



The Rise Of Napoleon Bonaparte

By Robert Asprey

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Asprey, a former marine officer and military historian (Frederick the Great), has produced the first volume of a new two-volume biography of a man who was not only one of the greatest generals in history, but also instrumental in the formation of modern Europe. Covering the period from Napoleon's birth in 1769 to his brilliant victory at Austerlitz in 1805, Asprey charts his subject's rise through military school and his path through the treacherous byways of the French Revolution. Though there is a tendency in the earlier portions of this book to reduce the Revolution to a reign of terror, making it difficult to explain why Napoleon would have been such a fervent follower of the radical Jacobins, Asprey generally provides clear explanations of the political environment in which Napoleon acted. The story of the campaign in Italy that brought the young general his first fame is well told in its military, political and diplomatic aspects, and Asprey's fascinating account of the campaign in Egypt is particularly valuable. Here the author corrects misconceptions of Napoleon's actions, such as the notorious "abandonment" of the French army in Egypt. The military aspects of the story tend to overwhelm the narrative in the final chapters, and a summary chapter would have been helpful. But the chapters are bite-sized, and the text is easy, so this book should find a wide readership among those who enjoy biography, history and military history. Illus. (Dec.)

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From [Booklist](#)

It is not easy to write an objective biography about a historical giant like Napoleon. His admirers hail his military genius and his indispensable role in destroying the tottering *ancien régime* throughout western Europe. His detractors emphasize his fatal conceit, his contempt for those who did not share his vision, and his perversion of republican ideals for his own aggrandizement. Asprey is a marine veteran and military historian. However, in this first installment of a projected two-volume biography, Asprey concentrates as much on Napoleon's personality development as he does on his military exploits. Asprey is clearly fascinated by his subject, but he reveals Napoleon to be a remarkable but deeply flawed man. Both his arrogance and his deviousness are evident here, but so are his extraordinary talents, including an uncanny ability to understand and to connect with the concerns of ordinary soldiers. This is a superbly written and exciting chronicle of the rise of a historical figure who remains a fascinating, compelling enigma. *Jay Freeman*
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Review

"A superbly written and exciting chronicle of the rise of a historical figure that remains a fascinating, compelling enigma." -- *Booklist*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Patricia Rodrigue:

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