

MILITARY GEOGRAPHY: FROM PEACE TO WAR

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Appendices, figures, maps, tables, photographs

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There has always been a long-standing relationship between Geography and the military. In the book *Military Geography: from Peace to War*, Military Geography is defined as the “application of geographic information, tools and techniques to military problems”. In the international arena, Military Geography enjoys recognition as a formal sub-discipline with its own speciality group within the Association of American Geographers. *Military Geography: from Peace to War* is a welcome addition to a rather sparse literature collection of this applied sub-discipline of Geography.

The book starts with an explanation of the scope of Military Geography that is extremely useful for researchers and students of Military Geography. This explanation enables one to identify the context of the operation under discussion (peacetime, stability and support operations (SASO), or war), the scale of the operation (strategic, operational or tactical), the approach used to study it (systematic, topical or regional) and the perspective of the study (applied and/or historical).

The authors carefully divided the rest of the content into the three contexts mentioned above. In the section dealing with the wartime context, six case studies are presented, ranging from a battle during the American Civil War, through World War II to the war in Iraq. In the section on the SASO context, another six case studies are presented, with topics such as “Disaster management and the military”, “Military and Political Geography in SASO”, and “The military geographic challenges of Afghanistan”. The peacetime context deals with aspects such as “Geographical perspectives on recruiting”, “Sustaining Army Land for 21st century

readiness” and “Examining the effects of warfare on the natural landscape”. This last section also contains six case studies. A well-written introduction and conclusion weave the different parts of the book into a coherent unit that is informative and easy to read, without compromising the academic integrity of the book.

The book has been supplied with the following as appendices: A glossary of common military terms and a short curriculum vitae of the authors. Both of these enhance the value of the book as they make it easy to reference unknown concepts (especially for non-military readers) and give further evidence of the wide scope of the field of Military Geography. In *Military Geography: from Peace to War*, the authors lavishly furnished the text with some 56 maps, 31 tables, 49 photographs and 7 figures in support of the content. These useful figures, tables, maps and graphics create both structure and body for each topic. The fact that all photos and maps are in black and white detaches some of its impact, but can be understood in the light of cost implications.

Military Geography: from Peace to War is written in simple, straightforward language that links relevant factors together in a fashion understandable to a wide range of readers ranging from uniformed military practitioners and military geographers to the non-professional. This book should serve as required reading for military geographers, military planners and policy-makers, as well as commanders and staff officers at all levels of all arms of service.

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