

University of Lodz, Department of Philosophy and History,
mgr Tomasz Fijałkowski, The question of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from
Afghanistan (1985-1989),
Promoter Prof. dr hab. Marek Dziekan, Łódź 2020

This paper concerns the question of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan in years 1985-1989. The turning point for the period in question seems to be clearly defined. The starting date is the moment in which, in the spring of 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev was elected the first secretary of the CPSU. Slightly more than a year later after the election, a shift in the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan appeared. In 1986 some of the Soviet troops were withdrawn from Afghanistan. The next phase of the retreat of other Soviet units took place in 1988-1989. The end date of the turning point is, of course, February 15th, 1989, i.e. the official departure of the last Soviet soldier from Afghanistan.

I used the following research methods: inductive, indirect comparative, progressive and repressive. A statistical method was also indispensable, allowing a better understanding of the discussed issues by including specific numerical comparative data in tables at the end of the dissertation.

Layout of dissertation

The dissertation consists of an introduction, four chapters divided into sub-chapters, ending, list of sources and literature.

Chapter I. Soviet intervention in Afghanistan (1979-1985). Outline of events.

I presented the events that eventually led to the entry of Soviet troops into Afghanistan, including riots in Herat in March 1979, occupation "in installments", the reaction of the US, taking the wrong decision of the entry of Soviet troops into Afghanistan, and the very operation of the entry of these troops with the inclusion of Babrak Karmal in power, which was the main political goal of this operation. I showed the reactions of individual international organizations to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. I presented the reactions of the United Nations, including resolutions, the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Muslim States, the European Council with a Carrington mission, and the Conference of Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries. Since 1982, the most active participant in the efforts to achieve peace in Afghanistan has been the United Nations, especially the Secretary General Pérez de Cuéllar and his envoy Diego Cordovez.

I presented the activities of the resistance movement against the Soviet invaders and the Afghan communists of the LDPA. I described the riots in Kabul of February 22-24, 1980, in which several hundred victims were killed, the deteriorating situation in the field of internal security, political currents of the armed opposition, terrorist attacks, bombs or rocket attacks of the resistance in Kabul, the Soviet characteristics of Ahmad Shah Masud, fierce fights in the Panchshir valley, forced a change of tactics of Soviet troops in Afghanistan.

I described the American reaction to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, trade fairs and then the agreement with Pakistan of April 1982, American aid in the form of arms supplies and military instructors, financial aid from Saudi Arabia, specific unofficial Iran support only for selected Shiite resistance groups, open support from Egypt in the form of sending weapons of Soviet production, support from China in the form of sending weapons and competition in this field with the USA, aid from Great Britain in the form of supplies of weapons, ammunition and instructors.

Chapter II. Moscow's change of position on the Afghan issue after Mikhail Gorbachev came to power (1985-1987).

I presented the changes in the USSR that took place after Mikhail Gorbachev came to power, known as glasnost and perestroika. I put special emphasis on showing the economic bankruptcy of the USSR, which was one of the factors behind the withdrawal of the Soviet Army from Afghanistan.

I presented the changes that took place in the Soviet armed forces, including their financing and limitations in this regard, differences between the USSR and the USA, the adoption by the USSR of a new defense military doctrine, the role of the KGB, the dismissal of Marshal Sergey Sokolov from the post of Defense Minister, a change in the course of Soviet policy foreign - "new political thinking", the Afghan issue in relations with the USA, relations with Pakistan, no prospect of victory for the Soviet Army in Afghanistan, approval process and the delivery of "Stinger" missiles for Afghan partisans, a political gesture of Gorbachev consisting in the withdrawal of 6 regiments to the USSR in 1986, and the continuation of Cordovez's diplomatic mission.

Chapter III. Attempts of the Afghan conflict settlement (Fall 1987-Spring 1988).

I discussed the attempts of détente in relations with the USA, relations with Afghanistan and Pakistan, I presented the last rounds of Afghan-Pakistani talks with Cordovez, Gorbachev's declaration of February 8, 1988, the signing of the Geneva agreements on May 14, 1988.

Chapter IV. The withdrawal of the Soviet troops under the supervision of UNGOMAP (1988-1989).

I presented the establishment, tasks and principles of operation of UNGOMAP. I presented the first phase of the Soviet withdrawal, Operation Pamir, the location of Soviet troops in Afghanistan after August 15, 1988, Soviet attempts to reach an agreement with the Afghan opposition, Operation Typhoon and the final withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan by February 15, 1989. I have included 9 tables with statistical data illustrating selected issues, which are significantly complemented by text materials.

The text part is closed with lists of sources studies and articles, as well as a table of contents.

Then I put the following attachments as illustrative material: 4 maps and 26 photos from the era.

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