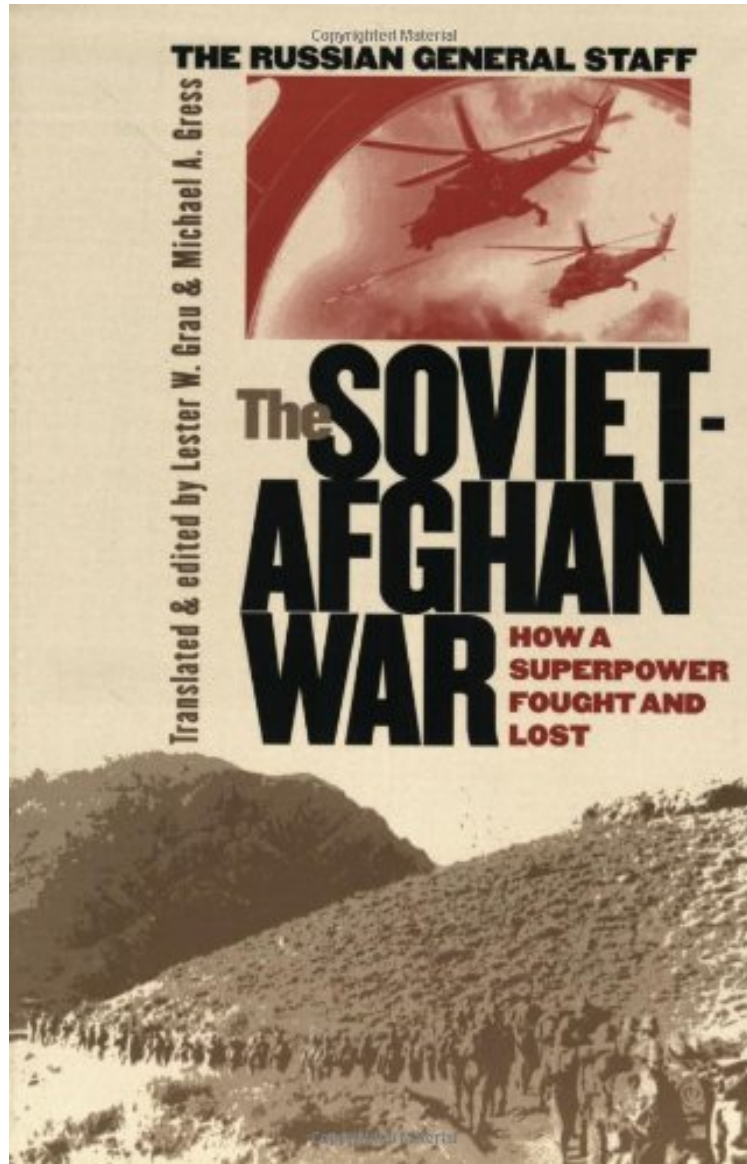


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The Soviet-Afghan War: How a Superpower Fought and Lost

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From Univ Pr of Kansas : **The Soviet-Afghan War: How a Superpower Fought and Lost** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised **The Soviet-Afghan War: How a Superpower Fought and Lost**:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The war than change my mind By Alejandro Casalegno As a young boy in Argentina, in 1984 i read in a newspaper about a "Soviet offensive in the Panjsher valley, Afghanistan", from

this day my passion for military history began and today is more stronger than ever. The book is a superb analysis of the soviet intervention, not communist propaganda, every tactics and weapons is shown in a professional way. The great irony is than the same locations of battles than i follow in the 80's are in the news now and the US Army is in the same crossroad than the Soviets. Afghanistan is a easy place to invade, impossible to be conquer. 7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. I dare you to find an adjective. By JTMAh, the great literary prose of Nabakov and Dostoyevsky this is not. Keep in mind this is an official Soviet study of the conflict. For those wondering just how colorful an after-action report from the monolithic socialist empire can be, wonder no more. You get what you pay for, this is the literary equivalent of the cold, soul-killing, concrete block architecture employed by the soviets through Eastern Europe and Afghanistan. If you can get past all of that, and it is a DIFFICULT read, you will find a level of detail and thoroughness without peer. It is similar to books published by our own government. Lots of numbers, lots of diagrams, and tons of information (20 pages on Ammunition Combat Service Support anyone?). The reader will need a decent level of understanding of military science - because the book does not stop long to explain concepts, and assumes quite a bit of the reader. In conclusion, it is the type of book you only really begin to enjoy when you have finished it. A worthy undertaking. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Detailed, insightful, yet incomplete. By G. Bahlman The translators and editors went to great pains not only to bring this detailed product of the Russian General Staff's analysis to English speakers, but have added their own analysis as well, with more up-to-date and more objective perspectives. This book will inform the readers on every aspect of Soviet operations inside Afghanistan, from logistical and medical issues, to large-scale motorized infantry tactics. Seemingly nothing was left out, except for one thing: why the Soviets lost! Also lacking was more detail on the Mujahideen perspective on the war. Accounts of Mujahideen activity were told entirely from the Soviet perspective. In fairness, this book sources only one document, and information about the inner workings of Mujahideen forces and Afghan society might have been sparse prior to 2002. But the book fails to address the non-military reasons for the war's failure, and let's face it, the Mujahideen were no match for the LCOSF in open warfare, which leaves the non-military aspects of Soviet occupation as the deciding factor in the outcome. The author makes only vague references to the effects of the occupation on the populace, the problems with the legitimacy of the DRA government, and the extent of foreign support to the Mujahideen, leaving the reader to draw his or her own conclusions about what finally forced the Soviets out. Overall, a very comprehensive, if limited, analysis of the war. I would recommend supplementing this book with other publications, such as the US Army Counterinsurgency Field Manual (ISBN-13: 978-0226841519).

The War in Afghanistan (1979-1989) has been called "the Soviet Union's Vietnam War," a conflict that pitted Soviet regulars against a relentless, elusive, and ultimately unbeatable Afghan guerrilla force (the mujahideen). The hit-and-run bloodletting across the war's decade tallied more than 25,000 dead Soviet soldiers plus a great many more casualties and further demoralized a USSR on the verge of disintegration. In *The Soviet-Afghan War* the Russian general staff takes a close critical look at the Soviet military's disappointing performance in that war in an effort to better understand what happened and why and what lessons should be taken from it. Lester Grau and Michael Gress's expert English translation of the general staff's study offers the very first publication in any language of this important and illuminating work. Surprisingly, this was a study the general staff never intended to write, initially viewing the war in Afghanistan as a dismal aberration in Russian military history. The history of the 1990s has, of course, completely demolished that belief, as evidenced by the Russian Army's subsequent engagements with guerrilla forces in Chechnya, Azerbaijan, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan, and elsewhere. As a result, Russian officers decided to take a much closer look at the Red Army's experiences in the Afghan War. Their study presents the Russian view of how the war started, how it progressed, and how it ended; shows how a modern mechanized army organized and conducted a counter-guerrilla war; chronicles the major battles and operations; and provides valuable insights into Soviet tactics, strategy, doctrine, and organization across a wide array of military branches. The editors' incisive preface and commentary help contextualize the Russian view and alert the reader to blind spots in the general staff's thinking about the war. This one-of-a-kind document provides a powerful case study on how yet another modern mechanized army imprudently relied upon the false promise of technology to defeat a determined guerrilla foe. Along the way, it vividly reveals the increasing disillusionment of Soviet soldiers, how that disillusion seeped back into Soviet society, and how it contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Red Army had fought their war to a military draw but that was not enough to stave off political defeat at home. The Soviet-Afghan War helps clarify how such a surprising demise could have materialized in the backyard of the Cold War's other great superpower.

From *Library Journal* The stark contrasts between the current American-Afghan war and the traumatic events of the Soviet conflict that ended more than a decade ago are dramatically apparent in this book. Translator and editor Grau (Lt. Colonel, U.S. Army, ret.; *The Bear Went Over the Mountain: Soviet Combat Tactics in Afghanistan*) had help deciphering the Russian General Staff papers from Gress, a Soviet migr who served in the Soviet army. The main body of the book is about Soviet army and air force tactics, operations, and armaments. At the end of each section, Grau offers "editor's comments" to explain and draw perspective on the accounts from the Russian General Staff.

Several recurring themes are that the Soviets/Russians have not given accurate statistics on the war, the Soviet military had thoroughly penetrated the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan before the invasion, and the Marxist-Leninist framework kept the generals from making a proper assessment of their task. Although of some historical interest, this book is ponderous with details and is not a light read. Recommended for public libraries with Soviet history collections and academic libraries. Harry Willems, Southeast Kansas Lib. Syst., Iola Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. "This superb translation will generate widespread and unprecedented interest in the subject. Offering a candid view of a war that played a significant role in the ultimate demise of the Soviet Union, this book presents analysis absolutely vital to Western policymakers, as well as to political, diplomatic, and military historians, and anyone interested in Russian and Soviet history. It also provides insights regarding current and future Russian struggles in ethnic conflicts both at and within their borders, struggles that could potentially destroy the Russian Federation."—David M. Glantz, coauthor of *The Battle of Kursk* "Provides a treasure trove of information and analysis."—William E. Odom, author of *The Collapse of the Soviet Military and On Internal War*

From the Back Cover "This superb translation will generate widespread and unprecedented interest in the subject. Offering a candid view of a war that played a significant role in the ultimate demise of the Soviet Union, this book presents analysis absolutely vital to Western policymakers, as well as to political, diplomatic, and military historians, and anyone interested in Russian and Soviet history. It also provides insights regarding current and future Russian struggles in ethnic conflicts both at and within their borders, struggles that could potentially destroy the Russian Federation."-- David M. Glantz, coauthor of *The Battle of Kursk* "Provides a treasure trove of information and analysis."--William E. Odom, author of *The Collapse of the Soviet Military and On Internal War*