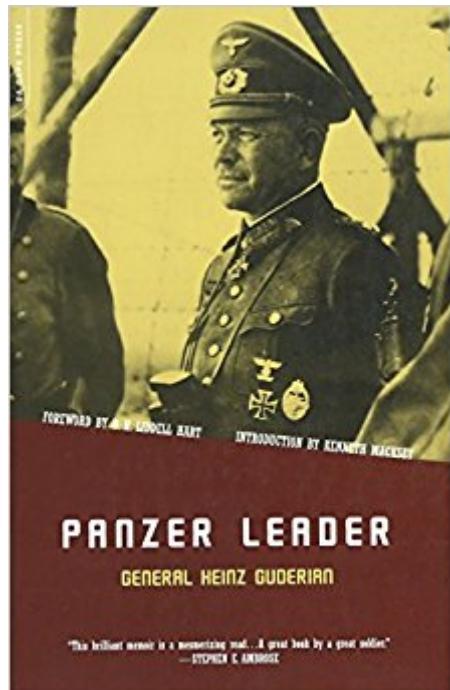


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Panzer Leader



Synopsis

General Heinz Guderian's revolutionary strategic vision and his skill in armored combat brought Germany its initial victories during World War II. Combining Guderian's land offensive with Luftwaffe attacks, the Nazi Blitzkrieg decimated the defenses of Poland, Norway, France and, very neatly, Russia at the war's outset. But in 1941, when Guderian advised that ground forces should take a step back, Hitler dismissed him. In these pages, the outspoken general shares his candid point of view on what would have led Germany to victory, and what ensured that it didn't. In addition to providing a rare inside look at key members of the Nazi party, Guderian reveals in detail how he developed the Panzer tank forces and orchestrated their various campaigns, from the break through at Sedan to his drive to the Channel coast that virtually decided the Battle of France. *Panzer Leader* became a bestseller within one year of its original publication in 1952 and has since been recognized as a classic account of the greatest conflict of our time.

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Customer Reviews

Panzer Leader is a candid and dramatic account of the development and campaigns of the panzer forces that, along with the Luftwaffe, stood at the heart of blitzkrieg; it is also a searing group portrait of the Third Reich's leading personalities as they turned early victory into a protracted, agonizing defeat. }Germany's opening run of victory in World War II was only made possible by the panzer forces that Heinz Guderian (1888-1954), the father of modern tank warfare, had created and trained, and by his audacious leading of those forces from 1939 to 1941. Guderian's breakthrough at Sedan and lightning drive to the Channel coast virtually decided the Battle of France. The drive he led into

the East came close to producing the complete collapse of Russia's armies, but at the end of 1941 Guderian was dismissed for taking a timely step back instead of pandering to Hitler's illusions. He was recalled to service only when Germany's situation had become desperate, and he was eventually made chief of the General Staff when all had become hopeless. Panzer Leader is a candid and dramatic account of the development and campaigns of the panzer forces that, along with the Luftwaffe, stood at the heart of blitzkrieg; it is also a searing group portrait of the Third Reich's leading personalities as they turned early victory into a protracted, agonizing defeat. }

--Larry Petersen
Opening with an excellent foreword which puts you in the mindset of the German General Staff, this book allows you to understand WWII from the German perspective. The book starts off by describing the development of German armoured warfare which arose out of a need for mobile defence, a direct result of the Treaty of Versailles. This gives valuable insight into how the Germans were able to bring about swift victories in Poland and France at the start of the war by using their experiences from re-militarising the Ruhr region and the friendly invasion of Austria. Guderian then gives an account of his campaigns in Poland, France and Russia up to the end of the first year when he was dismissed by Hitler. The account is backed up by sketch maps and you get an impression of what it was like to be there with the difficulties they faced from supplies to weather, the enemy and worst of all with their own high command. Later in the war Guderian is recalled to service to try to reverse the worsening fortunes of the Army and it is this part of the book which is probably the most interesting as you see his constant battles with Hitler and the high command to make them see sense such as not to launch operation Citadel (at Kursk). However in the end sense rarely prevails and you see the disastrous consequences that Guderian has predicted come to light. At the end of this book you come away with a good impression of Guderian and I feel that he was trying to make the best of a bad situation. --Paul R.
A very good book, describing the difficulties of Guderian's battles against the Inept Nazi high command, plus the actual battles he fought in against the allies. He comes across as a good general who didn't mind getting up front to where the fighting was, and seems genuinely worried about the welfare of his troops. He is also critical of the Nazi policy against the Slavic people saying it was a wasted opportunity to rally the Russian people against the threat of communism, instead treating them as slaves instead of allies. Overall a very good book. --Adrian Formann
--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Heinz Guderian (1888–1954) rose through the ranks of the German military to become chief of the general staff. He was also the author of *Achtung, Panzer!* and *With the Tanks in the East and*

West.

Guderian discusses these decisions, and many others, with a cold candor that is remarkable. I should note that no charges were brought against Guderian at any time during the post-war investigations and trials; he was the consummate military man - unaware, until after the war, of the horrors being inflicted on Jews, Poles, Russians, etc. by the SS and other *Party* troops after the military forces had taken a sector on the Eastern Front. By way of criticism, there are times when Guderian's detailed descriptions of tank strategies become a little much for the uneducated reader. But, if one is at all interested in the evolution of the use of armor in wartime I highly recommend reading *Achtung Panzer* before *Panzer Leader*. In the earlier book Guderian presents a cogent analysis of how he persuaded the very reluctant German Army to accept the concept of a mobile battlefield and in *Panzer Leader* he demonstrates how that mobility provided the huge tactical advantage to the blitzkrieg through Holland, Belgium, Luxemburg, and ultimately France that very well should have determined the outcome of the war (see *Dunkirk* above). By the time Germany invaded Russia the surprise of that strategy was gone, but it nonetheless nearly resulted in the capture of Moscow (see above).

Heinz Guderian paints a precise picture of Germany's Military role in Hitler's quest to establish the Third Reich. Detailed information of the concept of blitzkrieg and how it was developed and implemented, and the various characters who effected Germany's efforts give an understanding of why Hitler caused Germany's defeat. Guderian often gives a great deal of exact details that some readers may find either tedious or fascinating.

As a teenager I read *Panzer Leader* multiple times. One of my interests were military simulation games so it was natural to read a book about the development and application of Blitzkrieg by one of its main developers. The book is an excellent read and chronicles the development of armored warfare in Germany before and during WWII. This illustrated version is even better! The added pictures serve to enhance the message of the book as you can actually see images of the events and persons from the book. Definitely worth the extra money for the illustrated version!

The perspective of the professional German soldier, Heinz Guderian, explains how the bitter defeat of WWI lead him to believe that war was necessary. Rising to the rank of general as a result of his experience and writings about the future use of mobile armor his 1937 book became a favorite of

Hitler. Guderian commands the victorious field attack in Poland then designs the attack through the Ardennes in France. His breakthrough into France brings victory in Europe to the Nazi's and Hitler. Guderian is asked once again to lead the Germans against Russia and he commands the 2nd Army. With Moscow within his grasp he discovers the failed leadership of the Nazi's when he is ordered to leave Moscow and battle south for hundreds of miles to take a worthless position at the whim of Hitler. He battles back to the gates of Moscow but the Russian winter defeats his army. He refuses the order from Hitler to fight to the last man and withdraws his men from the senseless war against the elements. Guderian is dismissed from the Army in December 1941 and returns to Germany. The German army never recovers from the loss on the eastern front. This book details the general's view of the war in the order of Sherman or Grant.

If you want to understand why Germany rose and fell, read this fascinating book. Along with "Lost Victories" by von Manstein, Guderian's first hand account of dealing with redtape, lunacy, incompetence, and delusion is both riveting and unfiltered primary reading. A must read for anyone interested in the struggle of the Eastern Front....

I have read the bios of most of the high ranking German leaders, Including Goering (who never got to write an autobiography for obvious reasons), Speer, kesselring, Von Manstein's disjointed memoirs, and "panzer battles" by von Mellenthin. So I can say that "Panzer leader" is one of the better autobiographies among this group and it is top notch. It is very well written, stays on topic of who-what-when and most importantly HOW, and guderian also includes many of his personal perceptions, thoughts and opinions on the battles he fought, the German equipment and tanks vs. the Soviet ones and his view on the German military situation as the war unfolded. Particularly interesting are his views on hitler and his opinion of hitler's amateurish meddling And his (guderian's) constant contention with hitler's bad decisions at every turn. This book is a valuable addition to any serious study of WW2.

The author was an exceptional individual who believed in his Country and did all that he could to defend it. He must have been a brilliant strategist in modern tank warfare and given a free hand could have made it very difficult for the allies to win. This is a sad story of a true patriot who resisted the evils and excess' of Hitler but to no avail.

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