



Napoleon II (L'Aiglon)

The new "Caesar" who never reigned



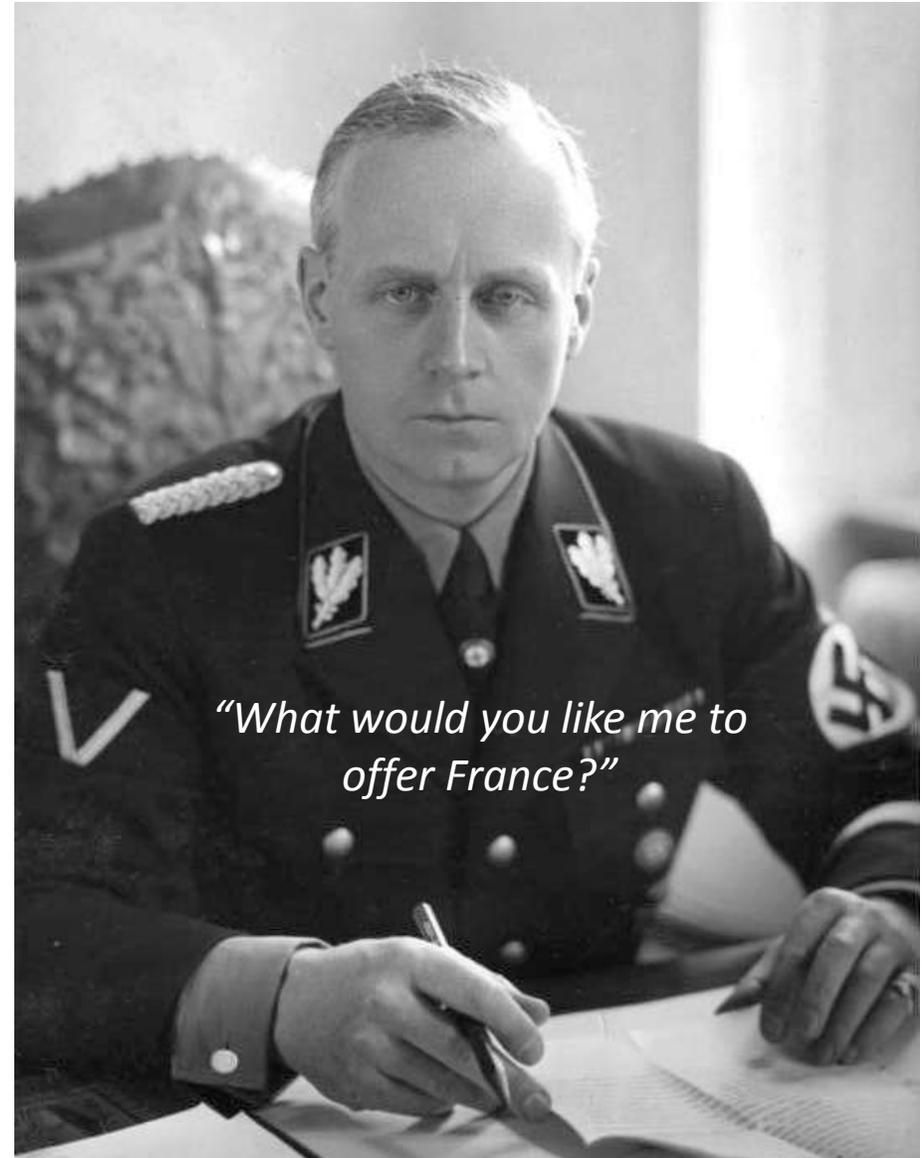
*“My birth and my death, this
is my whole story. Between
my cradle and my tomb,
there is a big zero.”*
Napoleon II on his deathbed
(1832)

Berlin (1938): a strange encounter



“Give us back the coffin of the king of Rome”

Jacques Benoist-Méchin (French journalist)



“What would you like me to offer France?”

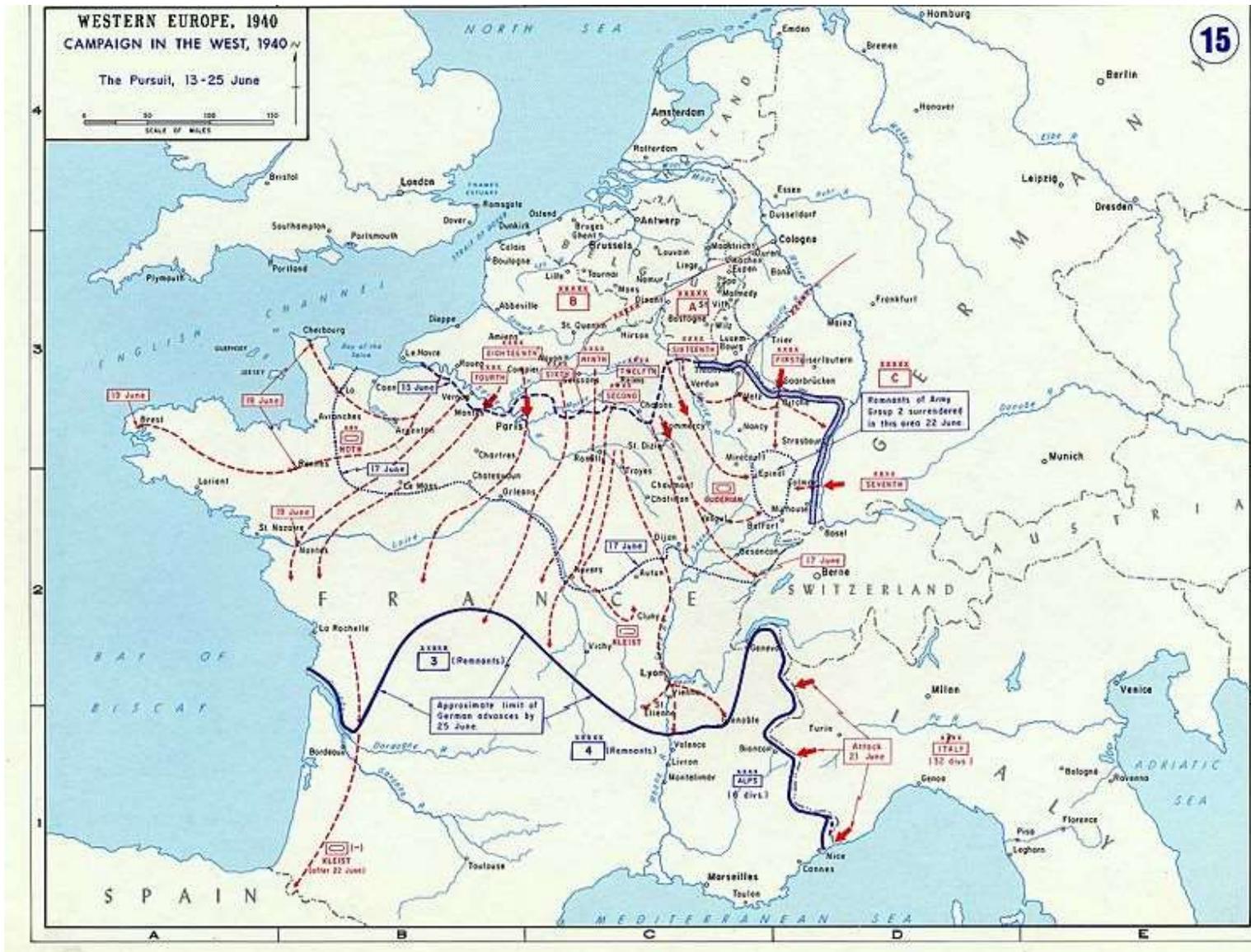
Joachim von Ribbentrop (Hitler's foreign affairs minister)

L'Aiglon (Edmond Rostand): a popular figure in France





May-June 1940: the collapse of France



Hitler orders the remains of Napoleon II to be transferred from Vienna to Paris



10 December 1940: Marshal Pétain invited to attend the ceremony in Paris



15 December 1840: the remains of Napoleon transferred to Paris from St-Elena



15 December 1940: the transfer of Napoleon II's remains to Paris: a gloomy ceremony

"They took our coal and they give us back the ashes"





1811: the birth of a new “Caesar”



15 December 1809: Napoleon divorces Joséphine



1810: Napoleon marries Marie-Louise of Hapsburg

The **Austrian alliance**: a centrepiece of French diplomacy since the 1750s
To stabilize Europe and contain the ambitions of Russia & Prussia



1770: the marriage of Louis & Marie-Antoinette





**Marrying a Hapsburg
princess: enhanced
legitimacy**

**Emperor Francis I: the last
Holy Roman emperor**

20 March 1811: the birth of the “King of Rome” (Napoleon-François-Charles-Joseph)



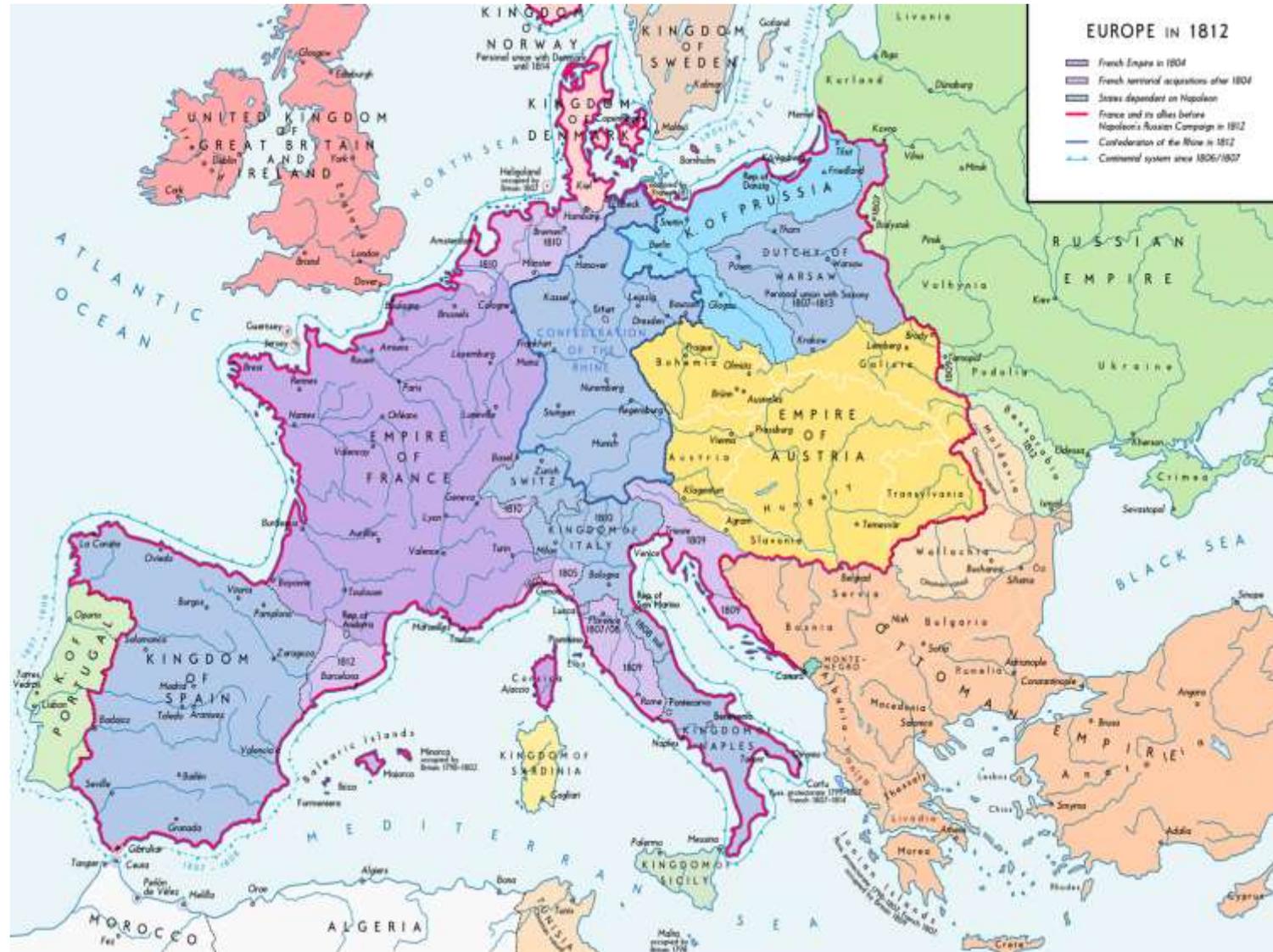
Nothing too good for the heir to the imperial throne



Mme de Montesquiou (“maman quiou”)
for governess



Napoleon's empire in 1812: the illusions of strength – Severe economic crisis/growing discontent



A “simple” family life



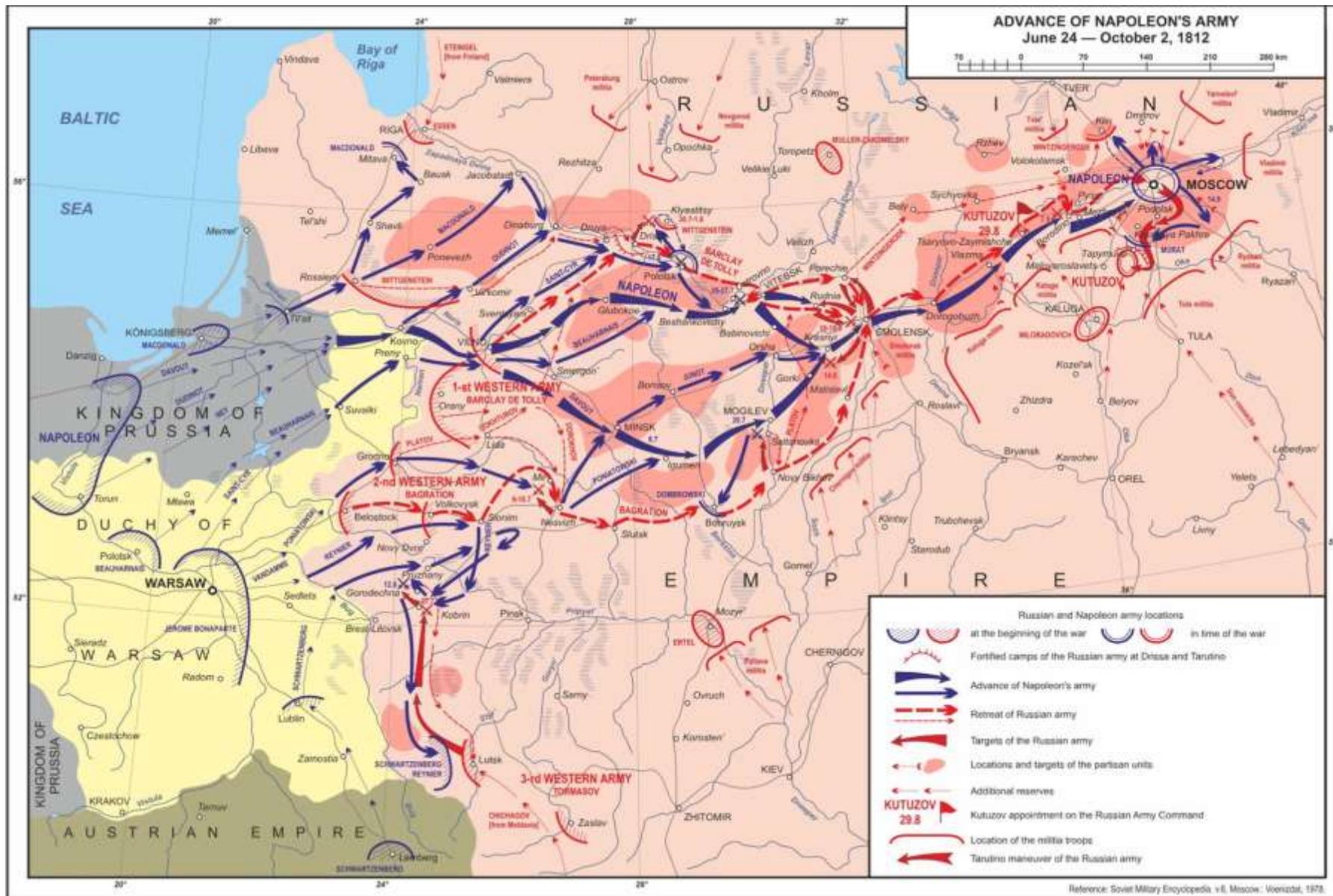
Napoleon: a very proud father



War with Russia: Napoleon confident a quick win at hand



Napoleon's plan: overwhelming the Russians quickly and force them to negotiate



The **Russian plan**: to avoid battle and force the French to advance deeper in Russia (overextended supply lines)



1812: the Russian retreat



October 1812: the Malet conspiracy



The plot: rumor that Napoleon had died in Russia

The goal: to end the imperial regime with the appointment of a provisional government

Napoleon II never considered as an option

Marie-Louise named Regent (1813)

Napoleon's return to Paris: a matter of urgency



Campaign in Germany in 1813

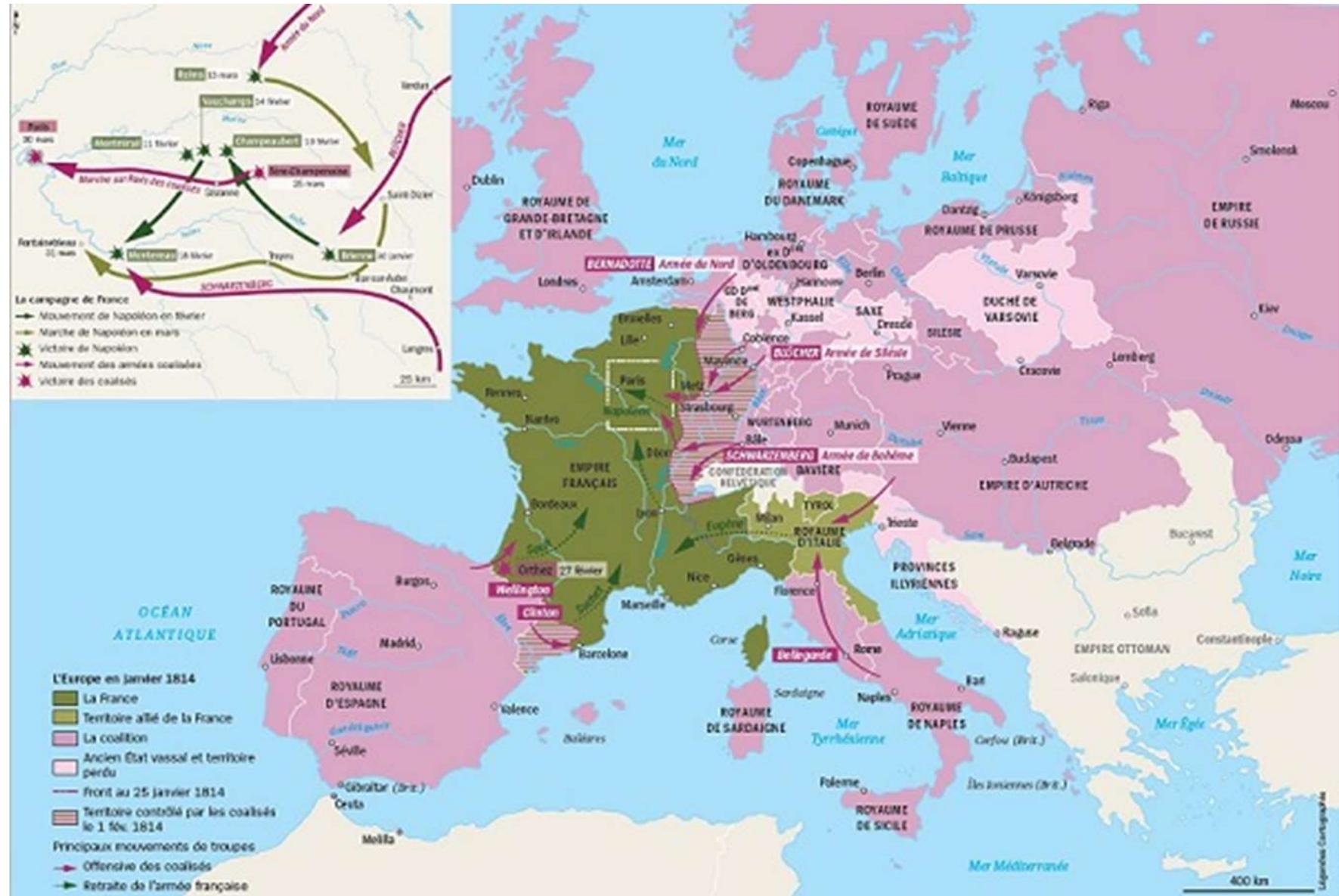
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Napoleon leaving Paris (January 1814): the little king of Rome and Empress Marie-Louise NOT to fall into the hands of the enemy coalition



1814: the invasion of France



The Austrians in France: **caution**

To maintain the Bonaparte dynasty
on the throne (Napoleon II):
balance of power in Europe

Marie-Louise as regent

Diplomatic discussions with Paris

Very slow movements of troops:
Napoleon's worst adversary







Alexander I visiting Joséphine à Malmaison (April 1814)



Napoleon: a threat to peace – To be removed from power permanently



Alexander I

Napoleon II?

A regency:
« *No guarantee of
tranquility* »



Talleyrand

Fontainebleau



4 April 1814: Napoleon's abdication (in favour of his son)





Marie-Louise & the king of Rome “under the protection” of the Russian army (château de Blois)



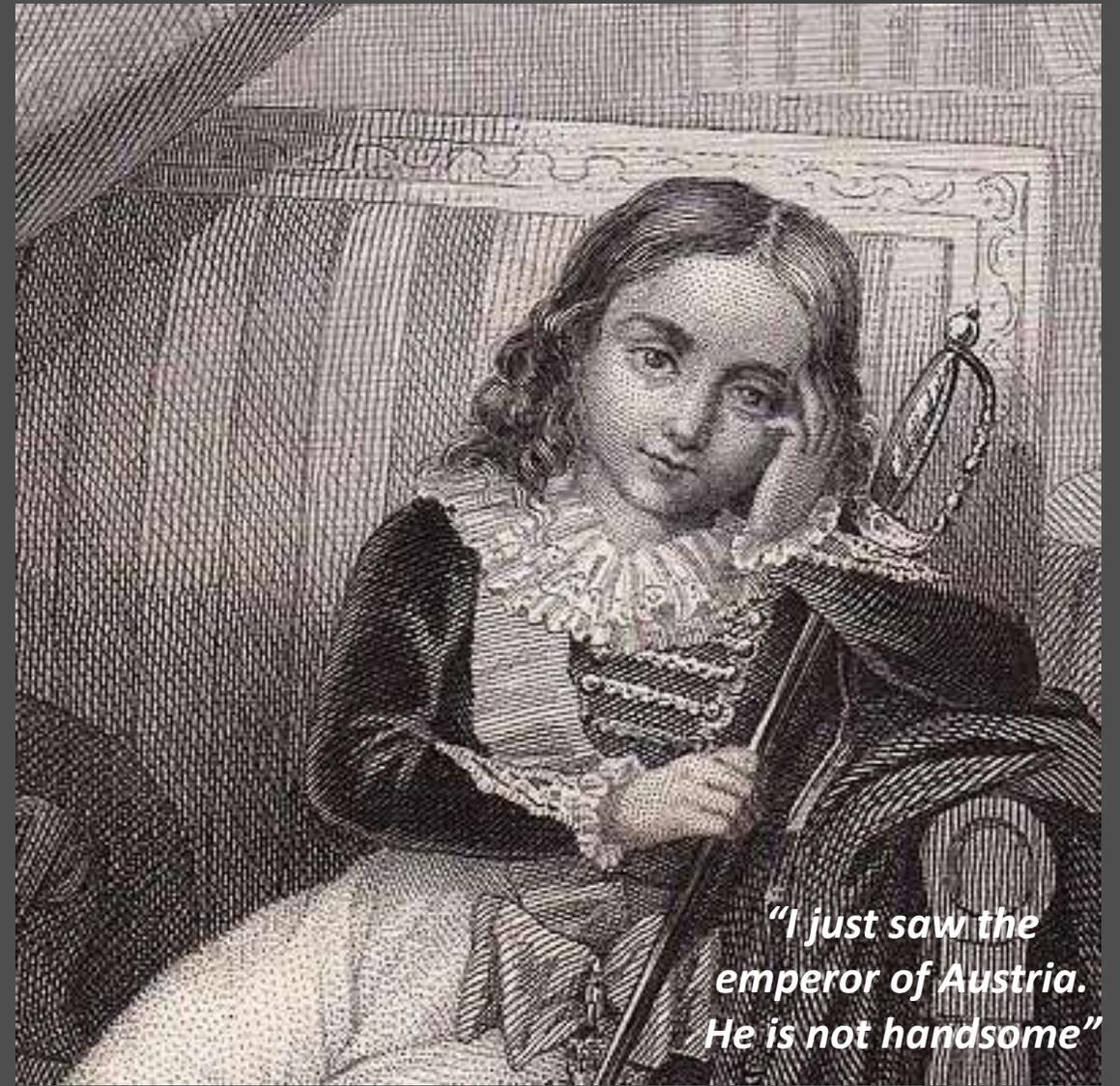


Château de Rambouillet





Francis I of Austria



*"I just saw the
emperor of Austria.
He is not handsome"*

Marie-Louise and the king of Rome taken to Vienna



Schönbrunn (Vienna): a golden cage





Réception de Louis XVIII à l'Hôtel de Ville, 29 août 1814.

The Bourbon restoration

Napoleon in exile at Elba







“The Count of Neipperg will try to divert the Duchess of Colorno, with all the necessary tact, from the idea of a voyage to the island of Elba”



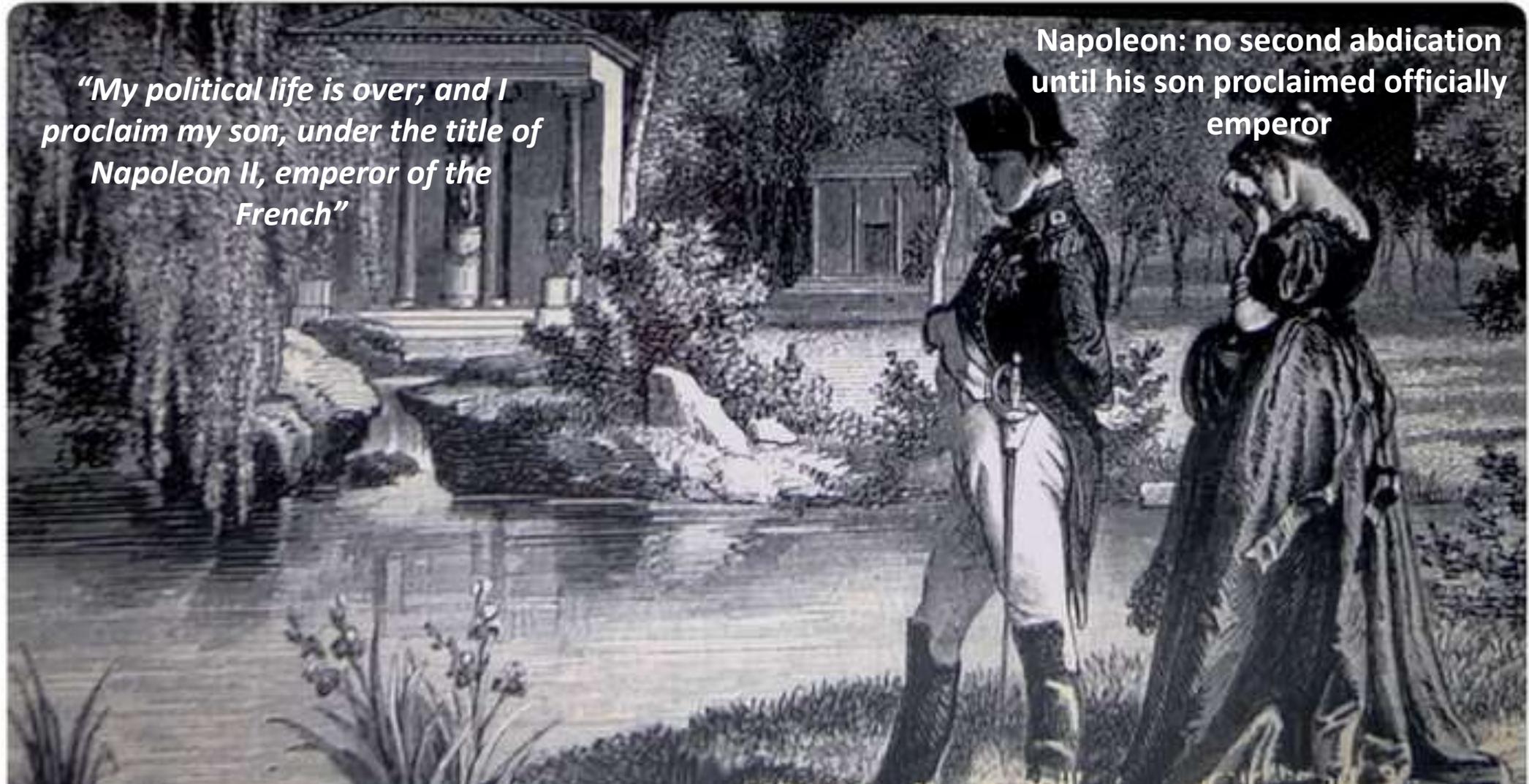


**Marie-Louise condemned
Napoleon's return from
Elba & refused to join him
in Paris**

Waterloo (18 June 1815)



21 June: Napoleon back in Paris



*“My political life is over; and I
proclaim my son, under the title of
Napoleon II, emperor of the
French”*

**Napoleon: no second abdication
until his son proclaimed officially
emperor**



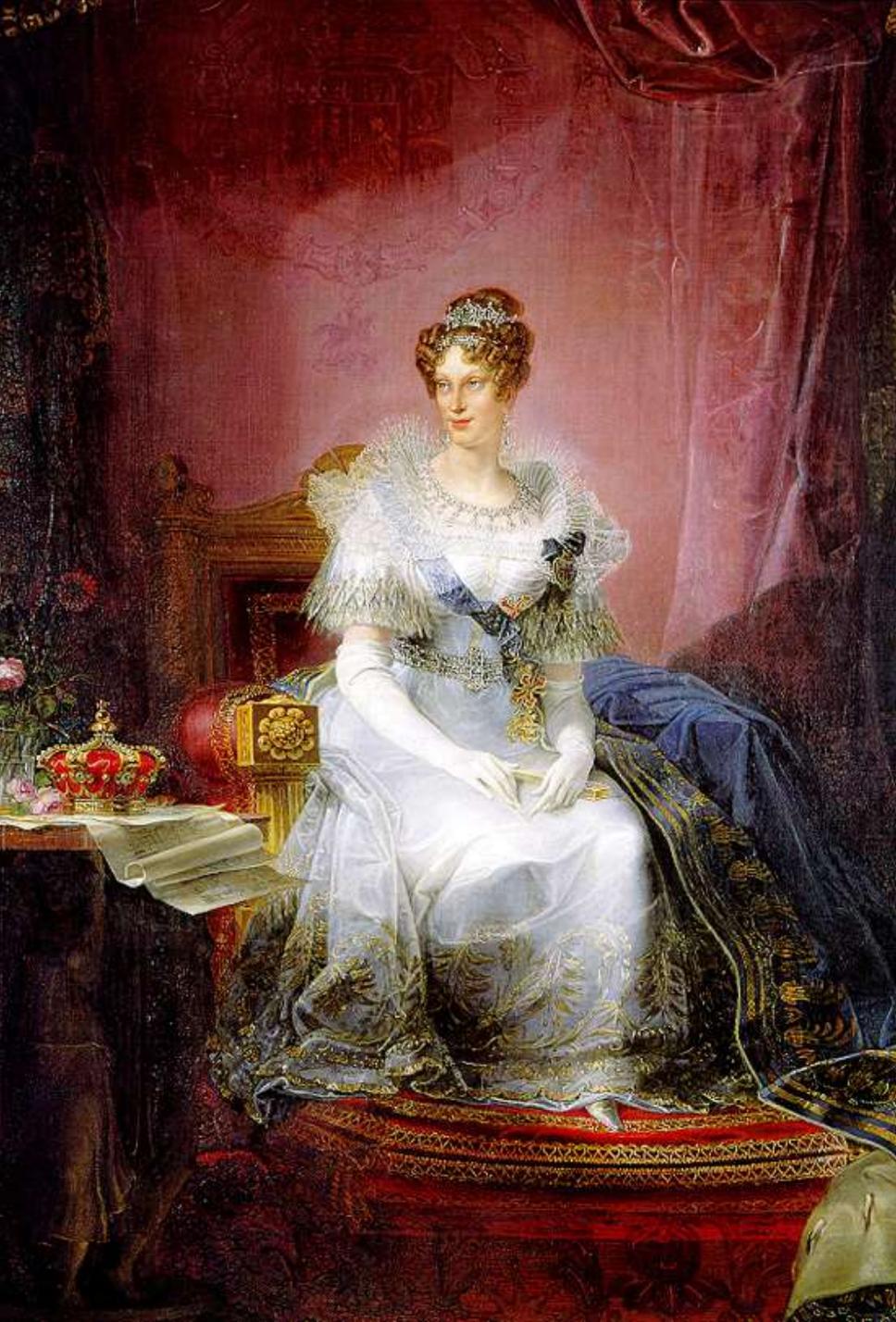
Debates at the Chamber of Deputies

Joseph Fouché (minister of police) to the deputies: no need to proclaim Napoleon II emperor



A close-up portrait of a young boy with light brown hair and striking blue eyes. He has a serious, somewhat somber expression. He is wearing a white ruffled collar and a dark, textured garment. The background is a soft, out-of-focus mix of blue and grey tones. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of his hair and the details of his clothing.

Vienna: the strict
education of a German
prince



Marie-Louise: Duchess of Parma

An absent mother – Frequent separations

Mother and son reunited only 7 times after 1816

"If Josephine had been my mother, my father would not have been buried at Saint Helena, and I should not be at Vienna. My mother is kind but weak; she was not the wife my father deserved" (Napoleon II)

His Serene Highness the Duke of Reichstadt: from Napoleon II to Franz



Growing nostalgia for
the Empire all over
Europe

Napoleon II: a popular
figure

Near complete
isolation in Vienna

No political clout

July 1830: another revolution in France – The Bourbons in exile



Renewed hope: the return of Napoleon II?



Prince Metternich

Napoleon's son "*excluded once and for all from all the thrones*"

The risk of antagonizing the Russian & British allies

Uprising in Parma: Napoleon II prevented from travelling –
The risks of provoking Italy's unity

1832: Napoleon II diagnosed with tuberculosis





The death of Napoleon II: a relief for many in Vienna

The imperial family absent

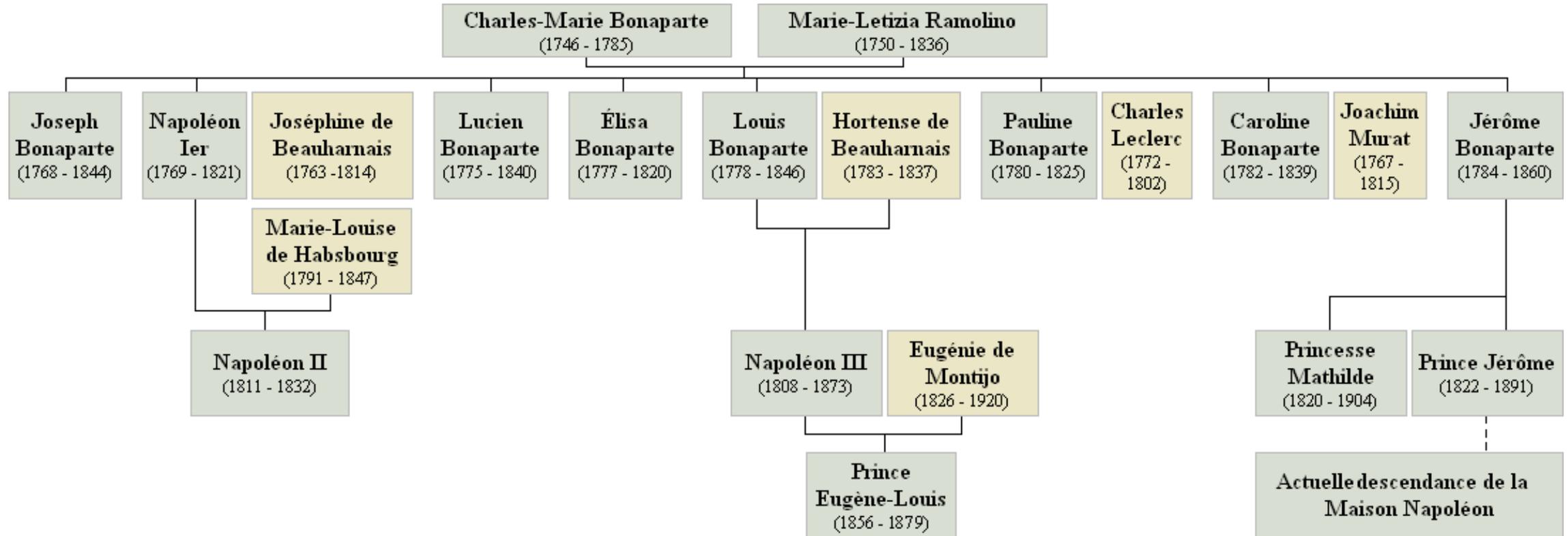
The growing threat of revolutions in Europe

The name Napoleon: a threat to the established order

Napoleon II's resting place: the Invalides in Paris



The clan system



Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte (1836)

