

# Master Research Project: Civil Conflicts

---

**Course Catalogue Number**  
7324P207ZY

**Credits**  
30 EC

**Instruction language**  
English

**Time Period(s)**  
2019, Semester 2  
Blocks 4-6

**Instructor**  
Dr. Mike Medeiros  
REC B10.05  
Individual meetings via appointment: [m.medeiros@uva.nl](mailto:m.medeiros@uva.nl)

## Course Objectives & Learning Outcomes

Students will develop the ability to:

- Evaluate social science research related to the study of civil conflicts.
- Analyse past and present cases of civil conflicts.
- Articulate specific research questions and formulate hypotheses to answer them.
- Create research designs that incorporate quantitative and/or qualitative methods to evaluate empirical evidence and test hypotheses.
- Communicate their research conclusions, as well as their theoretical, methodological, and empirical underpinnings, to a non-specialist academic audience in both speech and writing.
- Write an academic-level article.

## **Course Content**

Civil conflicts are a prominent demonstration of intergroup tensions. They can have dire consequences, representing a threat to social stability and harmonious social relations. Civil conflicts can manifest themselves in non-violent protests or can escalate to all-out war.

The course will explore the following questions: Why do civil conflicts occur? What explains variations in their level of intensity? Why can civil conflicts escalate into violence? How can civil conflicts be resolved?

The course will introduce students to a variety of concepts, theories and methodological approaches that will allow them to gain a profound understanding of the civil conflict phenomena. The course will challenge students to evaluate critically how well social science research explains a range of civil conflicts with diverging levels of intensity from different regions and time periods.

The course will also guide students in developing research questions and theoretical frameworks as well as the empirical analysis of cases.

## **Teaching methods/learning formats**

The course will be taught in the form of a seminar. The sessions will primarily consist of plenary discussions among the students. Therefore, students are expected to prepare for each class by 1) critically reading the assigned literature and 2) formulating questions and topics that they would like to introduce to the discussions.

Students will receive written feedback on their three submissions, their three in-class presentations and their thesis.

While Blok 5 is mostly devoted to individual research, students can schedule individual, or group, meetings if needed. This is particularly encouraged prior to undertaking field work (interviews, experiments, etc.) and/or to verify quantitative modelling strategies.

## **Manner & Form of Assessment and Assessment Requirements & Criteria**

Active participation and presentations (20%), and MA Thesis (80%).

The student's participation will be evaluated in each session based on class presence as well as the quality of their comments and questions. Furthermore, each reading, starting with the second meeting (12 February) will be assigned to a student who will have to briefly summarize the reading and launch the discussion on it.

## **Rules regarding Fraud and Plagiarism**

The provisions of the Regulations Governing Fraud and Plagiarism for UvA Students apply in full. Access this regulation at <http://www.student.uva.nl/preventfraud-plagiarism>. Plagiarism is presenting someone else's ideas as your own. Copying, paraphrasing or translating of text needs to be referenced according to academic standards. Plagiarism will be sanctioned severely.

## **Readings**

Extensive use will be made of online journal resources via the digital library. If not, the readings are available via Canvas.

## Schedule

### 5 February Introduction to the Course

This meeting will consist of a course presentation, a discussion of the assigned readings for this meeting, and a brief presentation by the students of their (informal) proposed thesis (topic, research question, data, and dependent variable).

#### Readings

2018-2019 UvA Political Science Thesis Manual.

Major Components of Research Design. King, Keohane & Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton University Press. pp. 12-27.

The Art of Theory Building. Kellstedt & Whitten. 2018. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 2.

Designing Your Research and Choosing Your Qualitative and Quantitative Methods. Brians, Willnat, Manheim, & Rich. 2006. *Empirical Political Analysis*. Chapter 4.

#### Recommended

Quantitative research: Kellstedt & Whitten. 2018. *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. Cambridge University Press.

Qualitative research: King, Keohane & Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton University Press.

Quantitative and qualitative research: Brians, Willnat, Rich & Manheim. 2018. *Empirical Political Analysis*. Routledge.

Aberbach, J.D. & Rockman, B.A. 2002. Conducting and Coding Elite Interviews. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 35(4): 673-676.

Harvey, W.S. 2011. Strategies for Conducting Elite Interviews. *Qualitative Research* 11(4): 431-441.

Teune, H. & Przeworski, A. 1970. *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*. New York: Wiley-Interscience.

12 February

## Important Basics of Civil Conflicts

Sherif, M. 1956. Experiments in Group Conflict. *Scientific American* 195(5): 54-59.

Dahrendorf, R. 1958. Toward a Theory of Social Conflict. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 2(2): 170-183.

Sambanis, N. 2004. What is Civil War? Conceptual and Empirical Complexities of an Operational Definition. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48(6): 814-858.

Day, J., Pinckney, J. & Chenoweth, E. 2015. Collecting Data on Nonviolent Action: Lessons Learned and Ways Forward. *Journal of Peace Research* 52(1): 129-133.

### Recommended

Anderson, B., 2006. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso Books.

Angstrom, J. 2001. Toward a Typology of Internal Armed Conflict: Synthesising a Decade of Conceptual Turmoil. *Civil Wars* 4(3): 93 -116.

Asch, S.E. 1955. Opinions and Social Pressure. *Scientific American* 193(5): 31-35.

Connor, W. 1990. When is a Nation? *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 13(1): 92-103.

Kalyvas, S. 2001. 'New' and 'Old' Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction? *World Politics* 54: 99-118.

Kalyvas, S. 2003. The Ontology of 'Political Violence': Action and Identity in Civil Wars. *Perspectives on Politics* 1(3): 475-494.

Milgram, S. 1974. *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View*. New York: Harper.

Newman, E. 2004. The 'New Wars' Debate: A Historical Perspective is Needed. *Security Dialogue* 35(2): 173-189.

Sambanis, N. 2001. Do Ethnic and Nonethnic Civil Wars Have the Same Causes? A Theoretical and Empirical Inquiry (Part I). *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45 3: 259-282.

Connor, W. 1993. Beyond Reason: The Nature of the Ethnonational Bond. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 16(3): 373-389.

Reilly, B. 2000/2001. Democracy, Ethnic Fragmentation, and Internal Conflict: Confused Theories, Faulty Data, and the 'Crucial Case' of Papua New Guinea. *International Security* 25 (3): 162-185.

Lake, D.A. & Rothchild, D. 1996. Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict. *International Security* 21(2): 41-75.

Lindemann, S. & Wimmer, A. 2018. Repression and Refuge: Why only Some Politically Excluded Ethnic Groups Rebel. *Journal of Peace Research* 55(3): 305-319.

### Recommended

Brubaker, R. 2004. *Ethnicity without Groups*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Cederman, L.E., Girardin, L. & Gleditsch, K.S. 2009. Ethnonationalist Triads: Assessing the Influence of Kin Groups on Civil Wars. *World Politics* 61(3): 403-437.

Geertz, C. 1963. *Old Societies and New States*. New York. Free Press.

Isaacs, H.R. 1989. *Idols of The tribe: Group Identity and Political Change*. Harvard University Press.

Yavuz, M.H. 2001. Five Stages of the Construction of Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey. *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 7(3): 1-24.

Gurr, T.R. 1993. Why Minorities Rebel: A global Analysis of Communal Mobilization and Conflict since 1945. *International Political Science Review*, 14(2): 161-201.

Caprioli, M. 2005. Primed for Violence: The Role of Gender Inequality in Predicting Internal Conflict. *International Studies Quarterly* 49(2): 161-178.

Lawrence, A. 2010. Triggering Nationalist Violence: Competition and Conflict in Uprisings against Colonial Rule. *International Security* 35(2): 88-122 .

Horowitz, D. 1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict. Theories, Patterns, and Policies*. Berkeley. pp. 349–60.

### Recommended

Birnie, J.K. 2006. *Ethnicity and Electoral Politics*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Chandra, K. 2005. Ethnic Parties and Democratic Stability. *Perspectives on Politics* 3(2): 235-252.

Cohen, L. J. 1997. Prelates and Politicians in Bosnia: The Role of Religion in Nationalist Mobilisation. *Nationalities Papers* 25: 481-499.

Collier, P., Hoeffler, A. & Rohner, D. 2009. Beyond Greed and Grievance: Feasibility and Civil War. *Oxford Economic Papers* 61(1): 1-27.

Daxecker, U.E., Amicarelli, E. & Jung, A. 2019. Electoral Contention and Violence (ECAV): A New Dataset. *Journal of Peace Research*. Available on Canvas.

Giordano, B. 2000. Italian Regionalism or 'Padanian' Nationalism – The Political Project of the Lega Nord in Italian Politics. *Political Geography*, 19(4), 445-471.

Green, D.P. & Seher, R.L. 2003. What Role does Prejudice Play in Ethnic Conflict?. *Annual Review of Political Science* 6(1): 509-531.

Humphreys, M. & Weinstein, J.M. 2008. Who Fights? The Determinants of Participation in Civil War. *American Journal of Political Science* 52(2): 436-455.

Mähler, A., & Pierskalla, J.H. 2015. Indigenous Identity, Natural Resources, and Contentious Politics in Bolivia: A Disaggregated Conflict Analysis, 2000-2011. *Comparative Political Studies* 48(3): 301-332.

Medeiros, M. 2017. The Language of Conflict: The Relationship between Linguistic Vitality and Conflict Intensity. *Ethnicities*, 17(5): 627-645.

Ross, Michael L. 2004. How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases. *International Organization* (58): 35–67.

Tadjoeddin, M.Z. 2011. The Economic Origins of Indonesia's Secessionist Conflicts. *Civil Wars* 13(3): 312-332.

27 February

**\*\*Submission of Research Question and Data Strategy\*\***

5 March

**Consequences of Conflict**

Lacina, B. 2006. Explaining the Severity of Civil Wars. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50(2): 276-289.

Steele, A. 2011. Electing Displacement: Political Cleansing in Apartadó, Colombia. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55(3): 423-445.

Howe, A.E. & Karazsia, Z.A. 2018. A Long Way to Peace: Identities, Genocide, and State Preservation in Burma, 1948–2018. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*: 1-21. Online first.

Medeiros, M. 2019. National Frenemies: Linguistic Intergroup Attitudes in Canada. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 42(16): 3-22.

### Recommended

Balcells, L. 2012. The Consequences of Victimization on Political Identities: Evidence from Spain. *Politics & Society* 40(3): 311-347.

Balcells, L. & Steele, A. 2016. Warfare, Political Identities, and Displacement in Spain and Colombia. *Political Geography* 51: 15-29.

Cunningham, D.E. 2006. Veto Players and Civil War Duration. *American Journal of Political Science* 50(4): 875-892.

Fearon, J.D. 2004. Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer Than Others? *Journal of Peace Research* 41(3): 275-301.

11 March

## Resolving Conflict

Bormann, N.C., Cederman, L.E., Gates, S., Graham, B.A., Hug, S., Strøm, K.W. & Wucherpfennig, J. 2018. Power Sharing: Institutions, Behavior, and Peace. *American Journal of Political Science*. Online first.

Erk, J. & Anderson, L. 2009. The Paradox of Federalism: Does Self-Rule Accommodate or Exacerbate Ethnic Divisions?. *Regional & Federal Studies* 19(2): 191-202.

Beardsley, K., Cunningham, D.E. & White, P.B. 2018. Mediation, Peacekeeping, and the Severity of Civil War. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Online first.

Krause, J., Krause, W. & Bränfors, P. 2018. Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations and the Durability of Peace. *International Interactions* 44(6): 985-1016.

### Recommended

Brancati, D. 2006. Decentralization: Fueling the Fire or Dampening the Flames of Ethnic Conflict and Secessionism?. *International Organization* 60(3): 651-685.

Glassmayer, K. & Sambanis, N. 2008. Rebel Military Integration and Civil War Termination *Journal of Peace Research* 45(3): 365-384.

Greenhill, K. & Major, S.. 2006/2007. The Perils of Profiling: Civil War Spoilers and the Collapse of Peace Accords. *International Security* 31(3): 7-40.

Griffiths, R.D., & Wasser, L.M.. 2018. Does Violent Secessionism Work? *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Online first.

Michael, M.S. 2007. The Cyprus Peace Talks: A Critical Appraisal. *Journal of Peace Research* 44: 587-604.

Nussio, E., Rettberg, A. & Ugarriza, J.E. 2015. Victims, Nonvictims and their Opinions on Transitional Justice: Findings from the Colombian Case. *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 9(2): 36-354.

Paluck, E.L. 2009. Reducing Intergroup Prejudice and Conflict using the Media: A Field Experiment in Rwanda. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 96(3): 574-587.

Pettigrew, T.F., Wagner, U. & Christ, O. 2010. Population Ratios and Prejudice: Modelling Both Contact and Threat Effects. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36: 635-650.

Röth, L. & Kaiser, A. 2018. Why Accommodate Minorities Asymmetrically? A Theory of Ideological Authority Insulation. *European Journal of Political Research*. Online first.

Stedman, S.J. 1997. Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes. *International Security* 22(2): 5-53.

Tannam, E. 2001. Explaining the Good Friday Agreement: A Learning Process. *Government and Opposition* 36: 493-518.

Walter, B.F. 1997. The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement. *International Organization* 51(3): 335-364.



<b>18 March</b>	<b>In-Class Presentation of Thesis Proposal</b>
<b>25 March</b>	<b>Detailed Outline Submission</b> <b>**No meeting**</b>
<b>30 April</b>	<b>In-Class Presentation of Literature Review and Plan of Analysis</b>
<b>28 May</b>	<b>In-Class Presentation of Findings</b>
<b>31 May</b>	<b>Full Draft Submission</b>
<b>21 June</b>	<b>Deadline Submission Final Draft</b>