

LIST III MT

HIU33102, Images of Empire: Representing Politics in the Age of Napoleon (Joseph Clarke)

Assessment: One essay



From his emergence on the international stage with the Italian and Egyptian campaigns of the late 1790s to his death in 1821 and beyond, Napoleon Bonaparte's career, first as all-conquering general, then as Emperor and finally as exile inspired an unprecedented explosion of visual imagery throughout Europe. From epic canvases of the enlightened hero on horseback and caustic caricatures of a demented 'little Boney' to physical mementos of the Emperor and booty plundered during the wars he waged, these images and objects offer important insights into how contemporaries understood and expressed their experience of revolution and regime change, of conquest and colonisation, of victory and defeat. Surveying the history of the Napoleonic period and its aftermath through its visual and material culture, this module draws upon local and international research collections to explore the interaction between image-making and empire-building in the early 19th century and to interrogate the relationship between art and politics in the making of modernity. In so doing, it also asks how historians can bring visual culture to bear upon their study of the past.