Research Seminar: Political Order and Conflict
MACIS Optional Research Seminar, Spring Term 2017

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Aims and organization
This seminar builds on the MACIS seminar on “political violence” and covers the literature on civil war and other types of conflict in the contemporary world. We will cover topics such as ethnic violence, political economy perspectives on war, the role of political institutions, and the international dimensions of civil conflict. The students will develop an original research question to be dealt with in a research paper.

The seminar will run for one term and will expose students to the literature on political order and conflict. It will provide an overview of core topics and readings, although students are highly encouraged to consult readings not covered on the syllabus when developing their projects. Students will write a research design, which may eventually turn into a full-length paper or thesis, and are expected to present their design during the final sessions of the course.

Requirements and grading
Students will have to fulfill the following requirements:
• Participate at the sessions of the seminar.
• Read the required readings assigned for each meeting.
• Write three short memos on the topics. The memos should develop a critique and analysis of the week’s readings. These memos are due on Monday evening of the week in which this topic is scheduled. Students need to be prepared to briefly present the main arguments appearing in their memos in class.
• Prepare a research design (due in week 12) that outlines the research question and the relevant literature for the research paper (see below).
• Discuss a research design of another student.
• Write a research paper on a topic chosen by the students (in agreement with the instructors).
The final grade will be determined primarily by the term paper. However, class participation and the memos are also taken into consideration.

All readings are available at:

http://cederman.ethz.ch/teaching/poc2016/
(User Name & Password: “poc2016”)

Schedule and Readings

Week 1 (February 22nd). Introduction

Week 2 (March 1st). Concepts & Classical Approaches to Conflict


Gurr, Ted. 1968. Psychological Factors in Civil Violence. World Politics. 20(2):245-278


Week 3 (March 8th). Political Economy and Natural Resources


**Week 4 (March 15th). Ethnic Inequality**


**Week 5 (March 22nd). Democracy, Democratization, and Conflict**


**Week 6 (March 29th). Trans-border Relations and International Diffusion**


[Recommended reading:


**Week 7 (April 5th). Organization of and Participation in Civil War**


[Recommended reading:

Week 8 (April 12th). Duration and Termination


[Easter break]

Week 9 (April 26th). One-sided Violence and Genocide


[Recommended reading:


Week 10 (May 3rd). Governmental Power Sharing


**Week 11 (May 10th). Territorial Power Sharing and Partition**


[Recommended reading: 

**Week 12 (May 17th). Peacekeeping**


Week 13 (May 24th). Student presentations I

Week 14 (May 31st). Student presentations II

Final Papers Due: [TBD]