

Urban battlefields

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Résumé ou extrait : "Urban Battlefields: Lessons Learned from World War II to the Modern Era offers a detailed study of the complexities of urban operations, demonstrating through historical conflicts their key features, the various weapons and tactics employed by both sides, and the factors that contributed to success or failure. Urban operations are a relatively recent phenomenon and an increasingly prominent feature of today's operational environment, typified by on-going fighting in Syria and Iraq. Here, Gregory Fremont-Barnes has enlisted ten experts to examine the key elements that characterize this particularly costly and difficult method of fighting by focusing on notable examples across the modern era. He covers their nineteenth-century roots, and follows with case studies ranging from major conventional formations to counterinsurgency and civil resistance. The contributors analyze the distinct features of urban warfare, which separate it from fighting in open areas, particularly the three-dimensional nature of the operating environment. These include: the restricted fields of fire and view; the substantial advantages conferred on the defender as a result of concealed positions and ubiquitous cover; the often- abundant presence of subterranean features including cellars, tunnels, and drainage and sewer systems; and the recurrent problems imposed by snipers holding up the progress of troops many times their number. Further, the authors consider how the presence of civilians may influence the rules of engagement and also may provide an advantage to the defender. Urban Battlefields illustrates why warfare in metropolises can be protracted and costly. It also illustrates why modest numbers of soldiers, militia, or insurgents with nothing more than shoulder-borne anti-tank weapons or ground-to-air missile systems, small arms, and improvised explosive devices can drastically reduce the effectiveness of much better disciplined, trained, and armed adversaries. Furthermore, it explains how those short-term advantages can be neutralized and ultimately overcome." (éd.)

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