

“Great Famines, War, and Humanitarian Assistance”

INTA 635-600 – Fall 2018

George H.W. Bush School of Government and Public Service Texas A & M University

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Professor: Andrew S. Natsios

Email: anatsios@bushschool.tamu.edu or anatsios@gmail.com

Telephone 979-862-1154

Office: 1108

Office Hours: Mondays: 12-1:00 pm or by appointment.

Class time: Mondays, 1:30-4:20.

GAR: Amanda Satterwhite

I. Course Description

The course will explore famines: their various definitions, theories of their causes and consequences, how those affected by them cope with them, the stages through which famines pass, and the means by which they may be predicted, measured, and analyzed. Famines will be viewed from three interrelated perspectives: as economic events, in their political context, and finally as public health and nutritional crises. Finally, various humanitarian responses to famine and conflict (since famines in Africa are usually a result of war and drought occurring simultaneously) will be examined, the strengths and weaknesses of each, and how these response programs are affected by conflicts. Specific case studies will be reviewed using the instruments of analysis developed during the course, particularly the entitlement theory of Amartya Sen. The course will prepare to work for an international NGO which does humanitarian relief or in the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance or Food for Peace in USAID, or a UN humanitarian agency such as the World Food Program.

II. Course Objectives

Students will be able to write USAID, UN Agency, or NGO briefing, strategy paper, and decision memos. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Write a coherent decision memo or information memo with policy choices for senior humanitarian NGO, UN agency, or USAID executives during an emergency or reconstruction program.
- Write an in depth analysis of the economic, political, and armed group dynamics during a complex humanitarian emergency, including the situation-specific moral dilemmas facing policymakers and program managers.
- Have an in-depth understanding of food security, famine theory, emergency response operations, and alternative programmatic approaches in responding to complex emergencies.
- Have full operational understanding of international humanitarian law, and the Sphere Standards for humanitarian response.
- Explain the operation of the international humanitarian response system during

- emergencies, its strengths and weaknesses.
- Conduct a field assessment during or after an emergency and design and present a plan to respond to a complex emergency

III. Assignments

Three short papers which will be in memo form are required during the course, the instructions for which will be provided in class. No footnotes or endnotes allowed on these short papers.

One 20 page paper on a famine of the student's choice will be due ***the last class at the beginning of class***. End notes, but no footnotes required for the long paper. This paper will describe the economics and politics of the famine and the measures taken by either the host government or by the international aid community in response. Why were these measures successful or unsuccessful? While this paper should use the analytical tools developed during the course, the paper must include an analysis of the famine using the entitlement theory of Amartya Sen or Thomas Malthus, and at least one other writer such as Alex de Waal or Larry Minear. The student must do a thorough literature search on the famine chosen as the paper must deal primarily with the famine itself. Do not waste space and time describing the theories of famine in the course—apply the theory or theories. The paper must include ***endnotes*** and a bibliography at the end (note: these two parts of the paper should be separate).

IF YOU USE FOOTNOTES I WILL NOT ACCEPT THE PAPER, YOU MUST USE ENDNOTES.

I will randomly choose students at the beginning of each class to outline the readings assigned for that day or I may give a short quiz on the readings for the day. Your preparedness from the readings will form part of your grade. Be prepared for each class by doing the readings by making notes.

There will no final or mid-term exam.

You will also participate in three oral class exercises on ***dates to be announced***. Instructions for these exercises will be posted online during the semester.

IV. Grading Methodology

Each student's grade will be determined by the grades of the short papers, the long paper, the class exercises, as well as attendance and participation in class discussions and reading presentations. Long Paper 50%. 3 Short Papers (10% for each paper) 30%. Verbal summary of Class readings 10%. Class participation, class exercises, attendance at Scowcroft Institute lectures or conferences (you must attend three during the semester to get credit).

Your papers will be graded on several criteria: thorough analysis of the causes and dynamics of the famine applying at a minimum Sen's Entitlement Theory or Malthus's Food Availability Decline (FAD) theory, analysis of the politics of the crisis and the quality of writing and organization of the paper. Late papers will result in a reduction of one half grade for every day late (an A will be reduced to an A- after one day's tardiness, a B+ after two days, and so on). If a

paper will be late, notify me on the day the papers are due or earlier.

V. Academic Integrity

Writing will make up much of the grade in this class. You should note that plagiarism is a violation of the TAMU Honor System. The University defines plagiarism as “the act of passing off as one’s own the ideas or writings of another” and notes that “plagiarism can be said to have occurred without any affirmative showing that a student’s use of another’s work was intentional.” (TAMU Honor System brochure, p. 4). Thus, plagiarism can occur either intentionally or through negligence. Be sure to cite all sources you use, and if you’re unsure whether or not to cite something, either ask Cindy Raisor or Kara Socol, or err on the side of caution. If I suspect the originality of a student’s work, I may use the new electronic search systems of the university to check for plagiarism. **DO NOT PUT YOUR INTEGRITY AND REPUTATION AT RISK BY ENGAGING IN THIS BEHAVIOR. I FIND IT PARTICULARLY OFFENSIVE IN A COURSE DEALING WITH LIFE AND DEATH ISSUES.**

VI. Climate of Inclusion, Respect in Class and Special Needs

Any student who have special needs in terms of taking notes or taking the exams please contact me and I will make special arrangements. Students are not allowed to use their computers during class unless I explicitly ask them to look up some matter.

We are committed in the Bush School and Texas A&M to creating and maintaining an inclusive campus climate that affirms diversity of thought, background, ethnicity, and perspective. Everyone is expected to respect the different experiences, beliefs and values expressed by fellow students and the instructor, and will engage in reasoned discussion and debate (which are encouraged) that refrains from derogatory or disrespectful comments about other students in the class or school.

VII. Contacting Me

If you have any questions during the semester between classes each week, email them to me on my TAMU/Bush Account and cc my Gmail account: anatsios@gmail.com

Office Hours will be held from 1:00 – 3:00 pm each Monday, however you may stop in any time I am in my office. Knock on my door—I sometimes keep my door closed so I do not disturb other people near my office—but a closed door does not mean I am away from my office. I do not mind you stopping by. If you wish to make an appointment for a specific time, do it by email.

VIII. E-reserves or Blackboard

Some of the readings will be on e-reserves for which the syllabus does not have links, wherever it says on blackboard read that to mean e-reserves. If the syllabus says you must read *most or all* of the book the law prohibits me from placing the book on e-learning or e-reserves, so you must get the book itself.

IX. Required Book List

The following books will be read in their entirety or a substantial portion and are available at the Texas A&M bookstore, in PSEL under Course Reserves, as well as on any number of online booksellers, such as half.com. All other readings will be available on Course Reserves.

Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1992.

Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*, Oxford University Press, 2007.

Jasper Becker, *Hungry Ghosts: Mao's Secret Famine*, Free Press. 1996.

Michael Barnett and Thomas Weiss, *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, Cornell University Press.

Robert Kaplan, *The Coming Anarchy: Shattering the Dreams of the Post-Cold War*, 2001.

Frederick Cuny with Richard Hill, *Famine, Conflict, and Response*, Kumerian Press, 1999. ISBN: 1565490908

John Prendergast, *Frontline Diplomacy: Humanitarian Aid and Conflict in Africa*, Lynne Rienner, 1996. ISBN 1-55587-696-X

Anne Applebaum, *Red Famine: Stalin's War on Ukraine*, Doubleday, 2017.

Lizzie Collingham, *A Taste of War*, Penguin Books, 2013. (paperback)

Hoffman, Peter and Weiss, Thomas, *Sword and Salve: Confronting New Wars and Humanitarian Crisis*, 2006.

Alex deWaal, *Mass Starvation: The History and Future of Famine*, 2018 (entire book)

Robert Kaplan, *The Coming Anarchy: Shattering the Dreams of the Post-Cold War*, Random House, 2001.

IX. Course Schedule

Week 1 – August 27:

Course introduction, requirements, reading list, source material, and approach.

- Food Security defined
- Theories of Famine
- Famine typology
- Famine as a process, not an event
- Kaplan's Chaos Theory

Reading Assignment:

Jasper Becker, *Hungry Ghosts: Mao's Secret Famine*, Free Press. 1996. (entire book)

Alex deWaal, *Mass Starvation: The History and Future of Famine*, 2018 (entire book)

Week 2 – September 3:

The economics of famine.

- Food availability decline theory of Thomas Malthus
- Exchange entitlement theory of Amartya Sen
- Micro-economic forces and famine
- Shocks, time sequencing, price increases, and famine

Reading Assignment:

Thomas Malthus, *Essay on the Principle of Population*. (Entire book - 6th edition online)

Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1992, ISBN 0-19-828463-2. (Entire book)

Edited by Stephen Devereux, *The New famines: Why Famines Persist in an Era of Globalization*, 2007, Chapter 4

Stephen Devereux, "Sen's Entitlement Approach: Critiques and Counter-critiques", Oxford Development Studies, 2001.

Week 3 – September 10: *The politics of famine.*

- Totalitarian famines
- War and famine
- Famine as an act of execution: famines caused by politics dynamics
- The political consequences of famines: France (1789), Ireland, (1845), Japan (1930's), Sahelian famine (1973), and North Korea (1997).
- The politics of the international humanitarian response system
- Foreign policy and famine: the diplomacy of catastrophe
- Military intervention in complex humanitarian emergencies

Reading Assignment:

Hendrix, Haggard, and Magaloni. "Grievance and Opportunity: Food Prices, Political Regime and Protest"

Marc Bellemare, "Rising Food Prices, Food Price Volatility, and Political Unrest"

Anne Applebaum, *Red Famine: Stalin's War on Ukraine*, 2017. Entire book.

Andrew Natsios, "The Politics of Famine in North Korea," Special Report of the U.S. Institute

for Peace Institute of Peace, August 2, 1999. www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr990802.html

Edited by Stephen Devereux, *The New famines: Why Famines Persist in an Era of Globalization*, 2007, chapters 1-3

Week 4 – September 17:

FIRST SHORT PAPER DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS

Diagnostic tools.

- Pre-famine and trailing indicators
- Early warning systems: FEWS net
- Field assessments and program evaluations
- Famine from the perspective of the survivors
- Making choices: increased family mortality or absolute destitution
- Coping mechanisms
- Building local capacity, avoiding destitution, and strengthening people's coping mechanisms

Reading Assignment:

Frederick Cuny with Richard Hill, *Famine, Conflict, and Response*, Kumerian Press, 1999, ISBN 1565490908. (Chapters 1-3)

Jean Dreze & Amartya Sen. *Hunger and Public Action*, Clarendon. (Chapters 1-4)

Mazurana, Benelli, Gupta, and Walker, *Sex and Age Matter: Improving Humanitarian Response in Emergencies*. Tufts University Feinstein Famine Center

Darcy, Stobaugh, Walker, and Maxwell. *The Use of Evidence in Humanitarian Decision-Making*. Tufts University Feinstein Famine Center

Week 5 – September 24:

FIRST CLASS EXERCISE

Humanitarian assistance during conflict.

- Do No Harm and the law of unintended consequences
- Disasters and Development: the gap. Cuny hypothesis.
- Developmental relief
- The microeconomics of aid during conflict: economics of chaos
- Standard Operating Procedures for aid agencies in conflict areas: the collective wisdom.

Reading Assignment:

Andrew Natsios, “Humanitarian Relief Interventions in Somalia: The Economics of Chaos”, *International Peacekeeping*, Volume 3, Spring 1996, Number 1.

Lizzie Collingham, *The Taste of War*, Penguin Books, 2013. (*Chapters Intro., 2, 3, 7-9, 11, 18, 19*)

Sword and Salve: Confronting New Wars and Humanitarian Crisis, Peter Hoffman and Thomas Weiss, 2006. (Entire book)

Week 6 – October 1:

Famine as a public health crisis.

- Moderate and acute malnutrition
- Disease as the major killer: immune system collapse
- The biology of starvation
- Changed disease environment hypothesis of Alex de Waal
- Mass migration and mortality
- Water and sanitation

Reading Assignment:

The Lancet, “The lessons learned from complex emergencies over past decade,” Peter Salama, et al, Vol. 364, pp 1801-1813, November 13, 2004.

The Lancet, “Public nutrition in complex emergencies”, Helen Young, et al, Vol 365, pp 1899-1909, November 20, 2004.

The Lancet, “Communicable diseases in complex emergencies: impact and challenges”, Maire A. Connolly, et al, Vol. 364, pp. 1974-1983, November 27, 2004.

Week 7 – October 8:

Programmatic responses to famine.

- British Famine Code of India
- Chinese Imperial System
- Sen and Dreze work
- Cuny market-based approach
- Employment and livelihood schemes
- External food aid, local purchase, and market interventions
- Program monitoring and evaluation

Reading Assignment:

Frederick Cuny with Richard Hill, *Famine, Conflict, and Response*, Kumerian Press, 1999.
(From Chapter 4 to the end of book)

Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen, *Hunger and Public Action*, Clarendon Paperback. (Chapters 5-8)

Week 8 – October 15:

SECOND SHORT PAPER DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS

Programmatic responses to famine continued.

- British Famine Code of India
- Chinese Imperial System
- Sen and Dreze work
- Cuny market-based approach
- Employment and livelihood schemes
- External food aid, local purchase, and market interventions
- Program monitoring and evaluation

Readings Assignment:

Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen, *Hunger and Public Action*, Clarendon Paperback. (Chapters 10-11)

Daniel Maxwell, et al, *A Market Analysis and Decision Tree Tool for Response Analysis: Cash, Local Purchase and/or Imported Food Aid?* 2007.

Cosgrove, Ramalingam, and Beck. *Real Time Evaluations of Humanitarian actions: An ALNAP Guide*. Overseas Development Institute, 2009. Read entire guide.

Eric James, *Managing Humanitarian Relief: An Operational Guide for NGOs*, Practical Action Publishing, 2008. (Chapter 2 and 4)

Week 9 – October 22:

The moral dilemmas of humanitarian aid.

- International humanitarian law
- The de Waal Hypothesis: non-intervention
- Accountability of international aid system and the recipients
- Foreign policy and humanitarian assistance
- The Sphere Standards

Reading Assignment:

Michael Barnett and Thomas Weiss, *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*, Cornell University Press. (Entire Book)

Thomas Weiss and Cindy Collins, *Humanitarian Challenges and Intervention*, Westview Press. (Chapters 3-5)

Week 10 – October 29:

Architecture of the international humanitarian response system.

- Chaotic evolution or intelligent design?
- The program delivery system options in failed states both during and after crisis
- Non-governmental organizations
- International Organizations: the UN Big Four (WFP, UNICEF, UNDP, and UNHCR), ICRC, and IOM
- Donor aid agencies: OFDA/DCHA of USAID and ECHO/EC
- USAID/DCHA Bureau: OFDA, FFP, OTI, CMM, OMA, and DART teams. The Field Officers Guide of OFDA.
- PRM and IO in DOS
- Coordination mechanisms: UN OCHA, DCHA/OFDA and EU/ECHO
- Donor funding systems: US and EU.
- USAID food aid and local purchase accounts
- Attempts at reform: the DFID proposals

Reading Assignment:

John Prendergast, *Frontline Diplomacy: Humanitarian Aid and Conflict in Africa*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996. (Read entire book)

Week 11 – November 5:

SECOND CLASS EXERCISE

Architecture of the international humanitarian response system continued.

- Chaotic evolution or intelligent design?
- The program delivery system options in failed states both during and after crisis
- Non-governmental organizations
- International Organizations: the UN Big Four (WFP, UNICEF, UNDP, and UNHCR), ICRC, and IOM
- Donor aid agencies: OFDA/DCHA of USAID and ECHO/EC
- USAID/DCHA Bureau: OFDA, FFP, OTI, CMM, OMA, and DART teams. The Field Officers Guide of OFDA.
- PRM and IO in DOS.
- Coordination mechanisms: UN OCHA, DCHA/OFDA and EU/ECHO
- Donor funding systems: US and EU.
- USAID food aid and local purchase accounts
- Attempts at reform: the DFID proposals

Reading Assignment:

Andrew Natsios, “International Humanitarian Response System”, *Parameters*, Vol. XXV No. 1, Spring 1995. <http://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/parameters/Articles/1995/1995%20natsios.pdf>.

Andrew Natsios, “The Clash of the Counter-bureaucracy and Development,” Center for Global Development, July 1, 2010.

http://www.cgdev.org/files/1424271_file_Natsios_Counterbureaucracy.pdf

OFDA External Review, *Planning from the Future: A Phase One Assessment* (entire report)

Week 12 – November 12:

THIRD PAPER DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS

Fragile and Failed States.

- Defined: five characteristics of complex humanitarian emergencies
- State fragility, failed states, and recovering states
- Collier’s four traps of failed states
- Douglass North and Limited Access Orders and state failure
- State failure as a development challenge: a failure of governance
- International response to state fragility and failure-innovations and reform
- Post-Conflict reconstruction

Reading Assignment:

Douglass North et al, *Limited Access Orders in the Developing World: A New Approach to the Problems of Development*, World Bank, Independent Evaluation Group, September 10, 2007.

Alex de Waal, “Mission without end? - Peacekeeping in the African Political Marketplace”, *International Affairs* 85:1, 2009 pages 99-113.

Robert Kaplan, *The Coming Anarchy: Shattering the Dreams of the Post-Cold War*, Random House, 2001.

Week 13 – November 19:

THIRD CLASS EXERCISE: Use case study from *Evaluating International Humanitarian Action*, Editor Adrian Wood, et al.

Fragile and Failed States continued.

- Defined: five characteristics of complex humanitarian emergencies
- State fragility, failed states, and recovering states
- Collier’s four traps of failed states
- Douglass North and Limited Access Orders and state failure

- State failure as a development challenge: a failure of governance
- International response to state fragility and failure-innovations and reform
- Post-Conflict reconstruction

Reading Assignment:

Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*, Oxford University Press, 2007 (Entire book).

Failed States Index 2017, Fund for Peace.

<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/951171705-Fragile-States-Index-Annual-Report-2017.pdf>

Economic Shocks and Civil Conflict: An Instrumental Variables Approach

Author(s): Edward Miguel, Shanker Satyanath and Ernest Sergenti

Source: Journal of Political Economy, Vol. 112, No. 4 (August 2004).

Week 14 – November 26 (Final Class)

FINAL LONG RESEARCH PAPER DUE

International Humanitarian Law and Guiding Principles of Humanitarian Analysis and Response.

- Code of Conduct, Red Cross Principles, and Bellagio Principles
- The UN Charter, Refugee rights, Geneva Conventions
- The Responsibility to Protect doctrine-R2P
- On strategy in humanitarian emergencies
- What we know and what we do not know about response
- Ten guiding principles of humanitarian operations

Reading Assignment:

Andrew Natsios “Commander’s Guidance: A Challenge of Complex Emergencies”, Parameters, VOL. XXVI, No. 2, Summer 1996.

<http://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/parameters/Articles/96summer/natsios.htm>

Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response. 2011 edition.
(read entire book)

Roger Riddell, *Does Foreign Aid Really Work?* (Chapters 18 and 19)

Andrew Natsios, paper *Preventing Human Rights Abuses in the Aftermath of the First Gulf War*, 1991.