

country as Stalin broke clans from the district to the national level, making fear the principle motive for productivity” (77). This is a fascinating book and Seth Bernstein’s translation and introduction are excellent.

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From Victory to Stalemate: The Western Front, Summer 1944. By C.J. Dick. Modern War Studies. Decisive and Indecisive Military Operations, vol. 1. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2016. xiv, 465 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Maps. \$39.95, hard bound.

From Defeat to Victory: The Eastern Front, Summer 1944. By C.J. Dick. Modern War Studies. Decisive and Indecisive Military Operations, vol. 2. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2016. xiii, 354 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Maps. \$39.95, hard bound.

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These books bear the unmistakable stamp of the milieu from which they emerged. The author, C.J. Dick, is a former officer in the British army as well as a historian who was, from 1989 to 2004, director of the Soviet Studies Research Center. As a soldier-scholar, Dick has led numerous staff rides in Europe, which are essentially battlefield tours for professional military officers in which the events of a given battle are retraced and the decisions made by commanders are scrutinized. The express purpose of these ventures is the distillation of lessons about the conduct of war, lessons that are explicitly meant to be drawn on and put to use by the ride’s students. *From Victory to Stalemate* and *From Defeat to Victory* are based on rides that Dick lead, and he says that they are “in essence, a written staff ride” (1). In keeping with this, Dick’s tone is didactic and his audience is primarily military officers, who will no doubt find much to discuss in these volumes. Outside of those circles, however, their appeal will probably be limited.

Dick employs a highly schematic theoretical framework for his analysis, one which will be familiar to readers of this sort of history and those with professional military education, but less so for those new to the field. For the benefit of the latter, Dick carefully spells this framework out, dividing war into three neatly defined “interrelated and interdependent levels” (1): the tactical, the operational, and the strategic. Broadly speaking, the strategic level consists of the establishment of large-scale goals in a given war, the tactical level the movement of units smaller than an army or army group on a battlefield. Linking them, in this schema, is the operational level, in which generals deploy large military formations in mutually reinforcing operations that build momentum towards victory. Command at this level, which Dick and like-minded theorists refer to as “operational art,” is the focus of his scrutiny; his goal in these books is to analyze the behavior of senior western and Soviet commanders in 1944 in order to cast judgment and seek lessons.

The main thrust of Dick’s argument is as follows: in the summer of 1944, both the western Allies and the Soviets stood on the brink of a crushing victory over the German forces they faced. In the west, this chance at victory was squandered as a result of squabbling among commanders and a lack of vigorous attacks, with the result that the war went on. Dick repeatedly assures the reader that the war “could have” ended much earlier than it did: “The crushing defeat inflicted on the Wehrmacht in August,” he writes, for example, in the introduction, “could (perhaps should) have been a prelude to decisive operations that would have ended the war in the west in 1944” (6). The Soviets, on the other hand, built on their momentum to deliver a series of shattering

blows to the Germans that took them to Berlin and ended the war. The main reason for the difference, Dick argues, is that the Soviets had mastered “operational art,” which they were able to do in part because the Red Army had a tradition of intellectual engagement with the concept. To Dick, operational artistry is most apparent in rapidly moving, aggressive battles of encirclement and annihilation, of precisely the sort the Soviets employed to devastating effect against the Germans in 1944 and 1945.

In illustrating the degree to which the Soviets sought to refine and improve their operations, Dick makes a welcome contribution to the central debate over the nature of the Soviet victory: namely, whether the Soviets outfought the Germans or simply outlasted them. However, in keeping with the case-study method he uses, Dick seeks to draw broader lessons and make more incisive judgments. Dick argues that the western allies’ operational shortcomings were rooted in, among other things, their lack of appreciation for operational art, the friction inherent in coalition warfare, and the caution that the British and Americans took with their men’s lives. This last point, however, is one that does not get enough attention from Dick, particularly since it was arguably at the heart of the different ways the Soviets and the democracies fought the war, including their relative aggressiveness at the level of “operational art.” In August 1944, for example, in a series of engagements that ultimately retook Khar’kov from the Germans—a battle that rarely even registers in broad narratives of the war in the east, dwarfed as it is by the titanic struggles of Stalingrad and Kursk—the Soviets incurred a *quarter million* casualties (68–69). Losses on this scale were simply unthinkable to the military and political leaders of the democracies. At one point Dick notes, seemingly with approval because it helped maintain the momentum of their attacks, that in the Red Army in 1944, “the treatment of human casualties followed the same principles that were applied to equipment” (157). In this way, Dick helps to substantiate, albeit despite himself, the argument of historians such as James Sheehan and Max Hastings that Europe’s dictatorships fought wars in ways that democracies could not, and that these differences hinged on their radically disparate views of the relative worth of individual human life, including their own citizens’. The ruthlessness displayed by the Soviets towards their own people during the Second World War, as much as their operational daring (from which it was inseparable), goes a long way towards explaining their victory.

These volumes are most suitable for use as textbooks in armed services’ war colleges, in which operational art is likely to figure as a subject of study. One hopes, however, that the students will be more cautious than Dick in trying to distill timeless, general principles, as well as less exasperated with the fundamental problem facing democratic armies: that they must put their soldiers and sailors in harm’s way without being careless with their lives. Perhaps this makes them less effective at conducting aggressive attacks, but it does, ultimately, give them something much more worth fighting for.

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The Right to be Helped: Deviance, Entitlement, and the Soviet Moral Order. Maria Cristina Galmarini-Kabala. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2016. xiii, 301 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Chronology. Glossary. Index. Figures. Tables. \$35.00, paper.

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In this thickly-detailed book, Maria Cristina Galmarini-Kabala outlines the Soviet system’s provision of assistance to single mothers, people who were blind or deaf either