



Operation Dragoon: The Liberation of Southern France 1944

Anthony Tucker-Jones

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Operation Dragoon, the Allied landings in the south of France in August 1944, is often seen as a sideshow supporting Operation Overlord, the crucial D-Day landings in Normandy. And often the operation is criticized as an expensive diversion of men and equipment from the struggle against the German armies in Italy. Yet, as Anthony Tucker-Jones shows in his new in-depth study, Dragoon and the subsequent Allied advance across southern France were key stages in the liberation of Europe, and the operation had far-reaching political and military ramifications. Controversy dogged the plan from the start. Fierce disagreement among the senior Allied commanders and politicians - in particular between Churchill, Eisenhower and de Gaulle - threatened to weaken the Anglo-American war effort.

In vivid detail Anthony Tucker-Jones tells the story of the high-level strategic argument that gave birth to Dragoon, and he looks at the impact of the operation on the direction and duration of the war against Nazi Germany. He also describes the course of the invasion on the ground - the massive logistical effort required, the landings themselves, the role played by the French resistance, and the bitter battles fought against German rearguards as they sought to retain France's southern cities and cover their withdrawal toward the strategic Belfort Gap.

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