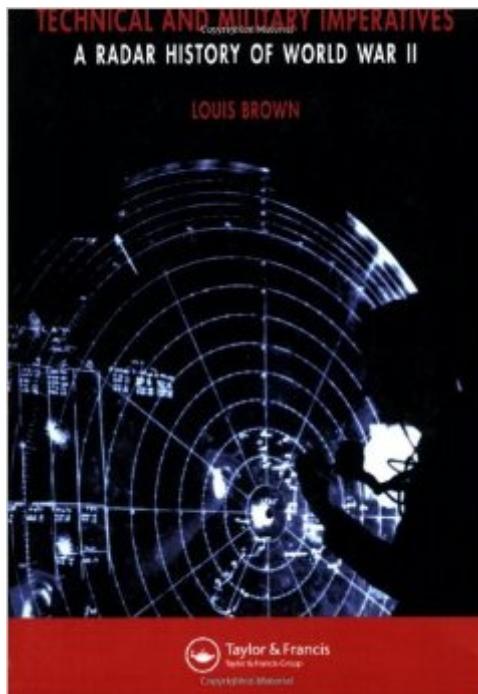


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A Radar History Of World War II: Technical And Military Imperatives



Synopsis

Technical and Military Imperatives: A Radar History of World War II is a coherent account of the history of radar in the second World War. Although many books have been written on the early days of radar and its role in the war, this book is by far the most comprehensive, covering ground, air, and sea operations in all theatres of World War II. The author manages to synthesize a vast amount of material in a highly readable, informative, and enjoyable way. Of special interest is extensive new material about the development and use of radar by Germany, Japan, Russia, and Great Britain. The story is told without undue technical complexity, so that the book is accessible to specialists and nonspecialists alike.

Book Information

Paperback: 563 pages

Publisher: Institute of Physics Publishing; 1 edition (January 1, 1999)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0750306599

ISBN-13: 978-0750306591

Product Dimensions: 5.9 x 1.3 x 9.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (9 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Brown began his studies on World War II radar development "because the book he would have liked to read did not exist". The outcome is a book almost any reader would love to have written! Although radar became an esoteric subject almost from the beginning, the necessary technical background is presented clearly and the reader does not have to be an electronics specialist to enjoy the superb panoramic view Brown presents of the development of a technology that changed the face of war - and that of peace as well! Even if one is familiar with the subject, surprises start popping up in the first dozen pages or so. This is not an updated version of the books that have gone before but something new. In the first place, it is based on massive, critical and thoroughly documented research. Secondly, it does not focus on the efforts of just one or two participants in the

radar epos - be it the Germans, British, American, the naval or air forces. Instead it describes the almost simultaneous and often comparable developments that took place before and during the war worldwide. Critical, and thus well-known, subjects like the role of radar in the Battle of Britain are dealt with, of course, but even here fresh insights are offered. And besides, many epic events that have unjustly been "forgotten" - such as the Japanese forces that were NOT to be found on Attu Island - are described. Even the selection of the photographs (of excellent quality) bears testimony to a fresh approach. Almost invariably, mention of the German Seetakt radar has been accompanied by pictures of the burning wreck of the Admiral Graf Spee. Here we see an intelligence officer's nightmare (or delight!): a German Torpedo School ship with Seetakt antenna in full view - in a freely available 1939 pocketbook!

The book is an extremely valuable, comprehensive and trusted source of information about all principal aspects and many details of the radar before and in time of the WWII, except one minor aspect. This is the pre-war history of radar R&D in the USSR. The author cites only one reference - a book by a Soviet general M. Lobanov, who supervised the gun laying radar developments in the 1930s, written in 1975. Still it is clear that the author could not read Russian and so had the book translated by someone. It looks like not all the book was translated or read, because too many facts, names and organizations are twisted, mixed up and simply omitted. This old Soviet book gives much better vision and proper names and facts than those reproduced by L. Brown. Still today exist other sources on this topic. In some sad way, the mentioned deficiency continues long tradition in the English-centered literature of neglecting and not accurate using the information available about the radar in the USSR even if it is scarce. The tradition started when someone in America in 1944 made a capital error in the name of one of two Russians who measured a real cavity magnetron in 1937 and published it in 1940 (in Russian) - correct name Malyarov or Maliarov was twisted and printed as "Malairov". And so, forever in English/USA publications the poor guy is "Malairov". L. Brown, in similar way, twisted the history of the research radar Zenit and presented it in a most sardonic way as an example of the worst radar development existed at that moment. I am not going to discuss this in details. I'd like only to note that, first, in the mentioned boook of Gen. Lobanov the story of Zenit is given with great sympathy and his evaluation of that achievement is clearly highly positive, at least at the time of 1938-39 testing.

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