
PSC 108/INTR 108

War in our time: the Russo – Ukrainian War

Hein Goemans

Harkness 337

Office Hours: Wed : 1:30–
2:30

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Course Information:

Fall 2022

Tue. & Thurs. 16:50–18:05

Dewey 1101

This course examines the current war in Ukraine. This is a major war, with major implications for our lives and it is important for you to develop your own understanding of it in all its various aspects. Since this war is ongoing, readings are going to be very different from other courses. There will be links to tweets, twitter threads, blog posts, articles, YouTube lectures and any other useful sources. You are required to do all the reading. A lot of important background information you need to have will be provided in the lectures. This includes historical background about Ukraine, the end of the Cold War, the causes of war and the causes of war termination, why soldiers fight, on logistics, etc.. Attendance to lectures is therefore mandatory. If you miss these lectures you will not be able to do well on the exams. Of which there will be two, a mid-term and a final exam. Since the war is ongoing, the syllabus is likely to change during the semester, as developments on the battlefield, on the negotiation table, or the availability of new information warrants.

For this class I feel it is necessary to warn that some of the readings will directly confront you with the horrors of war. And they are truly horrors. There is just no way around this, if we want to even begin to understand war. There will be some readings with images that you may want to skip, I fully understand that, and I will try to warn you beforehand.

Academic Integrity

Be familiar with the University's policies on academic integrity and disciplinary action (<http://www.rochester.edu/living/urhere/handbook/discipline2.html#XII>). Violators of University regulations on academic integrity will be dealt with severely, which means that your grade will suffer, and I will forward your case to the Chair of the College Board on Academic Honesty.

Teaching Assistants

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Historical background information:

As noted above I am likely to tweak the syllabus during the semester depending on developments. The background information which I will largely provide in lectures relies in part on the following books.

1. Michael Howard. *War in European History*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Paperback, 1976.
2. Martin Van Creveld, *Supplying War: Logistics from Wallenstein to Patton*. Cambridge University Press; 2nd edition, 2004.
3. Stephen Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle*, Princeton University Press, 2005.
4. Michael C. Horowitz, *The Diffusion of Military Power: Causes and Consequences for International Politics*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 2010.
5. Alan Clark, *Barbarossa: The Russian-German Conflict, 1941-45*, New York: William Morrow and Co., 1985.
6. R. J. Overy, *Russia's War*, Penguin Books, New edition, 1998.
7. Catherine Merridale, *Ivan's War; the Red Army 1939-45*, Faber and Faber 2006.
8. Christopher Browning. *Ordinary men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the final solution in Poland*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1998.
9. Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, Basic Books; 1st Edition edition, 2012.
10. Anne Appelbaum, *Red Famine*, Knopf Doubleday Publishing group, 2018.
11. M. E. Sarotte, *Not One Inch; America Russia, and the making of the post-cold war stalemate*. Yale University Press, 2021.
12. Alexander B. Downes, *Targeting Civilians in War*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012.

Current web-based sources worth reading during the semester include:

- **Yale Professor Timothy Snyder's lectures for his class HIST 247 *The Making of Modern Ukraine*.** Professor Snyder has committed to post all lectures for this class on YouTube.
 1. Introduction: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJczLlwp-d8>.
 2. The Genesis of Nations: <https://youtu.be/0LaEmaMAkpM>
- Branislav Slantchev (UCSD prof), provides insightful commentary on his blog: <https://slantchev.wordpress.com/category/russo-ukrainian-war-2022/>.
- <https://twitter.com/i/events/1483255084750282753>
- <https://wartranslated.com/>
- https://twitter.com/Chris0_wiki
- <https://twitter.com/RALee85>
- <https://twitter.com/KofmanMichael>
- <https://twitter.com/MassDara>
- <https://twitter.com/TrentTelenko>
- <https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical>
- <https://twitter.com/DefMon3>
- This guy is particularly fascinating: <https://twitter.com/kamilkazani>
- For maps of the war: <https://twitter.com/EdmapsCom>
- A video dairy? <https://twitter.com/OSINTua/status/1565388675545956353>
- BBC's Ukraine war in maps: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-60506682>

Course Outline

Thursday September 1

1. Introduction: ideas, themes and hopes for this course

History

“The way that history is presented has an integral connection with the [HG: Putin’s] decision to make war.” Timothy Snyder.

Tuesday September 6

2. Some Ukrainian history: 1920–1945

- Andrea Graziosi, Introduction to the Special Issue on the Soviet Famines of 1930-1933, *Nationalism Papers*, 48(3), 2020, 435–443.
- Andrea Graziosi, The National and the Social in Stalin’s Political Famines, *Contemporary European History*, 27(3), 2018, 470–475.

Thursday September 8

3. Some more recent Ukrainian history: The Maidan Revolution and the 2014 invasion

- Andrew Higgins and Andrew Kramer, “Ukraine’s President was Defeated Even Before He Was Ousted,” *The New York Times*, January 3, 2015.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/04/world/europe/ukraine-leader-was-defeated-even-before-he-was-ousted.html>
- Serhiy Kudelia, “The Donbass Rift,” *Russian Politics and Law*, vol. 54, no. 1, 2016, pp. 5–27.
- Volodymyr Ishchenko, “Insufficiently Diverse: The problem of non-violent leverage and radicalization of Ukraine’s maidan uprising, 2013-2014.” *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 11(2), 201–215.
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1879366520928363>

Optional: For more on the logic of how, when and why Yanukovich fell so suddenly: (this is an article that will fundamentally change your thinking forever)

- Timur Kuran, Now Out of Never. *World Politics*, 44 (October 1991). 7 – 48.

Tuesday September 13

4. **Some Russian history: Stalin and WW II**

Lecture on *Barbarossa, Russia's War* and *Ivan's War*.

Thursday September 15

5. Guest Speaker **Serhy Yekechyk**

- A very unmodern war: Understanding Russia's aggression against Ukraine

NOTE: The lecture will be in Goergen 101 and starts at 5 PM

Tuesday September 20

6. **Some more recent Russian history: Chechnya, Georgia and Syria**

- Fyodor Lukyanov, "Perestroika 2014: The Reasons Behind Moscow's Firm Stance on Ukraine," Valdai Discussion Club, March 19, 2014.
http://valdaiclub.com/near_abroad/67520.html Original Russian:
<http://www.gazeta.ru/comments/column/lukyanov/5952017.shtml>

Thursday September 22

7. **The end of the Cold War**

- Lecture on *Not One Inch*.

Getting to War

Tuesday September 27

8. **The road to war: Crisis management in the Fall of 2021**

- John Mearsheimer, *Conventional Deterrence*, Chapters 3–4
- Olga Chyzh, 2022. The Impact of Western Sanctions on Putin's War, *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 55, No.2., 496-501.
10.1017/S0008423922000336.
- The road to war: https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/interactive/2022/ukraine-road-to-war/?itid=sf_world_ukraine-russia_dont-miss.

Thursday September 29

9. **Who's to blame? It's all NATO's fault**

We'll be watching

- John Mearsheimer's lectures: Variation on the same theme.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JrMiSQAGOS4>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qciVozNtCDM>. Watch the interview, then watch the Q & A afterwards.
 - In debate format, Mearsheimer, Walt and McFaul:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EhgWLmd7mCo>

Tuesday October 4

10. **Who's to blame? Putin**

- Putin, June 2021: Because Voldomar, a Viking, (Vladimir/Velodomyr) was (supposedly) baptised in 988, the rest of the region's history is predetermined and thus Ukraine and Russia are the same nation. **Supposedly, according to Putin.** (See Snyder's lecture in HIST 247.)
<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/putins-new-ukraine-essay-reflects-imperial-ambitions/>.
- 21 February 2022: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/22/world/europe/putin-invading-ukraine.html>
- 24 February 2022: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/67843>.
- 26 February 2022:
<https://web.archive.org/web/20220226051154/https://ria.ru/20220226/rossiya-1775162336.html>, Google Chrome will translate.
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/21/world/europe/putin-ukraine.html>

Thursday October 6

11. **What caused the war?**

This is going to be an experimental class, where I solicit your explanations for what caused the war, point out strengths and weaknesses in these explanations, and together construct a couple (?) of plausible explanations.

- No reading. Instead you should be thinking! Come to class prepared!

Tuesday October 11

Fall Break

Thursday October 13

12. **The causes of war**

- James Fearon, Rationalist Explanations for War, *International Organization*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (Summer, 1995), 379–390. Note the page range!

Tuesday October 18

13. **Why do they keep fighting? The causes of war termination**

- My assessment the day after the war started: <https://www.rochester.edu/newscenter/putin-russia-invading-ukraine-explained-512642/>. (You might have to use Microsoft Edge, I know, an abomination.)
- Hein Goemans, *War and Punishment; the causes of war termination and the First World War*, Chapters 1 & 2, 3–52.
- An early assessment by a cohort of scholars of war termination: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/03/24/prospects-negotiated-peace-ukraine-are-bleak/>

Thursday October 20

14. **Mid term exam**

In the War

Tuesday October 25

15. **What were they thinking?!**

- **Initial expectations and initial war aims**
- My assessment March 9: <https://www.rochester.edu/newscenter/how-to-end-the-ukraine-war-514522/>
- Thomas C. Theiner, former Italian military (28/01/2022) <https://medium.com/@noclador/putins-plan-4652895de8ba>
- Russian expectations (26/02/2022): <https://web.archive.org/web/20220226051154/https://ria.ru/20220226/rossiya-1775162336.html>, Google Chrome will translate.

- Russian expectations (03/02/2022):
https://nvo.ng.ru/realty/2022-02-03/3_1175_donbass.html
- Russian expectations: https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/interactive/2022/russia-fsb-intelligence-ukraine-war/?itid=sf_world_ukraine-russia_dont-miss

Thursday October 27

16. What are they thinking *now*?

• Expectations and war aims in September/October

- Russian war aims?: <https://slantchev.wordpress.com/2022/08/23/the-kremlins-fairy-tales-duginas-assassination/>
- First week of September, 2022. Ukrainian General Valeriy Zaluzhnyi, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.
<https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-ato/3566404-prospects-for-running-a-military-campaign-in-2023-ukraines-perspect.html>

Conduct of the War

Tuesday November 1

17. Blitzkrieg or attrition?

- An interesting thread by Kamil Galeev, from 27 February 2022, where he describes why he think Russia will lose:
<https://twitter.com/kamilkazani/status/1497993363076915204>
- John Keegan, *The Face of Battle*, Vintage books, 1977. Chapter 4, The Somme, July 1, 1916, 204–280.
- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/interactive/2022/kyiv-battle-ukraine-survival/>.
- Trench warfare in the age of drones:
<https://twitter.com/i/status/1565421193104166912>, or
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1261158111360968>
- Artillery versus tanks and apcs:
https://twitter.com/Chris0_wiki/status/1534168919245737991

Thursday November 3

18. The soldier's perspective

Memoir of Russian soldier Pavel Filatyev. The full memoir – 144 pages – is in the readings folder, it's entitled "ZOV." I selected some memorable quotes, to begin with:

I don't know how, but I wanted all those responsible for the fuck-ups and messes in our army to be to be punished. I wasn't scared to die, I was offended to give up my life so ridiculously, I was hurt for all those who had given their lives and health for what, for whom?

- The first part of Filatyev's story, covering the six months he spent in training with the 56th Guards Air Assault Regiment in Crimea before the war, see https://twitter.com/Chris0_wiki/status/1560022545356791810.
- The second part, covering the period immediately before and after the invasion was launched on 24 February, is here: https://twitter.com/Chris0_wiki/status/1560355153441705984.
- For the third part, highlighting the haphazard and disorganised Russian takeover of Kherson in the face of even less well organised Ukrainian resistance, see https://twitter.com/Chris0_wiki/status/1560725596765913089.
- The fourth part deals with Filatyev's experiences of the start of the occupation of Kherson and Russia's disastrous attempt to take Mykolaiv and Odesa: https://twitter.com/Chris0_wiki/status/1561024849245573123.
- The fifth part, Filatyev is injured, withdrawn from the front and reflects on the war.

it was at that point that I finally relaxed and thought about the last two months of my life, what it was all about, why I needed it, whether I'd done something good or bad, why I was part of it and how and why I was there in the first place.

https://twitter.com/Chris0_wiki/status/1561411957340659713.

- The final instalment highlights Filatyev's detailed comments on the Russian military system, which provide an interesting insider's view of what's gone wrong with the Russian army and has led to its catastrophically poor performance in the war.

The system doesn't let the most promising, strongest and the smartest advance, but [prefers] those who can adapt to it, the higher up you go, the more you have to get dirty.

In all my time in the war I can't remember officers going to the trouble of leading soldiers, many getting drunk and sitting in normal fortifications while all the crap is done by regular contract soldiers.

https://twitter.com/Chris0_wiki/status/1561785870163787780.

Another account from Daniil Frokin, a different Russian soldier. He too expressed confusion about the war's purpose:

I don't know who we're fighting against. Maybe we're fighting against the Armed Forces of Ukraine. But the AFU are not Nazis.

- https://twitter.com/Chris0_wiki/status/1562874112707801088. Make sure you read #35.
- https://twitter.com/Chris0_wiki/status/1563038520821702656. Note this point about the officers, and their leadership:

So, he, the District Commander and the Army Commander were given rifles and the infantry was told: 'These men will go first and you are to follow.' And that's when [Omurbekov] was wounded.

Living conditions of officers! Lieutenant Pavel Petrakov, member of the elite Military Space Academy:

- <https://twitter.com/i/status/1565080986177732608>

Here's a Radio Liberty interview with Pyotr Danilov, a former sergeant of the 64th motorized rifle brigade from Khabarovsk. This is the unit that is accused of war crimes in Bucha:

- <https://www.svoboda.org/a/tupo-net-sil-nastupatj-intervjyu-s-byvshim-voennym-iz-64-y-brigady/32006060.html>

Here's a horrible short video of a Russian mercenary holding the skull of what he claims to have been a Ukrainian defender at Azovsteel in Mariupol. He uses the language of genocide.

This is incredibly offensive, so be forewarned, but it is a narrative that is actively supported and propagated by official channels in Russia:

- <https://twitter.com/i/status/1563753741697916928>

Tuesday November 8

19. Recruitment: Soldiers and Mercenaries

- Elizabeth M. F. Grasmeder, Leaning on Legionnaires: Why Modern States Recruit Foreign Soldiers, *International Security*, 46(1), Summer 2021, 147–195.

Optional: Anna Becker, *Shamed to Death: Social Image Concerns and War Participation*. This paper is a fascinating look at how UK men were “incentivized” to show up for World War I and join the UK army.

Thursday November 10

20. War Crimes

- Alexander B. Downes, “Desperate Times, Desperate Measures.” *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (Spring 2006), 152–195.
- Dara Kay Cohen, The ties that bind: How armed groups use violence to socialize fights, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol 54(5), 2017, 701–714.
- Bret Devereaux, What Makes Armies Commit Atrocities? The crimes in Ukraine stem from Russian military brutalities. *Foreign Policy*, April 6, 2022 (roughly 6 pages)
- Julia Friedrich and Niklas Masuhr, Why is Russia being so brutal in Ukraine? *Political Violence at a Glance*, May 23, 2022. (4 pages)
- Masha Glessen, The Prosecution of Russian War Crimes in Ukraine, *The New Yorker*, August 1, 2022

Optional:

- Alexander B. Downes, *Targeting Civilians in War*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012.
- Downes & Kathryn McNabb Cochran, It’s a crime, but is it a blunder? Chapter 13 in *Civilians and Warfare in World History*, New York, Routledge, 2018, 288–312.
- Christopher Browning. *Ordinary men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the final solution in Poland*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1998.
- Jonathan Steinberg, “Types of Genocide? Croats, Serbs and Jews, 1941–45,” in *The Final Solution; Origins and Implementation*, pp.175 – 193
- Christian Streit, “Wehrmacht, Einsatzgruppen, Soviet POWs and anti-Bolshevism in the emergence of the Final Solution,” in *The Final Solution; Origins and Implementation*, pp.103 – 118

Tuesday November 15

21. “Amateurs talk strategy, professionals talk logistics.” Gen Omar Bradley

Lecture on van Creveld, *Supplying War*

- What tires can tell you:
<https://twitter.com/TrentTelenko/status/1499164245250002944>

- The difference pallets make!
<https://twitter.com/TrentTelenko/status/1507056013245128716>
- On production of shells and materials:
<https://theins.ru/en/politics/254573>

Thursday November 17

22. **The Homefront**

- Stuff on the homefronts in Ukraine and Russia

Tuesday November 22

23. **The International Audience**

- How it started: <https://twitter.com/i/status/1567479046061056000>

Thursday November 24

Thanksgiving Recess

Thursday November 29

24. **Refugees and displaced people**

- Stuff

Thursday December 1

25. **What are they thinking now?!**

- **How have expectations changed? May/June 2022**
- Isaac Chotiner, The New Yorker, (24/05/2022): https://www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/putins-pivot-to-a-really-big-war-in-ukraine?mbid=social_twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter&utm_social-type=owned&utm_brand=tny&utm_campaign=cm_paid_social_tny_paid_content_ukraine_twitter&twclid=2-2favyhip0joq4z8vnwiwul2gw
- UK Chief of the General Staff, General Sir Patrick Sanders (28/06/2022): <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/chief-the-general-staff-speech-at-rusi-land-warfare-conference>
- **How have expectations changed? October/November 2022**

Tuesday December 6

26. **How have war aims changed? October/November 2022**

Thursday December 8

27. **TBD**

Tuesday December 13

28. **Last day of classes**

Thursday November 28

Questions to consider in formulating and evaluating social science research

1. *What is the central question?*
 - Why is it important (theoretically, substantively)?
 - What is being explained (what is the dependent variable and how does it vary)?
 - How does this phenomenon present a puzzle?
2. *What is the central answer?*
 - What is doing the explaining (what are the independent variables and how do they vary)?
 - What are the hypotheses, i.e., what is the relationship between independent and dependent variables, what kind of change in the independent variable causes what kind of change in the dependent variable?
 - What are the causal mechanisms, i.e., why are the independent and dependent variables so related?
 - How do the independent variables relate to each other?
 - What assumptions does your theory make?
 - Is the theory falsifiable in concept?
 - What does this explanation add to our understanding of the question?
3. *What are the possible alternative explanations?*
 - What assumptions are you making about the direction of causality?
 - What other explanations might there be for the phenomenon of study, and to what degree do they conflict with the central answer?
 - Could the hypothesized relationships have occurred by chance?
4. *Why are the possible alternative explanations wrong?*
 - What is the logical structure of the alternative explanations (compare 2)?
 - What is the empirical evidence?
5. *What is the relationship between the theory and the evidence?*
 - What does the research design allow to vary, i.e., in this design are the explanations variables or constants?
 - What does your research design hold constant, i.e., does it help to rule out the alternative competing explanations?
 - How are the theoretical constructs represented empirically, i.e., how do you know it when you see it (measurement)?
6. *How do the empirical conclusions relate to the theory?*
 - How confident are you about the theory in light of the evidence?
 - How widely do the conclusions generalize, i.e., what might be the limitations of the study?
 - What does the provisionally accepted or revised theory say about questions of broader importance?