

## Meeting between Napoleon and Emperor Francis I of Austria after the Battle of Austerlitz (c. 1812)

### Abstract

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In the early years of the nineteenth century, French troops under Napoleon Bonaparte swept across continental Europe in a series of military victories. In the Battle of the Three Emperors at Austerlitz (in today's Czech Republic) on December 2, 1805, Napoleon defeated a combined Russian-Austrian army led by Holy Roman Emperor Francis II and Russian Czar Alexander I. The image shows a meeting between Napoleon (right) and Francis II two days after the battle. At the time, the fortunes of Francis II (who, in founding the Austrian Empire the previous year, had become Francis I of Austria) were in decline. He had already suffered serious territorial losses and would eventually acquiesce to the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire the following year, in 1806. For Napoleon, however, Austerlitz marked the beginning of a five-year period of military and political hegemony in Germany. The painter Antoine Jean Gros, who painted this scene, was commissioned by Napoleon to paint battle scenes from his various campaigns and rose to become one of the most highly prized and honored painters of the Napoleonic era.

### Source

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Source: Oil painting by Antoine Jean Gros, undated. Musée National des Chateaux de Versailles et de Trianon.

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