

# Ib internal assessment how napoleon encouraged social stability in france assignm...

[History](#)



A. Plan of the Investigation To what extent did Napoleon's policies encourage social stability in France during his reign between 1799 and 1812? Between 1799 and 1812, Napoleon encouraged social stability to a large extent in France by overhauling the legal system with policies such as the Napoleonic Code, instituting economic management and organizing and reestablishing the educational system. The purpose of this investigation is to assess the success of policies Napoleon implemented and how these policies encouraged social stability.

Social stability is defined as a lack of civil unrest in society and an establishment of a coherent social structure and ideals. This assessment will outline Napoleon's aims and their success in encouraging social stability.

Methods to be used in this investigation include obtaining information from library books. Credibility of sources will be evaluated by reading about the author (usually provided at the end of the book). Generally, authors who attended universities and majored in topics such as European history and especially in Napoleonic history will be the most credible.

Two sources to be used in this investigation are France Under Napoleon and France 1789 ??? 1825 Revolution and Counterrevolution. These books will be evaluated concerning their origin, purpose, value and limitations. B.

Summary of Evidence Between 1799 and 1812, Napoleon encouraged social stability to a large extent in France by overhauling the legal system with policies such as the Napoleonic Code, instituting economic management and organizing and reestablishing the educational system. Generally, Germanic law took precedence in the north and Roman law dominated the south. A mixture of regional codes and royal decrees existed.

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Over the decades, new laws were made while old laws remained. Consequently, many of these laws contradicted one another. Prior to Napoleon assuming the role of Emperor, France had not experienced centralized laws (Markham, 278); a cause of social instability. Napoleon, seeing the dysfunction in this system, made legal reform. A main goal was to overhaul the legal system. The Napoleonic code succeeded in doing so and had several important elements including elimination of feudal order, individual freedom and secularization of society. Eventually, the entire legal system of France had been overhauled.

Other codes which led to the overhaul of the French legal system included the Code of Civil Procedure (1806), the Commercial Code (1807) and the Penal code (1810). These codes achieved improvements including: promotion of better trade by making trade arrangements more proficient and effective, setting up a logical judicial system organized the universally throughout France, increasing use of juries and making soldiers subject to civil and military law. The overhaul in the legal system led to civil unrest being settled and the French people being united under centralized laws.

Before Napoleon's reign, France's economy was failing miserably. Past kings had accumulated much debt over the past centuries and regimes which replaced Louis XVI were not any better in dealing with France's economic problems. Massive debt was one the most difficult problems France faced at the time. This debt was estimated to be as much as three times the value of the national treasury at the time (Markham, 282). To create social stability in

France, Napoleon understood that it would be essential to raise large sums of money.

As soon as Napoleon became First Consul he introduced the following: a national lottery to raise funds, a new full time groups of tax collectors, incentives to ensure all taxes were collected properly, increased taxes on some items, requirements to have the government buy breaks along with other items to distribute to the poor, organization of interest-free loans, provision of scholarships for education, and the Bank of France, (which gave the government better control over the nation's economy), replacement of paper money with coins which in turn increased people's faith in French currency. (Markham, 272 and Bergeron, 187) Within one year, France's economy had turned around completely. Debt was gone, tax collection was up and collection of the taxes was no longer corrupt. The value of French currency was stable and poverty was decreased on a large scale. (Markham, 278) For the most part of French history, education had been given only to the clergy and nobility; fewer opportunities were available to the common people. Education was provided by the Catholic Church, leading to a greater emphasis on religious dogma instead of focusing on basic skills needed to advance in society.

Even though educational administration was centralized in Paris, curriculum and educational standards varied throughout France. During Napoleon's reign, education was a top priority. He believed in the concept of equality and giving people the chance to rise or fall based upon their merit, not their social status. For people to achieve this possibility, they must be given the

opportunity to receive quality education. Napoleon made beneficial reforms, including establishing lycees (secondary schools designed to train future leaders and administrators of France), and removing religious influence of the Catholic Church.

Leadership would no longer be hereditary, and instead would be achieved through merit, implementing equality amongst the people. C. Evaluation of the Sources France Under Napoleon was originally published in 1972 and written by Louis Bergeron, a graduate of the Ecole Normale Superieure and was translated and published again in Oxford, United Kingdom in 1990 by R. R. Palmer. The purpose of this book was to inform readers on the conditions of France under Napoleon's reign.

Its value was that it elaborated more on the condition of France and the French people rather than more on Napoleon's victories. Limitations of this source include the fact that it was translated. Translations are not always exact and some thoughts can be misconstrued. Before the book was translated, the title was L'Episode Napoleonien: aspects interieurs. The word L'Episode (which translates to episode in English) indicates the book may have been part of a series. An episode also suggests the information may have been condensed.

Also, the subtitle " internal aspects" suggests there is another volume of the same series. Furthermore, the book was originally published in 1972. Such a publication date does not account for newly discovered information found in recent years. Lastly, this book was only best for outlining the aspects of Napoleon's aims, rather than exactly what his aims had accomplished.

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France 1789 -1815 Revolution and Counterrevolution was written by D. M. G. Sutherland and originally published in Great Britain in 1985.

The purpose of this book was to inform and make it easier for its audience to understand the French Revolution and Napoleon's impacts, rejecting classical views of the Revolution and instead highlight the importance of the conflict between revolutionary and counterrevolutionary movements. The value of this book is that rather than simply looking at classical views of the Revolution, it recognized there are other views and aspects to the French Revolution and Napoleon's reign. Also, this book was published later than France Under Napoleon which allows for newly discovered information to be incorporated into the text.

Limitations of this source include that its publication date is not recent, and although it is more recent than France Under Napoleon, it does not allow for newly discovered material to be taken into consideration. F. References

Bergeron Louis. (1981) France Under Napoleon Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press Markham J. David (2005) Napoleon for Dummies Indianapolis, Indiana: Wiley Publishing Inc. Sutherland D. M. G. (1986) France 1789 ??? 1815 Revolution and Counterrevolution New York, New York: Oxford University Press Willms Johannes. (1988) Paris: Capital of Europe New York, New York: Holmes and Meier