

Robespierre:

When: 1758-1794

Where: Paris, France

Who: Robespierre, Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, Danton, Brissot, Jacobins, Girondists, Mountain

What: Maximilien Robespierre was originally a more pacifistic and less liberal lawyer than he is now recognized as. At first, he did not believe that France could survive without its monarchy and supported a constitutional monarchy that was proposed by the Legislative Convention. A member of the Jacobins, particularly the Mountain, Robespierre had a change of heart having heard the sans-culottes demand for their daily bread in 1793. Following the September Massacres, Robespierre led the Committee of Public Safety in 1793 and 1794 until his execution by guillotine. Within that time, he installed a "planned economy" that helped with both the war effort and rationing that followed egalitarian principles. The Reign of Terror also led to a terrified but peaceful internal France while war was waged against Austria and Prussia. The Thermidorian Reaction to the Reign of Terror followed his death.

Why: Robespierre was important as his Reign of Terror united France and the French Revolution came full-circle following his death.

(Pages 704, 705, 706, 708, and 711)

Napoleon:

When: 1769-1821

Where: France, England, Germany, Prussia, Austria, Spain, Netherlands, Italy

Who: Napoleon, Pope Pius VII, Lord Nelson, Alexander I, William III, Louis XVIII, Arthur Wellesley

What: During the French Revolution, Napoleon had been a revered and popular soldier at battles like Toulon in Italy, and his short-comings in Egypt were overlooked as they were not well-known. Once at home, he staged a coup d'état against the weak Directory in 1799 and successfully crowned himself emperor in 1804 alongside a later-perfected republic. He pardoned the émigrés, assuming they returned to France and swore loyalty. Napoleon also established a national bank, healed the divisions with Pope Pius VII through the Concordat of 1801, which allowed Catholics that freedom of worship but granting Napoleon even more political power over the church, and brought about common law in France. Under his Civil Code of 1804, men would have equality before the law and security of the wealth and private property; women lost rights and were made subordinates in the "family monarchy", although they had the right to divorce. In regards to his military achievements, Napoleon was at war for most of his reign. He lost to Lord Nelson of England at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, but he did invade and dissolve the Holy Roman Empire into the Confederation of Germany as well as defeated the Austrian and Russian forces at Austerlitz. Napoleon's armies under the Tricolor also abolished feudalism in the territories they conquered. However, revolts in Spain reflected foreign dislike of Napoleon's high taxes on conquered territories. Violating the Treaty of Tilsit with Tsar Alexander I, however, proved to be his downfall. Napoleon invaded Russia and was defeated by the Cossacks as he tried to escape the inhospitable conditions in the tundra. He eventually admitted defeat and was generously exiled to Elba. After rumors of civil unrest in France reached him the next year concerning Louis XVIII, he escaped and returned for another 100 Days of glory until he was defeated by Arthur Wellesley at Waterloo. He was then exiled to the island of St. Helena, where he died in 1821 having fought two coalitions of countries, the perfect example of the Balance of Power Principle.

Why: Napoleon's Civil Code and Common Law, reorganization of the HRE into the German Confederation, spreading of nationalism abroad, and ending of feudalism would have lasting effects on Europe.

(Pages 712, 713, 714, 715, 717, & 718)