

# Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics

## Civil War Termination

Caroline A. Hartzell

Subject: Contentious Politics and Political Violence, Groups and Identities, Political Sociology,

Qualitative Political Methodology, Quantitative Political Methodology, World Politics

Online Publication Date: Oct 2016 DOI: 10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.31

### Summary and Keywords

Civil wars typically have been terminated by a variety of means, including military victories, negotiated settlements and ceasefires, and “draws.” Three very different historical trends in the means by which civil wars have ended can be identified for the post-World War II period. A number of explanations have been developed to account for those trends, some of which focus on international factors and others on national or actor-level variables. Efforts to explain why civil wars end as they do are considered important because one of the most contested issues among political scientists who study civil wars is how “best” to end a civil war if the goal is to achieve a stable peace. Several factors have contributed to this debate, among them conflicting results produced by various studies on this topic as well as different understandings of the concepts war termination, civil war resolution, peace-building, and stable peace.

Keywords: bargaining model, war outcomes, bargaining failures, military victory, negotiated settlement, truce, duration of peace, quality of peace

---

### Introduction

Research on the topic of civil war termination has been growing in recent years. Interest in the subject appears to be driven by a number of factors. One is a marked surge in the termination of intrastate conflicts that took place following the end of the Cold War. This development constitutes an interesting puzzle because certain features of civil wars are said to make it particularly difficult to end this type of conflict. Also noteworthy are shifts in the means by which civil wars have been terminated, a development that has fueled a debate among scholars regarding the “best” means of ending a civil war. Finally, the creation of new and improved data sets on civil war termination has facilitated efforts to study how civil wars end as well as the implications that civil war outcomes have for the subsequent peace.

The state of current knowledge as well as central puzzles and debates that have arisen in the study of civil war termination are addressed. Key concepts are overviewed, and the bargaining model of war is outlined, noting how it has shaped research on the topic of civil war termination. Historical trends in the means by which civil wars have been ended are identified, highlighting a number of explanations that have been developed to account for those trends. The debate regarding the different means by which civil wars have ended and the implications this has been argued to have for the peace are explored. New developments in the study of civil war termination and some directions for future research on civil war termination are presented.

## Key Concepts

An intrastate conflict is classified here as a civil war if it meets the criteria employed by Small and Singer (1982) in the Correlates of War project: the conflict produces at least 1,000 battle deaths per year; the central government is a party to the conflict; there was effective resistance on the part of both the national government and its opponents during the course of the conflict; and the conflict occurred within a defined political unit. Although this means of conceptualizing civil war bears some similarities to the definition of “armed conflict” employed by another conflict data project, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), an important distinction is the low fatality threshold—25 battle-related deaths in a calendar year—used by the latter.<sup>1</sup>

A civil war is considered here to have ended when two conditions are met: First, the parties involved in a civil war reach some kind of war-ending agreement or settlement that “specifies] who gets what and when” (Werner & Yuen, 2005, p. 262). Civil war settlements can be dictated by a victor or can be arrived at through a process of negotiation on the part of the adversaries. This criterion, it should be noted, means that conflicts that end with the voluntary withdrawal of an adversary from the conflict or with a gradual diminution in the number of battle deaths until the civil war eventually peters out are not classified as having formally terminated. While a focus on settlements as a defining feature of war termination is in keeping with other scholars’ work on this topic (see, e.g., Werner, 1999; Werner & Yuen, 2005), a number of scholars also have used war outcomes, or the means by which a conflict was ended—that is, victory, negotiated settlement, ceasefire or truce—as a means of identifying the termination of a civil war episode.

The second condition that must hold in order for a civil war to be considered to have ended is that the fighting between the warring sides must come to a stop. The representatives of opposing sides in a civil war may agree to a settlement, with the terms

specified in a treaty of surrender, a peace agreement, or some other mechanism. However, unless the fighting stops following the settlement, a civil war cannot be considered to have terminated. As long as former adversaries do not reinitiate armed conflict, a civil war remains terminated. This is true even if the terms of the war-ending settlement eventually change. Some intrastate wars, such as the one fought in Costa Rica in 1948, have not, to this date, seen armed conflict break out again. Other conflicts, such as the civil war that began in Angola in 1975, have been terminated only to start and end several more times.

## Civil War Termination through the Lens of the Bargaining Model of War

The bargaining model of war has dominated the study of war since the late 20th century. This model holds that war is one in a set of tools that rational actors may resort to in an effort to get what they want. In a world in which parties disagree over the allocation of a good, a resource, or a policy, they can be expected to resort to bargaining in order to resolve the conflict (Reiter, 2003). Because war is costly, parties should be motivated to reach a bargain without resorting to the use of armed conflict. The fact that adversaries sometimes fail to do so has been attributed to the influence of factors or mechanisms that produce bargaining failures. These factors include asymmetric information on the parties' parts regarding the potential benefits and costs of a war, an inability on the part of the parties credibly to commit to stick to the terms of a bargain, and goods or resources that are not divisible and thus make it impossible to reach a mutually beneficial bargain (Fearon, 1995).

According to the bargaining model of war, if war occurs because actors were unable to agree on which party should make concessions and what the nature of those concessions should be, fighting should provide the parties to a conflict with information that subsequently allows them to agree on the terms of a bargain. By revealing adversaries' relative capabilities, fighting helps produce convergent beliefs on the belligerents' parts regarding the consequences of continued combat. With uncertainty reduced as a result of fighting, warring opponents should be able to agree on a set of concessions or terms regarding a division of benefits or resources that all sides prefer to continuing the war (Reiter, 2003; Werner & Yuen, 2005).

Although the bargaining model of war initially was employed for the study of interstate war, researchers interested in understanding the onset, duration, and termination of civil wars have adopted it as well. Civil war scholars' use of the bargaining model of war

arguably has produced far-reaching effects for the manner in which we have come to understand civil war and its termination. Whereas scholars and pundits once posited that it was the primordial hatred of groups for one another that caused civil wars and impeded ending them, analysts now conceive of adversaries as rational, utility-maximizing actors who initiate armed conflicts because of bargaining failures and, concomitantly, should be able to stop fighting once the sources of those failures are addressed.<sup>2</sup>

The adoption of the bargaining model of war has shaped the research agenda on civil war termination in notable ways. One of these has been to focus attention on the factors that, in the context of civil wars, make it difficult for adversaries to reach a war-ending agreement. Barbara Walter's work on the difficulty rebel groups face in making a credible commitment to stop fighting is an early example of this type of analysis. As Walter observes, because non-state actors must continue to coexist with their adversaries within the confines of the nation-state, they fear that, once they surrender their arms, they will have little ability to protect themselves should the government choose to use its security forces to punish or vanquish them (1997). Focusing on problems posed by information asymmetries, Cunningham (2006) notes that civil wars are often characterized by multiple "veto players" or groups that have the capacity to continue a war on their own even when other groups sign on to a peace agreement. The larger the number of veto players involved in a conflict, he finds, the more difficult it becomes to end the civil war. Scholars have also dedicated considerable effort to identifying means of overcoming obstacles to agreements. These include, among others, actions by mediators to mitigate information asymmetries (Kydd, 2003; Rauchhaus, 2006), the presence of third-party enforcers and peacekeeping forces to bolster the credibility of commitments (Walter, 2002; Fortna, 2008), and the use of power-sharing measures as a means of communicating the credibility of actors' commitment to a bargain (Hartzell & Hoddie, 2007).

As useful as the bargaining model of war has been for framing and advancing research on civil war termination, there have also been drawbacks or limitations associated with its use. One potentially limiting aspect of the model is that by focusing attention on the bargains associated with choices to go to war or to end war, it tends to emphasize the roles that elite actors play in these processes. Although elite interests clearly matter, as Wood's (2000) detailed examination of the processes of civil war termination in El Salvador and South Africa makes clear, mass actors can play an important role in transforming elite interests in a manner that shapes the prospects for and means of ending intrastate conflict. To ignore that possibility is, as Autesserre (2010) emphasizes, to risk missing the ways in which "micro-level agendas could affect the macro-level settlements" (p. 45).<sup>3</sup>

A second potential problem with the use of the model is that it may be leading scholars to neglect some features that are unique to, or at least characteristic of, civil wars that could have an effect on conflict termination processes. To give but one example, because

the bargaining model of war initially was devised for the study of interstate war, scholars are accustomed to framing their analyses based on the idea of two (or more) actors engaged in a long-term competition for goods or resources. As Hartzell (2009) and Cunningham (n.d.) have shown, though, non-state actors have, in some cases, chosen to dismantle their organizations at the end of a war, a development the bargaining model of war is unable to account for and whose consequences for war-ending bargains have yet to be explored.

The bargaining model of war may also be limited in its ability to help account for a significant percentage of civil war outcomes, that is, those that stutter to a stop for a while or that see a marked decline in conflict levels only to start back up again (Kreutz, 2014). In many of these cases, the fighting comes to a halt, at least for some period of time, without any bargains of the nature emphasized by the bargaining model apparently having been struck by the parties to the conflict. Rather than constituting cases of war termination, these may well be examples of what Staniland (2012) refers to as “wartime political orders.” Drawing on examples from contemporary South Asia, Staniland (2012) notes that states and insurgents can develop sustained relationships that range from “collusion and shared sovereignty to spheres of influence and tacit coexistence to clashing monopolies and guerrilla disorder” (p. 244). By relaxing the bargaining model’s assumption that states and insurgents seek to monopolize power and resources and instead assuming that they seek to optimize authority, Staniland’s work highlights a potential weakness in the bargaining model’s explanation for why and how we should expect to see civil wars end.

## Trends in the Termination of Civil Wars

One of the factors that has fueled interest in the study of civil war termination is that there exist discernible patterns in the timing of and means by which civil wars have ended. Scholars have devoted a good deal of effort to identifying these patterns as well as attempting to account for the factors that are responsible for them. Analyses of these trends even have become institutionalized as governments, international agencies, and non-governmental organizations increasingly have come to rely on this type of information for purposes of policy planning and operations.<sup>4</sup>

Table 1 shows the distribution over time of episodes of civil war termination for the period 1945–2006. During that time, 128 episodes of civil war were terminated. Although the peace did not always hold following the end of these conflicts, each of these episodes

meets the criteria for civil war terminations outlined previously and can thus be considered a discrete case of war ending.

One of the interesting patterns to emerge from Table 1 is the significant spike in the number of intrastate conflicts that came to an end following the end of the Cold War. Sixty-one civil war terminations, or just under half of the total, occurred between 1946 and 1990. Most of those war terminations were distributed fairly evenly across that period, although the 1970s saw the number of war terminations double in comparison to the previous decade before dropping again during the 1980s. Turning to the post-Cold War period, we see that 49 war terminations, or a little more than one-third of the total number, occurred during the 1990s alone. Add to that the 18 civil wars that ended during the first seven years of the 21st century, and it is the case that fully more than half of all civil war terminations since the end of World War II occurred following the end of the Cold War.

Table 1. Trends in the termination of civil wars, 1945–2006.

<b>Decade</b>	<b>1945-1949</b>	<b>1950s</b>	<b>1960s</b>	<b>1970s</b>	<b>1980s</b>	<b>1990s</b>	<b>2000-2006</b>
<b>Means by which war ended</b>							
Military victory	6	9	8	14	8	15	2
	(71%)	(82%)	(80%)	(67%)	(67%)	(30.5%)	(11%)
Negotiated settlement	2	2	1	6	2	23	11
	(29%)	(18%)	(10%)	(28%)	(16.5%)	(47%)	(61%)
Truce	0	0	1	1	2	11	5
			(10%)	(5%)	(16.5%)	(22.5%)	(28%)

Source: Table 1 is based on author's data.

The surge in the number of civil war terminations following the end of the Cold War is not the only notable trend where the termination of civil wars is concerned. There have also been some interesting shifts in war outcomes, or the means by which civil wars have ended. As is evident in Table 1, military victory constitutes the most common means by which civil wars have ended during the post-World War II period. Sixty-two civil wars (48%) concluded in this fashion. Negotiated settlements ended 47 civil wars (37%), with representatives of opposing factions meeting to discuss and agree to the terms on which they would co-exist within the boundaries of the state. A truce secured an end to the fighting in 20 civil wars (15%), an outcome that saw adversaries focus on the modalities of stopping the fighting in the short term while delaying an ultimate resolution of the conflict.

During the Cold War, the vast majority of civil wars (72%) ended via military victory. The first decade following the end of the Cold War saw a major shift in civil war outcomes, with 47% of the conflicts concluded through negotiated settlements, 31% ending in a military victory, and 22% ending in truces. This trend in civil war outcomes became even more pronounced in the following seven years, with 61% of intrastate conflicts ending in a negotiated settlement, 28% in truces, and only 11% in military victories.

When viewing these patterns together, it becomes clear that the sharp uptick in the number of civil war terminations following the end of the Cold War has been driven by the increased use of negotiated settlements as a means of ending civil wars. Taking note of this, a number of scholars have sought to explain how a change at the level of the international system may have induced adversaries to end civil wars via negotiations. These explanations can be divided into two general categories. One focuses on changes in the type or level of support with which the superpowers had provided civil war adversaries during the Cold War. The other explanation focuses on increased levels of support by third-party actors for peace processes and settlements in the post-Civil War period.

The thinking behind the first of these sets of explanations can be summarized by Fearon and Laitin's observation (2008) that "more often than not, civil wars either become or may even begin as the object of other states' foreign policies" (p. 20). During the Cold War period, the superpowers provided funding and arms for "proxy" wars in countries ranging from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. With the end of the superpower conflict, foreign support for the government, non-state actors, or both sides of a civil war dried up. In a number of instances (e.g., Mozambique), this appears to have inclined civil war adversaries to seek to end a conflict via negotiation. In other cases, however, declining support by a superpower facilitated a victory by one side in a conflict (e.g., Eritrea in its war of secession from Ethiopia). The reduction in levels of foreign support for civil war

belligerents thus seems to provide a reasonable explanation for one of the trends noted previously, the surge in civil war terminations that followed the end of the Cold War.

Declining levels of superpower support, argue Kalyvas and Balcells (2010), produced a shift in the technologies of rebellion used in civil war. Whereas aid by the superpowers at one time enabled militarily weaker rebel groups to challenge governments using guerrilla warfare, diminished support by the major powers meant that those types of conflicts could no longer be sustained. Guerrilla or irregular civil wars, which had once favored victories by incumbent government forces, were now displaced by conventional civil wars fought by heavily armed opponents and symmetric nonconventional conflicts matching adversaries with low levels of military technology. It is this latter type of conflict in particular, find Balcells and Kalyvas (2014), that is most likely to end in a stalemate and thus, according to them, a negotiated agreement to end the war. Changes in the outcomes of civil conflicts are thus, according to this explanation, a “function of the relative military capacity of the rival sides” (2014, p. 19).

Although changes in military technology linked to declining superpower support may have led to more civil war stalemates, it is not clear why this would necessarily result in a spike in negotiated settlements as a war outcome. As Fortna (2009) astutely observes, unless the credible commitment problem is addressed (something that changes in relative military capacity arguably do not succeed in doing), adversaries can be expected to continue fighting. While stalemates may lay the groundwork for a settlement, they must, argues Fortna (2009), be combined with “mechanisms that allow parties credibly to commit to maintaining peace,” thus making it “easier for them to stop the war at a draw, rather than fight[ing] on to the finish” (p. 12).

As was noted previously, one mechanism that has been identified as playing a role in helping adversaries make a credible commitment to maintain the peace is peacekeeping missions. Whether deployed by the United Nations (UN), the Organization of American States, or other groups of states, peacekeeping forces can help to guarantee the safety of all parties to a conflict. Believing that their security concerns will be addressed, civil war adversaries should be more willing to negotiate a settlement to a conflict as well as credibly commit to stick to the peace. Interestingly enough, it was precisely with the end of the Cold War that international peacekeeping forces became widely deployed (Fortna, 2008). Once the superpowers no longer sought to block the UN and other actors from becoming involved in efforts to help manage conflict, civil war rivals contemplating an end to a war became aware that there was a good chance that peacekeeping troops would be sent to their country if a settlement was reached. This knowledge is thought to help explain the greater willingness of adversaries to negotiate an end to conflicts in the years following the end of the Cold War.

Another factor that may have played a role in getting civil war antagonists to the bargaining table and helped them to negotiate a settlement is mediation. Mediators facilitate communication between the parties to a conflict, increase the flow of trustworthy information, encourage rivals to engage in the use of confidence-building measures, and attempt directly to influence the parties' beliefs (Kydd, 2006; Mason & Siegfried, 2013). To the extent that mediators facilitate the exchange of information, they can help adversaries to strike a bargain that secures the peace. Additionally, mediators' efforts are thought to help foster trust between rivals, thereby enhancing former combatants' commitment to the bargains they strike (Kydd, 2003; Savun, 2008). Because mediation activity, like peacekeeping, saw a quantum leap following the end of the Cold War in terms of the number of actors involved and the resources that were committed to attempting to end civil wars through diplomatic channels, this too is thought to help account for the surge in negotiated settlements of civil wars.

It is possible that yet another shift in the means by which civil wars are terminated may be on the horizon. In a recent paper, Söderberg Kovacs and Svensson suggest that we may be witnessing a return to military victories as a means of ending intrastate conflicts (2013). Describing what they characterize as a growing trend of "militancy" in ending armed conflicts, they observe that there has been a sharp decline in negotiated agreements since 2009. Although not enough time has transpired to confirm definitively that military victory has again emerged as the dominant means of ending civil wars, there is reason to believe that Söderberg Kovacs and Svensson may have identified a new turning point in civil war terminations. Some developments, such as the (re)emergence of major power rivalry between the United States and Russia, may be serving to encourage or enable some of the parties to conflicts to fight to a finish. Other factors may have lessened, at least for a while, the degree of support for efforts to end civil wars through negotiations. Notable among these is a sense of disenchantment on the part of the international community with the results of some of the negotiated settlements signed in the post-Cold War period as well as fluctuating levels of funding for negotiation processes and peacekeeping missions in the wake of the global economic crisis.

## **Debating the “Best” Way to End a Civil War**

Identifying trends in civil war termination is more than just a matter of academic interest. If, as some scholars claim, civil war outcomes have an impact on the durability of the peace, changes in the dominant mode of civil war outcome could have an effect on the number of civil wars that are ongoing in the international system as well as on the likelihood that some countries will experience recurring civil wars. In fact, it was concern

regarding the number of civil wars that were exhibiting a pattern of recurrence that gave rise, in the late 20th century, to the beginning of a debate among academics regarding the “best” way to end a civil war if the goal was to ensure that fighting did not break out again.

The debate regarding the best means of ending a civil war is rooted in propositions advanced by the bargaining model of war. The model suggests that once a war-ending settlement is reached, peace will last as long as the formerly warring groups remain committed to the bargain that they have reached (Fearon, 1995, 1998; Reiter, 2003). Parties should stick to their bargains, and the peace should prove stable, as long as the adversaries have similar expectations regarding the outcome of a future hypothetical civil war between the relevant sides. If any of the parties’ expectations change, however, a settlement is not likely to stick and the probability that war will break out again increases (Wagner, 1993; Werner, 1999; Werner & Yuen, 2005).

As this explanation for the renewed outbreak of civil war makes clear, the challenge inherent in establishing a durable peace is “how best to reduce uncertainty and stabilize expectations among the parties to a settlement” (Hartzell, 2009, p. 349). Two different positions exist regarding the best way to accomplish this. The first, which until recently was the dominant view on this issue, maintains that civil wars that end in a military victory will experience the most durable peace (Wagner, 1993; Licklider, 1995; Walter, 1997; Luttwak, 1999). Scholars in this camp argue that civil war adversaries’ expectations regarding any future deal that they may be able to secure for themselves will be least likely to change in those instances in which a victor is able to demonstrate its superior power. The winning faction in a civil war is thought to accomplish this by destroying or dismantling the organizational structures of the adversaries it defeats, thus making it impossible for the losers to engage in future armed challenges. A military victory is also posited to leave the defeated party with little doubt regarding the outcome of any potential future military encounters. Rather than believing that they can gain a better deal for themselves by resorting to war again, rivals who have been militarily defeated in a civil war are deemed to be more likely to stick to the bargain that ended the war.

A second school of thought takes issue with the position that military victories are the only viable means of ensuring that civil war does not recur. Representatives of this school of thought posit that rivals can *negotiate* a war-ending settlement that stabilizes expectations and reduces uncertainty, thereby producing a durable peace. Scholars who advance this argument emphasize that it is the content of the bargain that is reached at the end of a civil war that really matters. Put another way, the terms of settlements and the effects these have on warring actors’ expectations for the future are singled out as being more important than the outcome of a civil war—that is, whether it ends in a military victory or a negotiated agreement. Although outcomes may affect the shape a

bargain takes, other factors—for example, third-party actors—can as well. Civil war settlements can thus be expected to differ considerably in terms of “who gets what and when.”

Scholars who contend that settlements produced via a negotiated end to a conflict can generate a durable peace have identified a number of agreement characteristics that they posit auger well for the peace. In a nutshell, settlements that distribute state power among adversaries, that make provisions for the groups’ security, and that increase the costs of a return to armed conflict help to provide rival groups with a stake in the peace and ensure that they remain committed to the bargain they have struck (Hartzell, 1999; Hartzell & Hoddie, 2007; Mattes & Savun, 2009). Of interest is the fact that war-ending bargains with some of the features listed previously are not unique to settlements that have been reached via negotiations; measures of this nature are characteristic of some settlements of civil wars that ended in a military victory (Mukherjee, 2006).

A number of scholars have conducted empirical tests of the two sides of the debate just outlined. Distinguishing between military victories and negotiated agreements, Licklider (1995) found that the latter means of ending a war was the one most likely to see parties return to armed conflict, a result he attributed to the winning side’s ability to vanquish the adversaries’ fighting forces. Work by DeRouen and Bercovitch (2008) on the duration of peace following civil war also provides support for this claim. Doyle and Sambanis (2006), on the other hand, conclude that negotiated agreements produce a durable peace while military victories have no discernible impact on the peace. Walter (2004) finds that neither type of war outcome has a significant effect on peace duration. A study by Fortna (2008) indicates that both military victories and negotiated settlements can produce a durable peace. Other researchers, arguing that the identity of the military victor has an impact on the stability of the peace, have distinguished between wars that end in a government victory, a victory by rebel forces, and a negotiated agreement. The results of these tests also have proved mixed, providing support for scholars who posit that rebel victories are more likely to produce a durable peace (Quinn, Mason, & Gurses, 2007; Toft, 2010; Mason, Gurses, Brandt, & Quinn, 2011) as well as for those who hypothesize that it is government victories that generate that outcome (Kreutz, 2010).

As the results of the studies noted make clear, neither side of the debate regarding the best way to end civil wars has as yet emerged a clear winner. Some of the differences in the studies’ findings most likely stem from varying definitions of intrastate conflicts as well as the use of alternative model specifications and methodologies. However, a more important point that can be made is that none of the studies cited really tests the argument advanced by the bargaining model of war regarding the stability of war-ending bargains. There are two reasons to make this claim. First, it is not clear that war

outcomes, the explanatory variable used in the studies noted, is a reasonable proxy for the terms of settlements. The means by which a civil war ends may shape the nature of a war-ending bargain but it is not likely to be the only factor that does so. This implies that there may be real differences between war outcomes and war-ending bargains.

Second, it is not clear that the causal mechanisms associated with the different types of civil war outcomes actually function as the two sides of the debate outlined here have claimed they do. Scholars have assumed that military victories result in the destruction of the losing factions' organizational structures while negotiated agreements preserve them. However, none of the studies mentioned have sought to test that proposition, thus making it difficult to conclude what effect the fate of factions has on the duration of the peace.<sup>5</sup> Nor do the studies cited consider whether provisions for distributing power among adversaries, which are typically associated with negotiated agreements, were included as part of the bargain following a military victory. This means that even in those instances in which studies find an association between military victory or negotiated agreements and the duration of the peace, we cannot be certain why the outcome has the effect that it does on the longevity of the peace. Civil war outcomes may have an impact on the peace, but it is not clear that we know yet exactly how and why that is the case.

## **Developments in the Study of Civil War Termination**

Research on civil war termination has burgeoned in the past decade. Driven by the creation of new and improved data sets and the application of a variety of econometric techniques, scholars continue to seek to identify the conditions under which intrastate conflicts are most likely to end. In addition, there is now growing attention to the impact that factors related to war termination processes are likely to have on the nature of the subsequent peace. The influence of the bargaining model of war continues to be seen in scholars' quest to understand the incentives that actors have for initiating, and then terminating, a civil war. New trends in the study of civil war termination have also become evident, as researchers have begun to focus on conflict dynamics at the subnational level and the micro-level foundations of conflict.

Perhaps one of the most important developments in the study of civil war termination in the last few years has been the creation of data sets that better allow scholars to test some of the theoretical propositions that have been elaborated over the years. At the heart of the bargaining theory of war are dyadic interactions between a state and one or more rebel groups. A number of the data sets that have been employed to test hypotheses

in keeping with this perspective are structured on a country-year basis with indicators consisting of national attributes (e.g., the size of the national army) and conflict characteristics (e.g., the issue at stake in the war). Constructed as they are for the purpose of examining interactions between states, data sets of this nature are less useful for assessing the types of interactions between state and non-state actors that are at the heart of the bargaining theory of civil war. The advent of dyadic data sets like the Uppsala Conflict Data Project Dyadic Dataset (Harbom, Melander, & Wallensteen, 2008) and the Non-State Actors in Armed Conflict Dataset (Cunningham, Gleditsch, & Salehyan, 2013) that contain indicators focusing on various attributes of governments and armed challengers means that scholars now truly can examine the effects that state-rebel group characteristics and interactions have on civil war termination.

A number of new data sets now also provide scholars with information regarding the terms of the bargains state and non-state actors have agreed to when ending civil wars. The Transitional Justice Peace Agreement Database (Bell & O'Rourke, 2009), for example, contains information on a number of features of peace agreements signed since 1990, including judicial reforms and amnesty provisions. The Peace Accords Matrix (Joshi & Darby, 2013) provides data on 51 types of provisions for 34 comprehensive peace agreements that were negotiated between 1989 and 2012, noting as well whether or not the provisions were implemented in subsequent years. The Power-Sharing Event Dataset (Ottmann & Vüllers, 2015), which encompasses all peace agreements signed during the years between 1989 and 2006, tracks whether or not agreements struck by government-rebel dyads to share political, military, territorial, and economic dimensions of power are implemented during a five-year period following the end of the war. Although many of these data sets are relatively new, they hold promise as a means of testing propositions regarding the role the terms of settlements play in the civil war termination process.

The growth of micro-level analyses of civil war also has led to the creation of new data sets. The micro-level approach focuses on the individual or subnational levels of analysis as a means of testing the claims that appear in the bargaining literature on war. Survey data collected at the household or individual level in conflict-affected countries have been used to test hypotheses regarding the behavior of individuals. Although works that rely on this type of data have produced important insights regarding the factors that motivate individuals to engage in conflict (and which thus must presumably be addressed if they are to be persuaded not to take up arms again), research of this nature does suffer from a problem of limited external validity. Analyses focusing on conflict at the subnational level have sought to account for the spatial and temporal nature of violence—that is, the fact that violence often ebbs and flows over the course of a conflict and that it manifests itself in certain parts of the country, and not others. Because many of these studies have relied on data collected at the subnational level within a single country, issues of limited

external validity also apply. Scholars are now beginning to address this issue, however, by developing large-scale geo-referenced events-level conflict data sets that can be used to test micro-level theories of civil war.<sup>6</sup>

## Conclusion: Potential New Directions for Research on Civil War Termination

An attempt has been made to provide a roadmap for those interested in understanding the research program on civil war termination that has developed since the late 20th century. The analysis provided should by no means be considered exhaustive. There are a number of issues, ranging from natural resources to ethnic representation at the political center, and more, whose implications for conflict onset and termination scholars have explored that are not discussed. Those topics, which constitute potential elements of war-ending bargains, have been put aside in favor of examining the historical developments, puzzles, and debates that have driven research on civil war termination.

The research program on civil war termination has evolved since the 1990s and shows every indication of continuing to do so in the future. One topic that recently has been gaining traction with scholars is the relationship between civil war termination and the quality of the peace. Whereas researchers once were almost exclusively interested in the effects civil war termination had on the duration of the peace, there is now growing interest in learning more about whether and how war termination processes might be shaping the post-conflict landscape. Accordingly, scholars have begun to investigate the linkages between civil war termination and human rights (Bell, 2008; Hoddie, N.D.), post-conflict economic growth rates (Flores & Nooruddin, 2009), governance (Cammett & Malesky, 2012), and democracy (Hartzell & Hoddie, 2015), among other outcomes. This line of inquiry is one that is ripe for further research given the likelihood that there is a relationship between the quality of the peace and its duration in post-conflict states.

Scholars have now identified a number of mechanisms related to civil war settlements that they claim help to shape the potential for peace. These include, for example, the potential that some power-sharing measures have to bolster actors' sense of security in the post-conflict environment (Hartzell & Hoddie, 2007) or to improve citizens' perceptions of governance (Cammett & Malesky, 2012). Although tests employing panel data have provided support for the peace-enhancing effects of power-sharing arrangements, we do not know whether this is because they function as has been hypothesized. This is one area in which micro-level investigations that survey individuals to find out whether and how the terms of settlements have an effect on their lives could help to make an

important contribution to our understanding of civil war termination. A related question of interest would be to learn how information regarding the terms of settlements is transmitted to actors. How much knowledge do different actors have of the terms of settlements? Who controls the flow of information regarding the terms to which the parties have agreed? Does the transmission of information affect actors' commitment to the peace? As these questions suggest, although civil war termination has been the subject of study for many years now, there is a great deal more we can learn about how and why wars end and what that implies for the future of individuals, communities, states, and perhaps even international relations.

## References

- Autesserre, S. (2010). *The trouble with the Congo: Local violence and the failure of international peacebuilding*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Balcells, L., & Kalyvas, S. N. (2014). Does warfare matter? Severity, duration, and outcomes of civil wars. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 58(8), 1390-1418.
- Bell, C. (2008). *On the law of peace: Peace agreements and the lex pacificatoria*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bell, C., & O'Rourke, C. (2009). **Counting peace agreements: The transitional justice peace agreement database**. Transitional Justice Institute Research Paper No. 09-12. Transitional Justice Institute, Ulster University.
- Cammett, M., & Malesky, E. (2012). Power sharing in postconflict societies: Implications for peace and governance. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 56(6), 982-1016.
- Cunningham, D. E. (2006). Veto players and civil war duration. *American Journal of Political Science*, 50(4), 875-892.
- Cunningham, D. E., Gleditsch, K. S., & Salehyan, I. (2013). Non-state actors in civil wars: A new dataset. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 30(5), 516-531.
- Cunningham, K. G. (n.d.). *Opposition movement cohesion and territorial power sharing*. Unpublished manuscript.
- DeRouen, K., Jr., & Bercovitch, J. (2008). Enduring internal rivalries: A new framework for the study of civil war. *Journal of Peace Research*, 45(1), 43-62.
- Doyle, M. W., & Sambanis, N. (2006). *Making war and building peace: United Nations peace operations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

- Eck, K. (2012). In data we trust? A comparison of UCDP GED and ACLED conflict event datasets. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 47(1), 124–141.
- Fearon, J. D. (1995). Rationalist explanations for war. *International Organization*, 49(3), 379–414.
- Fearon, J. D. (1998). Bargaining, Enforcement, and International Cooperation. *International Organization*, 52(2), 269–306.
- Fearon, J. D., & Laitin, D. D. (2008). **Civil war termination**. Unpublished manuscript.
- Flores, T. E., & Nooruddin, I. (2009). Democracy under the gun: Understanding postconflict economic recovery. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 53(1), 3–29.
- Fortna, V. P. (2008). *Does peacekeeping work? Shaping belligerents' choices after civil war*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Fortna, V. P. (2009). **Where have all the victories gone? Peacekeeping and war outcomes**. Unpublished manuscript.
- Gleditsch, N. P., Wallensteen, P., Eriksson, M., Sollenberg, M., & Strand, H. (2002). Armed conflict 1946–2001: A new dataset. *Journal of Peace Research*, 39(5), 615–637.
- Harbom, L., Melander, E., & Wallensteen N. P. (2008). Dyadic dimensions of armed conflict, 1946–2007. *Journal of Peace Research*, 45(5), 697–710.
- Hartzell, C. A. (1999). Explaining the stability of negotiated settlements to intrastate wars. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 43(1), 3–22.
- Hartzell, C. A. (2009). Settling civil wars: Armed opponents' fates and the duration of the peace. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 26(4), 347–365.
- Hartzell, C. A., & Hoddie, M. (2007). *Crafting peace: Power-sharing institutions and the negotiated settlement of civil wars*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Hartzell, C. A., & Hoddie, M. (2015). The art of the possible: Power sharing and post-civil war democracy. *World Politics*, 67(1), 37–71.
- Hoddie, M. (n.d.). *Power sharing and physical integrity rights in post-civil war states*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Huntington, S. (1993). The clash of civilizations? *Foreign Affairs*, 72(3), 22–49.

- Joshi, M., & Darby, J. (2013). Introducing the peace accords matrix (PAM): A database of comprehensive peace agreements and their implementation, 1989–2007. *Peacebuilding*, 1(2), 256–274.
- Kalyvas, S. (2006). *The logic of violence in civil war*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Kalyvas, S. N., & Balcells, L. (2010). International system and technologies of rebellion: How the end of the cold war shaped internal conflict. *American Political Science Review*, 104(3), 415–429.
- Kaplan, R. D. (1994). The coming anarchy. *Atlantic*, 273(2), 44–77.
- Kreutz, J. (2010). How and when armed conflicts end: Introducing the UCDP conflict termination dataset. *Journal of Peace Research*, 47(2), 243–250.
- Kreutz, J. (2014). How civil wars end (and recur). In E. Newman & K. DeRouen, Jr. (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of civil wars* (pp. 349–363). London: Routledge.
- Kydd, A. (2003). Which side are you on? Bias, credibility, and mediation. *American Journal of Political Science*, 47(4), 597–611.
- Kydd, A. (2006). When can mediators build trust? *American Political Science Review*, 100(3), 449–462.
- Licklider, R. (1995). The consequences of negotiated settlements in civil wars, 1945–1993. *American Political Science Review*, 89(3), 681–690.
- Luttwak, E. N. (1999). Give war a chance. *Foreign Affairs*, 78(4), 36–44.
- Mason, S. J. A., & Siegfried, M. (2013). **Confidence building measures (CBMs) in peace processes**. In *Managing peace processes: Process related questions. A handbook for AU practitioners* (vol. 1, pp. 57–77). African Union and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.
- Mason, T. D., Gurses, M., Brandt, P. T., & Quinn, J. M. (2011). When civil wars recur: Conditions for durable peace after civil wars. *International Studies Perspectives*, 12(2), 171–189.
- Mattes, M., & Savun, B. (2009). Fostering peace after civil war: Commitment problems and agreement design. *International Studies Quarterly*, 53(3), 737–759.

Mukherjee, B. (2006). Why political power-sharing agreements lead to enduring peaceful resolution of some civil wars, but not others? *International Studies Quarterly*, 50(2), 479-504.

Ottmann, M., & Vüllers, J. (2015). The power-sharing event dataset (PSED): A new dataset on the promises and practices of power-sharing in post-conflict countries. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 32(3), 327-350.

Quinn, J. M., Mason, T. D., & Gurses, M. (2007). Sustaining the peace: Determinants of civil war recurrence. *International Interactions*, 33(2), 167-193.

Rauchhaus, R. W. (2006). Asymmetric information, mediation, and conflict management. *World Politics*, 58(2), 207-241.

Reiter, D. (2003). Exploring the bargaining model of war. *Perspectives on Politics*, 1(1), 27-43.

Savun, B. (2008). Information, bias, and mediation success. *International Studies Quarterly*, 52(1), 25-47.

Small, M., & Singer, J. D. (1982). *Resort to arms: International and civil wars, 1816-1980*. Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE.

Söderberg Kovacs, M., & Svensson, I. (2013). **The return of victories? The growing trend of militancy in ending armed conflicts**. Unpublished manuscript.

Staniland, P. (2012). States, insurgents, and wartime political orders. *Perspectives on Politics*, 10(2), 243-264,

Toft, M. D. (2010). *Securing the peace: The durable settlement of civil wars*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

**UCDP/PRIOR Armed conflict dataset codebook**. Version 4-2015.

Wagner, R. H. (1993). The causes of peace. In R. Licklider (Ed.), *Stopping the killing: How civil wars end* (pp. 235-268). New York: New York University Press.

Walter, B. (1997). The critical barrier to civil war settlement. *International Organization*, 51(3), 335-364.

Walter, B. (2002). *Committing to peace: The successful settlement of civil wars*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Walter, B. (2004). Does conflict beget conflict? Explaining recurring civil war. *Journal of Peace Research*, 41(3), 371–388.

Werner, S. (1999). The precarious nature of peace: Resolving the issues, enforcing the settlement, and renegotiating the terms. *American Journal of Political Science*, 43(3), 912–934.

Werner, S., & Yuen, A. (2005). Making and keeping peace. *International Organization*, 59(2), 262–293.

Wood, E. J. (2000). *Forging democracy from below: Insurgent transitions in South Africa and El Salvador*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

## Notes:

(1.) UCDP defines conflict as “A contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths” (*UCDP-PRIOR Armed Conflict Dataset Codebook*, Version 4-2015, p. 1).

(2.) See Huntington (1993) and Kaplan (1994) for examples of works that employ the primordial approach to analyzing civil war.

(3.) See also Kalyvas (2006) for a discussion of the role that the identities, motives, and actions of local and supra-local actors play in civil war.

(4.) See, for example, the *Human Security Report* and *Human Security Brief* series published by the Human Security Report Project.

(5.) Hartzell (2009), who tests this proposition for all civil wars ending between 1945 and 2006, finds that slightly more than 40% of the conflicts that ended in a military victory saw more than one faction preserve its organization identity.

(6.) See Eck (2012) for a discussion of the differences between two such conflict events data sets, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program Georeferenced Events Dataset and the Armed Conflict Location Events Dataset.

**Caroline A. Hartzell**

Political Science Department, Gettysburg College

