The impact of women's involvement in peace negotiations in Northern Ireland and Spain

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'Women with an understanding of social justice and of the ways that gender inequality hinders human development can make peace negotiations more constructive, more inclusive and more sustainable. Their absence from this process results in setbacks to the development of society at large and undermines democracy.'

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Section 1. Introduction

The continuing prevalence of civil wars merits renewed efforts to understand more about how they might be successfully resolved. Some conflicts, for example that between Israel and the Palestinians, appear intractable despite years of efforts by national and international actors. More understanding of what factors might assist conflict resolution[1] is clearly required, as well as the political will to act on such understanding.

Some 50 percent of civil wars have terminated in peace agreements since 1990, more than in the previous two centuries combined, when only one in five resulted in negotiated settlement. However, nearly half of all such agreements break down within five years, and more within a ten-year period, while many of the remainder enter a "no war, no peace" limbo whose evaluation is difficult (Bell 2006).

In the literature on this problem, the influence of gender is rarely recognized as a relevant factor. Men predominate both in war and in peace negotiations, but this is ignored in a 'gender-blind' approach, possibly because they also dominate in scholarship on the issues. This study aims to explore whether gender is significant in the success or failure of efforts to end civil wars.

First therefore I will consider various theories on war termination, some of which apply to civil war in particular. It is thought that it is harder to settle intrastate rather than interstate disputes, because parties who have been in violent conflict need to form a common government (Mason and Fett 1996). Various factors have been identified as contributing to or

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[1] Conflict resolution has been defined as 'a situation where the conflicting parties enter into an agreement that solves their central incompatibilities, accept each others' continued existence as parties and cease all violent actions against each other'. The agreement reached is therefore one of three elements which are part of a complete resolution of the conflict - 'a necessary step to a lasting arrangement' (Wallensteen 2007:8). An international consensus on the content of peace agreements has been developing since the end of the Cold War, which emphasizes that settlements should deal with issues of justice, not just ensure an end to violence (Wallensteen 2007:11).

jeopardizing such settlements (Collier and Sambanis 2002). According to Fearon's conflict model, bargaining is difficult due to commitment and information problems and the indivisibility of spoils (Fearon 1995). Both sides fear retaliation and therefore are unwilling to give up their arms – a third party who is credible to both sides can assist with this by monitoring agreements and by enforcement if necessary (Walter 1997). Third party mediators can reduce information problems, and third parties can use sanctions or incentives to compensate for indivisibility of spoils or to reduce private incentives for conflict.

It is argued that 'war weariness' makes a settlement more likely, and is more important than divisibility of stakes or political, social or economic factors (Mason and Fett 1996). The role of strong institutions in promoting a sustainable settlement, and the negative effect of adversaries' resource poverty, is highlighted by Genicot and Skaperdas (2002). Strategically designed international peacekeeping and enforcement operations can foster peace by substituting for limited local resources and alleviating factors that feed hostility (Doyle and Sambanis 2000).

Internationalisation of the issues by involving other governments, especially the U.S., is thought to be helpful (Owen 2007). Others point to the valuable role of correctly designed institutions in enabling people from conflicting groups to form multiple identities – for example, as Northern Irish, Catholic, Irish and European. These will reduce threat perceptions and ethnic security dilemmas, and increase trust, thus reducing conflict (Jesse and Williams 2005:xi). The failure of negotiations is typically attributed to the pursuit of irreconcilable aims, or obdurate political leadership. Some believe that the amount of military and economic power held by the conflicting parties will determine the outcome. They advocate a 'realpolitik' approach – so-called 'negotiations from strength' (Guelke 2003). However, even if an agreement is reached, 'spoiling' - deliberate hindering, delaying or undermining of an agreement - can cause a return to conflict (Newman 2006).

Peace agreements can be classified into three main types, which tend to emerge at different stages of a conflict. Prenegotiation agreements often establish the conditions required for groups to take part in talks or the issues to be discussed, and may be uni- or bilateral declarations rather than products of negotiation. Framework or substantive agreements are aimed at sustaining cease-fires; they provide a framework for governance designed to address the root causes of the conflict, and tend to be more inclusive of military groups. Implementation or renegotiation agreements occur at a later stage and often include practical steps to fulfilling the commitments made (Bell 2006).

Citizen- and community-based efforts can run parallel to official negotiations, often using problem-solving workshops, capacity-building efforts, conferences and informal gatherings to build relationships (Rupesinghe and Anderlini 1998). Women's organizations have often been active in community-based efforts for peace, and have been lobbying for greater inclusion in peace building[2]. Women's growing dissatisfaction with the lack of attention to gender in formal structures led to a global campaign by some 200 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), supported by certain actors at the UN such as UNIFEM. This resulted in the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in October 2000. The resolution was the first official recognition by the UN of the need to address gender issues in conflict prevention, management and reconstruction (Barnes 2006).

However, despite the evident commitment of many feminist and women's organizations to peacebuilding, the assumption cannot be made that feminism equates with pacifism. Some argue that women should be included in peacebuilding as a matter of equal rights, for example the women's NGO Women's International League for Peace and Freedom[3],

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[2] The first signs of change on this front were at the UN 4th World Conference on Women in 1995, when peace was explicitly linked to gender equality and a recommendation was made that a gender perspective be mainstreamed into all policies and programs. Various UN reports and initiatives followed but these efforts remained outside the mainstream (Barnes 2006).
[3] See their website at www.wilpf.int.ch

whereas others, even if they share this view, claim women can make a specific and different contribution (e.g. Anderlini 2000, Cockburn 2007). There are several distinct strands within feminist thought from which these two positions originate.

Liberal feminism is perhaps the strand which has made the most inroads into public policy[4]. Its main emphasis is on women's inclusion as a matter of equality of rights and the use of the law to embed this equality into the political and social system. Marxist feminism brings gender issues into an economic analysis, and black feminism highlights the racism inherent in the predominately white women's movement (Bryson 2003).

None of these strands explicitly link women and peace. Those that may, in some cases, include radical feminism with its critique of patriarchy and male violence, standpoint feminism with its emphasis on women's particular voice based in their unique experiences, and eco-feminism. Some writers see women as connected with nature through their reproductive capacity, and therefore more concerned with nurturing and protection (for example, Daly 1984). A less essentialist perspective argues that the exploitation of women forms the basis of the exploitation of nature, and attitudes to both need to change. For some, women's perspective is different, at least as long as women and men are brought up in separate gendered ways, and needs to be valued (Ruether 1996).

Feminist post-modernism, however, emphasizes the need to deconstruct the categories of 'woman' and 'women's interests', and to be aware of the power of the gendered discourse. It rejects essentialism and thus any linkage between women and peace would be thought suspect[5].

From the 1990s onwards, feminist theorists in the field of international relations were challenging the conventional discourse around peace and conflict. Writers critiqued the myth of the warrior hero and the militaristic

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[4] For example, the growth of gender mainstreaming – incorporating a gender perspective into every aspect of an organisation's work.
[5] For a study of different schools of feminist theory, see Bryson (2003).

patriarchal state, and analysed the meaning of 'security' from a feminist viewpoint. Scholars from various theoretical perspectives considered the so-called 'women and peace' hypothesis, which I explore in the next section[6].

However, despite attempts by feminists to 'engender' the field of peace and conflict studies, the mainstream literature still does not consider the potential role of women or gender in conflict resolution, with few exceptions (such as Woodhouse 1999). Evidence of the positive contribution made by women has been presented mainly by NGOs[7] and international bodies such as UNIFEM. For example, according to a UNIFEM study, not only do women at the peace table 'articulate conflict and peace differently than men', they also bring concrete change:

'They propose laws supporting equality for women and other social sectors, and initiate new development strategies and programmes that benefit both women and society at large. They also open opportunities for women's participation in a wide spectrum of political institutions, and they alter understanding of the roles women can play.' (Anderlini 2000:32,39).

However, this type of evidence is largely anecdotal (Nakaya 2003). It remains important therefore to examine more rigorously whether women do make an impact on negotiations, and if so, how and why. I aim to contribute to addressing this gap in the literature in this paper.

In this research therefore, I will examine the issue of whether the participation of women in the peace process affects the nature and outcome of the process, and if so, how and why these impacts occur. This study is part of the broader research programme considering the links between women, gender equality and peace, which I will discuss in more detail in the next section.

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[6] See Stean (1998) for an overview of feminist approaches to international relations.
[7] See www.peacewomen.org for many examples of women's peacebuilding work.

In what follows I will first describe the theory and the hypotheses to be examined. I will then discuss the methodology and case selection. A comparative case study of the civil conflicts in Northern Ireland and Spain will form the empirical analysis used to test my hypotheses. Finally, I will discuss the results and tentative conclusions to be drawn, and link these with other explanations for the success or failure of peace processes.

Section 2. Theoretical Framework

I will examine the theory that women's participation in the peace process contributes to a successful outcome. This is a probabilistic rather than a deterministic theory, as it argues that on average, these effects will be seen, and not that they will be seen without fail. It could apply to negotiations in many countries or contexts, therefore its scope is broad.

The causal mechanism underlying this theory is that women bring different qualities, skills and/or experience to the conflict resolution process, all of which are expected to have a positive effect on the outcome. I will first examine this causal mechanism in more detail by looking at various explanations for these differences in women's behaviour compared to men's. I will then turn to the practical implications for this study: how these differences might affect women's attitudes or behaviour in peace negotiations.

Broadly, explanations of women's more pacifistic attitudes fall into two groups, either arguing that women are inherently more peaceful than men (Brownmiller 1975, Daly 1984), or that the differences are caused by cultural factors – women have been influenced by their different experiences (Gilligan 1982, Togeby 1994, Goldstein 2001). It is important to note here that differences are described in general terms, as tendencies. There is a considerable heterogeneity in the behaviour and attitudes among men and among women. Yet, in conceptual terms, a significant difference may still exist between a typical (average) woman and a typical man.

The first explanation sees innate differences between men and women rooted in their biology. War occurs because men have high levels of aggression and a need to dominate the 'other' by the use of force. The ideology of rape and male subjugation of women originates from male and female anatomy. Man discovered that his genitalia could serve as a weapon to generate fear and used this as a means to power and

domination. A woman chooses to stay with her subjugator in order to avoid the risk of being raped by other men. Male aggression against other men is explained by their need to fight off competitors for their property (Brownmiller 1975).

Women are associated by some with nature, oppressed by men's use of sexual aggression to dominate both women and the natural environment (Daly 1984). Some recent evidence does appear to show fairly small biological differences. Genetic codes are the same, and there is no evidence that war is rooted in male sexuality, but small cognitive, size and strength differences may lead men to be more war-like. The direct link between short-term testosterone levels and aggression is shown to be nebulous, and sex hormones are not responsible for female pacificity as maternal behaviours are limited to the nursing period and include maternal aggression (Goldstein 2001). Fukuyama (1998) cites the evidence from biology that males aged 15 – 30 are more verbally and physically aggressive, using this to argue that Western countries ought not to allow 'feminine' values to dominate in government, lest it weaken their position internationally.

However few contemporary scholars support the presence of innate differences, and it has been claimed that evidence produced is unsound, because although some studies have found gendered differences in behaviour, they have failed to consider that this might be because gender relations have restricted women's opportunities up till now – it should not be assumed that women would still act differently if they had the same access and opportunities as men (Goetz 2007). In any case any theory implying that women as a group share any inherent characteristics will not find favour with post-modernists, who reject the use of the term women as a fixed category in favour of the term 'women' - to make explicit the fact that 'women' and 'men' are constructed categories (Zalewski 1994).

If differences are not innate, then it is women's different experiences – in early childhood, as mothers (for some) and in male-dominated social structures which cause any differences. Earlier feminists seek explanations

for gender differences in childhood and familial influences. Children's experience of maternal care is key to their psychological development. According to these theories, boys form their gender identity by moving towards their father and rejecting their mother, producing a male denial of relation and connection. Girls retain more attachment to their mother, coming to a self-definition based on 'empathy' and continuity with others. Gender roles are reinforced by the learning of 'appropriate' gender behaviour through imitation and training (Chodorow 1978). This same psychological process also explains gendered differences in attitudes to moral issues, with men seeing morality as a matter of rights and rules, leading to an 'ethic of justice', and women seeing morality as concerned with responsibility and relationships, resulting in an 'ethic of care', which is culturally undervalued (Gilligan 1982).

There is disagreement as to whether the experience of being a mother has a pacifying effect on women. Some claim that mothers are not intrinsically peaceful, but that maternal practice, with its emphasis on protection, nurturance, training and non-violent conflict resolution, is a '"natural resource" for peace politics' (Ruddick 1989:157). 'Mothering' can be done by men although it is currently dominated by women. The 'responsibility training' which caring for children involves appears to reduce aggressive and impulsive behaviour, which is highest in men who actively strive for power, one important psychological cause of war (Winter 1988, 1993). Masculine values predominate however in politics and the military. If 'maternal thinking' was more prevalent in these fields, conflict would be more easily resolved.

However some studies (Goldstein 2001, Conover and Sapiro 1993) find no support for the hypothesis that mothering has a pacifying effect on women's values, and in one study women with more children were found in fact to be less critical of militaristic foreign policy (Togeby 1994). An alternative perspective suggests that women with fewer (or no) children have more time to participate in politics. These women's presence in the political sphere still acts as a pacifying constraint on state behaviour (Regan and Paskeviciute 2003).

The fact that many women experience discrimination, greater poverty and exclusion from power structures may give rise to a greater awareness of both gender inequality and broader issues of social injustice. Women with feminist views tend to have greater sympathy for disadvantaged people (Conover 1988), to be more pacifistic (Tessler and Warriner 1997, Tessler, Nachtweg and Grant 1999) and more fearful of war (Conover and Sapiro 1993). Women are more likely to work in the caring professions and to be more left-wing, and this encourages them to be more critical of militaristic and aggressive foreign policy (Togeby 1994). One study found that female opposition to military spending in the U.S. in the 1980s and the Gulf War was rooted in a reluctance to divert spending from essential social services (Harrington 1992). Feminism's emphasis on equality and justice leads to less emphasis on hierarchies and domination of the 'Other', which impacts on foreign policy decisions at government level in states with greater gender equality (Caprioli 2000, 2003).

Another line of argument to explain gender differences is that cultures use gender to perpetuate war, in order to benefit the powerful. War is essential to the maintenance of the sovereign state. Sacrifice of the self for one's homeland, not the drive to kill the 'Other', is at the heart of war. In order to convince men to die for their country, the state is gendered as female, the motherland, an extension of the mother/home (Elshtain 1992). Cultures use gender to overcome men's natural reluctance to fight by linking the attainment of manhood to battle performance. Gender 'serves to delineate and separate war from normal life, enabling soldiers both to suspend social norms against killing and to withstand the hell of war.' (Goldstein 2001: 331). Gender is used to encode domination – enemies are constructed as feminine. Both men and women collude in perpetuating the gender norms associated with war.

Women are not inherently anti-militaristic but the myth of the 'dangerous world' where men need to protect women has been created and sustained to exclude women from power. Women who are admitted to the political elite are those who do not threaten male political privilege. Ideas of

masculinity are perpetuated to justify foreign policy risk-taking (Enloe 1989). In situations of militarization, traditional gender ideals are stressed (Byrne 1996).

In summary therefore, theorists argue that women in general are likely to be more empathic and place more importance on relationships, non-violent conflict resolution and social justice. These attitudes stem from early childhood nurturing, possibly from being mothers, and also from living within male-dominated social structures. Gender norms affecting both men and women may also be used by elites to maintain and further their positions of power.

How would these differences then become apparent in the case of women involved in peace negotiations?

According to several studies on gender, conflict resolution and mediation, women prefer to use a problem-solving rather than adversarial approach, seek harmony, and emphasise care and relationships as well as justice and substantive issues (Kolb and Coolidge 1988, Northrup 1991, Northrup and Segall 1991). Female mediators look more for underlying problems in attempting to get to solutions, and include plans for future interactions, whereas men have a more short term, task oriented approach (Weingarten and Douvan 1985). One study finds that agreements mediated by women are more likely to last, those mediated by men to be broken (Maxwell and Maxwell 1989)[8].

Other, more anecdotal evidence claims that women are more able to bridge divides (Cockburn 2007, Anderlini 2000) and therefore are more able to find common ground, work with adversaries, and reach a consensus. Women communicate in different ways – they listen better, foster a more conciliatory atmosphere and are less aggressive (Anderlini 2000: 37-39). They can use more empathy and are more process-orientated, placing importance on how negotiations are conducted and not

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[8] All the above studies are cited in Stamato 1992.

just on the outcome. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable agreements (Potter 2005:15).

Also, women are more likely to have come to the peace table via their roots in civil activism, 'often with first-hand experience of the brutal consequences of violent conflict'. This means that they are deeply committed to achieving an end to violence (Anderlini 2000:34). They bring different issues to the negotiating table from those brought by men – different visions of power-sharing, gender-related issues, human rights, education, social service provision, disarmament and reintegration[9] (Potter 2005:14). They can therefore better represent women's interests (Goetz 2007). Women and in particular feminists understand the linkages between capitalism, nationalism and patriarchy as root causes of war, meaning that they are more able to come forward with sustainable solutions (Cockburn 2007). They are willing to 'expose the underbelly of war' by speaking openly about the suffering it causes, and aim to transform structures to promote social justice (Anderlini 2000: 32, 8).

The testable hypotheses that can be derived from the theory described above relate to three aspects of peace negotiations. According to the arguments discussed, generally speaking the participation of women will affect the conduct, content and outcome of negotiations in the following ways:

Hypothesis 1: Conduct

Women participants in negotiations are more likely than men to pay attention to the process itself, to use a problem-solving rather than adversarial approach and to try to foster harmony and mutual understanding.

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[9] For example, women in recent negotiations in Guatemala and Somalia succeeded in obtaining commitments on women's rights in the peace agreement. However, these commitments were not long-lasting, because new power-sharing arrangements were based on existing social structures, and institutions and leaders did not take responsibility for institutionalising gender equality (Nakaya 2003).

Hypothesis 2: Content

Women's contributions to the content of discussions or agreements are more likely to include reference to the suffering caused by war, human rights, relationships, inclusiveness and social justice.

Hypothesis 3: Outcome

Agreements in which women have participated are more likely to be sustainable. A breakdown of the agreement or a return to conflict is less likely.

I will turn now to an empirical exploration of the hypotheses generated above, using a 'most similar' case study design to examine in detail the cases of peace negotiations in Northern Ireland and Spain, and starting with a discussion of methodological issues.

Section 3. Methodology

Operationalization and Measurement

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables are the conduct of the peace negotiations, the content of the agreement(s), and the outcome of agreement(s). Conduct was measured[10] by assessing the level of use of the following methods which H1 suggests are favoured by women: paying attention to the process itself, using a problem-solving rather than adversarial approach, trying to foster harmony and mutual understanding[11]. Content was measured by assessing the level of inclusion of the issues which H2 suggests will be raised by women: the suffering caused by war, human rights, relationships, inclusiveness and social justice[12]. Outcome was measured by assessing the situation two years after the settlement(s) according to whether there was no termination of conflict, termination[13] but with ongoing low-level or residual violence, or termination with no residual violence[14].

My dependent variables have good validity because I examined in detail the actual records of meetings (to capture the conduct of negotiations), the texts of agreements (to capture their content) and the records relating to whether war or violence continued (to capture the outcome).[15]

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[10] Measurement entails assigning particular observations to particular values or categories of the operationalised concepts. I recorded the measurement of the causes and the outcomes in each case, maintaining the same definition of basic concepts throughout the study.

[11] Observations were described as including no use, partial use or full use of these approaches.

[12] Observations were described as including no inclusion, partial inclusion or full inclusion of these issues.

[13] Termination is taken as the signing of a substantive agreement (Bell 2006).

[14] Adapted from Doyle and Sambanis 2000.

[15] Validity refers to whether the measures used 'closely approximate the true meaning of a concept, or what the researcher thinks he or she is measuring' (King, Keohane and Verba 1994:25).

Independent Variables

The independent variable of interest is women's participation in the peace process, i.e. official negotiations aimed at producing a settlement. Women's participation can be defined directly therefore its operationalization is straightforward. Different types of participation are possible, for example as delegates in peace negotiations, as observers, as mediators, or through civil society groups. Cases were selected on the basis that participation by women did occur in Northern Ireland, and did not occur in Spain (see below)[16].

I also considered as control variables other factors that previous research found to be important for the process, content and outcomes of peace negotiations and that need to be accounted for in order to minimise omitted variable bias. These can be divided into general explanations (discussed above, and summarized here) and explanations specific to the two cases, which are discussed in the conclusion.

General factors favouring settlement are thought to be third party security guarantees, mediation and use of sanctions and incentives (Fearon 1995, Walter 1997), war weariness (Mason and Fett 1996), strong institutions including those enabling multiple identity formation (Genicot and Skaperdas 2002, Jesse and Williams 2005), international peacekeeping and enforcement operations (PKOs) (Doyle and Sambanis 2000), international involvement especially by the U.S. (Owen 2007), and greater power (Guelke 2003). General factors working against a settlement are thought to be the presence of spoilers[17] (Newman 2006), resource poverty (Genicot and Skaperdas (2002), irreconcilable aims and obdurate political leadership (Guelke 2003). If any of these factors were shown to be common to the two cases, they could be ruled out as explanations for any differences in the outcomes.

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[16] However, on further research it transpired that one woman did take a minor role in negotiations in Spain, and her input is analysed below.
[17] Spoilers are defined in Newman's study as parties who sabotage a peace process, whether deliberately or accidentally.

Choice of Method

A qualitative method is more appropriate than a quantitative method for the purpose of my analysis because the focus of this study is to understand how and why any effects occurred, that is, to unravel the causal process rather than to merely assess the impact of women's involvement in peace negotiations relative to other factors. In addition, the number of settlements of conflict where women have been involved is very small, which means that there are not enough cases for a large-N quantitative study from which generalisable inferences can be drawn, therefore a smaller case study was more appropriate[18].

Inference

This initial study does not attempt to provide conclusive evidence of the validity of the theory. As noted, there are only a few examples so far of women's participation – the cases which stand out, apart from Northern Ireland, are Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala and Burundi (and see table below). It is also difficult to isolate the effects of this key variable compared to the other factors influencing the post-conflict outcome, and also to draw inferences from outcomes in one country to possible outcomes in other countries, as country situations are very different (unit heterogeneity). Bearing this in mind I used methods which assisted in maximizing any possible causal inference from the data[19], as

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[18] Case studies are particularly useful in providing descriptions of new situations such as women's involvement in peace negotiations, as before seeking to explain a phenomenon it needs to be described in depth. This study was framed around clear testable hypotheses, meaning it could lead to more focused and relevant description (King, Keohane and Verba 1994:45).

[19] I identified two countries, one with a relatively high level and one with no participation, and also analyzed several sets of negotiations in each, in order to maximize variability on my main independent variable within the sample. In order to increase the number of observations and thus the possibility of generating causal inference, I applied the hypotheses to more instances of the negotiations process over time. In order to maximize the usefulness of the multiple observations to be collected within only a few cases, I used 'structured focused comparison' (Geddes 2003:137). In other words, I examined the same potential causes and same effects for each observation, used the same categories for assigning values to variables (measured the same potential causal factors in the

follows, whilst being aware that any findings would be tentative at this stage.

Case Selection

The theory was developed from psychology, feminist thought, and empirical studies of women's and men's attitudes to war, foreign policy decisions, violence and mediation and tested using qualitative empirical data from countries experiencing civil conflict[20].

Using a comparative 'most similar' design (George and Bennett 2005:252), I focused on peace negotiations in two similar countries (see below for similarities) in order to establish whether any observed effects could be attributed to the most significant difference between the cases, i.e. women's involvement.

I considered all civil wars since the end of World War II (Wallensteen 2007). Some civil wars that ended without negotiations were disregarded. It was necessary that negotiations took place by June 2006, in order to be able to establish whether there had been a return to violent conflict between the parties within two years. The universe of cases was therefore 'civil wars including negotiations from 1945 - 2006'. I then carried out background research to establish in which negotiations women participated, looking at sources such as the UN, NGOs and news agencies[21]. From this list, I then looked for cases which were similar in key respects, in particular that the countries were in the same region and

same way for each observation) and made the analyses of observations comparable so that (cautious) generalizations could be suggested. A list of key questions linked to the hypotheses was asked of each case, relevant to all cases, in order to be able to compare and systematically analyse the results (George and Bennett 2005:86). I gathered evidence on all the observable implications of the theory, using documentary analysis of records of meetings, published documents, news reports and other written materials.
[20] The same evidence should not be used to create and test a theory, as facts cannot test or contradict a theory that is constructed around them, and there would be a risk of confirmation bias (George and Bennett 2005:111).
[21] See in particular www.peacewomen.org

if both were former colonies, that they had been ruled by the same colonial power. I also considered whether the civil conflict was at a roughly similar time and of a similar type.

I found that most cases fell into two groups. Where two cases were similar enough, either they both had women involved in negotiations, or both of them omitted women. In Africa, women took part in negotiations in both Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi, but in Rwanda civil war ended without negotiations. In Latin America, women participated in both Colombia and Guatemala. They also did in the settlement in Cambodia, but there was no similar conflict with which to compare the case. In Asia there was participation by women at the grassroots in both the Solomon Islands and Bougainville. Turning to Europe, the same applied to Kosovo, Bosnia and Macedonia. The only exceptions were Northern Ireland, where women had a significant presence, and Spain (Basque conflict) where women were not involved in peacebuilding up until 2006. Therefore these cases were selected for the study. Both are cases of ethnic/nationalist conflict in countries in Western Europe. Their roots go back at least two centuries, but in both the level of violence has been particularly high since the 1960s. Peace processes took place in both countries from the 1970s onwards.

There have been a number of studies comparing these two conflicts, but these have not considered the gender dimension. According to Letamendia and Loughlin (2006:377-378), the two conflicts (plus that in Corsica) stand out in all cases of violent conflict in the last four decades, because of the longevity and political organization of the armed groups involved and their challenge to the traditional nation-state. Both ETA and the IRA were nationalist / separatist movements which challenged the legitimacy of the state to exercise a monopoly over the use of violence. Both used Marxist ideology or an internal colonialism analogy, and both had more recently declared a willingness to take a non-violent approach[22]. The

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[22] Although in the case of ETA, this willingness turned out to be short-lived.

comparison of the two conflicts by Jesse and Williams (2005) focused on the response of the state to the nationalist movements and in particular the nature of institutions that were set up.

Section 4. Empirical Analysis

I will first outline briefly the basis of each conflict, and will then consider the main negotiations and agreements, discussing whether their conduct, content and outcomes were influenced by the gender of participants as I hypothesized in the theoretical section of my dissertation[23].

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland is a deeply divided society with two broad politico-cultural blocs – Protestant-unionist-loyalist[24], seeking to maintain Northern Ireland's constitutional position within the UK, versus Catholic-nationalist-republican[25], seeking political unification of the island of Ireland. Institutionalised discrimination against the Catholic minority under the British-established administration led to growing dissatisfaction amongst Catholics by the 1960s. The resulting instability led to the imposition of direct rule from London. A three-cornered low-intensity conflict developed between the British state[26] and its local agents, Irish republicans (dominated by the IRA[27]) and pro-UK loyalists. By the mid-1990s over 3,500 people had been killed (MacGinty 2006).

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[23] There was no information available on the gender of participants for some of the negotiations and agreements. Where possible I have considered instead the leadership of the groups concerned.

[24] The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) is the largest unionist party, followed by the more moderate Ulster Unionist Party (UUP). Other smaller parties include the Progressive Unionist Party (PUP) and the UK Unionist Party (UKUP). No women are recorded as leaders or spokespersons for these parties.

[25] Main parties are the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP, leaders Gerry Fitt 1970-79, John Hume 1979-2001), in which women have not been in leading roles, and Sinn Fein (SF, leaders Ruairi O Bradaigh 1970-83, Gerry Adams 1983-present)

[26] Represented in talks by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. The first woman in this post was Mo Mowlam who took office in 1997.

[27] The women's group which later became the women's section of the IRA, Cumann na mBan, was formed in 1914. Most women were in caring roles, with a few female combatants (Talbot 2004).

Conduct of Negotiations

An in-depth analysis of Northern Ireland peace negotiations reveals that where women were involved the outcome was positive - it led to the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement of 1998. Following the ceasefires announced by the IRA and the loyalist paramilitary groups in 1994, all-party talks were convened which opened in June 1996[28], with substantive negotiations starting in October 1997[29]. The Northern Ireland Women's Coalition (NIWC), formed because women's groups wanted to ensure that the settlement recognised their concerns, had won two seats at the negotiating table. It had a deliberate cross-community base, and declared from the outset that it would not defend a fixed constitutional position. Instead it would work towards a settlement in which the fundamental rights of all groups would be safeguarded, and would base its contribution to negotiations on three core principles – human rights, equality and inclusiveness. The two representatives elected[30] consulted widely with women around the country throughout the negotiating process (Fearon and Rebouche 2006, Hinds 1999, Ward 2004, Hope 2006).

Both governments' negotiating positions were based on the 1995 Framework Document[31]. This had been criticised by women's groups for its lack of inclusiveness (generally, and of women) and its articulation of the North-South and East-West dimensions (Hinds 1999:120). However, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Mo Mowlam's contribution was

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[28] The following were the delegates from each party. British government Mo Mowlam, Paul Murphy, other (male); Irish Government Ray Burke, David Andrews, Liz O'Donnell; PUP David Ervine, Billy Hutchinson, Hughie Smyth; SDLP John Hume, Mark Durkan, Seamus Mallon, Sean Farron, Denis Haughey; SF Gerry Adams, Martin McGuinness, Gerry Kelly, Alex Maskey, Mitchel McLaughlin, Bairbre De Brun; UDP Gary McMichael, Davey Adams; UUP David Trimble, Ken Maginis, John Taylor; Alliance John Allerdice; Labour Malachi Curren, Hugh Casey; NIWC Monica McWilliams, Pearl Sagar. DUP and UKUP participated only initially (no women delegates). There were therefore approximately 3 women in addition to the 2 NIWC delegates.

[29] Sinn Fein were admitted in 1997 after the IRA reinstated its interrupted ceasefire.

[30] Monica McWilliams, a rural Catholic, and Pearl Sagar, a working-class Protestant

[31] A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR AGREEMENT: A shared understanding between the British and Irish Governments to assist discussion and negotiation involving the Northern Ireland parties. See Elliott (2007):254-264 for full text.

described as crucial, because she 'cajoled and persuaded reluctant politicians to consider and reconsider proposals from different viewpoints' (Ward 2004:198). She 'just listened and took the shit. I often used to get up and serve the tea at those meetings because it helped people to relax and talk' (Mowlam 2002:207,156). Mowlam spent much time before and during negotiations meeting people in the community and visiting prisoners. She valued inclusiveness, and talked to and visited 'as many interested and concerned groups in addition to the parties and police and the army … I listened to the folk to see how my views either differed or coincided with theirs' (Mowlam 2002:207,124).

Unionists did not have a helpful attitude during the talks. The UUP, DUP and UKUP rejected the initial ground rules and the appointment of George Mitchell as senior chair, and the DUP and UKUP walked out on the entry of Sinn Fein (Durkan 1999). The UUP favoured a deliberate and measured pace on a tightly defined agenda, sometimes adopted an obdurate stance and was guilty of foot-dragging and cynicism. (MacGinty 2006:165). On the Nationalists' side, the SDLP were 'more tolerant' than the unionists (Mowlam 2002:150). Sinn Fein did appoint a woman as one of their delegates[32], following efforts by women in the party to increase female participation, but feminists were unsure if this was an achievement or mere tokenism (Ward 2004). Sinn Fein tried to quicken the pace of the process and expand its agenda, yet was also obdurate and at times used delaying tactics (MacGinty 2006:165).

In contrast, the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition were determined that the talks should produce an agreement that all sections of the community could feel they owned, and aimed to create a culture of tolerance and inclusion, believing in the possibility of consensus, unlike other parties (NIWC 1998, Fearon and Rebouche 2006). They won the agreement of all parties to a more consensual decision-making process, and insisted that delegates from ex-combatants should be included. They also initiated meetings of the four smallest parties in the talks (Hinds 1999:125).

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[32] Lucilita Bhreatnach, General Secretary

The NIWC focussed on finding common ground between participants, by finding out what might be acceptable to participants on a given issue and putting this to the chairpersons. They used their links with the grassroots to consult and refine their ideas (Fearon and Rebouche 2006). They paid much more attention to relationships and the process, as well as the content of the talks (BBC 2004). They believed that respect and trust could be built over time if parties listened to each other (NIWC 1998). They challenged the expression of sectarian and sexist attitudes, because they aimed for a transformed political culture in order to achieve a lasting settlement (Hinds 1999:125).

NIWC delegates often acted as 'trusted arbiters between different factions' (Ward 2004:198). 'Their balance, their ability to understand and bring people along and, in the end, their willingness to talk to the paramilitary-related parties gave those parties a lot of support when they needed it' (Mowlam 2002:147). Their lack of interest in jockeying for position was shown when they were the only party which did not complain about their room allocation, as they 'just wanted to get on with the talks' (Mowlam 2002:141).

While women's involvement contributed positively to peace negotiations in the mid-1990s, the two main previous sets of talks, neither of which included women, did not have a positive outcome. The first set of negotiations to try to settle the conflict was in 1973, after the Northern Ireland Assembly had been established by an Act of Parliament. Discussions were held to agree the establishment of the power-sharing Northern Ireland Executive[33]. No women are documented as participating in the talks. The parties disagreed on issues related to internment, policing, and a Council of Ireland, but did manage to make progress on other less controversial areas in the social and economic spheres (Hayes 2007). Following the setting up of the Executive, it and the British and

[33] Participants were centre parties, including Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland (APNI), the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), the Irish Government. 'Men of violence' and the DUP were excluded. Chair was William Whitelaw.

Irish Governments met in December[34] and negotiated the Sunningdale Agreement. However, as discussed below, this was short-lived.

From the early 1980s to 1993 various meetings took place between different groupings of the parties to the conflict, including secret contacts between the British and Irish Governments and paramilitary groups. Documents released on the contacts between the British Government and the IRA demonstrate an unwillingness on both sides to move from their publicly expressed positions. The Irish Government set up a Forum for Peace and Reconciliation but the Alliance Party was the only one from Northern Ireland to send delegates (Boyle and Hadden 1995:273-276).

The last set of meetings between the centre parties, the Brooke-Mayhew talks, ended in deadlock in November 1992 (Cox *et al* 2006:455), due to deteriorating relationships between the two governments and the Northern Irish parties, and the recalcitrance of unionists (Byrne 2001:337). This was the last of seven British government initiatives between 1972 and 1993 that ended in failure (MacGinty 2006), although others comment that some progress was made, in particular in clarifying some of the principles which underpinned later negotiations such as the right of self-determination and the acknowledgement of minority rights (Boyle and Hadden 1995:275).

At the same time that these talks were taking place (1992-93), during a UN-sponsored consultation process, women commented that issues at the very centre of their lives were being disregarded by politicians, and argued that if they were attended to, talks would be more productive (Hinds 1999:112). Women were largely excluded from the formal political process in Northern Ireland and therefore from a role in the peace process itself in this period, although they had been active in peace work in the

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[34] Participants were Edward Heath, then British Prime Minister, and Liam Cosgrave, then Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister), senior ministers, representatives of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), and the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland (APNI).

community for some decades[35]. Discussions between party leaders were conducted mainly in secret, and the agenda was narrowly constricted (Sales 1997:1).

In summary therefore, the earlier negotiations in which women were absent were not inclusive of all parties and did not exhibit a problem-solving or conciliatory approach, nor lead to successful outcomes. The talks of 1996 – 98 however, with women's participation, were more successful, and the conduct of the women – both the NIWC and Mo Mowlam - stands out as using a conciliatory, relationships-based approach.

Contents of Agreements

There have been three agreements reached regarding a resolution of the conflict, one bi-lateral and two multi-lateral. The only one which included all parties, or their representatives[36], was the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement of April 1998, which involved women. This recognised Northern Ireland's constitutional position within the UK and its right to unify with the Republic of Ireland if both populations agreed in referenda. Three political institutions were to be set up – the devolved power-sharing Northern Ireland Assembly, the British-Irish Council and the North-South Ministerial Council. The agreement also covered the release of some prisoners and reform of the police and judicial systems (MacGinty 2006). The final draft of the agreement was put together by the two Prime Ministers, whom Mitchell, one of the chairs of the talks, credits for putting together a compromise that would attract broad support (Mitchell 2007:91).

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[35] Women Together for Peace and the Peace People were founded in the 1970s but neither group was invited to join talks (Gidron *et al* 2002, Sales 1997:195). Various other civil society groups have worked to foster understanding and reconciliation during the course of the conflict (Byrne 2001:338-341).
[36] The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and UKUP participated initially, but walked out on the entry of Sinn Fein, who came in after the IRA had declared a ceasefire. Paramilitary groups on both sides were involved via their political associates.

The Northern Ireland Women's Coalition contributed much to the agreement. Their proposal for a Civic Forum, to promote participative democracy, was accepted. Their submissions on the need for a detailed recognition of the rights and needs of victims, and the right of women to full and equal political participation were included in the agreement (NIWC 1998, Hinds 1999, Fearon and Rebouche 2006). Several of NIWC's submissions on decommissioning were also incorporated, in particular that decommissioning should be a non-coercive process. The Coalition ensured that the agreement included a commitment to integrated education and mixed housing (Hope 2006). In addition to the direct inputs by women, the final agreement also included a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland, and the Equality, Human Rights and Victims Commissions.

Two other agreements, however, did not involve women but did include limited mention of human rights. The Sunningdale Agreement of 1973 envisaged the devolution of government to a Northern Ireland Assembly under the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, with a more inclusive proportional electoral system[37]. It set out plans for a Council of Ireland, which would consider human rights, policing, and other co-operation. A lack of flexibility is apparent in the introductory section, which states 'none had compromised, and none had asked others to compromise, in relation to basic aspirations … in [reaching agreement] they were not sacrificing principles or aspirations' (Elliott 2007:223). Although this was a substantive agreement in that it provided for devolved government, it did not include all parties to the conflict nor terminate the conflict.

Similarly, the Anglo-Irish Agreement[38] of 1985 contained a few positive elements despite the lack of women's involvement, stating that the two governments would work together for peace 'by promoting reconciliation,

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[37] There was no mandated power-sharing, nor any provisions for a minority veto or cultural autonomy. Although Unionists would undoubtedly gain a majority of seats, they would not be able to govern without some Catholic representation.
[38] Also known as the Hillsborough Agreement, this committed the British government to consulting the Government of the Republic of Ireland on its policies in Northern Ireland (Hayes 2007).

respect for human rights … Matters to be considered … include the avoidance of economic and social discrimination …' (Elliott 2007:231). However there are no concrete measures included to further these aims, signalling perhaps a lack of genuine commitment. The agreement failed to set up a power-sharing devolved government and did not promote intercommunal consensus or the accommodation of political or cultural differences, thus failing to be acceptable to unionists (Byrne 2001:336). What is more, this was a pre-negotiation agreement (Bell 2006) in that it was made between the two governments only, and was not a substantive agreement that terminated the conflict.

In short, an in-depth analysis of peace negotiations in Ireland provides strong evidence about the impact of women's involvement in peace negotiations on the content of reached agreements. The Sunningdale Agreement established a body to consider human rights, but the Anglo-Irish Agreement made token reference only to this and reconciliation, without any concrete commitments. In contrast, women's involvement in the Good Friday Agreement is associated with at least six significant achievements relating to participative democracy, victims, gender equality, non-coercion, integrated education and mixed housing, in line with my hypothesis. The evidence suggests therefore that women have played an important role in shaping the content of peace agreements.

Agreement Outcomes

One way to assess the success of peace agreements is by evaluating the situation two years after the agreement (Doyle and Sambanis 2000). The Good Friday Agreement was a success from this perspective. It was massively endorsed by referenda in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in May 1998. NIWC gained two seats in the first Northern Ireland Assembly, in which 13% of the delegates were female, and introduced measures on family-friendly working hours and childcare expenses for Assembly members. It provided a radical voice in debates on matters such as divorce (Fearon and Rebouche 2006). Three Nationalist women were

appointed to the Northern Ireland Executive (Ward 2004). Other positive achievements include the establishment of the Equality Commission, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (1999) and the Civic Forum (with 38% women at the initial forum)[39].

By 2000 therefore, power had been devolved to the Assembly (since December 1999) but it was taken back again in February 2000 as decommissioning by the IRA had still not occurred. In May 2000 the IRA promised to 'put weapons beyond use' and devolution was restored[40]. The NIWC had proposed that an inclusive implementation committee be set up to manage the post-agreement process, but this was not taken up. This was arguably a factor in the problems that occurred in maintaining devolved government (Hope 2006).

Although there were political crises, they were not accompanied by large-scale political violence. However the splinter group Continuity IRA carried out attacks in Northern Ireland and London in 2000, mainly aganist security installations (MacGinty 2006:157-162). Also violence against Catholics and inter-loyalist violence continued in the year (MacGinty 2006:166-167). Street violence has increased since the Agreement[41], but the level of overall violence has markedly declined compared to the period before the ceasefires in 1994 (McCartney 2003).

In contrast, after the Sunningdale Agreement was signed at the end of 1973, both the IRA and loyalist paramiltary groups continued their campaigns, carrying out attacks in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and England throughout 1974 and 1975 (BBC 1974). The Northern Ireland Executive collapsed in May 1974 following a general strike organised by the Protestant UWC[42], a result of unionist rejection of the

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[39] The Bill of Rights was still in development, but its future was uncertain due to political objections from both sides. All these bodies have suffered from periods when devolved government has been suspended (Fearon and Rebouche 2006).
[40] The Assembly was suspended again in 2001 and 2002.
[41] A sharp rise in crime rates is often seen in societies emerging from protracted conflict (MacGinty 2006).
[42] Ulster Worker's Council (trade union)

agreed involvement of the Republic of Ireland in Northern Ireland's affairs. Direct rule from Westminster was resumed (Cox *et al* 2006).

The evidence therefore demonstrates that the agreement in which women had participated was the only one which terminated the conflict, albeit with a continuation of low-level violence. The fact that it had been accepted by all parties to the conflict, and had been endorsed by the populations of both parts of Ireland, was obviously very significant.

Spain

In contrast to Northern Ireland, there has as yet been no settlement of the Basque conflict in Spain, in which women's participation has been so far minimal. The only agreements reached to date regarding a resolution of the conflict come under the category of 'pre-negotiation agreements' (Bell 2006).

The Basque conflict is essentially a two-party one between ETA – Euskadi ta Askatasuna (Basque Country and Freedom), an armed group which is part of the broader Basque nationalist movement, and the Spanish state[43]. Basque political parties and trade unions have also taken part in negotiations, which started in the late 1970s in the post-Franco era. Peace groups (Elkarri[44], Gesto por la Paz[45], the women's group Ahotsak[46]) and other civil society groups have been active but had no official role, apart from the participation by Elkarri in the talks of 1998.

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[43] Since the transition to democracy the Government has been led either by the centre-left Socialist Worker's Party PSOE (1982 – 96, 2004 – 2008), a coalition (1996 – 2000) or the conservative People's Party (2000 - 2004).

[44] A 'social movement for dialogue and agreement', established in 1992 (Mees 2003).

[45] 'Gesture for Peace' established in 1989, politically heterogeneous and condemns the use of any form of violence for any purpose (Mees 2003).

[46] There had been women's peace activism in Spain at least since the 1980s, but any activity in the Basque region has had a very low profile (Cockburn 2007). The women's group Ahotsak ('voices') produced a peace proposal in 2006, apparently the first time women had acted on their own in the Basque peace movement (Ahotsak 2006). In the same year, Emakunde, the Basque Women's Institute organised an international conference to promote women's participation in the resolution of the Basque conflict (Emakunde 2006).

ETA, founded in 1959, wants an independent, socialist Basque Country, the region including parts of northern Spain and south-western France, known in Basque as Euskal Herria. Its members see their territory as occupied by foreign powers, and frame their struggle as one for freedom from 'colonial' oppressors (Beck 2005). Women made up 10 – 15% of ETA members from the 1960s to the 1980s, with the majority in supportive or collaborative roles rather than armed activism, and most active women were not mothers. Women activists have commented on the 'machismo' culture in the organization (Hamilton 2007). Some women have had leadership positions, of whom three have had a particularly high profile[47].

The Basque Autonomous Community, which administers three Spanish provinces in Euskal Herria, has existed since 1978 and has its own parliament[48], but is not recognised as legitimate by ETA. No women are noted as key leaders of any of the Basque political parties or of the parties making up the Independent Left (Partido Socialista Obrero Espanol 2008, Basque Government 2008), although women had been lobbying the Left to take on the feminist agenda since the 1970s. However, by 2006 women's political participation both in public institutions and in left-wing organizations was still at a very low level, and the nationalist left had still not taken on their demands (Reguiero 2006).

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[47] Dolores González Catarain ('Yoyes'), ETA's first female leader, was killed by ETA in 1986 as a 'traitor'. Maria Soledad Iparraguirre Guenechea ('Anboto'), described as 'ETA's number 2' and their highest-ranking woman, was active from 1980 to 2004 when she was arrested, and ran the military operations and extortions unit. Maria Belen González Peñalba ('Carmen') took part in numerous attacks and kidnappings from the 1980s onwards, and was also part of ETA's negotiating team in 1989 and 1999. She was sentenced in 2007 to 467 years imprisonment (New York Times 1992, Lukor 2004, Diario Horizonte 2005).
[48] PNV (Basque Nationalist Party), centre-right party, has mainly dominated in government. Leader 1986 - 2004 Xabier Arzalluz, 2004 – 2008 Josu Jon Imaz. Batasuna, left-wing nationalist, closely associated with ETA and as such currently banned, predecessors Euskal Herritarrok and Herri Batasuna (HB). PSOE-PSE, Basque branch of Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, leader 1974 – 1997 Felipe Gonzalez, 1997 – 2001 Joaquín Almunia, 2001 to date Jose Luis Zapatero. PP - Popular Party – Spanish conservative party, leader 1990 - 2004 Jose Aznar, 2004 to date Mariano Rajoy (BBC 2008, Partido Socialista Obrero Espanol 2008, Basque Government 2008).

Conduct of Negotiations

The Spanish case is marked by a number of negotiations where women were not involved and conduct did not favour conciliation, in line with my expectations. A series of preliminary meetings took place in 2005-2006 between ETA and the Government, in which no women are documented as participating[49], and in which little progress was made (Fisas 2007). In September 2006 ETA and the Government met again with international observers and agreed on procedural matters (Fisas 2007:8-9). ETA had delayed the start of the talks, according to a communiqué issued in August, because they considered that the Government was backtracking on its commitment to setting up the political strand of the negotiations independently (El Pais 2006). This strand of the talks was meant to discuss security issues (weapons, prisoners and refugees); however Zapatero's decision to preface the talks with a warning that self-determination could not be discussed could be seen as intransigent, as could ETA's delaying tactics. In October 2006 ETA and the Government met again, but discussion was dominated by ETA's recent theft of weapons and the repercussions for the peace process[50] (Fisas 2007). ETA's continuing to amass arms during negotiations was not conducive to the process.

The next meeting of the two parties, in December 2006, was expected to lead to formal talks (Guardian 2006)[51]. However it was dominated by discussion of the crisis arising from the non-compliance by both parties with what had been agreed. ETA wanted to discuss political issues such as self-determination, which were not supposed to be on the agenda (Fisas 2007). Again there was no progress and the focus was on differences and obstruction from both sides. Both parties in this set of (men-only) talks appeared determined to maintain fixed positions and did not comply with

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[49] Facilitated by the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and attended by Jesus Eguiguren from the Government, plus two others, and Josu Urrutikoetxea Bengoetxea ('Josu Ternera') of Batasuna, former leader of ETA, plus 2 others from ETA.
[50] Detailed information on the meeting was not available.
[51] ETA was probably represented by Javier Lopez Pena ('Thierry').

agreements, suggesting a lack of a genuine wish to find common ground or co-operate, thus supporting my hypothesis.

There were, however, some negotiations where women were involved (one woman in fact) yet she did not behave as expected. In the first significant set of meetings between ETA and the Government, in Algeria between 1986 and 1989, ETA was represented by three men[52] and one woman, Maria Belen González Peñalba, and the Government by six male officials[53]. During the talks the Government representatives agreed to the principle of discussing political issues with ETA, but their superiors in Madrid later overturned the decision (Fisas 2007: 2-3, Mees 2003: 67-71). There was also disagreement between ETA's spokesperson and his ruling council in France: 'the ETA leadership was more radical than their negotiators and soon annulled the concessions' (Beck 2005:207). ETA suspended the talks and the temporary ceasefire which they had called for their duration. Both sets of negotiators were at odds with their leadership, with the leadership not being prepared to compromise. Therefore there did not seem to be a well-grounded wish to find a mutual solution. There is no record of any particular contribution made by the female ETA member.

After the Lizarra-Garazi Accord was signed in 1998 (see below), ETA declared a ceasefire which led to a meeting with the Government in May 1999. ETA was represented by two men including the chief of the political wing[54] backed up again by Maria Belen González Peñalba (in charge of taking notes of the meeting), and Aznar's Government by three male officials[55]. The sides were in fundamental disagreement from the outset as ETA again wanted to discuss political issues and the Government was only

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[52] Domingo Iturbe Abasolo ('Txomin') (died March 1987), Ignacio/Inaki Aracama Mendia ('Makario') and Eugenio Etxebeste ('Antxon')
[53] Rafael Vera, Secretary of State for Security, J. Argote, M. Ballesteros, Juan Manuel Eguigaray, J. Elgoriga and J. Sancristobal. Meetings were facilitated by PNV. Several nationalist lawyers and representatives of the Algerian Government were also present.
[54] Mikel Albizu ('Antza') and Vicente Goikoetxea ('Willy')
[55] Aznar's aide Javier Zarzalejos, Secretary of State for Security Ricardo Martí Fluxá and Pedro Arriola. Also present as mediator was the former Bishop of Bilbao.

prepared to discuss matters of security. ETA asked whether the Government would recognize the right of self-determination for the Basques, but were met with outright refusal (New York Times 1999). González Peñalba and an ETA member who had set up the talks were arrested afterwards, which was seen as aggressive by ETA, as was the fact that information about the meeting was leaked (Mees 2003: 150-151).

There was also a set of talks in which women were not involved, but where methods hypothesised as favoured by women were partially evident. This was the Ireland Forum in June 1998, set up by Herri Batasuna (HB) for Basque groups in the Autonomous Community to discuss the Northern Irish peace process and its possible application to the Basque conflict. It was promoted as being an inclusive process. Participants were all the nationalist parties[56], some of the unions[57], non-nationalists the Independent Left (IU), the peace movement Elkarri and other small nationalist groups – but not the PP or PSOE-PSE.

According to Beck (2005:211-212) there were several weaknesses inherent in the proceedings. Firstly, the proposed international input never materialised. Secondly, the proto-state of Euskadi was much weaker than its equivalent in the Irish process, the Irish Republic. Third, the supposed principle of 'non-exclusion' was a sham, because PP and PSOE-PSE were not included in pre-negotiations or the signing of the agreement. Finally, the stipulation that acceptance of the right to Basque self-determination was needed to open negotiations would never be agreeable to the Spanish parties.

To summarise therefore, although a woman was involved in negotiations between ETA and the Spanish state between 1986 and 1989, and again in 1999, her presence did not contribute positively to the process. The woman concerned was part of ETA's leadership, fully committed to its goals and methods and had engaged in violence for many years. The Ireland Forum, although not orchestrated by women, did include the

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[56] HB, PNV, EA, IU and Batzarre
[57] ELA, LAB, EHNE, ESK-CUIS, STEE-EILAS

principle of inclusiveness. This may have been a result of women's influence in the Irish peace process (Hinds 1999). However as noted above, this did not translate into practice as the two main Spanish political parties were not included. It seems therefore that the Irish-inspired process was significantly watered down in Spain.

Contents of Agreements

ETA and the Spanish Government made several proposals without women's involvement, which did not make a positive contribution. In 1995 ETA[58] set out their proposal for peace in the 'Democratic Alternative'. They stipulated that 'the Spanish State must recognize our Self-Determination Right and our territoriality' and that 'the Basque society will be the unique subject in taking any decision.' If their conditions were met, ETA would cease its armed activity (ETA 1995). It is a unilateral proposal which demands action from the Government, without allowing for negotiation or compromise.

ETA declared a unilateral ceasefire after the signing of the Lizarra-Garazi Accord in 1998, which held for 14 months. Their statement first welcomes the fact that other parties have come together with the nationalist left to support their aims, but then specifies that settlements and links with political parties that 'aim to destroy Euskal Herria' must be destroyed. They would still act to defend themselves 'in case [of] hypothetical confrontations', and future events and attitudes would determine the duration of the ceasefire (Republican News 1998). The ceasefire is therefore somewhat conditional.

ETA made another declaration in September 2006, whilst they were in talks with the Government, in which they reiterated their determination 'to continue fighting steadily, with weapons in our hands, until we achieve

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58 No information was found as to whether any women were involved in the drafting of these proposals. Specifically, the two most senior women are not described as being involved in such work, therefore it was assumed there was no female participation.

independence and socialism for the Basque Country' and concluded with 'We are ready to give our lives for this! … Long live the Basque fighters! … With no rest until independence and socialism are attained!' (El Mundo 2006). The statement includes an unchanging commitment to goals and to the use of force, despite being in the process of negotiating at the time.

Spanish Prime Minister Zapatero sought agreement to hold talks with ETA in June 2006 in his 'Proposal for Peace', noting however that 'political questions can only be resolved by the legitimate representatives of the popular will', i.e. would not be discussed with ETA. The Government wanted to persuade ETA to hand over its weapons and dissolve, and to discuss minor concessions, such as the transfer of ETA prisoners to jails that were closer to the Basque region (International Herald Tribune 2006). Zapatero added a few days later that "something that simply does not exist cannot be put on the table", refusing thereby to consider any discussion of the self-determination of the Basques (Basque News 2006). Preconditions and a fixed agenda feature in this proposal, suggesting intransigence rather than a wish to compromise.

To summarise therefore, ETA's proposals show a continuing commitment to the use of force, and both theirs and the Government's have an inflexible approach. These proposals therefore support the hypothesis.

As in the case of Northern Ireland, however, there were two agreements (both pre-negotiation only) and one proposal where women were not involved[59] which included some positive elements. The Ajuria-Enea Pact[60] was signed by Basque political parties (except the banned Herri Batasuna) in January 1988. On the positive side, it stipulated that there was no place for violent paramilitary groups in the political process and that there should be a solution based on dialogue. However it still included a demand for self-determination by Basques only.

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[59] No information was found as to whether any women were involved in the drafting of these agreements, but no women seem to have been in leadership positions in the parties at the time.
[60] Formally, the Agreement for the Pacification and Normalization of Euskadi

Similarly, the Lizarra-Garazi Accord, signed in September 1998 as the result of the Ireland Forum, drafted by 2 (male) representatives of HB and PNV and signed by all 23 members (Mees 2003:136, 138-9), includes references to inclusiveness, unconditionality, non-violence, and an unlimited agenda. However, it argues that decision-making rests with the Basque population and the overall aim is a new concept of Basque sovereignty, thus falling short of achieving a full peace agreement.[61] The agreement was marked by the use of a problem-solving rather than adversarial approach ('In this sense, negotiations should not be understood as a process of separate gains, but as part of the attempt to resolve the conflict') and a focus on the process ('In accordance with the characteristics with which the process and the Peace Agreement in Ireland have been produced, we think that the conflict affecting Euskal Herria can find channels of resolution if the following guidelines and actions are observed….'). However there is one reference to the desired outcome, which is not negotiable: 'Euskal Herria must have the word, and make the decision.'

Thus the Ajuria-Enea Pact refers to the need for dialogue and the Lizarra-Garazi Accord also mentions inclusiveness and the importance of the process. In the case of the Accord these concepts were inspired by the Irish peace process and therefore may show the mark of women's influence. However they also both include a non-negotiable position on Basque self-determination.

Agreement Outcomes

The only two agreements signed, which were not substantive, did not have women's involvement and did not result in an end to the conflict. Two years after the Ajuria-Enea Pact of 1988, according to Mees (2003:58) there was a 'virtual stalemate' in the conflict. Violence by ETA including shootings and bomb attacks continued throughout 1990,

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[61] For the full text of the Lizarra-Garazi Accord, see
http://www.elkarri.org/en/pdf/Lizarra-Garazi%20Accord.pdf

resulting in more than 20 deaths (New York Times 1990a, 1990b, Funes 1998:495).

Although ETA had announced a ceasefire after the Lizarra-Garazi Accord of 1998, they ended it in November 1999, and a member of the Spanish military was the first to be assassinated in January 2000. There followed a 'bloody nightmare caused by more and more indiscriminate violence against nearly everybody opposed to ETA and its ideology … a return to terror' and the Basque political system entered a period of acute crisis (Mees 2003:152-154). At least 22 people were killed by ETA in the year (Guardian 2000). Thus, in line with my expectations, evidence from Spain suggests that the absence of women's involvement is associated with lack of success in the peace process.

Section 5. Discussion of Results

Using an in-depth analysis of Northern Ireland and Spain, this dissertation examined the role of women in shaping the process, content, and outcome of peace agreements. I found that women were highly influential for the conduct of negotiations in the case of Northern Ireland, in particular in the talks leading to the Good Friday Agreement (GFA). In Spain however, the results are mixed. A female member of ETA's negotiating team did not display any more pacifistic behaviour than did the men[62]. However, as noted, ETA was known to be a group dominated by traditional masculine values and any women members probably needed to mirror these values in order to rise in the hierarchy. Although most men-only talks supported the hypothesis, one set (the Ireland Forum) did seem to contain some of the principles usually favoured by women. The Ireland Forum had been inspired by the Irish peace process and therefore it could be argued that women did participate in its design, albeit indirectly.

With respect to women's impact on the content of peace agreements, in Spain most of the agreements and proposals analysed support my hypothesis. However, some documents, such as the Lizarra-Garazi Accord, were produced without women's input, but contained partial mention of the issues usually raised by women. In the case of Northern Ireland, as expected the Good Friday Agreement, with significant input by women, contains mention of all the expected issues. The two earlier agreements made without women's input only contain minimal references to them.

As for the hypothesis relating to the outcome of agreements, in both cases it is supported by all observations. Two years after both attempts at agreements in Spain, violence continued, and there has yet to be a termination of the conflict. In Northern Ireland two years after the Good

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[62] The behaviour of this woman shows the danger of treating 'women' as a homogeneous category. NIWC dealt with this issue by requiring all candidates to sign up to principles of inclusiveness, equality and human rights (Hope 2006).

Friday Agreement, unlike after earlier attempts, violence was much reduced and institutions were in place in a devolved government, albeit with remaining problems.

I will now consider alternative explanations for these outcomes. Looking at the general theories of (civil) war termination reviewed earlier, factors which do not appear to be common to both sides which may explain the more peaceful outcome in Northern Ireland are strong institutions, including those enabling multiple identity formation (Genicot and Skaperdas 2002, Jesse and Williams 2005), leaders who are able to compromise, finding a 'win-win' solution (Guelke 2003) and international involvement especially by the U.S. (Owen 2007).

Previous literature suggests that in Northern Ireland, the Sunningdale Agreement failed because it was unbalanced in favour of nationalists, but in any case, both paramilitaries were against power-sharing (Dixon 2001). The Anglo-Irish Agreement failed because the strength of Unionist opposition was underestimated (Dixon 2001), both Unionists and the SDLP were excluded from negotiations, and Nationalists were dissatisfied with law and order issues (Goodall 2007).

In contrast, the success of the Good Friday Agreement is attributed to the gradual strengthening of the co-operative relationship between the UK and Eire (Oberschall 2007), or the fact that veto holders with the power to bring down a peace accord from without were included in its formulation (MacGinty 2006:167). The IRA could accept the GFA because the changing international context, and the realization that armed struggle had reached its limits, had combined to mean that they could now 'extricate themselves from the cycle of violence while saving face in the eyes of their own followers' (Letamendia and Loughlin 2006:390). The British government managed to reassure both sides – Sinn Fein in private, the Unionists in public (Dixon 2001). One commentator considers that the NGO sector played a major role in the settlement, as its ethos of inclusiveness, dialogue and consensus slowly entered the party political

debate, and people from the sector brought their knowledge and skills to the negotiating table (Cochrane and Dunn 2002).

The lack of resolution of the Basque conflict is attributed largely to the attitudes of the key players. ETA maintained a rigid view of the unchanged position of the Spanish state, which was used as a rationale to continue the armed struggle, and neither ETA nor the state was interested in bringing forward the peace process. ETA perpetuates a culture of violence and uses it to bind members around its goals (Conversi 2006:178-195, Mees 2003). ETA still dictates terms to its political wing, unlike in Northern Ireland (Mees 2001).

Aznar's government used various hostile tactics to derail negotiations, for political ends (Conversi 2006:178-195, Mees 2003). Both weakness of and repression by the Spanish state are highlighted as negative factors (Woodworth 2001, 2007). The establishment of autonomous regions in response to nationalist demands meant Basque people felt even less Spanish than before, thus prolonging the conflict (Jesse and Williams 2005). However others criticise the state's refusal to consider Basque independence (Woodworth 2001). U.S. pressures on Spanish internal politics resulted in greater insecurity and the radicalization of nationalists including Basques (Conversi 2006:182-195). According to Mees (2003:97-100), the peace movement played an important role in consciousness raising, contributing to the rise in public opposition to armed struggle from the 1980s to late 1990s. However no peace groups have so far been party to any negotiations involving the Spanish Government.

In summary therefore, there are clearly many factors involved in the outcomes of these two conflicts. I would not wish to exaggerate the impact of women in Northern Ireland on the peace process, but some links can be drawn between their influence and other explanations. The intransigent attitude of ETA and the Spanish state is highlighted by many. It is interesting therefore that the nationalist left in the Basque Country has not been influenced by women as much as it has in Ireland. Also, no women acted on behalf of the Spanish Government, whereas Mo Mowlam

participated for the British Government in Northern Ireland in the successful negotiations, and has been noted for her ability to build relationships with all sides.

Inclusiveness is acknowledged to be a key factor in the success of the GFA – and this was one of the three principles of the NIWC. No fully inclusive talks process has yet taken place in Spain, and does not look likely. The Government has permanently banned ETA's political colleagues, and is trying to ban the Basque Parliament from holding a referendum on independence, claiming it is unconstitutional (EITB 2008).

The NIWC was unique in being a party which did not take a position on the constitutional issue to be decided. As George Mitchell, chair of the Northern Ireland talks, commented: 'Having been an important lubricant in the process, [the Women's Coalition] came away with less (except for their interest in the general good)' (Mitchell 2007:105). This perhaps shows a lack of understanding of the aim of the NIWC, which was precisely the 'general good'. No such coalition (women's or otherwise) has yet been included in the Basque peace process. The development of women's activism in Spain was probably delayed by active opposition from Franco's regime. Feminists from the 1970s onwards were largely associated with left-wing politics and trade unions, meaning that Marxist feminism predominated (Valiente 2002) rather than a type of feminism in which peace activism might have taken hold. The women's coalition Ahotsak was only formed in 2006 and so far has not been invited to any formal talks.

Turning finally to the issue of identity, it has been suggested that the ability, fostered by appropriate institutions, to form multiple identities (for example Catholic, Irish, European, Northern Irish) has aided the success of the GFA. I would suggest that the way women in Northern Ireland communities, and NIWC members, were able to prioritise their identity as women over their religious or cultural identities, was a key factor in their

role as peacemakers[63]. As one of NIWC's founders commented: '[In the 1980s and 1990s] I could cross the peace line ... because I was considered as a woman, I was neither Orange nor Green[64] ... that made working as a community worker relatively easy – to form networks ...' (BBC 2004).

It appears therefore that this study provides some support for the theory that women's participation in the peace process contributes to a successful outcome. I only examined here women's participation in civil war negotiations, but the nature of the hypotheses means that they could be easily extended to interstate conflicts[65]. It has been acknowledged that this contribution, whilst it may have effected change in the conduct and content of some peace processes and agreements, has not yet resulted in any long-term changes in political and social structures. In fact in several countries where women were involved in peace negotiations, women continue to face discrimination and exclusion in post-war society and women's political representation has decreased (Nakaya 2003). Barnes (2006) attributes this to the fact that women have been 'added' to existing structures, rather than the structures that have produced and perpetuated inequality being transformed[66]. Women's presence in negotiations ought therefore to be just one element of a strategy aiming to build a sustainable peace. Such a strategy also needs to address the underlying power relations which have led to conflict and which include a gender dimension (Nakaya 2003), and would be assisted by further research on the links between gender and conflict.

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[63] The fact that the Northern Irish state was constructed around maintaining majority rule for a section of the population, and the subsequent polarisation around community loyalties, has made it difficult for gender-based loyalties to develop (Sales 1997:202). This makes the success of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition even more remarkable.

[64] Orange is the colour of Unionism and green of Nationalism.

[65] Caution is needed before generalising from a study of two cases. However, the internal validity of my results has been strengthened by the fact that I have considered alternative explanations. Their external validity is good because the two cases selected exemplify the class of cases from which they are drawn, and that class has been clearly defined.

[66] See Dixon (2001) for an exploration of the way that structural constraints limit the power of agents attempting to realize their interests, in the context of Northern Ireland.

Appendix 1. Questions to ask of the cases

Background information

For each set of negotiations:

- When, where, who participated?
- Was there any input from civil society or other bodies, apart from officials at the table?
- If so, from whom, what form did it take, were there any women in those groups? What were their roles? (e.g. delegate, observer, mediator)
- Were there any side or parallel negotiations? Who had an input into them?
- Any mediators? Who?
- Did negotiations break down?
- Was there an agreement?
- What happened after the agreement or after negotiations had broken down?
- Was there a return to conflict?
- Was the agreement implemented?

Hypothesis 1: Conduct

How did participants behave? Did any participants behave in the following ways, and if so, were they male or female:

- prefer to use a problem-solving rather than adversarial approach
- look more for underlying problems in attempting to get to solutions
- seek harmony, be able to bridge divides
- listen better
- foster a more conciliatory atmosphere
- be less aggressive
- use more empathy
- be more process-orientated.

Hypothesis 2: Content

Did any participants behave in the following ways / suggest the following substantive issues, and if so, were they male or female:

- speak openly about the suffering caused by war
- emphasise care and relationships as well as justice and substantive issues
- include plans for future interactions
- suggest different visions of power-sharing,
- raise different issues including gender-related issues, human rights, education, social service provision, disarmament, reintegration
- suggest the transformation of structures to promote social justice.

Hypothesis 3: Outcome

What were the outcomes of negotiations?
Did agreements in which women participated last longer?
What reasons have been put forward for the success or failure of negotiations?

Appendix 2. Table of findings

Conflict	Negotiations & agreements	Women involved	Peaceful agreement?
Northern Ireland	Sunningdale Talks 1973	No	No
	Sunningdale Agreement	No	Partial
	Talks 1980s – 1993	No	No
	Anglo-Irish Agreement	No	Partial
	Talks 1996-98	Yes	Yes
	Good Friday Agreement 1998	Yes	Yes
Spain	ETA – Spanish state talks 1986-1989	Yes	No
	ETA proposal 1995	No	No
	Ireland Forum 1998	No	Partial
	ETA declaration 1998	No	No
	ETA – Spanish state talks 1999	Yes	No
	Talks 2005-06	No	No
	ETA declaration 2006	No	No
	Spanish Government proposal 2006	No	No

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