October-December 2009
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Tuesday 8h45-10h45- Room 2
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Seminar Description:

The seminar, intended both for complete novices in security/military affairs and for doctoral researchers with some knowledge in the field, examines the changing character of war these last twenty years. Since the end of the Cold War, wars have not disappeared but they are not exactly what they used to be. Their number, aims, character, conduct, scope and consequences have partially changed in a variety of ways and partially remained constant. What did or did not change and why?

We will examine and assess critically the main alternative explanations for change/continuity in warfare and explore new hypotheses, emphasizing notably the links between the transformations of (domestic, transnational, international) politics – especially citizens’ political participation – and the transformations/continuity of war and warfare. We will further discuss these approaches by looking at the logics and characteristics of specific armed conflicts.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the seminar, you should be able to:
- Get a better sense of the characteristics of wars and warfare since 1989 in a comparative historical and regional perspective.
- Understand and critique different conceptions of the changing character of war.
- Identify and assess the different links between domestic politics and the changing character of war as well as their evolution over time.
- In addition, this seminar gives you an opportunity to hone your writing and oral skills.

Requirements:

This is a discussion seminar and I encourage class participation. Participants will present and discuss texts from the syllabus. If their research project is related to the seminar’s themes, participants are welcome to present their own work.

- Seminar attendance: I expect regular attendance and will circulate a signing sheet at each seminar. I authorize one seriously justified absence (medical reason).
- Doctoral researchers are expected to do all the required reading -- on average: about 60 p./session -- for each session prior to class and to write a short summary, or a personal critique, of the session’s readings (about 500 words). Note that the readings that should only be “skimmed” do not have to be included in the summary.

- An oral presentation of 10 minutes, followed by questions, and the leading of a seminar discussion. Make sure that the class has a detailed outline of your oral presentation as a handout. I will ask for the written note of the presentation.


**SEMINAR OUTLINE**

2. The “New Wars” Debate
3. Technology and the Changing Character of War
4. Clausewitz’s Trinity: a Theory for Today’s Wars?
5. Polity, Political Participation and War: A Clausewitzian Framework
6. Diminished Politics, Weak States and Changing Wars?
8. Wars in Africa
9. Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq
10. Conclusion

Recommended supplementary readings listed below are designed to provide background and additional information in preparing papers and oral presentations, or suggest further line of inquiry for those who desire it.


What is war? Concept, operationalization, methods, comparisons. What is, and should be, the focus of the study of war (including what changes and does not change)? Disentangling the dimensions of war and warfare: number of wars, number of soldiers involved, incidence, ends, means, motivation, organization, weapons and equipment, strategy and tactics, geographical scope, causes, conduct, outcome, etc.

Uppsala Conflict Data Program – “Frequently Asked Questions”


**Recommended Supplementary Readings:**


http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/UCDP/index.htm Since the 1970s, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) collects information on a large number of aspects of armed violence since 1946.


2. **The “New Wars” Debate** (Oct. 20)


Recommended Supplementary Readings:
Stathis N. Kalyvas, ““New” and “Old” Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction?” World Politics 54 (1) (Oct. 2001), 99-118.


3. Technology and the Changing Character of War (Oct 27)

Please note: at 19h we will watch Danis Tanovic’s award winning movie “No Man’s Land” (2001).
After various skirmishes, two wounded soldiers, one Bosnian and one Serb, confront each other in a trench in the no man's land between their lines. They wait for dark, trading insults and even finding some common ground; sometimes one has the gun, sometimes the other, sometimes both. Things get complicated when another wounded Bosnian comes to, but cannot move because a bouncing mine is beneath him. The two men cooperate to wave white flags, their lines call the UN (whose high command tries not to help), an English reporter shows up, a French sergeant shows courage, and the three men in no man’s land may or may not find a way to all get along. We will discuss this movie during next week’s seminar.

The changing character of war is fundamentally shaped by changes in the kinds of equipment warriors use. War is “(…) completely permeated by technology and governed by it” (Van Creveld, 1). High tech/low tech.


*Recommended Supplementary Readings:*


Special session: guest speaker Dr. Colin Fleming, Max Weber Fellow


Recommended Supplementary Readings:


5. Polity, Political Participation and War: A Clausewitzian Framework  (Nov 10)

Changes in politics – but which aspects of politics exactly? - shape warfare. Politics, polities, popular (de)mobilization and the character of war. Relevant mechanisms connecting changes in politics and warfare. Intensity/content of
the popular mobilization. Contrast with broader arguments about culture and warfare or war and society.

"As soon as public service ceases to be the chief business of the citizen, and they would rather serve with their money than with their persons, the State is not far from its fall. When it is necessary to march out to war, they pay troops and stay at home. When it is necessary to meet in council, they name deputies and stay at home. By reason of idleness and money, they end by having soldiers to enslave their country and representative to sell it."


**Recommended Supplementary Readings:**


6. *Diminished Politics, Weak States and Changing Wars?* (Nov 17)

*Please note:* at 19h we will watch Ken Burns and Lynn Novick’s, “The War” – Episode Two “When Things Get Tough” (January 1943-December 1943) (2006). Americans mobilize for total war at home and overseas. Factories hum around the clock, while in North Africa and then Italy, inexperienced GIs learn how to fight. Meanwhile in the skies over Europe, thousands of American airmen gamble their lives against preposterous odds on daylight bombing missions.

Following Clausewitz’s suggestion, if we want to understand changes in warfare these last 20 years, we should examine politics – especially citizens’ political participation -- carefully. Civic participation and mobilization these last 20-30 years: characteristics and changes. Democracies and non-democracies. Implications for warfare? Is this the “democratic peace” argument?


**Recommended Supplementary Readings:**


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8. Wars in Africa (this session will be postponed)


Recommended Supplementary Readings:


9. Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan (Dec 8)

Please note: at 19h we will watch Gillo Pontecorvo’s La Battaglia di Algieri (The Battle of Algiers) (1966).


Recommended Supplementary Readings:


10. Conclusions (Dec 15)