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The Afghan war did not bleed the Soviet Union dry and lead to the demise of the 'evil empire.' Only 3.4 per cent of the Soviet population eligible for military service fought in Afghanistan (p. 329). Most Soviet soldiers remained stationed in Europe for the duration of the war and never saw a single shot fired in anger.

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Indeed, entire sections of the book about the Soviets' difficulties on the ground -- be it finding translators, winning trust of the local population, facing logistical challenges, the frustrating efforts to train a local Afghan army -- could be copied and pasted into a book about NATO's presence in Afghanistan. While Soviet goals early in the war had been to transform Afghanistan into a stable and prosperous socialist country -- just like NATO dreamed of liberal multiparty democracy in ...

### **Book review: "Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan 1979 ...**

"Afghansty" is in fact Afghanistan from a Russian perspective - a useful and valuable work. Unfortunately the author tends to lean toward Russian interpretation of events at the cost of scholarly balance. He accepts, without reservation, Russian estimates of more than 15,000 killed in Afghanistan.

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