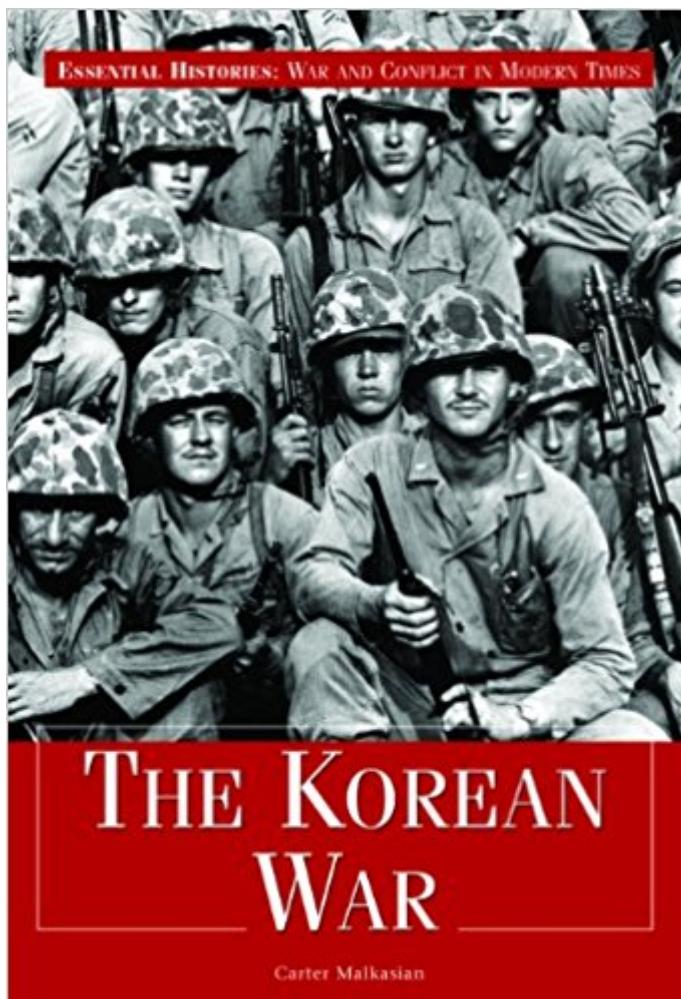


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# The Korean War (Essential Histories (Rosen))



## **Synopsis**

The Korean War was a significant turning point in the Cold War. This book explains how the conflict in a small peninsula in East Asia had a tremendous impact on the entire international system and the balance of power between the two superpowers, America and Russia. Through the conflict, the West demonstrated its resolve to thwart Communist aggression and the armed forces of China, the Soviet Union and the United States came into direct combat for the only time during the Cold War.

## **Book Information**

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Age Range: 12 - 14 years

Grade Level: 7 - 9

## **Customer Reviews**

"A very useful resource, especially, but by no means exclusively, in school and college libraries...these books offer very useful standardised accounts and are presented in very attractive and approachable volumes."--Reference Reviews --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

This unique series studies every major war in history looking at all the aspects of war, from how it felt to be a soldier to the lasting impact of the conflict on the world around it. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

This book is an excellent addition to the fabulous Osprey collection. The author accomplished a

very important task by underscoring the importance of a largely unknown and misunderstood war. This error is corrected by this comprehensive introduction to the Korean war. The author presents the war in every facet....political....military...and human. It's a balanced account that discusses the contributions of non American allies as well as insight into the Communist aims and strategies. I really enjoyed the author's discussion of the effects of this war. As usual with the Osprey books, the crisp prose is augmented by wonderful maps. This book is a fascinating and important narrative.

As I have said before Clift Notes for History. I would have given another star if I hadn't found a gross editorial error! This brings those facts that I am not sure about into question. The section in question went as follows Fifty MiG- 15s intercepted nine B- 29 Superfortress bombers attacking Namsi airfield. Three bombers were destroyed. Another eight received major damage. It just doesn't add up. Also I realize the publisher is a British firm, but there was a lot in the book covering the Commonwealth division in the conflict!

This book is a great introduction to the Korea War which unfortunately too many people don't remember or know anything about. The way of the future is to follow a new history that improves upon the previous, not repeat the mistakes of our forefathers.

War history is story telling, and good story telling requires a good thesis. The main thesis of this book, which is also the author's PhD thesis, is that Korean War is the first modern "limited war" as the major geopolitical players feel their ways into optimal strategies and tactics in the nuclear-dominated Cold War era. I think this point of view is quite valid and appropriate. Thus the book, although short, is still quite worthy, as it covers all the important events related to its main theme. Some colorful and interesting details of the Korean War are necessarily brushed over, given the book's limited length. For example, Task Force Faith is not mentioned in the text at all but appears only on the map of Chosin reservoir. Compounding this shortcoming is the fact that the author is British and selects his anecdotes mainly from the combat history of the Commonwealth troops. While the American perspective is not hard to find in most books on this subject, a better coverage on Chinese and/or Korean sources would have definitely improved this work. The language in the book is not dry but, well, "patient", by which I refer to the feeling I get about the author talking to a young audience. Indeed, my 8-year-old son has no problem going through the book entirely on his own. He thoroughly enjoys it, but probably misses most of the deeper and broader discussions in the book. Overall, I consider this a strength of the book, as it is deep enough

for grown-ups and easy enough for kids.

Good historic review, discussion from the point of view of both sides is educational and very interesting for those who are interested in leaning what happened from both sides. Good reading.

This summary covers all the bases of the Korean conflict: political, tactical, strategic, cultural and does it well within an Osprey format. It was a war fought on two levels. The lower level was fought between the two Korean countries wanting to unify their whole country under their political control. On the larger scale, it was a war fought among the three super powers for ideology, prestige and the expansion of world dominance. North Korea was under the influence of Stalin and the Soviet Union was training and equipping the NKPA to invade the south while the US was marginally helping the South Koreans. Its been said that the speech Dean Acheson gave on 1/12/1950 that implied the US was letting go of South Korea, excluding it from the US sphere was the prime motivator for the invasion. The introduction presents a brief history of Korea going back to 1905 when Japan took it over and mistreated the Koreans until the end of WWII when the Soviet Union liberated the northern half and the US the southern half. The narrative continues to describe the friction between the US and Communist China after the world war as well as the alliance formed between Stalin and Mao. The author talks about the political atmosphere of the day and how these countries are linked together. Its all basic information but if you're new to the Korean War, its invaluable to understand how the war started, why the PRC got involved and why the UN forces stayed the course. There were critical implications that could effect the world if a third world war or a nuclear war had ignited. It was the first time in the Cold War that the Superpowers were indirectly fighting each other. Mr. Malkasian includes a good chronology that spans the entire war that will be helpful as a guide to follow the battle action and political events. The invasion of the south began on June 25th, 1950 when columns of T34 tanks spearhead the assault along the border. For the next two and half months the ROK and meager US forces had a very tough time being pushed back to the Pusan Perimeter until enough reinforcements were brought in to stop the NKPA at the Naktong River. MacArthur devised the Inchon landings in mid September which turned everything around, causing the NKPA to flee to the north. UN Forces followed past the 38th parallel inciting Mao to counterattack, dramatically escalating the war. The key engagements are covered and each has its own color map. There are 12 maps which greatly help to understand the dialog. The maps show the dispositions of all the key players: US, ROK, PRC, NKPA and UN. The maps include the initial invasion, the Pusan Perimeter, the major PRC offensives, the Chosin Reservoir battle, Mig Alley. In

addition to the tactiacal coverage on the ground, off the coast as well as the air war, the author explains the civilian migration and hardship, the Communist insurgency in the south, the quarrelous "peace" negotiations, POW issue, prison riots and much more. There are mini profiles of MacArthur, Ridgeway, Clark. The story ends with describing the human and economic costs of the war and how the different countries survived and responded from the bitterness of the war. There are also many fine photos to study. A Bibliography and Index round out the book. This is an excellent primer and a good starting place before you read the full length books. Its highly recommended. Also, a good companion book to this one would be "US Army Forces in the Korean War 1950-53" by Donald Boose. Its one of Osprey's Battle Orders series and it expands on the organizational aspects.

I am a glutton for war history, but do not like to read books that are long. At 94 pages this book is just about right in providing a lot of detail, yet still holding my interest. After reading this book I have a much better understanding of all facets of the the Korean War. The author did a great job of being technical, but also including actual accounts from soldiers.

A good introduction to the conflict. It explains in particular how the stalemate part of the war was fought and why the Communist coalition eventually decided to seek an armistice after Stalin's death.

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