



Civilization and War

By Brett Bowden

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'Civilization and War is an exceptionally erudite and timely meditation on the close relationship between civilization, progress and war in modern political thought and policy from the Enlightenment to the war on terror. It is a fitting complement to Dr. Bowden's path-breaking study, The Empire of Civilization (2009).'

- James Tully, University of Victoria, Canada

'Civilization and War addresses a concern of all thinking persons in elegant language with erudition to match. Bowden's readers will profit by stretching their minds, learn much to mull over and discuss with their friends.'

- William H. McNeill, University of Chicago, US

'A lucid, wide-ranging and fascinating discussion of how 'civilization' has given rise to ideals of peace and progress and is - perhaps inescapably - prone to technologically-advanced, destructive warfare.'

- Andrew Linklater, Aberystwyth University, UK

'Following his award-winning The Empire of Civilization, Brett Bowden's Civilization and War is a much-needed corrective to Kantian hopes for cosmopolitan governance. Short as it may be, this is an eminently readable book that rightfully poses uncomfortable questions with regard to the inextricable link between 'civilization' and 'barbarism.' It is also a reminder, however, to political realists to take the ethical questions of armed conflict more seriously. Such violence is overcome less by normative moral frameworks than by the actual practices of migration and cooperation as much as by exchanges of goods and ideas.'

- Christian Emden, Rice University, US

Civilization and war were born around the same time in roughly the same place they have effectively grown up together. This challenges the belief that the more civilized we become, the less likely the resort to war in order to resolve differences and disputes. The related assumption that civilized societies are more likely to abide by the rules of war is also in dispute. Where does terrorism fit into debates about civilized and savage war? What are we to make of talk about an impending 'clash of civilizations'? In a succinct yet wide ranging survey of history and of ideas that calls in to question a number of conventional wisdoms,

Civilization and War explores these issues and more whilst outlining the two-way relationship between civilization and war.

Providing an alternative perspective to conventional thinking, this book will appeal to a wide interdisciplinary audience across all regions of the globe. The material is both original and highly topical and is written in a sharp, snappy style that makes it accessible to a wide readership, including upper-level undergraduates, postgraduates, academic specialists and informed general readers. *Civilization and War* makes important contributions to the fields of international relations, peace and conflict studies, political theory and the history of ideas, and will be of interest to people with a curiosity about world history and current affairs.

Contents: Preface 1. Introduction 2. Civilization and Peace 3. Civilization and War 4. Civilization and Savagery 5. Civilization, War, and Terror 6. Us and Them at War 7. Civilizations at War? Bibliography Index

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Editorial Review

Review

'This book may well suit every reader. It covers a very broad topic by taking a closer look at the relationship between civilization and war. Brett Bowden offers in fewer than 210 pages much of what one needs to reflect on the largely neglected relationship between civilization and war. As is the case with any good book, this one raises more questions than answers and offers through numerous chapter notes and its bibliography the opportunity for readers to explore further the many topics addressed. The writing style makes it possible to reach an audience broader than just academic. Although the book is physically small in size, the creation of a single synthesis of ideas makes it worthwhile for anyone who wishes to approach, with the critical distance required, the important issues of the relationship between civilization and war.' -- Bruno Andre Giraudon, Journal of Conflict Management 'Bowden raises many salient points in his book. War in all its fury certainly remains a persistent feature of human relations. The amounts of money societies devote to war preparation demonstrate the high priority placed on violent activity. Certainly, the ongoing violence in Iraq, Syria, and Nigeria show the persistence of war despite international efforts to contain such conflicts. Bowden's observations clearly remain poignant for today's world.' -- The Historian 'Civilization and War is an exceptionally erudite and timely meditation on the close relationship between civilization, progress and war in modern political thought and policy from the Enlightenment to the war on terror. It is a fitting complement to Dr. Bowden's path-breaking study, The Empire of Civilization (2009).' -- James Tully, University of Victoria, Canada 'Civilization and War addresses a concern of all thinking persons in elegant language with erudition to match. Bowden's readers will profit by stretching their minds, learn much to mull over and discuss with their friends.' -- William H. McNeill, University of Chicago, US 'A lucid, wide-ranging and fascinating discussion of how "civilization" has given rise to ideals of peace and progress and is - perhaps inescapably - prone to technologically-advanced, destructive warfare.' -- Andrew Linklater, Aberystwyth University, UK 'Bowden clearly identifies the constellation of concepts that coalesce around civilization and war... The paradox of civilization and war at the heart of this book is not a new discovery, but it is an important one. Simply stated, it notes that as civilization has grown so has war-making such that these two go and grow together. The paradoxical nature of this relationship, of growing civilization leading to an increase in militarization and conflicts, is a sharp contrast to the rhetoric of peace that emerges from liberal democratic states. Identifying this contrast is important, and Bowden does this very well.' -- Mark Erickson, European Journal of Cultural and Political Sociology 'Following his award-winning The Empire of Civilization, Brett Bowden's Civilization and War is a much-needed corrective to Kantian hopes for cosmopolitan governance. Short as it may be, this is an eminently readable book that rightfully poses uncomfortable questions with regard to the inextricable link between "civilization" and "barbarism." It is also a reminder, however, to political realists to take the ethical questions of armed conflict more seriously. Such violence is overcome less by normative moral frameworks than by the actual practices of migration and cooperation as much as by exchanges of goods and ideas.' -- Christian Emden, Rice University, US

About the Author

Brett Bowden, Associate Professor of History and Political Thought, University of Western Sydney, Visiting Fellow, The Australian National University and University of New South Wales at the Australian Defence Force Academy

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