



# Death of the Wehrmacht: The German Campaigns of 1942 (Modern War Studies)

*Robert M. Citino*

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For Hitler and the German military, 1942 was a key turning point of World War II, as an overstretched but still lethal Wehrmacht replaced brilliant victories and huge territorial gains with stalemates and strategic retreats. In this major reevaluation of that crucial year, Robert Citino shows that the German army's emerging woes were rooted as much in its addiction to the "war of movement"-attempts to smash the enemy in "short and lively" campaigns-as they were in Hitler's deeply flawed management of the war. From the overwhelming operational victories at Kerch and Kharkov in May to the catastrophic defeats at El Alamein and Stalingrad, *Death of the Wehrmacht* offers an eye-opening new view of that decisive year. Building upon his widely respected critique in *The German Way of War*, Citino shows how the campaigns of 1942 fit within the centuries-old patterns of Prussian/German warmaking and ultimately doomed Hitler's expansionist ambitions. He examines every major campaign and battle in the Russian and North African theaters throughout the year to assess how a military geared to quick and decisive victories coped when the tide turned against it. Citino also reconstructs the German generals' view of the war and illuminates the multiple contingencies that might have produced more favorable results. In addition, he cites the fatal extreme aggressiveness of German commanders like Erwin Rommel and assesses how the German system of command and its commitment to the "independence of subordinate commanders" suffered under the thumb of Hitler and chief of staff General Franz Halder. More than the turning point of a war, 1942 marked the death of a very old and traditional pattern of warmaking, with the classic "German way of war" unable to meet the challenges of the twentieth century. Blending masterly research with a gripping narrative, Citino's remarkable work provides a fresh and revealing look at how one of history's most powerful armies began to founder in its quest for world domination.

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