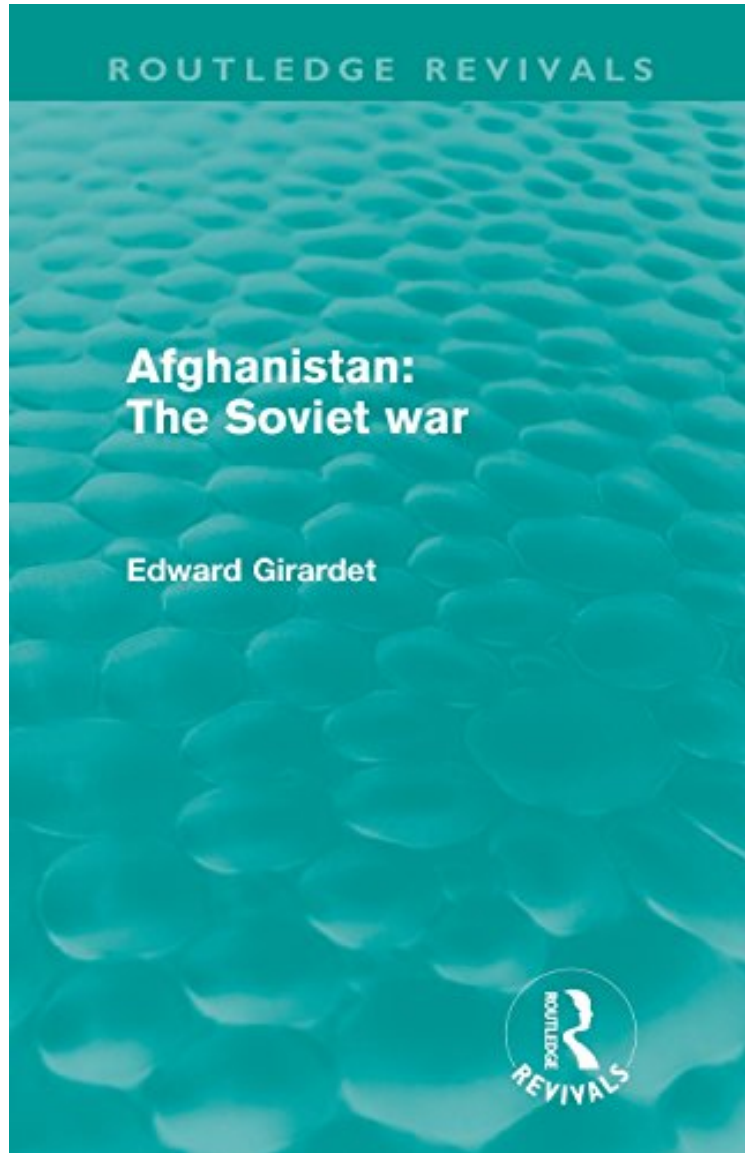


[E-BOOK] Afghanistan: The Soviet War (Routledge Revivals)

Afghanistan: The Soviet War (Routledge Revivals)

Ed Girardet

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Ed Girardet : Afghanistan: The Soviet War (Routledge Revivals) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Afghanistan: The Soviet War (Routledge Revivals):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Unpleasant resonances, backwards and forwardsBy (((Marco Buendia)))"Russia's Vietnam", as Jimmy Carter's Brzinski crowed. He was intent on making it something even worse. And he succeeded!The author was a reporter for the Christian Science Monitor, and wrote this in the fine tradition of

that paper. It was published in 1986, just before Michael Gorbachev began to radically change the USSR, domestically and in foreign policy. He is referred to once in this book, on p. 134, where he is quoted as threatening the Pakistanis, an American client developing an atomic weapon, with American collusion. Unlike his American counterparts, however, Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon, he would quickly extract his country from this morass. Unfortunately, between the USSR and the USA, damage far beyond anyone's expectation had already been done. The book begins with the Soviet invasion. There is no substantial introduction to the country and what had led to the volatile situation that would tempt the drunken and punch-drunk leadership of the USSR to imitate the Americans' bloody escapade in Vietnam. In this one respect only the book is lacking. Needless to say, even the good reportorial abilities of Girardet were inadequate to foresee the consequences of bloody Soviet, American and religious malfeasance for the emotional, ignorant and unhappy people of Afghanistan, the USSR and the USA, not to mention the collateral damage throughout the Muslim world, Europe and Guantanamo.

First published in 1985, this is a book written at the height of the Soviet war in Afghanistan in the 1980s. Based on five clandestine trips into Afghanistan with the resistance, the book examines why the Soviets invaded in 1979 and what they were seeking to defend. The author analyses their deliberate policy of migratory genocide through a combination of aerial bombardments, political repression and economic blockades. The book is written by the journalist Ed Girardet, one of the world's leading authorities on the conflict, whose particular strength is his dispassionate reporting style and his firsthand proximity to the conflict. He interviewed many of the leaders of the Afghan resistance, both inside Afghanistan and in the refugee camps and he explains in depth the nature of the Afghan Islamic anti-communist struggle for independence. This is a book in the finest tradition of war reporting on the front line and the reissue is essential reading for all those interested in the history of the conflict in Afghanistan.

From Publishers Weekly In light of the scarcity of reliable information up to now, this informed appraisal of the war in Afghanistan is most welcome. Girardet, a correspondent for the MacNeil-Lehrer Report and formerly the Christian Science Monitor's correspondent in Afghanistan, addresses Soviet motives and ultimate objectives, the degree of U.S. involvement and the likely outcome. Based on information gathered in several trips and many interviews, the book reveals the pitiless application of Soviet anti-insurgency techniques against a primarily peasant resistance movement which, after six years, is still holding its own. The war costs the Kremlin between three and four billion dollars a year, with perhaps 40,000 Soviet soldiers already killed, and no end in sight. Girardet observes a similarity between this situation and American involvement in Vietnam. In cool, careful prose, he depicts the nightmare of aerial bombardment, armored ground assaults, brutal reprisals and gas attacks against villages. The book is in the highest tradition of war reporting, conveying not only the unique quality of the fighting itself but the social and political implications as well. January Copyright 1985 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal The author's experience as a correspondent in Afghanistan before and after the invasion qualifies him uniquely to describe the Soviet "grim war of attrition" against the guerrillas and their passive civilian support. This is a strong, well-written book about the brutality of "Sovietization" and the "migratory genocide" inflicted on the refugees. Criticism of the mujahideen adds balance. The author neglects larger questions about the Soviet role in the region and the war's external repercussions; his anecdotal style does not permit a serious conclusion. The absence of footnotes and maps is especially annoying given the book's detail. However, general and academic libraries will find this useful and a good companion to Ralph Magnus's scholarly *Afghan Alternatives: issues, options, and policies* (LJ 8/85). Zachary T. Irwin, Business Social Sciences Div., Behrend Coll., Pennsylvania State Univ., Erie Copyright 1985 Reed Business Information, Inc.