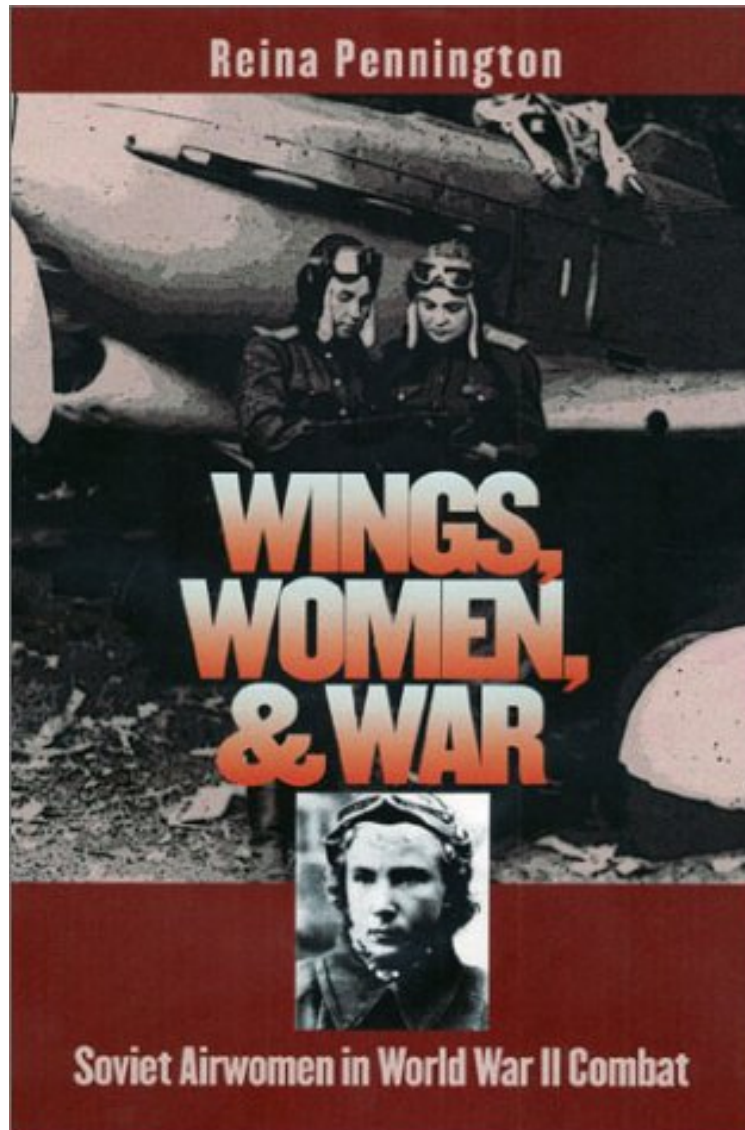


(Free) Wings, Women, and War: Soviet Airwomen in World War II Combat (Modern War Studies)

Wings, Women, and War: Soviet Airwomen in World War II Combat (Modern War Studies)

Reina Pennington

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Reina Pennington : Wings, Women, and War: Soviet Airwomen in World War II Combat (Modern War Studies) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Wings, Women, and War: Soviet Airwomen in World War II Combat (Modern War Studies):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wings, Women, Skill, and Extraordinary Courage By James E. Egolf Reina Pennington wrote a good book re very young women in the Soviet Air Force during WW II. Pennington's

careful description of the Russian Front showed war's unimaginable destruction and undaunted courage. The book had humorous anecdotes, and many of the women in the Red Army Air Force were mavericks to say the least. While many of Russian/Soviet women filled traditional roles, once war erupted between the Germans and Soviets, many Soviet women showed a willingness to sacrifice themselves for "The Russian Motherland." Pennington began this book with a brief historical description of Russian/Siberian women. Archaeology showed that the remains of women holding weapons. During WW I, a women's unit was organized in 1917 to fight against the Germans. The initial number of women was about 2,000 women, but the number was reduced to 300 women due to unreasonable discipline. Alexander Kerensky was critical of such unreasonable discipline, and during the later civil war between the Whites vs. the Reds, women were on both sides of the conflict. Prior to WW II, women joined glider and aviation clubs whereby these young women impressed their instructors with their ability and skill. Often these women would perform acrobatic stunts which they were not supposed to do. Pennington noted that gliders and planes were practical because of the fact that Russian roads were scarce and primitive. As an aside, the lack of good roads helped slow the German invasion which the Soviets. When the German invasion started on June 22, 1941, Soviet recruiters faced a deluge of women to join the Red Army to fight against the Germans. These women volunteered combat roles such as tank drivers, tank gunners, and tank commandants. These women volunteered as snipers, partisans, The men were skeptical of these women's skill or courage, but once these women showed their deadly skill and courage, the men learned to respect and honor these women. Among those who volunteered, women entered the Red Air Force as fighter pilots, air to ground assault pilots, and "night witches." The night witches flew primitive biplanes which were primitive. Their commanders were skeptical and one commander thought he was commanding "a little girls unit" due to the youth of these women. Pennington described these planes called the Po-2 as slow yet deadly. These women would fly at night at such altitudes that parachutes were useless. After some embarrassing training missions, these women proved their skill. The Po-2 was slow which worked to their advantage because the much faster German fighter pilots would stall their planes to such slow speeds to attack the Po-2 pilots. These brave women faced search lights, anti-aircraft fire, bad weather, and lack of navigation equipment. These women continued These dangerous missions in spite of the death of their women comrades. These women were so proud of their work and refused to let men load bombs. The tactics the women used were to fly close to their targets, shut their engines, and glide to the targets without the noise of operation engines. As noted above, Soviet male commanders were skeptical of women in the ranks. Commander Markov was angry that he was ordered to command women pilots, but his skepticism changed to praise. The women appreciated the change and his training that he became affectionately known as "Daddy." What surprised many of the men who had command positions was the women's unrestrained enthusiasm to engage in combat and defend Holy Mother Russia or the Motherland. As noted, some of these women were indeed mavericks. Liliia Litviak (1921-1943), who did not live to be 22, was such a maverick. She violated dress code uniform by taking the fur from her books and decorating her uniform collar. When confronted about the unauthorized decoration, Litviak, asked the commander if the frill suited her rather than the violation of the dress code. Many pilots decorated their planes with shark teeth designs. Litviak decorated her plane with flowers. She rearranged her quarters with "woman's touch." Pennington wrote the Red Army women's courage. She also wrote about these women's determination. When efforts were made to demobilize, these women used their "feminine wiles" to stay in combat. Women who were seriously wounded, DEMANDED to return to action rather than returning home to "rest on their laurels." The women served as an example to the men in the Red Army, and the women's courage was contagious not only among other women comrades but also the men in the Red Army. When WW II ended, the women were mustered out of the Red Army Air Force, they few were readmitted to the ranks. Some of these women married. Others got careers as flight instructors, college professors. These women returned to civilian life, but their memory was subdued until conscientious historians revived what was a forgotten episode which should get more attention. This book was well written. James E. Ego August 5, 2016 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The "go-to" book on Stalin's three female aviation regiments. By E. Elaine Sutherland I give it a four and a half, actually. It is a solid job of research, very well written, and with far more detail than I ever expected (It has the style of a dissertation, with tons of footnotes, but is still extremely readable). I would have given it a five if it were not for the description of the trip from Moscow to Engels taking nine days. Other sources give it as one day, and while Pennington may be right and the others wrong, it throws up an uncertainty about other facts. If she is correct, and all the others wrong, I apologize to the author. The book is, decidedly, the 'go to' book regarding the three female aviation regiments and anyone wanting to do research, should start with this. In fact, no other book is really necessary. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Cool Stories of Women Fighter and Bomber Pilots in World War II By Heather Steele What a well researched, well written, and interesting book about a group of women that we never hear about. Cheers to Ms. Pennington for bringing this fantastic history to light.

The Soviet Union was the first nation to allow women pilots to fly combat missions. During World War II the Red Air Force formed three all-female units - grouped into separate fighter, dive bomber and night bomber regiments - while also recruiting other women to fly with mostly male units. Their story, fully recounted by Reina Pennington, honours

this group of fearless and determined women. Pennington chronicles the creation, organization and leadership of these regiments as well as the experiences of the pilots, navigators, bomb loaders, mechanics, and others who made up their ranks, all within the context of the Soviet air war on the Eastern Front. These regiments flew a combined total of more than 30,000 combat sorties, produced at least 30 Heroes of the Soviet Union, and included at least two fighter aces. Among their ranks were women like Marina Raskova ("the Soviet Amelia Earhart"), a renowned aviator who persuaded Stalin in 1941 to establish the all-women regiments; the daredevil "night witches" who flew ramshackle biplanes on nocturnal bombing missions over German frontlines; and fighter aces like Liliia Litviak, whose 12 "kills" are largely unknown in the West. Here, too, is the story of Alexander Gridnev, a fighter pilot twice arrested by the Soviet secret police before he was chosen to command the women's fighter regiment. Pennington draws upon personal interviews and the Soviet archives to detail the recruitment, training and combat lives of these women. Mixing anecdote with analysis, her work should find a wide readership among scholars and buffs interested in the history of aviation, World War II, or the Russian military as well as anyone concerned with the contentious debates surrounding military and combat service for women.

Pennington's chilling tale of savage combat and incredible bravery and of the struggle of these pilots for recognition and acceptance will forever bury the myth that women cannot fight. A masterful and groundbreaking account of courageous women warriors. Carlo D'Este, author of Patton: A Genius for War "Pennington conveys wholly fresh, vivid, often unique and revealing insights drawn from a formidable and fascinating array of evidence. Much of her book is deeply moving. It is impossible not to be stirred, even appalled, by the fate of some of these women." John Erickson, author of The Road to Stalingrad "Pennington's meticulous research, dogged investigative skills, and clear writing make this book an instant classic in its field and a virtual model for future authors who write on the subject of women in war." David M. Glantz, coauthor of The Battle of Kursk "A fine, detailed study of the conflict between combat roles and gender roles. Must reading for all serious students of women's military history." Linda Grant De Pauw, author of Battle Cries and Lullabies From the Back Cover "Pennington conveys wholly fresh, vivid, often unique and revealing insights drawn from a formidable and fascinating array of evidence. Much of her book is deeply moving. It is impossible not to be stirred, even appalled, by the fate of some of these women." --John Erickson, author of The Road to Stalingrad "Pennington's meticulous research, dogged investigative skills, and clear writing make this book an instant classic in its field and a virtual model for future authors who write on the subject of women in war." --David M. Glantz, of The Battle of Kursk "A fine, detailed study of the conflict between combat roles and gender roles. Must reading for all serious students of women's military history." --Linda Grant De Pauw, author of Battle Cries and Lullabies About the Author Reina Pennington, a former intelligence officer with the Air Force and Defense Intelligence Agency, is director of Peace, War and Diplomacy Studies at Norwich University in Vermont. She is editor of Military Women Worldwide: A Biographical Dictionary and author of numerous articles in Air Space/Smithsonian, Air Force Magazine, Airpower Journal, and Journal of Slavic Military Studies.