

Small Wars and the Global Order

HIAF 113
Spring 2009
Tu.-Th., 12.30-1.50
PCYH 121

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There have been no fully global wars between nation-states since the 1940s. Yet, it is a mistake to assume that the causes and consequences of smaller wars have been simply domestic. The last sixty years have seen brutal, even genocidal, national conflicts shaped by multiple states and conflicting global ideologies. Since each war has had economic, political, and humanitarian significance beyond its national borders, this course explores the circumstances, interconnections, and traumas of 'small wars'—civil wars, proxy wars, and foreign military interventions—in transnational perspective. Many common threads tie conflicts as diverse as the anti-colonial war in Algeria, the civil war in Angola, and the current Iraqi insurgency. To appreciate these ties we will trace the geopolitical strategies, contests over natural resources, profiteering, ideologies, and human rights violations evident in many conflicts since the Second World War.

By paying particular attention to the intersections of national and foreign interests we can better understand the global circumstances each conflict reflects as well as the social, political, national, and regional particularities that differently shape each war. Further, by considering local interests stereoscopically within geopolitical strategies we can better appreciate the continuities between anti-colonial, Cold War, and post-Cold War conflicts as well as their effects on our collective future. Finally, rather than offering the perspectives of dispassionate analysts, each of the readings captures something of the psychological realities of war through the eyes of those who experienced it firsthand.

Required readings: available at Groundworks bookstore

Lansana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006.

Michael Herr, *Dispatches*. New York: Vintage, 1991.

Ryszard Kapuscinski, *Another Day of Life*. New York: Vintage, 2001.

Nir Rosen, *In the Belly of the Green Bird*. New York: Free Press, 2006.

Recommended readings, NOT required: available at Groundworks bookstore

Dexter Filkins, *The Forever War*. New York: Knopf, 2008.

EXAMS & ASSIGNMENTS:

EXAMS: Three exams will be administered over the course of the quarter. The first two exams, April 21 and May 14, will be in the form of in-class essays. The final will be a take-home exam. You will be given the questions for the final exam at the end of class

on Tuesday, June 2. **Your responses to all essay questions must be drawn from the lectures, readings, and films.** The final exam must be submitted by 4.30pm on Monday, June 8.

The three exams, including the final, will consist of three or four essay questions from which you may choose two. Unlike the first two exams **the final will be cumulative, so you will be responsible for bringing material from throughout the semester to bear on your responses.**

ASSIGNMENTS: We will watch multiple films over the course of the quarter. You are required to write **one-page, single-spaced reviews of two of the films.** *You may decide which two films you would like to review.* The review should not be a comprehensive outline of the film but should instead be a reflection on the themes, ideas, and messages of the movies. What did the film attempt to convey? In what ways was it successful? What were its faults? What did you like? What didn't you like?

EVALUATION:

Final grades will be calculated in the following manner, which is designed to reward improvement:

- 1) Exams: 90 percent (25% 1st, 30% 2nd, 35% Final)**
- 2) Film reviews: 10 percent**

Schedule of Class Meetings, Exams, and Readings

Meeting	Reading
3.31 Introduction	none
4.2 War, Cold and Hot	<i>Dispatches, 3-69</i>
<i>Independences Movements to the Cold War</i>	
4.7 General China in Kenya	<i>Dispatches, 70-107</i>
4.9 Settler War in Algeria	<i>Dispatches, 107-166</i>
4.14 <i>Battle of Algiers</i>	<i>Dispatches, 167-209</i>
4.16 Independence in Vietnam	<i>Dispatches, 209-249</i>
4.21 FIRST EXAM	<i>Dispatches, 249-260</i>
<i>Cold War to the Post-Cold War</i>	
4.23 Anti-imperialism in Cuba	<i>Another Day of Life, 127-143, 1-26</i>

4.28	Racial Exclusion in Zimbabwe	<i>Another Day of Life, 27-76</i>
4.30	<i>Flame</i>	
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5.05	Colonial Legacies in Angola	<i>Another Day of Life, 77-124, 143-144</i>
5.07	Maoism in Peru	<i>A Dirty War in West Africa, vii-38</i>
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5.12	Global Mujahedeen in Afghanistan	<i>A Dirty War in West Africa, 39-69</i>
5.14	SECOND EXAM	none
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Post-Cold War to Global War on Terrorism

5.19	Long War in Liberia	<i>A Dirty War in West Africa, 70-155</i>
5.21	<i>Liberia: An Uncivil War</i>	<i>A Dirty War in West Africa, 156-215</i>
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5.26	A Dirty War in Sierra Leone	<i>In the Belly of the Green Bird, 1-69</i>
5.28	Questions of Genocide in Sudan	<i>In the Belly of the Green Bird, 70-138</i>
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6.02	The Freedom in Iraq	<i>In the Belly of the Green Bird, 139-194</i>
6.04	Global War on Terrorism	<i>In the Belly of the Green Bird, 195-248</i>
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FINAL EXAM question will be handed out in class on Tuesday, June 2nd. Your final essay should be turned in by 4.30pm on Monday, June 8th. Your answers should reference the texts, lecture notes, and films.