

2007 Woodrow Wilson Foundation Award For the best book published in the U.S. during the previous calendar year on government, politics, or international affairs. The award is supported by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation.

Award Committee: William R. Keech, *Carnegie Mellon University*, Chair; Gary C. Cox, *University of California, San Diego*; and Richard Ned Lebow, *Dartmouth College*

Co-Recipient: Stathis Kalyvas, *Yale University*

Title: *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge University Press, 2006)

Citation: Kalyvas poses four puzzles at the outset of his book. Why are civil wars particularly savage in comparison to foreign wars? Why is there such striking variation in violence within individual civil wars? Observers point to paired villages, seemingly identical in relevant ways, but one is victimized by massacres, often with internal participation, and the other untouched. Why do macrohistorical accounts explain the outcome of civil wars in terms preexisting popular loyalties, while allegiances and loyalties are almost invariably transformed during the course of such war? And finally, why is there such a disconnect between macrolevel causes of war and microlevel patterns of violence?

The author distinguishes and decouples civil violence from civil war. He offers a macro theory of “irregular war” and a microfoundational theory of violence. The theory of violence links the two because it is based on the interactions of actors at the central and local levels, and between combatants and non-combatants. Their interaction is shaped by the demands of irregular war, the logic of asymmetric information and the dynamics of local rivalries. In combination, they produce particular patterns of interaction and associated levels of civil violence. The author tests the theory in the Greek civil war (1944-1949). His data are drawn from archives in Britain and Greece and from interviews with former participants. In the conclusions, he examines some of the implications of his theory for the study of problems where national-local or center-periphery cleavages, and the interactions between actors on either side of these divides, are critical.

The core of the theory of civil violence derives from the central proposition of Kalyvas’ theory of war: political actors maximize territorial control subject to the local military balance. Territorial control requires cooperation from local inhabitants, who may maximize certain benefits through cooperation. Most people prefer to collaborate with the side that can best guarantee their survival, irrespective of their sympathies. Collaboration is more difficult in areas of contested control, and in these zones conflicting actors see the benefits of using selective violence to consolidate their control and weaken that of their adversary. Selective violence requires private information, which is asymmetrically distributed among the principal contestants and local populations. The latter know who collaborators and defectors are, and can choose to reveal this information or not. Individuals want to denounce only when it is safe for them to do so, in situations that is where their victims cannot counter-denounce them. Thus, the higher degree of control an actor has in an area, the safer individuals feel and the more likely they are to denounce.

Denunciation is most likely, not where control is most contested, but where violence is least needed to maintain that control. Strategic individuals will be least likely to get rid of their enemies in conditions where they are most safe in denouncing them. It is in the between areas, where control is partially effective, giving citizens some degree of protection, that denunciation, while somewhat less likely, will lead to the most violence.

The Logic of Violence in Civil War is impressive in its framing of the problem (separating civil violence from civil war) and in its construction of a theory that takes into account macro- and micro-level perspectives. It builds on their interaction, makes rich use of primary data, performs quantitative and qualitative analysis of that data, and brings awareness of the implications of the theory for a wider range of phenomena. The theory stands in sharp contrast to understandings of civil war and violence derived from both Thucydides and Hobbes that explain civil violence solely in terms of the anarchy created by civil war. It makes a substantial substantive contribution to our understanding of civil violence and of the importance of interactions between central authorities and local populations for understanding the behavior of both. We believe it will be extremely well-received by relevant research communities in comparative politics and international relations. It also has great relevance to historians of civil wars.