

Western Intervention in the Balkans
The Strategic Use of Emotion in Conflict

Conflicts involve powerful experiences. The residue of these experiences is captured by the concept and language of emotion. Indiscriminate killing creates fear; targeted violence produces anger and a desire for vengeance; political status reversals spawn resentment; cultural prejudices sustain ethnic contempt. These emotions can become resources for political entrepreneurs. A broad range of Western interventions are based on a view of human nature as narrowly rational. Correspondingly, intervention policy generally aims to alter material incentives (“sticks and carrots”) to influence behavior. In response, poorer and weaker actors who wish to block or change this Western implemented “game” use emotions as resources. This book examines the strategic use of emotion in the conflicts and interventions occurring in the Western Balkans over a twenty-year period. The book concentrates on the conflict in Kosovo but also examines conflicts and interventions in Macedonia, Bosnia, Montenegro, and South Serbia.

Roger D. Petersen holds BA, MA, and PhD degrees in political science from the University of Chicago. Since 2001, he has taught in the Political Science Department at MIT, where he was recently named Arthur and Ruth Sloan Professor of Political Science. Petersen studies comparative politics with a special focus on conflict and violence, mainly in Eastern Europe, but also in Colombia and other regions. He is the author of *Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2001) and *Understanding Ethnic Violence: Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2002). He also has an interest in comparative methods and has co-edited, with John Bowen, *Critical Comparisons in Politics and Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 1999). He teaches classes on civil war, ethnic politics, and civil–military relations.

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“Roger Petersen unpacks the recent history of Western interventions in the Balkans to show how easily peace can be subverted by ethnic leaders who know how to appeal to anger, fear, guilt, shame, and resentment. Those who oppose peace use *jujitsu-politics*: they apply carefully calibrated violence to elicit a spiral of emotions and counterviolence that will bring them new fighters and new supporters. Petersen here extends rational choice theory to include emotions as resources no less important than money and guns; peacekeeping operations will never look the same after you have read this book.”

– Clark McCauley, Bryn Mawr College

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For Daniela

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