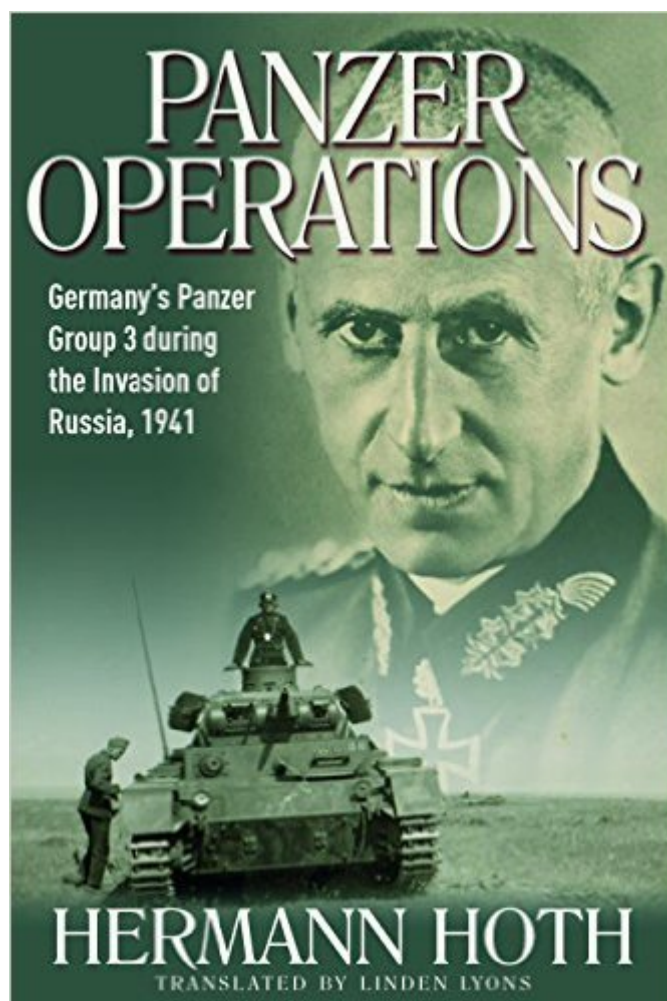


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Panzer Operations: Germany's Panzer Group 3 During The Invasion Of Russia, 1941



Synopsis

This book, originally published in German in 1956, has now been translated into English, unveiling a wealth of both experiences and analysis about Operation Barbarossa, perhaps the most important military campaign of the 20th century. Hermann Hoth led Germany's 3rd Panzer Group in Army Group Center in tandem with Guderian's 2nd Group during the invasion of the Soviet Union, and together those two daring panzer commanders achieved a series of astounding victories, encircling entire Russian armies at Minsk, Smolensk, and Vyazma, all the way up to the very gates of Moscow. This work begins with Hoth discussing the use of nuclear weapons in future conflicts. This cool-headed post-war reflection, from one of Nazi Germany's top panzer commanders, is rare enough. But then Hoth dives into his exact command decisions during Barbarossa still the largest continental offensive ever undertaken to reveal new insights into how Germany could, and in his view should, have succeeded in the campaign. Hoth critically analyses the origin, development, and objective of the plan against Russia, and presents the situations confronted, the decisions taken, and the mistakes made by the army's leadership, as the new form of mobile warfare startled not only the Soviets on the receiving end but the German leadership itself, which failed to provide support infrastructure for their panzer army's breakthroughs. Hoth sheds light on the decisive and ever-escalating struggle between Hitler and his military advisers on the question whether, after the Dnieper and the Dvina had been reached, to adhere to the original idea of capturing Moscow. Hitler's momentous decision to divert forces to Kiev and the south only came in late August 1941. He then finally considers in detail whether the Germans, after obliterating the remaining Russian armies facing Army Group Center in Operation Typhoon, could still hope for the occupation of the Russian capital that fall. Hoth concludes his study with several lessons for the offensive use of armored formations in the future. His firsthand analysis, here published for the first time in English, will be vital reading for every student of World War II.

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Customer Reviews

"Panzer Operations: Germany's Panzer Group 3 during the Invasion of Russia, 1941" by Gen. Hermann Hoth (April 2015), which was originally published in German in 1956. As the subtitle of this book states, the battlefield scope of this book focuses on Panzer Group 3 during its invasion of Russia between June-Oct. 1941, although the author does review the "Big Picture" of the overall invasion..Although this book totals 215 pages, 10% of the book is devoted to appendices & bibliography. The author devotes 6 pages to his thoughts regarding the viability of tanks during a possible nuclear war in Europe -- which really don't add much to this book. Fortunately, 16 pages are of nice campaign maps. The author spends several pages analyzing the differences between "operational" versus "strategic" goals versus "tactics" (p.28) and how such thoughts were contemplated by Clausewitz versus Scharnhorst, and how such thoughts influenced the German military mind during the 1870s, WWI, and Hitler.As the author noted: "This book does not purport to be a definitive account of the military history of the Russian campaign" (p.7) ... "In the first few months of the Russian campaign, [the author's] Panzer Group 3 was the middlemost of the three northern German panzer groups".The author noted: "The pros and cons of an attack against Russia are thoroughly described elsewhere" (p,39), but he does devote a couple of pages reviewing how the German campaigns against England (Operation Sealord), and in the Balkans, influenced Hitler's time-schedule in invading Russia (Operation Barbarossa).

• Panzer operations • is a very competent, candid and forthright discussion of the 3rd Panzer Group early battles in Operation Barbarossa seen from the eyes of his daring commander. The book is very clearly written and easy to read and it's great to see that this book is available again.I thought fairly highly of this book (originally published in 1956!), because it allowed me to see the operational events of a highly decorated panzer commander that I knew so little about. Though preferring a little greater depth to these operations, this is still a respectable book and is still recommended.In chapter I (• Introduction •), the author begins his odyssey with explaining German war doctrine and the influence of the-then new weapon • nuclear bomb • over the operations of armored units.In the next chapter (• Background •, 28 pages) general Hoth

introduces us to the origins of the operational plan 'Barbarossa'. He describes how German general staff was confronted with a task of the kind that it had not dealt with for 25 years and shows relevant deployment orders, estimates, assessments of the terrain and political situation, etc. He then proceeds in the next chapters (3-9) to the major battles carried out by his Panzer Group and some adjacent units in the summer of 1941 - Minsk, Smolensk Vyazma, etc. In the 'Conclusion' chapter the author tried, briefly, to explain the reasons for the failure of the campaign against Russia in 1941. Among the issues mentioned are the underestimation of the Russian political-strategic resistance, Hitler's interference in the conduct of the operations and the difference between Hitler's and Army war objectives.

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