

Fall 2021: Civil Wars

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Course Description

Since the end of the Cold War, civil wars (a.k.a. intrastate wars) have become the dominant form of violence and armed conflict around the world. Why do some countries experience more civil wars than others? How do civil wars fight and how do they end? What are the impacts of civil war in the short- and long-term on the states and civilians? This graduate-level course is about civil war as a theoretical concept—its nature, causes, dynamics, and effects. Please note that this class is NOT about the Chinese or American Civil War or about any specific civil war. Rather, this course provides a survey of classic and contemporary work on civil war primarily by political scientists. We will start by defining civil war and discussing why should we study it as a distinct phenomenon from other forms of political violence and/or international war. We will explore a variety of approaches to the causes of civil wars, considering classical works in economics and political science, as well as some recent contributions in the field. We will then dig into civil war dynamics: tactics and repertoires of violence in conflict (including violence against civilians), characteristics of armed group organizations, and the varying relationship between armed groups and the state. Finally, we will explore the determinants of civil war duration and termination, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and the long-term legacies of civil wars on political and economic development.

Course Objectives

The objective of this course is to develop the analytic and critical thinking abilities of students using the subject matter of civil war. By the end of the course, students should be able to read, engage with, and analyze academic text. They should be able to think critically about the texts and apply the text to examples. Moreover, students will learn how social scientists study social phenomenon such as civil war using different research methods. Finally, by the end of the course, students should be able to answer the following questions:

- What constitutes a civil war?
- What are the major causes of civil war?

- Why do civilians join violent rebel movements?
- What explains the formation and fragmentation of rebel movements?
- Why do some civil wars last longer than others?
- What explains the different forms of violence observed during civil wars?
- What are some of consequences of civil war?
- How do civil wars successfully end?
- How successful are third parties in stopping civil wars?

Textbooks

There are no required textbooks for this class. All course materials will be available on the course website or through the library. I expect that you have the week’s reading completed **before** you come to class on Monday. I strongly recommend the following textbooks:

- T. David Mason and Sara McLaughlin Mitchell eds., *What Do We Know about Civil Wars?*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2016.(hereafter *Mason et al 2016*)
- Edward Newman and Karl DeRouen eds., *Routledge Handbook of Civil Wars*, Routledge, 2014. (hereafter *Newman and DeRouen 2014*)

Remote learning

In cases that some students are not able to attend the lectures in person at Tsinghua campus, the course will be taught in a “hybrid mode” where remote learning is accessible. The instructor will use **VooV Meeting** or **Tencent meeting(腾讯会议)** for remote teaching, which is given below:

- Meeting ID (recurred):
- Password:
- link:

To download and install *VooV Meeting* (if you are based outside of mainland China), please visit: <https://voovmeeting.com/download-center.html?from=1001>

To download and install *Tencent meeting*, <https://meeting.tencent.com/download-center.html>

Course Policy

I will detail the policy for this course below.

Grading Policy

- **20%** of your grade will be determined by your attendance and participation in class. Generally, ask questions and answer them. Your contribution to the quality of the class discussion is a key to the success of this course.
- **30%** of your grade will be determined by a presentation.

- 50% of your grade will be determined by a final paper.

Class presentation: You will be required to present in front of the class on a topic based on the assigned readings from a chosen week. During your presentation, you should also lead the class discussion using readings from that week and help the class understand the key research questions, theories, and findings of the readings.

Final Paper: You will be required to write a 15-page essay discussing questions related to the dynamics of a specific civil war of your choosing. The theme of this essay can be “why it occurred?” or “how it fought?” or “how it ended (if applicable)?” or “what are the consequence of that civil war?”. You should draw some of the discussions from the class and should engage with existing research. You should choose a standard format (APA, Chicago, etc.) for the in-text citations and bibliography and be consistent with the chosen format. Final paper will due at the start of the final exam.

Grading Scale

>= 93	A	70 - 72	C
90 - 92	A-	67 - 69	C-
85 - 89	B+	63 - 66	D+
80 - 84	B	60 - 62	D
77 - 79	B-	<= 59	F
73 - 76	C+		

Cell Phones and laptops

Please do not bring cell phones to class. If you do bring a cell phone to class, turn the ringer off. Laptop or tablet use is allowed during class only for note-taking.

Class Schedule

Students must read the following before Tuesday’s class session. **Important:** class readings are subject to change, contingent on mitigating circumstances and the progress we make as a class. Students are encouraged to attend lectures and check the course website for updates. The class is divided into two parts: the first part will be a lecture by the instructor and will be an overview of each week’s topic, and the second part will be a seminar where **all students** are expected to contribute to the class discussion.

Week 1, 2021-09-13: Course introduction—What is a civil war and why should we study it?

Required readings:

- Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2007. “Civil Wars.” In Carles Boix and Susan Stokes, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 416-434.
- Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2001. “New and Old Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction?” *World Politics* 54 (1): 99-118.

Read *all* associated documents on course website.

- [Taking Good Notes](#)
- [Dos and Dont's of Writing for Students](#)
- [Reading a Regression Table: A Guide for Students](#)

Recommended readings:

- Mason et al, chapter 1
- Sambanis, Nicholas. 2004. “What is civil war? Conceptual and empirical complexities of an operational definition.” *Journal of conflict resolution* 48(6): 814-858.

Week 2, 2021-09-20 [Rescheduled to 2021-09-18 (SAT)]: The causes of civil war—rational choice

Required readings:

- Walter, Barbara F. 2009. “Bargaining failures and civil war.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 12: 243-261.
- Walter, Barbara F. 2004. “Does conflict beget conflict? Explaining recurring civil war.” *Journal of Peace Research* 41 (3): 371-388.

Recommended readings:

- Cunningham, Kathleen Gallagher. 2013. “Actor fragmentation and civil war bargaining: How internal divisions generate civil conflict.” *American Journal of Political Science* 57(3): 659-672.
- Fearon, James D. 1995. “Rationalist Explanations for War.” *International Organization* 49(3): 379-414.

Week 3, 2021-09-27: The causes of civil war—political economy

Required readings:

- Collier, Paul and Anke Hoeffler. 2004. “Greed and Grievance in Civil War.” *Oxford Economic Papers* 56 (4): 563-595.
- Cederman, Lars-Erik, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Halvard Buhaug. 2013, *Inequality, grievances, and civil war*. Cambridge University Press, Chapters 1-2 (pp. 1-29)

Recommended readings:

- Blattman, Christopher, and Edward Miguel. 2010. “Civil war.” *Journal of Economic literature* 48(1): 3-57.
- Mason et al, chapter 2

Week 4, 2021-10-04: National Day, no class

Week 5, 2021-10-11: The causes of civil war—ethnic identity

Required readings:

- Cederman, Lars-Erik, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Nils B. Weidmann. 2011. “Horizontal Inequalities and Ethnonationalist Civil War: A Global Comparison.” *American Political Science Review* 105 (3): 478-495.
- Denny, Elaine K., and Barbara F. Walter. 2014. “Ethnicity and civil war.” *Journal of Peace Research* 51(2): 199-212.

Recommended readings:

- Mason et al, chapter 3
- Newman and DeRouen, chapter 8

Week 6, 2021-10-18: The causes of civil war–gender (in)equality

Required readings:

- Hudson, Valerie M., et al. 2009. “The heart of the matter: The security of women and the security of states.” *International Security* 33(3): 7-45.
- Melander, Erik. 2005. “Gender Equality and Intrastate Armed Conflict,” *International Studies Quarterly* 49(4): 695-714.

Recommended readings:

- Kaitlyn Webster, Chong Chen, and Kyle Beardsley. 2019. “Conflict, Peace, and the Evolution of Women’s Empowerment.” *International Organization* 73(2): 255-289.
- Mason et al, chapter 12

Week 7, 2021-10-25: The causes of civil war–international system and other

Required readings:

- Kalyvas, Stathis N. and Laia Balcells. 2010. “International System and Technologies of Rebellion: How the End of the Cold War Shaped International Conflict.” *American Political Science Review* 104 (3): 415-429.
- Gleditsch, Kristian Skrede. 2007. “Transnational dimensions of civil war.” *Journal of Peace Research* 44 (3): 293-309.

Recommended readings:

- Mason et al, chapter 5
- Fearon, James D, and David D. Laitin. 2003. “Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War,” *American Political Science Review* 97(1): 75-90.

Week 8, 2021-11-01: The dynamics of civil war: Rebel recruitment

Required readings:

- Güne Murat Tezcür. 2016. “Ordinary People, Extraordinary Risks: Participation in an Ethnic Rebellion.” *American Political Science Review* 110(2): 247-264.
- Humphreys, Macartan, and Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2008. “Who fights? The determinants of participation in civil war.” *American Journal of Political Science* 52(1): 436-455.

Recommended readings:

- Weinstein, Jeremy M. 2005. “Resources and the information problem in rebel recruitment.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49(4): 598-624.
- Gates, Scott. 2002. “Recruitment and allegiance: The microfoundations of rebellion.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46(1): 111-130.

Week 9, 2021-11-08: The dynamics of civil war: Inside armed organization

Required readings:

- Weinstein, Jeremy. 2006. *Inside Rebellion*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 127-159.
- Bakke, Kristin M., Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, and Lee JM Seymour. 2012. A plague of initials: Fragmentation, cohesion, and infighting in civil wars." *Perspectives on Politics* 10(2): 265-283.

Recommended readings:

- Cunningham, Kathleen Gallagher. 2011. “Divide and conquer or divide and concede: How do states respond to internally divided separatists?.” *American Political Science Review* 105(2): 275-297.
- Pearlman, Wendy, and Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham. 2012. “Nonstate actors, fragmentation, and conflict processes.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56(1): 3-15.

Week 10, 2021-11-15: The dynamics of civil war: Alliances and conflict between armed groups

Required readings:

- Bapat, Navin, and Kanisha Bond. 2012. “Alliances between Militant Groups.” *British Journal of Political Science* 42(4): 793-824.
- Christia, Fotini. 2012. *Alliance Formation in Civil Wars*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Chapters 1-2 (pp. 1-54)

Recommended readings:

- Balcells, Laia, Chong Chen, and Costantino Pischedda. 2021. “Do Birds of a Feather Flock Together? Rebel Constituencies and Civil War Alliances.”
- Akcinaroglu, Seden. 2012. “Rebel interdependencies and civil war outcomes.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56(5): 879-903.

Week 11, 2021-11-22: The dynamics of civil war: Tactics during civil war

Required readings:

- Stanton, Jessica. 2013. “Terrorism in the Context of Civil War.” *Journal of Politics* 75(4): 1009-1022.
- Cohen, Dara. 2013. “Causes of Rape During Civil War: Cross-National Evidence (1980-2009).” *American Political Science Review* 107(3): 461-477.

Recommended readings:

- Newman and DeRouen, chapter 23
- Bueno de Mesquita, Ethan. 2013. “Rebel tactics.” *Journal of Political Economy* 121 (2): 323-357.

Week 12, 2021-11-29: The dynamics of civil war: Violence against civilians

Required readings:

- Balcells, Laia. 2011. “Continuation of politics by two means: Direct and indirect violence in civil war.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55(3): 397-422.
- Humphreys, Macartan and Jeremy Weinstein. 2006. “Handling and manhandling civilians in civil war.” *American Political Science Review* 100(3): 429-447.

Recommended readings:

- Balcells, Laia, and Jessica A. Stanton. 2021. “Violence Against Civilians During Armed Conflict: Moving Beyond the Macro-and Micro-Level Divide.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 24.
- Wood, Reed M. 2010. “Rebel capability and strategic violence against civilians.” *Journal of Peace Research* 47(5): 601-614.

Week 13, 2021-12-06: Civil war duration and termination

Required readings:

- Cunningham, David E., Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Idean Salehyan. 2009. “It takes Two: A Dyadic Analysis of Civil War Duration and Outcome.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53 (4): 570-597.
- Cunningham, David E. 2006. “Veto players and civil war duration” *American Journal of Political Science* 50(4): 875-892.

Recommended readings:

- Collier, Paul, Anke Hoefler, and Måns Söderbom. 2004. “On the duration of civil war.” *Journal of Peace Research* 41(3): 253-273.

- Mason et al, chapter 6

Week 14, 2021-12-13: Peacekeeping and peacebuilding in civil war

Required readings:

- Fortna, Virginia Page. 2008. *Does peacekeeping work?: shaping belligerents' choices after civil war*. Princeton University Press, 2008. Chapter 4 (pp. 76-103).
- Kyle Beardsley. 2011. "Peacekeeping and the contagion of armed conflict." *Journal of Politics* 73(4): 1051-1064.

Recommended readings:

- Hultman, Lisa, Jacob Kathman, and Megan Shannon. 2013. "United Nations peacekeeping and civilian protection in civil war." *American Journal of Political Science* 57(4): 875-891.
- Beardsley, Kyle, David E. Cunningham, and Peter B. White. 2019. "Mediation, peacekeeping, and the severity of civil war." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63(7): 1682-1709.

Week 15, 2021-12-20: The durability of post-conflict peace

Required readings:

- Cammett, Melani and Edmund J. Malesky. 2012. "Power-Sharing in Post-Conflict Societies: Implications for Peace and Governance." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56(6): 982-1016.
- T. David Mason, Mehmet Gurses, Patrick T. Brandt, and Jason Michael Quinn. 2011. "When Civil Wars Recur: Conditions for Durable Peace after Civil Wars." *International Studies Perspectives* 12(2): 171-189.

Recommended readings:

- Collier, Paul, Anke Hoeffler, and Måns Söderbom. 2008. "Post-conflict risks." *Journal of Peace Research* 45(4): 461-478.
- Hartzell, Caroline, and Matthew Hoddie. 2003. "Institutionalizing peace: power sharing and postcivil war conflict management." *American Journal of Political Science* 47(2): 318-332.
- Mattes, Michaela, and Burcu Savun. 2009. "Fostering Peace After Civil War: Commitment Problems and Agreement Design." *International Studies Quarterly* 53(3): 737-759.

Week 16, 2021-12-27: The short-and long-run legacies of civil war

Required readings:

- Neumayer, Eric. 2021. “Economic legacy effects of armed conflict: insights from the Civil War in Aceh, Indonesia.” *Conflict Management and Peace Science*. First Published March 2, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0738894221994503>
- Lupu, Noam, and Leonid Peisakhin. 2017. “The legacy of political violence across generations.” *American Journal of Political Science* 61(4): 836-851.

Recommended readings:

- Kang, Seonjou, and James Meernik. 2005. “Civil war destruction and the prospects for economic growth.” *The Journal of Politics* 67(1): 88-109.
- Kaitlyn Webster, Priscilla Torres, Chong Chen, and Kyle Beardsley. 2020. “Ethnic and Gender Hierarchies in the Crucible of War.” *International Studies Quarterly* 64(3): 710–722.

Final paper due at 23:59 pm on Week 17, 2022-01-03