

Yes, Napoleon was a Great Leader

Source 1

[Napoleon's Proclamation to His Troops in Italy \(March-April 1796\)](#)

You have won battles without cannon, crossed rivers without bridges, made forced marches without shoes, camped without brandy and often without bread. Soldiers of liberty, only republican phalanxes [infantry troops] could have endured what you have endured. Soldiers, you have our thanks! The grateful *Patrie* [nation] will owe its prosperity to you. . . .

. . . Undoubtedly the greatest obstacles have been overcome; but you still have battles to fight, cities to capture, rivers to cross. Is there one among you whose courage is abating? No. . . . All of you are consumed with a desire to extend the glory of the French people; all of you long to humiliate those arrogant kings who dare to contemplate placing us in fetters; all of you desire to dictate a glorious peace, one which will indemnify the *Patrie* for the immense sacrifices it has made; all of you wish to be able to say with pride as you return to your villages, "I was with the victorious army of Italy!"

Friends, I promise you this conquest; but there is one condition you must swear to fulfill—to respect the people whom you liberate, to repress the horrible pillaging committed by scoundrels incited by our enemies. Otherwise you would not be the liberators of the people; you would be their scourge. . . . Plunderers will be shot without mercy; already, several have been. . . .

Peoples of Italy, the French army comes to break your chains; the French people is the friend of all peoples; approach it with confidence; your property, your religion, and your customs will be respected.

Source 2

[Napoleon surrounded by scientists and students in Egypt, Léon Cogniet, C. 1831](#)



Source 3

[“Napoleon’s Account of the Internal Situation in France, 1804”](#)

A plot conceived by an implacable government was about to replunge France into the abyss of civil war and anarchy. The discovery of this horrible crime stirred all France profoundly, and anxieties that had scarcely been calmed again awoke. Experience has taught that a divided power in the state is impotent and at odds with itself. It was generally felt that if power was delegated for short periods only it was so uncertain as to discourage any prolonged undertakings or wide-reaching plans. If vested in an individual for life, it would lapse with him, and after him would prove a source of anarchy and discord. It was clearly seen that for a great nation the only salvation lies in hereditary power, which can alone assure a continuous political life which may endure for generations, even for centuries.

Source 4

[Memoirs of Madame de Remusat- Napoleon's Appeal \(1880\)](#)

I can understand how it was that men worn out by the turmoil of the Revolution, and afraid of that liberty which had long been associated with death, looked for repose under the dominion of an able ruler on whom fortune was seemingly revolved to smile. I can conceive that they regarded his elevation as a degree of destiny and fondly believed that in the irrevocable they could find peace. I may confidently assert that those persons believed quite sincerely that Bonaparte, whether as consul or emperor, would exert his authority to oppose the intrigue of faction and would save us from the perils of anarchy.

None dared to utter the word "republic," so deeply had the Terror stained that name; and the government of the Directory had perished in the contempt with which its chiefs were regarded. The return of the Bourbons could only be brought about by the aid of a revolution; and the slightest disturbance terrified the French people, in whom enthusiasm of every kind seemed dead. Besides, the men in whom they had trusted had one after the other deceived them; and as, this time, they were yielding to force, they were at least certain that they were not deceiving themselves.

Source 5

[Concordat of 1801](#)

The Government of the French Republic recognizes that the Roman, Catholic and Apostolic religion is the religion of the great majority of French citizens.

His Holiness likewise recognizes that this same religion has derived and in this moment again expects the greatest benefit and grandeur from the establishment of the Catholic worship in France and from the personal profession of it which the Consuls of the Republic make.

In consequence, after this mutual recognition, as well for the benefit of religion as for the maintenance of internal tranquility, they have agreed as follows:

1. The Catholic, Apostolic and Roman religion shall be freely exercised in France: its worship shall be public, and in conformity with the police regulations which the Government shall deem necessary for the public tranquility.

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2. A new circumscription of the French dioceses shall be made by the Holy See in concert with the Government...

... 4. The First Consul of the Republic shall make appointments, within the three months which shall follow the publication of the bull of His Holiness, to the archbishoprics and bishoprics of the new circumscription. His Holiness shall confer the canonical institution, following the forms established in relation to France before the change of Government.

5. The nominations to the bishoprics which shall be vacant in the future shall likewise be made by the First Consul, and the canonical institution shall be given by the Holy See. in conformity with the preceding article.

6. Before entering upon their functions, the bishops shall take directly, at the hands of the First Consul, the oath of fidelity which was in use before the change of Government, expressed in the following terms:

"I swear and promise to God, upon the Holy Scriptures, to remain in obedience and fidelity to the Government established by the constitution of the French Republic. I also promise not to have any intercourse, nor to assist by any counsel, nor to support any league, either within or without, which is inimical to the public tranquility; and if, within my diocese or elsewhere, I learn that anything to the prejudice of the State is being contrived, I will make it known to the Government."

Source 6

[The Napoleonic Code \(non-pdf excerpt found here, emphasis on marriage and women\)](#)

Of the Publication, Effect, and Application of the Laws in General

1. The laws are executory throughout the whole French territory, by virtue of the promulgation thereof made by the First Consul. They shall be executed in every part of the Republic, from the moment at which their promulgation can have been known. The promulgation made by the First Consul shall be taken to be known in the department which shall be the seat of government, one day after the promulgation; and in each of the other departments, after the expiration of the same interval augmented by one day for every ten myriameters (about twenty ancient leagues) between the town in which the promulgation shall have been made, and the chief place of each department.
2. The law ordains for the future only; it has no retrospective operation.
3. The laws of police and public security bind all the inhabitants of the territory. Immovable property, although in the possession of foreigners, is governed by the French law. The laws relating to the condition and privileges of persons govern Frenchmen, although residing in a foreign country.

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4. Private agreements must not contravene the laws which concern public order and good morals.

Book I: Of Persons

Title I: Of the Enjoyment and Privation of Civil Rights

1. The exercise of civil rights is independent of the quality of citizen, which is only acquired and preserved conformably to the constitutional law.
2. Every Frenchman shall enjoy civil rights.

Source 7

[Napoleon in Exile, on the Napoleonic Code](#)

“My glory is not that I won forty battles and dictated the law to kings... Waterloo wipes out the memory of all my victories... But what will be wiped out by nothing and will live forever is my Civil Code.”

Source 8

[Was Napoleon the true progenitor of the European Union? Berfois article](#)

“We need,” he told his former police minister, Joseph Fouché, “a European law code, a European high court, a single currency, the same weights and measures, the same laws. I must make all the peoples of Europe into a single people, and Paris, the capital of the world.” The French emperor had not previously expressed such vaulting ambitions, but as his empire swelled, he came to believe he could bring the continent a degree of unity that it had not known since the fall of Rome. After falling from power himself in 1815, he frequently referred back to these ambitions, and lamented his failure to create an enduring European superstate. Was Napoleon, and not the shrewd post–World War II diplomat Jean Monnet, the true progenitor of the European Union?

Source 9

[“We’re Still Living in the Age of Napoleon” Washington Post article](#)

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, the German philosopher who popularized the idea of the “zeitgeist,” saw Napoleon as its embodiment, as “history on horseback.” He reinvented military tactics through his campaigning and battles, broke Europe’s old

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feudal order with his conquests of swaths of the continent and, depending on one's 19th-century convictions, died a romantic world hero or as a doomed tyrant, consumed by [insatiable hubris and self-regard](#). To this day, myriad nations can trace their legal codes to Napoleonic edicts, myriad academics can locate the origins of their disciplines in [Napoleon's ambitious study of Egypt](#), and myriad people who are short of stature can get [accused of harboring his fiery temper](#).

Everywhere you look, we inhabit a world that, in some sense, Napoleon helped bequeath. He "is nearly synonymous with the spread of the modern bureaucratic state, not only the institutions themselves, but the modern outlook that goes with them: meritocracy, liberal property rights, public service and equality before the law," Everett Rummage, creator of "[The Age of Napoleon](#)" podcast, told Today's WorldView. "In much of Europe, Napoleon's armies were the force that smashed feudalism and ushered in the turbulent, dynamic 19th century," Rummage added. "Those countries he didn't conquer were forced to emulate French methods to survive the onslaught. Napoleon was a harbinger of the modern world, with all its terrors and abuses, but also all its progress and possibilities."

Source 10

[Napoleon I on his Imperial Throne](#)

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No, Napoleon was not a Great Leader

Source 1

[On 19 Brumaire An VIII \(10th November 1799\), Bonaparte made a proclamation to the French people. This translation of his speech featured in the Annual Register for the year 1799, published in London in 1801.](#)

Proclamation of General Buonaparte (sic).

Nov. 10, eleven o'clock at night.

On my return to Paris, I found a division reigning amongst all the constituted authorities. There was no agreement but on this single point — that the constitution was half destroyed, and could by no means effect the salvation of our liberties. All the parties came to me, confided to me their designs, unveiled their secrets, and demanded my support. I refused to be a man of any party.

[...]Frenchmen! you will recognize, without doubt, in this conduct, the zeal of a soldier of liberty, and of a citizen devoted to the republic. The ideas of preservation, protection, and freedom, immediately resumed their places on the dispersion of the faction who wished to oppress the councils, and who, in making themselves the most odious of men, never cease to be the most contemptible.

(Signed) BUONAPARTE.

Source 2

[Gerard, Napoleon I in his Coronation Robes](#)



Source 3

CHAPTER VI.

Of the respective Rights and Duties of Married Persons.

212. Married persons owe to each other fidelity, succour, assistance.
213. The husband owes protection to his wife, the wife obedience to her husband.
214. The wife is obliged to live with her husband, and to follow him to every place where he may judge it convenient to reside: the husband is obliged to receive her, and to furnish her with every thing necessary for the wants of life, according to his means and station.

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215. The wife cannot plead in her own name, without the authority of her husband, even though she should be a public trader, or non-communicant, or separate in property.

218. If the husband refuse to authorize his wife to plead in her own name, the judge may give her authority.

Of second Marriages.

228. A woman cannot contract a new marriage until ten months have elapsed from the dissolution of the preceding marriage

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Source 4

[From the Letters of Napoleon I, 1801-1806](#)

To Fouché, June 1, 1805, Head of the Ministry of Police

I would like newspaper editors [to have] enough sense not to publish news harmful to the nation. The attention of the papers ought to be directed toward attacking England— English fashions, English customs, English literature, the English constitution.

To Fouché, May 7, 1806, Head of the Ministry of Police

A fourth volume of Millot (a French author) has just been published, containing all kinds of ridiculous nonsense and harmful to the glory of our arms. It is the height of indecency that such an ignoramus should write in the grand manner about contemporary events. Have the book suppressed.

Source 5

[Goya, The 3rd of May](#)



Source 6

Minard's Flow Map of Napoleon's Russian Campaign of 1812

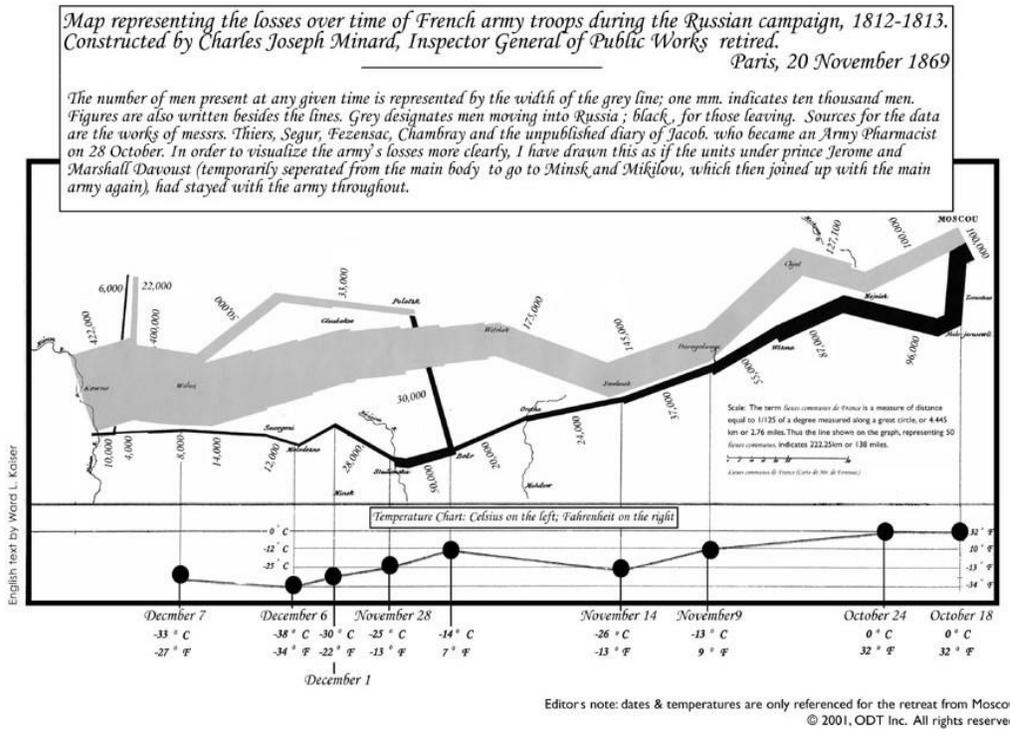
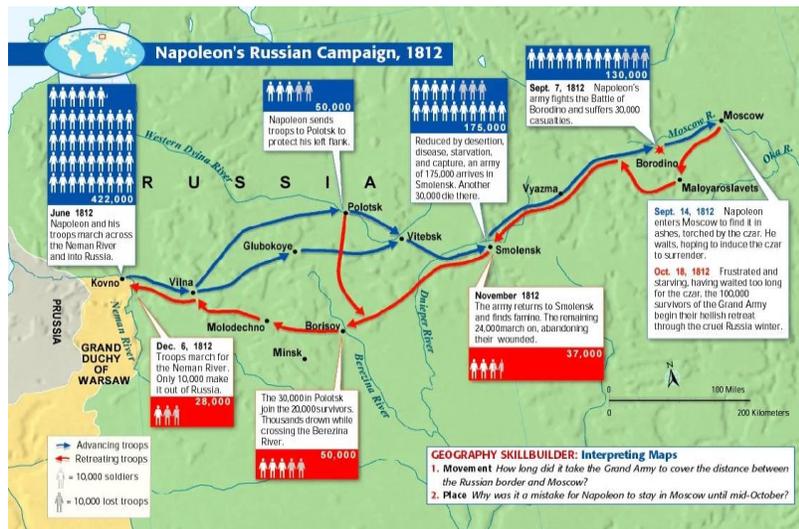
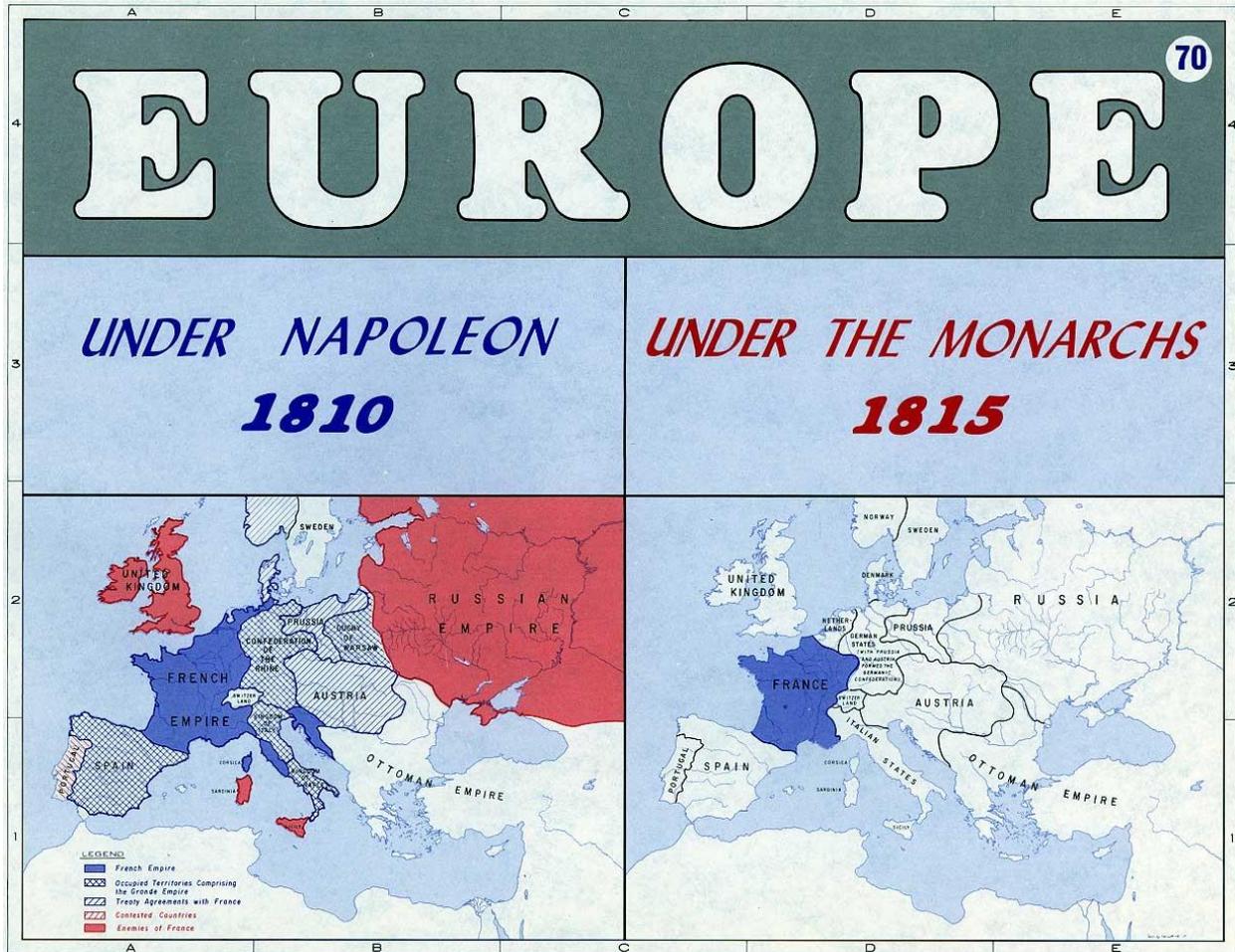


Figure 58. Minard's map of Napoleon's Russian campaign. This graphic has been translated from French to English and modified to most effectively display the temperature data.



Source 7

Maps of the Empire



Source 8

[David, The Emperor Napoleon in his Study in the Tuileries, 1812](#)



Source 9

[The Legacy of the French Empire and Enslaved Labor in Haiti](#)

For years, I refused to visit France, although I have many relatives living there. I did not want to visit a nation which had kidnapped and enslaved my African ancestors.

The slaves of France's richest colony, Saint Domingue, spent 13 bloody years fighting for freedom from chattel slavery and colonial domination. They formalized their hard-won independence on Jan. 1, 1804. The bourgeoisies of Europe and the newly-born United States of America diplomatically shunned and economically embargoed the new upstart nation of Haiti because of the example it set for the slaves whom they still owned and trafficked.

A Haitian college student's account of the impact of the slavery on the people and nation of Haiti published August 22, 2022, in [www. haitiliberte.com](http://www.haitiliberte.com)

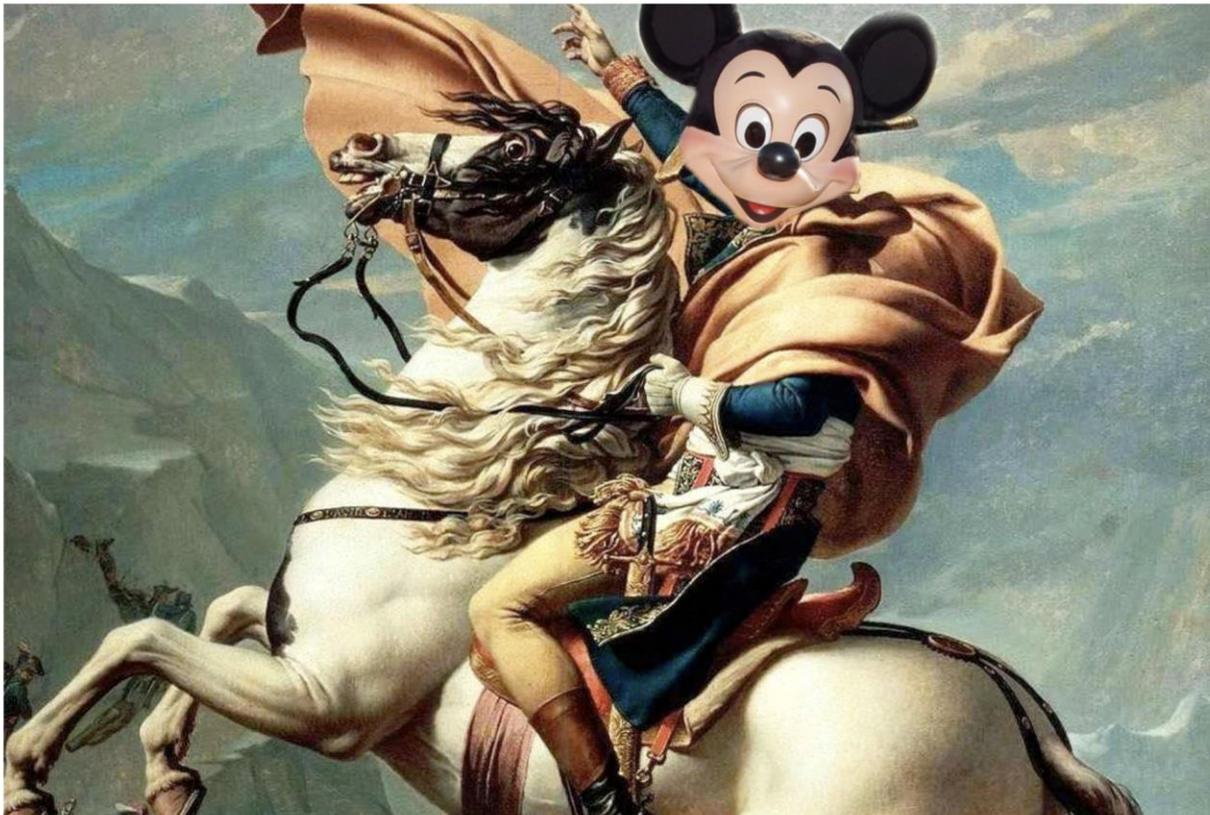
Source 10

[Napoleonland](#)

A theme park based on Napoleon's accomplishments which satirizes him as a leader.

MEDIA

The emperor's new theme park



By Rebecca Davis

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17 Feb 2012

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Disneyland Paris is so last century. If a French MP gets his way, tourists may be flocking to Paris to visit 'Napoleonland', a theme park celebrating the 19th century emperor. By REBECCA DAVIS.