

Department of History Recommendations

Middle Eastern Case Studies

"Battle of Algiers." Directed by Gillo Pontecorvo with Brahim Haggiag and Jean Martin, black and white, 120 minutes, 1965.

This movie provides a fictional account of the revolutionary movement in Algeria that incorporates documentary-style footage and even incorporates many of the leaders of the actual revolution. It is renowned for its subtle depiction of the internal dynamics of cell-based revolutionary movements.

Esposito, John L. *Islam and Politics*. 4th edition. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1998.

Islam and Politics provides three critical perspectives to conflict in the Middle East. First is the historical view of Islam as a unifying and expansive force on the Arab peoples. Many of the groups opposed to American influence "yearn" backward for the good old days. Their ideology is focused on how to get there from now. Secondly, Islam has definite and specific political connotations. It has cultivated its own legal systems (the *shariah* [law] and various "schools" of interpretation), social welfare system, and enfranchisement system. Only God is sovereign, and therefore only God may make law. People fall into two categories: those who submit to God's will and are subject to God's law, and those who do not, which by the way includes Muslims who are not aligned with God's will. *Jihad* is therefore required to bring all into submission. Lastly, the proliferation of Islamic groups indicates a dynamic and decentralized movement, with motives, objectives, and tactics that are not necessarily congruent between groups.

Haldane, Aylmer L. *The Insurrection in Mesopotamia, 1920*. Edinburgh and London: W. Blackwood and Sons, 1922.

Personal account by the commanding officer of British forces that suppressed a large-scale insurrection against British occupation in 1920. Methods used were innovative, if brutal, causing short term pacification but long-term resentment of British influence.

Nakash, Yitzhak. *The Shi'is of Iraq*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.

Most noted Western scholar of Iraqi Shi'ites, Nakash is unique in dealing with the Iraqi Shi'i as a distinct group from greater Iranian/Lebanese influences. An essential read for those serving in the South.

Paret, Peter. *French Revolutionary Warfare from Indochina to Algeria: The Analysis of a Political and Military Doctrine*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964.

The author examines official reports and directives and the large body of writings by French officers who participated in these campaigns. He describes the destructive and the constructive components of counter-revolutionary warfare, stressing the use of psychological

tools—re-indoctrination centers, health services, and other techniques—to construct a superior ideological base. After detailing the organization of the French Army's psychological-action units, he analyzes the official case history of an actual operation, Operation Pilote, to demonstrate how the doctrine worked in practice.

General Studies of UW, Guerrilla Warfare, & Counterinsurgency

Cummings, Bruce. *The Origins of the Korean War*. 2 vols. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981-90.

The Origins of the Korean War (vol. 1, *Liberation and the Emergence of Separate Regimes*, and vol. 2, *The Roaring of the Cataract*) details the American occupation experience in post-war Korea. Significantly, US forces arrived in Korea three weeks after the surrender of Japan, which put the Americans on the defensive politically. The Korean people agitated for immediate independence, while the American occupation was distracted with a host of other seemingly equally important issues. The result was a race between the forces of anarchy, dissolution, and never-ending violence; and, an American occupation trying to find its way through a cultural and ideological conundrum. Ultimately, the Americans won, but the result was messy, required a sustained military and economic commitment, and a three year "hot" war.

Herrington, Stuart. *Stalking the Vietcong*. Novato, CA: Presido Press, 1997.

Stuart A. Herrington's *Stalking the Vietcong* provides a first-hand account of an American intelligence officer's personal struggle with Vietcong shadow government. Assigned as an Operation Phoenix advisor to the Hau Nghia province of South Vietnam in 1971, Herrington worked on debriefing and exploiting Vietcong defectors and NVA prisoners in attempts to neutralize the Vietcong infrastructure. His experiences with the both the Vietcong and the South Vietnamese intelligence service officers he came in contact with provide valuable insights into the challenges the United States military faced during the Vietnam War.

Keats, John. *They Fought Alone*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1963.

This is a narrative account of Lt. Col. Wendell Fertig's campaign against the Japanese on Mindanao in the Philippines during WW2. This shows how Fertig puts together an insurgency against the occupation forces, showing important aspects such as recruitment, supply, intelligence, movement of insurgents in denied areas, role of the auxiliary, etc. Critical is the psychological connection between insurgent and populace. For example, at one point, Fertig asks the local women to cut up their curtain rods and slowly sand them down into bullet shapes to provide ammunition for the guerillas. This was not needed from a logistics viewpoint, as bullets made in this fashion would be less useful than captured Japanese ammunition, but it played a critical psychological role: it provided a direct connection between the population and the insurgents. Each Filipino woman, spending time each day for months working on a bullet, would have an attachment to the insurgency and feel she was doing her part for the cause. It was a seemingly minor task that created a shared sense of resistance. This type of connection is critical, and must be identified and broken or replaced by the counterinsurgency force.

Linn, Brian M. "Intelligence and Low-Intensity Conflict in the Philippine War, 1899-1902." *Intelligence and National Security* 6 (January 1994): 90-114.

Like Linn's book on the Philippine War, this article emphasizes the paramount importance of local collection and analysis of intelligence in this sort of conflict. Intelligence will (should) flow up more than down, and efforts to homogenize and disseminate intelligences at higher levels of command are often counterproductive.

_____. *The Philippine War, 1899-1902*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2000.

Linn's book is something of an "instant classic" on counterinsurgency operations. Linn examines the Philippine War as a combination of multiple, smaller regional wars. The U.S. Army achieved success as it recognized the predominance of regional disparities and tailored its efforts to local conditions. The book provides positive examples of decentralized (and therefore effective) operations and intelligence collection, as well as the successful integration of the civil and military components of a pacification campaign.

Race, Jeffrey. *War Comes to Long An: Revolutionary Conflict in a Vietnamese Province*. Berkley: University of California Press, 1972.

Simply put, this book is a must-read to understand guerrilla warfare or insurgencies as a social phenomenon. Implicitly a scathing critique of conventional military thinking, Race's book equips commanders and their staffs with the conceptual framework necessary on conducting *meaningful* IPB. This book also questions many of the ways in which we typically measure "progress" (schools built, areas "secured," etc.) in such wars. If you want to know what you're doing wrong, read this book.

Truong, Nhu Tang. *Vietcong Memoir*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1985.

This is the memoir of a member of the NLF underground in Saigon during the Vietnam War, who then left Vietnam for France after 1975, when the North Vietnamese took over and dismantled the provisional revolutionary government of the south. A good description of the viewpoint of the insurgent, particularly in urban areas. Of particular interest are the strategic thinking of the NLF (e.g. creating the image of a broad-based popular movement, as opposed to purely communist), methods of recruiting, activities of the mole Pham Ngoc Thao (sabotaging the Strategic Hamlet program, "pacifying" a province, thus creating a VC safe haven, coup attempts, etc.) Emphasis is on subversion and propaganda.