

E. Europe in 1789

1. Europe was the way it was in 1789 because of what had happened since 476...
 - a) France & Germany, had been split since 843.
 - b) Their separation was made worse by the violence of the Reformation and Religious Wars (1517-1648) where they had been aligned on opposite sides (with France staying Catholic) and Germany mostly Lutheran and Catholic.
 - c) Spain and Portugal had evolved into separate nations in relative isolation from the rest of Europe during the Reconquista (711-1492). They were strongly Catholic.
 - d) England's kings had given up any claims to France and embraced the separation of England from the rest of Europe by making Anglicanism.
 - e) Russia had joined the *Europe of Nations* by defeating Sweden in the Great Northern War (1700-22) under the leadership of Peter "the Great."
2. The period from 476 to 1789 is the "medieval" period.
 - a) The word "medieval" comes from the Latin "medium" (middle) and "aevum" (age). In other words, it denotes a *middle age* between ancient and modern.
 - b) *The Medieval Period in the history of Europe is the period from 476 to 1789 during which its nations emerged from their tribal roots to form into distinctive and antagonistic cultures in separate countries.*

VI. The Modern Europe of Nations (1789-1945)

The Modern Period in the history of Europe is the period from 1789 to 1945 during which Europe's nations switched from monarchy to national forms of socialism, resulting in massive wars that nearly destroyed Europe.

A. The French Revolution Revisited

1. We have seen that the French kings overcame the English kings during the Hundred Years' War of 1337-1453. (The map on page 9 shows how the French kings eventually controlled all the land. This was the first "absolute" monarchy in Europe.)
2. As the saying goes, "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely."
3. The last of the powerful and corrupt French kings since the Hundred Years' War was Louis XVI, who ended up bankrupt.
4. He asked his people for help at a meeting called the "Estates-General" in 1789, but they rebelled.
5. Seeing the rise of popular government first in America, and now in France, the kings of Europe became alarmed by the prospect of similar changes occurring in their own countries. They allied with one another and invaded France to stop the revolution.

B. The Rise of Napoleon

1. As the wars of the French Revolution raged, a young officer named Napoleon Bonaparte gradually climbed up the ranks of the French army.
2. As a great military commander, the people naturally turned to him in a time of war. He used his popularity and military power to make himself “Emperor of the French.”



Napoleon started as a military commander, and then became a leader of the Revolution, but then became Emperor of the French. This was a strange result for the French Revolution, but the French people loved him because he made them masters of Europe.

C. The Napoleonic Wars (1799-1815)

1. When Napoleon became the leader of France in 1799, the Napoleonic *period* began.
2. The most important thing he accomplished was the conquest of *Germany*.



Napoleon enters Berlin in 1806. Compare this image to the photograph from page 6. The famous “Brandenburg Gate” is in the background of both. Napoleon’s conquest of Germany was the first time the two had been unified in an empire since Charlemagne—*almost exactly a thousand years earlier*.