

**THE LESSONS OF MODERN WAR:  
VOLUME II**

**THE IRAN-IRAQ WAR**

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To David Boulton and Fred Praeger for their patient efforts and support.

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## Preface

This is the second volume in a series of three volumes that the authors have written with the assistance of Raymond J. Picquet, W. Andrew Terril, and Carol K. Wagner, and the support of the Royal United Services Institute. These three volumes cover five major wars: the Arab-Israeli conflict of October 1973, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, the Iran Iraq War, the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan, and the Falklands conflict with Argentina.

Volume One covers the lessons of the Arab-Israeli arms race between 1973 and 1989, and of the Arab-Israel conflicts of 1973 and 1982. Volume Two in this series covers the Iran-Iran War. Volume Three covers the Falklands and Afghan conflicts, and provides the general conclusions of the study.

Each of the three volumes is written as an independent work, but the analysis of the wars in question is standardized as much as possible. The analysis of major conflicts is divided into sections that analyze the forces involved, the history of the conflict, key aspects of the operational art of war, and the impact of major types of forces and weapons.

The analysis in each volume focuses on military events and lessons, and only treats the politics of each conflict to the extent it is necessary to understand the grand strategy, strategy, and tactics of the conflict. Where possible, key events and data are described in a way that will allow the reader to draw his or her own conclusions. A deliberate effort has been made to avoid oversimplifying the complex nature of modern war.

The sources and methods used in each volume are described at its end, and a research bibliography is provided for each conflict. Frequent use is made of tables and charts to allow comparisons of forces, portray force shifts over time, and show the key performance features of major weapons. In most cases, the data shown are shown as provided in the original source, rather than standardized or altered to eliminate minor conflicts. This is done to allow the reader to see the original data on which the analysis is based.