# Contents

*List of illustrations*  page vii  
*List of maps*  xi  
*Acknowledgements*  xiii  
*Glossary of terms*  xv  
*Tables of military ranks and army structures*  xv  

**Introduction**  1  

## Part I  Strategic plans and theoretical conceptions for war against the Soviet Union  

1  **Fighting the bear**  33  
   - The evolution of early strategic planning  33  
   - Two ways to skin a bear – the Marcks and Lossberg plans  39  
   - Crisis postponed – from war games to Directive No. 21  54  
2  **The gathering storm**  70  
   - The army deployment directive  70  
   - The dysfunctional order – delusion as operative discourse  84  
   - Barbarossa – the zenith of war  95  
3  **Barbarossa’s sword – Hitler’s armed forces in 1941**  105  
   - Carrying fear before them and expectation behind – Hitler’s panzer arm  105  
   - Standing before the precipice – the infantry and Luftwaffe on the eve of Barbarossa  117  
   - The impossible equation – the logistics and supply of Barbarossa  127  
4  **The advent of war**  139  
   - ‘Welcome to hell on earth’  139
## Part II The military campaign and the July/August crisis of 1941

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Awakening the bear</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The perilous advance to the east</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The battle of Smolensk</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The attrition of Army Group Centre</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>In search of resurgence</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Showdown</td>
<td>423</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5 Awakening the bear
- Indecisive border battles and the surfacing of strategic dissent 153
- The Belostok–Minsk pocket – anatomy of a hollow victory 170
- Straining the limits – Bock’s race to the rivers 186

### 6 The perilous advance to the east
- Forging across the Dvina and Dnepr – the threshold to demise 209
- ‘The Russian is a colossus and strong’ (Adolf Hitler) 228
- Caught in the hinterlands 245

### 7 The battle of Smolensk
- The end of blitzkrieg 260
- Crisis rising – the German command at war 273
- ‘I am on the brink of despair’ (Franz Halder) 290

### 8 The attrition of Army Group Centre
- The killing fields at Yel’nya 306
- Sealing the Smolensk pocket and Army Group Centre’s fate 324
- Victory at Smolensk? The paradox of a battle 344

### 9 In search of resurgence
- The arduous road to renewal 361
- ‘Today is the beginning of positional warfare!’ (Fedor von Bock) 380
- Embracing world war and apocalypse – Hitler reaches resolution 400

### 10 Showdown
- Hitler’s triumph in defeat 423

### Conclusion

**Bibliography**

**Index**