

*France: From Liberal Empire  
to the Third Republic*

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# The Reign of Napoleon III

- The authoritarian years: 1851-1860
  - Legislative control
  - Press censorship
  - Harassment of opposition
- Support came from people who approved protection of private property, support of the French Catholic Church, and his economic program
  - Army
  - Property owners
  - the French Catholic Church
  - Peasants
  - Business people
- Mass support because of victory in the Crimean War



# The Reign of Napoleon III

- The liberal years: 1860-1870
  - Free-trade treaty with Great Britain
  - Free debate in legislature
  - Relaxation of censorship
  - Allowance of labor unions
- 1870: leaders of moderates form a ministry and write a liberal constitution that made ministers responsible to the legislature
- Liberalism intended to gain back support after failures in foreign policy



# The Reign of Napoleon III

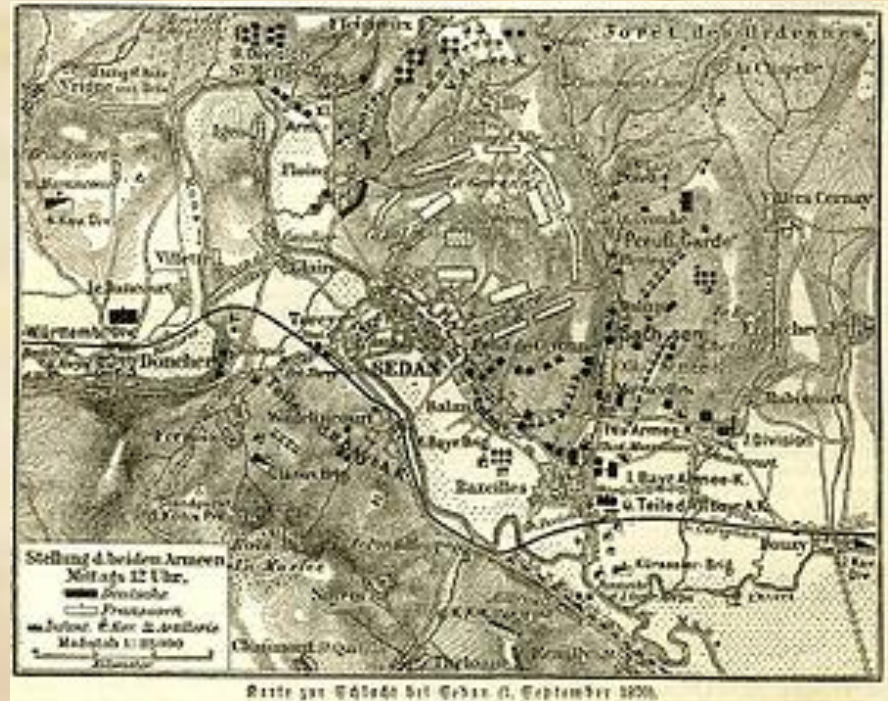
- 1860: lost control of diplomacy in Italian unification
- 1861-1867: disastrous support of military expedition by Austria against Mexico
  - Led by Archduke Maximilian of Austria
  - Ended in his execution
- Passive while Germany is strengthened
- Loss in 1870 war against Germany





# The Reign of Napoleon III

- Empire crumbled at the Battle of Sedan
- Napoleon III was captured and died in England in 1873
- Paris proclaimed a republic and a government was set up for national defense
- Paris was sieged by Prussia
- The government moved to Bordeaux
- Paris surrendered in 1871, long after France was ready for peace



# The Paris Commune



- After fighting with Germany stopped, the division between the provinces and Paris became sharper
- New National Assembly, elected in February, was dominated by monarchists
- National Assembly subsequently gave executive power to Adolphe Thiers
- On May 23, the Treaty of Frankfurt, which Thiers negotiated with Prussia, was officially ratified

# The Paris Commune

- Many Parisians regarded the monarchist National Assembly sitting at Versailles as a betrayal
- Parisians elected a new municipal government, called the Paris Commune, which was formally proclaimed on March 28, 1871; it consisted of both radical and socialists alike
- The goal of the Commune was to administer Paris separately from the rest of France





## *The Paris Commune*

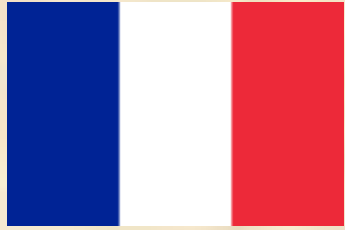
- *The National Assembly surrounded Paris with an army in April, and on May 8, the army bombarded the city*
- *On May 21, the army broke through the city's defenses, and during the next seven days, the soldiers killed around 200,000 inhabitants*
- *The Paris Commune soon became a legend throughout Europe*



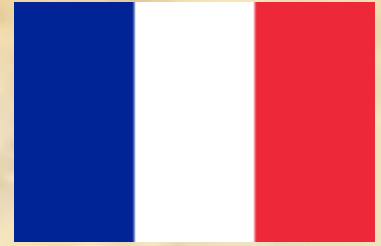
# The Paris Commune

- While Marxists regarded the Commune as a genuine proletarian government that the French bourgeoisie had suppressed, it was dominated by petty bourgeois members
- The Commune wanted a nation of relatively independent, radically democratic enclaves, not a worker's state
- The suppression of the Commune represented the triumph of the centralized nation-state, as well as the protection of property





## The Third Republic



- The National Assembly was forced into a republican form of government.
- The monarchist majority was divided in loyalty between the House of Bourbon and the House of Orleans.
- This problem could have been avoided because the Count of Chambord, the Bourbon claimant, had no children and had agreed to allow the Orleanist heir to become his successor.
- Chambord would not become king unless the flag remained the tri-color flag.



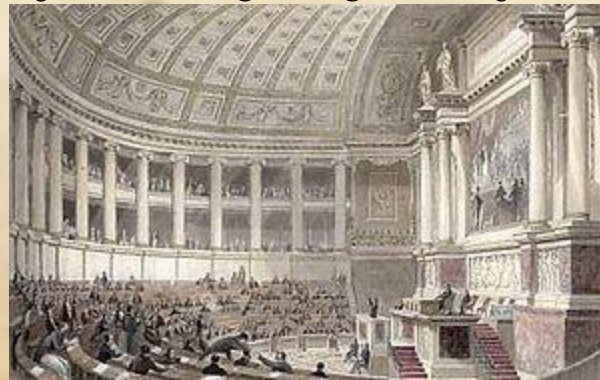
# The Third Republic



- Conservative monarchists wouldn't even return to the white flag of the Bourbons, which symbolized extreme political reaction.
- In September 1873, after the indemnity had been paid, Prussian occupation troops were withdrawn from France.
- Thiers was removed from office due to his republican sentiments.
- Marshal Patrice MacMahon, a conservative army officer was elected as president and was to prepare France for a monarchist restoration,.

# The Third Republic

- In 1875 when the still monarchist in sentiment National Assembly was unable to find a king, they decided to regularize the political system.
- This new political system provided for a Chamber of Deputies elected by universal male suffrage, a Senate chosen indirectly, and a president elected by the two legislative houses.
- This system was the result of the arguing and frustration of the monarchists.





# The Third Republic



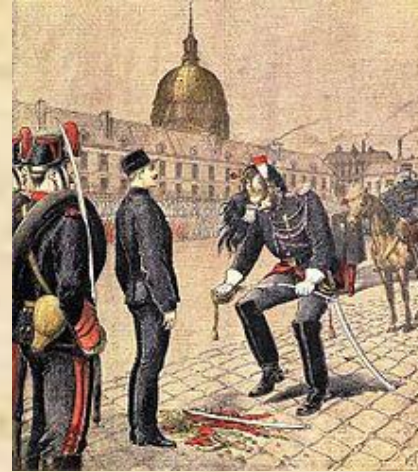
- After many disagreements with the Chamber of Deputies, MacMahon resigned in 1879.
- With his departure, the dedicated republicans were left in charge of the national government.
- The political structure of the Third Republic proved to be much stronger than expected,
- It was able to overcome many challenges from persons such as General Georges Boulanger, who would have put in place strong executive authority.

# The Third Republic

- It also survived scandals, like the sale of awards of the Legion of Honor and the corruption of politicians and journalists by a company that tried to construct a canal in Panama.
- The scandals made the Republic's politics appear sleazy.
- The institutions of the republic allowed new ministers to replace those whose corruption was exposed.



# Dreyfus Affair



- The affair involved the accusation of French Army Officer Alfred Dreyfus in 1894 of allegedly selling military secrets to the Germans
  - The Affair divided the French nation and has come to be seen as a symbol of the miscarriage of justice
  - The Affair led to a new phase in the Third Republic that led to a radical-led government
  - The Affair helped enhance the force of the press on political life in France

# Dreyfus Affair

- The case was built around comparing handwriting samples
  - Dreyfus was found guilty and sent to Devil's Island or almost 5 years
  - Later it was discovered that the evidence was forged
- Emile Zola wrote a newspaper article directed at the president publicizing all information known at that time of the case



All pictures from :[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page)  
Kagan, Donald, Steven E. Ozment, and Frank M. Turner. *The Western Heritage: Since 1300*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007. Print.  
"I Accuse!" *Letter to the President of the Republic* by Emile Zola 1898. N.p., n.d. Web. 27 Mar. 2014.