



Napoleon Bonaparte

*Friend or Foe of
the Revolution?*

Emperor of France

- **Joined army of new government at age 16 after completing military school**
- **At age 24, he defended French government from a rebellion by the royalists**
- **Popular military leader in France; he won battles against European monarchies (Austria, Sardinia, Italy)**
- **Became a general, was put in charge of the military, then became the 1st consul which replaced the Directory**
 - ⇒ **this is known as a coup d'état: a sudden seizure of power**
- **With his military & domestic successes, Napoleon had the public's support to become emperor; at coronation, Napoleon seizes the crown from the Pope's hands and crowns himself, arrogantly showing that he thinks himself more powerful than the Church.**

Defender of the Revolution

- **Anxious for stability and peace, a vote is held which approves a new constitution which gave enormous powers to Napoleon**
- **Napoleon kept and enforced many of the changes of the revolution such as :**
 - **Fairer taxes, a national bank, stable currency, more loans; this resulted in a more stable economy**
 - **Promotions based on merit, not status; fired corrupt officials; created public schools; created a code of laws; this resulted in boosting the public's confidence in their government**
 - **Recognized Catholicism as “faith of the Frenchmen,” signed compromise with Pope, and retained seized church lands; this resulted in satisfaction for the peasants, the bourgeoisie, and the Church**

The Code of Napoleon

- **A comprehensive system of laws**
- **Sacrificed individual liberty and rights in favor of authority & order (state more important than individual)**
- **Ensured equality, but freedom of speech and press was restricted**
- **Allowed freedom of religion but acknowledged Catholicism as “faith of the Frenchmen.”**
- **Women’s rights limited (could no longer have right to sell property)**
- **Restored slavery in the French colonies**

Conqueror of Europe

- **Wanted a massive French empire--including Louisiana, Florida, and West Indies, but slaves were difficult to control & France needed money so Napoleon sells “Louisiana Purchase” to US in 1803**
- **Napoleon had already annexed Netherlands, Italy, and Switzerland**
- **By 1812 Napoleon controlled most of Europe with their border extending all the way to Russia; the only countries free from Napoleon’s grasp were Britain, Ottoman Empire, Portugal, and Sweden**
- **French Empire is huge, but this causes increased nationalism in countries ruled by Napoleon & thus increased threats to Napoleon’s power**

*Napoleon's Empire
Collapses*

Napoleon's 3 Costly Mistakes

Napoleon's love of power both raised him to great heights as well as caused his downfall. This is true of many leaders throughout history.

- 1. Continental System:** In order to make continental Europe more self-sufficient and destroy Britain, Napoleon ordered a blockade against England. England's navy was stronger than France's though, so Britain was able to defy France. This embarrassed & weakened Napoleon.
- 2. The Peninsular War:** Because Portugal was ignoring the Continental System, Napoleon sent troops through Spain to fight Portugal. Spain was incensed at this invasion, especially when Napoleon put his own brother on the Spanish throne. Also, Spain resisted France's state-controlled church; they were and still are a fiercely Catholic country. Spain fought back with guerillas whom Napoleon couldn't defeat and who also weakened his empire.
- 3. Invasion of Russia:** Because Russia refuses to obey the C.S., Napoleon invades Russia; Russian soldiers practice a scorched-earth policy; Napoleon takes Moscow but Russia refuses to surrender; Napoleon waits too long & then retreats in the winter; Russian soldiers attack the vulnerable army; only 10,000 soldiers survive.

Napoleon's Downfall

The Agony. . . . Napoleon's enemies were quick to take advantage of Napoleon's vulnerability; Britain, Russia, Prussia, & Sweden make an alliance; Austria soon joins → Napoleon's armies are crushed; Napoleon wants to continue to fight but his generals refuse; Napoleon surrenders; The coalition gives Napoleon a small pension and exiles him to Elba off the coast of Italy

And the Ecstasy. France puts King Louis XVI's brother on the throne, but peasants aren't happy about this. Napoleon sees an opportunity and goes for it. He escapes from Elba and returns to a huge welcome back party in France. Within days, Napoleon is emperor again.

Nothing Lasts Forever. . . . The rest of Europe is quick to respond. In 1815, the British army gathers its troops in Waterloo, Belgium, and Napoleon attacks. This defeat ends Napoleon's comeback which lasted 100 days. This time, Euro's ship Napoleon off to St. Helena, a tiny island in the South Atlantic. There he lived quietly until he died of a stomach ailment.

The Congress of Vienna

After Napoleon, Europe felt the need for stability, security, and peace. They met in Vienna for eight months to try to achieve this.

These meetings were attended by “the Big Five”: Prussia, Russia, Austria, England, and France. The representatives were distrustful of democracy & sought to undo the reforms of the French Revolution. They wanted stability, not change, and thus acted as reactionaries (go back in time).

3 Goals of the Congress of Vienna:

1. Prevent future French aggression by surrounding France with strong countries
2. Restore a balance of power within Europe so no country could threaten others
3. Restore Europe’s aristocracy, including monarchs to their thrones
 - Returned monarchs to thrones, but in France, King Louis XVIII was tempered by a constitution

Legacy of Congress of Vienna

- A victory for conservatives, but France and Great Britain now had constitutional monarchies.
- Eastern Europe (Russia, Austria, Prussia) were more conservative and felt extremely threatened by French ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity.
- Although no true democracy existed in Europe, the revolution's ideals and principals paved the way for changes in the early 1800s such as taxation and property ownership. Old ideas of government were dying and democracy and justice were increasing.
- Efforts to increase stability and maintain a balance of power diminished power of France but increased England and Prussia; nationalism, extreme pride in your country, grew in countries controlled by foreign powers
- Peace lasted until 1853 for The Big Five; for many other nations, until 1914