Peter Katzenstein Book Prize

The Katzenstein Prize, in honor of Peter J. Katzenstein, the Walter S. Carpenter, Jr. Professor of International Studies at Cornell University, recognizes an outstanding first book in International Relations, Comparative Politics, or Political Economy. The prize was established on the occasion of Professor Katzenstein’s 40th Year at Cornell University and has been made possible by the generous support of his colleagues, collaborators, and former students.

The selection committee for the prize changes from year to year, but general questions may be addressed to Jonathan Kirshner jdk5@cornell.edu or Matthew Evangelista mae10@cornell.edu. Nominations and copies of the books themselves should go to the selection committee, when it is announced on this website or elsewhere. In fact, sending the book constitutes the nomination. There is no formal letter required.

Winners


2015
Awarded to Paul Staniland for his *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse* (Cornell, 2014).

In *Networks of Rebellion*, Paul Staniland has produced a theoretically elegant and empirically rich study of the local politics of insurgency. Staniland convincingly argues that to understand insurgency we must first understand the insurgents and their political networks—how they are organized, why they sometimes flourish, and why at other moments they founder. The influence of *Networks of Rebellion* is likely to be immense. Staniland’s scholarship contributes to understanding the national and international politics of insurgency, civil war, and conflict resolution, seamlessly crossing into the fields of comparative politics, international relations, and security studies. The findings of this excellent book should also shape how policymakers think about and respond to insurgencies. In addition to Staniland’s impressive field and historical research, *Networks of Rebellion* demonstrates how the scholarly literature on networks and social ties has much to contribute to our understanding of contemporary patterns of violence in South and Southeast Asia as well as around the world. Informed by Staniland’s interpretation of the organizational dynamics of insurgent groups, *Networks of Rebellion* is an outstanding book that is most deserving of the Katzenstein prize.

*Back to the top*

This impressive book draws on a sophisticated research design, wide-ranging theorizing, and rigorous and creative empirical methods to offer the novel and powerful argument that international models matter in policy choice. Linos brings together her interests in both political science and international law to study the mechanisms by which democracies adopt health care, family and labor law models from abroad. Her motivating puzzle is the question of why rich democracies, which have strong domestic policy-building capacities, would need to borrow models from abroad. She argues that even they find “international benchmarking” useful. The theoretical framework draws widely from literature on diffusion and on domestic and comparative social policymaking, and the analysis focuses on the role played by the authoritativeness of models promoted by international organizations and by prominent rich states. The study employs cross-country regression models and qualitative analysis to estimate the impact of domestic and international factors on policy choice. It draws on three types of empirical evidence: experimental public opinion data, cross-national regressions over eighteen democracies over several decades, and qualitative case studies comparing early and late adopters. Challenging technocratic arguments about policy diffusion, Linos argues that ordinary voters’ uncertainties and politicians’ reelection concerns are critical to policy diffusion; international models can help politicians rally voter support behind proposed reforms. The extensive and innovative research highlights the interactions between the domestic and international realms and applies rigorous social science methods to tell us something new and important about international law.

Back to the top

In a strong field of excellent first books, *The Politics of Nation-Building* by Harris Mylonas distinguishes itself on several dimensions. It addresses an important question at the intersection of international and comparative politics by productively combining insights from theories of Comparative Politics and International Relations and by reformulating key concepts in the study of nation-building. Mylonas argues that certain elements of the international system predispose nation-building élites towards particular strategies: accommodation, assimilation, or exclusion. These elements include their country’s relationship with other states – whether allies or enemies – and whether foreign states support the non-core groups in the nation-building state. Mylonas also incorporates in his geostrategic analysis whether the nation-building state itself pursues status-quo or revisionist goals, particularly in regard to its territorial ambitions. Mylonas fashions creative hypotheses linking these elements and tests them on a body of rich empirical material; his analysis is sophisticated, subtle, and insightful.

*Back to the top*