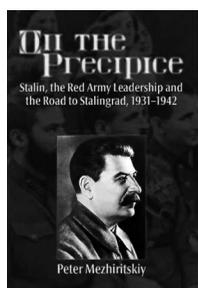


and horizontal integration. The author delivers an early pledge to shatter “old shibboleths” in both the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as to challenge cherished aspects of American, national mythology. The specialist will find a few, minor errors. Regardless, this work stands as a major contribution with its phenomenal balance of primary and secondary sources and depth of synthesis across a staggering wealth of historiography on the American Revolution from the perspective of the subjects.

The Men Who Lost America is an important book. It dissects the senior-level “sausage making” of the British effort to reassert control over its wayward colonies. It provides a case study of especial resonance today. It showcases the misunderstanding inherent in stereotypical and simplistic explanations. Moreover, it does so in terms of special relevance to the readership of *Parameters*.



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\$59.95

On the Precipice: Stalin, the Red Army Leadership and the Road to Stalingrad, 1931-1942

By Peter Mezhiritsky

Reviewed by Dr. Stephen Blank, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, American Foreign Policy Council

There is a compelling need for a systematic study of the topic outlined in the title, especially as so much more has been learned about Stalin and the Red Army since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, this is not the book to fill that gap. Indeed, it represents a regression in our efforts to understand Stalin, the Red Army, and the Soviet system as a whole. In the last twenty years as some archives have been opened and Russian historians have enjoyed greater (though not full) freedom to publish about hitherto “closed” topics, we have learned a great deal about Stalin, his system, and the Red Army. Previously, and especially during the 1950s and 1960s, it was exceedingly difficult to obtain reliable information and evidence concerning these subjects. As a result, too much of the literature had to rely on what could fairly be described as rumor, hearsay, and—to be blunt—educated (or not so educated) conjecture. Fortunately, for the most part that is no longer the case.

Unfortunately the author of this book has reverted to the bad old days and this work is replete with the earlier form of source material and “evidence” instead of solid research backed by evidence. Page after page is replete with statements like “I was told by” or “X remembers that,” etc. Moreover, the lack of evidence causes the author to fail to ask—let alone answer—fundamental questions. The reader is left with what is essentially a thoroughgoing demonization of Stalin. The issue here is not that Stalin deserves that demonization. That is beyond doubt. But why did his helpers all the way down the line assist him in decapitating the leadership of the Red Army? Why did the Generals mentioned here, who fell victim to the various purges and arrests, not rebel if they were such paragons of bravery and virtue as the author suggests? Indeed, why did the armed forces as a whole not revolt against collectivization, the purges, etc? Absent evidence, it is impossible to formulate answers to

these questions, which are key issues for the study of the Red Army in Soviet affairs.

Despite the glossy production virtues of the book, these serious shortcomings invalidate it as a serious and useful account of the period under review and this is a great pity. Recent works by Roger Reese, David Glantz, David Stone, and others have shown the nature of the Red Army under Stalin, and the onset of the militarization of the Soviet economy as a whole. But since the pioneering work of John Erickson, which stands alone despite having been composed over fifty years ago when evidence was scarce, we have not had a systematic analysis of the Soviet High Command to use Erickson's title. Without such an analysis, it really is impossible to answer the questions posed above and others that may be of important analytical value for historians and students of the Red Army. If we take into account the centrality of the army as an institution to both Tsarist and Soviet rulers alike as well as the militarization of the Soviet economy, described by Oskar Lange as a *Sui Generis* war economy, we cannot understand either Stalin or the system in their totality.

Of course, in the absence of such an analysis, it would be virtually impossible to determine what expectations Moscow actually had during the thirties of the imminence of a European war, whether it would involve Russia and, if so, under what circumstances. Neither is it possible to guess at, let alone analyze, Soviet war aims without such an evidentiary and analytical foundation. Inasmuch as the Cold War, and possibly Operation Barbarossa, were triggered by Stalin's efforts to realize his war aims, these are not purely academic questions. Unfortunately for the serious reader looking for evidence or answers to these questions, those things are not found here. And that is everyone's loss.

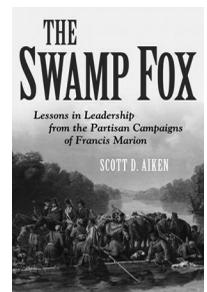
The Swamp Fox: Lessons in Leadership from the Partisan Campaigns of Francis Marion

By Scott D. Aiken

Reviewed by Jill Sargent Russell, Doctoral Candidate in War Studies, King's College London

One approaches works on military leaders written by their lifelong fans with a sense of dread. Often, these works cannot escape the bounds of hero worship to provide commentary more useful than laudatory. Colonel Scott Aiken has managed to avoid the pitfalls of his inspiration on the way to crafting a really fine piece of scholarship on General Francis Marion's leadership and campaigns.

This is a work of two narratives. The first, and predominant one, covers the history of General Marion and his role commanding a partisan formation in the campaign to defeat the British in South Carolina. The second argues the relevance of this history to contemporary issues of war. Mastering the primary historical narrative, the work misses excellence for the relative weakness of its attention to the contemporary story. I am at pains to remind readers the critiques and issues brought out in this review are, in part, the result of how deeply engaged with the



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