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 I. Kurochkin -- Sweeping villages with Afghani and Soviet subunits by  
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Sommario/riassunto

[Illustrated with 52 maps and diagrams]Sixteen years after its  
 commencement and six years after its cessation, the Soviet-Afghan War  
 remains an enigma for Westerners. Set against the backdrop of earlier  
 successful Soviet military interventions in East Germany (1953),  
 Hungary (1956), and Czechoslovakia (1968), and occasional Soviet  
 military pressure on Poland, the stark military power of the Soviet state  
 seemed to be an irresistible tool of indefatigable Soviet political  
 power...More than a few strategic pundits and military planners  
 envisioned a bold Soviet strategic thrust from southern Afghanistan to  
 the shores of the Persian Gulf, to challenge Western strategic interests  
 and disrupt Western access to critical Middle Eastern oil.Despite these  
 fears and dire warnings, the Soviet Afghan military effort soon  
 languished as the British experience began to repeat itself. Although  
 appearing to have entered Afghanistan in seemingly surgical fashion  
 and with overwhelming force, the Soviet military commitment was, in  
 reality, quite limited, and the immense and stark territory of  
 Afghanistan swallowed the invaders up. Across the largely barren  
 landscape, guerrilla fighters multiplied, and, within months, the  
 hitherto curious word mujahideen took on new meaning...To this day  
 the Western view of the Afghan War has been clouded in mystery and  
 shadows. Soviet writers have presented Westerners with a mixture of  
 political diatribe, military fable, allegory, and analogy, set against the  
 backdrop of few facts. Westerners have recounted the war based on  
 this Soviet material, sketchy mujahideen accounts, the reports of the  
 occasional Western war correspondents in Afghanistan, and pure  
 supposition. This volume, the first factual material to shed real light on  
 the conflict, represents a unique first step in setting the Afghan record

straight.

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