

# Tanks At The Iron Curtain 1946-60: Unveiling the Secrets of Cold War Armored Warfare

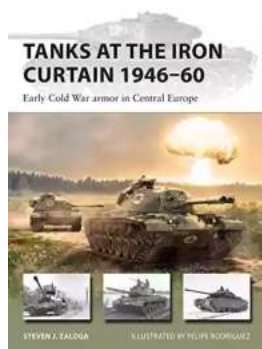


When the Iron Curtain descended upon Europe after World War II, tensions were running high between the democratic nations of the West and the communist forces of the Soviet Union. And at the heart of this tense standoff lay an immensely powerful tool of modern warfare - tanks. These mechanical beasts,

armed with heavy artillery, became the symbol of military might during the Cold War era from 1946 to 1960.

## Tank Technology and Innovation: The Arms Race Heats Up

As the nations on both sides of the Iron Curtain sought to assert their dominance, tank warfare became a critical element of their military strategies. Countless hours were dedicated to developing and improving tank technology, and this era witnessed incredible leaps forward in armored warfare.



### Tanks at the Iron Curtain 1946–60: Early Cold War armor in Central Europe (New Vanguard)

by D C Robinson (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 24018 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 47 pages



In the West, the United States and its allies were quick to embrace the concept of the "main battle tank." These tanks combined maneuverability, firepower, and armor protection, making them versatile in various combat scenarios. The M47 Patton tank and its successor, the M48 Patton, were among the most iconic American tanks of this period.

On the Soviet side, the legendary T-34 tank from World War II formed the basis for further advancements. The T-54 and T-55 tanks became the backbone of the

Soviet armored forces, known for their robustness, firepower, and adaptability.

## **The Tank Battlefields of the Iron Curtain**

The Iron Curtain became a testing ground for these armored beasts. Various proxy wars and conflicts erupted between the East and the West as they sought to expand their influence. From the Korean War to the Vietnam War, tanks played a significant role in shaping the outcomes of these conflicts.

During the Korean War, the United States used its tanks to great effect against the North Korean and Chinese forces. The M26 Pershing and later the M46 Patton tanks proved formidable adversaries, showcasing the technological advancements achieved since World War II.

In Vietnam, the Soviets and their allies provided the North Vietnamese with tanks such as the T-54 and T-55, which posed a significant challenge for the American forces. The Battle of An Loc, in particular, saw intense tank combat with both sides deploying a large number of armored vehicles.

## **Tank Tactics and Strategies: A Constant Chess Match**

Tank warfare was not just about technological superiority; it also required careful planning and tactical expertise. Both sides employed various strategies to outmaneuver their opponents and gain the upper hand on the battlefield.

The Soviets, for instance, relied on the concept of "mass" - deploying large numbers of tanks to overwhelm their enemies. This approach was witnessed in the brutal Battle of Kursk during World War II and continued throughout the Cold War.

In contrast, the West emphasized mobility and combined arms tactics. Tanks were integrated with infantry, artillery, and air support to create a formidable force

capable of swiftly striking strategic targets.

## The Legacy of Tanks at the Iron Curtain

The era of tanks at the Iron Curtain left an indelible mark on military history. It was a time of intense competition and constant technological advancements in armored warfare, with both sides pushing the limits of what tanks could achieve.

While the Cold War eventually came to an end, the legacy of these tanks lives on. Many surviving vehicles from this period serve as reminders of the fraught standoff that defined an era. Today, museums around the world display these tanks for enthusiasts and historians to appreciate, ensuring that the story of tanks at the Iron Curtain is not forgotten.



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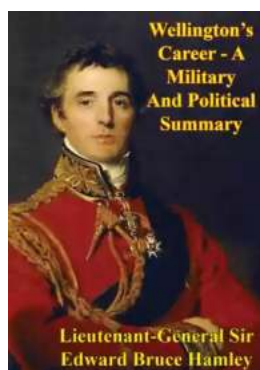
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A study of the Soviet and NATO armored forces that faced each other off in Central Europe in the early Cold War, and how their technology, tactics, and doctrine were all rapidly developed.

For 45 years, the most disputed point in the World was the dividing line between East and West in Europe; here the use and development of tanks was key. In this fully illustrated study, author Steve Zaloga, describes how Soviet and NATO tanks were deployed in the early years of the Cold War, and how a generation of tanks such as the Soviet T-44/T-54 and IS-3, British Centurion, US Army M26/M46 Pershing (all developed during World War II) saw extensive service after the war had ended. Initial post-war generation tanks including the Soviet T-54A, T-10 heavy tank, British late-model Centurions, Conqueror, US Army M41, M47, M48 and the French AMX-13 are examined in detail alongside the most important technical trends of the era: the development of shaped-charge anti-tank projectiles, the influence of anti-tank missiles, and the of chemical/nuclear protection and night fighting equipment. The book also considers the influence of post-war doctrine and tactics on tank technology and the effect of regional conflicts such as the 1950 Korean War, the war in Indo-China, and the 1956 Mid East War on tank warfare.



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