

## The Republic in crisis: revolutions, annexation and Restoration (1707-1815) — overview and summary

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The Genevan eighteenth century was a century of prosperity and of conflict. While the Fabrique exported its watches across Europe and the capitalists placed their funds in Paris and London, the Republic was shaken by repeated political crises, pitting the oligarchy of the councils against the citizens and bourgeois, and then against the natifs and the habitants who were excluded from political rights. These crises drew the intervention of the neighbouring powers, drove many Genevans into exile and culminated in the revolution of 1792, the Genevan Terror of 1794 and the annexation by France in 1798. After fifteen years of French rule, the Restoration of 1813 opened the way to Geneva's entry into the Swiss Confederation in 1815. This chapter retraces that sequence and draws from it the lessons for the financial centre, whose political stability would become, in the nineteenth century, one of its principal selling points.

### 1 In five sentences

1. In the eighteenth century, the Republic of Geneva was shaken by repeated crises between the oligarchy of the councils, the citizens and bourgeois and the natifs, which gave rise to mediations and foreign interventions.
2. The revolution of 1782, crushed by France, Bern and Sardinia, drove many Genevans into exile, among them Étienne Clavière, and demonstrated the vulnerability of a small republic under foreign guarantee.
3. The revolution of 1792 established political equality, but the radicalisation of 1794, the economic crisis and the depreciation of the French annuities impoverished the city.
4. Annexed by France in 1798, Geneva became the chef-lieu of the département du Léman, retained some of its institutions and

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experienced economic decline, while bankers of Genevan origin took part in the financial reconstruction of France.

5. Restored in 1813, Geneva entered the Confederation in 1815, obtained a territory contiguous with Switzerland and benefited from Swiss neutrality, which would become one of the foundations of its financial centre.

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