

Civil Action and the Dynamic of Violence

EDITED BY

DEBORAH AVANT, MARIE E. BERRY,
ERICA CHENOWETH, RACHEL EPSTEIN,
CULLEN HENDRIX, OLIVER KAPLAN, AND
TIMOTHY SISK

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Introduction

Civil Action and the Dynamics of Violence in Conflicts

DEBORAH AVANT, MARIE E. BERRY, ERICA CHENOWETH,
RACHEL EPSTEIN, CULLEN HENDRIX, OLIVER KAPLAN,
AND TIMOTHY SISK

1.1. Introduction

The Second Liberian Civil War (1999–2003) ended not on the battlefield but in meeting rooms and peaceful demonstrations. Tired of the seemingly intractable violence, a network of women's groups coalesced under the Women in Peace Network (WIPNET) banner to try to bring an end to it. The women organized a *Lysistrata*-inspired sex strike, which received a great deal of international media attention.¹ But they also lobbied Liberian president Charles Taylor directly to extend peace talks with Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia and, once the talks were under way, create a human barrier to prevent negotiators from leaving the table before a deal could be concluded. Two leaders of the movement—Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Leymah Gbowee—received the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of their efforts.

The story of WIPNET provides a striking example of how a civil society group taking civil action can dampen violence. And this example is not unique. In Colombia, community-based organizations, including local NGOs, unions, and faith groups, negotiated with government forces, rebels, and paramilitaries to reduce violence in their communities during the war (Kaplan 2017). Firms in Colombia committed to best practices, such as the Voluntary Principles on Business and Human Rights, and spent money and effort to push for peace (Rettberg 2009). A nonviolent protest movement in Ukraine led former president Viktor F. Yanukovich to flee.² After that, small pockets of nonviolent activism continued to confront violence, at times successfully. For instance, in spring 2014 in the city of Mariupol, steel workers from the company Metinvest

joined with community activists and local police to patrol the city, remove barricades, and restore order.³ These are not isolated incidents in the context of a few conflict-affected settings. Indeed, from the Bosnian War (1992–1995) to Mexico's ongoing drug-related violence, we find examples of *civil action*—nonviolent strategies that promote deeper engagement with stakeholders—that often improve the prospects for peace.

This volume constructs a logic of civil action. We conceptualize “civil action” as behavior characterized by (a) a reluctance to engage in violence and (b) a willingness to abide by a minimal level of respect to maximize engagement with others.⁴ We and our contributing authors argue that civil action often makes it harder to activate the relational processes that generate violence, even though it can involve civil disobedience and mass noncooperation and other disruptive acts, as well as explicit efforts to reduce or prevent violence. Civil action can be undertaken by a wide range of social actors, driven by different bases of authority. Although civil action sometimes escalates violence, it often has violence-dampening effects. This volume highlights the crucial and often-neglected role that civil action has played in deciding the fates of conflicts around the world.

Below, we elaborate on the logic of civil action and demonstrate its intersection with analyses of microdynamics and contentious politics. We then examine who takes civil action and the authority claims and capabilities that affect this potential. Next, we then explore three ways in which civil action might matter for conflict dynamics: through its effect on relationships, on levels of local violence, and on the overall conflict. We elaborate on how civil action matters—through process and relationships—and when it should be most likely to work. Finally, we provide an outline of the remainder of the book.

1.2. What Is “Civil” about Civil Action?

Our concept of civil action builds on civil resistance and the notions of civility on which it is based. The vast literature on civil resistance has largely equated “civil” with “nonviolent.” It examines action that seeks political change and is thus explicitly contentious. Civil resistance is, by definition, transgressive and extra-institutional. Nonetheless, analysts hold that proscribing violence is key to a style of resistance that yields more-beneficial results (Roberts 2009, 2–3; Sharp 2011, 87). Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) demonstrated not only that these campaigns are successful, but how they succeed. Refraining from violence “facilitates the active participation of many more people than violent campaigns, thereby broadening the base of resistance and raising the costs to opponents of maintaining the status quo” (10–11). The number and diversity of participants

Introduction

repression will backfire. Even erstwhile supporters of the status quo are often uncomfortable with repression against nonviolent action and are more likely to shift their support to an opposition that is nonviolent. It is this effect on relationships that makes nonviolent movements more likely to achieve the goals. These relational dynamics also increase the likelihood that the resulting changes will be democratic.

Civil action is broader than civil resistance in one way, and somewhat narrower in another. While both civil resistance and civil action are nonviolent civil resistance typically refers to a form of conflict in which people actively confront oppression using disruptive, transgressive, and extra-institutional method. Civil action is broader because it also includes less conflictual engagement with various stakeholders—legally or illegally, institutionally or extra-institutionally. Civil action is narrower, though, in that it typically eschews exclusionary action. Methods that opponents find unsettling, insulting, disrespectful, threatening—such as public shaming and social ostracization—should be tamed through personal connection or recognition in other arenas such that constructive engagement can persist, even in the midst of conflict. Civil action subsumes much of what we count as civil resistance even as it refines what form of resistance should count as civil action and broadens the ends at which it aims.

Thinking through the broader concept of civil action led us to revisit debate over civility to clarify how we would draw the line between actions that are considered “civil” and those considered “uncivil”—terms that remain contested. In his two-volume series, *The Civilizing Process*, German sociologist Norbert Elias traced civility to notions courtesy in the Middle Ages. With transitions to modernity that grew into a “more self-conscious molding of personal behavior to conform to norms of appropriateness and to facilitate coordination in increasingly complex urban communities” (Bybee 2016, 9; Elias 1978).

Many scholars take a maximalist view of civility, seeing it as attending to “on better angels,” respecting good manners, and abiding by social norms. By this logic, insult and verbal attacks are evidence of incivility. Scholarship has taken this maximalist view in a Hobbesian direction, urging silence on issues that prompt too much disagreement, or in a Lockean one, aiming tolerance of a civilized beings and building ever larger areas of consensus (Bejan 2017).

Seen this way, though, exhortations for civility can preclude just the sort of civil resistance that leads to social change. Silence on issues of great disagreement can be a tool for the continuation of practices that advantage some over others. Privileging civility can be a mechanism for the elite and powerful to silence opposition and dissent. Indeed, one of the significant critiques of civility that it can be used to preserve an unfair status quo (Bybee 2016).

Instead, we build on what Teresa Bejan (2017) calls “mere civility.” It

an image that separates two spheres in which people can bond—over mundane interactions or over commitments to broader social purpose. Drawing on the writings and life of Roger Williams, Bejan (2017) explains that “mere civility” eschews violence (is peaceable), respects some (any) social graces, and is restrained based on something that is shared, a “bond of civility” (57–61). The minimal restraint it entails is crucially separate from the values over which people can, and do, legitimately disagree (60–61). In Williams’s writing, these values were religious, but we extend them here to any values that pertain to broad social purpose. Thus *mere civility* does not require agreement or consensus and does not entail avoiding conversation about issues on which people vehemently disagree.

Mere civility is distinguished from more robust ideas of civility because it places value on the human connections that can be established in even ordinary interactions and continued dialogue between perspectives. Unlike the dominant Hobbesian or Lockean schools that either restrict what is said or require some level of agreement on which to base interactions, *mere civility* requires only peaceable actions that are respectful enough of basic human decency to keep a conversation going (Bejan 2017, 164). Instead of discouraging discourse, it encourages open conversation even among those who neither respect nor agree with one another. Bejan (2017) shows how this conception of civility is inclusive—radically so. It led Williams to call for, and implement, a much more open vision of who was part of society—“one that included American ‘Barbarians’ and Catholic ‘Antichristians’ alike” (65).⁵ Williams founded the Rhode Island settlement on these terms. As Bejan explains, what drove William to this notion of *mere civility* was his strident proselytizing and the logic through which he thought it would most likely be successful (50–81).

The conception of civil action we put forth, then, refers to behavior that is animated by (a) reluctance to engage in violence and (b) willingness to abide by a minimal level of respect in order to continue engagement with others. It includes, but does not end with, civil resistance. It may be contentious, conciliatory, or cooperative. It can be undertaken by a wide range of social actors, driven by different motives and bases of authority. To be considered *civil*, however, action must resist violence and curtail interactions that exclude others.

1.3. Civil Action, Microdynamics, and Contentious Politics

Traditional analyses of war and civil war often assume that there is unity among “protagonists” and focus on their overarching, or macro narratives. One of the important insights from microtheories on violence, though, is that not all actions

actions are motivated by a macronarrative and not all violence stems from on Stathis Kalyvas (2006) shows how in civil war, action motivated by personal (small-group concerns often feeds violent dynamics. Violence not only can, but often does, escalate inadvertently because violent episodes provide opening that ordinary people, alone or as part of a group, take advantage of to enrich themselves or settle scores in ways that lead to more violence.

While studies on microdynamics have uncovered how actions unrelated to overarching policy matter for violence, they tend to see ordinary civilians as either opportunistic perpetrators or as victims (Kalyvas 2006; Weinstein 2006). They have rarely focused on the ways citizens and groups use their agency to de-escalate or reduce violence.⁶ But the empirical record reveals that citizens and groups do this all the time. A local business consortium in Kenya worked to dampen violence during the 2013 elections (Owuor and Wisner 2014). Community groups worked to reduce the impact of Colombia’s civil war on the neighborhoods (Kaplan 2017). And even during the Rwandan genocide, individual Hutu engaged in transactions to desist from killing Tutsi (Luft 2015). The uncivil and violent activity Kalyvas and others document often works alongside civil action, and the two can play off each other.

The relational insights offered by contentious politics scholars offer a path toward whether and how violence unfolds. The contentious politics literature has long noted overlap in the general relational qualities that accompany political violence. The exclusivity, polarization, radicalization, and evocation of enmity that are activated in wars between states also accompany civil, intrastate wars (Esteban and Schneider 2008) and political violence more generally (Tilly 2003). Scholars have recently begun to draw this relational logic into the security studies field (Avant and Westervinter 2016; Goddard and Nexon 2016).

Much of the contentious politics literature focuses on uncivil action and its impact on violence. Exclusivity and polarization engender violence by othering leading to what sociologists call social “closure” (Barth 1969; Burt 2005; Tilly 2006). Othering denotes who is outside the circle and, at the most extreme, who is the enemy. The process of social closure often reduces individuals with many different social identities and roles to only one. Closure then keeps the other out by choking off new information and options for action. Studies of war are also littered with this logic of enmity (Clausewitz 1989; Howard 1970). Relativist work in political science, sociology, and social psychology demonstrate that these general “uncivil” relational processes accompany violence in a variety of settings (see, for example, Schmitt 1996; Tilly 2003; Staub 1996). Generally, the contentious politics literature focuses on the logic of the process—but the violent process. The related work focuses less on the process than on the structural

We see civil action as something that often makes it harder to activate the relational processes that generate violence. Building out the logic focused on processes that lead away from violence reveals many possibilities. Resisting closure by maintaining a more complex view of others increases the potential for identification with the different social roles or identities any given individual might occupy (Varshney 2001). Respecting those with whom one disagrees, even on mundane matters, opens the potential for listening to them, as Kupchan's (2010) analysis in *How Enemies Become Friends* demonstrates. Listening can lead to changes in framing that benefit all sides—as Javier Argomaniz (chapter 9) documents in his analysis of the peace movement's separation of pro-Basque from pro-violence. Listening can also build relationships. The mundane bonds people develop in day-to-day life or over efforts to provide public goods can temper their reactions to disagreements they have over values, as we have seen in the growing literature on rebel rule (Arjon, Kaspir, and Mamplily 2015). And maintaining even a small amount of openness in relationships allows new information to flow in ways that may limit the spread of extreme claims in support of opportunistic action, as Solingen has demonstrated in looking at the relative proliferation and war-prone activities of more open and more closed governments (Solingen 2007a, 2007b). The same openness that limits the spread of extreme claims can help build greater understanding between parties. Interaction with others on everyday issues can engender identification that reduces violence against others. Serious examination of civil action in particular settings may help reveal more ways through which violence can be forestalled than the conventional wisdom currently accepts. We hope our analysis is seen as a response to analysts' calls for greater attention to a more varied set of processes through which peace can be built (Muggah and Krause 2009; Paffenholz 2010).

Investigating civil action, how it is undertaken by various social actors, and how it shapes conflict trajectories in particular circumstances is this volume's task. Through this exploration, we aim to demonstrate the value of a larger research agenda taking into account both civil and uncivil action.

1.4. Who Undertakes Civil Action and Why?

Civil action is defined by behavior rather than the characteristics of different people or groups. Thus all people have some capacity for civil action. Here, we focus on civil action undertaken on behalf of different common social identities. Our analysis builds on several streams of research that highlight the effects of nonstate actors on conflict dynamics. In theorizing what civil action a particular group might take and why, we focus on the logic of *authority* behind particular

We define *authority* as the ability to induce deference in others (Avant, Finnemore, and Sell 2010; Barnett and Finnemore 2004; see also Raz 1990). Different social identities induce deference in different ways, which constrains what actors can do when acting in this role. Authority-claims provide insights into the meanings or collective purpose that charge an authority's relations—why followers pay attention to the authority in the first place. For instance, a church might induce deference among its followers through its commitment to religious doctrine. It might also induce deference from a broader community by virtue of its ability to represent its followers' views or perform good works for that community. These various bases of authority animate action. They help actors justify engaging in civil (or uncivil) action and thus shape the sorts of action they can take.

We define *capacities* as the relational and other resources a group can tap into to generate effect. These include levels of organization, relational ties with which to spread information and generate a following, and material resources. A church, for example, is organized to perform services, collect contributions, and do other works in the community. It also has access to resources through donations. A church's relationships with worshippers and others in the community can increase its capacity to act, and its ties to national or transnational churches of the same ilk can generate resources and draw attention to its actions. A group's relational ties and other capacities shape its ability to take action.

The most obvious authority that might undertake civil action is the government. Max Weber (Gerth and Mills 1946, 77–78) defined the state as “a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.” As many others have pointed out, states often legitimate that monopoly by providing public goods (North 1986) or claiming to represent the public interest. They also often claim to limit when and how agents of the state, including police and military personnel, use physical force (Loader and Walker 2007). But other local authorities of all sorts can also take civil action. These include community organizations, NGOs, churches and religious leaders, businesses, journalists and artists, and even elders or other traditional authorities. These vary in their claims to authority and in their capacities.

Transnational authorities may also engage in civil action. Transnational networks can connect local organizations with advocates in international nongovernmental organizations (Keck and Sikkink 1998). Transnational corporations may have stakes in particular conflicts through their investment or supply chains. Finally, international or intergovernmental organizations (IOs) gain authority via delegation by governments or a broader community of governments (the international community), and they often have a commit-

In what follows, we offer some initial thoughts on the authority and capacity these local and transnational social identities can draw from to undertake civil action, and we highlight examples of actions that have been taken in conflict-affected areas. Though our focus is on civil action, there are also logics by which each can also undertake uncivil action.

1.4.1. Governments

Weber's oft-cited definition of a state ties a state's claim to a monopoly on violence to its *legitimacy*, which we take to be a commitment to marshal violence for purposes that are widely accepted among a population. In the best of circumstances, citizens widely defer to the government, and its actual use of violence is restrained; the government offers its citizens various resources—such as a legal system—that allows for the nonviolent resolution of conflict and protects them from violence. In the midst of conflict, though, parts of governments can become tools for uncivil action. During the Troubles in Northern Ireland, for instance, the police in the town of Dungannon allied with the loyalists—against government policy and law. This increased the capacity for loyalist violence, and when they were seen as taking partisan action, reduced the trust of Catholics in the police and enhanced the Irish Republican Army's ability to recruit new members (Grubb 2016 and chapter 5, this volume).

Governments often have significant capacity, by virtue of their resources and organization, to shape collective behavior. The police in Northern Ireland, for example, have budgets, equipment, standard operating procedures, and institutional authority. In the midst of conflict, these capacities may be diminished (if the tax base goes down, for instance, or offices are attacked) or increased (if the public rallies, outside groups lend support, or governments begin raising more revenue to address threats).

1.4.2. Movements and Local Civilian Groups

Studies on the microdynamics of violence focus on civilians as individuals who either take advantage of, get roped into, or become victims of violence (Kalyvas 2006; Valentino 2004). But civilians can also organize collectively. The most obvious work on collective organization focuses on civilians as part of movements. Groups advocating political change are generally committed to achieving some broader social good. Resistance movements generate authority through both this commitment to change and the quality of their behavior. The appeal to civil action can help to draw larger numbers of participants to the group and, in some circumstances, encourage a shift in loyalty among regime supporters. In

response to state repression or violence, though, some may be tempted to retaliate. And as group solidarity grows, so can efforts to exclude those with different views, as was the case with Viktor Orbán's Civic Circles Movement in Hungary (Greskovits 2017).

Civilian groups can also explicitly aim to tamp down violence. Kaplan documents this in Colombia, where community organizations stepped in to engage with different armed groups that were operating in their midst and negotiate strategies to reduce the risk to the community (Kaplan 2017). These local groups may mobilize existing institutional authority for this new purpose, as was the case with the Asociación de Trabajadores Campesinos del Caribe (Kaplan 2013b). Community groups can also form in direct response to the violence, generating authority as a voice for a particular sort of inclusive community, as Marie Berry (chapter 7) explains happened in Tuzla, Bosnia, during the 1990s conflict there. In the Tuzla case, local leaders with various authority bases—from government to religious to commercial—participated in an umbrella organization committed to maintaining the multiethnic character of the city. Groups can also influence or manage local justice procedures, such as providing conciliation services, discouraging or sanctioning those who join armed groups, and so on, which can discourage residents from resolving their disputes through armed actors and thereby dampen the potential for cycles of violence (see García Durán 2005; Van Cott 2006). Community groups can name and shame violent actors and use religious and moral commitments to persuade armed groups to reduce their aggressive or violent behavior (as documented by Guerra Curvelo 2004).

Local community groups often have far fewer resources than governments and vary widely in levels of organization. They gain capacity according to the strength and extent of their social ties and the appeal of their mission. Local groups can repurpose quotidian networks to generate more participation, more information, and more connection with other authorities (Parkinson 2013). Local groups can also build capacity through their accomplishments. Small gains can increase participation and overall capacity. A commitment to using civil action to accomplish change can legitimize a group and potentially attract other authorities, to establish a broader and more diverse following.

1.4.3. Local NGOs

Closely related to local community groups are local NGOs (sometimes called community-based organizations, or CBOs). They can either be entirely local or a branch of a national organization. Some generate authority by virtue of their principled commitments to, for instance, furthering human rights, women's

concerns, or environmental issues; others are professional membership organizations, such as lawyer or teacher associations, and gain additional authority from those who also appreciate the social purpose these professionals provide. Their civil action is often tied to their social purpose. To the extent that the conflict impacts that purpose, they may also be drawn into attempts to ramp down the conflict.

Local NGOs and associations also arise during armed conflicts to address the specific problems the residents of the community are facing, such as Fundación Dario May, in Pensilvania, Colombia, or Médica Zenica, in Bosnia. In Syria, the Local Coordination Committees and other national networks emerged to support grass-roots protest efforts as they took shape throughout the country, while the Violations Documentation Center formed to report on human rights abuses by the government and opposition alike (Pearlman, chapter 2). Women's NGOs often form to protest violence (e.g., Women in Black in Israel/Palestine), demand accountability for the death (or disappearances) of loved ones (Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo in Argentina), or mobilize for social-psycho care (e.g., Avega Agahozo in Rwanda). Local NGOs may work to serve local needs or may monitor the numbers of civilians killed and wounded by combatant forces and advocate for justice, reparations, or changes in the military strategies of armed actors. They frequently partner with transnational actors to develop methods of systematically tracking civilian harm and to gather evidence of killings and damages. We have seen this evidence-based advocacy take place most recently in Afghanistan and Syria, facilitated by mobile phones and other technological tools (Niland 2011).

Like local community groups, local NGOs gain their greatest resource from their connections. By virtue of their commitments to issues, though, they may also link up with other national and transnational actors that can lend them additional reach and capacity. For instance, in Colombia, the Jesuit think tank Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular interacts with and provides information to Human Rights Watch and other groups. Local groups that do not support transnational action can also counteract its effectiveness, as has been the case in some areas of Afghanistan. NGOs that take successful civil actions related to their missions may also generate greater commitment from others.

1.4.4. Religious Authorities

Researchers have also tied religious institutions and leaders to behavior that both exacerbates and alleviates violent dynamics (Appleby 2000; Sisk 2011; Kaplan 2013a). Religious institutions and leaders gain authority from the commitment to doctrine and from the special role faith plays in shaping moral

compass. Even nonadherents may defer to a religious leader as someone possessed of moral authority—evident in the broad popularity of the Dalai Lama or Pope Francis. The larger religious organization of which individual institutions are a part may also delegate authority to them. And they may gain the deference of both their followers and a broader constituency by virtue of the public service they carry out, such as charity work, social services, and schools. Religious leaders can be driven to undertake civil action in keeping with the teachings of peace and tolerance that are common to many religions. Like Roger Williams in Rhode Island, they may also be drawn to civil action in the hopes of wooing new adherents. They can also, however, be drawn to uncivil action, fomenting exclusion and violence. Berry's analysis of the Bosnian war in chapter 7 of this volume shows both.

Religious institutions such as mosques, churches, and temples have generally developed significant organizational capacities to serve their communities. Religious leaders are also often connected to others in their faith communities at the national and transnational levels. Their ties to other faith leaders can generate the potential for interfaith dialogues. Finally, they have resources from tithes and may garner additional resources through their many connections to other religious institutions, political actors, or business elites. The combination of their special authority and significant capacities gives religious institutions and leaders noteworthy capacity for civil (and uncivil) action.

1.4.5. Businesses

Businesses generate authority through both purpose and profit, but profitability shapes each of their authority relations. It is when a purpose promises profit that companies grow; without the promise of profit, a company is not likely to sustain itself (Litvin 2004). Local businesses gain authority with consumers for producing goods or services and with employees for providing jobs. Their role in the local economy may also generate some authority among the population at large and within government circles based on expertise, but also on continued profitability. Larger companies may also have shareholders as additional constituents. Businesses do not always push for social change, and often depend on the government to protect their property; however, many are averse to violence that disrupts markets or threatens that property. This can give some businesses leaders both the reason and authority to try to ramp down violence. Indeed, there is some evidence that local companies can conduct "quiet diplomacy" with actors in local conflicts or use their economic influence to lobby for peace agreements. For instance, Wood (2003) attributes the success of the El Salvadoran and South African dissidents in part to significant conflict fatigue

on the part of commercial interests, who then used their economic influence as leverage over those countries' governments. Individual business leaders can also have particular leanings that lead them to act.

Businesses vary widely in size. Their authority claims are often linked to particular as well as common purposes, but they often have strong levels of organization both at the company level and also sometimes through business groups in their sector (Soule 2009). Many have ties to different levels of government that can generate both resources and potential influence over government actions. Their material resources are generally greater than many movements or NGOs.

1.4.6. Journalists and Artists

Journalist and artists are a category that is left out of much of the work on non-state actors, but the fact that journalists (and to a lesser degree artists) are often targeted during conflicts should alert us to their potential importance. Journalists gain authority by virtue of their access to and reporting of information; artists of all sorts gain it from their ability to move people aesthetically or emotionally and by reflecting the culture and history of groups under attack. Both are frequent features of conflict—journalists reporting it and artists depicting it in ways that interpret its cost and meaning (or lack thereof). As the fourth estate, the political importance of journalism and journalists is widely recognized (Schulz 1998), and the so-called CNN effect is said to shape the issues we attend to and the frames through which we see them (Robinson 2002; Harcup 2014). Art, too, has played a multitude of roles in conflict throughout history (Brandon 2007). Journalists are charged with sensationalizing conflict in ways that may exacerbate social closure and othering, but they can also bring truth to bear in ways that humanize the other or report on the atrocities being committed on all sides in ways that call the violence into question. Artists play a unique role because their expression is not seen as fact. They may have more leeway to interpret conflict in ways that lead people to reflect critically on their assumptions. Of course, artists and journalists can also take uncivil action and become tools for propaganda.

The resources of both artists and journalists depend on the networks of which they are a part. Moving stories or artworks, however, can rapidly increase the size of a network. For instance, Steven Zech (chapter 3) demonstrates how staging moving performances that took on the violence on both sides of Peru's civil war elevated the profile of the Vichana theater group, and then violence against one of its champions propelled it much further. Pearlman (chapter 2) adds that free expression and citizen journalism are particularly important forms of civil action against regimes that make censorship and control of information a primary pillar of authoritarian rule.

1.4.7. Traditional Authorities

Traditional authorities gain their authority through the customary legacy they embody. Their claim to represent a people and provide some benefit to them is often made both in the community and with some outside authority. The benefits they provide may include services, such as mediating disputes or, in some cases, the capacity to wield violence. The overlap between quotidian ties, claims to a people, and history often give traditional authorities deep influence over their populations. They tend to be more relevant in areas where a modern national government is less present. But they frequently have ties to the central government, or even to its local representatives. Indeed, governments sometimes delegate authority over specific matters to these leaders. Although traditional authorities can include tribal elders or chiefs who play integral roles in fostering stability and development, they can also include those more likely to use violence, often termed "warlords," who can engage in uncivil action to undermine stability and augment violence. Scholars have acknowledged that traditional authorities can undertake what we would call civil action to generate benefits to themselves or their people under particular circumstances (Ahram and King 2012; Marten 2012; Wachtkeon 2004).

The wealth and the levels of formal organization among traditional authorities vary widely. Their quotidian ties are generally strong, however, and their greatest resource is their ability to interface between their legacy and internal patronage system and the outside authority; they are arbiters (Ahram and King 2012) or brokers (Marten 2012). Where traditional authorities are relevant, they exert an important pull on their populations and efforts at civil action without their blessing are likely to yield limited effect.

1.4.8. Transnational NGOs

Transnational NGOs can be categorized according to their focus on advocacy or implementation (Murdie 2014). *Advocacy* groups gain authority and resources from their commitment to principles. *Implementing* NGOs gain authority and resources from their commitment to a mission, but also from their capacities to deliver services. Advocacy organizations are often committed to political change; they undertake mobilization to prescribe proper behavior and to "name and shame" offending parties (Hendrix and Wong 2014). Implementing NGOs often provide humanitarian relief, environmental protection, or development in the midst of conflict. They tend to be more willing to get along with rebels or other conflict actors, maintaining neutrality to gain access to populations and reduce the potential that the work they do will incite violence against them. Their

commitments to their mission and to service provide ample justification for civil action.

International NGOs often have greater access to material resources than their local counterparts do. They are likely to have highly developed organizational capacities, though these vary and may be stronger among implementing organizations than advocacy organizations. They frequently have stronger connections than local NGOs do, though, with governments outside a conflict zone and with international organizations—from whom they may also receive contracts and resources (Cooley and Ron 2002). They vary widely in their connections with local NGOs, religious organizations, businesses, civilian groups or local government officials, but these ties are generally less well developed.

1.4.9. Transnational Corporations

Transnational corporations (TNCs), like local companies, are concerned with profitability. They gain authority from a similar array of constituencies as local firms, though expertise is often more important, shareholders often play a larger role, and government officials from their home countries add an additional constituency. Like local companies, TNCs rarely push for political change (indeed, they often lobby against it), and they frequently rely on the government for protection. Like local companies, they are generally averse to violence (Alt et al. 1996). Mining, oil, or other extractive companies are committed to their operations and their property; however, in ways that regularly lead them to try to continue working in amid conflict zones (Alt et al. 1996). Their resources and linkages have frequently led transnational NGOs to assign authority to them for their complicity in violence (Hauffer 2010; Mirshak 2010). This, in turn, has sometimes led transnational corporations to civil action. Traditional analyses have examined how transnational companies sometimes lobby their home governments to pressure foreign governments to pursue peace agreements (Keck and Sikkink 1998). It has become increasingly common, however, for TNCs to participate more directly. This can mean using economic rewards to encourage peaceful behavior or demobilization, appointing ombudspersons to develop community dispute-resolution mechanisms and address localized grievances involving the company, or providing social services and infrastructure (healthcare, electricity, etc.) to compensate the community and reduce the negative perception of the company (Bebington, Bornschlegl, and Johnson 2013). In some cases, companies have participated in multi-stakeholder initiatives or standards to encourage nonviolent behavior by others and to guard against the potential that their actions will spark conflict. The Kimberly Process, Extractives Industry Transparency Initiative, the Voluntary Principles on Land and Resource

aim to reduce violence by establishing systems that allow or encourage business activity without feeding into corruption or violence (Nelson 2000; Banfield, Hauffer, and Lilly 2005).

TNCs have significant material resources and strong organizational capacity. They also have strong connections to national and international governments. They may have more conflictual relationships with local and transnational NGOs and variable relations with local communities. As with transnational NGOs, these local ties are quite variable.

1.4.10. International Organizations

International organizations (IOs) gain authority via delegation from states but also through their missions, many of which are tied to promoting peace. Since the United Nations landmark "Agenda for Peace," in 1992, IOs have directed more attention to intrastate conflict (Peon 2002). They have focused on prevention, negotiation, securing peace agreements; peacebuilding; and assisting local institutions to make them more legitimate, inclusive, and capable (Walter and Snyder 1999; Doyle and Sambanis 2006; Sisk 2013). IOs do not always eschew violence. The United Nations has a long history, dating to the Congo Crisis of the early 1960s, of "peace enforcement" or "robust peacekeeping," and NATO has often taken bellicose actions. IOs also take civil action, though, including mediation, monitoring (including security guarantees), norm promotion, and institution building.

IOs also have significant material resources and strong organizational structures. Their strongest ties are to governments, but they also often have ties to the transnational NGO community and transnational companies. As with the other transnational actors, their local ties and understandings can be more tenuous (see Autesserre 2014; Campbell 2017).

1.5. What Effects Should We Attend To?

The case studies presented in this book examine the actions authorities have taken and their justifications for doing so during periods of armed conflict. Some of the case studies also offer explanations for why particular groups or authorities undertake civil action or uncivil action, but our primary focus is on the effects that civil action produces.

As the discussion thus far suggests, we anticipate that civil action often dampens the potential for violence. But its effects are not always peace promoting. For example, when the Rwandan Armed Forces (Forces Armées Rwandaises, or

FAR) were defeated by the Rwandan Patriotic Front following the 1994 genocide, the majority Hutu government, along with its forces and Hutu refugees, fled into the border areas, creating a public health disaster. Humanitarian NGOs, including CARE and Medicines Sans Frontières, engaged nonviolently to set up camps to support the desperate population. But the camps also provided shelter and support to the government and to FAR. The FAR forces then used violence to consolidate their control over the refugees in the camps and remobilized to attack the new government in Rwanda. An estimated 4,000 died as a result of the violence. The remobilization eventually led the new Rwandan president, Paul Kagame, to attack the camps, in 1996 (Terry 2002). This example, juxtaposed with the civil action the group undertook in Liberia, highlights the Janus-faced impact civil action can have and heightens the importance of understanding its logic and tracing its various effects.

The relational perspective that informs this project directs our attention to a multilevel analysis of effects that may indicate movement away from (or toward) social processes that are known to produce violence. This should include the macro indicators of conflict resolution that are often a part of conventional analyses, such as peace agreements or reductions in overall yearly violence. It should also direct our attention to the variation in violence levels in different locales in conflict-affected states, as has become common among those whose work focuses on the micro processes of conflict. Finally, at the most microlevel, we should also attend to how civil action affects the maintenance (or building) of the trusting relationships on which the open systems of governance and order that minimize overall prospects for violence depend.

Let us unpack these effects in reverse order. At its most basic level, civil action can preserve or enhance the space for human interactions that maintain relationships. Relationships are the critical social fabric on which collective action and governance are built. During the siege in Sarajevo between 1992 and 1995, for instance, women would put on lipstick, style their hair, and walk to work each day as if they were living in a normal city. Artists used satire to lampoon the war and those who engaged in it—putting on a “Miss Besieged Sarajevo 93” beauty contest and performing the musical *Hair* as a deliberate and radical rejection of the fighting (see Berry, chapter 7). This did not end the siege, but it may have weakened the recruiting efforts by the radical parties who were championing the war. Moreover, these forms of creativity and resistance helped maintain relationships and energize a collective spirit that was critical to governance during the crisis. These relationships were also central to rebuilding order after the siege was over.

In a more heartbreaking example, the White Helmets in Syria, considered for a Nobel Peace Prize in 2016, have saved tens of thousands of lives by rushing

(Pearlman, chapter 2). These efforts to carve out space for human interaction had obvious personal impact in the lives of those involved. But such efforts can also be important for maintaining—and, in some cases, strengthening—the social fabric that is necessary for governance, either during the war or after its conclusion. In many of even the most difficult cases, including Syria, civil action enables these relationships to develop.

Civil action may also reduce the likelihood of violence in particular spaces. As Séverine Autesserre has reported, despite widespread violence in other parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the island of Idjwi remains peaceful. Activity we would categorize as civil action by a network of grass-roots groups—women’s groups, youth groups, religious groups, and traditional institutions—works to head off violent mobilization in Idjwi (Autesserre 2016). Similarly, civil action can tamp down violence after it has emerged, as it arguably has in Mariupol, Ukraine. Tamping down local violence is important in its own right, particularly for those living in more peaceful areas, but because violence in one locale is often used to justify violent responses in another, dampening violence in one place can also reduce the intensity of the overall conflict. Many of our cases—including Mexico, Afghanistan, Northern Ireland, and even Bosnia—offer evidence linking civil action to declining levels of local violence.

Along with the general literature, we are also interested in whether or not a war ends. We look for links between civil action and the ultimate resolution of a conflict. The settlement of the Liberia Civil War we mentioned at the beginning of the chapter is one example. The “sex strike” was only a small part of this; overall, a variety of civil actions undertaken by the movement played a critical role in the steps that led to the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement (Gberie 2005). Evidence from two of the cases, Colombia (Rettberg, chapter 10) and the Basque Country in Spain (Argomaniz, chapter 9), also links civil action to processes that contributed to the resolution of the conflict.

1.6. How Civil Action Matters: Processes and Relationships

Like civil resistance, civil action should work through its effect on relationships. Avoiding violence—peaceable behavior—is key. Violence often results from efforts to achieve something without earning it according to established social rules (Gould 2003). It frequently works to undermine established collective purpose. Even violence by government forces often reveals failures or injustices in governance processes or attempts to use the authority of government to benefit few rather than many. Violence is often justified with an appeal to enmity,

closure chokes information flow and arouses suspicion around those with ties to the other.⁷ If social capital in a group is gained by reproducing biases instead of by assessing the consistency or accuracy of information, it amplifies bias and encourages the "othering" that is key to polarization. As we discussed earlier, this situation also allows for opportunism.

When individuals can kill to grab land for themselves in the name of collective purpose, it can spur retribution and spark a spiral in which violence begets violence (Kalyvas 2000). Although a collective intensity of purpose can spike during violence, the results rarely generate collective benefits and often lead to regret (Hedges 2002). Violence is not only destructive to life and property; it also leaves those it spares socially damaged, reducing openness, allowing solidarity to be exclusive and prone to opportunism, and restricting new connections. The wounds are lasting.

Civil action's nonviolent and minimally respectful behavior (either in ordinary daily existence, such as toward those one shares a Friday market with, or based on shared concern about important social issues, such as the commitment to democracy) can help build more open solidarity. Although much civil action work focuses shared social purpose, shared daily experiences can bring people together around an experience—such as wanting to keep the market open. The solidarity that is generated by working to keep the market open can generate conversations about different approaches to social issues—and the reverse.

Respectful behavior generates a predisposition toward inclusiveness. Recognizing someone as worthy of respect, even in a nominal way, is often puts a break on polarization. Staying open to connecting with others and encouraging information to flow, even among those who see situations differently, allows for new interpretations of social situations. Openness to connections and to information are key mechanisms for resisting the poison closure process that But (2005) and others have warned against.

The "mere civility" on which our concept of civil action relies requires neither a censoring of disagreement nor placing restrictions on resistance to injustice, repression, or violence. Indeed, disagreement, resistance to wrongs, and conversations about them are key to resisting complicity in violence or injustice. Its focus on decorum and respect as tools to encourage conversations also has critical importance for relational dynamics. These parameters for action foster connections, solidarity among connections, and openness among connections. Its *reluctance to violence* is fundamental to each. Through these mechanisms, civil action is more likely to maintain or build relationships upon which an effective and just governance can be built—those that are most likely to maximize voice in keeping with a collective purpose and thus productive in generating a resilient

Connections. Connections are fundamental to collective action. More people participating in a more meaningful way is key to successful civil resistance (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011, 30). The reason civil resistance works better than its violent alternative is that it is more likely to attract large numbers of participants across a broad spectrum of society. In South Africa and El Salvador widespread participation was key to changing governmental behavior (Wood 2000). Corporate elites at Nestle and Shell (Friedman 2006, 50) and military elites in Yemen (Brooks 2013; Nepstad 2013) also shifted their perspectives and behavior as a result of large movements. And new norms often reach tipping points once they are held by a large enough group, at which they have cascading effects (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). Thus far in studied history, if enough people participate in a movement, it is successful—the so-called 3.5 percent rule (Chenoweth 2013). Successful movements often turn societal authorities away from a regime, leaving them either agnostic toward or supportive of the movement. This dynamic is associated with civil resistance campaigns that are both successful and result in more democratic processes.

Solidarity. For connections to gain meaning there must be a collective logic to them—some agreement or solidarity within a group around a purpose. Our conception that civil action encourages articulation and voice around moral and ethical commitments, or purpose, is critical to developing solidarity. Building solidarity requires communication, but its form can vary from clandestine conversations that can be critical to organization to open political speeches or subtler public demonstrations of meaning. Civil action can thus be highly contentious.⁸ But to be civil, action should demonstrate some capacity to tolerate and even respect those with whom one disagrees. Doing so enables active conversations about social issues that can both attract the like-minded and hold open the most potential for persuading others—or generating creative new understandings. Civil action may also reveal ways to shape incentives that pull in participants or gather followers who may be less committed to a cause but are eager to continue particular relationships.⁹ Balancing these twin impulses, toward connection and toward solidarity, increases the potential to generate solidarity among more people. Solidarity, though, is a Janus-faced mechanism. It is critical to civil action's potential but can also be a source of uncivil action.

Openness. Openness to information, connections, and opportunities is critical for keeping meaningful relationships vibrant. Change is ubiquitous and remaining open to information allows groups to identify problems and opportunities. Furthermore, innovative responses are often the product of connections with other networks (Granovetter 1973; Padgett and Powell 2012).¹⁰ Brokers,

mechanisms through which innovative ideas for resolving the conflict originate (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001; Goddard 2012). Brokers' potential for innovation is similarly elevated by openness to arguments for reconstructed meanings, or shifts in solidarity logic. Openness is also important for avoiding opportunistic action, when brokers use the meaning surrounding social purpose for personal gain (often with the use of violence) at costs to the purpose. Information flow and openness to outside sources make it more difficult to hide such moves and easier to generate social reactions that punish opportunism and reward behavior that appeals to common concerns. Openness to information can thus interrupt processes of closure. It can also allow the consideration of alternatives that can engender commonality or reduce violence. The commitment to remain open to information should encourage openness and interrupt closure even within large solidarity networks.

Civil action thus aims to manage the different social benefits that come through connections and solidarity by recognizing the social value of trust in particular relationships (Burt 2005) but being biased toward openness. Through these mechanisms civil action can affect mobilization processes, framing, the perception of opportunities or threats, and repertoires of action. It can thus affect the balance between contention and interaction that is key to conflict dynamics (McAdam et al. 2001, 17). There is always the potential, though, for solidarity to become captured, for brokers to use their positions opportunistically, and for social capital to be bound to a particular vision, leading to uncivil action—that is, exclusion and othering. Just because an actor takes civil action one day does not mean it will the next. Under what circumstances does civil action seem most likely to maintain relationships, reduce levels of local violence, or affect the overall dynamics of the conflict?

1.7. When Does Civil Action Work?

To begin, civil action appears most likely to reduce violence when it resonates locally. Local dynamics play the largest role in shaping civil action's relational potential. Local actors are those whose lives have built quotidian and other connections that they can pull into local political and social circles to enable more consequential action (Parkinson 2013; Braun 2016). Cultivation of even very personal relationships can maintain civil space in the middle of a conflict. Preexisting connections and organization can also be redeployed for civil action during a conflict. This can be important given the difficulty of organizing amid violence or in periods of polarization. Robert Braun (2016) has documented how the strong networks of trust and empathy that developed among members of a minority church in a majority dominated local neighborhood contributed to

they were the minority and Protestants when they were to rescue Jews during the Holocaust. Long-standing connections can also link networks in new ways when individuals play multiple roles and thus can act as what network theorists refer to as "multiplex nodes" (Padgett and Powell 2012). Public efforts to resist violence, even in private arenas such as artistic performance or ways of dressing, can also generate solidarity and attract others to strengthen local relationships. And new connections can be important for reconfiguring how people identify. Identifying in different ways often leads actors to move between more and less violence (McAdam et al. 2001).

Transnational civil action can contribute resources, organization, and new ideas, but its impact on relationships and violence is often secondary and may be distorted if it does not tap into, and further develop, local connections. This finding ratifies what some have already shown: international help yields its intended result in conjunction with local actors and relationships at various levels (Murdie 2014; Campbell 2017), but these relationships are often fraught (Autesserre 2014). Relationships with international groups may lead organizations on the ground taking civil action to gain material support but lose legitimacy (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). Transnational civil action by those who misunderstand local relationships may be resisted or co-opted, or it may backfire. Even when it has a positive impact on the local economy or other social benefits, transnational civil action may still feed into violence if its impact threatens those committed to uncivil action (Zürcher, chapter 8). Though the dynamics change from case to case, in general we find that local relational dynamics play a critical role. This also suggests that transnational actors should attend as much to the relational impact their intervention has as they do to the type of intervention or level of resources behind it.

Second, civil action by any one party is not determinative; it is interaction that shapes relationships and leads to, or away from, violence. Interactions have greater impact with greater *coordination*. Coordination helps to pull the actors taking civil action into a wave, increasing the potential to make even more connections and encouraging solidarity. In Tuzla, coordination among political parties and then the creation of the Tuzla Citizens' Forum enabled synchronization among the many different organizations that were engaged in civil action in the city, including different parts of the local government (Berry, chapter 7). On the outskirts of Lima, popular theater groups coordinated with women's associations and other community organizations to resist insurgent violence and to denounce the state's human rights abuses, demonstrating that greater coordination, even among low-capacity groups, can have effect (Zech, chapter 3). We find many instances in which coordination builds on existing organizations but allows them greater impact than if they were working alone. All the cases we examine in which civil action had an impact on local violence involved

Third, a greater *breadth* of actors undertaking civil action also enhances its potential impact. Differences along ethnic, religious, class, political, gender, or other lines means that actors have different bases of authority and different constituencies. As more of them tap into their respective networks, they bring more potential participants to engage in civil action. They also can shape a more inclusive solidarity and help translate its meaning for people in different societal positions. When activists are joined by housewives and lawyers and business people and church leaders, civil action is more impactful. Within-case comparisons of different cities during the 1990s Bosnian conflict (Berry, chapter 7) and recent violence in Mexico (Ley and Guzmán, chapter 6) demonstrate different ways in which diversity and breadth of participation can matter.

Often, conflicts end not because the two sides finally come to terms over what they have been fighting about but because the character of the sides changes or how they see themselves shifts. McAdams et al.'s (2001, 191–94) analysis of the civil war that did not occur in Spain provides a useful illustration. Contention in Spain was diverted away from violence by new connections (in particular, deepening relationships with Europe) that strengthened a focus on Spain as a democracy and on modern economic relations. These frames changed the way elites saw themselves vis-à-vis those they represented and thus the type of action they saw as productive. Goddard's (2012) analysis of brokers in Northern Ireland also demonstrated that peace can be found in shifting identities. The cases examined here show how civil action can matter for these shifts. Argomaniz (chapter 9) finds a similar dynamic in the Basque region of Spain, where peace activists were able to shift the narrative in ways that drew in a great breadth of participants to work in complement to, if not coordination with, shifts in the government's strategy.

We also include a cautionary note about the interaction between civil and uncivil actions. Extreme levels of polarization and violence can make civil action dangerous, limiting its likelihood and effect (Fujii 2009). As the example of Prijedor, Bosnia, demonstrates, sustained organization around exclusion, othering, and violence can erode trust in relationships, unsettle norms, and raise the costs of undertaking civil action (chapter 7). And the case studies of Syria and Peru demonstrate civil actions can have a boomerang effect that escalates violence even as they transform action possibilities. Notwithstanding these cautions, Table 1.1 summarizes the actors, mechanisms, conditioning factors and outcomes associated with the civil action described in this volume.¹¹

We look separately at our three different dependent variables or effects. This is useful for better understanding shifts in conflict dynamics, particularly over short periods of time. In the longer term, however, these effects are rarely distinct. Civil action that works to maintain or enhance relationships is crucial for the local social fabric, but it can also, with coordination and broad participation,

Table 1.1 Repertoires of Civil Action¹¹

Actors	Mechanism/civil actions	Factors conditioning civil action's effects	Outcomes
Government authorities	<i>Nonviolence</i> Denounce/resist violence Monitor violence Maintain restraint	Quality of local ties (+)	Preserve and build relationships
Citizen groups		Prior relationships and organization (+)	Dampen local violence
Religious authorities	<i>Connections</i> Promote dialogue Aid/rescue	Coordination of action (+)	Move toward conflict settlement
Local companies			
Artists and journalists	Collaborate with other nonviolent action	Breadth of actors taking action (+)	
Transnational advocates	Offer engagement with opponents	Intensity of violence/polarization (–)	
Transnational implementers	<i>Solidarity</i> Assert/create collective frames		
Transnational companies	Assert commonality Name and shame perpetrators		
International Organizations	Create conflict aware practices Aid/rescue		
	<i>Openness</i> Facilitate information exchange Report on violence		

to lead to less violence overall. Although we examine each case separately for analytical ease, it is worth noting their relationship to one another.

1.8. Cases and Outcomes

We trace the logic of civil action and its effects through nine case studies. The case studies examine the actions of a variety of authorities undertaking civil action in an array of violent conflict situations. The cases ask whether civil action (and by whom or what) contributed to the maintenance of relationships, the level of actual violence, or the ending of conflict. Our goal is to introduce and ex-

conflict dynamics, foster additional research on its effects, and ultimately lead to greater understanding and better policy.

We group the chapters according to the primary relational outcome on which they focus. Though many of the chapters are built around within-case comparisons, and thus exhibit a variety of outcomes, their attention is primarily directed toward maintaining relationships, levels of local violence, or the conflict overall. Part I contains three chapters that examine how civil action primarily worked to maintain or build relationships even in the midst of extreme violence.

Chapter 2, by Wendy Pearlman, examines civil action in Syria's current conflict. Although she notes the role of civil action in leading to repressive violence against protesters in the first place, her primary point is to demonstrate the endurance, and even blossoming, of civil action amid an extraordinary level of violence by the regime, and then a violent resistance to it. Pearlman charts two phases. In the first, a popular uprising saw the emergence of local committees that organized street protests, citizen journalists and artists who created new forums for free expression, expatriates who mobilized support, and medical teams who established alternative healthcare. In the second, after the conflict escalated to a multidimensional civil war, citizens created institutions of self-government, developed means of delivering relief and rescue to bombarded communities, and built an array of support mechanisms by and for the forcibly displaced. Though impeded by both the relative lack of preexisting organizations on which to build and the relentless and extreme violence, civil action by many different actors in Syria has carved out space for new relationships that hold a critically important place in the country's landscape. They provided a bridge away from its authoritarian past, and represented a crucial component of any hope for a more democratic future. Even as these hopes fade, it is worth reflecting on these relationships.

In chapter 3, Steven Zech analyzes how civil action by Vichama Teatro, a theater group in Peru, affected violence on the outskirts of Lima. Through its performances and commitment to nonviolence, the group was instrumental in turning a critical eye on all sides during the civil war and preventing closure in a highly polarized environment. Vichama's performances took place amid escalating terrorist violence that culminated in the brutal assassination of a key activist ally. But the community rallied around the group in the wake of this violence, and the continuation of its work opened avenues for dialogue and solidarity and helped to build connections among community members—women's associations, mother's clubs, and community groups delivering social services—across political lines. Despite the initial violence, Vichama Teatro enabled relationships that laid a foundation for less violent interactions in the

Chapter 4 is by Fletcher Cox, who focuses his research on the long-running Samburu-Turkana range war in Kenya. There, civil and uncivil action on the part of traditional authorities, local civilian groups, and the government, along with civil action by various transnational peacebuilding and development organizations, have worked to maintain the authority of local militias in ways that have frozen conflict. Although the local elders sometimes mobilize to prevent escalation, their authority is vested in exclusionary identities and violent capacities that have also inhibited the resolution of the conflict. Only a transformation of their authority will make an end to the conflict possible.

Part II contains four chapters, each examining within-case comparisons of different conflicts to demonstrate civil action's effects on levels of local violence. Chapter 5 by Amy Grubb looks at the behavior of local representatives of government, particularly the police, in two communities in Northern Ireland during the Troubles. Civil action on the part of protesters and police maintained a level of calm in Omagh; whereas uncivil action by the police in Dungannon, particularly their collusion with loyalist radicals, caused violence to escalate rapidly.

Sandra Ley and Magdalena Guzmán, in chapter 6, demonstrate how civil action by businesses began processes that de-escalated criminal violence in Mexico. In Monterrey, a coordinated effort by large companies drew in parts of the national government to work alongside civil-society organizations to create a new, less corrupt police force. Training and monitoring programs also helped to moderate the violence. They were accompanied, though, by increased allegations of human rights abuses. The new connections and the breadth of participation helped contain the violence in Monterrey even though violence continued in many other parts of Mexico. The authors contrast the experience of Monterrey with that of Acapulco, where businesses did not cooperate with one another. In Acapulco, some businesses used violence as a justification to engage in uncivil action, to reap commercial advantage. And the levels of violence in Acapulco remained high.

During the Bosnian civil war in the 1990s, violence levels varied markedly in different parts of the country. In chapter 7, Marie Berry describes how different levels of civil action affected the violence in Tuzla, Sarajevo, and Prijedor. In Tuzla, civil action by a robust set of religious and other local organizations, which coordinated with one another and the local government through a "Citizen's Forum," generated solidarity, maintained and developed connections, and expanded openness in ways that contributed to the relatively peaceful outcome there. In Sarajevo, less-coordinated civil actions by a variety of groups—religious organizations, artists, NGOs, and others—generated solidarity and maintained relationships, even during the siege, but was not enough to contain

from an uncivil partisan takeover of the local government, reduced the space for civil action.

In chapter 8, Christoph Zürcher uses survey data from local communities in Afghanistan to explain at least two civil-action strategies they used to reduce violence. One involved attempts to use the Taliban's narrative in pleading with them to use restraint. The second was to claim neutrality in the fight between the government and the Taliban. Although both strategies depended on characteristics of the Taliban's local organization and generated costs, in some circumstances, the villagers reported that their actions were effective in reducing violence. Zürcher also finds that civil action involving transnational aid, though it was designed to improve villagers' lives, often did so at the cost of making local violence-reduction strategies less effective.

Part III describes two cases in which civil action was consequential for resolving the conflict. In chapter 9, Javier Argomaniz examines how a nascent peace movement in Basque Country in Spain undertook civil action to challenge the violent narratives promoted by ETA's sympathizers. In collaboration with local authorities, public figures, and other civil-society organizations, support for this movement grew over the course of decades, and eventually a narrative of peace, democracy, and human rights became dominant in Basque society. Although many other factors contributed to the conflict's resolution, civil action by the peace movement, Argomaniz argues, is essential to understand how the end to ETA violence became possible.

Angelika Rettberg, in chapter 10, focuses on the civil action undertaken by parts of the business community that helped end the conflict in Colombia. Much of her analysis seeks to understand why particular elements of the business community took action to support peace. She also demonstrates, however, that the actions these businesses took were consequential in reducing an inadvertent acceleration of violence and in aiding the effort to end the conflict more generally.

Even in highly violent contexts, civil action can affect conflict processes and outcomes. Investigating the civil action and the uncivil action of many different social identities generates new insights into the interactions that produce conflict dynamics. These insights point the way to better theorizing and a wider range of valuable policy options. The conclusion summarizes the insights gained from the case studies and extends their potential usefulness to examining contentious politics more generally, particularly in the context of contemporary political struggles.

1.9. In Sum

The volume elaborates on the logic of civil action and shows how this concept

of conflict and contentious politics literatures. Many of the chapters articulate the reasoning different authorities use to justify taking civil action. The chapters that follow build out and highlight the agency of various social actors as a function of their claims to authority, constituencies, and capabilities. They also disaggregate the ways in which civil action may affect violence: in relationships, levels of local violence, and the overall conflict. The cases described here illustrate the mechanisms through which civil action works and the conditions under which it is likely to dampen or escalate violence. By investigating the agency of a broad array of social actors and attending to the civil—as well as uncivil—actions they take, the volume provides new insights into conflict dynamics that we hope will inspire better theory and more useful policy options in conflict-affected contexts.

Notes

1. *Lysistrata* is a classical Greek comedy, written by Aristophanes, in which women endeavor to end the Peloponnesian War by denying all the men of the land sex.
2. Ukraine is not alone. From 2000 to 2014, over 50 percent of such mass movements have succeeded in overthrowing sitting governments (Chenoweth 2016).
3. "Pro-Russian Insurgents Retreat from Buildings in Mariupol," *CBC News*, May 16, 2014.
4. Based on an analysis by Roger Williams, respect can be based on day-to-day interactions that are unrelated to general values. This respect allows those who disagree, even vehemently, to nonetheless talk with one another. See Bejan (2017).
5. Williams founded the Rhode Island settlement on these terms. As Bejan (2017) explains, what drove Williams to the notion of "mere civility" was his strident proselytizing and the logic he thought would most likely make it successful (pp. 50–81).
6. For exceptions see Wood (2000, 2003).
7. Burt (2005) refers to this process as "echo."
8. This is in sharp contrast to Hobbesian notions of civility that advise remaining silent on issues over which there is great disagreement (Bejan 2017).
9. Rublee (2009, 116–21) outlines three mechanisms through which behavior can be shifted: persuasion (change in preferences), cost-benefit calculation, and identification (social esteem).
10. Although our overall logic is not confined to this approach, the benefits of openness we define here are similar to those described in North, Wallis, and Weingast (2009).
11. It is possible, indeed probable, that the authority that an actor—or actors—claims affects the civil action it undertakes and the reception of that action.

References

- Ahrens, Ariel, and Charles King. 2012. "The Warlord as Arbitrageur." *Theory and Society* 41: 169–186.
- Alt, James E., Jeffrey Frieden, Michael J. Gilligan, Dani Rodrik, and Ronald Rogowski. 1996. "The Political Economy of International Trade: Enduring Puzzles and an Agenda for Inquiry." *Comparative Political Studies* 29 (6): 689–717.
- Appleby, R. Scott. 2000. *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation*.

- Arjona, Ana, Nelson Kasfir, and Zachariah Manjiilly. 2015. *Rebel Governance in Civil War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Auteserre, Severine. 2014. *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Auteserre, Severine. 2016. "Here's What Congo Can Teach the World about Peace." *Monkey Cage*, October 19. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/10/19/heres-what-this-islant-in-congo-can-teach-the-world-about-peace/>.
- Avant, Deborah, Martha Finnemore, and Susan Sell. 2010. *Who Governs the Globe?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Avant, Deborah, and Oliver Westerwinter. 2016. *The New Power Politics: Networks and Transnational Security Governance*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Banfield, J., Virginia Haufler, and Damian Lilly. 2005. *Transnational Corporations in Conflict-Prone Zones: Public Policy Responses and a Framework for Action*. Milton Park: Taylor & Francis.
- Barnett, Michael, and Martha Finnemore. 2004. *Rules for the World*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Barth, Fredrik, ed. 1969. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- Bebbington, Anthony, Teresa Bornschlegl, and Adrienne Johnson. 2013. "Political Economies of Extractive Industry: From Documenting Complexity to Informing Current Debates." *Development and Change*. <https://doi:10.1111/dech.12057>.
- Bejan, Teresa. 2017. *Mere Civility: Disagreement and the Limits of Toleration*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Brandon, Laura. 2007. *Art and War*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Braun, Robert. 2016. "Religious Minorities and Resistance to Genocide: The Collective Rescue of Jews in the Netherlands during the Holocaust." *American Political Science Review* 110 (1): 127–147.
- Brooks, Risa. 2013. "Abandoned at the Palace: Why the Tunisian Military Defected from the Ben Ali Regime in January 2011." *Journal of Strategic Studies*: 205–220.
- Burt, Ronald S. 2005. *Brokerage and Closure: An Introduction to Social Capital*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bybee, Keith. 2016. *How Civility Works*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Campbell, Susanna. 2017. *Global Governance and Local Peace*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Clausewitz, Carl von. 1989. *On War*. Edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Chenoweth, Erica. 2013. "The Success of Nonviolent Civil Resistance." TEDx Talk. September 21, Boulder, Colorado.
- Chenoweth, Erica, and Maria J. Stephan. 2011. *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Chenoweth, Erica. 2016. "Why Is Nonviolent Resistance on the Rise?" *Diplomatic Courier* (June 28).
- Doyle, Michael, and Nicholas Sambanis. 2006. *Making War and Building Peace: UN Peace Operations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Elias, Norbert. (1939) 1978. *The Civilizing Process*. Translated by Edmund Jephcott. New York: Urizen Books.
- Esteban, Joan, and Gerald Schneider. 2008. "Polarization and Conflict: Theoretical and Empirical Issues." *Journal of Peace Research* 45 (2): 131–141.
- Finnemore, Martha, and Katherine Sikkink. 1998. "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change." *International Organization* 52 (4): 887–917.
- Friedman, Monroe. 2006. "Using Consumer Boycotts to Stimulate Corporate Policy Changes: Marketplace, Media, and Moral Considerations." In *Politics, Products, and Markets: Exploring Political Consumerism Past and Present*, edited by Michele Micheletti, Andreas Follesdal, and Dietlind Stolle, 45–62. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

- Fuji, Lee Ann. 2009. *Killing Neighbors: Webs of Violence in Rwanda*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- García Durán, S. J., Mauricio. 2005. "To What Extent Is There a Peace Movement in Colombia? An Assessment of the Country's Peace Mobilization, 1978–2003." PhD dissertation, University of Bradford.
- Gberie, Lansana. 2005. "Liberia's War and Peace Process: A Historical Overview." In *A Tortuous Road to Peace: The Dynamics of Regional, UN and International Humanitarian Interventions in Liberia*, edited by Festus Aboagye and Alhaji Bah, 51–72. Pretoria, South Africa: Institute for Security Studies.
- Gerth, H. H., and C. Wright Mills. 1946. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Goddard, Stacie E. 2012. "Brokerage Peace: Networks, Legitimacy, and the Northern Ireland Peace Process." *International Studies Quarterly* 56 (3): 501–515.
- Goddard, Stacie, and Daniel Nexon. 2016. "The Dynamics of Global Power Politics." *Journal of Global Security Studies* 1 (1): 4–18.
- Gould, Roger V. 2003. *Collision of Wills: How Ambiguity about Social Rank Breeds Conflict*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Granovetter, Mark S. 1973. "The Strength of Weak Ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 78 (6): 1360–1380.
- Greskovits, Béla. 2017. Rebuilding the Hungarian Right through Civil Organization and Contentment: The Civic Circles Movement. EUI Working Paper RSCAS 2017/37.
- Grubb, Amy. 2016. "Microlevel Dynamics of Violence: Explaining Variation in Violence among Rural Districts during Northern Ireland's Troubles." *Security Studies* 25 (3): 460–487.
- Guerra Curvelo, Weidner. 2004. *La Disputa y la Palabra: La Ley en la Sociedad Wayuu*. Bogotá, Colombia: Ministerio de Cultura.
- Harcup, Tony. 2014. "The CNN Effect." *A Dictionary of Journalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Haufler, Virginia. 2010. *A Public Role for the Private Sector*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Hedges, Chris. 2002. *War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Hendrix, Cullen S., and Wendy H. Wong. 2014. "Knowing Your Audience: How the Structure of International Relations and Organizational Choices Affect Amnesty International's Advocacy." *Review of International Organizations* 9 (1): 29–58.
- Hirschman, Albert O. 1970. *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Howard, Michael. 1970. *War and European History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kalyvas, Stathis. 2006. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kaplan, Oliver. 2013a. "Nudging Armed Groups: How Civilians Transmit Norms of Protection." *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development* 2 (3): 62.
- Kaplan, Oliver. 2013b. "Protecting Civilians in Civil War: The Institution of the ATCC in Colombia." *Journal of Peace Research* 50 (3): 351–367.
- Kaplan, Oliver. 2017. *Resisting War: How Communities Protect Themselves*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Keck, Margaret E., and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Kupchan, Charles, A. 2010. *How Enemies Become Friends: The Sources of Stable Peace*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Litvin, Daniel. 2004. *Empires of Profit: Commerce, Conquest and Corporate Responsibility*. New York: Texere.
- Loader, Ian, and Neil Walker. 2007. *Civilizing Security*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Luft, Aliza. 2015. "Towards a Dynamics Theory of Action at the Micro-Level of Genocide: Killing, Desistance, and Saving in 1994 Rwanda." *Sociological Compass* 33 (2): 148–172.
- Marten, Kimberly. 2012. *Warlords: Strong-Arm Brokers in Weak States*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

- McAdam, Doug, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly. 2001. *Dynamics of Contention*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mirshak, Dima Jamali Ramez. 2010. "Business-Conflict Linkages: Revisiting MNCs, CSR, and Conflict." *Journal of Business Ethics* 93 (3): 443-464.
- Muggah, Robert, and Keith Krause. 2009. Closing the Gap between Peace Operations and Post-Conflict Insecurity: Towards a Violence Reduction Agenda. *International Peacekeeping* 16 (1): 136-150.
- Murdie, Amanda. 2014. *Help or Harm: The Human Security Effects of International NGOs*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Nelson, Jane. 2000. *The Business of Peace*. Report. London: International Alert, the Council on Economic Priorities, the Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum.
- Nepstad, Sharon Erickson. 2011. *Nonviolent Revolutions: Civil Resistance in the Late 20th Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nepstad, S. E. 2013. "Matiny and Nonviolence in the Arab Spring: Exploring Military Defections and Loyalty in Egypt, Bahrain, and Syria." *Journal of Peace Research* 50 (3): 337-349.
- North, Douglass. 1986. "The New Institutional Economics." *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics* 142 (1): 230-237.
- North, Douglass C., John Joseph Wallis, and Barry R. Weingast. 2009. *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Owun, Victor Odundo, and Scott Wiser. 2014. "The Role of Kenya's Private Sector in Peacebuilding." OEF Reference policy brief. One Earth Future, Broomfield, CO. <http://oefresearch.org/publications/policy-brief-role-private-sector-peacebuilding>
- Padgett, John F., and Walter W. Powell. 2012. *The Emergence of Organizations and Markets*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Patfaholtz, Thania, ed. 2010. *Civil Society and Peacebuilding: A Critical Assessment*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- Parkinson, Sarah. 2013. Organizing Rebellion: Rethinking High-Risk Mobilization and Social Networks in War. *American Political Science Review* 107 (3): 418-432.
- Peon, Sorpong. 2002. The UN, Peacekeeping, and Collective Human Security: From an Agenda for Peace to the Brahimi Report. *International Peacekeeping* 9 (2): 51-68.
- Raz, Joseph, ed. 1990. *Authority*. New York: New York University Press.
- Reitberg, Angelika. 2009. "Business and Peace in Colombia: Responses, Challenges, and Achievements." In *Colombia: Building Peace in a Time of War*, edited by Virginia M. Bouvier, 191-204. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Roberts, Adam. 2009. Introduction to Civil Resistance and Power Politics: *The Experience of Nonviolent Action from Gandhi to the Present*, edited by Adam Roberts and Timothy Garton Ash. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Robinson, Piets. 2002. *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News, Foreign Policy, and Intervention*. New York: Routledge.
- Rubee, Maria. 2009. *Nonproliferation Norms: Why States Choose Nuclear Restraint*. Athens: University of Georgia.
- Schmitt, Carl. 1996. *The Concept of the Political*. Translated by George Schwab. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Schulze, Julianne. 1998. *Rewiring the Fourth Estate: Democracy, Accountability and the Media*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sharp, Gene. 2011. *Sharp's Dictionary of Power and Struggle: Language of Civil Resistance in Conflicts*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sisk, Timothy D. 2011. *Between Terror and Tolerance: Religious Leaders, Conflict, and Peacemaking*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
- Sisk, Timothy D. 2013. *Statebuilding*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Soule, Sarah A. 2009. *Contention and Corporate Social Responsibility*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Solingen, Erel. 2007a. *Nuclear Logics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Solingen, Erel. 2007b. "Pax Asiatca versus Bella Levantina: The Foundations of War and Peace in East Asia and the Middle East." *American Political Science Review* 101 (4): 757-780.
- Staub, Ervin. 1996. "Cultural-Societal Roots of Violence: The Examples of Genocidal Violence and of Contemporary Youth Violence in the United States." *American Psychologist* 51 (2): 117-132.
- Terry, Fiona. 2002. *Condemned to Repeat? The Paradox of Humanitarian Action*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Tilly, Charles. 2003. *The Politics of Collective Violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tilly, Charles. 2006. *Identities, Boundaries, and Social Ties*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Press.
- Valentino, Benjamin. 2004. *Final Solutions: Mass Killing and Genocide in the 20th Century*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Van Cott, Donna Lee. 2006. "Community Justice in the Andes?" In *Informal Institutions and Democracy: Lessons from Latin America*, edited by Gretchen Helmke and Steven Levitsky, 249-273. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Vashney, Ashutosh. 2001. "Ethnic Conflict and Civil Society: India and Beyond." *World Politics* 53 (3): 362-398.
- Wachtkekon, Leonard. 2004. "The Paradox of 'Wardlord' Democracy: A Theoretical Investigation." *American Political Science Review* 98 (1): 17-33.
- Walter, Barbara, and Jack Snyder. 1999. *Civil War, Insecurity, and Intervention*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Weinstein, Jeremy. 2006. *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wood, Elisabeth Jean. 2000. *Forging Democracy from Below: Insurgent Transitions in South Africa and El Salvador*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Wood, Elizabeth Jean. 2003. *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Vargas, Gonzalo. 2014. *La responsabilidad social empresarial en la construcción de paz: una introducción*. Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes.

Ward, Michael, and David Davis. 1992. "Sizing up the Peace Dividend: Economic Growth and Military Spending in the United States, 1948–1996." *American Political Science Review* 86 (3): 748–755.

World Bank. 2016. *Doing Business 2016: Measuring Regulatory Quality and Efficiency*. Washington, DC: World Bank Group. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-0667-4>.

World Bank. 2018. Data from Colombia. http://data.worldbank.org/country/colombia;https://www.google.com.co/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncpjo8f9_&ctype=&strail=false&bc=d&nselm=h&met_y=ny_gdp_mktip_kd_zg&scale_y=lin&ind_y=false&rdim=region&idim=country:COL&fidim=region&hl=es&dl=es&ind=false#ictype=&strail=false&bc=d&nselm=h&met_y=ny_gdp_mktip_kd_zg&scale_y=lin&ind_y=false&rdim=region&idim=country:COL&fidim=region&tstart=-254775600000&tend=151245000000&hl=es&dl=es&ind=false.

11

Conclusion

DEBORAH AVANT, ERICA CHENOWETH, RACHEL EPSTEIN,
AND CULLEN HENDRIX

11.1. Introduction

We began this project with questions about how nonviolent actions by nonstate authorities affect violence during conflicts. A reluctance to define our project by what it was not propelled us to search for a positive term to describe these activities. Our concept of civil action takes inspiration from civil resistance but broadens the ends to which it can be used, further develops the notion of civility on which it is based, and opens paths for understanding civil action on the part of a wide range of authorities working in and outside of governments. The nine case studies in this book have illustrated a range of different civil actions and how they matter for the resolution of conflict, the degrees of violence in different areas, and the capacity for relationships in the midst of conflict.

Our conclusion synthesizes what we have learned about civil action from our case studies and how it intersects with various ongoing concerns in the field. We offer a series of propositions and questions that we hope will prompt further research on civil action, its causes, and its effects. As the project unfolded, we could not help but notice the irony of writing about civil action even as politics in the United States, Europe, and beyond, grew increasingly polarized. Our final section thus ponders the relevance of civil action in less violent situations, how the growing importance of connections through social media might shape its likelihood and effect, and whether civil action can be a tool for advancing exclusionary goals.

11.2. What Have We Learned?

The case studies in this volume have demonstrated a broad range of civil action.

context of at least minimal respect for the opposing parties take multiple forms. Civil action highlighted in the preceding chapters includes the provision of medical assistance and food, the collection and dissemination of information about conflict conditions and human welfare, civil disobedience and protest, corporate coordination with public authorities to improve police efficacy, and artistic expression that questions and challenges the legitimacy of violence. These strategies change conflict trajectories in ways that often dampen violence. They also, however, can have unintended consequences that can cause the violence to increase or result in forms of social exclusion that augur poorly for postconflict peacebuilding. Here we draw out some of the major findings, including those that are contradictory, in an effort also to point to potential avenues for ongoing research.

11.2.1. Propositions from the Case Studies

The actors involved in civil action are diverse, and their different authority claims condition both their motivations for engaging in civil action and their repertoires of civil action. This finding may seem self-evident, but it is important to recognize nonetheless. In the case studies, civil actions were undertaken by a remarkably diverse set of actors, ranging from tribal leaders (Afghanistan, Kenya) to religious leaders and institutions (Basque Country, Northern Ireland, and Bosnia), entertainers and performers (Peru), commercial firms (Mexico, Colombia), formal and informal community groups and social movements (omnipresent). Although they were not an explicit focus on our case-study chapters, we could add to this list the media, transnational activist networks, international organizations such as the Red Cross, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme, and trade unions. Indeed, producing an exhaustive list of real and potential nonviolent actors in violent contexts would be virtually impossible.

These diverse actors gain authority in different ways that give them different motivations for engaging in civil action. Tribal leaders were motivated both to protect their communities and to sustain and reinforce their claims to authority over those communities. Religious leaders and institutions were motivated to preserve the social role of their organizations, as well as by a desire to extend their influence and provide moral and spiritual support to both affected communities and combatants (even if at cross purposes). Entertainers and performers were motivated to comment on and critique their violent surroundings, mining their context for deeper social meaning and beauty. Commercial firms were motivated to create more opportune circumstances for commerce,

Formal and informal community groups and social movements, however, were characterized by an even more varied set of motivations, ranging from community protection (in many cases) to advocacy for women's rights (Peru) and non-violent regime change (Syria). Moreover, in some cases, the lines between actor types were blurred, as in the case of Peru, where the theater group was an extension of a community organization. Any attempt to develop a general theory of civil action must confront the reality that the actors involved are remarkably diverse, which makes inferring predictable patterns of behavior among them quite complicated.

Similarly, these diverse actors have distinct repertoires of civil action. In chapter 1, we highlighted the diversity of both the actors and the mechanisms and actions by which they would seek to tamp down violence (see Table 1.1). Our case studies suggest that most of these actors engage in different repertoires of actions in attempting to affect violence. Tribal leaders used their informal authority to offer engagement with opponents, monitor the violence and maintain restraint, and exchange information. Religious leaders asserted collective frames for action (both civil and uncivil), maintained restraint but in other instances promoted incivility, and offered aid and rescue. Entertainers and performers used theater, dance, and other means to assert collective frames, denounce the violence, and provide positive cultural experiences in otherwise very difficult and trying contexts. Commercial firms used their market power, economic leverage, and connections to encourage the reform of security practices and to name and shame bad behavior. Finally, community groups and social movements engaged in all these actions and more, including mass mobilization to make claims against both state and nonstate armed actors.

11.2.1.1. In Conflict Settings, Civil Action Can Carve Out Space for Alternative Narratives That Contest Violent Action

This was among the most common findings of our authors. In nearly every case, civil action provided an alternative narrative to those that championed violence. In Peru, Zech showed the degree to which theater groups secured a separate space for those unpersuaded by or disillusioned with Shining Path's objectives and use of violence, but also frustrated with the government's response. The Vichama theater group of Villa El Salvador drew diverse communities into efforts to promote education, women's empowerment and honest confrontations with trauma. It thus offered a very distinct set of priorities from combatants on either side of the civil war. Similarly, Argumaniz documented the succession of protest organizations that critiqued Basque nationalism.

violence without giving up the pursuit of Basque identity. Their protest activities demonstrated alternative pathways to dignity and freedom. Over decades, the space these peace movements created generated a path that accumulated overwhelming public support. The pacifying role of nonviolent narratives spawned by civil action is also central to Berry's chapter on the microdynamics of war in Bosnia. In Tuzla and Sarajevo, civil action sustained narratives of inclusion, nonviolence and the value of the diversity rooted in these cities' histories, even as Serb and Croat nationalists and Jihadists peddled an opposing violent narrative. Rettberg's chapter on the Colombian private sector's engagement in the peace process also shows civil action creating additional space. In that case, business-led projects allowed local communities to profit from peace-related work, which had the broader effect of cultivating support for finalizing the peace negotiations. In each instance, civil action created space for organizing a constituency around peace and allowed constituents to both engage with one another and draw in others.

11.2.1.2. *Civil Action Can Create Platforms from Which Leaders Committed to Nonviolent Management of Collective Concerns Can Emerge and Assume Authority in Domestic and International Circles*

Drawing directly from the previous proposition, civil action can propel the kind of leadership necessary for organizing nonviolent alternatives. Zech, in Peru, gave us the example of María Elena Moyano, a peace and women's rights activist, who was elected deputy mayor of Villa El Salvador before she was murdered in 1992. Although our case studies do not detail postconflict developments, the cultivation of leaders steeped in civil action, peaceful opposition, and democratic sensibility are invaluable to postconflict transitions. The experience and public recognition they gain in the midst of conflict can position them for more successful leadership after it ends. Ley and Guzmán depicted similar leadership development in Mexico among a group of powerful business leaders in the state of Monterrey. The authors credit the state's business elites with breaking the critical link between criminal violence and government officials that had long made corruption possible. Zürcher, examining Afghanistan, also observes the extent to which dealing with conflict and violence requires leadership and tends to reinforce those that emerge to provide this function. In that case, the elders serving on village councils who negotiated with armed groups, devised strategies for self-defense and navigated the tricky dilemmas posed by foreign aid developed important skills and followings. In sum, civil action in conflict settings provides an opportunity for new kinds of leaders to emerge, or for ex-

Conclusion

11.2.1.3. *Civil Action Can Improve the Availability and Accuracy of Information*

Cox's chapter on the Turkana-Samburu range war in northern Kenya demonstrated three ways in which civil action improved information flow reducing the frequency (if not the severity) of violent outbreaks. Community-based organizations in collaboration with elders and even militias on both sides of the conflict developed, through their extensive networks, thorough-going monitoring capacities to anticipate violence and, in some cases, forestall conflict. At the same time, the elders in these communities used their privileged access to information to dispel rumors of pending attacks, which also served to abate conflict. Turkana and Samburu elders also shared information with one another to dampen violence—demonstrating the constructive effect of minimal respect among opposing parties for encouraging restraint. Pearlman's chapter on Syria also showed the intrepid efforts of "citizen journalists," which had already begun in the early phase of the conflict between the regime and protestors, before the violence erupted. In that instance, emerging citizen journalists confronted a hostile environment in which the government-controlled media repressed news about the protests and misrepresented the intentions of those who mobilized (claiming they were criminally motivated or directed by foreigners). As the conflict progressed and became more brutal, citizen journalists continued to inform the world about the deteriorating human rights conditions, severe privation, torture, and civilian deaths—and they maintained this effort even after prominent organizations, including the UN, had given up. Whereas the Syrian case demonstrates that improved information does not necessarily catalyze an international response, Berry's chapter on Bosnia clearly shows that it can fuel public outrage beyond a war's borders. Indisputable evidence of atrocities compelled the international community to take action that undermined and ultimately ended the siege of Sarajevo, and ushered in the Dayton Peace Accords.

11.2.1.4. *In Many Instances, Civil Action Saves Lives*

By dampening local violence or charting paths to the resolution of conflict, civil action can save lives. In her comparative case study of Omagh and Dungannon in Northern Ireland, Grubb clearly demonstrates how civil action by the police can have life-saving effects. In Omagh, the impartiality of the police vis-à-vis competing factions represented civil action by virtue of its respect for the rule of law and the rights of citizens even if they were contesting the prevailing system. Police impartiality muted polarization, reprisals, and mistrust, making other forms of civil action aimed at violence reduction in Omagh both possible and comparatively effective. In Dungannon, by contrast, the police's lack of impartiality

police and loyalist counterprotestors left Catholics feeling alienated, suspicious, and susceptible to the more radical narratives that advocated violence. The consequences of civil action by the police—or its absence—led the death toll and frequency of violence in Dunganon to be more than twice that in Omagh over a similar time period. Pearlman's chapter on Syria also documents the degree to which civil action saves lives. The White Helmets, for instance (otherwise known as the Syrian Civil Defense) were reported to have saved 41,000 lives as of 2016. Pearlman argues in essence that if war conditions are so intense that the international aid agencies cannot access an area, action by locals is the first (and only) line of defense. Civilians, both organized, as the White Helmets were, and not, dug their compatriots out from under bombed buildings and provided medical assistance, food aid, and other humanitarian services. Many of the chapters point to civil action that was directed toward this existential end. Village elders in Afghanistan and Kenya saw saving lives as their first responsibility; businesses in both Mexico and Colombia could not tolerate continued escalating violence out of concern for humanity, and not just narrow worries about profitability; and victims' associations in Basque Country were intent on limiting the loss of loved ones for others (see the chapters by Zürcher, Cox, Ley and Guzmán, Retberg, and Argomaniz respectively).

11.2.1.5. *In Other Instances, Civil Action Improves the Quality of Life, Even Under Dehumanizing Conditions*

Saving lives is critically important, but so is making life worth living amid the extremities and indignities of war. Civil action can also work to improve the quality of life. Several of the chapters address this issue head-on, showing the inventive and courageous ways in which people connect with one another, using humor, irony, and artistic expression—both to undermine the legitimacy of violence, but also, one suspects, to claim membership in a social order that actively affirms peaceful engagement with others. Zech's chapter on Peru provides the purest example of this kind of community building: when theater became a refuge and its own, nonmilitaristic form of self-defense. Berry also chronicles how in Sarajevo, certain small acts of defiance, as well as satire, built solidarity and unexpected endurance among the population. By exposing and ridiculing the hypocrisy of those perpetrating violence, Sarajevans created a context in which to consolidate their shared sense of truth and justice. This made individuals less vulnerable to fatigue and hopelessness than would have otherwise been the case. Argomaniz, too, points to the ways in which the use of dramatic effect—especially through silent protests—attracted broader public attention. But the theatrical approach was also particularly resonant. Continued reference to

anticonflict narratives and images, cleverly delivered, enhanced the appeal of the peace movement and thus its capacity to build solidarity in a sustained way over time. Preserving civil activity against violence in Basque Country was no small feat given the extent to which people can be accommodated to a status quo, even a violent one. Even more practically, in the case of Colombia Retberg showed that many (though not all) businesses improved the quality of people's lives by preventing forced displacements, employing former combatants, and helping erstwhile combatants and victims of violence alike to reintegrate into civilian life.

11.2.1.6. *Civil Action Can Also Backfire—or Boomerang*

Civil action can generate more violence. It can also undermine existing structures that are in place to manage collective concerns without using violence. Zürcher's study on Afghanistan describes how civil action by aid agencies led to both. External aid agencies, informed by developmental goals, have pursued educational projects, including setting up schools for girls or for coeducational institutions that are, by our definition, civil. But these projects both incited attacks from the Taliban and led rivals to challenge established village elders. This has often destabilized village governance structures—reducing their capacity to manage violence. In Syria too, Pearlman reported on the multiple ways in which civil action has incited more violence, first from Bashar al-Assad's brutal regime and then from extremist responses to it. Zech's analysis of Peru similarly points to a violent response. The murder of the Peruvian peace activist and prominent feminist María Elena Moyano was undoubtedly an effort to intimidate those contemplating or planning to take civil action into remaining silent and inactive. Cox's chapter on northern Kenya argues that civil and uncivil action there between the Samburu and Turkana are "deeply interrelated." Indeed, he documented the extent to which civil action can bleed into something much more dangerous. The same information shared among tribal leaders that can undermine pernicious rumors and, in some circumstances, build confidence and trust was also used as military intelligence to pummel the opponent once violence does erupt. As with Zürcher, Cox also finds that humanitarian assistance can have a downside. Although it helps civilian populations, it also supplies would-be and actual combatants. Finally, the reverse is also true. When uncivil action is seen as effective, it can be detrimental to civil action advocates. Retberg notes that the Colombian government's edge over the FARC, its consequent ability to push the guerrilla forces to the periphery, and the parallel success in promoting Colombian prosperity also dampened the support for negotiating a settlement with FARC. In Colombia "advocates" . . .

to undermine support for civil action. Many of our cases also reveal the contradictory effects of civil action—it can fuel violent backlash but also reignite additional civil action. We thus see many types of boomerang effects. And civil action can sometimes become a feature of the conflict itself (see especially Cox, but also Pearlman, Zürcher, and Zech).

11.2.1.7. Governing Institutions and Individuals Working in Them Affect the Likelihood That Civil Action Will Occur—and Can, at Times, Make It Nearly Impossible

Civil action is more likely in the context of impartial and effective governing institutions, even if the impartiality and effectiveness are informal or uneven across different parts of the government. Although the quality of governing institutions may not seem an obvious place to look for the sources of conflict trajectories (since we expect institutional breakdown under conflict), some of our authors highlighted this as an important variable that either creates or diminishes opportunity for civil action. The clearest example is from Grubb on Northern Ireland. The chief source of relatively less violence in Omagh compared to Dungannon was precisely the commitment to impartiality among the police, consistent with the minimal respect principle. Where impartiality reigned (in Omagh), there was much more evident space for civil action. Argomantz points to the quality of government intervention in the Basque conflict (on the part of Spain) that over time had a virtuously compounding effect with the peace movement. As Spain conferred more power and independence to a Basque regional administration (including a police force that ultimately protected peace protectors from harassment), this augmented arguments that the ETA was not the only Basque entity fighting for and securing the region's interests. Governance that enhanced representativeness there chipped away at the ETA and related-party support. Likewise, even though corruption was rife among Monterrey's local institutions, the ability of business leaders to find national-level governmental support was critical to their efforts. In the absence of governmental support, civil action can offer community and opportunities to retain or forge personal relationships and purpose. This is true even under conditions of very severe violence, intimidation, and coercion, as was the case in Peru, Syria, and Afghanistan. In contrast, Berry's analysis of the Bosnian city of Prijedor demonstrates how uncivil behavior by governing authorities can undermine the space for civil action. Serb nationalists in Prijedor worked with the Serbian government to covertly develop their own, exclusionary administrative structure, which ultimately frustrated any resistance effort. Shortly thereafter, the purges of non-Serbs began, to be followed by full-scale military assaults. Civil action may

Conclusion

also be less likely when there is unambiguous military superiority on one side. Not only are there fewer incentives to mount peaceful protests, but the danger under such circumstances may be more acute. As noted, Rettberg showed that the perceived effectiveness of the government's military efforts in Colombia diminished the support for a negotiated settlement.

In sum, even though they work through diverse actors and repertoires, the propositions reveal some common mechanisms through which civil action's creation of connections, solidarity, and openness can have an effect—by generating alternative narratives, developing new leaders, and improving the quality and quantity of information. They also hint at the interactive conditions under which civil action is likely to have its greatest impact on conflict reduction when it is locally resonant, interacts synergistically with others, and is imbued with capacity. Civil action is least likely to arise, and can backfire, when exclusion and violence are at their most extreme and backed by the governing institution.

11.2.1.8. Civil Action in These Case Studies Also Reveals Important Questions for Further Research

First, what causes civil action? This clearly important question has not been our focus, but we do offer some insights into it. One is that authority claims affect the type of civil actions actors can take. Our hunch going in was that civil action was not restricted to specific authority types and that there were logics to which authority types could be drawn to both civil and uncivil actions. Our case studies supported this. For instance, two of our chapters focused on businesses. We know that businesses do sometimes take civil action. But Ley and Guzmán on Mexico and Rettberg on Colombia, point to different kinds of actions firms took vis-à-vis these countries' respective conflicts. Rettberg finds that the private sector's propensity for civil action that was focused on conflict reduction greater among urban and exporting firms than firms located in rural areas that produced less tradable goods and services. Ley and Guzmán's analysis of firm responses to drug violence in Mexico, though, shows a somewhat different dynamic based on the levels of cooperation in different locales. Strong corporate cooperation in Monterrey led to violence reduction, while anarchic self-regard in Acapulco did not. In Monterrey, business worked closely with public authorities to create a new state police force and improved crime-reporting opportunities for citizens and stronger accountability of government officials—activities that all clearly fall under the rubric of civil action.

Religious institutions also frequently take civil action. This was evident in the Basque Country, Northern Ireland, and Bosnia, among other places. But in Bosnia, religious leaders urged restraint, tolerance, and inclusivity in some

instances, and incited violence of unimaginable brutality in others. Berry's analysis of religious leaders blessing troops before they headed off to rape, pillage, and kill in the service of ethnic and religious domination tells us that religious institutions have relationships that make them very effective at cultivating community, loyalty, and solidarity—but sometimes for murderous ends. It is unclear what would help us understand ahead of time whether the religious leaders in question (and their followers) would wind up on the civil or the uncivil sides of the war. The Bosnian example appears to point to inclusive and exclusive ideologies, as well as to violent versus nonviolent discourses. However, Braun (2016), in his analysis of Protestant and Catholic Church behavior during the Holocaust, suggests that contextual dynamics can generate more civil action or less among otherwise similar religious institutions. There are still important and unanswered questions about what leads religious, commercial, and other institutional actors to civil versus uncivil actions.

Second, how should we characterize ambiguous actions and effects? For instance, though Ley and Guzmán document the reduction of violence and crime associated with the newly recruited and trained police force that business leaders supported in Monterrey, they also note the increase in the number of human rights accusations against that new police force. It could be that the improved conditions created space for more claims, even as actual violations decreased, but we cannot rule out the opposite. One can also question whether collaboration between businesses and public authorities to eschew support for public protests of intolerable crime to enhance the government's legitimacy, was in fact civil. On the one hand, it was crucial to securing the deal that decisively reduced crime; on the other, it suppressed an arguably vital additional form of civil action. Zürcher described a similar self-policing in Afghanistan that elders undertake to maintain their communities' neutrality vis-à-vis combatants, not by contesting the Taliban's narrative but by using it—and thus sometimes reinforcing exclusion. Is such action civil or not?

The conceptualization we draw on would be satisfied with enough civility to keep the conversation going. By its nature, it depends on both its nonviolence and its reception by others as respect worthy of continued engagement but both are subject to interpretation. As Bejan notes, a call for civility raises three questions related to toleration: "1) how much difference can we bear, 2) how much must we share to make that difference bearable, and 3) where should we draw the line" (Bejan 2016, 152). In articulating a more encompassing line, Roger Williams introduced not only a more minimal standard, but one that pleaded for finding distinction between values and daily life while recognizing that they will also be mutually dependent and referential. "The meanness of Williams' civility was thus relative and relational. Any positive account of its requirements would be open

Conclusion

that any proposed list of *fundamenta*, no matter its latitude, could and would be met with conscientious dissent" (Bejan 2016, 163) Though some will doubt attempt to move beyond the ambiguity to greater clarity and specificity they should be aware of the potential injustice to the nuance critical to many interactions they may interject. We admit, though, that embracing the nuance and contextual specificity inherent in many interactions makes the concept harder to measure and assess.

Finally, what is the relationship between civil action and values? Zürcher's chapter on Afghanistan added some cautionary doubt to even the ostensible universal values of inclusivity and tolerance as a bulwark against violence. He suggests, the modernization discourse these values are a part of is seen threatening to some in Afghanistan. For instance, as we have already recounted actions to advance the interests of women and girls, including improving access to education—a goal to which the editors of this volume wholeheartedly subscribe—can serve to provoke violence and erode the existing social fabric. But Zürcher also suggests that self-policing is easier in villages that see themselves as ethnically homogeneous. Though there are many reasons to question the obvious identification of people with particular ethnicities, when ethnic narratives are prominent markers of social identity, it can create a pressure for closure that leads to trade-offs between civility, even as we have defined and violence. So, while diversity, inclusivity, and tolerance clearly contribute to dampening violence in some (perhaps most) cases when tolerance itself becomes disputed, protecting civility can accelerate violence. Indeed, as Bejan points out in her analysis of Roger Williams's practices, inclusiveness and tolerance can work at cross purposes. "Mere" civility requires only tolerance, an even that will always be subject to judgment. Scholars and practitioners often approach their subjects with liberal biases (as the editors of this volume do). It is essential to be aware, though, of the value conflicts that are often at play. In many parts of today's Afghanistan, promoting peace may be at odds with preventing some kinds of harm. Only by using that awareness can we begin to manage these conflicts more productively.

11.3. Civil Action and the Broader Literature on Conflict and War

The concept of civil action and the propositions that emerge from these case studies speak to the larger literature on peace and conflict in several important ways. First, these findings highlight and reinforce recent trends in the field that focus on the occurrence of nonviolent action amid armed conflict. For instance,

need to “unpack” peace and nonviolent action from the mere absence of violent conflict. Chenoweth, Hendrix, and Hunter (2019) show a wide range of nonviolent actions that were underway even during major civil wars in Africa, including activism that crosses borders and even continents. And recent work by Huang (2016), Kaplan (2017), Krause (2018), and Dorff (2015) suggest that collecting data on civil action during an armed action can help to produce more systematic and generalizable analysis of the onset, dynamics, and outcomes of the conflict. The concept of civil action broadens the types of events and the range of potential actors whose behavior affects conflict.

Second, some scholars have previously noted a disconnect between the literatures on conflict resolution and armed conflict (Howard and Stark 2017). While Howard and Stark (2017) analyze macro attempts at conflict resolution and their success, the observations drawn from our cases speak to the potential that focusing on micro processes brings. The brokerage function played by various actors in the context of Afghanistan, Colombia, and Syria also suggests bridges between these literatures and demonstrates the promise of integrating knowledge about arbitration, dispute resolution, and conflict management into the conventional study of war.

Third, although we do not focus specifically on the question of how civil action contributes to whether war breaks out or not, our cases do suggest ways in which civil action can matter for how wars end. For instance, some studies suggest that civil wars are particularly difficult to end when parties cannot credibly commit to maintain peace in the aftermath of mass violence (Walter 1997). Complex civil war with a high number of veto players can be especially difficult to end (Cunningham 2006). But the chapters in this book—and the concept of civil action more generally—guide the focus on civil war scholarship away from armed actors alone and suggest that unarmed actors can use nonviolent methods to negotiate with and pressure armed actors into ending their hostilities. The Basque case is particularly instructive in this regard. Moreover, our logic and cases caution against assuming that collective actors are either monolithic or unchanging. As Berry’s analysis of Sarajevo showed, civil action can make it harder for armed groups to recruit, affecting the capacity of different groups.

Finally, our findings support and amplify recent arguments that have emphasized the importance of local resonance for building peace. Severine Autesserre (2010, 2014) has shown the difficulties international peacebuilders have when they ignore local dynamics, and Susanna Campbell (2018) has shown the importance of local accountability for successful peace efforts. Cox’s analysis of Kenya and Zürcher’s investigation of Afghanistan demonstrate very similar dynamics. Civil action that is not sensitive to local dynamics can amplify rather than reduce violence and undermine institutions necessary for peace.

11.4. Navigating Slippery Conceptual Terrain: Inclusion and Exclusion

Inclusion and exclusion are central to our conception of civil action, but also civil resistance, sustainable development, and peacebuilding. The inclusion previously underrepresented or excluded groups—such as women, historical marginalized communities, indigenous groups, or youth—can be civil but also is a core concept in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and featured prominently in the 2016 revised UN peacebuilding architecture (United Nations 2016). In this volume, inclusivity yields both instrumental (protection of people and communities) and broader normative (dampening violence and resolving conflict) benefits, and exclusivity poses risks. As some of our propositions demonstrate, though, civil action by one party is only one part of an interaction and is not preordained to bring about greater inclusion.

Furthermore, defining inclusivity and exclusivity—both generally, and specifically with respect to civil action in violent contexts—is incredibly difficult and requires wrangling with basic conceptual issues (Hendrix 2019). For one, what is being included or excluded? Is it social group based on ascriptive or quasi-ascriptive identities, such as nationality or extra-national status, ethnicity and geographic region, religion, or gender identity? Or is exclusion or inclusion understood as being primarily experienced by individuals? For another, what does it mean to be included or excluded? Does it mean having representation in processes—either formal or informal—that structure social interactions, like formal political institutions, communities, and religious organizations? Or does it mean being included in outcomes, like whether a group is socially integrated or marginalized? These are thorny questions, and more sustained engagement with them will benefit future analyses of civil action.

11.5. Civil Action and Polarized Politics

We have found that during conflict, civil action can create space for maintaining or building productive relationships, dampening levels of local violence, and even contributing to war’s end. Some of our case studies have also demonstrated a fine line between managing political discord and slipping into civil war. We thus suspect that attention to civil action can have much broader implications for thinking about useful ways to engage in the fraught, polarized, and uncivil political circumstances that characterize many parts of the world today. We thus end with a few thoughts on its potential—even in the social media age and in the face of those who seem to be pursuing exclusionary aims.

The civil resistance literature has already given us a deep reservoir of evidence of the usefulness of nonviolent strategies for promoting social change that is both successful and democratic. Our concept of civil action suggests that some actions in civil resistance are more "civil" than others. Insults, disrespect, and social ostracizing can narrow the options for engagement in ways that move toward incivility and conflictual outcomes. Civil resistance that calls out social problems but still leaves room for the individuals engaged in it to show respect to those they are resisting at some level will be more likely to make connections with broader swaths of society and maintain openness—to new members and new information. Size and openness are important to movement success. Our logic suggests that they should also be important in maintaining the commitment to nonviolence and in short-circuiting some types of violent responses. If we are right, civil resistance that accords with our conception of civil action and leaves space to keep conversations going, no matter how tense, will be less likely to either provoke violent responses or turn to violence itself.

The civil action concept also broadens our aperture, allowing us to focus on more-or-less civil action by police or government administrators as well as movements themselves. As our case studies suggest, civil action on the part of people in these roles can be especially consequential for both accelerating and dampening violence. We have seen similar dynamics in recent events in the United States. Heavy-handed police tactics in the wake of the initial protests of Michael Brown's shooting in Ferguson, Missouri, for instance, hastened violence on all sides, while the greater respect shown to the protestors by the National Guard troops (as well as the decision to send US attorney general Eric Holder to meet with the protestors) calmed the situation (Zagier 2014). This accords with the expectations we set out in this volume.

As Wendy Pearlman noted, civil action can be enhanced by social media, as it was in the initial nonviolent protests in Syria. The Arab Spring, more generally, demonstrates social media's importance for sharing details about protests and generating support for movements (Chadwick 2013). Others have suggested, though, that social media is a platform that might inhibit civility. Consider a recent interaction between Bari Weiss (a conservative opinion writer at the *New York Times*) and Eve Peyser (staff writer at *Vice*), about which they wrote in a recent article (Weiss and Peyser 2018). The two had sparred on Twitter and admitted to thinking of one another as enemies. Then they met at a conference, and in a series of more informal conversations, discovered many things they shared outside politics. Intrigued by these commonalities, the two decided to collaborate—first on an article on sourdough bread and then on one about the perils of Twitter and other social media. According to Eve, "Social media has a tendency to flatten people." And, as Bari puts it, "Outrage and negativity are the

Conclusion

caused both to reconsider their interactions on social media. Rather than to away from it, though, they changed their approach to it. On the one hand, the article reinforces the idea that civil action might be harder in the era of social media. On the other, it demonstrates that even on social media, civil action can generate new connections, greater openness, and change. So even if we accept that civil action may be more difficult on social media, when it is undertaken could generate similar productive social interactions.

Scholarly work has also questioned the productivity of looking at social media as a separate social space and suggested that we think of it, instead, as an additional layer on top of existing spaces (Chadwick 2013). Seen this way, Twitter and other sites can offer additional avenues for action—civil or uncivil. Connie Duncombe (2017), for instance, argues that postings on Twitter can frame representations of state identity in new, easily accessible ways that can quickly disseminated to diplomatic counterparts. She traces how in the lead to the nuclear agreement, Iranian tweets can be understood as civil action we have defined it. They redefined the terms of the negotiations (as a win-win opportunity for both Iran and the United States) and communicated the importance of mutual respect in reaching a deal.

Finally, some worry that civil action could be hijacked and used for exclusionary ends. For a variety of reasons, nonviolent actions tend to be associated with non-motivably desirable social outcomes: increasing space for diverse groups to act as they be recognized, facilitating beneficent social change (democratization, respect for human rights, women's rights, etc.), and creating the social context in which longer-term peacebuilding can take place. However, there is no a priori reason why these same repertoires of action cannot not be marshaled toward closing social space, curtailing democracy and respect for human rights, and sowing the seeds of the type of exclusionary politics that so often result in a return to armed conflict (Østby 2008, Cederman, Weidmann, and Gleditsch 2011).

The Civic Circles Movement in Hungary, for instance, was launched in the wake of the Fidesz loss in 2002. As Greskovits (2017) describes it, the movement took actions we would largely describe as civil: protests, petitions, open letters, and public statements. It did take some explicitly exclusionary actions such as denying participation by members of the LGBTQ community, but its activities were mostly nonviolent. The group's goal, though, was to extend the grass-roots networks, associations, and media of the civic right. "The circle acted in collaboration with hundreds of other, officially registered patriotic church-bound, professional, cultural, and local-level political organization as well as many small and medium-size private businesses, which, whether on grounds of material interest or ideological sympathy or both, aligned with the right" (Greskovits 2017, 9). The close relationship between the movement and

others, to argue that it was "civic activism harnessed for political ends" (4). And we did see a move toward a more exclusionary politics in Hungary that was associated with the movement's activities.

Still, even though Greskovits (2017) credits the movement with organizing its base, he also notes its limits, even in its heyday (28). These limits may have been associated with its more exclusionary focus. Also important was the reaction of the Left and liberals, which according to Greskovits, was often exclusionary, as elites demonized the movement as fascist (6). Some might see such reaction as warranted given the movement's association with Orbán. Greater engagement and efforts to keep a conversation going, though, could have been more productive than demonization that closed off the potential for argument. Finally, among the most intriguing elements of this case is the lack of a mobilization strategy by purportedly more liberal-leaning and tolerant politicians and the struggle among parties in the left-leaning coalition (Greskovits 2017, 29). More-exclusionary strategies, even in the pursuit of liberal goals, appear to have yielded little fruit.

11.6 In Sum

Building on the logic of micro analyses of conflict, arguments from contentious politics and the roles of nonstate actors, and conceptions of civility, we have elaborated a logic of civil action. By developing the concept, the range of actors that might engage in it, and its potential impact on relationships, levels of local violence, and overall conflicts, we have opened a conversation about how the full range of agency by citizens and groups can affect conflict dynamics. Our case studies have demonstrated civil actions' plausibility and impact in a variety of settings. The cases also illustrate the mechanisms through which civil action works and the conditions under which it is likely to dampen or escalate violence. Our exploration provides new insights into conflict dynamics. We hope these insights will inspire more research, better theory, and more useful policy options for managing conflict.

References

- Autesserre, Severine. 2010. *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Autesserre, Severine. 2014. *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bejan, Teresa. 2016. *Mere Civility: Disagreement and the Limits of Tolerance*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Conclusion

- Braun, Robert. 2016. "Religious Minorities and Resistance to Genocide: The Collective Role of Jews in the Netherlands during the Holocaust." *American Political Science Review* (1): 127–147.
- Campbell, Susanna. 2018. *Global Governance and Local Peace: Accountability and Performance in International Peacebuilding*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cederman, Lars-Erik, Nils B. Weidmann, and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch. 2011. "Horizontal Inequalities and Ethnonationalist Civil War: A Global Comparison." *American Political Science Review* 105 (3): 478–495.
- Chadwick, Andrew. 2013. *The Hybrid Media System: Politics and Power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chenoweth, Erica, Cullen Hendrix, and Kyleanne Hunter. 2019. "Introducing the Nonviolent Action in Violent Contexts (NAVVC) Dataset." *Journal of Peace Research* 56 (2): 295–30.
- Cunningham, David E. 2006. "Veto Players and Civil War Duration." *American Journal of Political Science* 50 (4) (October): 875–892.
- Davenport, Christian, Erik Melander, and Patrick Regan. 2018. *The Peace Continuum: What and How to Study It*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Duncombe, Constance. 2017. "Twitter and Transformative Diplomacy: Social Media and US Relations." *International Affairs* 93 (3): 545–562.
- Dorf, Cassy L. 2015. "Civilian Autonomy and Resistance in the Midst of Armed Conflict." *Idiosyncrasy*. Duke University.
- Greskovits, Béla. 2017. "Rebuilding the Hungarian Right through Civil Organization Contention: The Civic Circles Movement." EUI Working Paper RSCAS 2017/37.
- Hendrix, Cullen S. 2019. "The Ins and Outs of Conceptualizing Inclusion: Theoretical Empirical Implications for the Study of Inclusive Approaches to Governance Peacebuilding." *Journal of Global Security Studies* (forthcoming).
- Howard, Lise Morjé, and Alexandra Stark. 2017. "How Civil Wars End: The International System Norms, and the Role of External Actors." *International Security* 42 (3): 127–171.
- Huang, Reyko. 2016. *The Wartime Origins of Democratization: Civil War, Rebel Governance, Political Regimes*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Kaplan, Oliver. 2017. *Resisting War: How Communities Protect Themselves*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Krause, Jana. 2018. *Resilient Communities: Non-violence and Civilian Agency in Communal Violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Østby, Gudrun. 2008. "Inequalities, the Political Environment, and Civil Conflict: Evidence from 55 Developing Countries." In *Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict*, edited by Francis Stewart, 136–159. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- United Nations General Assembly. 2016. "Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture." A/RES/70/262. New York: United Nations.
- Walter, Barbara F. 1997. "The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement." *International Organization* 51 (3) (Summer): 335–364.
- Weiss, Bari, and Eve Peyser. 2018. "Can You Like the Person You Love to Hate?" *New York Times*. December 3. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/03/opinion/bari-weiss-eve-peyser-friendship.html>.
- Zagier, Alan Scher. 2014. "Governor Nixon Taking National Guard Out of Ferguson." *Associated Press*, August 21.