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The GI Offensive in Europe: The Triumph of American Infantry Divisions (Modern War Studies (Paperback))

Peter R. Mansoor

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The German Wehrmacht was one of the most capable fighting forces the world has ever known, but in the end it was no match for the Allies. Some historians contend that the Allies achieved victory through brute force and material superiority. But, as Peter Mansoor argues, all of the material produced by U.S. industry was useless without trained soldiers to operate it, a coherent doctrine for its use, and leaders who could effectively command the formations into which it was organized.

This book provides a comprehensive study of America's infantry combat performance in Europe during World War II, showing that the Army succeeded by developing combat effective divisions that could not only fight and win battles, but also sustain that effort over years of combat. While American industry admittedly enabled the U.S. to sustain its overseas armies, the effectiveness of those forces ultimately rested on their organizational capabilities and ability to adapt to combat in a variety of lethal environments and to learn from their mistakes.

Mansoor analyzes the impact of personnel and logistical systems on the Army's strength, explaining how leaders used these systems to keep a small number of divisions at a high state of combat effectiveness. During the critical battles of 1944-45, American divisions were able to sustain this high level while their Wehrmacht counterparts disintegrated, demonstrating that the Army's endurance in extended combat was the most critical factor in its ultimate success. Mansoor also takes a close look at the personalities and capabilities of division commanders, infantry tactics and operations, logistics, and the benefits and weaknesses of stateside training.

The American army won, asserts Mansoor, because unit for unit at the division level it was more effective than its adversaries. By showing how U.S. infantry developed more quickly and fought better than commonly believed, *The GI Offensive in Europe* contributes significantly to the history of the U.S. Army in the European theater and to our overall understanding of military effectiveness.

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