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## Film Review: Napoleon

By Martin Emmanuel Perez

### *Introduction*

Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821), born Napoleone di Buonaparte, on Corsica, is considered to be one of the greatest generals in world history. His life has become legendary, from being talked about in history books to becoming part of mainstream media. Bonaparte single-handedly brought the majority of Europe under his growing French empire through the use of his great military knowledge, by using the battlefield to his advantage and learning from past military leaders such as Alexander the Great (356 BCE - 323 BCE) and Julius Caesar (100 BCE- 44 BCE). People around the world have learned of Napoleon Bonaparte in history classes. Students have learned how the French Revolution (1789-1799) inspired future revolutions and how the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) gave rise to nationalism in countries across Europe.<sup>1</sup> The two wars were a series of conflicts that ranged France against the shifting alliances of European powers; efforts by Napoleon to affirm his supremacy were made to balance European power.<sup>2</sup> Napoleon had many campaign victories throughout his military career, yet one campaign that can be considered a complete failure was his 1812 invasion of Russia and his subsequent march back to France. His greatest failure, however, came when he was defeated

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<sup>1</sup> "Napoleonic Wars Summary," Encyclopædia Britannica, Accessed April 16, 2024. [https://www.britannica.com/summary/Napoleonic-Wars#:~:text=Napoleonic%20Wars%2C%20\(1799%E2%80%931815,the%20balance%20of%20European%20power.](https://www.britannica.com/summary/Napoleonic-Wars#:~:text=Napoleonic%20Wars%2C%20(1799%E2%80%931815,the%20balance%20of%20European%20power.)

<sup>2</sup> "Napoleonic Wars Summary."

at the Battle of Waterloo against British and Prussian forces on June 18, 1815; consequently, he would be sent into his final exile on the island of St. Helena, in the South Atlantic Ocean, where he would pass away in 1821. With his victories and failures, Napoleon is still discussed in books, television shows, and movies, such as Ridley Scott's *Napoleon*, released in November 2023. It is my intention to give a full review of the film based on its historical accuracy but also show how the cinematics played out for some parts of the film. I would like to express my apologies if my review offends individuals.

### ***Napoleon During the French Revolution***

The film opens with a prologue on the screen, informing the audience that they are traveling back to the year 1789, when France was in turmoil due to the skyrocketing prices of bread and the unrest in the streets. The scene then changes to a woman, who can be considered of noble birth, being escorted by royal guards, along with two children. As the camera zooms slowly in on the frightened woman with her two children, the French Revolution song, "Ça Ira," slowly increases in volume in the background.<sup>3</sup> The song is well known amongst the French since it describes how they were tired of having to suffer under the monarchy and aristocracy:

***French:***

*Ah! ça ira, ça ira, ça ira  
les aristocrates à la lanterne!  
Ah! ça ira, ça ira, ça ira  
les aristocrates on les pendra!  
Si on n' les pend pas  
On les rompra  
Si on n' les rompt pas  
On les brûlera.  
Ah! ça ira, ça ira, ça ira  
les aristocrates à la lanterne!*

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<sup>3</sup> This version of Ça Ira is sung by Édith Piaf (1915-1963), a famous French singer.

*Ah! ça ira, ça ira, ça ira  
les aristocrates on les pendra!*

**English Translation:**

*Ah! It'll be fine, It'll be fine, It'll be fine  
aristocrats to the lamp-post*

*Ah! It'll be fine, It'll be fine, It'll be fine  
the aristocrats, we'll hang them!*

*If we don't hang them*

*We'll break them*

*If we don't break them*

*We'll burn them*

*Ah! It'll be fine, It'll be fine, It'll be fine  
aristocrats to the lamp-post*

*Ah! It'll be fine, It'll be fine, It'll be fine  
the aristocrats, we'll hang them!*

It is revealed to the audience that the woman with the two children is Marie Antoinette (1755-1793), Queen of France, born Archduchess Maria Antonia Josepha Johanna of Austria, played by Catherine Walker (b. 1975). The Queen, wearing a blue dress and powdered wig, along with her two children are being protected by royal guards. The following scene, however, shows her being transported to the guillotine by cart, still wearing the blue dress.

How is it that Ridley Scott allowed Marie Antoinette to continue wearing the dress? What makes it more embarrassing is that it depicts her willingly going up to the guillotine, as if Marie Antoinette was saying, "I willingly give myself up for the people of France so I can get my head chopped off in the guillotine. Oh, I shall do so willingly." That is not the case though. In the French Revolution, the sad end of Marie Antoinette is one that is filled with great tragedy. During her imprisonment, her natural hair turned white; dressed in all white on the day of her execution, the executioner then cut off her hair where she then wore a white

bonnet.<sup>4</sup> The part of the film that depicts her execution is the part where she was being escorted into an open cart to the guillotine, with Marie Antoinette acting calm while the people were shouting insults at her. As records show, she was still bound even while going up the steps of the guillotine.<sup>5</sup> The film then shows the executioners pushing her down on her knees, while she puts her head on the block. That in itself is not the case here. The guillotine has a board where the person is strapped on, first by standing up, then being lowered on their stomachs, and pushed on the chopping block. Then, the executioner releases the blade, and the head is cut off.

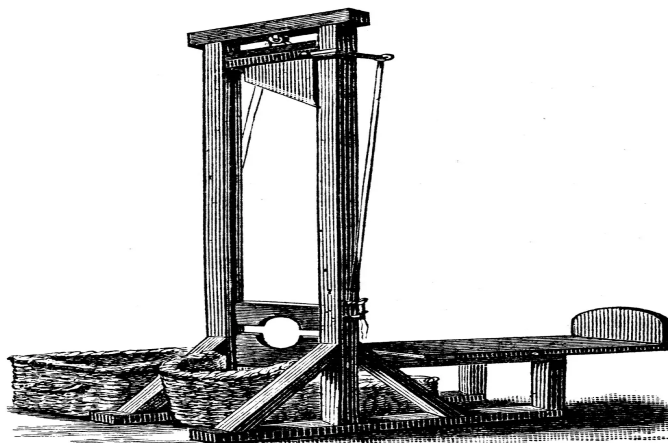


Figure 1: A print of the guillotine. A machine that became the primary symbol of the Reign of Terror (1793-94).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Harrison W. Mark, "Trial and Execution of Marie Antoinette," *World History Encyclopedia*, Last modified November 07, 2022, <https://www.worldhistory.org/article/2099/trial-and-execution-of-marie-antoinette/>.

<sup>5</sup> Harrison W. Mark, "Trial and Execution of Marie Antoinette."

<sup>6</sup> "Guillotine," *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Accessed May 24, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/guillotine>.

## Reviews

After the blade falls on Marie Antoinette's head in the film, the executioner holds her head up high, and Napoleon Bonaparte, played by Joaquin Phoenix, is spotted in the crowd. Harry Howard, History Correspondent at MailOnline, argues about Napoleon's whereabouts during the execution, saying that Napoleon was busy with a siege in Toulon that was happening at the time of her execution.<sup>7</sup> Napoleon, in antiquity, was still a young man when the French Revolution started, as well as an artillery officer within the new revolutionary army (*Armée Révolutionnaire Française*). It is completely out of context to have someone like Joaquin Phoenix, who is close to being in his fifties, be allowed to portray a younger version of Napoleon, who would have been twenty years old at the start of the French Revolution.



Figure 2: Marie Antoinette portrayed by actress Catherine Walker.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Harry Howard, "How Accurate Is Ridley Scott's Napoleon? From Marie Antoinette's Hair to Shooting the Pyramids with a Cannon - Experts Reveal Film's Made-up Scenes after It Riled French Critics," *Daily Mail Online*, November 17, 2023, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12757077/How-accurate-Ridley-Scotts-Napoleon-Marie-Antoinette-pyramids.html>.

<sup>8</sup> Howard, "How Accurate IS Ridley Scott's Napoleon? From Marie Antoinette's Hair to Shooting the Pyramids With..."



Figure 3: Painting of a more accurate depiction of the day Marie Antoinette was executed.<sup>9</sup>

One of the most important events that the movie did depict, the Battle of Toulon, was the battle that made him into the youngest general in France. Toulon was a major port city in the south of France, where many rebels who were against the new republic were being helped out with the aid of the allied forces.<sup>10</sup> It also was one of the major naval bases in France, where rebels ended up welcoming British ships, giving control of the port to the British commanders.<sup>11</sup> The film depicts Napoleon doing reconnaissance of La Tour Royale, the fort at Toulon, and the

<sup>9</sup> Harrison W. Mark, "Trial and Execution of Marie Antoinette," *World History Encyclopedia*, Last modified November 07, 2022, <https://www.worldhistory.org/article/2099/trial-and-execution-of-marie-antoinette/>.

<sup>10</sup> Harrison W. Mark, "Siege of Toulon," *World History Encyclopedia*, February 15, 2023, <https://www.worldhistory.org/article/2171/siege-of-toulon/>.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Wilde, "Napoleon and the Siege of Toulon 1793," ThoughtCo, Last modified March 4, 2019, <https://www.thoughtco.com/napoleon-and-the-siege-of-toulon-1221693#:~:text=The%20siege%20of%20Toulon%20in,the%20greatest%20generals%20in%20history.>

harbor, with the British army and their navy patrolling the area. He is seen walking and monitoring, as a voice-over is heard of Napoleon reading a letter he wrote to his brother, where he explains to his brother how this battle would make the French leadership not look down on them based on their Corsican background.

The film only shows the British as being the main party in the fort; in reality, the Spanish and the Dutch also took part in the battle, which is what Scott leaves out.<sup>12</sup> The cinematic battle scene was impressive, though, with the cinematography being very well done. In it, during the dead of night, the Revolutionary forces are stealthily approaching the fort that the British are occupying, while the British are seen drinking and having a good time, not knowing what is coming. Then, a fuse is lit and the gate explodes, followed by mortars being fired, catching the British by complete surprise. The Revolutionary forces are then seen charging the fort, climbing up ladders. At the end of the Battle of Toulon, when daylight comes, Napoleon's brother, Lucien, is shown, promoting him to the rank of Brigadier General. Scott does a good job showing that moment, although the lighting of the fuse is historically inaccurate. The film shows a line fuse, like one that would be used in modernity and not during the French Revolution, causing a misconception of military technology. In reality, they would have used a barrel of gunpowder and left a trail of it, not a line that is easy to set up.

Another scene in the film is the portrayal of Maximilien Robespierre's (1758-1794) demise. The film shows Paul Barras (1755-1829), a French politician, played by actor Tahar Rahim (b. 1981), accusing Robespierre, a French lawyer and statesman, played by Sam Troughton (b. 1977), of being a tyrant due to his actions during the Reign of Terror (1793-1794), in which Barras accuses him of declaring himself as judge, jury, and executioner. The film then depicts Robespierre trying to run away by going up to the second floor of the National Convention, which is where he

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<sup>12</sup>Mark, "Siege of Toulon."



shoots himself but fails. In fact, it did not happen like that. On July 26, 1793, Robespierre went to the National Convention, claiming to have a new list of suspected persons within the National Convention and in the Committee of Public Safety.<sup>13</sup> When he refused to give names, the whole room went into an uproar. Robespierre was able to get away from the National Convention and fled to the Hotel de Ville. It was at that moment when the National Convention declared him an outlaw and tyrant. At 2 a.m. Robespierre tried to fire the pistol on the side of his head, but he missed and shot his jaw instead. He would be sentenced to death the next day.<sup>14</sup>

### ***The Directory Period***

A portion of the film that was well orchestrated was where a Survivor's Ball, or bal des victimes, is portrayed. The balls, which take place near the end of the Reign of Terror, portrays survivors, mainly from elite backgrounds, who are watching an act, as a musical piece is being sung, with the crowd laughing and having a good time. The song, "La Guillotine Permanente," is a well-known French Revolution song. Many of the women have had their hair cut short and they are wearing red necklaces/bands around their necks, representing their loved ones who were guillotined. What is historically inaccurate about this scene, however, is the meeting of Napoleon and Josephine (1763-1814), born Marie Joséphe Rose Tascher de La Pagerie, historically known as Josephine de Beauharnais, future Empress of France, played by British actress Vanessa Kirby (b. 1988). Scott shows them meeting at the Survivor's Ball; in reality, they were introduced to each other by a mutual friend of Napoleon.<sup>15</sup> Of course the two end up marrying each other after the encounter, both in the movie and in history.

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<sup>13</sup> Harrison W. Mark, "Maximilien Robespierre," *World History Encyclopedia*, January 11, 2023. [https://www.worldhistory.org/Maximilien\\_Robespierre/](https://www.worldhistory.org/Maximilien_Robespierre/).

<sup>14</sup> Mark, "Maximilien Robespierre."

<sup>15</sup> Nathan Smith, "The Real History Behind Empress Joséphine in Ridley Scott's 'Napoleon'," *Smithsonian Magazine*, November 21, 2023,



Figure 4: Actor Joaquin Phoenix as Emperor Napoleon I and British actress, Vanessa Kirby, as Empress Josephine.<sup>16</sup>

The film then depicts Napoleon's campaign in Egypt. In a letter to Josephine, he writes how he walks in the same footsteps of Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar, as he leads his forces in Egypt. The film shows Napoleon looking up at the Great Sphinx, and Mamluk forces standing in front of the Great Pyramids. Scott then shows Napoleon firing cannons at the pyramids, which is arguably the biggest inaccuracy of the entire movie. Napoleon did not shoot his cannons at the Great Pyramids<sup>17</sup> because there would be archeological evidence of this event and it would be in every

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<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-real-history-behind-empress-josephine-in-ridley-scotts-napoleon-180983290/>.

<sup>16</sup> Rachel Ulatowski, "Why Ridley Scott's Napoleon Is More Interested in Joséphine than 'Battlefields' or 'Sex Scenes,'" *ScreenRant*, November 24, 2023, <https://screenrant.com/napoleon-movie-josephine-story-why-ridley-scott-response/>.

<sup>17</sup> Zack Sharf, "Ridley Scott Tells off French Critics Who Dislike 'Napoleon': 'The French Don't Even like Themselves,'" *Variety*, November 20, 2023, <https://variety.com/2023/film/news/ridley-scott-slams-french-napoleon-reviews-1235801660/>.

history textbook today. The real Battle of the Pyramids (July 21, 1798), where Napoleon fought Mamluk forces in the French Invasion of Egypt (1798-1801), occurred nine miles away from the pyramids.



*Figure 5: Scott portrays the Great Pyramids being hit by French artillery while Napoleon was facing the Mamluks during the Battle of the Pyramids (July 21, 1798), which is a misinterpretation of the actual events that took place.<sup>18</sup>*

### ***The Depiction of Napoleon and Josephine's Relationship: Hollywood vs Facts***

For most of the middle part of the film, Scott revolves the movie around the relationship that Napoleon had with Josephine, in regard to them meeting one another, to their divorce, and until her death in 1814. Scott makes it seem like Napoleon is older than Josephine, due to the age gap between Phoenix and Kirby, when in reality, Josephine was older than Napoleon by just a few years. Josephine, born into an aristocratic family, had a bad relationship with her first husband, Viscount Alexandre de Beauharnais (1760-

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<sup>18</sup> Oli Welsh, "Did Napoleon Really Shoot a Pyramid? Ridley Scott Says Sure, Why Not," *Polygon*, July 10, 2023, <https://www.polygon.com/23789626/napoleon-trailer-ridley-scott-joaquin-phoenix-pyramids>.

1794), because of his unfaithfulness and multiple affairs. They, however, had two children, a son, Eugène (1781-1824), and daughter, Hortense (1783-1837). Beauharnais would eventually be arrested and become a victim of the Reign of Terror, being sentenced to be killed by guillotine, while Josephine was imprisoned. After being released, she had many affairs with political leaders, including a young Napoleon Bonaparte. Despite her being several years older than him, the two hit it off, eventually getting married.<sup>19</sup> In Scott's movie, after the Reign of Terror is over, there is a scene where people who were imprisoned, cheer as they free themselves from a giant single cell, with a woman dressed in green cloak among them, walking out; it then transitions to the woman walking all alone on the empty streets, looking around at the mess. This is supposed to be Josephine, as she looks around, flabbergasted with what she is seeing, wondering what to do next.

When Napoleon and Josephine finally start dating each other, Napoleon visits her home to give her son his father's sword, which is just a random sword Napoleon picks up from the armory that looks like a sword held by an officer. They are then seen at a café, enjoying the view of the streets and each other's company, with Josephine giggling towards Napoleon, while he gives her a smile. The film makes it seem like they are in love, but in reality, it was far from that.

After getting married, both Napoleon and Josephine had their share of affairs in real life, especially while Napoleon was fighting in Egypt. In the film, Napoleon is informed by one of his men that Josephine has been sleeping with Hippolyte Charles (1773-1837), played by Jannis Niewöhner. Napoleon, himself, had also taken in a lover, who was the wife of a junior army officer in actual events.<sup>20</sup> The officer reveals that he came across the

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<sup>19</sup> Rachel Ulatowski, "Why Ridley Scott's Napoleon Is More Interested in Joséphine..."

<sup>20</sup> Nathan Smith, "The Real History Behind Empress Joséphine in Ridley Scott's 'Napoleon,'" *Smithsonian Magazine*, November 21, 2023,

information by letters written to him by Josephine's lady in waiting, Lucille, portrayed by Riana Duce. When Napoleon returns to his home after abandoning his men in Egypt, he demands to know where Josephine is, to which a servant responds that she is in Lyon. The next scene shows Josephine returning home, her belongings packed up and outside in the rain, while whimpering out of shock. The next scene moves to her sitting in a chair, in the parlor, while Napoleon is belittling her, asking her how she could hurt him like this. He goes on to say that without him, she is nothing.

The pivotal moment of their marriage comes when Josephine fails to provide Napoleon with an heir to his throne, to take his place as Emperor of the French. The film shows them trying to conceive, yet Josephine cannot bear a single child. At dinner, Napoleon threatens Josephine, saying that if she does not bear him a child that night, then he will divorce her. Josephine then belittles him by asking if all the intercourse they did was not enough and they throw food at each other, until she gets up and goes to her room. Napoleon then enters the room and the two of them start to have intercourse. According to Nathan Smith, culture writer for *Smithsonian Magazine*, Napoleon holds Josephine responsible for the couple's infertility.<sup>21</sup> In the film, Napoleon's mother, Letizia (c.1750-1836), played by Sinéad Cusack (b. 1948), is shown telling Napoleon to sleep with a younger woman in order to see who was at fault of why Josephine was not able to bear any children; when the girl is pregnant, Napoleon looks disbelieving towards Josephine, as if he still cared and loved her. Napoleon then decides to get a divorce.

The annulment ceremony is different between the film and historical reality. In the film, the annulment takes place inside a church, with Josephine and Napoleon surrounded by their family and officials of the court, such as ambassadors and military

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<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-real-history-behind-empress-josephine-in-ridley-scotts-napoleon-180983290/>.

<sup>21</sup> Nathan Smith, "The Real History behind Empress Joséphine in Ridley Scott's 'Napoleon.'"

officials. Napoleon is shown reading his portion of the divorce with ease, while Josephine hesitates after the first couple of sentences. Napoleon then grabs her by her shoulders, telling her that this is for her country and her people, and slaps her, as if to tell her to get it together. When she starts over, she does not hesitate. According to Smith, the actual annulment took place in the throne room of Tuileries Palace, Le Palais des Tuileries, in Paris.<sup>22</sup> As Josephine read her part, it was said that she began to falter and sob, in which she asked if someone could finish reading the statement for her.<sup>23</sup> This is completely different from how it was depicted in the film, with Josephine being able to read it fully without asking for anyone's help.



*Figure 6: The painting of the divorce of Emperor Napoleon and Empress Josephine, titled, "The Divorce of the Empress Josephine," by Henri Frederic Schopin, 1846.<sup>24</sup>*

Even though they are divorced, Scott depicts the two of them as being on good terms. While the Russian Campaign was

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<sup>22</sup> Smith, "The Real History."

<sup>23</sup> Smith, "The Real History."

<sup>24</sup> Nathan Smith, "The Real History behind Empress Joséphine in Ridley Scott's 'Napoleon.'"

going on, there are overlapping voiceovers of Napoleon reciting letters that he had written to Josephine throughout his campaign, even though she is living in her château, living the rest of her days. After marrying Archduchess Marie Louise of Austria (1791-1847), played by Anna Mawn (b. 1997), and giving birth to a son, Napoleon François Joseph Charles Bonaparte (1811-1832), Napoleon visits Josephine and allows her to carry the child, where she is shown speaking softly to him, telling him how he will accomplish great things.

When Napoleon was first exiled to the island of Elba, off the coast of Italy, Josephine became ill. Napoleon is shown arriving in France, after escaping from Elba, and goes to Josephine, who is sitting in her room, being examined by a doctor, looking very weak. She is advised to go to bed, to get plenty of rest. Hortense, her daughter, comforts her, while Josephine says that Napoleon is on his way. It then shows her lying in bed still weak and not really being able to speak. Upon returning home and finding himself too late, as Josephine has passed away, a distraught Napoleon questions Hortense about Josephine's last moments; Hortense mentions that Josephine kept all of his letters written to her. Historically, it is argued that when Napoleon went into exile, he did not forget about her, with his last words being her name when he died in 1821.<sup>25</sup>

### ***Cinematography of the Battles Portrayed***

From Toulon to Waterloo, Scott shows his artistic skills when depicting battle scenes, especially with how a battle during the Napoleonic War would have looked like. Napoleon's genius is shown at the Battle of Austerlitz (1805), where he lets the Austro-Russian forces attack his camp. Napoleon then sends a wave of infantrymen, jumping out of trenches, to rush the Austro-Russian forces, before sending a flank of calvary towards them. The Austro-Russians retreat to a frozen lake, where Napoleon

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<sup>25</sup> Nathan Smith, "The Real History behind Empress Joséphine in Ridley Scott's 'Napoleon.'"

unleashes his final blow by firing cannons onto the frozen lake. Many Austro-Russians drown in the cold, freezing water. The Battle of Borodino (1812) is silent, with only the soundtrack playing over Napoleon's forces, who are facing off with the Russians in an open field with infantry, cannons, and charging calvary, with Napoleon leading the cavalry charge. The Battle of Waterloo (1815) depicts open fields, with trenches made, with cannons mounted on a little hill, and with the command post in the middle on top of the hill. The most accurate portrayal of the battle comes from the Brits' famous square formation when they battled the French cavalry. The Duke of Wellington was very complex in making sure that the French cavalry would not take the advantage as they had been doing throughout the wars.<sup>26</sup> Scott does a good job with this, showing the way how the British were able to quickly get in formation and ward off the French cavalry.

### ***Criticism of the Movie and Scott's Response***

There were concerns and controversies over the accuracy of the movie. Zack Sharf, digital news director for Variety.com argues that Scott shrugged off negative reviews of the film, citing French critics calling it "Barbie and Ken Under the Empire," harkening to the film, *Barbie*, being released a few months prior.<sup>27</sup> The French critics probably viewed *Napoleon* as a way of erasing the facts about Napoleon and Josephine. Patrice Gueniffey, a French historian, makes the claim that Scott made the film to be "very anti-French and very pro-British," in his rewrite of history.<sup>28</sup> In Scott's response to a BBC interview, he states, "The French don't even like themselves. The audience that I showed it to in Paris,

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<sup>26</sup> "History of the British Infantry Square." Stuart Briggs. Accessed May 25, 2024. <https://www.stuartbriggs.co.uk/history-of-the-british-infantry-square/>.

<sup>27</sup> Zack Sharf, "Ridley Scott Tells off French Critics Who Dislike 'Napoleon': 'The French Don't Even like Themselves,'" *Variety*, November 20, 2023, <https://variety.com/2023/film/news/ridley-scott-slams-french-napoleon-reviews-1235801660/>.

<sup>28</sup> Zack Sharf, "Ridley Scott Tells off French Critics Who Dislike 'Napoleon'."



they loved it.”<sup>29</sup> There are probably people in France who think that Scott did not do an accurate portrayal of Napoleon, since this is their history; they also probably believe Scott was just pushing his British perspectives into it. In an interview with Total Film, Scott states how he had made many historical films and how he had asked himself questions such as the accuracy of things.<sup>30</sup> In regard to his film, *Kingdom of Heaven*, he responds ““Were you there? That’s the f\*cking answer.””<sup>31</sup> It’s quite fascinating that Scott would give such an answer to an actual historian, who isn’t named in the article, who knows a thing or two about what happened in Jerusalem having studied it. Was Ridley Scott there when Napoleon is believed to have fired his cannons at the Great Pyramids of Giza? Was he there at Marie Antoinette’s execution and did you see Napoleon there? Was he there during Robespierre’s downfall, where he apparently only went up to the second floor of the National Convention, and shot himself? In the end, though, *Napoleon* was made purely for entertainment, and it completely gets rid of the historical significance of Napoleon.

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<sup>29</sup> Zack Sharf, “Ridley Scott Tells off French Critics Who Dislike ‘Napoleon’.”

<sup>30</sup> Zack Sharf, “Ridley Scott Tells off French Critics Who Dislike ‘Napoleon’.”

<sup>31</sup> Zack Sharf, “Ridley Scott Tells off French Critics Who Dislike ‘Napoleon’.”

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### **Author Bio**

Martin Emmanuel Perez is currently finishing up his first year in the history M.A. program at California State University, San Bernardino. Obtaining his bachelor of arts in history in 2020 and teaching credentials in social science at the end of Fall 2021 from the same institution, Martin has developed his love for history even more. Although he has a love of world history, his academic interests mainly focus on East Asian history, mainly Korean history. He developed a love for East Asia when he arrived at CSUSB for his undergraduate years. Having traveled to East Asia twice, South Korea twice and most recently Japan in the Summer 2023, Martin's knowledge of Asian history has grown and made him interested in learning more of the region. He hopes to continue on to earn a PhD and teach East Asian history to students who find interest in the region, specifically Korea. Martin is currently working as a resident substitute teacher at his alma mater, San Jacinto High School, located in his hometown of San Jacinto, CA.

