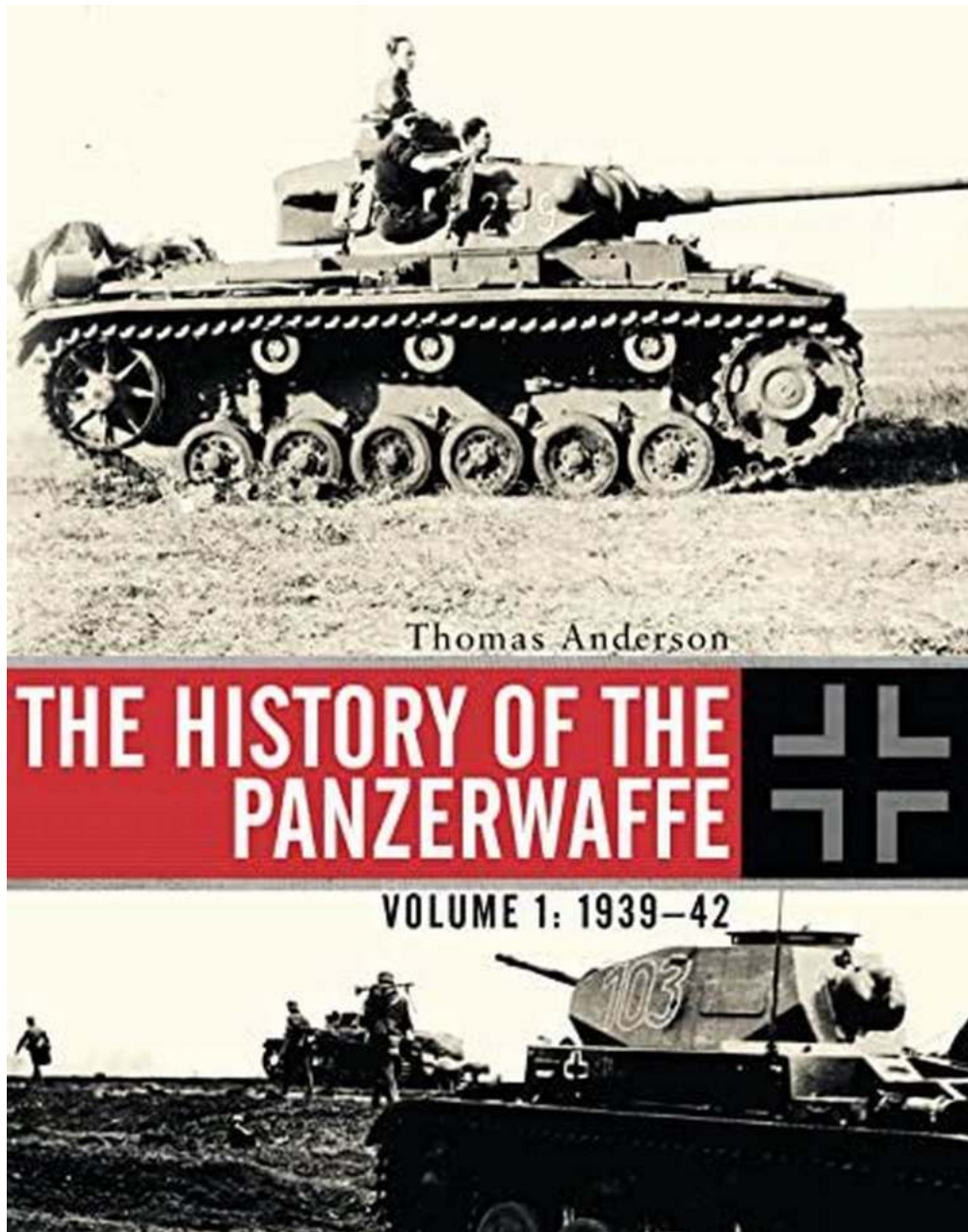


# The Fascinating History of the Panzerwaffe Volume 1939-42: Unveiling the Secrets of Nazi Germany's Armored Forces

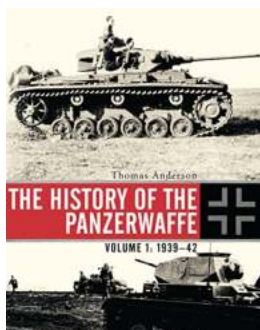


The Rise of the Panzerwaffe

When we think of World War II, one of the first images that come to mind is the relentless advance of the Panzerwaffe, the German armored forces. These formidable tanks played a critical role in Hitler's conquest of Europe, and their history from 1939-42 is a captivating tale of innovation, strategy, and overwhelming power.

## Building the Panzerwaffe: Origins and Development

The Panzerwaffe's story begins before the war, as Germany sought to rebuild its military might following its defeat in World War I. In blatant violation of the Treaty of Versailles, the German army secretly started developing armored vehicles and tanks. This clandestine effort laid the foundation for what would become the Panzerwaffe.



### The History of the Panzerwaffe: Volume 1: 1939–42

by Thomas Anderson (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 158229 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 418 pages



One of the pioneers who shaped the Panzerwaffe was Heinz Guderian, a visionary military strategist who emphasized the importance of concentrated armored forces. Guderian's theories, combined with Germany's increasing industrial capabilities, led to the birth of Panzer units that would soon dominate the battlefields of Europe.

## **The Panzerwaffe in Action: Blitzkrieg and Unstoppable Momentum**

1939 marked the eruption of World War II, and with it came the baptism of fire for the Panzerwaffe. The German invasion of Poland showcased the devastating potential of the armored forces. Utilizing a lightning-fast tactical approach known as Blitzkrieg, the Panzerwaffe swiftly crushed Polish defenses, leaving the world in awe of their efficiency and power.

The success of the Panzerwaffe in Poland set the stage for even greater triumphs. In 1940, the armored forces spearheaded the infamous invasion of France, where their lightning-fast maneuvers outwitted and overwhelmed the Allied forces. The fall of France solidified the Panzerwaffe's reputation as an unstoppable force.



The first battle at Marsa al-Brega was a short, but fierce one in which six British Crusader tanks were lost while PzRgt 5 lost two PzKpw III and a PzKpfw IV. During the coming days German forces, as always supported by Italian troops, extended their probing attacks to an all-out offensive intended to sweep British forces out of Cyrenaica. Rommel achieved this with only 50 percent of his forces (the 15.PzDiv had not arrived) in just 12 days and his stunning success not only impressed the German supreme command, but also his British foe. However, Rommel had ignored his orders from Berlin.

His forces continued to advance through the desert and finally reached the Egyptian border and the city of Tobruk, where British and Australian troops were trapped and besieged for 33 weeks.

Unhappy with Rommel's actions *Generalfeldmarschall* Halder sent his deputy, General von Paulus (not the later commander of the 6.Armee), to find out why he had ignored his orders. At the time Rommel was unaware of the forthcoming *Unternehmen Barbarossa*. It is possible that Rommel was influenced by this setback, also at that time his troops began to feel the effects of the overextended supply lines. Fuel, ammunition, water and all other essential supplies had to be transported from the ports of Tripoli and Benghazi: a distance of 1,500km. It is obvious that a large proportion of valuable fuel was being consumed by the transport vehicles of the supply columns.

**Above:**

A PzKpfa III Ausf G or H with fuel cans stowed on top of the turret, and water cans on the track cover, indispensable items for during the long marches in the desert. The ubiquitous black palm-tree emblem of the Afrika Korps is painted next to the driver's vision visor. (Zimmermann)

## Innovations and Iconic Tanks: The Heart of the Panzerwaffe

Central to the Panzerwaffe's success were the exceptional tanks they deployed on the battlefield. At the forefront was the Panzer II, a light tank designed for reconnaissance and infantry support. It established the foundation for future tank designs.

The Panzer III and Panzer IV soon followed, each with its own distinct role on the battlefield. The Panzer III excelled as an anti-tank weapon, while the Panzer IV became the backbone of the German armored divisions, with its superior firepower and mobility.

However, it was the arrival of the Tiger I and Panther tanks that truly elevated the Panzerwaffe's domination. The Tiger I, with its thick armor and powerful gun, struck fear into the hearts of Allied tank crews. The Panther, a marvel of engineering and design, became the epitome of German tank superiority.

### **Challenges and Defeats: The Panzerwaffe's Turning Point**

Despite their initial triumphs, the Panzerwaffe faced significant challenges in the early 1940s. The invasion of the Soviet Union proved to be a turning point, as the vast landscapes and resilient resistance tested the limits of Germany's armored forces.

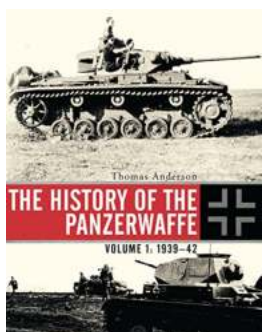
Furthermore, the later years of the period covered in this volume saw the entry of the United States into the war, resulting in the gradual erosion of Germany's military advantage. The Panzerwaffe, although formidable, struggled to keep up with the Allies' increasing industrial capabilities and numerical superiority.

### **: The Legacy of the Panzerwaffe**

The history of the Panzerwaffe from 1939-42 is a captivating testament to the power and ingenuity of Nazi Germany's armored forces. From their clandestine origins and lightning-fast tactics to their iconic tanks and ultimate challenges, the Panzerwaffe's story continues to fascinate military enthusiasts and historians alike.

Today, the lessons learned from the successes and failures of the Panzerwaffe still shape modern armored warfare. Understanding their history provides valuable insights into the ever-evolving nature of military strategy and technology.

So delve into the pages of "The History of the Panzerwaffe Volume 1939-42" and unravel the secrets behind one of history's most fearsome war machines.



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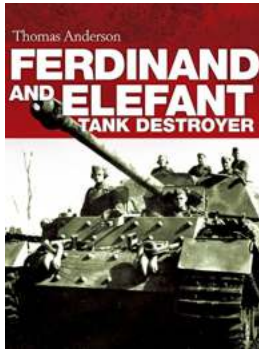
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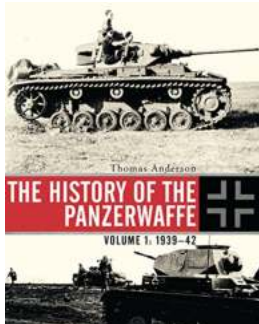
The Germans transformed armoured warfare from a lumbering and ponderous experiment in World War I into something that could decide the outcome of conflicts. This technical and operational history is the definitive guide to the legendary Panzerwaffe, from its very infancy to the days when it made Europe its garden path at the height of Nazi German power. With rare and revealing combat reports, along with photographs sourced from previously unseen private and archival collections, it uncovers the technical and operational stories of the formidable armoured beasts that formed the backbone of the German war machine – tanks such as the Panzer I, II and 38(t).





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The Ferdinand and Elefant tank destroyers were German heavy assault guns developed and used during World War II. These massive machines were designed to provide fire...



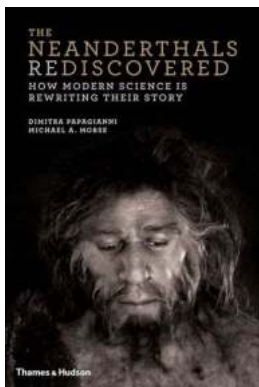
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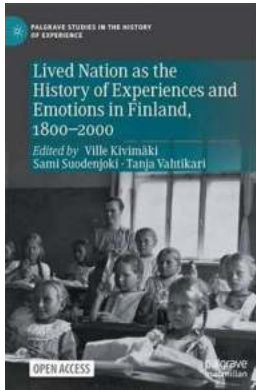
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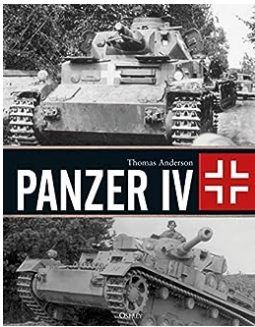
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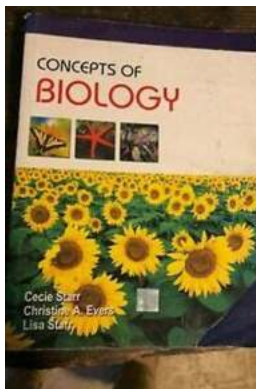
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