

## 6. Imperial Glory (1807-1812)

During the height of Napoleon's power, he faced ~~two~~ of his biggest challenges: ~~t~~he Peninsular War and the Fifth Coalition (1807–1809). ~~-~~Despite having secured peace with Russia and Prussia at Tilsit, Napoleon now had to organize his expanded empire and enforce the Continental System against the British. ~~-~~To do so, he focused his attention on reining in the Kingdom of Portugal. ~~-~~This kingdom, which had violated ~~his~~ Napoleon's trade prohibitions, ~~and was doing~~ by conducting business with the ~~British~~ English. ~~-~~ Portugal's future King John VI, nicknamed "the Clement" (r. 1816–~~1822~~), then prince regent due to the mental illness of his ~~then~~-reigning mother, had agreed to close Portugal's ~~his~~ ports to British trade following the Franco-Spanish defeat at Trafalgar in 1805. ~~-~~ Nevertheless, ~~in defiance of Napoleon's orders~~, John ~~not only~~ resumed ~~both~~ diplomatic relations ~~and trade with Britain~~. ~~with Britain but also~~ ~~trade in defiance of Napoleon's orders~~.

A displeased Napoleon, therefore, followed up his victory over Russia and Prussia by sending an army to invade Portugal. ~~-~~ On October 17, 1807, General Jean-Andoche Junot (1771–1813) led 24,000 French troops across the Pyrenees into Spanish territory. ~~-~~ Spain permitted this army to traverse ~~its~~ ~~their~~ lands and head towards Portugal to enforce Napoleon's Continental System. ~~-~~ What ~~was later~~ ~~became~~ known as "The Peninsular War" (Spain and Portugal are in the Iberian Peninsula<sup>1</sup>) became a drawn out, six-year affair that bled the French army and diverted

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<sup>1</sup> The Iberian Peninsula, also known as Iberia and located in the southwest corner of Europe, is principally divided between Portugal and Spain, comprising most of their territory, but also including Andorra and a small part of France along the peninsula's northeastern edge, as well as Gibraltar on its

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valuable troops, attention, and resources from other theaters that may have been more important.

With Napoleonic forces moving ~~about~~ throughout the Iberian Peninsula by the winter of 1808, French agents ~~intrigued in~~ the internal affairs of their Spanish ally and not just in those of their Portuguese enemy. ~~With apparent discord dividing members of the Spanish royal family~~, discord stoked by French agents ~~and~~, Napoleon announced on February 16, 1808, that he would intervene as a mediator between the rival political factions in the country. ~~This “mediation” included sending French Marshal Murat with 120,000 troops into Spain.~~ ~~This new French force, which~~ arrived in Madrid on March 24<sup>th</sup>, where they were far from welcomed. Instead, riots soon erupted against what was perceived as a foreign occupation, and to the further outrage of many Spaniards, Napoleon appointed his brother, Joseph Bonaparte, as the new ~~king~~ of Spain in the summer of 1808. ~~Spain’s heavily religious and conservative population opposed~~ ~~felt outrage at~~ this imposition of a French monarch ~~who had no~~ ~~without~~ significant prior ties to Spain, especially one with ties to a Masonic ~~L~~odge. ~~Although Joseph managed to put an end to the Spanish Inquisition during his reign,~~ Joseph and his loyal Spanish followers (called “*Josefinos*” by rebellious Spaniards) were held in contempt by the public, ~~although one thing Joseph accomplished during his reign was to finally put an end to the Spanish Inquisition.~~

~~Throughout Spain, resistance to French occupation spread to such an extent that in July, the French suffered a major defeat at the Battle of Bailén. Spanish~~ ~~suffered~~ ~~casualties and losses numbered~~ a mere 243 dead and 735 wounded ~~versus~~ ~~while~~ ~~French~~ ~~suffered~~ ~~casualties and losses of some~~ 2,200 dead, 400 wounded, and 17,635 captured. ~~Joseph attempted to secure Napoleon’s permission to abdicate after retreating to the~~ ~~n~~North, but Napoleon would hear none

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south coast, a small peninsula which forms an overseas territory of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

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of this defeatism, ~~and~~, instead, ~~sending~~sent reinforcements. -To stave off total disaster, the French emperor decided to intervene in person, and Madrid was promptly recaptured.

-Joseph's reign also saw the successful declaration of independence from Spain by Venezuela (1810) ~~before~~and Joseph eventually abdicated in 1813. -Joseph's command of French forces on the ~~P~~peninsula ~~had been~~was an illusion, as French generals would consult Napoleon and not Joseph before taking action.