

Martyn Lyons. *Napoleon Bonaparte and the Legacy of the French Revolution*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994. Pp. iv, 344. Cloth, \$45.00. ISBN 0-312-12122-9. Paper, \$17.95. ISBN 0-312-12123-7.

In this clear and compact book Martyn Lyons demonstrates how Napoleon tamed, reshaped, reformed, and preserved the achievements of the French Revolution and created the centralized administrative system that has persisted in France to this day. Here we learn why after Waterloo people referred to revolution and Napoleon almost in the same breath. In the world after 1815 the remnants of the first had been submerged into the stunning accomplishments of the second. This is Napoleonic history with the battles mostly left out, one that explains how Napoleon solidified the secular state, the revolutionary land question, transformed nascent democracy into plebiscitary dictatorship, and set the standard for governing elites who have dominated France since 1815, no matter what the regime.

Lyons fleshes out what other historians have said many times: Napoleon's was *not* a military dictatorship, although its success in part stemmed from his winning battles. Rather it was a bureaucratic or administrative dictatorship, based on an elite of what the French call "les notables" and on a centralized structure that Louis XIV would have envied. Education policy—the new *lycees* and the *Institut de France*—was planned to produce and reward the elites. Economic policy—tariff protection for new businesses and the privately financed Bank of France—was designed to attach the upper bourgeoisie to the regime. A very interesting chapter in Lyons's book is "Masses of Granite: The Sociology of an Elite." It included, as he points out, "landowners, functionaries, and soldiers" along with the already existing "revolutionary bourgeoisie of administrators and professionals."

Lyons presents a Napoleon who was always at some level a republican and revolutionary, but one who sought to restrain, channel, and manage what remained of France's great upheaval of 1789-1799. The real end of revolution, as Lyons sees it, came not with the Brumaire coup of 1799 but with Bonaparte's assumption of the life consulate in 1802. And revolutionary traditions could be resurrected and exploited as needed, something Napoleon actually did in 1814 when the allies invaded. Millions of French peasants supported the Emperor then because they thought the return of the Bourbons would mean that the church and emigres would take back lands confiscated from them in the Revolution. The same situation existed in 1815, and Napoleon exploited it. Upon his return from Elba, he announced he had come "to save Frenchmen from the slavery in which priests and nobles wished to plunge them."

Martyn Lyons, whose *France under the Directory* published twenty years ago is still the best short book on the subject, has given teachers and students of the French Revolution-Napoleonic period real food for thought in his newest work. Like the older *Napoleonic Revolution* by Robert Holtman, Lyons's book concentrates on what was left of Napoleon's achievements after the smoke of battle cleared away. The Napoleonic era was not outside of the legacy of revolution but very much within it, although it transformed what that legacy meant permanently.

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Joseph T. Criscenti, ed. *Sarmiento and His Argentina*. Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993. Pp. viii, 216. Cloth, \$25.00.

Alfred Stepan, ed. *Americas: New Interpretive Essays*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. Pp. x, 327. Cloth, \$45.00; paper, \$14.95.

Although both of these books are anthologies of scholarly writing on topics concerning Latin America, they differ in purpose and ease of reading. *Americas: New Interpretive Essays* was written "for the general reading public" and as a support work for the "Americas" television course on PBS. The authors, all well-known Latin American specialists, suggest new ways of understanding the region.