

[PDF] The Peasant Prince: Thaddeus Kosciuszko And The Age Of Revolution

Alex Storzynski - pdf download free book



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Description:

From **Publishers Weekly** Prize-winning journalist Storzynski pulls military strategist and engineer Thaddeus Kosciuszko (1746-1817) back from the brink of obscurity by including almost every documented detail to create the first comprehensive look at a man who once famously symbolized rebellion. His were the plans sold to the British by Benedict Arnold. And Kosciuszko's years of devotion to the American cause framed his efforts to transform Poland into a self-governing republic freed from the oversight of Russia's interests. He antagonized Catherine the Great and,

later, Napoleon. Kosciuszko rallied the first Jewish military force since biblical times to fight for Polish independence, and consistently supported equality and education for peasants, Jews, Muslim Tatars and American slaves—which earned him the devotion of the masses and lectures by the upper classes. Readers of military and American history should take note: the minute details will enthrall devotees. Casual readers will benefit from Storozynski's expert crafting of a readable and fact-filled story that pulls readers into the immediacy of the revolutionary era's partisan and financial troubles. (May)

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Review **2010 FRAUNCES TAVERN MUSEUM BOOK AWARD WINNER** "Despite his heroic efforts, Kosciuszko's fatherland had to wait a century after his death before regaining independence from Russia. The world would have to wait even longer for an accessible, soundly researched, English-language biography. With "The Peasant Prince," Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Alex Storozynski has filled the void. And what a tale he has to tell. A melodramatic, foiled elopement deprived the young Kosciuszko of the love of his life and led him to cross the Atlantic and sign up with George Washington's ragtag rebel army. The Polish émigré engineered the network of fortifications around West Point that Benedict Arnold unsuccessfully tried to betray to the British and that helped keep the main British army bottled up in New York City. Kosciuszko also played a key role in the wilderness campaigns that ended in the crucial American victory at Saratoga. And he made a triumphal return to his native Poland in time to lead a doomed but heroic national struggle against Russia and overwhelming odds. All this and a supporting cast that amounts to a Who's Who of 18th-century American and European history. In America, those who knew Kosciuszko included Benjamin Franklin (who helped recruit him); George Washington (who had trouble getting Kosciuszko's name right but hailed him as a military "engineer of eminence"); Thomas Jefferson (who called him "as pure a son of liberty as I have ever known"); and Thomas Paine (who, like Kosciuszko, was granted honorary French citizenship by the revolutionary regime but spoke out against its brutal excesses). In Europe, Kosciuszko's acquaintances included Napoleon Bonaparte (who tried—and failed—to use him as a pawn in European power politics) and Catherine the Great (who, after ruthlessly suppressing the Polish insurrection, kept Kosciuszko a political prisoner in Russia until her death in 1796)."—*Wall Street Journal*

"Alex Storozynski has just published "The Peasant Prince: Thaddeus Kosciuszko and the Age of Revolution," a sweeping, colorful, and absorbing biography that should restore Kosciuszko to his proper place in history. President of the Kosciuszko Foundation, which promotes Polish-American educational exchanges, Storozynski is also a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who knows how to tell a good story. In his account, Kosciuszko—as soldier in America and then a revolutionary in his homeland—exemplified some of the best ideals of his era. He also experienced some of its worst betrayals and disappointments. ... Emancipation was 'a controversial idea ahead of his time,' Storozynski writes—just, as this stirring biography makes clear, like the man himself."—*Newsweek.com*

"In *The Peasant Prince* Alex Storozynski fills a gap in our picture of the American Revolution, and relates it to the worldwide struggle for freedom. Thaddeus Kosciuszko was a noble soul with few options, a friend of liberty in an age of aggression and tyranny. Storozynski shows how he navigated a life of romance and realpolitik, keeping his principles intact."—Richard Brookhiser, senior editor of the *National Review*, and author of *What Would the Founders Do? Our Questions, Their Answers*

"Prize-winning journalist Storozynski pulls military strategist and engineer Thaddeus Kosciuszko (1746-1817) back from the brink of obscurity by including almost every documented detail to create the first comprehensive look at a man who once famously symbolized rebellion. His were the plans sold to the British by Benedict Arnold. And Kosciuszko's years of devotion to the American cause

framed his efforts to transform Poland into a self-governing republic freed from the oversight of Russia's interests. He antagonized Catherine the Great and, later, Napoleon. Kosciuszko rallied the first Jewish military force since biblical times to fight for Polish independence, and consistently supported equality and education for peasants, Jews, Muslim Tatars and American slaves—which earned him the devotion of the masses and lectures by the upper classes. Readers of military and American history should take note: the minute details will enthrall devotees. Casual readers will benefit from Storozynski's expert crafting of a readable and fact-filled story that pulls readers into the immediacy of the revolutionary era's partisan and financial troubles.”—*Publishers Weekly*

“*The Peasant Prince* is an objective history that is needed in today’s America and Poland. The hero of Alex’s book is one of the fathers of modern democracy in the same mold as Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Lincoln.”—Adam Michnik, *Solidarnosc* activist and editor in chief of *Gazeta Wyborcza*

“In a meticulously researched work, Storozynski greatly enhances our understanding of Kosciuszko’s personality and motivations by investigating the Pole’s relationship and feelings toward Africans, Jews, and peasants. His contribution advances our knowledge of this complex character whom Jefferson considered the ‘purest son of liberty’ he ever knew.”—James Pula, Purdue University

“Tapping new sources in archives in Poland and Switzerland, Alex Storozynski provides a fresh perspective on Thaddeus Kosciuszko, the Polish engineer most responsible for the construction of Fortress West Point, General Washington’s ‘key of America.’”—Colonel James M. Johnson, U.S. Army (Ret.), military historian of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, and former chief of Military History, U.S. Military Academy at West Point

“*The Peasant Prince* is a testament to a great man and an important addition to world history.”—Byron E. Price, Texas Southern University

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