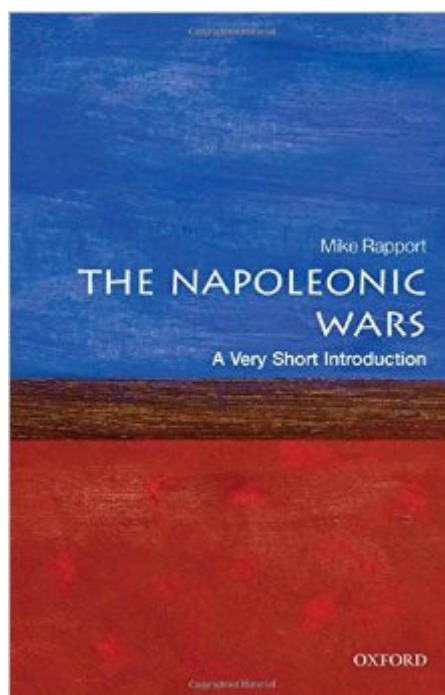


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The Napoleonic Wars: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)



Synopsis

The Napoleonic Wars have an all-important place in the history of Europe, leaving their mark on European and world societies in a variety of ways. In many European countries, they provided the stimulus for radical social and political change--particularly in Spain, Germany, and Italy--and are frequently viewed in these places as the starting point of their modern histories. In this Very Short Introduction, Mike Rapport provides a compact overview of these pivotal wars. He begins with the French Revolution and the French Revolutionary wars of 1792-1803, which set the stage for the rise of Napoleon, and then examines the Napoleonic Wars in two acts--the years in which the French dominated the European landscape and the years when an allied Europe fought back, leading to Napoleon's final defeat at the Battle of Waterloo. Rapport sheds light on the social, political, and institutional aspects of warfare in the Napoleonic era, and he provides a fascinating discussion of the ways and means with which these wars were fought, looking at the tactics, strategies, and weaponry of the time. Finally, he illuminates the significance of the wars, and their legacy, in both specific national contexts and from a wider global perspective.

About the Series: Oxford's Very Short Introductions series offers concise and original introductions to a wide range of subjects--from Islam to Sociology, Politics to Classics, Literary Theory to History, and Archaeology to the Bible. Not simply a textbook of definitions, each volume in this series provides trenchant and provocative--yet always balanced and complete--discussions of the central issues in a given discipline or field. Every Very Short Introduction gives a readable evolution of the subject in question, demonstrating how the subject has developed and how it has influenced society. Eventually, the series will encompass every major academic discipline, offering all students an accessible and abundant reference library. Whatever the area of study that one deems important or appealing, whatever the topic that fascinates the general reader, the Very Short Introductions series has a handy and affordable guide that will likely prove indispensable.

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Customer Reviews

This judicious, well-written book provides a very good summary of the entire 1789-1815 period of European History (not just the later part dominated by Napoleon) Its main emphasis is on the complex political history of the period, with lesser attention to economic, social, and military history. It can serve well to refresh the memories of those who have studied the period before, to help to integrate and set in context accounts of particular parts of the overall story, or provide an attractive introduction. The Further Reading section at the back is an excellent introduction to many of the best books on the period and its individual aspects. The lack of maps is an unfortunate omission, particularly for those relying on it as an introduction. It would have been better to leave out the illustrations (few of which contribute much) and replace them with a few well-selected maps.

Mike Rapport tells us why these wars were set to break out even before the French Revolution and why the various coalitions failed to push them to a conclusion. There is a lot of drama in the Napoleonic wars and they were pivotal in the development of world power relationships, but to understand them you need a broader perspective, and Rapport gives that. Interestingly the tactics and strategy that led to Napoleon's signal successes were worked out under the Ancien Régime, something I had not known. Essential reading if you are interested in this period. Well written too.

The little book that could in a short review just like the title says; provided historical review of what caused the Napoleonic wars. Concentrating in a summary form on the political history that led to the Napoleonic war; though some of it I disagree with probably due to the brevity of the book. It also looks at the economic, social, and military history though to a much lesser extent. What this book does brilliantly is to provide an attractive introduction in to this period, a good refresh, and an understanding of this period of time. The series of Very short Introductions by Mike Rapport is well worth the investment, for the Armature, and those looking to refresh their memory of the period that his books cover. I gave it 5 stars because it really deserved it in my humble opinion; it is an excellent Very Short Introduction

This little book provides an excellent overview of the causes, major events, and the results of the Napoleonic Wars. This is a very good contribution to "A very Short Introduction Series" and provides an excellent summary of one of the major epics of modern history. This covers a span of time that marks one of the major turning points of European History and provides the prologue for many events of the 19th, 20th, and 21st Centuries.

I very much enjoyed reading this very short introduction to the Napoleonic Wars. The book's title is SLIGHTLY deceptive in that it also covers the Revolutionary Wars that preceded the Napoleonic Wars, but that is splitting hairs. The book is well written, and although it indeed helps if you are familiar with the French Revolution's particulars, it isn't absolutely necessary due to the orientation piece at the front part of the work. It is well written, both clearly and logically laid out. The book does not emphasize details of various battles, but being an overview, weaves the story of the various wars (and there were plenty of them) that immediately followed the French Revolution, and how those wars eventually reshaped the political and cultural landscape of Europe by about the third decade of the 19th century. I can highly recommend it as one of the very well done "Very Short Introductions" (I've read about ten to twenty of them at this point), and if you are interested in French history, it's a must. Five Stars.

Just what I needed. I have read long, long biographies of Napoleon but this helps to give an overview. I am collecting toy metal soldiers for my grandson and it is difficult to understand who was on whose side at various times during the Napoleonic Wars. This has been a great help. I do not know how the various armies kept track of "the enemy" since they all had such colorful uniforms many of them similar.....

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