

The Rise and Fall of Napoleon



The Directory



- Established by the French Constitution of 1795
- Made up of a legislative assembly and an executive branch with five directors
- Lasted from 1795 – 1799
- Had many problems:
 - Inefficient
 - Corrupt
 - Removed price controls which led to a drastic rise in prices and revolts in Paris
- Army continued to fight for “liberty, equality and fraternity” across Europe

Napoleon's Beginnings



- Born in Corsica in 1769
- Attended French military academy
- Rose through the ranks
- Led French troops to victory of the British at the Battle of Toulon
- Broke up Paris mob with “grapeshot”
- Gained attention of the Directory
- Was made general at age 27

Early Victories and Defeats



- Several victories over the Austrians, leading to their withdrawal
- Invasion of Egypt and loss at Battle of the Nile (Admiral Nelson)

Virtual Dictatorship



- With help of loyal troops and two directors he overthrew the government in 1799
- Drew up another constitution (4th since revolution)
 - Napoleon named First Consul
- By age 30, was virtual dictator of France
- 1802: Made himself First Consul for life, approved by popular vote
- 1804: Proclaimed himself “Emperor of the French”, again endorsed by popular vote

Domestic Policy



- **Major Reforms:**

- Napoleonic Code:

- ✦ Brought together many reforms of the revolution into a unified legal system
- ✦ Has influenced French law to the present day
- ✦ Based on Roman Law (Paternalistic)

- National Bank of France

- All citizens must pay taxes

- System of lycées

- Combined reform and tradition in areas of religion

The Height of Napoleon's Power



- 1807-1812
- Empire stretched from France to the borders of Russia
- Other nations (Spain, Italy, Confederation of the Rhine) were satellite states
- Values of the revolution were spread throughout Europe



The Continental System



- Was unable to defeat Great Britain
- 1805: Invasion force was defeated by Nelson, at Trafalgar
- Chose instead to blockade Britain – told all European nations to stop trading with GB
- GB declared any ship heading to France would have to pay a tax to GB first
- War of 1812
- In the end, the system backfired

European Nationalism



- **Opposition to Napoleon grew:**
 - Resented paying taxes to France and serving in Napoleon's army
 - Wanted to restore their own traditions
- **Spain:**
 - Guerrilla warfare 1808 – 1812
- **Prussia:**
 - Rebuilt army, waited for chance to strike

Fall of an Emperor



- Russia broke with continental system
- Napoleon marched Grand Army (500,000) all the way to Moscow
- Defeated by winter and attacks from Prussians, Brits, Austrians and Russians
- March 1814:
 - Allies captured Paris
 - Napoleon abdicated and went into exile on the island of Elba

Fall of an Emperor



- Napoleon replaced by Louis XVIII
 - Kept many of the changes including Napoleonic Code
- Émigrés returned wanting revenge
- Napoleon returns for 100 days in confusion
- Soundly defeated by an army of Brits and Prussians at the battle of Waterloo, Belgium in 1815
- Napoleon exiled to the island of St. Helena, died in 1821