

Peter Mersky

Two volumes. and detail the successes of Arab MiG pilots in the many post-World War II Mideast conflicts. Readers are left to draw their own conclusions about claims and counter-claims. I highly recommend this ambitious series, even if a reader purchases only one or two volumes.

This is the most recent edition in a set of five books, with at least one more on the way—a heavily illustrated series featuring a veritable encyclopedia of facts and history. Photo and art reproduction throughout the series is first-rate, as are maps that help readers pinpoint the numerous airfields used by Arab and Israeli squadrons. The cost of each volume varies, averaging \$65, but the books are well worth the cover prices. They are the work of several authors with special expertise in the Middle East. Previous entries in the series are *MiG-15*

Arab MiGs Volume 5
and *MiG-17, Super sonic Fighters 1958-67, The June 1967 War and The Attrition War 1967-1973, A follow-up to this title, October 1973 War: Part 2*, is due in October. This ongoing series is about as good as it gets, especially considering how difficult it is to write about military aviation in the Middle East.



by Tom Cooper and David Nicolle, with Holger Müller, Lon Nordén and Martin Smisek, Harpia (distributed by Casemate), Haverlow, Pa., 2014, \$64.95.

ARAB MIGS VOLUME 5—OCTOBER 1973 WAR: PART I

Robert F. Dorr

Combined in one volume are the sagas of two B-17 Flying Fortress crew members. Addison Barusch was a copilot, Paul Lynch a waist gunner. Richard Allison, a retired U.S. Navy captain and lawyer, conducted extensive research and interviews to document Barusch's flying experience and Lynch's ground-pounding ordeal. The result is a touching narrative of heroism and resilience. Operation Thunderclap was an Allied plan for a massive air campaign against German cities, especially the capital, beginning with the February 3, 1945, assault on Berlin that involved 2,500 American aircraft. The Black March was a 500-mile, three-month-long trek at gunpoint by American prisoners of war, many of whom died along the way. A lot of suspense is built into these separate tales of combat flying by Barusch and the horrid mistreatment of Lynch. We keep wondering what will happen next—and we keep turning the pages.



by Richard Allison, Casemate, Haverlow, Pa., 2014, \$34.95.

OPERATION THUNDERCLAP AND THE BLACK MARCH: TWO WORLD WAR II STORIES FROM THE UNSTOPPABLE 91ST BOMB GROUP

Robert Gutman

Imagination." *Hump Pilot* provides an entertaining window into what it was like to fly cargo over the world's most dangerous air route in the worst flying conditions imaginable. The attrition rate among Hump aircrews was appalling, even when compared with what the Eighth Air Force experienced over Europe. These men were all well aware that even if they managed to bail out successfully from a malfunctioning aircraft, their chances of surviving in the jungle or mountains below were slim.

HUMP PILOT: DEFYING DEATH FLYING THE HIMALAYAS DURING WORLD WAR II

by Neddada R. Thomas, History Publishing, Paltades, N.Y., 2014, \$18.95.



well, whom she describes as an old-fashioned infantry general with no appreciation of air power. While there is much truth in that accusation, it was not all Stilwell's fault. "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell was a prickly character, but he was fighting without sufficient men or supplies while dealing with corrupt Chinese and muddling British allies, as well as subordinates like Chennault, who went behind his back to promote their own personal agendas. Such discord lay behind the joke that CBI, the acronym for the China-Burma-India Theater, stood for "Confusion Beyond mountains in the world. Transport planes began flying the Himalayan route in 1942, when operating conditions were extremely rough, including standing orders that pilots should ignore bad weather and press on regardless. By the time the author's father was flying the Hump, things had improved considerably, but it remained a daunting job.

There are few personal accounts by World War II cargo plane pilots, and fewer still of those who flew "over the Hump," the Allies' name for the air supply route from northern India to China via the Himalayas. Neddada Thomas has produced a spirited account of the experiences of her father, Ned Thomas, who late in the war wrestled a Curtiss C-46 Commando over the tallest

mountains in the world. Transport planes began flying the Himalayan route in 1942, when operating conditions were extremely rough, including standing orders that pilots should ignore bad weather and press on regardless. By the time the author's father was flying the Hump, things had improved considerably, but it remained a daunting job.