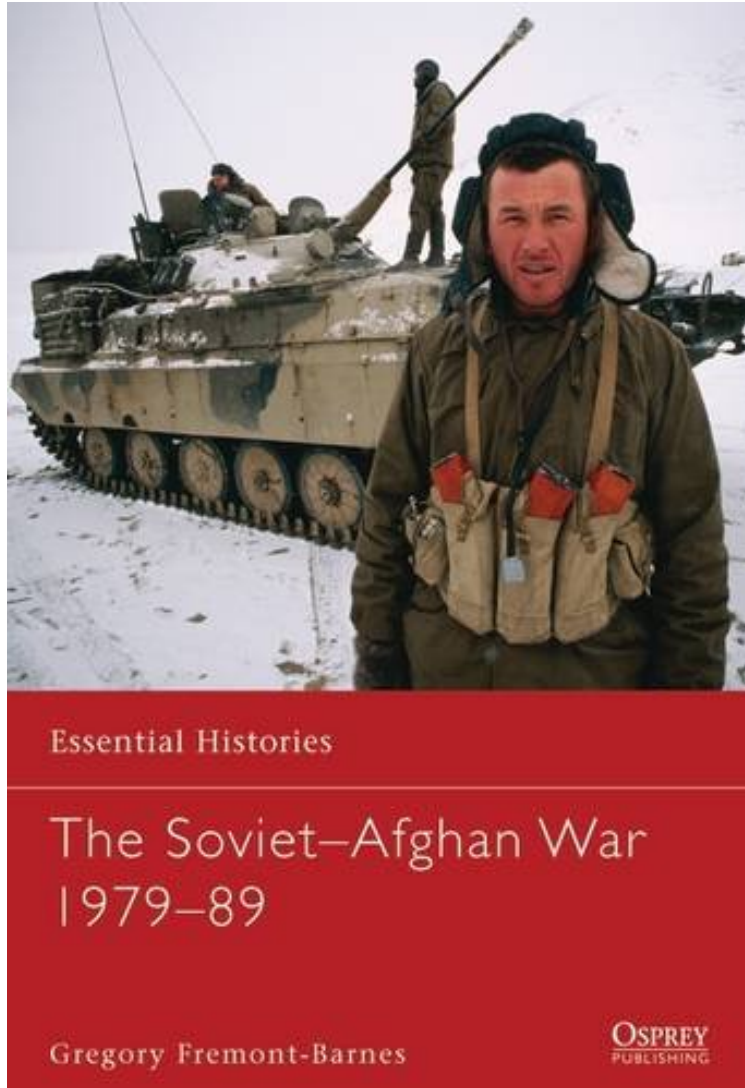


[Pdf free] The Soviet-Afghan War 1979-89 (Essential Histories)

The Soviet-Afghan War 1979-89 (Essential Histories)

Gregory Barnes

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Gregory Barnes : The Soviet-Afghan War 1979-89 (Essential Histories) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Soviet-Afghan War 1979-89 (Essential Histories):

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. As much of a history of Afghanistan as coverage of the war By WryGuy2 This book, "The Soviet-Afghan War 1979-89", by Gregory Fremont-Barnes, is an entry in Osprey Publishing's Essential History Series. To quote from Osprey's web page, "Each Essential Histories book studies the origins, politics, fighting and repercussions of one major war or theatre of war, from both military and civilian perspectives ... Featuring full colour maps, diagrams and photography throughout, each book in Osprey's Essential Histories series also includes pictures of contemporary artwork and artifacts, providing a full visual appreciation what

it was like to live through each war." Including the index, the book is 96 pages cover to cover (not 80 pages as listed in the product description above). As suggested by Osprey's summary, the book is more of a high level overview of the Afghanistan and the Soviet -Afghan conflict than a pure coverage of the war. The author begins with a discussion of the genesis of Russian/Soviet-Afghan relations (primarily beginning in the 1800's), discusses the warring sides, and covers the outbreak of the conflict and the fighting itself. He then shifts to following one Soviet soldier's story for a chapter, provides a look into how the typical Afghani lived, and discusses the experience of a western journalist who rode with the mujahedeen on two expeditions in 1985. He then explains how the war ended, and offers some analysis of the war and conclusions. I'll admit that I was expecting more detailed coverage of the Soviet campaigns and various battles when I purchased the book. Most of the depictions are either broad overviews or notional examples of how each side would conduct operation. This is partly understandable given how there were no defined "fronts" as there were in say, World War II, and a large part of the problems the Soviets faced arose because they couldn't force the mujahedeen to fight a convention war. Overall, this is a good, erudite book that gives you the background into how the war came about, why the war was fought the way it was (in large part because of the different cultures and expectations for each side), and what the ramifications of the war were. Four stars.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Excellent book on an obscure war with far-reaching consequences

By Carl W. This book, the latest in Osprey's Essential Histories' series, deals with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the waning days of the the Soviet Union (yes, the invasion that led the U.S. to pull out of the Moscow Olympics). The book is well illustrated with maps and photos, and has much useful detail on this obscure conflict, which began the chain of events that led to the United States also being drawn into Afghanistan in 2001. In that war, the Soviet Union was backing a pro-Soviet government that had overthrown its predecessor, against a Muslim insurgency that came to be heavily backed by the U.S., ironic in light of the current posture of the U.S. there. The author's analysis of the conflict is sound, and highlights the difficulty of putting down an Afghan insurgency even by one of the strongest military forces in the world, as well as the many mistakes the Russians made.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent overview of the USSR's "Vietnam"

By Stone Dog This is an excellent overview of the Soviet conflict in Afghanistan that has been compared to America's experience in Vietnam. I feel the author did a good job of creating a cogent chronicle of the conflict from many points of view. The author covers a number of aspects of the war quite well. The author spends a little time on the past invasions of Afghanistan but brings the reader quickly to the fateful events that brought a superpower into the mountainous land of the Afghans. The reader quickly notices that the USSR did not dictate events but was constantly reacting to what was going on internally on the Afghan political scene. The USSR moved quickly and decisively into their neighbor to the south with what seemed to them to be massive force sufficient for the task. Throughout the conflict, the Soviets overestimated their own abilities and underestimated those of the mujahadin and with forces too few for the task and often the wrong weapons. They were a mechanized army optimized for war in central Europe, not for fighting a guerrilla war in mountains. Gregory Fremont-Barnes introduces the reader to the rural Afghan who is tough, self-reliant and fiercely Islamic and one can hardly think of a worse place and an even worse people for the atheist, Marxist USSR to attempt to subdue. We get a sense of the geography of the land and how it affected combat. The reader gets a sense of the kind of war the mujahadin fought as well as the downside of their lack of a "united front". It's fairly obvious the Soviets lasted as long as they did because of the fracturous nature of the opponents. On the other hand, we read about how lightly they were armed and poorly they were supplied and yet how highly motivated they were as "fighters of God". Lastly, I liked that the book contains first-hand accounts in the form of the words of Pvt. Vladislav Tamarov as well as American journalist Arthur Bonner. The book contains numerous passages from the journals of these men and others. It's valuable to get a sense of what it was like by those who were there. If you're looking for a good overview of the conflict, this would be a good choice. It contains good maps as well as excellent photos and artwork as one would expect from Osprey. I give this Osprey title five stars.

The Soviet invasion of neighbouring Afghanistan in December 1979 sparked a bloody nine-year conflict with the Mujahideen until Soviet forces withdrew in 1988-89, dooming the communist Afghanistan government to defeat by Afghan popular resistance backed by the USA and other powers. The Soviet invasion had enormous implications on the global stage; it prompted the US Senate to refuse to ratify the hard-won SALT II arms-limitation treaty, and the USA and 64 other countries boycotted the 1980 Moscow Summer Olympics. For Afghanistan, the invasion served to prolong the interminable civil war that pitted central government against the regions and faction against faction. The country remains locked in conflict over 30 years later, with no end in sight. For over a year before the invasion the communist Afghan government, installed following a coup and intent on forcibly modernizing the country's civil law in the face of centuries of feudal practices, had called for Soviet armed assistance in its efforts to overcome the open rebellion of the Mujahideen. Fearing the international consequences should the Afghan government be toppled, the Soviets decided to invade. From the outset, though, they failed to understand that communist principles were incompatible with traditional tribal relationships - especially in a country notorious for its poor communications and resistance to centralization. The Soviets found that their forces, largely made up of conscripts untrained in mountain warfare and counter-insurgency - and deploying 'conventional' weapons such as tanks and helicopters - could not

defeat guerrillas enjoying the support of both the local population and powerful foreign allies such as the USA, and operating in harsh mountainous and/or desert terrain that favoured the defenders. The Soviets decided to stage a phased withdrawal of their own forces and concentrated on building up the Afghan government forces, but the Mujahideen soon prevailed, ushering in a new era dominated by the Taliban, an Islamist militia group that controlled large parts of the country from the mid-1990s. Featuring specially drawn mapping and drawing upon a wide range of sources, this succinct account explains the origins, history and consequences of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, thereby shedding new light on the more recent history - and prospects - of that troubled country.

"...a winning pick for any modern military analysis." - The Midwest Book (February 2013) "The author does a superb job of telling the story of the Soviet-Afghan war. He covers how it was in Afghanistan before the Soviets became interested, how the Soviets poured money and resources into trying to make Afghanistan another communist country, how it failed, how the military was sent in, what they dealt with and how they tried to change things. It seems very familiar. They also failed. It is a fascinating look into a culture few truly understand and it shows what went wrong and why. An excellent read that anyone with even a passing interest in the subject will want to read. Chock full of photos and maps, it is highly recommended." - Scott Van Aken, Modeling Madness (March 2013) About the Author Gregory Fremont-Barnes holds a doctorate in Modern History from Oxford University and serves as a Senior Lecturer in War Studies at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, dividing his work between teaching cadets on site and commissioned officers of the British Army posted to garrisons throughout the UK and abroad. He is the author of numerous titles for Osprey, including ESS 040: The Anglo-Afghan Wars 1839-1919.