



# Panzer Operations: Germany's Panzer Group 3 During the Invasion of Russia, 1941 (Die Wehrmacht im Kampf)

By Hermann Hoth

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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 arm'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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### Editorial Review

#### Review

Hoth's writing style is direct and to the point; yet it remains very readable and thought-provoking. He is a commander who cares very deeply about his soldiers and their well-being but also for the mentorship and development of his leaders... I would strongly recommend this book for any leader wanting to clearly understand what command (highlighted by bold, decisive action) entails in an operational context. (*The Military Review*)

#### About the Author

Hermann Hoth (1885-1971) began World War II in command of a motorized corps. During Operation Barbarossa he commander Panzer Group 3 of Army Group Center, and toward the end of 1941 was promoted to command of 17th Army. In June 1942 he was given command of 4th Panzer Army. In 1943, following the battle of Kursk, he was relieved of command. After serving six years in prison following the Nuremberg Trials, Hoth turned to writing and died at age 85 in Goslar, Germany. Linden Lyons holds a master's degree in history from Monash University in Melbourne, Australia. He also studied German at the University of Freiburg and librarianship at the University of Canberra. He is passionate about languages, chess, and fencing, and lives in Melbourne with his family.

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