

## **Notes on Emperor Napoleon I (1769-1821)**

Despite his failures and faults, Emperor Napoleon I is unanimously considered to be a universal spirit because of his exceptional personality and his extraordinary capacity for work, which enabled him to make fast and effective decisions.

Legitimized several times through direct referendums of the French people, he nevertheless died, abandoned and exiled on an inaccessible island.

But this perceptive politician, prodigious and feared warlord, basking in the glow of military glory, admired even by his enemies (under duress, he was forced to bravely face seven successive coalition still hoping to sign a peace agreement), talented administrator, he naturally became legendary, immortalized as an exceptional being.

Napoleon had all the qualities of a leader: strong authority and charisma. He was able to get French people to work and produce for 15 years in a way they have seldom done and made them proud again.

His firm leadership, which has often been lacking in French leaders and which is still sometimes missing in today's Europe, allowed for a swift and spectacular economic and moral recovery for the people of France, following a major revolution that was just as destructive in terms of a Capetian millennium material order and a Christian bimillennium moral order, as it was creative in terms of new ideas that were at the heart of modern democracies.

He will remain "Napoleon the Great" for his remarkable administration of the countries of continental Europe, for which he brought about favourable progress – although seen much too little nowadays – in the areas of economic, religious, social and cultural freedoms.

He would play a significant role in ensuring the triumph of capitalism, through the recognition and democratic establishment of private property in Europe, and through the codes and laws that were necessary for its development.

In France, he was able to restore order after the revolutionary chaos, obtain efficiency after impotence, restore profit after waste, and choose better public figures after getting rid of incompetent people.

He was able to meet the dual trend of a nation that was difficult to rule and at the same time being demanding and progressive, reactionary and conservative.

My personal conviction is that Napoleon is a universal genius and that he will remain one of the great figures of the modern world who took the qualities that transcend and glorify men – courage, perseverance, and love for one's country while being a staunch European – to a sublime level.

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Excerpt from my lectures  
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