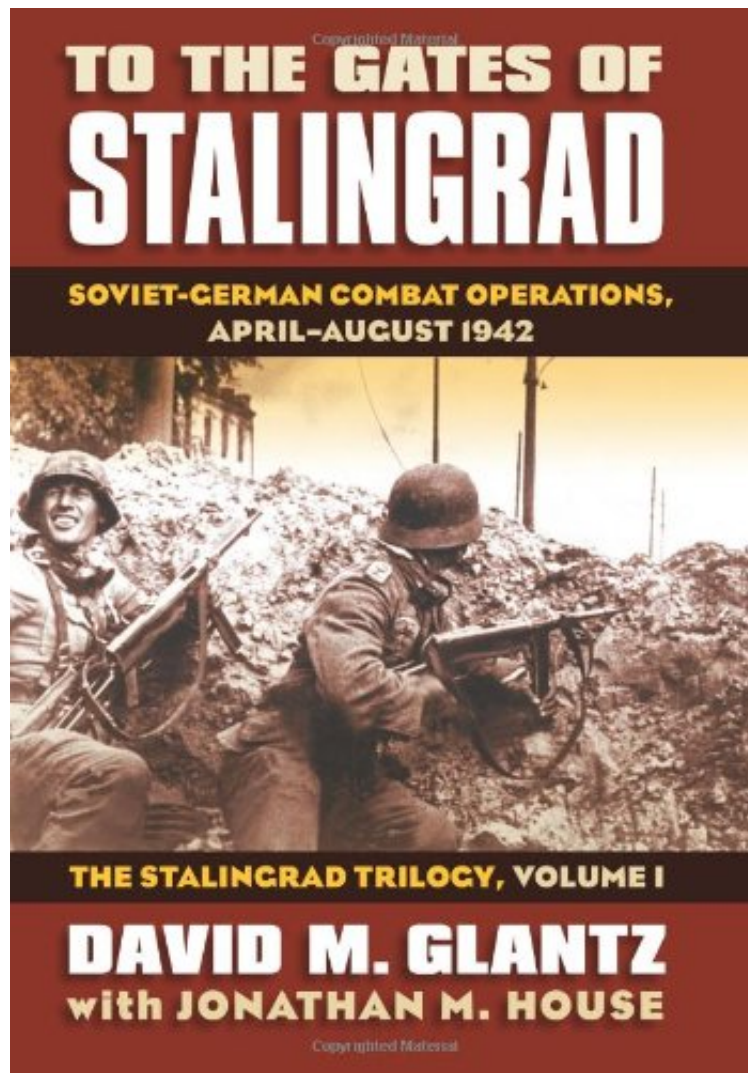


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## To the Gates of Stalingrad: Soviet-German Combat Operations, April-August 1942 (Modern War Studies)

David Glantz, Jonathan M. House  
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David Glantz, Jonathan M. House : To the Gates of Stalingrad: Soviet-German Combat Operations, April-August 1942 (Modern War Studies) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised To the Gates of Stalingrad: Soviet-German Combat Operations, April-August 1942 (Modern War Studies):

13 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Impartial,definitive account of combat which preceded StalingradBy Karun MukherjiGlantz and House are scholars par excellence.They have combined to produce another

excellent book. Rich and lavishly documented account of combat which preceded the arrival of Wehrmacht on the approaches to Stalingrad. I have read books on Operation Case Blue. Paul Carrel's 'Hitler moves East' gives detailed narration but does not go to the extent of this work. Most Historians have been obsessed with explaining Red army's epic defence of Stalingrad while paying scant attention to operations which preceded it. This book ably fills that void. Authors have thoroughly combed official records of both sides including hitherto neglected sources. As a result they have shed new light which profoundly expands and alters our understanding of the subject. Wehrmacht launched Case Blue on June 28, 1942. This was Hitler's bid to seize Stalingrad and oil resources of Grozny, Maikop in the Caucasus. A prelude to it Germans launched a string of preliminary operations: Friedrichus I, II, Wilhelm there by gained additional territory which served as a springboard to unleash their grand offensive. Meanwhile Manstein's 11th army had broken the siege of Sevastopol in Crimea and evicted Soviets from Kerch peninsula: Operation Bustard Hunt. This opened the backdoor to Caucasus but Hitler by shifting Manstein's forces to Leningrad did not exploit opportunity that beckoned him. From Soviet perspective, Stalin thought Germans in summer of 1942 will renew their bid to seize Moscow. Author's have argued Reichel incident had no effect on Stalin's thinking. Soviet dictator disposed his best forces along the Moscow axis. At the same time he did not shrink from bolstering Soviet defences in the south. Authors have divided the Blue operation into 4 phases. Phase 1 was an absolute success. Within a span of 15 days Panzer groupings of Army Group Weichs and Paulus Sixth army in a pincer move smashed and shattered the armies of Soviet Bryansk and Southwestern fronts to reach Voronezh on the western bank of river Don. Phase 2 Hoth's forth Panzer army and Army Group A as first Panzer army completed the encirclement and destruction of Soviet forces in the Donbas region. Phase 3 involved fourth Panzer army now under the operational command of Army Group A with 3 of Army Group B's Panzer corps co-operating with Kleist First Panzer army in outflanking and defeating Soviet southern Front which defended the approaches to Rostov. By this time Hitler had split the Army Group South into two: A and B. Fourth phase saw penetration of Wehrmacht into Caucasus, a zone of war again ignored by most historians. Authors focus attention on futile German drive to seize Stalingrad in a rapier-like thrust. Stalin managed to slow the Wehrmacht by erecting a wall of armies along the western bank of Don river. Judging from a strategic perspective Blue operation cannot be deemed an unqualified success. Why? Hitler elated by the fall of Rostov chopped the battle into two halves. He now wanted Wehrmacht to seize Stalingrad and oil resources of Caucasus simultaneously which entailed the dissipation of German strength across a sprawling territory. I feel this ruined the campaign. Splitting of effort resulted in Germans being strong nowhere. Secondly, Red army's ability to raise fresh divisions. As authors point out no sooner Germans smash 25 Soviet divisions another 50 divisions take their place. Sounds startling! Yes, Germans underestimated Russian colossus. You cannot defeat an enemy which keeps raising and fielding fresh armies. It is like trying to tear a card pack. You can tear a card but not a card pack. Because pack which is formed by cards protects the card. So quantity generates its own quality. Attrition became so debilitating so much so when Wehrmacht neared key objectives of the operation it had lost its cutting edge. It's precisely here this book makes a radical departure from previous works. Earlier books have emphasized Red Army practising elastic defence when German attack opened. Authors have shown this to be false. Though defeated everywhere Red Army continued to resist stubbornly. Thirdly, Germans lacked strategic air power. This would have made big difference to the campaign. Strategic bombers could have ranged deep and wide behind the Soviet fronts. By bombing railroad networks they could have blocked the movement of Red Army reserves to the battle zone. Key to German victory lay in isolating the latter from Soviet rear just as allies did in Normandy. Book is divided into 12 chapters. Each chapter is impeccably researched. Back pages contain extensive research notes. Few pages feature charts, tables showing composition of forces and force ratios. Some pages carry illustrations seen for the first time. My only grudge is about maps few of which look smudged. There is interesting biographical sketch of top Soviet and German commanders. Finally, a word of advice. This book is meant only for serious-minded. Authors say Sixth army reached Stalingrad only in successive spurts. I finished reading it in similar fashion. 9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. I Should Love this Book More than I Do By Ken McCormick I am fascinated by the battle of Stalingrad, and have read most everything I can get my hands on about it. Glantz has produced a masterpiece. It contains a fresh perspective and an ENORMOUS amount of information. There are lots of maps. I should love this book. Instead, I like it, and have enormous respect for the author. But I don't love it. The problem, I think, is information overload. There is so much unit information that paragraph after paragraph is devoted to what is essentially order-of-battle information on every action. If you are looking for that, this book is what you want. If you want a smooth-flowing narrative, you won't find it. The maps are mostly far too small, so I strongly recommend you read the book with a magnifying glass in hand. Otherwise, the maps won't add much. Having said that, Glantz presents a fresh view of the campaign. The Russians fought harder than others have suggested, and did much to wear-down the Germans. It was not a cake-walk followed by a sudden stiffening of resistance. Like everything else in the East, it was hard-fought. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. On to Stalingrad. How the German Heer reached the great city on the Volga in 1942 By Michael Reese David Glantz is becoming a better writer. I usually find his books a bit dry and still have trouble with the maps (from German or Soviet sources) he uses but the man does know war on the Russian Front. This book covers the battles that preceded the 1942 German Offensive in southern Russia code named Operation Blue, the execution of Operation Blue and the combat leading up to the Battle of

Stalingrad with the Germans holding a toehold on the Volga River as the Russians pulled back into Stalingrad and the German 6th Army closed in on Stalingrad's suburbs. Good reading for Eastern Front historians.

The confrontation between German and Soviet forces at Stalingrad was a titanic clash of armies on an unprecedented scale—a campaign that was both a turning point in World War II and a lasting symbol of that war's power and devastation. Yet despite the attention lavished on this epic battle by historians, much about it has been greatly misunderstood or hidden from view—as David Glantz, the world's foremost authority on the Red Army in World War II, now shows. This first volume in Glantz's masterly trilogy draws on previously unseen or neglected sources to provide the definitive account of the opening phase of this iconic Eastern Front campaign. Glantz has combed daily official records from both sides—including the Red Army General Staff, the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, the German Sixth Army, and the Soviet 62nd Army—to produce a work of unparalleled detail and fresh interpretations. Jonathan House, an authority on twentieth-century warfare, adds further insight and context. Hitler's original objective was not Stalingrad but the Caucasus oilfields to the south of the city. So he divided his Army Group South into two parts—one to secure the city on his flank, one to capture the oilfields. Glantz reveals for the first time how Stalin, in response, demanded that the Red Army stand and fight rather than withdraw, leading to the numerous little-known combat engagements that seriously eroded the Wehrmacht's strength before it even reached Stalingrad. He shows that, although advancing German forces essentially destroyed the armies of the Soviet Southwestern and Southern Fronts, the Soviets resisted the German advance much more vigorously than has been thought through constant counterattacks, ultimately halting the German offensive at the gates of Stalingrad. This fresh, eye-opening account and the subsequent companion volumes—on the actual battle for the city itself and the successful Soviet counteroffensive that followed—will dramatically revise and expand our understanding of what remains a military campaign for the ages.

“A magisterial new survey that draws on a wealth of previously inaccessible Red Army records and will be indispensable reading for all serious students of the battle.”—Michael K. Jones, author of *Stalingrad: How the Red Army Triumphed* “In a way never before attempted, Glantz reveals how the battle proceeded through the step-by-step, day-by-day efforts of leaders to plan, supervise, and conduct combat operations amidst the fog of war.”—Roger R. Reese, author of *Red Commanders* From the Back Cover “A magisterial new survey that draws on a wealth of previously inaccessible Red Army records and will be indispensable reading for all serious students of the battle.”—Michael K. Jones, author of *Stalingrad: How the Red Army Triumphed* “In a way never before attempted, Glantz reveals how the battle proceeded through the step-by-step, day-by-day efforts of leaders to plan, supervise, and conduct combat operations amidst the fog of war.”—Roger R. Reese, author of *Red Commanders* “Glantz is the world's top scholar of the Soviet-German War.”—*Journal of Military History* About the Author David M. Glantz is the author of numerous books, including *The Battle for Leningrad, 1941-1944*; *Colossus Reborn: The Red Army at War*; and *Red Storm over the Balkans: The Failed Soviet Invasion of Romania*. Jonathan M. House is the author of *Combined Arms Warfare in the Twentieth Century*. Glantz and House are also coauthors of *When Titans Clashed: How the Red Army Stopped Hitler* and *The Battle of Kursk* (see page 41).