



Napoleon: The Immortal Emperor

By Gerard Gengembre, Pierre-Jean Chalencon, David Chanteranne

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This lavishly illustrated book retraces the meteoric career of Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821), the "little Corsican" who rose from the ashes of the ancien régime to become the most charismatic and powerful European leader since Alexander the Great. Accompanied by paintings, drawings, engravings, caricatures, sculpture, film stills, posters, and other examples of Napoleonic iconography, the text tells the story of the leader's life, his myth, and his enduring fame over two centuries.

An inspired master of propaganda, Bonaparte was acutely aware of his image at every stage of his progress, from the lean man of action painted by Gros in the 1790s through Ingres's Zeus-like sovereign of 1806, to the tragic, fallen hero apotheosized in stone by Rude. Later depictions of Napoleon cast him as Romantic hero and unsurpassed military strategist but also as Corsican despot and anti-Christ. In addition to work by artists ranging from the court painter David to Larry Rivers in our own time, the book presents clothing, jewels, furniture, porcelain, and silver from Malmaison and other Napoleonic residences, each a paradigm of Empire elegance. All find a place in a book whose fascinating combination of history, biography, and the arts is sure to find a wide audience.

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About the Author

Gérard Gengembre, professor at the University of Caen (Normandy), specializes in 19th-century literature and the relationship between literature, politics, and ideology.

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