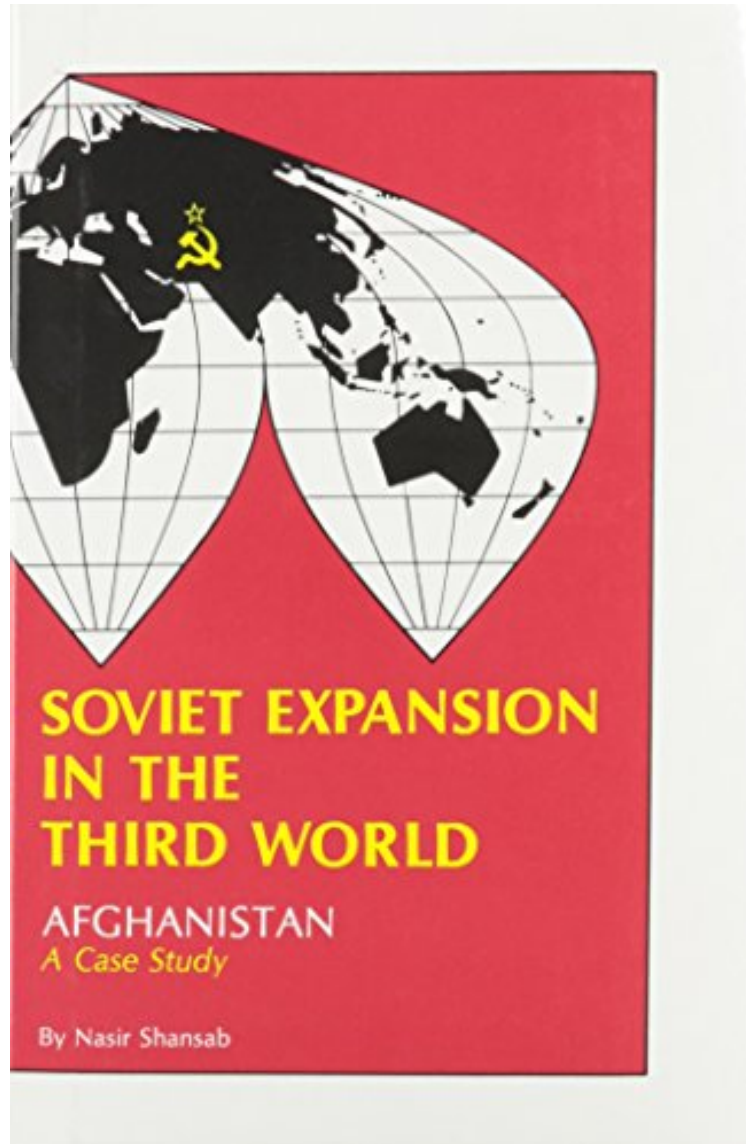


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Soviet Expansion in the Third World: Afghanistan a Case Study

Nasir Shansab

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Nasir Shansab : Soviet Expansion in the Third World: Afghanistan a Case Study before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Soviet Expansion in the Third World: Afghanistan a Case Study:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Knowledgeable book By Bryon Wait Shansab, Nasir 1986 Soviet Expansion in the Third World: Afghanistan: A Case Study. Silver Spring, Maryland: Bartleby Press. Pp.xii, 190; some pictures; some vague maps. Nasir Shansab's book deals with the Soviet's expansion into Afghanistan. His book

chronicles Communism's rise in Afghanistan, the Soviets' invasion of Afghanistan in 1919, and the subsequent jihad that has followed. However, it is important to note that this book was written in 1986, before the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan had ended. However, Shansab does a wonderful job on giving a detailed history of the fifteen to twenty years that led up to the Soviet invasion, as well as details as to what took place during the occupation. The book begins by telling the reader "Russian expansionist ambitions in Central and Southwest Asia had taught Afghan rulers to be on guard." Thus rulers of Afghanistan were always cautious of their northern neighbors. The book itself is divided into four main parts. The first part of the book deals with how and why Soviet Communist ideas spread into Afghanistan. Shansab feels that because of "[p]overty, lack of opportunity, social injustice, and political subjugation," throughout the seventies and earlier, has left Afghanistan as a prime place for instilling communist beliefs. He goes on to state that the Soviets planned to use this social unrest and the public's frustration to their own advantage. Thus during the 1950's they began to loan Afghanistan money and began trading with them in an attempt to make them seem as a more powerful, yet charitable ally, while in reality making Afghanistan dependent on the Soviet assistance. In the sixties, the Soviets began funding groups in order to spread communism into Afghanistan. Shortly after, a small group of Marxists met in 1965 and formed the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan. This group felt that they needed to abolish the existing political system, and replace it with a Communist regime. Thus, part one ends with Daoud being overthrown by the Communist party by announcing their victory on radio in Kabul. The second part of the book deals with the different social and cultural aspects of Afghanistan, and how they dealt with the new Communist leaders. Shansab details incidents, especially one in Herat in March of 1979, where the lower class and middle class people revolted against the new Communist regime by ransacking government buildings and killing local officials. These incidents began to grow in number, as well as the death toll of Communist leaders and Shiite Muslims. The protests and executions grew so bad that by the summer of 1979, the Soviets were convinced they had to invade Afghanistan and put down the rebellions. In part three of the book, Shansab deals with strategies and tactics of the Russian army when they invaded Afghanistan. Their first step was to assassinate the old ruler, Hafizullah Amin and installed Babrak Karmal as president, in an attempt to have him and the PDPA consolidate power. Shansab describes this new phase of Afghani history by explaining that "The tragedy of a nation engulfed in civil war caused by internal socio-political factors now took on the form of a national resistance against foreign occupation." The Soviet army began to kill protestors and students that were in opposition. By 1981, the Soviets had shown that they were incapable of putting down the resistance movement. Shansab feels that this weakness was due to the fact that all of the army's orders came from Moscow, a place not used to fighting guerilla wars. The resistance continued, and in 1985, six years after the initial invasion, the Soviet soldiers hadn't accomplished any of their goals and were still trying to stop the resistance fighters. In fact by 1986, all the Russians had accomplished was forcing 3 million refugees into Pakistan and one million into Iran. Since the book was published in 1986, part three ends here with Afghanistan's neighbors dealing with the refugee problem. Part four deals with Soviet geopolitics and American efforts to help the Afghani people and refugees. Shansab feels that the reason the Soviets have not found success in Afghanistan is because they did not count on such strong resistance. According to Shansab, there are 10 different factions of resistance, each being unique in religious or social backgrounds. "In spite of its obvious shortcomings, the Afghan resistance has continuously grown from its isolated pockets of rebellion into a nationwide war of resistance." Shansab feels that this is a war that the Soviets most likely will not win. He feels that the only reason that the Soviets are trying to invade Afghanistan is because they feel that they are in competition with the United States for influence in the smaller countries of Asia and Europe. However, Shansab feels that because of this event, this has forced the United States from a passive observer into an active challenger. He notes that the United States has been giving covert assistance to Afghanistan and its neighbors in order to hinder the Soviet's operation. However, Shansab feels that the United States must now deal with either trying to build democracy in other Third World countries, or whether it should help the existing governments in order to ensure the public's safety. Thus in his final statement, Shansab states that he feels that this conflict is bigger than just the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, he feels as if the United States should help the Afghani people not only because they are being oppressed but for the sake of the free world.

Byron Wait
1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Extremely well written; honest, clear, and critical.
By A Customer
Mr. Shansab's book, written ten years before the Taliban, is nothing short of prescient. His narrative is succinct, forceful and descriptive. The author's analysis of Afghanistan's pre-communist days, the Soviet invasion, and the Afghan resistance eerily transcends the subject of his book.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very original; extremely well written; still accurate.
By A Customer
Shansab describes social affairs like Naipal writes about religious problems. I found Shansab's analysis refreshing and would recommend this book to anybody who is interested in the Middle East and Islamic fundamentalism.

NEW BOOK EXCELLENT CONDITION.