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## Battleships: Axis and Neutral Battleships in World War II

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the appendix of military museums at the rear of the book.

The authors are occasionally vague, e.g., in speaking of Eisenhower's headquarters at Southwick House, now part of a Royal Navy training establishment, one encounters the phrase "If permission has been obtained you can enter. . . ." A guide of this sort should really be specific about *where* and *how* to go about obtaining that permission. That same vagueness is also evident in reference to the Continent, e.g., the massive submarine pens at Saint-Nazaire, France, which "can be visited." The British chapter is almost exclusively limited to sites of interest in the south of England; the north, and Scotland are nearly completely neglected.

The guide offers better coverage of the Continent, i.e., a good summary of the invasion sites in Normandy, simple but clear maps, and on occasion, practical information on where to park—a not unimportant consideration on the crowded Continent. Still, there is only so much information that can be put into an ambitious book of this sort. Anyone really interested in touring the landing sites would be well-advised to use the *Guide Michelin*, and those with a special interest who have taken the trouble and expense to hire a car would probably want to obtain the excellent and very detailed publications found in the British magazine *After the Battle*. The latter (which the authors include in their bibliography) is readily available at specialized

military bookshops and contains a list of back numbers and their subjects, which can be ordered from the publishers.

There is nothing on the invasion of southern France, or the Italian campaign. Places of interest in Denmark and Norway are not mentioned, and the list of military museums is relatively short, with some important ones omitted, notably the Dutch military museum in Leiden and the Belgian military museum in Brussels. Anyone purchasing this book would also probably want full information on the German military museum at Rastatt, not included in the appendix, but well worth a visit. The publication of approximately 26 photographs from the World War II era is unnecessary in a work of this sort. The money might have been better spent on additional maps.

This book is useful as an overall summary, but anyone who is really serious about visiting these battlefields will almost certainly want to supplement it with other publications.

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Garzke, William and Dulin, Robert O. *Battleships: Axis and Neutral Battleships in World War II*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1985. 512pp. \$44.95

This is the third and final volume of a series on the battleships conceived between the wars. The first, on U.S. battleships, appeared in 1976; the second, on the Allied designs,

arrived in 1980; and now this. All discuss design development, the specifics of the final design, and each ship's operational history. There are ample photographs as well as key foldouts of the ship classes described. The three volumes represent a unique, definitive study of a ship type which, despite its often reported demise, still provokes more interest than any other. Included in this final volume are the three ships of the Japanese *Yamato* class; the German *Scharnhorst* (two ships) and *Bismarck* (two ships) classes plus their unbuilt follow-ons; the four ships of the Italian *Vittorio Veneto* class; and some Spanish nonstarters.

Nearly half of the book is devoted to the German *Scharnhorst* and *Bismarck* classes, representing two distinct designs. These four ships saw more action over more time than any other Axis battleships. Unfortunately, while Dulin and Garzke provide photographs, text, and tables on the German *Deutschland*-class "pocket battleships," they fail to cover those three ships formally, with plans or operational histories. Yet, this design had an impact on many of the designs later developed in Europe: the *Scharnhorsts*, the French *Dunkerques* and, according to this book, the design studies for the unbuilt Spanish ships. It could be argued that the *Deutschlands* were not true battleships, but they should have been included for the design innovations they initiated.

Japan's *Yamato* class was undoubtedly the most mysterious and intriguing design of the war. Those ships'

superlatives extended in every direction—size, armament, arrangement—and appearance. At the end of the war the Japanese Navy destroyed most of the information and many of the plans and photographs of this class. Even today, a good photograph of the *Musashi* does not exist.

The *Shinano*, third ship of the *Yamato* class, which was converted into an aircraft carrier, is particularly interesting. Her plans, about which the United States knew very little, are the only ones of a carrier design in the 3-volume series. Even now there is only one photograph of her. On her way to the Inland Sea before commissioning, she was sunk by the U.S.S. *Archerfish*. The *Yamato*'s follow-ons—and predecessor designs—are described briefly, and are accompanied by speculative illustrations. None were ever laid down, partly because Japan realized as quickly as the United States that carriers truly were the capital ships of the day.

In contrast to the German and Japanese ships, Italy's four of the *Vittorio Veneto* class are not well-known. These handsome ships began commissioning just as Italy entered the war, but in their short lives they did little. The most notable event in their history was the spectacular destruction of the *Roma* in 1943 by a German glide bomb while she was on her way to surrender to the Allies. Garzke and Dulin say that these ships' 15-inch guns were superior to their German equivalents, though other sources say that the Italian Navy was so concerned about their unpredictable dispersion of fire that

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they consciously avoided committing them to any serious engagement.

There is a short, speculative section on Spain's plans for battleships based on the Italian *Vittorio Veneto* design. The ships never were built, the authors say, primarily because Italy became involved in World War II. But looking at Spanish naval history over the past fifty years, it is difficult to believe that Spain had the resources to expend at that time and in this direction. Only France (the *Jean Bart*) and England (the *Vanguard*) completed battleships after the war, more for purposes of national pride than naval necessity.

The authors, after ten years of work, speculate on who built the best battleship, but since each design met differing requirements, there is no definitive answer. Of those tested, however, the leading contenders have to be, firstly, the *Bismarck* and secondarily, the *Yamato*. Both used treaty-violating size to provide superior individual offensive and defensive characteristics, and both demonstrated impressive resistance to their eventual destruction. The French *Richelieu* class may have been superior as well, and of course we should consider the untested U.S. *Iowa* class. The *Iowas* were built, as the authors point out, by the one nation who had the resources to come up with the very best.

Anyone who is interested in a definitive description of the physical characteristics of the last battleships built on earth should have all three volumes.

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Smith, Myron J. *Battleships and Battle-cruisers: 1884-1984: A Bibliography and Chronology*. New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1986. 691pp. \$150

Above all, this book provides us with evidence of our continuing fascination with the battleship and its hybrid sister, the battle cruiser. It is, as the title indicates, a bibliography which lists most of the important books, articles, and academic theses that have been published on these ships in ten languages during the last century. The chronology provides an almost day-by-day coverage of events in the service careers of particular ships, as well as significant dates for the classification overall.

The bibliographical section of this book is by far its largest and most important part. It is well-subdivided into almost every conceivable category, allowing its user ample opportunity to find entries on the ship or ships he is researching. In addition to listing general accounts and reference works, Smith also provides a listing of ships in alphabetical order by nation. The exception to this rule is the U.S. Navy, and here Smith has wisely chosen to follow its sequential hull number system. Appropriately, the only two exceptions to this policy, the early predreadnoughts the U.S.S. *Maine* and the U.S.S. *Texas*, are listed first in alphabetical order and then followed by the U.S.S. *Indiana*, also known as BB 1.

Before listing the works published on individual battleships in the national section, Smith provides us with a brief description of the ship