

# RUSSIAN ROULETTE: Afghanistan Through Russian Eyes

*Genady Bocharov*

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**Genady Bocharov : RUSSIAN ROULETTE: Afghanistan Through Russian Eyes** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised RUSSIAN ROULETTE: Afghanistan Through Russian Eyes:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Read the BookBy Arthur SevanI have a strong conviction that if one is about to write a "review" on a book he or she must, a the very least, read the entire book and then offer their opinions. Some reviwiers do not do that, some skim... I have read the book and several times I must add. It is a great work in a sense of perseptions of a modern war or conflict (as it is called in the media and politicians). I had no idea how the Soviet soldiers viewed that war nor did I know how the commader of the Soviet contingent viewed it. It is not a book about Soviet military tactics in Afganistan nor is it an adventure story. It is an attempt to analyze a fruitless war and its effect on the people.0 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A waste of timeBy W. CookA pretty pathetic mix of front line monotony and homeland poetry. The author either smoked way too much dope while in Afganistan or he just lacks any idea of what it was he was trying to get across to the audience. I kicked back and was all set to read what I thought would be a real down to earth description of war in one of the few armpits left in this world. But after about 15 minutes I realised this was another in a long string of Soviet/Afghan let downs. It seems very few, if any, of the soldiers who fought in this war have anything but the most rudimentary idea of how to put it down on paper. Bottom line, if your on a deserted island and this book washes up on shore, go ahead and enjoy it. Just don't part with any cash for it.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A sensitive treatment of the Afghan war from the Soviet sideBy J. RhiPerhaps I loved the book more because I read it on my recent visit to Afghanistan.

Beginning with the first episode in *Kabul Hotel*, everything seemed so vivid and painful. I was really sorry for those who had to be on both sides in the period of the Soviet occupation, which turned out to be after all the beginning of a much more grave tragedy.

This book is about the war in Afghanistan; it is a classic about war anywhere. It is by a Russian journalist; it will remind you of the best writing about Vietnam. The author takes us inside the war in Afghanistan -- the Soviet Vietnam. The book is written in several voices: that of the extraordinary journalist that Bocharov is, those of several ordinary Soviet soldiers who tell who they are (or were) what happened to them. Taken together, these parallel streams recreate the atmosphere of the war, its specific characteristics, its moral cul-de-sacs tragedies. This was the longest war waged by Russia since 1813.

From *Publishers Weekly* Bocharov, a Soviet journalist who covered the war in Afghanistan from 1980 to 1988, here relates experiences of its combat participants. One story is about a wounded soldier who saved himself by parachuting from a chopper hit by ground fire; another recounts the ordeal of the sole survivor of an ambush; another is about a My Lai-like incident in which seven civilians riding in a car were massacred because they did not stop at a Soviet checkpoint. The material fails to convey whatever was unique about this particular war, and each "Soldier's Tale" is followed by a uniformly disappointing chapter called "The Journalist's Story." Readers will find the book too broadly general, such as Bocharov's observation that the war in Afghanistan "brought out marvellous human qualities . . . such as generosity, willpower, humility, sense of duty, and amazing courage." Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Library Journal* While one would have hoped that Bocharov, a Soviet journalist who spent ten years covering the Afghanistan war, would provide a Soviet insight into that military fiasco, his treatment of the conflict is very different. Namely, he concentrates on the larger issue of war and its horrors. While certain portions of the book are specific to Afghanistan, many of the situations discussed would describe almost any war. Lacking is a depth or breadth of treatment; only a handful of incidents are noted. Still, libraries interested in war studies might want this. - Don ald Clay Johnson, Univ. of Minnesota Lib., Minneapolis Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. Language Notes Text: English (translation) Original Language: Russian