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### Salerno: A Military Fiasco

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cant role in winning that victory. Horner's careful research rises above the drums and trumpets style that frequently limits the scope and value of military history, and his effort to view Australia's role in the broader context of a lesser allied power within a great power coalition is both interesting and successful.

STEVEN T. ROSS  
Naval War College

Erickson, John. *The Road to Berlin: Continuing the History of Stalin's War With Germany*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1983. 877pp. \$42.50

In *The Road to Berlin* John Erickson completes his study of Soviet military operations during the Second World War. This monumental work traces Russian campaigns from the counterattack at Stalingrad to the fall of Berlin and the capture of Prague. In addition to detailed operational narratives Erickson also provides a bibliography of such volume and detail that it virtually constitutes a second book.

There is much to learn from Erickson's book. Every major Soviet operation is described in great detail, and it is apparent that Soviet command talent went well beyond the names of the famous generals like Zhukov, Rokossovskii and Konier, who are well-known to Western readers. Generals like Vatutin, Bagramyan and Tolbukhin were able, even brilliant, commanders, who had mastered the art of leading combined arms formations with drive and dash.

Erickson also explores in much detail Stalin's wartime relations with FDR and Churchill and examines the evolution of his policies toward Poland and the Balkans. He also notes that there was a plot to kill or capture the Big Three at Teheran, that the Russians were in fact unprepared to help the 1944 Warsaw rising and that the Soviets were in fact in favor of having allied forces in Italy advance into Austria and northern Yugoslavia in 1945.

Problems with the book include a number of pointless illustrations, too few maps which too often fail to include cities, towns, and rivers mentioned in the text and some minor errors with the German order of battle. The Hermann Göring armored division, for example, was not an SS formation.

Such problems are, however, trivial when compared to Erickson's overall achievement. What Weigley in *Fisenhower's Lieutenants* has done for the US Army in Europe, Erickson has now done for Soviet operations on the Eastern Front. In the future no history of the Russo-German war can be written without reference to Erickson's detailed research and brilliant narrative.

STEVEN T. ROSS  
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Morris, Eric. *Salerno: A Military Fiasco*. New York: Stein and Day, 1983. 358pp. \$19.95

For most Navy and Marine Corps readers, the term amphibious warfare evokes a mental picture of such World War II landings as Tarawa and Iwo Jima. This view is under-

standable because the Pacific war, in large part, was the model on which current US amphibious doctrine was patterned. In the Pacific campaigns, for example, the objectives were typically islands that could be isolated by naval forces and then subjected to intense air and naval gunfire bombardment. The enemy situation—primarily his inability to reinforce—made the need for surprise secondary to the need for a thorough preparation of the beaches and offshore approaches.

Ironically, however, the European landings such as the one described in Eric Morris's *Salerno: A Military Fiasco* may more closely resemble the landings facing amphibious commanders in any future, global war. In the European theater, the amphibious objectives were beachheads on the continent. This fact of geography and the mobile nature of the enemy combined to make isolation of the objective area more tentative than in the Pacific landings as was attainment of sea control and air superiority. These conditions placed a premium on surprise and resulted in a style of amphibious warfare characterized by night landings made with a minimum of air and naval gunfire preparation. Additionally, the combined US-British nature of these landings increased the complexity of a type of operation already known for its complicated character. Operation AVALANCHE, the Allied landing at Salerno, Italy, on 9 September 1943, is a good example of the European style of amphibious warfare.

*Salerno: A Military Fiasco* is an inter-

esting, easily readable account of Operation AVALANCHE. The book is written in a popular style that relies heavily on accounts of the individual activities of participants ranging from the Army Commander to individual riflemen. At times this style makes following the flow of the battle difficult, but it does give the reader a sense of how small, apparently unconnected actions fit together to determine the outcome of a battle. The author also does an excellent job of describing the confusion and uncertainty that attend any large combat action and the effect those factors have on the battle.

Although Operation AVALANCHE was one of the major amphibious operations of World War II, the author concentrates mainly on the land battle for the beachhead. Fortunately, however, students of amphibious warfare will find material of current interest ranging from comments on the command relationships for a combined landing to descriptions of the effectiveness of naval gunfire against tanks and the effect of air-launched smart weapons employed against an amphibious task force.

A number of small errors detract from the overall quality of *Salerno*. None of the errors are significant—incorrect designations for German tanks, for example—but they do tend to distract the reader. In spite of these distractions, however, *Salerno* remains an interesting account of an important step in the evolution of modern amphibious warfare.

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