NAPOLEON BONAPARTE AND EUROPE [1799-1815]

The history of France and Europe after the 1789 French revolution was dominated by the personality of Napoleon Bonaparte. He was born at Ajaccio on the island of Corsica in Genoa (Italy) in 1769. By birth Napoleon was an Italian born to Italian parents. He only became a French citizen because Corsica was annexed by France from Genoa (Italy) a year before he was born.

Napoleon belonged to a family of 13 children 8 of whom survived death. He lived a poor life during his childhood but was lucky that in 1779 he was sent to the military academy of Briene and later in 1784 he joined the military school of Paris where he excelled in military science and mathematics. Because of his good performance in military science, he won a commission as a sub lieutenant of artillery at the age of 16.

While at the military school of Paris he mixed with the children of the nobles and thus felt the inferiority complex as a commoner. That is why he had an unhappy life as a student and was always moody, penny less but studious. That is why one of his teachers remarked that “the young star is made of granite but there is a volcano inside”. He spent most of his time reading historical literature, philosophical writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau and read war novels; he was a close associate of Maximillian Robespierre. These prepared him for his future career.

The rise of Napoleon to fame and power is one of the most astonishing in history. From a humble background, Napoleon ruled France and much of Europe for 15 years. During the French revolution, he was a member of the Jacobins club at the rank of a colonel. He proved himself as an able soldier and a great leader for example in 1793 he was entrusted with the expulsion of the British force which was aiding a royalist rising at port Toulon at the age of 25 he was promoted to the rank of brigadier.

In 1795 he saved the convention from a royalist insurrection commonly known as the “whiff of grape shot”, in 1796 he saved the directory government from the Babeuf plot, in the same year he led the military campaign against Austria in Italy (the Italian campaign) and in 1798 he carried out the Egyptian campaign.

On return he found the directory government divided among its directors and he carried out his coup detat of Brumaire in 1799. He became the first consul and in 1801 became consul for life. In 1804 he declared France an empire and ruled France until 1815 when he was overthrown by the allied powers.
FACTORS FOR THE RISE OF NAPOLEON TO POWER IN FRANCE

The role or effects of the French revolution of 1789 greatly contributed to Napoleon’s rise to power in 1799;

The French revolution overthrew Louis XVI and the ancient regime hence bringing the bourbon rule to an end in France. The overthrow of Louis XVI and the bourbon regime created a political vacuum that was filled by napoleon Bonaparte.

The revolution abolished the hated social classes and the privileges that had been promoted by the regime. The revolution opened chances to peasants, the idea of equality and promotion for all was enhanced by the revolution which helped a common man like napoleon to rise to power.

The revolution also brought the idea of career open to talent under which any person of ability or talent would earn promotion irrespective of their social status and origin. Napoleon was a man of rare abilities and talent which he used to rise to power in 1799.

The revolution also led to the scarcity of artillery officers because of the death or running to exile of officers of noble origin during the revolution. Napoleon benefited from this scarcity by rising through military ranks first as a brigadier and then to the rank of a general within a short period of time. His rise to such high ranks in the army helped him to rise to power.

The French revolution also created revolutionary wars and campaigns in which napoleon participated as a commander e.g. He commanded the Italian and Egyptian campaigns in which napoleon and the revolutionary army brought glory to France. The campaigns exposed napoleon’s heroics and greatness as a soldier. When he organized a coup in 1799 he was massively supported by the army and the population hence his rise to power.

The French revolution also led to the rise of weak governments such as the convention and directory which were characterized by a lot of inefficiencies which left the masses discontented longing for a savior who came in the name of napoleon.
The revolution also created a situation of fear and insecurity of property and needed people to safeguard the revolutionary gains. Napoleon was seen as the right person to protect the revolutionary achievements hence his rise to power.

The revolution ended monarchical rule which was hereditary and changed the means of accessing political power which ended the dominance of the bourbon and opened political space to commoners like Napoleon.

His association with leading revolutionary leaders such as Robespierre, Carnot, Barras, brought him closer to the center of political power in France thus helping his rise to power. E.g. Carnot secured him the command of the Italian campaign which was a stepping stone for his rise to power.

QN 1.

To what extent was the French revolution of 1789 responsible for the rise to power of Napoleon Bonaparte in France?

QN 2.

"Without the French revolution of 1789 Napoleon would have died a common man" discuss.

The weakness of the directory government.

The directory government rose to power after the reign of terror in October 1795 and lasted up to 1799 when it was overthrown by Napoleon.

It was characterized by the following weaknesses.

The directors were men of mediocre talent and little political experience, their government was inefficient characterized by corruption and bribery, government failed to solve the challenges of the time which left the French discontented. The political vacuum created by this government needed an efficient leader who came in the person of Napoleon.

The directory government was extravagant in public expenditure. It set up a large army which needed a lot of money for maintenance which led to over taxation of the masses thus increasing discontent of the masses and unpopularity of the government.

The directory regime was characterized by insecurity as a result of internal revolts which led to hiring of Napoleon to suppress the revolts. This made Napoleon famous at home leading to his rise to power.

The same government was also faced with many external wars such as the Italian and Egyptian campaigns which were also commanded by Napoleon. These also exposed Napoleon’s military and leadership abilities thus helping his rise to power.

The directory government failed to control inflation, unemployment and other social-economic challenges. The government presided over a poor economy with low levels of
production, food shortages and high levels of poverty which led to discontent among the masses and favored Napoleon's rise to power.

The directors were divided and lacked harmony among themselves as they disagreed very often on minor issues which left their government weak.

Napoleon also befriended most of the directors such as Barras. Napoleon married Josephine, daughter of Barras with whom he was passionately in love. Josephine had useful aristocratic connections which helped Napoleon's rise to power. He was also a close friend to Abbey Sieyes and Lucien Bonaparte his brother who were members of this government and instrumental in his 1799 coup.

Loopholes in the directory government's constitution also caused its unpopularity. E.g. The constitution narrowed the franchise by increasing property qualification. This denied many French peasants their rights to vote or be voted to public offices. The government therefore lost its credibility among the masses hence paving the way for the rise of Napoleon to power.

The anti-religious policy of the directory made it unpopular in France. The directors implemented the civil constitution of the clergy, persecuted and imprisoned many non-juring priests. Napoleon overthrew them with the promise of reconciling the state and the church.

The directory government exclusively promoted the interests of the middle class who were concerned chiefly with personal gains than those of the poor masses. This increased hatred for the directory from the masses who welcomed Napoleon.

The weakness in its foreign policy led to the rise of Napoleon. E.g. French forces were defeated by a British fleet in the Egyptian campaign which made the government unpopular thus helping to exploit such a weakness.

QN.

To what extent did the weakness of the directory government contribute to the rise of Napoleon to power in France?

Napoleon's military victories.

As a soldier and commander of the army Napoleon participated in many wars or battles both at home and abroad in which he registered military victory and therefore became famous. He succeeded in suppressing many internal revolts against the directory government such as the royalist rising in Toulon, the Babeuf plot, the royalist rising against the convention (whiff of grape shot). He also commanded the Italian and Egyptian campaigns successfully. All these victories brought glory to France, portrayed Napoleon as an efficient leader and a hero. When he organized a coup in 1799 he was massively supported hence his rise to power.

Napoleon's personal ambition.
No doubt napoleon was a man of overwhelming ambitions. His ambitions can be traced from his childhood when he dreamt of liberating Corsica France and becoming the king of Corsica, his ambitions led him into the Italian and Egyptian campaigns, they made him tireless in activity and that’s why he slept for two hours only. His ambitions made him ruthless in his pursuit for power when he dreamt of building a French empire and use kings as his officials.

Napoleon’s luck or fortune.

He was lucky to have been born a Frenchman and to have survived childhood. The island of Corsica had come into French possession a year before napoleon was born making him a French man by birth to qualify for any public office.

In 1792, napoleon was dismissed from the army after overstaying his leave but he was lucky to be recalled in 1793 due to the scarcity of artillery officers hence maximizing his potential.

He was lucky to receive education with sons of nobles when he was actually a peasant. It was a rare chance for a peasant to receive education before the outbreak of the revolution.

He was lucky to escape the guillotine after Robespiere’s downfall in 1794 yet napoleon was his close associate, he was just imprisoned and later released.

He was lucky to elude / dodge nelson’s fleet when going to Egypt and when leaving Egypt when he left his army stranded.

He was also lucky that the friends he had were influential in the French politics such barras, Sieyes, Carnot etc. and this made him famous.

When he carried a coup in 1799, he had nervous anxieties and fainted and failed to address the assembly but he was lucky that his brother Lucien was there who swore to stab the heart of his brother if he did not keep the gains and interests of the French masses.

He was lucky that a revolution broke out at the time it did to give him all the possible opportunities.

He was lucky that the revolutionary governments were weak and unpopular and could thus be toppled without anybody supporting them such as the directory government.

Napoleon’s character and personality.

He was intelligent, well read, educated and very ambitious for example, he was able to become a general at the age of 30. He was an opportunist in that things came at the time they were needed and as an opportunist, he was quick to exploit them to his advantage. He could even change opportunity into action very quickly.

He was courageous, confident, brave a man with extra ordinary brain, very resourceful and very energetic for example in war, napoleon’s presence in the battle field was
equivalent to 40000 soldiers. He also had a lot of determination and it was as a result of his determination that he took up a disorganized army to the Italian and Egyptian campaigns against the strongest.

He was a diplomat too, he would crown his victories with peace such as the treaty of compoformio after he had defeated the Austrians in his Italian campaign.

He was also a genius and foresighted which explains why he kept aloof from the directory government knowing its weaknesses would ruin his future plans, he also abandoned his plans of liberating Corsica and instead took part in the French revolution which gave him a lot of opportunities for his rise to power.

Napoleon’s education also contributed to his rise to power, he was widely read especially in revolutionary literature of great philosophers like jean Jacques Rousseau, he also studied maths, political science and history. He was well versed with a lot of knowledge about the art war and peace. He also greatly understood world politics having read the constitutions of many countries like Britain, turkey, Switzerland and others which sharpened his mind and helped him to rise to power.

The support of the army. Napoleon was a military genius who rose to higher ranks in the army within a short period of time. While at military academies of Brienne and Paris he made friends who supported him as the leader of the army in the various assignments. It was this army which gave him support when he organized the coup of Brumaire in 1799.

Napoleon also had strong oratory abilities ie power of speech (he was a gifted speaker). He had a careful selection of words and powerful memory which impressed his followers both the soldiers and French civilians. For example while preparing for the Italian campaign he spoke and convinced the army when he said “you are badly fed and nearly naked – I am going to lead you to the most fertile plains in the world. You will find there great cities and rich provinces. You will find there honor, glory and wealth.”

Within a few weeks of invading Italy he defeated the Austrian army and forced them to sign the treaty of campo-formio and liberated the Italians to whom he said “people of Italy if the French army comes to break the chains of bondage, greet it with confidence your property, religion and customs will be protected." Such convincing language won napoleon support of the army and the masses leading to his rise to power.

Napoleon’s humble background also provided him with the determination and courage to rise to power against all odds. He came from a poor family of 13 children 8 of whom survived childhood. While at school he was despised by his school mates and taken to be a social misfit. He was penniless, friendless and had one meal a day which made him hardened and determined to break the chains of poverty. He welcomed the French revolution with open hands during which he became a disciple of Jean Jacque Rousseau.

The annexation of Corsica, the Mediterranean island from Genoa by France in 1768. Napoleon was born a year after France annexed Corsica island from the Italian republic of Genoa which made him a French citizen by birth though he was an Italian by descent.
He was therefore eligible to hold any public office in France, was able to benefit from French military training thus providing him the platform to rise to power.

The technological and scientific advancement during that time also conditioned his rise to power. This was a period of industrial growth which brought advancement in transport and military hardware. These simplified organization and execution of military adventures from which Napoleon benefited as an artillery officer his rise to power.

The role played by Carlos Bonaparte, Napoleon’s father also conditioned his rise to power in 1799. His father forged a noble origin hence enabling his son Napoleon to join the military academy of Brienne on a noble scholarship, where he excelled in military science and math, later joining the Paris academy where he graduated as a second lieutenant in the French army. Had it not been for his father Napoleon would not have remained a common Frenchman.

The role played by Lucien Bonaparte. Lucien was his brother and president of the council of 500, he used his position to influence the assembly to accept Napoleon when he said “here is the man you have been waiting for, he will respect you, and he will respect the revolutionary gains. He is my brother. If he fails, I will stab him in the chest”. He also saved Napoleon from failure when he was beaten hence saving the coup from failure.

Napoleon’s association with influential people like Maximillian Robespierre and other army officers helped him to rise to power in a way that they helped him to learn military skills, to be vibrant and appealing at political public speeches. Napoleon learnt and was able to win support from the masses by promising political, social and economic changes hence his rise to power.

Napoleon’s marriage to Josephine the daughter of Baras who was one of the directors in the directory government. This marriage gave him aristocratic connections and greatly elevated his status from a simple army officer to a son in law which gave him chance to lead military campaigns that made him popular hence his rise to power.

The military coup de ‘tat of Brumaire in 1799 through which Napoleon captured power from the directory government. The coup nearly failed and Napoleon nearly killed but he was saved by his brother and with the help of abbey Sieyes and Ducas Roger, Napoleon saved the coup hence his rise to power.

**NAPOLeON’S CONSOLIDATION OF POWER.**

After the successful coup of Brumaire, Napoleon devised means of strengthening himself on the throne so he adopted a number of policies which included the following.

He abolished the directory government and established a new government called the consulate. He became the first consul and gave himself all the powers to appoint and dismiss government officers. He also had powers to make war or peace though there were other consuls such as Ducos Roger and Abbey Sieyes.
Another step was to organize elections for the legislative assembly. He drew and prepared the list of candidates to stand for elections. These candidates of his choice would help him control France and in the end Napoleon surrounded himself with friends who supported him and his policies.

After putting the legislative assembly in place, he abolished the old constitution and started the process of making a new constitution. Again Napoleon dominated the process of making laws. The constitution allowed him to rule for two years but later he turned against the constitution and extended his term to four years then to ten years and finally made himself ruler for life and his position hereditary.

In 1804 through a referendum Napoleon changed the government from a consulate to an empire. He automatically became the emperor and crowned himself. He assumed the title of Emperor Napoleon I and became a complete dictator.

Napoleon also consolidated himself in power by using the French revolutionary ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity because these became the lasting symbols and gains of the French revolution.

He also set up a centralized system of administration by dividing the country into departments headed by prefects and also carried out other local divisions with all leaders answerable to him which helped him to control the country effectively thus consolidating himself in power.

Napoleon also adopted naked despotism by use of harsh methods of suppressing his opponents. Those who criticized him were dismissed from government; others were imprisoned, sent into exile or even killed.

He also employed spies in every sector and transformed France into a police state by establishing a strong police to deal with criminals. Efficient detectives kept Napoleon informed about what was transpiring in different parts of France hence eliminating or reducing internal and external enemies.

Above all he censored the press to reduce criticism. The number of newspapers reduced from 70 to only 4 in Paris by 1810 all under strict state control, for he was quoted saying "liberty is not for common people". Newsmen who wrote against Napoleon were either killed or exiled which scared many journalists who wanted to expose his weaknesses.

He reorganized the army by recruiting, training and equipping it. He used this army to maintain himself in power by using it to suppress rebellions and external enemies. He also used the army to fight wars of expansion and bring glory to France.

He also strengthened his stay in power by limiting the growth of intellectualism which would have resulted into opposition against him. He did this by banning the teaching of all liberal subjects such as history, literature, philosophy and political science.
He also transformed the French economy through improving trade relations, encouraging industrialization, improving commerce and agriculture. These gave a strong foundation for development and creation of employment to the French.

He also solved the long term problem between the state and the church by signing the concordat with the pope in which catholic religion became the religion of the majority in France and granted freedom of worship. This pleased many in France and strengthened his hold on power.

He practically contributed to the abolition of feudalism and serfdom in France through extensive land reforms thereby winning the loyalty of the peasants.

He was a patron of art and therefore restored and enlarged French palaces, beautified French city of Paris to become the leisure city of Europe eventually pleasing many glory seekers.

Napoleon`s principle of the legion of honor of 1802 that promoted hard work and patriotism created a big class of people of peasant origin who were loyal to him.

He carried out various education reforms which pleased many Frenchmen who had him at heart. His education reforms were aimed at producing citizens who were absolutely loyal to the state. He established many technical schools with the aim of improving French industrial sector. The University of France was founded with many academies which pleased many and strengthened his stay in power.

He emphasized the principle of equality by abolishing class divisions and their privileges thereby consolidating his reign among the peasants.

Napoleon also employed his relatives and friends in senior positions. It should be remembered that when he organized the coup, the assembly refused to accept his statement but his brother Lucien saved him. Therefore since then he depended on his relatives and friends in his administration as mayors, governors and kings.

By the treaty of Amiens of 1802 between France and Britain, Napoleon pleased many Frenchmen whose opinion was in favour of peace. By this treaty, Britain restored the French colonies she had captured from France and in return Britain retained Trinidad and Ceylon. This also allowed him to concentrate on domestic reorganization.

He also strove to reform the tax system that pleased many peasants and middle class. The old tax system that exploited the peasants and the middle class was replaced with a fair tax system that was based amount of wealth and not social background.

He improved roads, constructed bridges and canals all of which improved transport and communication in France hence capturing the attention of many.

He pleased the middle class by establishing the value of the French currency on gold standards; he also set up the national bank of France in Paris to regulate financial affairs and support industrial growth, established a trade advisory board and put in place other trade incentives.
He closed the chapter of republican violence and uprisings and put in place peace and stability without sacrificing the achievements of the revolutions.

Finally, he involved France in an aggressive policy. This was because majority of the Frenchmen wanted foreign glory. So he started by defeating the second coalition of Austria, Britain, Prussia and Russia which won him the support of the French hence consolidating himself in power.

**NAPOLEON'S RE-ORGANISATION / DOMESTIC REFORMS.**

Between 1800 and 1810, napoleon devoted his energies to the internal reorganization of France. He set to make the nation progressive and as a statesman, he gave France a number of reforms which survived even after his downfall. Some of the reforms made him to be referred to as a statesman or napoleon the great having fulfilled the expectations of the revolutionaries.

Napoleon and the Catholic Church (the concordat)

Napoleon was quick to realize that the majority of the French were Catholics whose feelings had been hurt by the French revolution. The revolution had created a big gap between the state and the church through the civil constitution of the clergy and confiscation of church property and the worship of reason. The directory government had also changed Sunday into a working day, all of which made the state and church bitter enemies.

Napoleon began by reconciling the church and state meanwhile his approach was that of a statesman as he said, “a state without a religion is like a ship / vessel without a campus “. He also said, “Religion is the cement of social order “. So in 1901 napoleon reached an agreement with the pope known as the concordat and the following were the contents of the concordat;

Catholic religion was recognized as the religion of the majority but not all Frenchmen.

Other religions were allowed to carry on their religious practices (freedom of worship was granted).

Church services / activities were to be supported by the state funds thereby maintaining the clergy as state servants.

Napoleon as 1st consul retained powers to appoint all high church officials such as bishops. Church meetings were to get state permission and napoleon would always have a state representative.

The pope also recognized the sale of church property / lands ie. those who had bought church land were to retain it.

The pope was not to interfere in the matters of the state. There was also to control elementary education.
With the friendship of the pope of Rome, Napoleon hoped to have the alliance of the church wherever his power extended. He had reconciled the church and the state which strengthened his position. He had captured the peasant's loyalty and also helped to restore social stability to a France that badly needed it at that time.

On the other hand however, the concordat annoyed the peasants who were not happy with the church control of elementary education. Staunch Catholics were not pleased by his failure to return the pope's influence in France. The revolutionaries were not satisfied with Napoleon's changes in the church as one general remarked, "the only thing missing at this ceremony is the million dead men who died to get rid of this nonsense.

Napoleon and education;

Before Napoleon came to power, the education system in France was disorganized and characterized by conflicts between the state and the church over its control. Napoleon's skills as a statesman were witnessed in his education reforms.

He established elementary and secondary schools and gave France a good foundation for the primary sector by giving scholarships to all without excluding the peasants. He built secondary schools, semi-military secondary schools, elementary schools that were left in the hands of the church. Secondary schools were set up in every commune controlled by the state where he encouraged the teaching of Maths, science, technical skills and military science.

In 1808, he founded the imperial university of Paris with 17 academies in different parts of France. The university was headed by a grandmaster appointed by Napoleon. It was expected to control the education system of France. He also uplifted the institute of France for higher studies and research. Technical education and research were intended to produce self-sustaining citizens and military education was to produce loyal and patriotic citizens.

However, fearful of parliamentary and legal French feelings, he passed the 1803 decree which banned the teaching of liberal subjects such as history, literature, political science and philosophy.

He was equally opposed to female or girl child education when he said, "I do not think we need to trouble ourselves with any plan of instruction for young females.... Public education is not suitable for them because they are never called upon to act in public. Manners are all in all to them and marriage is all they look to". This was a violation of the revolutionary principle of equality of all man.

He also under funded education by allocating a small fraction of the budget to the education sector and because of this many French children did not succeed in education.

Napoleon and the French legal system or law (code Napoleon);

The work which Napoleon was afterwards praised of was "code Napoleon". This was a clear and definite statement of the laws of France as they affected every citizen. It was
based on common sense and experience rather theory. Since 1789, the law had been in a constant state of confusion but with urgent demand and active assistance of Napoleon himself, a specially appointed committee of lawyers completed the immense task of codifying the law.

Code Napoleon covered a number of aspects such as the rights and duties of man, marriage and divorce, parenting, inheritance of property, religious tolerance, trial in public by open jury. The law had five codes namely the penal code, criminal code, commercial code, civil code and military code.

The code confirmed the right to private property, guaranteed private freedoms, equality before the law and unified the judicial system. It also abolished church and feudal laws.

However, Code Napoleon was criticized on a number of grounds; the family law made divorce more difficult causing family conflicts, sons were not allowed to marry under 25 years and girls under 21 years without the consent of their father. The code lowered the status of women and permitted a father to have his child temporarily imprisoned. It also retained the death penalty which was against the revolutionary spirit and above all it served to protect Napoleon's dictatorship.

Napoleon and the Legion of Honor;

Napoleon came to power on merit and through hard work and so he tried to open the door to men of ability and talent irrespective of their social status and origin/birth. He used the Legion of Honor to encourage hard work.

The Legion of Honor was a reward given to people for a distinguished service to the state and showed that he was committed to merit and the career open to talent. Honors were given to people who excelled in politics, art, music, military and civil service such as Marshal Marat who was a son of an inn keeper. Honors made Frenchmen to work hard so as to be rewarded as stated by Napoleon, “men are led by toys”.

To show concern for equality and hard work, Napoleon allowed the émigrés to return home but as common men so that they would make their contribution to the nation. Using the Legion of Honor, Napoleon's officers became the best in terms of efficiency which made him successful and great.

However, it's often said that the Legion of Honor created a class of privileged people equivalent to those of the ancient regime, rewards were mostly given to military officers and also promoted nepotism using his honors. However such a fact should be taken with caution because Napoleon's despotism was based on merit than the ancient regime which was based on birth.

Napoleon's reforms in industry and commerce;

Napoleon was also interested in the French industry and commerce having inherited a desperate situation, especially the financial crisis and most aspects in the economy that had declined. He set up the chamber of commerce and industry and the advisory board for the manufacturers, imposed high tariffs on imports to protect local goods. New cotton
machines were invented and factory laws were passed. As a result France witnessed a period of industrial development.

He is however criticized for having imposed high tariffs on imports which subjected the French to inferior home made goods. Heavy tariffs led to enmity with the neighbors.

Napoleon and local government;

The French revolution had created a lot of disorganization in local government in France. Napoleon tried to introduce reforms which became the basis of French administration even in modern time 8s.

Napoleon retained the revolutionary divisions of France – the departments headed by prefects. But he also created new divisions called arrondisements to replace the districts. The arrondisements were headed by sub-prefects. The arrondisements were further sub divided into communes headed by mayors.

Napoleon directly appointed the heads of these divisions and each division had local councils as advisers. Napoleon centralized his administration by appointing the ministers, prefects, sub-prefects and civil servants. In his reforms, napoleon gave France excellently chosen officials, which made France strong and united.

Napoleon came up with the consulate system of government where he appointed himself as the first consul. He later assumed the title of emperor in 1804.

However napoleon is criticized for over centralizing power and destroying the aspirations of the French people. He dominated the constitution making process and later became a dictator.

The ministers, prefects and sub-prefects were directly answerable to him. Even the central government was directly under his control. Such dictatorship and one man control is what the 1789 revolution had tried to abolish.

In 1804, napoleon restored the ministry of police under Joseph Fouche, dominated by secret government spies. In 1810, he revived the prisons and allowed arbitrary arrests and detention without trial like it had been during the reign of Louis xvi’s letter de cachet.

Napoleon also revived censorship of the press which denied the French freedom of press and expression. His repressive policies denied people their fundamental rights and increasingly became a dictator.

Napoleon and financial administration;

Before the rise of napoleon, the French financial system was in shambles. There was no bank, inflation was rampant, government revenue was squandered, forgery and bribery were high in offices.
Napoleon tried to correct all the above by creating the bank of France in 1800. The bank managed all government loans and revenue. The bank also issued stable currency based on the gold standard in 1801.

He centralized and improved the collection of taxes from the local authorities which had encouraged embezzlement. He abolished undue profits on contracts and fraud on public services. The bank also regulated or regularized the system of stock exchange.

All the above reforms restored financial credibility which was very much needed at that time. It checked the extravagancy and wastefulness that had characterized the ancient regime and directory government.

Napoleon and public works;

Napoleon's commercial, industrial, agricultural and financial reforms demanded improvement in public works. Napoleon is credited for having constructed roads, canals, and bridges, telegraph lines, etc.

Marshy areas around towns were drained, while sea ports and harbors were enlarged and fortified. All in all napoleon’s public works made paris the most beautiful city in Europe hence it became a major tourist centre. Napoleon is credited for the idea of radiating roads.

Promotion of French culture, napoleon promoted and preserved French culture when opera houses were built ,museums beautified and field with works of art and treasures looted from Italy. The streets of Paris and other major towns were restored , street gardens replanted. Dance and drama, books about French culture were published and an academy of music, dance and drama was opened.

Napoleon and the army /Military.

Napoleon greatly re-organized the French army and made it the most formidable force / strongest on the European continent . By removing the barriers of accident of birth as criteria for promotion ,Napoleon’s reforms turned the French army in to the most able and most efficient on the European continent..

The French army became one of the most well trained and equipped. Napoleon made longer the period of training for the army.

In all, France during Napoleon’s period became the land master of Europe, the strongest on land and was able to safeguard the revolutionary gains. It kept law and order hence political stability, economic prosperity and improved standards of living.

However, Napoleon is blamed for turning France into a military state. It was in order to maintain to maintain the military that Napoleon heavily taxed the Frenchmen. Napoleon also used the army to attack the rest of Europe hence causing unnecessary suffering. It is said that by the end of his reign in 1815, every French family had lost about 3 members because of the Napoleonic wars.
French agriculture was greatly improved upon eg swamps were reclaimed which increased the amount of land for crop farming. The government provided loans and other incentives to farmers which increased food supply hence reducing food shortages thus helping him to control power in France.

**NAPOLEON BONAPARTE'S FOREIGN POLICY.**

After becoming the first consul of France with powers to make peace and war, napoleon embarked on an aggressive foreign policy that saw France become the centre of European affairs. He gave France a dynamic foreign policy that added to his greatness.

The main aims of Napoleon's foreign policy included:

- The building of the French colonial empire;
- He snatched the province of Louisiana from the king of Spain
- French forces were sent to capture Haiti, san Domingo, Syria and Egypt
- He held negotiations with the Tipu sultan to oust the British from India
- With the of invading indie, he seized the Cape of Good Hope and Mauritius islands. His ambitions made England his enemy and England prepared to wage war against France.

- His mercantile or trade policy;
- Napoleon aimed at the expansion of French trade and the destruction of British trade
- He established the continental system and forced European nations to accept it though it became a major cause of his downfall.

- The policy of interference or exporting the revolutionary gains;
- He interfered with the internal affairs of other nations inspite of the treaty of Amiens 1802.
- He established republics in about six countries and posted his armies there.
- He annexed piedmont to his empire
- He interfered in the internal affairs of Switzerland where he dissolved the unitary constitution and set up a feudal constitution
- He changed the name of the cisalpine republic of Italy and called it Italian republic
- He annexed Holland to his empire.

The policy of interference and annexation proved to be useful to napoleon as it elevated his status in France.
Destruction of the Naval power of England. Napoleon regarded England as one of his greatest enemies. Also due to its being surrounded by sea, it was next to impossible to invade England by the land forces of France. Napoleon therefore thought of capturing the island of Malta from the British but England refused to surrender the island hence bringing war closer.

Revival of the ancient glory of France. Napoleon wanted to elevate the glory of France which could be done through military victories. His victories raised the prestige of France and for sometime the French forgot the aristocratic rule of napoleon because of his largely successful foreign policy.

EVENTS OF NAPOLEON’S FOREIGN POLICY:

In foreign affairs, napoleon’s activities were dominated by wars;

Napoleon at war with the second coalition 1800:

Napoleon got involved in military confrontation with the second coalition of Britain, Russia and Austria formed in 1797 to help Austria recover Italy and stop napoleon’s aggressive policy. At the battle of Marengo, June 14, 1800, the French defeated the main Austrian forces. The Austrians were again defeated in Germany at Hohenlinden on December 3, 1800.

The Austrians pleaded for peace and by the treaty of Luneville, 1801 France regained all the territories that she had secured under the treaty of campo Formio. Russia and Britain also separated following their conflicting interests over the Mediterranean. This brought the second coalition to an end.

Napoleon and the league of armed neutrality 1801:

Britain was not happy with French achievements; both the revolution and napoleon. She planned to suffocate France’s economic recovery hence tried to use her strong navy to capture all strategic positions in the world.

In 1796, Britain had captured the French west Indian islands of St.lucia and Malta in the Mediterranean. She used her naval power to search and capture all vessels trading with France which annoyed such countries.

To defeat Britain, napoleon convinced Russia, Sweden, Denmark and Prussia to form the league of armed neutrality to specifically hinder Britain from trading with continental Europe. Britain responded by attacking and defeating the Danish fleet at the battle of Copenhagen in 1802. Russia also withdrew from the league when Czar Paul was murdered and succeeded by Czar Alexander I who was opposed to France. France and Britain agreed to sign the treaty of Amiens, March 1802 to stop their conflicts.

Napoleon at war with the third coalition:

This comprised of Britain, Austria and Russia with the aim of driving France back to her original boundaries i.e. out of Belgium, Holland, Italy and the German states.
Napoleon militarily defeated the Austrians at the battle of ulm in October 1805. He also defeated a combined Austrian and Russian force Austerlitz in December 2nd 1805. Austria agreed to sign the treaty of press burg in December 1805 by which Austria gave up her control of Italian states to France, gave up her influence over the south German states to France and also lost Venetia, Istria, Tyrol and Dalmatia near Italy.

The Russians also asked for peace after being defeated at fried land in 1806 and by the treaty of tilsit in July 1807, Czar Alexander I accepted napoleon’s territorial control of the confederation of the Rhine and the grand duchy of Warsaw. Russia got Finland from Sweden and also got the Balkans.

In 1806 napoleon dissolved the holy roman empire (a grouping of German states and Austria) and set up the confederation of the Rhine out of the German states.

Napoleon’s dynastic policy:
Napoleon through his aggressive foreign policy had defeated and conquered large areas of Europe by 1810. To consolidate his position and ensure continued loyalty of such conquered peoples, he placed his relatives and friends on the thrones of subject states.

His brother Joseph Bonaparte was made king of Naples in Italy and later king of Spain, his brother Louis Bonaparte was made king of Holland, his brother Jerome Bonaparte was made king of Westphalia (the north German states), marshal Marat was made duke of the German states and later king of Naples, he married off his sisters to Italian princes, he gave the grand duchy of Warsaw (Poland) to his friend the king of Saxony, a German state.

Such action made napoleon a master of a large area west of Russia. By 1810 the Napoleonic Empire included all Western Europe except Britain.

Napoleon and continental system, 1806:
The biggest remaining problem for napoleon to dominate Europe was Britain – which had proved superior at sea / had a strong navy. Napoleon realized that to defeat Britain, he had to break her economic strength.

To defeat Britain, napoleon adopted the continental system. This was an economic war aimed at destroying British overseas trade, to bring unemployment, financial chaos and general suffering that would force her to plead for peace.

By the Berlin decrees and Milan decrees of November 1806, napoleon declared the blocking of Britain and stopped all French allies from trading with Britain or her colonies. Napoleon also announced the confiscation of all British goods on the European mainland.

Britain also responded by issuing the “orders in council” in 1807 by which she also declared a blocking of all continental ports accepting napoleon’s decrees. Britain was to stop any outside country from trading with continental Europe. This economic war partly led to napoleon’s downfall;
Effects of the continental system;

It led to scarcity of British manufactured goods in France and other European countries which negatively affected their economies. Hence they started opposing Napoleon i.e. Spain, Prussia, Russia, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Portugal and Italian states.

It made Napoleon lose popularity among the European middle class because it affected their businesses. The continental system led to the shortage of goods and therefore high prices hence exploitation of the peasants.

The continental system led to conflicts between Napoleon and the Catholics. In 1808, the pope had become tired of Napoleon’s continental system and started trading with Britain. Napoleon responded by imprisoning him in 1809 which cost Napoleon support of the Catholics in France, Austria, Italian states and the rest of Europe.

The continental system contributed to the rise and growth of nationalism among the population of the affected European states such as the Italian states which contributed to his downfall.

The continental system partly led to the Moscow campaign of 1812 which was very disastrous to Napoleon because Napoleon lost most of his experienced and trusted generals which later led to his downfall.

The continental system contributed to the formation of the fourth coalition of Britain, Russia, Austria and Prussia which finally defeated and expelled Napoleon out of Europe.

Napoleon and the peninsular war:

One of the effects of the continental system was the peninsular war of 1808-1809. Portugal had refused to implement Napoleon’s continental system hence he planned to attack Portugal through Spain. After the conquest of Portugal, he overthrew the Spanish royal family and replaced King Charles IV with his brother Joseph Bonaparte.

This attracted hostility from the extremely backward and intensely Catholic Spaniards who disregarded Napoleon’s doctrines of liberty to fight for their independence. With British help the Spaniards fought a guerilla war fare which defeated Napoleon’s army at Baylen. The French army was also defeated by the British and Portuguese army at Vimiero. Napoleon had underestimated the Spaniards when he sent only 20,000 soldiers, he was quoted saying, “a country as full of monks as yours is easy to subdue.” But many French troops remained permanently tied up in Spain and this war turned out to be a disaster to Napoleon in the following ways;

It contributed immensely to Napoleon’s downfall as grant and temporally observed, “The peninsular war was like an ulcers that drained Napoleon’s strength”. The war caused great loss of manpower to Napoleon’s army and after this; Napoleon was not able to win any other war against his enemies.

It increased nationalism among the Spaniards. Napoleon’s ideas of liberty and equality exported to Spain made him unpopular among the Spaniards who united to fight him.
The war also gave Britain an opportunity to acquire a base on the peninsula where they stationed their troops and consequently participated in the French defeat.

The war also gave moral confidence to other states in Europe to rise against napoleon such as in 1812 during the Moscow campaign when Russians rose in numbers and defeated napoleon.

Napoleon's trickery or unreliable character was exposed by this war. He invaded Portugal through Spain or with Spanish help but later turned against Spain. After this war, no state was willing to ally with napoleon hence leaving napoleon isolated.

Napoleon and pope Pius VI.

Due to the severe social and economic conditions in the papal states, Pope Pius 7th was forced to condemn and reject the continental system in 1808 as a spiritual leader. It was not in order for him to support this system against Britain because it could affect his credibility among the Catholics therefore he gave free entry to British ships through the papal states. This annoyed Napoleon and with a lot of anger Napoleon told the Pope that “No doubt your holiness is sovereign in Rome but I am the emperor”. My enemies shall be your enemies", he therefore attacked and annexed the Papal States and imprisoned the Pope Pius vii. This was a blunder which damaged Napoleon’s popularity among the Catholics in France and the world at large.

Napoleon and the Moscow campaign 1812

The continental system led to the Moscow campaign of 1812. This was organized by Napoleon against Russia. The czar Alexander I of Russia found himself fixed of being without British foods, declared himself neutral and started trading with Britain in 1811.

This treaty greatly annoyed napoleon who quickly prepared to attack Russia in the Moscow campaign of 1812, however, there were other grievances/misunderstandings between the Czar and Napoleon which caused the war.

Napoleon had failed to keep his promise to the Czar over the Balkans; i.e help Russia expand in C. Europe. The Czar had refused to give Napoleon his sister in marriage after Napoleon divorcing Josephine.

The Czar had refused to address Napoleon as a fellow emperor/ “mon frieze” but always called him general.

Napoleon had grabbed (taken) the territory of Oldenburg formerly ruled by the relative of the Czar which annoyed the Czar.

Napoleon hurriedly organized one of the largest armies in the history i.e 610,000 men with 32000 horsemen to invade Moscow in September 1812. Through the attack was during summer, the Russian winter caught up with the invading French army, yet the French army was not equipped with winter clothing hence many died of the severe cold conditions.
Napoleon continued on expecting to find food supplies for his soldiers in Moscow. At Borodino outside Moscow, a great battle was fought which the French won at the expense of 50,000 men and 30,000 horses.

As the Russians retreated, they carried out the scorched-earth method, burning down the city and anything of value. With no food and shelter, many more of the invading French soldiers died. It is estimated that by the time Napoleon thought of retreating from Moscow in 1812, about 2/3 of his army had died.

As the invading French army retreated, the Russians attacked them, killing a large number of them. In all of the 610000 soldiers who had crossed R. Niemen to invade Russia, were only 20,000 crossed it back. Of these, only 10,000 were of military value. For the first time in Europe, Napoleon registered his biggest humiliation.

The Moscow campaign marked the turning point in Napoleon's career was a boomerang.

Napoleon lost most his experienced / veteran soldiers in this campaign i.e managed to cross back to France with only 20,000 men.

Napoleon lost all his horses in this campaign i.e 32000. This rendered his army immobile/ could not move easily.

The failure of the Moscow campaign Napoleon apply harsh measures to raise conscripts / a new army. This undermined his support in the country, allies and satellite states.

The Moscow campaign also made Napoleon adopt harsh measures to raise revenue to finance his army and works/ increased taxation which made him more unpopular.

The Moscow campaign also made Napoleon's most trusted generals to desert/leave him. These turned against him and even leaked his plans to the enemy. These include:

General Fouche - the chief of police
Talleyrand- chief of diplomatic service
Marshal Bernadotte- ruler of Sweden who advised the allies i.e. “when you face the marshals attack, when you face Napoleon retreat”.

The Moscow campaign made Napoleon appear a weak general with a weak army, defeated by backward Russia. This encouraged many countries to join war against Napoleon.

The Moscow campaign gave the British the bargaining power to convince other European countries to join her in the war against Napoleon. This in 1813, she was joined by Prussia, Russia, Austria and Sweden to fight Napoleon.

The defeat in Moscow made Napoleon start using young inexperienced boys in his wars. Though Napoleon managed to raise a new army of 300,000 men, it is said that this partly trained always received further training while on the march to the war front. It is not surprising that he was easily defeated at “the battle of nations” of Oct 16th 1813.
The Moscow campaign physically drained Napoleon and his army hence became fatigued/too tired to fight any more wars immediately. Needed a lot of rest which the allies did not allow to him as they attacked him until his downfall.

The loss of the war in Moscow forced Napoleon to accept an amnesty/peace treaty proposed by the emperor of Austria in May 1813. Napoleon felt that he needed time to re-enforce and re-organize his forces in order to continue the war. He had just defeated the Prussians at the battle of Lutzen and the Russians at the battle of Bautzen in May 1813.

Note that Napoleon had never accepted a treaty dictated to him but because of his deteriorating military might, he accepted the treaty in 1813.

Napoleon and the fourth coalition;

The tide of disaster at the Moscow campaign 1812 encouraged Napoleon's enemies to form the fourth coalition. The shattering blow to the French in Russia inspired Prussia, Austria, Britain and Russia later joined by Sweden that was promised to receive Norway by the allies. The allies first sought for peace with Napoleon through the Frankfurt proposal which was rejected by Napoleon, forcing the allies to attack Napoleon from three fronts ie Switzerland, Belgium and the Rhineland.

However Napoleon mobilized a force of a quarter of a million in a short period of three months with which he defeated the Prussian army at Dresden but the allies easily regrouped and at the battle of Leipzig (sometimes known as the battle of nations), the French forces were overwhelmed and forced to retreat through Germany with the allies in pursuit.

Napoleon put up a spirited fight in France but soon the allied forces led by the Prussian commander Blucher marched straight to Paris. By the treaty of Fontainebleau of April 1814, Napoleon abdicated or gave up the throne but was allowed the title of emperor, an income of 200,000 pounds and the Mediterranean island of Elba as his kingdom.

Just before his abdication, a provisional government was set up by the French senate. The provisional government was headed by Talleyrand, a former bishop and foreign minister of the republic and Napoleon. This government arranged for the restoration of the Bourbon rulers in France.

The allies restored Louis XVIII, the elder surviving brother of Louis XVI, who accepted to rule by the terms of a charter which guaranteed a parliament and a constitution. Shortly after, the allies signed the first Paris peace treaty which reduced France to her 1792 boarders.

They also met in November 1814 in Vienna Congress which lasted up to June 1815 to find lasting solutions to European problems. Just before congress was concluded, news that Napoleon had escaped from Elba reached the leaders who had met at Vienna. Upon his return, Napoleon ruled France for a hundred days when he again established himself as master of France. The allies however confronted him and finally defeated him at the battle of Waterloo in Belgium in June 1815 and his fate was sealed. He was exiled in the
inaccessible island of St. Helena, in the south Atlantic where he died six years later in 1821. Europe would never again be troubled by his brilliant talents, his restless energy, his inflexible will and his lack of moral sense.

**REASONS FOR NAPOLEON’S DOWNFALL**

Napoleon fell from power because of both his domestic and foreign policies. However, to a large extent his foreign policy led to his downfall. Among the factors included the following.

His overwhelming ambitious character was a major cause for his downfall.

He was so ambitious that he was never satisfied with his conquests. He is once quoted to have said “This little France is too small a field, great celebrity must be obtained in the East”. Denis Richards in his book, “An illustrated History of Modern Europe, 1789-1984” observed that “Even if he had crushed Europe utterly, he would have gone to the Turkish empire, to India, to America. A restless demon of energy drove him on, a demon he himself was aware of when he loved to picture himself as a man of Destiny, driven on by fate. His schemes were all too big he simply couldn’t last.”

Therefore, his overwhelming ambition led Napoleon to engage in expensive schemes which he couldn’t fulfill at the time. This ambition led him to his downfall.

The continental system also contributed to his downfall.

Napoleon aimed at destroying British economic potential and supremacy. British ships and goods were prevented from entering any part and port of Europe where Napoleon had control. But this finally led to Napoleon’s downfall.

The rest of Europe depended on British goods for their survival.

Britain had a powerful navy and was the sea master. She could afford to sell her goods in other parts of the world i.e. America, Australia, and the far East.

France was no yet industrialized and was just a continental power. She also had no strong navy. In all, the continental system contributed the downfall of Napoleon in the following ways:

It led to scarcity of manufactured goods which led to widespread suffering and hatred of Napoleon.

It made Napoleon to be hated by the Catholics in Europe in 1809.

It made Napoleon lose support of the Middle class traders in Europe.

It made Napoleon embark on the disastrous Peninsular War of 1808-1809.

It led Napoleon to embark on the disastrous Moscow Campaign of 1812.

Old age or physical exhaustion and mental fatigue that led to loss of the strong sense of judgment and military stamina.
It has been said that like most Southern Italians, Napoleon matured so early that at the age of 40, he was already too old. The old age made Napoleon lose the strong military stamina, rapidity and surprise that had earlier been the pillars of his success.

The vast conquest.

Napoleon's conquests were too vast to be under any effective control. It meant that most of the military campaigns had to be called out by his generals, who unfortunately were either weak or jealous of each other. In Spain, the generals quarreled and even refused to help one another. In Russia, one general tried to murder the other.

Note that Napoleon had defeated nearly all continental Europe. He had direct control in Italy, the Germany states, Holland, and Belgium, he had to direct the affairs in the satellite states i.e. Spain Rhine confederation etc. This was too big an area for one man to control.

Lack of a navy and presence of British naval superiority also led to his downfall.

The British naval strength and Napoleon's lack of one was a crucial factor in his downfall. Napoleon had always used the Dutch navy but Britain destroyed it in 1809, hence war on sea remained the monopoly of Britain. The failure to defeat Britain at sea had two negative effects;

It made Napoleon resort to an indirect method i.e. the continental system which led to disaster.

It left Britain as the nucleus around which coalitions against France could be formed. Despite defeating several coalitions, the fourth coalition finally defeated Napoleon.

Growth of Nationalism and liberalism in Europe.

By 1814 the ideas of liberalism and nationalism had begun surfacing in Europe. During his rule, Napoleon had forced many small nations under his rule. Hence whenever he ruled, his administration became a burden to the people i.e in Italy, the German states, Netherlands (Holland), Belgium, Denmark, Spain etc.

Much as he brought some freedom to such oppressed people, his administration was characterized by imposed rulers (his brothers and relatives), heavy taxation, censorship of the press, a strict secret police, arbitrary arrests and imprisonment without trial, harassment of peasants etc.

Such unfair policies led to the growth of nationalism, the desire for liberty from foreign rule and willingness to fight against Napoleon hence leading to his downfall.

Loss of a sense of judgment.

As the year progressed, Napoleon lost a sense of judgment of the possible. The clearness of vision and swift judgment that was characteristic of his earlier youthful years was lost as he desired greatness i.e.
In 1809 he imprisoned the Pope against the better judgment of the concordat hence lost support of the Catholics.

The Peninsular War of 1809-9 where Napoleon sent only 20000 troops hoping for quick victory. Later 300000 French troops ended up permanently tied up in Spain.

The Moscow campaign of 1812 when Napoleon invaded his longtime ally Russia i.e.

He had forgotten that his huge empire needed friends and allies, not enemies.

Attacking Russia without winter clothing, hoping Russia without winter clothing, hoping for quick victory.

Attacking Russia because the Czar had refused to give Napoleon his sister showed lack of sense of judgment and priority.

In his diminishing judgment, Napoleon thought that the fall of Moscow was not even would mark the end of Russian resistance. Moscow was not even the seat of the Czars. It was far away at St Petersburg.

Napoleon had also lost clear judgment when he embarked on the Moscow campaign in the East while Britain remained undefeated in the West.

Historians have observed that Napoleon must have overworked himself and easily lost the sense of judgment by quoting his popular phrase, "A normal man sleeps for 2 hours, a woman sleeps for 4 hours and a fool for 8 hours. Such lack of rest made Napoleon wear out too quickly.

Napoleon's despotic rule.

Napoleon had become unpopular by 1814. In France, he drafted a despotic constitution, over centralized power and dropped the liberal ideas of the 1787 French Revolution. In other areas of Europe, he adopted even harsher policies, all of which made him a common enemy of all European people and governments.

New military innovations.

One of the major reasons for Napoleon's downfall was the new military reforms by European governments. In Russia, reforms were carried out under St. Hardenberg and Minister Scharn Horst which brought the government nearer to the masses.

By 1811, Prussia had 120000 men in reverse. All over Europe new military techniques and weapons were being developed. These were put to use to defeat Napoleon.

Increasing military decline.
Napoleon had created the largest and most powerful army on the European continent. But by 1814, this army had reduced to small numbers. Most of his generals had either died in the frequent wars while some were deserted. Yet Napoleon's unending wars required experienced soldiers.

Unity of Europe or formation of coalitions against Napoleon.

One of the most vital reasons in the downfall of Napoleon was the unity of the entire European army against him in 1813 and 1814. His misfortune was that the entire European army and resources that were mobilized against him were simply too much.

The territorial losses and diplomatic humiliations drove the governments of Europe into an alliance against Napoleon which finally succeeded in overthrowing him. The allies of the 4th coalition had about 1,000,000 men fighting Napoleon's army of 300,000 young experienced boys.

Natural law.

As human beings, Napoleon Bonaparte had to succumb to the natural law. He could not last forever and when time came for his downfall, he had to go.

Role of Britain

Historical, hostility between Britain and Napoleon.

The Toulon incident of 1793.

Egyptian Campaign of 1798-99

Breaching of the treaty of Amiens, March 1802.

Britain destroyed the Danish fleet at the battle of Copenhagen, 1801 that Napoleon had wanted to use to attack her.

The role of Britain in organizing coalition against Napoleon eg 2nd, 3rd, 4th, coalition.

Britain sent the largest number of troops.

Always financed the coalitions due to her economic power.

Mobilized forces to fight Napoleon.

British naval and economic superiority became an encouragement to other European countries to her.

British desire to safeguard her economic interests made Napoleon's continental system fail by issuing "Orders in council" 1807. This in effect,

Deprived Napoleon 1 of his allies e.g. Spain.

Created new enemies e.g. Denmark.

Stimulated nationalism.
Plunged Napoleon into expensive and disastrous wars eg the peninsular war.

Britain’s contribution at waterloo.

Britain had forces in the army of occupation in France in 1814

At Leipzig, “The Battle of Nations” involving 500,000 men was fought on Oct.16th-18th, 1813. The allies included the British, Austrians, Prussians, Russians and Swedes under Marshal Bernadotte who had deserted Napoleon and joined the allies.

Napoleon was defeated, throwing the French forces back over the Rhine River. For the first time, the allies carried the war into herself since 1793. Czar Alexander 1 of Russia and the king of Prussia Fredrick William entered France on march 31st 1814. Napoleon abdicated (gave in power) on the 7th 1814. He was exiled to the island of elbo, off the coast of Italy.

The allies met at Vienna and restored the Bourbon monarchy under Louis xviii. But Napoleon escaped from elbo in March 1815. Landed at Cannes in southern France overthrew the bourbons and ruled France for another 100 days.

On 18th June, the battle of waterloo was fought which ended napoleons’ career, the Napoleonic empire and Napoleonic error. Napoleon surrendered to the British forces and was exiled on the island of ST. Helena in the southern Atlantic where he died on the 5th may 1821.

**IMPACT/ EFFECTS OF NAPOLEON’S RULE ON EUROPE.**

By 1814, napoleon’s aggressive and expansionist foreign policy had greatly affected Europe. The effects were political, social and economic. His policies affected both small and big European nations. Emphasizing the impact of napoleon on Europe, David Thompson in his book “Europe since Napoleon” observed that, “if the French revolution had thrown Europe into a melting pot, Napoleon studied about making sure that much of the residue was removed and giving it a shape it was never to lose. Europe could never be the same again even after his downfall”.

Napoleon is credited for exporting the revolutionary ideas beyond French frontiers. The revolutionary ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity were spread all over Europe. Napoleon destroyed the system of privileged classes and feudalism in the areas he had controlled and introduced his code Napoleon which ensured law, order and justice.

Through his activities of trying to unite the Italian states and Germany states under one leadership, napoleon indirectly facilitated the unification struggles of both countries. His fostered nationalism in those countries. i.e. people started thinking and working for their unity.

The period of Napoleon led to the expansion of the French frontiers. i.e destroyed the old boundaries where France was just a small country in 1790. By 1814, napoleon’s French empire covered Western Europe from the Baltic Sea to the Adriatic Sea, from Tagus to Niemen covering Italian states, Belgium, German states, Holland etc.
created independent republics which he sometimes administered himself or appointed his friends or relatives to rule. i.e.

Joseph Bonaparte in Spain
Luis Bonaparte in Holland
Jerome Bonaparte Westphalia
Marshal Muzat in Naples
Marshal Bernadotte in Sweden etc

In such places, napoleon over threw the legitimate rulers.

Napoleon is credited with instituting the code napoleon of 1804 which had several sub codes in it. The code corrected the chaotic French legal frame work, emphasized the rights of man, duties of a citizen, and confirmed the gains of the peasants from the revolution. The code napoleon was later adopted in many parts of the rest of Europe.

In 1801, napoleon signed the concordat with the pope. This settled the long standing conflict between the French government and the catholic majority. The concordat also helped to reconcile France with the rest of the catholic world hence reducing on the hostilities.

Napoleon introduced new reforms in the education system of France. Such reforms later became the basis of modern education in the whole of Europe.

Napoleon also introduced the legion of humor in France which instilled the spirit of commitment, hard work and patriotism. People worked tirelessly to achieve efficient officers in Europe. Such a system was copied by other European countries.

Also his reforms in local government and public works did not only benefit France alone but also other European countries where he had direct control like Belgium and Italy

Napoleon made efforts to centralize European markets under French control though his continental system. His idea became the basis of the current European Economic Community.

Napoleon set up the union of West German states known as the confederation of the Rhine in 1806. In all he put an end to the Holy Roman Empire which had dominated central Europe under control of austral.

In 1804, napoleon established a uniform system of weights and measures i.e the metric system which greatly facilitated trade. This was adopted by other European countries and became the basis of the current measures.

Napoleon’s rule caused political unrest in Europe through his endless wars right from 1800-1813. Napoleon fought and defeated the 2nd coalition formed in 1797, defeated the 3rd coalition formed in 1805 and the 4th coalition formed in 1813.
The constant/ endless Napoleonic wars were further destructive to Europe of human lives and property.

These wars cost Europe millions of people. It is revealed that the wars cost France on the average of three children per family.

Likewise towns, industries, roads, buildings etc were destroyed through the scorched earth policy which was adopted in many wars.

Napoleon's continental system negatively affected European economies but especially that of France herself, Prussia, Norway, Sweden, Finland, the papal states, Russia, Holland, etc. it disrupted the prosperous trade between Britain and the rest of Europe. It caused economic insecurity, financial crisis, economic recess, unemployment, scarcity of essential goods and inflation.

Napoleon imprisoned the Pope in 1809 which created a state of tension and conflict between him and the Catholics and between France and the rest of Europe.

Napoleon overthrew legitimate rulers in many parts of Europe. He replaced such rulers with his brothers and friends. Such rulers included the king of Naples and Sicily, king of Spain, the Pope, the Princes of the German states etc.

His dictatorial policies i.e. censorship of the press, abolition of free debate and creative writing violated the freedom of speech and expression pronounced by the French Revolution of 1789.

His regime carried out a lot of social and economic exploitation to raise funds to sustain his imperial empire. In conquered areas, Napoleon heavily taxed the people to the benefit of France. However, towards the end of his reign; even the Frenchmen were heavily taxed to finance his war.

The Napoleonic nostalgia (longing for past glory) in Europe especially in France greatly undermined the credibility of the Orleans Monarchy i.e. between 1830 and 1848. The Frenchmen desired an adventurous ruler like Napoleon yet Louis Philippe was not hence undermining his rule.

In areas where Napoleon had control, he introduced reforms and revolutionary ideas that gave rise to new forces of nationalism, liberalism and democracy. These new forces disturbed Europe hence outbreak of revolutions in 1820, and 1848.

Napoleon's expansionist was greatly altered Europe. The balance of power in Europe was greatly changed though his military conquests and annexations. By the time of his downfall, he had turned France in to land master of Europe while Britain remained the sea master.

One of the most important effects of the Napoleonic era was that he forced the European governments to bury their differences and act in coalitions. This was to result in the
concert of Europe \ congress system after 1815. This act of working together provided the basis for the future league of Nations and the present day United Nations Organization.

In all, Napoleon Bonaparte has given historians an example of the damage that can result from dictatorship and overwhelming ambition ie. Too much power in the hands of one man. But Napoleon also gave Europe durable, social and economic reforms that have stood the test of time.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. "It was mainly Britain that was responsible for the downfall of Napoleon1" Discuss.

2. To what extent did Napoleon 1 live up to the expectations of the revolutionaries?

3. What was the most significant factor which led to the downfall of Napoleon the great?

4. "It was Napoleon the Great's own domestic policies which led to his downfall" Discuss.

5. "The Moscow Campaign of 1812 was the turning point in the career of Napoleon 1" Discuss.

6. Account for the downfall of Napoleon 1.

7. "Without the French Revolution, Napoleon would have died as a common man" Discuss.