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Barbara F. Walter: Committing to Peace

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1. Introduction

 WHY DO SOME CIVIL WARS end peacefully, while others are fought to the finish? Why, for example, did the Sandinistas and Contras in Nicaragua stop their war with a negotiated settlement, while the Sandinistas and the Somoza regime did not? Why were the Sudanese able to end their conflict in 1972 in a settlement, but not the Nigerians? Why did negotiations in Bosnia bring peace, while negotiations in Rwanda brought genocide?

Between 1940 and 1992, only a third of all negotiations to end civil wars resulted in a successfully implemented peace settlement. In most cases, combatants chose to walk away from the negotiating table and return to war. In fact, civil war combatants almost always chose to return to war unless a third party stepped in to enforce or verify a post-treaty transition. If a third party assisted with implementation, negotiations almost always succeeded, regardless of the initial goals, ideology, or ethnicity of the participants. If a third party did not, these talks almost always failed.

This book tries to explain why combatants in some civil war negotiations choose to sign and implement peace settlements, while others choose to return to war. I argue that successful negotiations must do more than resolve the underlying issues over which a civil war has been fought. To end their war in a negotiated settlement, the combatants must clear the much higher hurdle of designing credible guarantees on the terms of the agreement—a task made difficult without outside assistance. The biggest challenge facing civil war opponents at the negotiating table, therefore, is not how to resolve disagreements over land reform, majority rule, or any of the underlying grievances that started the war. These are difficult issues, but they are not the most difficult. The greatest challenge is to design a treaty that convinces the combatants to shed their partisan armies and surrender conquered territory even though such steps will increase their vulnerability and limit their ability to enforce the treaty's other terms. When groups obtain third-party security guarantees for the treacherous demobilization period that follows the signing of an agreement, and obtain power-sharing guarantees in the first postwar government, they will implement their settlement. When groups fail to obtain such guarantees, the warring factions will eventually reject a negotiated settlement and continue their war.

I have four aims in this book. The first is to uncover why so many civil wars fail to end in successfully negotiated settlements and why

third-party enforcement or verification of the post-treaty implementation period is critical for success. The second is to reconceptualize the resolution of civil wars as a three-step process during which combatants must decide whether to (1) initiate negotiations, (2) compromise on goals and principles, and (3) implement the terms of a treaty. By understanding resolution as composed of three distinct stages, I hope to demonstrate that the factors held up in the scholarly literature to explain the settlement of civil wars omit a key problem. Groups who agree to meet at the negotiating table and who manage to resolve their grievances still worry that their enemy will take advantage of them after they sign a peace agreement and begin to demobilize. In the end, it is the implementation phase, long ignored by scholars, that is the most difficult to navigate and the reason so many negotiations fail. My final aim is to collect and analyze the data necessary to test a range of competing explanations in order to draw appropriate lessons.

Before continuing, I should mention what this book does not aim to do. It does not take a stand on whether the United States should have intervened in Rwanda or Bosnia or should intervene in any country seeking a settlement to a civil war. It makes no judgment about the practicality of providing peacekeeping services around the globe, or the ethics of intervening to help stop a civil war.¹ It also does not discuss the difficulties world leaders face obtaining domestic political support for post-treaty interventions.

What it does lay out are the conditions under which peace negotiations succeed, the type of outside intervention that is necessary to get combatants through the difficult implementation period, and the timing during which third-party intervention is most valuable. This book leaves it up to policymakers to decide whether the benefits of peace are worth the money, manpower, and support needed to launch such missions.

The rest of this chapter is divided into five sections. The first presents the empirical puzzle driving the book, namely that combatants frequently choose to return to civil wars even after they have signed comprehensive peace agreements. The second section summarizes the main argument: civil war peace negotiations frequently fail because combatants cannot enforce or credibly commit to treaties that produce enormous uncertainty in the context of a highly dangerous implementation period. The third section reviews other explanations for why civil war

¹ For an analysis of these issues see Lori Fisler Damrosch and David J. Scheffer, *Law and Force in the New International Order* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991); and Laura W. Reed and Carl Kaysen, eds., *Emerging Norms of Justified Intervention* (Cambridge, Mass.: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1993).

negotiations may break down. In the next section I explain the methodology used to test these competing explanations. The final section gives a brief summary of the rest of the book.

The Puzzle

A close examination of all civil war negotiations between 1940 and 1992 shows that getting combatants to the bargaining table and resolving their grievances does not guarantee peace.² As figure 1.1 shows, 62 percent of all negotiations during this period led to a signed bargain.³ Yet as figure 1.2 reveals, almost half of these treaties were never implemented. Contrary to common expectations, combatants do not have the greatest difficulty resolving underlying conflicts of interest and reaching bargains. They have the greatest difficulty implementing the resulting terms. In short, the conditions that encourage groups to initiate negotiations and sign settlements do not appear sufficient to bring peace.

The Argument

An important and frequent reason why civil war negotiations fail is because it is almost impossible for the combatants themselves to arrange credible guarantees on the terms of the settlement. Negotiations frequently do not fail because the conditions on the ground are not “ripe for resolution,” as many have argued. Combatants in most civil wars seek a negotiated settlement at some point during the conflict. Nor do negotiations frequently fail because bargains cannot be struck, as many others have argued. Adversaries often compromise on the basic issues underlying their conflict, and they often find mutually acceptable solutions to their problems. Negotiations fail because combatants cannot credibly promise to abide by terms that create numerous opportunities for exploitation after the treaty is signed and implementation begins. Only if a third party is willing to enforce or verify demobilization, and only if the combatants are willing to extend power-sharing

² Fifty-one percent of all civil wars that started between 1940 and 1992 experienced formal peace negotiations at some point during the conflict. See appendix 1 for the list of cases.

³ Only those agreements that included a political as well as a military solution to the conflict were defined as comprehensive peace agreements. See chapter 3 for a discussion of how peace agreements were defined and coded.

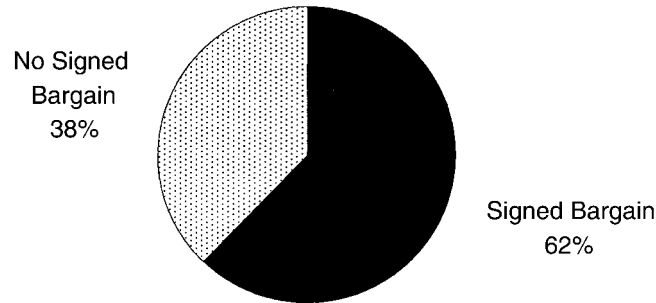


Fig. 1.1. Percentage of civil war negotiations that led to signed bargains, 1940–1992

guarantees, will promises to abide by the original terms be credible and negotiations succeed. I call this theory the *credible commitment theory* of civil war resolution.

In what follows, I show that resolving a civil war requires much more than negotiating a bargain and establishing a cease-fire. A successful peace settlement must integrate the previously warring fractions into a single state, create a new government capable of accommodating their interests, and build a national, nonpartisan military force. This process of integration, however, creates a transition period during which combatants become less and less able to survive a surprise attack and enforce subsequent terms. Thus, even under the very best conditions—when combatants have initiated negotiations and signed a mutually agreeable treaty—the desire for peace clashes with the realities of implementation, and groups frequently choose the safer, more certain option of war.

The fact that combatants have such difficulty enforcing and credibly

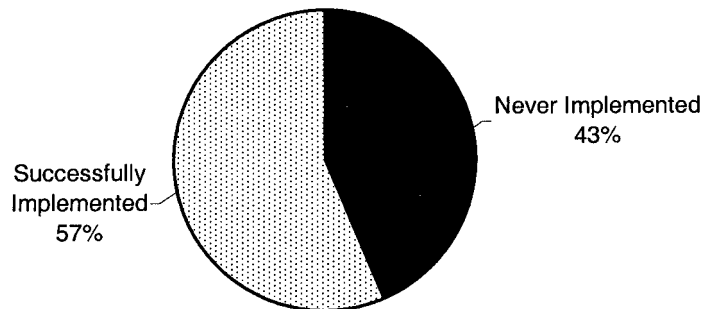


Fig. 1.2. Percentage of signed bargains that were successfully implemented, 1940–1992

committing to the terms of their own peace settlements, however, does not mean that the resolution of civil wars can be traced to a single cause, outside security guarantees. Combatants have no chance to settle their wars unless they are willing, first, to meet at the negotiating table and, second, to resolve their underlying grievances and strike a deal. Both of these steps are likely to be driven by a variety of factors that come into play long before third parties arrive on the scene. Although the credible commitment theory says almost nothing about these additional conditions for peace, the focus here on enforcement and commitment does serve a purpose. By emphasizing the structural problems of implementation I hope to show that in important ways, issues of post-treaty security are likely to pervade all decisions leading to settlement and play a critical role in the final outcome of civil wars. In the end, enforcement will matter a great deal.

Current Theories of Civil War Resolution

Six additional theories of civil war resolution can be found in the literature, and I present them for several reasons. The first is to give skeptical readers a better sense of the many variables purported to take combatants from war to peace and allow these readers to come to their own conclusions about the efficacy of my argument. My second purpose is to begin to identify the full range of factors that are likely to play a role in each of the three stages of the peace process. This tactic is designed to impose greater conceptual rigor on the study of civil war resolution and enable me to determine what factors are doing what work at each of step along the way. My final aim is to determine whether third-party security guarantees and power-sharing pacts really do play critical, independent roles in the peaceful resolution of civil wars, or are only the end result of these other, more important, conditions.

Current theories of civil war termination can be roughly grouped into one of two camps. The first views negotiated settlements primarily as a function of the economic, military, or political conditions that exist on the ground and are likely to encourage combatants to initiate negotiations. This set of theories tends to assume that once these conditions favor negotiation, successful settlement is likely.⁴ The second set of theories views negotiated settlements primarily as a function of combatants' ability to resolve underlying conflicts of interest. This camp assumes

⁴ See especially I. William Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); and Stephen John Stedman, *Peace-making in Civil War: International Mediation in Zimbabwe, 1974–1980* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991).

that once a bargain has been reached, successful settlement should follow. Both camps stand in contrast to the credible commitment theory, which argues that even if combatants reach a mutually agreeable bargain they will not implement its terms unless credible guarantees on the terms of the treaty are included.

Conditions That Affect “Ripeness for Resolution”

The most popular explanation for the success or failure of negotiations focuses on the importance of situational factors, conditions that make civil wars “ripe for resolution.”⁵ Three conditions in particular are believed to make war less attractive and encourage combatants to pursue compromise solutions: high costs of war, military stalemate, and certain domestic political institutions.

COSTS OF WAR

Expected utility choice theorists have long assumed that the decision to fight or negotiate is determined by the relative costs and benefits of a unilateral victory or a compromise settlement.⁶ Proponents of this view argue that combatants carefully estimate their chances of winning a civil war, the amount of time it will take to achieve this victory, how much it will cost, and their relative payoffs from winning versus accepting a settlement. Settlement occurs when combatants believe they can do no better by continuing to fight than by bargaining.

There are good theoretical reasons to believe the costs of war have a significant effect on the process by which civil wars end. First, incumbent governments and rebels have a finite base of resources on which to draw and are forced to pursue alternate solutions to violence as war coffers dry up. Second, a full military victory becomes less attractive as the costs of achieving it increase. Third, leaders are likely to come under increasing domestic pressure to end violence as civilian suffering increases and war fatigue sets in. Peter De Vos, former U.S. ambassador to Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Tanzanian, and Costa Rica,

⁵ The term “ripe for resolution” was coined by I. William Zartman in his book by that title.

⁶ See, for example, Donald Wittman, “How a War Ends: A Rational Model Approach,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 23, no. 4 (1979): 743–63; Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and David Lalman, *War and Reason: Domestic and International Imperatives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); T. David Mason and Patrick J. Fett, “How Civil Wars End: A Rational Choice Approach,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 40, no. 4 (1996): 546–68; and T. David Mason, Joseph P. Weingarten, Jr., and Patrick J. Fett, “Win, Lose, or Draw: Predicting the Outcome of Civil Wars,” *Political Research Quarterly* 52, no. 2 (1999): 239–68.

points out that “the participants are not ready to settle until they’re just too weary. If you look at Mozambique, if you look at Angola, that’s what’s happened.”⁷ The costs of continuing a war, therefore, should be directly related to combatants’ willingness to pursue a negotiated settlement.

BALANCE OF POWER

Theorists of international relations have long argued that the decision to go to war (or remain at peace) is strongly affected by the relative balance of power between adversaries.⁸ A. F. K. Organski, for example, has argued that a balance of power produces peace because “no one side can achieve a great enough superiority to be sure that aggressive action would be crowned with success.”⁹ This logic should apply equally well to the resolution of civil wars. Combatants who are fairly equal on the civil war battlefield should be more likely to negotiate a settlement for at least two reasons. First, military stalemates often, although not always, indicate a determined opponent who promises a costly war of attrition. Second, military stalemates produce uncertainty as to the eventual winner, making each side less willing to risk a decisive loss.¹⁰ “Stalemate,” according to George Modelski, “is easily the most important condition of a settlement. Without it, one or both of the parties may hold justified hopes of an outright win and therefore have the incentive to go on fighting.”¹¹ This theory, therefore, predicts that

⁷ From Dana Francis, ed., *Mediating Deadly Conflict* (Cambridge, Mass.: World Peace Foundation, 1998), 34–35.

⁸ See A. F. K. Organski, *World Politics*, 2d ed. (New York: Random House, 1968); Inis L. Claude, *Power and International Relations* (New York: Random House, 1962); Geoffrey Blainey, *The Causes of War* (New York: Free Press, 1973); Michael Howard, *The Causes of Wars* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983); Arthur Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate: Circumstances and Choice in International Relations* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990).

⁹ Organski, *World Politics*.

¹⁰ The power preponderance school would make the opposite prediction, arguing that combatants should be less likely to negotiate settlement when a balance of power exists since both groups can still hold onto the hope that they will eventually win the war. I do not include a discussion of this theory in the text because it has never been offered as an explanation for the resolution of civil wars. Nonetheless, the same hypothesis regarding the importance of a military stalemate could be used to test this prediction.

¹¹ George Modelski, “International Settlement of Internal War,” in *International Aspects of Civil Strife*, ed. James Rosenau (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 143. See also I. William Zartman, “The Unfinished Agenda: Negotiating Internal Conflicts,” in *Stopping the Killing: How Civil Wars End*, ed. Roy Licklider (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 24; Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution*; Zartman, “Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts,” in *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an*

the more equally matched combatants are on the battlefield, the more likely they are to pursue negotiations.

DOMESTIC POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

A third explanation for negotiated settlements can be drawn from institutional explanations for war and peace. One could argue that the decision to negotiate depends on the domestic political constraints placed on individual leaders. According to this view, civil wars that occur in democratic countries should be more likely to end in compromise settlements, for one of three reasons.¹² First, leaders of democracies face higher domestic constraints in their use of force than leaders of authoritarian governments and are, therefore, less likely to be allowed to pursue unpopular wars.¹³ Presidents Johnson and Nixon were forced to respond to a public that increasingly demanded U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. This stands in stark contrast to Russia's pursuit of its war with Chechnya. As one noted Russian scholar has observed:

Russia's war with Chechnya most likely would not have occurred if Russia had been a consolidated democracy. From the very beginning, roughly two-thirds of all Russians opposed the war, a figure that grew steadily over the next two years. Had their interests been represented in the state through the usual pluralist institutions found in stable, liberal democracies, the decision to attack may not have been made.¹⁴

Second, democratic leaders are likely to find it easier to credibly commit to peace agreements since they are more likely to be held accountable by their voting publics for promises made.¹⁵ Abraham Lincoln's

End to Civil Wars, ed. Zartman (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute, 1995), 11; and Robert Harrison Wagner, "The Causes of Peace," in Licklider, *Stopping the Killing*, 260.

¹² Ted Gurr, however, has found that most democratic regimes have been able to avoid communal conflicts through various types of reform. Nonetheless, we should still observe a relationship between the degree of democracy in a country and the likelihood of settlement if this theory holds. See Ted Robert Gurr, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993).

¹³ Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, *War and Reason*; T. Clifton Morgan and Sally H. Campbell, "Domestic Structure, Decisional Constraints, and War: So Why Can't Democracies Fight?" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 35, no. 2 (1991): 187–211. For a related argument see H. E. Goemans, *War and Punishment: The Causes of War Termination and the First World War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

¹⁴ Michael McFaul, "A Precarious Peace: Domestic Politics in the Making of Russian Foreign Policy," *International Security* 22, no 3 (1997–98): 5–35.

¹⁵ For discussions of how democratic institutions can help leaders reveal information about their intentions and thus overcome informational asymmetries see James D. Fearon, "Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes," *American Political Science Review* 88 (1994): 577–92; and Kenneth A. Schultz, "Domestic Opposi-

signature on a peace agreement between the North and the South was a credible signal of the North's intent because of the full force of the democratic institutions that accorded him his power to sign. It was improbable that he would try to renege on a treaty. By contrast, General Anastasio Somoza's word to the Sandinistas during Nicaragua's war in 1978–79 was less credible because public penalties would not have followed any renouncement of peace.

Finally, democratic leaders accustomed to sharing political power have less to lose by opening the government than authoritarian leaders who stand to forfeit monopoly control of government.¹⁶ The Conservative Party in Colombia, for example, gave up far less when it signed a peace treaty with the Liberal Party than did the absolutist government of Chiang Kai-shek when it agreed to a coalition government with the Chinese Communist Party. A focus on democratic political institutions, therefore, leads to the prediction that the more democratic a state, the more likely the government will be to negotiate a settlement to war.

Conditions That Encourage Combatants to Strike a Bargain

Scholars in the second camp shift the focus of attention away from the conditions that encourage combatants to initiate negotiations toward the conditions that encourage combatants to make real concessions to their enemy.¹⁷ These scholars do not ignore the importance of preexisting military, economic, or political conditions that favor settlement. They simply stress that negotiations have no chance to succeed unless combatants are able to resolve the issues driving the war and reach a mutually agreeable deal. Three factors in particular are likely to affect the chances of a settlement: the identity of the combatants, the divisibility of the stakes over which they are fighting, and the presence of an outside mediator. If identities are malleable, if stakes are easy to divide, or if mediators are present, negotiations are more likely to

tion and Signaling in International Crises," *American Political Science Review* 92 (1998): 829–44.

¹⁶ Although this depends on the goals of the rebels. Governments who are accustomed to power sharing are likely to be equally intransigent if rebels aim to overthrow their leader or secede. In these cases, even the most democratic leaders would have equally much to lose.

¹⁷ See especially Robert Randle, "The Domestic Origins of Peace," *Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Science* 392 (November 1970): 76–85; Fred C. Ikle, *Every War Must End* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971); Glenn Snyder and Paul Diesing, *Conflict among Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977); and James D. Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," *International Organization* 49, no. 3 (1995): 379–414.

succeed. If not, combatants are unlikely to resolve their differences, and war is likely to resume.

ETHNIC IDENTITY

It is widely assumed in both journalistic and scholarly accounts of civil wars that the identity of the combatants plays a large role in their willingness to compromise.¹⁸ Civil wars between different ethnic groups are frequently depicted as intense value conflicts fought over issues close to the heart. Such wars are thus thought to be less amenable to rational calculations of costs and benefits than conflicts between combatants drawn from similar identity groups. Ethnic conflicts are viewed as the result of kinship turned bad, of “feuds” and “bitter rivalries,” not power politics. “I have six sons,” a Bosnian Croat farmer told a reporter when asked whether he would implement the Dayton peace accords of 1994, “and if we are told to share our government with Muslims, all of them will join me in the war that will come.”¹⁹ By this theory, once violence erupts, identities become cemented in ways that keep combatants from working together. This theory predicts that combatants fighting over issues tied to their identities will have greater difficulty reaching a compromise settlement than those fighting over more negotiable political or economic issues.²⁰

THE DIVISIBILITY OF STAKES

Others argue that the success or failure of peace negotiations depends on how easy it is for the combatants to divide the stakes over which they are fighting. “If,” Paul Pillar has written, “the stakes are chiefly

¹⁸ See Chaim Kaufmann, “Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars,” *International Security* 20, no. 4 (1996): 136–75; Patrick M. Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000); Ibrahim A. Elbadawi and Nicholas Sambanis, “External Interventions and the Duration of Civil Wars,” World Bank Policy Research Paper, July 25, 2000; Francis, *Mediating Deadly Conflict*; John W. Burton, *Resolving Deep-Rooted Conflict: A Handbook* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1987); Cvijeto Job, “Yugoslavia’s Ethnic Furies,” *Foreign Policy* 92 (fall 1993): 52–74; Anthony D. Smith, “The Ethnic Sources of Nationalism,” in *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*, ed. Michael E. Brown (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 27–41.

¹⁹ Mike O’Connor, “Bosnia Croats Resist Peace Accord,” *New York Times*, February 13, 1996, A8.

²⁰ See Robert Randle, *The Origins of Peace: A Study of Peacemaking and the Structure of Peace Settlements* (New York: Free Press, 1973), especially p. 430; Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), especially chap. 14; and Burton, *Resolving Deep-Rooted Conflict*.

indivisible, so that neither side can get most of what it wants without depriving the other of most of what it wants, negotiations are less apt to be successful.”²¹ Many civil wars may end in decisive military victories precisely because the goals combatants are pursuing tend to be absolute, “with nothing in between to contribute to the give and take of negotiation and bargaining.”²²

Two arguments regarding divisibility can be made. One could argue that rebels fighting for total goals such as the complete control of a country, the elimination of a rival, or the revolutionary overthrow of a hated political, economic, or social system are less likely to reach a negotiated settlement than rebels fighting for limited aims such as land reform or democratic adjustment.²³ In these cases, it is possible that a middle ground exists in which to draw a compromise settlement. This theory predicts that total wars are less likely to end in negotiated settlement than limited wars.

One could also argue, however, that rebels fighting over territory may make it easier for the central government to accommodate their demands because incumbent elites can part with territory and still retain power. If this is true, one would predict that secessionist conflicts and conflicts fought for greater territorial autonomy are more likely to find negotiated settlements because these conflicts do not threaten the very existence (or livelihood) of the incumbent elite.²⁴ This theory predicts that territorial wars will be more likely to reach negotiated settlement than nonterritorial conflicts.

MEDIATION

Finally, many scholars and practitioners champion the ability of a mediator to surmount difficult bargaining problems and help combatants reach an agreement.²⁵ Mediators serve at least three important roles.

²¹ Paul Pillar, *Negotiating Peace: War Termination as a Bargaining Process* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 24. For similar arguments see Ikle, *Every War Must End*, 95; Modelski, “International Settlement”; and Wagner, “The Causes of Peace.”

²² Zartman, “The Unfinished Agenda,” 25–26.

²³ See Stephen John Stedman, “Negotiation and Mediation in Internal Conflict,” in *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict*, ed. Michael E. Brown (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996); and Charles King, “Devolution of Power and Negotiated Settlements in Civil Wars,” paper presented at the Second Annual Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities, New York, April 1997.

²⁴ See especially, Stephen Stedman, “Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes,” *International Security* 22, no. 2 (1997): 5–53.

²⁵ See Jacob Bercovitch and Jeffrey Z. Rubin, eds., *Mediation in International Relations: Multiple Approaches to Conflict Management* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992);

The first is informational. Mediators can supply missing information, transmit messages, highlight common interests, and encourage meaningful communication so that combatants can better locate a common middle ground. They can also play an important procedural role. Mediators can arrange for interactions between the parties, control the pace and formality of the meetings, and structure the agenda in order to keep the process focused on the issues. The third role is in some ways more coercive. Mediators can reward concessions made by the parties and punish intransigence in order to make disagreement costly.²⁶ Each of these functions is likely to help the combatants to break through bargaining impasses and locate terms agreeable to both parties. “The ability of the would-be mediator,” Stephen Stedman argues, “is an independent variable that affects the success or failure of negotiation.”²⁷ Given this theory, one expects the success of civil war negotiations to vary directly with the presence or absence of an outside mediator.

The preceding discussion reveals a range of alternative explanations for why some civil wars end peacefully while others do not. Table 1.1 lists these competing hypotheses.

What Is Missing

Current theories of the resolution of civil wars tell us much about the conditions likely to bring combatants to the negotiating table and about the conditions then likely to encourage them to reach and sign compromise bargains. The theories do not explain, however, why even signed bargains fail to bring peace, and thus do not provide a comprehensive explanation for why some negotiations end in peace while others do not. As figure 1.2 showed, a signed peace settlement does not guarantee

Jacob Bercovitch, *Social Conflicts and Third Parties: Strategies of Conflict Resolution* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984); Francis, *Mediating Deadly Conflict*; C. R. Mitchell and K. Webb, eds., *New Approaches to International Mediation* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1988); Cyrus Vance, *Hard Choices: Critical Years in America's Foreign Policy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983); David Owen, *Balkan Odyssey* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1995); and Chester A. Crocker, *High Noon in Southern Africa: Making Peace in a Rough Neighborhood* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992).

²⁶ This typology was developed by Saadia Touval and I. William Zartman, eds., *International Mediation in Theory and Practice* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985). For a good overview see Jacob Bercovitch, “Mediation in International Conflict: An Overview of Theory, a Review of Practice,” in *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques*, ed. I. William Zartman and J. Lewis Rasmussen (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace, 1997).

²⁷ Stedman, *Peacemaking in Civil War*, 23.

TABLE 1.1
The Competing Hypotheses

<i>Theory</i>	<i>Associated Hypothesis</i>	
Costs of war	Hypothesis 1	The more costly a war, the more likely combatants are to negotiate a settlement.
Balance of power	Hypothesis 2	The more equally matched combatants are on the battlefield, the more likely they are to end their war in a negotiated settlement.
Domestic political institutions	Hypothesis 3	The more democratic a state, the more likely its government is to negotiate a settlement.
Ethnic identity	Hypothesis 4	Combatants fighting over issues tied to their identity are less likely to end their war in a negotiated settlement than combatants whose identity is the same.
Divisibility of stakes	Hypothesis 5	The more divisible the stakes over which the combatants are fighting, the more likely the war is to end in a negotiated settlement.
Mediation	Hypothesis 6	The success of civil war negotiations varies directly with the presence or absence of an outside mediator.

that a civil war will end. Almost half of all combatants who signed comprehensive peace agreements during the period from 1940 to 1992 chose to return to war rather than implement the terms of the agreement. To understand why some civil wars end by negotiated settlement and others do not, we must understand how the parties' expectations about compliance with the terms of the agreement affect decisions to negotiate or fight at each step on the road to peace.

Research Methods

Two different methodologies, quantitative analysis and comparative case studies, are used in this study. Statistical analysis allows comparison of many cases at once and uncovers patterns that would not be

revealed by examination of a small number of cases. It also ensures that the conclusions drawn are pertinent to a wide range of cases, not just one or two that caught the researcher's eye.

Statistical analysis, however, has its limitations. First, it is not particularly helpful in building causal theories of civil wars' resolution. The ideas in this book originated from reading detailed historical accounts of particular conflicts, not from regression analysis. Second, although patterns do emerge, important cultural and historical differences cause individuals, governments, and rebel factions to act in ways not predicted by the theory. A contextual comparison of individual cases ensures that the generalizations made here are not too sweeping and should help to reveal the limitations of the theory.²⁸ Finally, statistical analysis cannot confirm or disconfirm the causal mechanisms purported to link third-party intervention and power-sharing guarantees to the peaceful resolution of civil wars. It can only reveal the correlation, if any, between each of these variables and peace. A careful study of individual cases, therefore, is needed to build, refine, and test the theory.

How the Book Is Organized

The next seven chapters examine the conditions under which combatants choose to end their civil war through a negotiated settlement rather than a military victory. Chapter 2 develops the credible commitment theory highlighted above. This theory suggests that incentives to cheat on the agreement discourage combatants from cooperating and convince them to continue a war even if they would prefer to settle. The chapter presents three simple game-theoretic models to show that fears of post-treaty exploitation pervade the peace process and factor into decisions to cooperate or fight at each step along the way.²⁹

Chapter 3 introduces the data set used to test the theories summarized above and explains how each of the variables specified in previous chapters is measured. This chapter may be of particular interest to scholars seeking a data set with which to test theories of civil war, intervention, and war termination.

Chapter 4 tests the competing hypotheses against all civil wars that began between 1940 and 1992. The results show that two factors have

²⁸ For an excellent discussion on the strengths of qualitative analysis see Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, "Diplomatic History and International Relations Theory: Respecting Difference and Crossing Boundaries," *International Security* 22, no. 1 (1997): 5–21.

²⁹ Readers not versed in this approach should have no difficulty following the text. All math is confined to the appendix.

a significant effect on combatants' decision to sign and implement negotiated settlements. Negotiations are unlikely to succeed unless an outside power is willing to guarantee the security of the combatants during demobilization, and unless specific political, military, or territorial guarantees are written into the terms of the treaty. The results, however, also reveal that other factors play important roles prior to the implementation of a peace treaty. The costs of war (measured as a function of battle deaths and duration) and rebels' goals matter a great deal in bringing combatants to the table, and territorial goals, a military stalemate, and mediation are instrumental in reaching a bargain. In the end, however, the two most important factors in convincing combatants to both sign and implement peace settlements are third-party security guarantees and power-sharing pacts. Only then do we get peace.

The links among third-party security guarantees, power-sharing pacts, and successful settlement, however, could be spurious. This possibility is the subject of chapter 5. Here I am particularly interested in answering three questions. First, are third-party intervention and power-sharing guarantees necessary to obtain negotiated peace, or can one be substituted for the other? Second, does the strength of an outside guarantee—for example, the identity of the guarantor or the size of the peacekeeping force—or the extent of power-sharing guarantees affect the outcome of civil wars? Third, do third-party and power-sharing guarantees have a direct causal effect on the outcome of civil wars, or are they offered only in cases in which the parties would have ended the war on their own? I find that third-party guarantees and power-sharing pacts are both highly correlated with settlement, and that the strength of outside security guarantees and the strength of power-sharing pacts tend to be inversely related to each other. Some evidence indicates that combatants are more willing to extend treaty pacts in long civil wars and those in which a third party steps in to guarantee demobilization. There is also some evidence that third-party security guarantees tend to be connected to the offer of power-sharing pacts. Overall, however, there are surprisingly few significant correlations between post-treaty guarantees and other factors that may be related to peace.

Chapters 6 and 7 supplement these tests with in-depth case studies of negotiations to end the civil wars in Zimbabwe and Rwanda. Here, day-to-day negotiations are scrutinized to see if fears over post-treaty security really do drive decisions to sign and implement peace treaties, if combatants seek third-party security guarantees to allay these fears, and if compliance with the terms of the agreement coincides with the arrival of outside observers or peacekeepers. Case analysis confirms the strong connection between third-party security guarantees, power-sharing pacts, and the peaceful settlement of civil war.

Chapter 8 reviews the theory and the findings presented in the book. It ends by outlining the implications this study may have for scholars interested in questions of conflict and cooperation, especially under conditions of high risk, and for policymakers pursuing the more pressing question of how to resolve persistent and recurring civil wars.