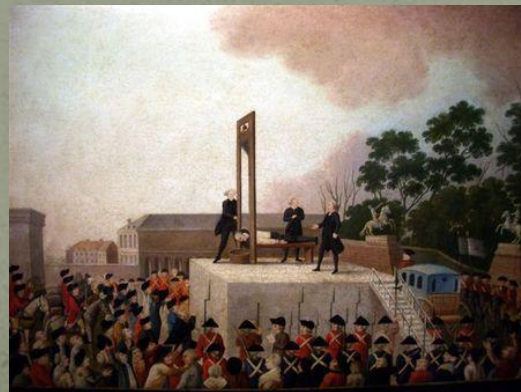


German Nationalism:

Reaction To Defeat In The Napoleonic Wars & The Enlightenment



Nationalism

•Nationalism was the most successful political force of the 19th century (1800s). It emerged from two main sources:

1. the Romantic exaltation of "feeling" and "identity"
2. the Liberal requirement that a legitimate state be based on a "people" rather than, for example, a dynasty, God, or imperial domination.

There were two main ways of exemplification:

1. the French method of "inclusion" - essentially that anyone who accepted loyalty to the civil French state was a "citizen". In practice this meant the enforcement of a considerable degree of uniformity, for instance the destruction of regional languages.
2. The German method, required by political circumstances, was to define the "nation" in ethnic terms. Ethnicity in practice came down to speaking German and (perhaps) having a German name. It is debatable whether, in practice, all nationalisms ended up as Chauvinistic and aggressive, but the very nature of nationalism requires that boundaries be drawn resulting in substantial groups of "outsiders."

The Enlightenment

An intellectual movement which began in England in the seventeenth century, but then spread to have eventual influence over all sections of the world. The term "Enlightenment," rooted in an intellectual skepticism to traditional beliefs and dogmas, denotes an "illumined" contrast to the supposed dark and superstitious character of the Middle Ages. From its inception, the Enlightenment focused on the power and goodness of human rationality.

Or

A period in Europe in the 18th century (1700s) when many writers and thinkers began to question established beliefs, e.g. in the authority of kings or of the Church, in favor of reason and scientific proof. The idea developed that everyone was of equal value and had equal rights.

Characteristics of Enlightenment thinking:

- 1) Reason is the most significant and positive capacity of the human;
- 2) Reason enables one to break free from primitive, dogmatic, and superstitious beliefs holding one in the bonds of irrationality and ignorance;
- 3) In realizing the liberating potential of reason, one not only learns to think correctly, but to act correctly as well;
- 4) Through philosophical and scientific progress, reason can lead humanity as a whole to a state of earthly perfection;
- 5) Reason makes all humans equal and, therefore, deserving of equal liberty and treatment before the law;
- 6) Beliefs of any sort should be accepted only on the basis of reason, and not on traditional or priestly authority; and
- 7) All human endeavors should seek to impart and develop knowledge, not feelings or character.

The Napoleonic Wars



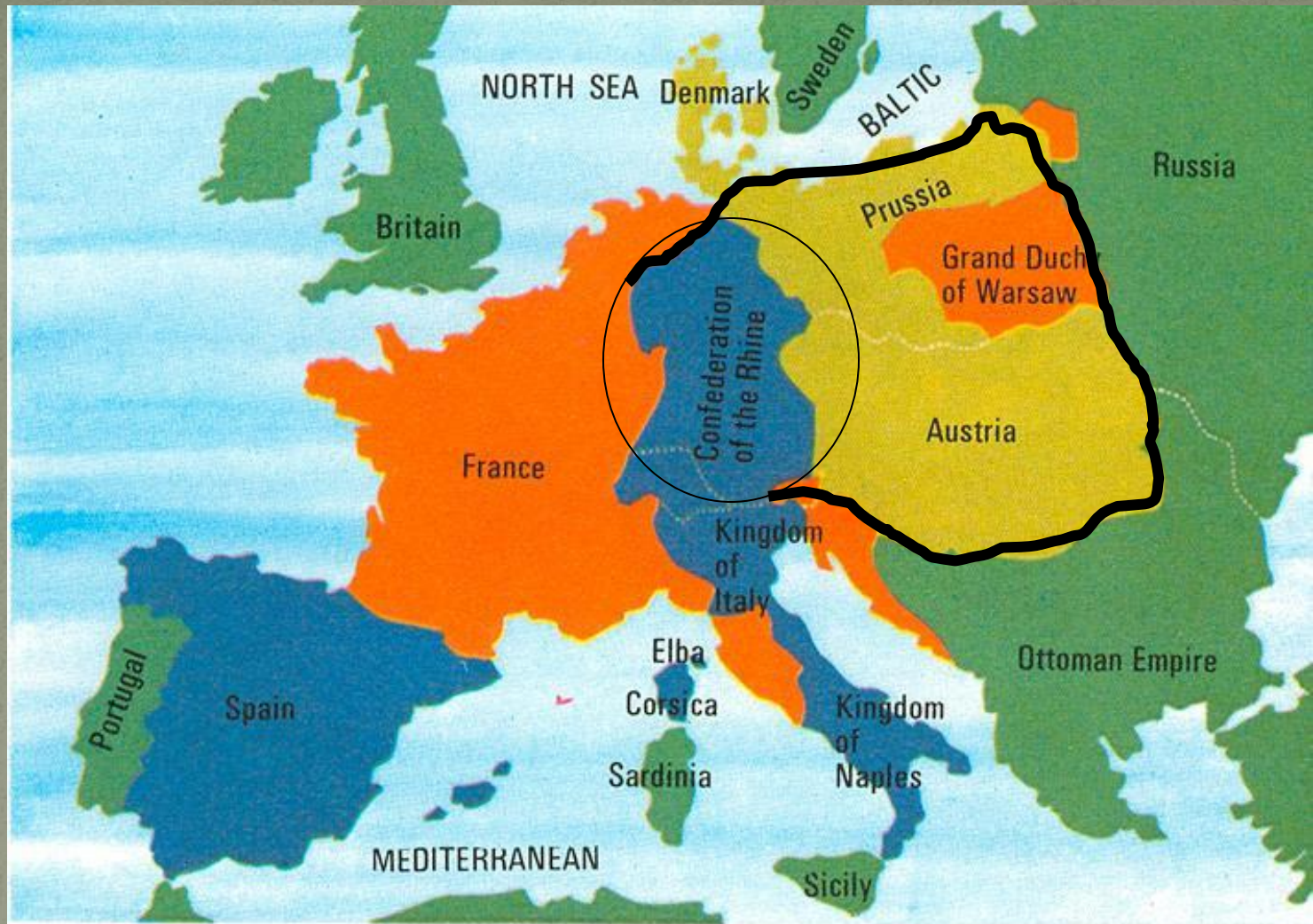
The French Revolution and The Napoleonic Empire

- In 1789, growing discontent with France's feudal government suddenly exploded into an open revolt which drew the attention of all the nations of Europe. The ensuing violence and international involvement triggered more than two decades of nearly continuous warfare as various competing empires sought to re-impose their own views of balanced power. So many related military campaigns were fought over such large areas by so many different factions, that this era has wryly been called the first true world war.

- The French Revolution, and the Napoleonic Empire. The Revolution and ensuing republic saw the toppling of the old French monarchy and its replacement by a series of sporadically violent civilian administrations. At the peak of the violent period, known as "The Terror," the former king and queen were cruelly put to death. This act galvanized the other nations of Europe against France, and guaranteed that no matter what improvements might be made later, the resulting nation would never enjoy the cooperation of Europe's other leaders.



- The events which followed were typical in the history of revolutions; an army general seized control of the government. This general however, named Napoleon Bonaparte, was of unusual intelligence and charisma, and he had seized control of what today would be called a superpower. The presence of this charismatic military genius as the head of France vastly complicated Europe's political landscape and broadened the atmosphere of confrontation which was destined to continue until one of the two sides was defeated. Napoleon himself was not of a disposition to resist playing the same power games as those around him, and so not until 1815 did the wars end with the battle of Waterloo and the return of a monarch to Paris.



- German Nationalism is the result of Germany's defeat in the Napoleonic Wars
 - Also results in German anti-Semitism
- French victory in the Napoleonic wars spread Enlightenment ideas of freedom and equality across Europe
 - Germany hated these ideas
 - Germany associated these ideas of progress and man's ability to better himself through the attainment of knowledge and a universe governed by reason with the French, English and the Jews.
 - In French occupied German lands, Jews were given political and social equality and all the same "rights of man" as all other groups.

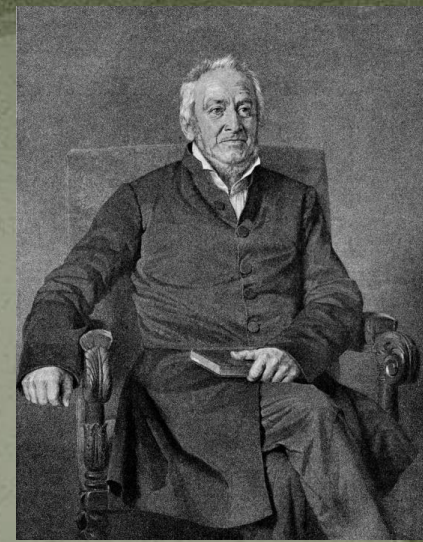
- The Enlightenment was a break from the Medieval World of man's innate sinfulness, of superstitions, where salvation was only through God.
- Napoleon destroyed the last remnant of the Holy Roman Empire: 1806
 - He reorganized German lands
 - Secularized ecclesiastical states
 - United free states into territorial states
 - Got rid of the medieval order of free Imperial Knights
 - Formed a confederation of German states under French Protection
 - Destroyed all German links to their historical past
 - Germans built a new nationalism and shaped a new German national character
 - Germans reject Enlightenment ideas and modernity
 - Retain loyalty to the remote glorified idea of their medieval past...which included deep hatred towards the Jews.

- Germany rejected the idea of equality of peoples the Enlightenment had brought to Europe.
- Too radical for the Germans to accept
 - They rejected granting Jews political equality
 - Based their rejection on traditional Medieval objections
 - Scripture and association with the devil
 - Jews therefore unfit for political freedom
 - Certain basic racial qualities [inherent] in Jews that were at variance with those of Germans.
- Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814)
 - Has been called the Father of German Nationalism and modern German Anti-Semitism
 - Called Germans to reject the French Enlightenment ideas of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity
 - Rather “Have character and be German!”



- *“It is in you [Germans] in whom the seed of human perfection most decidedly lies, and you are charged with progress in human development. If you perish in this your essential nature, then there perishes together with you every hope of the whole human race for salvation from the depths of its miseries.”*
– Johann Gottlieb Fichte
- He characterized Jews as a state within a state that would undermine the German nation.
- He maintained equal rights could only be given to Jews if Germans were to “cut off all their heads in one night, and set new ones on their shoulders, which should contain not a single Jewish idea.”

- Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769–1860)
- Poet and Pamphleteer
- French ideas considered “un-German”
- Defined Germans by distinguishing them from an internal enemy – the Jews.



- Jews had gained political freedom in German lands under French control
- Germans did not want this
- Jews became associated with ideas and values of the French victors
- Jews were not true insiders but outsiders
- Old Feudal Germany – Jews were always outsiders
 - New German Nationalism latched onto this old prejudice .