



The Napoleonic Wars (Smithsonian History of Warfare)

By *Gunther Rothenberg*

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This vividly illustrated history of the Napoleonic Wars documents the wars' origins in the French Revolution, narrates Napoleon's victories at Austerlitz and Jena, and concludes with his defeats in the Iberian peninsula, Russia, and finally at Waterloo. Author Gunther E. Rothenberg describes how Napoleon transformed interstate warfare into a system of relentless conquest, creating a military superpower on a scale not seen since the Roman Empire. Though eventually defeated, Napoleon's model of conquest set a pattern that was to be revived by modern totalitarian states, and their opponents.

- A sweeping examination of the rise, triumph, and eventual downfall of Napoleon, a man whose military genius forever changed the face of war.
- Analysis of Napoleon's system of waging war, and the strategies that allowed him to create a singularly powerful army.
- A look at the profound influence of Napoleonic conquest on warfare of the modern era.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Military historian Gunther Rothenberg provides a detailed account of the Napoleonic Wars in this installment of Cassell's multivolume series covering the history of warfare. The treatment is predominantly military rather than social. The matter-of-fact, dispassionate text is rich in tactical details and statistics, augmented by contemporary paintings, well-designed maps, and diagrams. The actions of the protagonists' commanders are also critically assessed, with much attention given to Napoleon himself, stressing the power of his charisma but showing that his insistence on sole control ultimately proved a weakness. Significantly, *The Napoleonic Wars* aims to show that, far from being the end of a military era, this was a period marking the origins of modern warfare. Developments in army organization, strategy, and weaponry gained from the experience of over 20 years of war are progressively described. The main points of Rothenberg's argument, that Napoleonic strategies continued to be followed and that the sheer scale of war was revolutionary, are summed up in the brief epilogue. The bulk of the broadly chronological text is uncluttered by too much speculation; military-history buffs will appreciate *The Napoleonic Wars* for its clarity. --Karen Tiley, *Amazon.co.uk*

About the Author

Gunther E. Rosenberg was a professor of history at Purdue University and has written several books on Prussian history.

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Anthony Robin:

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