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# Ethnicity, political survival, and the exchange of nationalist foreign policy

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**ABSTRACT**

How does leadership's desire for political survival in ethnically heterogeneous democracies affect the probability of states exchanging nationalist foreign policy? I define nationalist foreign policy as foreign policy that aims to fulfill national self-governance using a civic or ethnic frame. I argue that civic-nationalist policy disputing the territoriality of one's own state is more likely, while ethno-nationalist policy favoring the leadership's foreign co-ethnics is less likely, when the size of the leadership's ethnic group is small and the level of democracy is relatively high. This is because the leadership, under such domestic conditions, has to mobilize support from other ethnic groups in order to stay in power. Civic-nationalist policy allows the leadership to increase domestic solidarity across ethnic lines and mobilize support from other ethnic groups, whereas ethno-nationalist policy would risk other ethnic groups criticizing the leadership of being ethno-centrist. These hypotheses are supported by quantitative analysis using an original dataset.

Since the eighteenth century, the spread of nationalism has led people around the world to work for the congruity of their national and political borders for self-governance, often causing conflict over who governs whom and where (Abulof 2016; Cederman, Warren, and Sornette 2011; Gellner 2006; Wimmer 2013). Such nationalist conflict has occasionally developed as the exchange of nationalist foreign policy between bordering states, as in the cases of Greece and Turkey over Cyprus and the Aegean Sea (Rumelili 2003), India and Pakistan over Kashmir (Ganguly 2001), China and Japan over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands (Takeuchi 2014), and, most recently, Ukraine and Russia over Crimea and Donbas.

Nationalist foreign policy exchange deserves particular attention for two reasons. First, when states dispute with each other over the nationalist stake (the congruity of national and political borders), it is difficult for them to reach a negotiated settlement. This is because, if the leadership of these states made a

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compromise on the nationalist stake, it could be accused of national treason and removed from office (He 2007). Thus, if the leaderships of the conflicting states want to stay in power, the best strategy for both of them is to make no compromise, take a hardline policy against each other, and keep engaging in hostilities (Colaresi 2004). The difficulty in reaching a negotiated settlement increases the chance of war (Fearon 1995); thus, the dyads of nationalist foreign policy exchange are a type of "dangerous dyads" (Bremer 1992).

Although these characteristics have been covered in the broader literature on interstate rivalry (for example, Colaresi 2004; Colaresi and Thompson 2002; Vasquez 2009), the nationalist nature of foreign policy points to the second reason why nationalist foreign policy exchange deserves particular attention. As nationalism is advocated by national/ethnic political actors in domestic politics, focusing on nationalist foreign policy enables a new domestic explanation of international relations: how ethnic politics and regime types together shape specific foreign policy. According to the literature on interstate conflict, regime types influence leaders' propensity to engage in hostilities abroad to increase their chances of staying in office (Chiozza and Goemans 2011; Kisangani and Pickering 2011),[1] while ethnic politics motivate leadership to direct nationalism against a foreign country (Carment, James, and Taydas 2009; Haynes 2016; Saideman 2001; Saideman and Ayres 2008; Sambanis and Shayo 2013; Woodwell 2007). In particular, I focus on the political peculiarity of ethnically heterogeneous democracies: in such democracies, for the leadership to maintain political stability, consensus among different groups is necessary (Andeweg 2000; Lijphart 1984).

Drawing on these previous insights, I examine how the desire of state leadership for political survival in ethnically heterogeneous democracies affects the probability of states exchanging nationalist foreign policy. Is the leadership in ethnically heterogeneous democracies more likely or less likely to use nationalist foreign policy against neighboring countries? If so, is it a civic or ethnic type? By answering these questions, I contribute to a better understanding of the role of ethnic politics, regime types, and nationalism in international relations and foreign policy making.

As nationalism studies indicate, nationalist foreign policy may be framed in civic or ethnic terms (Schrock-Jacobson 2012; Smith 1991; Snyder 2000). In this article, I define civic-nationalist policy as the foreign policy that disputes the territoriality of one's own state (and not that of its dependencies) against another country but without the leadership's foreign co-ethnics being a central issue. Ethno-nationalist policy is defined as the foreign policy that exercises a political

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[1]Examples of the recent literature on leadership and office-seeking behavior include, but are not limited to, the effect of possible post-tenure punishment on the likelihood of negotiated settlements (Debs and Goemans 2010), the effect of international terrorism on leader tenure (Park and Bali 2017), the effect of term limits on the conflict behavior of hawkish and dovish democratic leaders (J. Carter and Nordstrom 2017), and the (in)stability of different military leaderships (Kim and Kroeger 2018).

influence over the leadership's co-ethnics living in a foreign country. Greater details are given in the following section.

My argument is twofold. First, if the ethnic group of the leadership is small while the level of democracy is relatively high, it increases the probability of civic-nationalist foreign policy against neighboring countries. When the ethnic group of the leadership is small in a relatively democratic country, the leadership has to mobilize popular support across ethnic lines to stay in power, and civic-nationalist foreign policy (rather than ethno-nationalist foreign policy) helps this goal by diluting ethnic division and increasing domestic solidarity.

Second, if the ethnic group of the leadership is small while the level of democracy is relatively high, it decreases the probability of ethno-nationalist foreign policy against neighboring countries that have the leadership's co-ethnics. This is because the leadership has a greater opportunity or need to mobilize support from other ethnic groups within its own state and to avoid the ethno-centrist foreign policy that favors its own ethnic group over the others. My arguments are empirically supported by quantitative analysis using an original dataset of nationalist foreign policy exchange.

The article makes a new contribution to the literature on nationalism and interstate relations. Scholars have examined the effect of nationalism on the probability of militarized interstate disputes in general (Bertoli 2017; Haynes 2016; Mansfield and Snyder 2005; Schrock-Jacobson 2012; Shelef 2016; Wimmer 2013; Woodwell 2007). This approach, however, requires the assumption that all these disputes have a nationalist nature by definition (which may or may not be true) in order to establish the causal connection between nationalism and militarized disputes. Meanwhile, my data directly measure the exchange of nationalist foreign policy, thus building more robust empirics on the relationship between nationalism and interstate relations.

This point also applies to the literature on the diversionary use of force. The literature argues that leaders who face domestic problems mobilize public support by initiating interstate hostility and generating a "rally-round-the-flag" effect. While there are several types of political ideology that enable such mobilization (for example, Kisangani and Pickering 2011), nationalism is one of the most important (Haynes 2016; Solt 2011). However, because the literature has lacked measures of interstate *nationalist* hostility, it has been difficult to examine empirically whether domestic problems really predict a specifically *nationalist* diversionary use of force. The data on nationalist foreign policy exchange allow for such empirical modeling, and my empirical models find that domestic problems are not a good predictor of nationalist foreign policy exchange.

Finally, this article speaks to the broader literature on foreign policy. The literature points to the psychological and cognitive biases of leadership that cause insufficient and/or inadequate processing of information about foreign affairs and prevent rationalist-type decisions on foreign policy (Jervis 1976;

Mintz and DeRouen 2010: chapter 6; Renshon and Renshon 2008). This article suggests that nationalist foreign policy, while often seen as "irrational" foreign policy, can result from the leadership's rational decision in relation to staying in power.

Another important argument in the literature is that foreign policy is a product of political processes affected by both domestic and international conditions (Blavoukos and Bourantonis 2014; Hudson 2005; Mintz and DeRouen 2010: chapter 7; Putnam 1988). Most closely related to this article, leaders engage in hostilities abroad to stay in power, particularly if their states face external threats. External threats increase the likelihood of dovish leaders being replaced by hawkish leaders (Colaresi 2004), thus making hawkish foreign policy the dominant strategy for leaders to stay in power. External threats are also a convenient target to which leaders divert public attention from domestic issues, allowing them to mobilize popular support (Mitchell and Prins 2004). The novelty of this article is that its focus on nationalist foreign policy brings a new perspective to what international and domestic conditions together enable leaders to capitalize nationalistically on external threats for political survival. As international conditions, the contiguity and cross-border ethnic groups between states give leaders *opportunities* to use civic-nationalist or ethno-nationalist foreign policy. As domestic conditions, the (potential) political instability in ethnically heterogeneous democracies provides leaders with *motivations* to adopt a civic-nationalist foreign policy and not ethno-nationalist foreign policy. This perspective also adds to the literature on the relationship between political instability and interstate hostility, which has been found positive, negative, or null depending on other factors (e.g., Davies 2002; Daxecker 2011; Haynes 2016).

The remaining part of the article is structured as follows. The first section gives the definition of "nationalist," the key term in the article. I then elaborate on my theory and articulate two hypotheses. These hypotheses are empirically examined in the subsequent section; the findings are robust to many alternative specifications. Finally, I present the concluding remarks, together with the implications of the findings for future research and policy making.

## Defining "Nationalist"

Nationalists are actors who advocate nationalism, the political ideology that seeks the congruity of national and political borders for self-governance (Gellner 2006: 1). The difference between civic-nationalists and ethno-nationalists is the way they define their own nations (Smith 1991); nations are "imagined political communit[ies]" (Anderson 2006: 6).[2] The literature

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[2]The nation is "imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 2006: 6).

on nationalism (Brubaker 1999; Smith 1991) suggests that civic-nationalists are those who define their nation through the territoriality of their own state, excluding its dependencies if any (e.g., advocates for the Swiss nation including ethnic Germans, French people, and Italians); ethno-nationalists are those who define their nation through their ethnicity (e.g., Croatian nationalists who sought to secede from multi-ethnic Yugoslavia).[3] In this article, I reformulate these definitions of civic-nationalist and ethno-nationalist to be those that suit the analysis of foreign policy directed at another country.

I define civic-nationalist policy as the foreign policy that disputes the territoriality of one's own state (and not that of its dependencies) against another country but without the leadership's foreign co-ethnics being a central issue. Thus, I do not consider any territorial dispute (Huth and Allee 2002; Schultz 2017) to be the manifestation of civic-nationalist policy; it must be over the territoriality of one's own state and not over that of its dependency (c.f., Frederick, Hensel, and Macaulay 2017; Shelef 2016). And the foreign co-ethnics of the leadership do not (and should not) matter, because what civic-nationalists rely on to define their nation is not their ethnicity but the territoriality of their own state. When foreign co-ethnics of the leadership matter in a disputed territory, it becomes one of the factors that constitutes an ethno-nationalist foreign policy, as explained below.

I define ethno-nationalist policy as the foreign policy that exercises a political influence over the co-ethnics of the leadership who live in a foreign country. As mentioned above, ethno-nationalists define their nation through ethnicity; thus, what matters at the interstate level is ethnicity that ties its members across state borders as an ethnic nation. A typical example of ethno-nationalist policy is irredentism, i.e., seeking the annexation of ethnic enclaves (Saideman 2001; Saideman and Ayres 2008; Siroky and Hale 2017); but such territorial revisionism is not a prerequisite for coding ethno-nationalist policy. As long as the leadership exercises a political influence over its foreign co-ethnics (e.g., the Turkish government supporting Turkish Cypriots over the partition of Cyprus into Greek and Turkish areas), I consider it to be the manifestation of ethno-nationalist policy (see Carment et al. 2009: 67).

A traditional approach categorizes nationalism as civic or as ethnic according to an analysis of doctrinal specifics (e.g., Ignatieff 1993; Kohn 2005; Muller 2008; Snyder 2000). However, this approach has been criticized for its conceptual and empirical ambiguity and ambivalence, as many nations have *both* civic and ethnic elements at one and the same time (Brubaker 1999; Nieguth 1999; Smith 1991: 13).[4] To overcome this problem, I measure

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[3]The article does not use the term "nationalism" in an ordinary sense, the sense equated with national hostile attitudes. This catch-all definition makes the concept of nationalism too ambiguous to distinguish different political ideologies and, therefore, inadequate for analysis (see Gerring 2012: 127–28). Instead, by "nationalism" I denote the aforementioned academic definition.

[4]For example, the Japanese nation is shaped by both the territoriality of the Japanese state and the shared ancestry and culture of Japanese people, that is, ethnicity.

whether a state's nationalist foreign policy is a civic-nationalist type or an ethno-nationalist type, based on each context where the policy is directed at a specific target. For example, China's policy to annex Taiwan for the purpose of unifying the divided Chinese people was coded as an ethno-nationalist type, while its policy to annex the uninhabited Japanese-governed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands was coded as a civic-nationalist type. Thus, while a nation can have both civic and ethnic elements, either element can manifest as nationalist foreign policy against different targets.

## Theory

Here, I elaborate on my theory, drawing on state leadership's desire for political survival. I specify one background condition for my theory. In the following theoretical discussion, I assume that states are neighbors, and by "neighbors" I mean that they share borders. Both disputed territoriality and foreign co-ethnics are most likely to be observed between geographically contiguous states, because of the historical process of border drawing and voluntary or forced migration. Therefore, contiguous states have far more opportunity for nationalist foreign policy between states than do non-contiguous states. In methodological terms, contiguity as a dyadic factor conditions which country is likely to be the target of one's civic-nationalist foreign policy; and, as we see later, the presence of co-ethnics in a neighboring state conditions which country is likely to be the target of one's ethno-nationalist foreign policy.[5] In other words, by focusing on contiguous states, we can make sure that we are comparing the same things—so-called unit homogeneity (Gerring 2012: 246–47). Woodwell (2007: 86–87), examining the effect of transborder ethnic kin on militarized interstate disputes, takes the same approach.

A state is more likely to use civic-nationalist policy, if the ethnic group of the leadership is small while the level of democracy is relatively high. The small size of the leadership's ethnic group indicates a high risk of ethnically divided politics. The lack of domestic solidarity makes it difficult for a state to maintain political stability and manage domestic and foreign affairs effectively (Posen 1993a, 1993b; Wimmer 2013: chapter 2). In an ethnically heterogeneous society, foreign policy has to appeal across ethnic groups (Carment et al. 2009: 77). How much domestic solidarity matters to the leadership, however, also depends on how democratic its regime is. This is because, as a regime becomes more democratic, its leadership has to mobilize the political support of a greater proportion of the population; conversely, as a regime becomes more autocratic, its leadership needs political support from

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[5]If I use country-years as the unit of analysis, it means that we assume that all states have equal opportunities for civic-nationalist and ethno-nationalist foreign policy. But some states share borders with fewer countries than others, and some states share borders with fewer countries that have co-ethnics than others. This is why it is necessary to use the directed dyad approach rather than the country-year approach.

only a small section of the population (Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson, and Morrow 2003). In other words, in a country that has a relatively high level of democracy, the leadership whose ethnic group is small has to appeal more to other ethnic groups in order to mobilize enough support to stay in power, than in a country that has a relatively low level of democracy. The small size of the leadership's ethnic group implies either ethnic fractionalization (i.e., there are many, but small, other ethnic groups) or polarization (i.e., there is one, but large, other ethnic group) (Haynes 2016). In either case, my argument holds. To organize support great enough to stay in power and manage politics well, the leadership whose ethnic group is small but who operates in a relatively democratic state has to obtain support from multiple small ethnic groups in the case of ethnic fractionalization, or from some members of the other large ethnic group in the case of ethnic polarization.

Through disputing the territoriality of its own state with a neighboring country, the leadership can resort to the differentiation between the national "self" and "other" in the interstate system, thereby diluting ethnic identities within its own state and solidifying different ethnic groups as a single civic nation (Sambanis and Shayo 2013). In some cases, the leadership may purposely create a dispute over the territoriality of its own state with a neighboring country. In other cases, a state may become the target of a territorial challenge from a neighboring country; consequently, the leadership will have to defend the status-quo territoriality in order to show that it is the defender of the whole civic nation. In either case, the desire of leadership to stay in power by increasing domestic solidarity explains why it resorts to civic-nationalist policy against a neighboring country. In short, the combination of the small size of the leadership's ethnic group and a relatively high level of democracy increases the probability of civic-nationalist foreign policy, as summarized in Table 1.

H1: *The combination of the small size of the leadership's ethnic group and a relatively high level of democracy will increase the probability of civic-nationalist foreign policy against neighboring countries.*

The size of the leadership's ethnic group and the level of democracy demonstrate the opposite effect on the probability of ethno-nationalist foreign policy. In principle, the leadership has to prioritize the preference of its own ethnic constituency over that of other ethnic groups for political survival

**Table 1.** Hypothesized probability of civic-nationalist foreign policy.

|  |  | Level of democracy | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Low | High |
| Leadership's ethnic group size | Small | Low probability | High probability |
|  | Large | Low probability | Low probability |

in domestic politics; if not, other members of the leadership's ethnic group could mobilize support along ethnic lines and could replace the leadership (Saideman 2001). It is no wonder that previous research on irredentism has found that the presence of foreign co-ethnics increases the probability of the leadership engaging in conflict with a country that hosts these co-ethnics (for example, Huth and Allee 2002; Saideman 2001; Woodwell 2007).

However, even when the leadership has its own foreign co-ethnics, it may be hesitant to use ethno-nationalist policy, if its regime is more democratic than autocratic and the leadership's ethnic group is small. This is because, under such a condition, the leadership has greater opportunity or the need to mobilize support from other ethnic groups, and to avoid the ethno-centrist foreign policy that favors its own ethnic group over others. Whether the leadership adopts a policy that appeals to its own ethnic constituency is a function of how dominant the ethnic group is within domestic politics (Carment et al. 2009: 76). And the effect of group dominance is more salient for democratic leaders than autocratic leaders, because the former has to mobilize support from a large portion of the population while the latter does not have to do so (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). In short, the combination of the small size of the leadership's ethnic group and a relatively high level of democracy should *decrease* the probability of the leadership using an ethno-nationalist policy against a country where its foreign co-ethnics live, as summarized in Table 2.[6]

H2: *The combination of the small size of the leadership's ethnic group and a relatively high level of democracy will decrease the probability of ethno-nationalist foreign policy against neighboring countries where the leadership's ethnic kin live.*

## Empirical Analysis

This section tests the above two hypotheses using large-N statistical analysis. First, I describe the data of nationalist foreign policy exchange and explain the research design and the variables. Then, I present and discuss the results of the analysis. The empirical analysis focuses on the post-WWII period

Table 2. Hypothesized probability of ethno-nationalist foreign policy.

| | | Level of democracy | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | Low | High |
| Leadership's ethnic group size | Small | High probability | Low probability |
| | Large | High probability | High probability |

[6]The two hypotheses are separately presented, because their scope conditions are different. The first hypothesis focuses on dyads where states are contiguous, while the second hypothesis focuses on dyads where states are contiguous and an actor state has the leadership's co-ethnics in a target state.

(from 1946). This period has been a distinctive time for nationalism (Connor 1994: 37–38, 173), for example, the institutionalization of self-determination in the interstate system. Thus, it increases the unit homogeneity of my empirical models for the sake of better causal inference (for unit homogeneity, see Gerring 2012: 246–47).

## Data of Nationalist Foreign Policy Exchange

I created the data of nationalist foreign policy exchange, drawing primarily on Thompson and Dreyer (2012). Thompson and Dreyer (2012) document the narratives of interstate rivalries in a global scale, which essentially capture the situation where states exchange any kind of competing and threatening foreign policies. Coding foreign policy on a global scale requires extensive qualitative work. Hence, Thompson and Dreyer's (2012) narratives assist significantly this task. Then, I narrowed the universe of cases to dyads that were especially prone to violent behavior, referring to Klein, Goertz, and Diehl (2006), who measure dyads that experienced a series of militarized interstate disputes with issue linkage. The importance of nationalism for mass legitimacy makes violent attempts more likely than bargaining in solving disputed issues (Huth and Allee 2002: 80; Takeuchi 2014). This implies that the focus on violence-prone dyads increases the unit homogeneity of my data in terms of the saliency of nationalism, and helps better causal inference.

I coded foreign policy as a civic-nationalist or ethno-nationalist type based primarily on Thompson and Dreyer (2012) narratives. When the narratives were suggestive about the presence of nationalist foreign policy but did not give enough information for an unambiguous coding decision, I referred to other secondary sources.

I coded one state's foreign policy against another as a civic-nationalist type, if the policy disputed the territoriality of one's own state (and not of a dependency) without any evidence of the leadership's foreign co-ethnics being a central issue. I did not regard such foreign co-ethnics as a central issue, if one of the following two conditions was met. One is that there was clear evidence that the disputed territory was not populated by the leadership's foreign co-ethnics (for example, the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands for China and Japan). The other is that an issue other than the leadership's foreign co-ethnics (such as strategic importance or economic resources) was the main driving force of interstate hostility (for example, Iraq-Kuwait over oil reserves). In most cases, the distinction between the territoriality of a state and that of a dependency was straightforward; when unclear in Thompson and Dreyer (2012) narratives, it was helped by the Issue Correlates of War data (Frederick et al. 2017).

I coded a state's foreign policy directed at another state as an ethno-nationalist type, if at least one of the following two conditions was met.

One is that the state explicitly made its leadership's foreign co-ethnics a diplomatic issue with another state (e.g., claiming part of foreign territory under the name of protecting foreign co-ethnics, or giving political assistance to foreign co-ethnics). The other is that the state claimed the ownership of a foreign territory where the leadership's foreign co-ethnics lived, and there was no issue other than these co-ethnics that could have motivated the territorial revisionism. Finally, if I did not find any evidence for the exchange of nationalist foreign policy in Thompson and Dreyer (2012) narratives, those dyads were dropped from my universe of cases.

More details on coding are available in the Supplementary File. The list of all cases of nationalist foreign policy exchange is available in the Appendix at the end of the article, where a total of 63 dyads are identified.

## Research Design

As my theory explains, for the two different nationalist policies—civic-nationalist and ethno-nationalist types—I use two dependent variables, which are dichotomously coded. First, civic-nationalist policy is coded 1 if an actor state directs civic-nationalist policy against a target state in a year; 0 otherwise. Second, ethno-nationalist policy is coded 1 if an actor state directs ethno-nationalist policy against a target state in a year; 0 otherwise. I include the ongoing years of these policies (with time controls as I explain below), because my theory explains the probability of a state directing nationalist foreign policy against a target state, i.e., the probability of both initiation and continuation (Bennett and Stam 2000b: 661n6). To control for simultaneity bias, I use the observations of the dependent variables one year ahead ($t + 1$). I employ probit regression as the dependent variables are binary.[7] I implement robust standard errors clustered on dyads to control for within-group heteroskedasticity.

The unit of analysis is directed dyad-years where states are contiguous by land/river or water equal to or less than 400 miles (Stinnett, Tir, Diehl, Schafer, and Gochman 2002).[8] Directed dyad-years, rather than non-directed dyad-years, are appropriate because I examine the probability of a state directing civic-nationalist or ethno-nationalist policy against another state. And, as discussed in the theory section, my theory focuses on neighboring states, so that using the subset of contiguous states is consistent with my theory. Additionally, to test my second hypothesis, I further restrict the universe of cases into directed dyad-years where the leadership of an actor state has its foreign co-ethnics in a target state, because the presence of foreign co-ethnics is a prerequisite for ethno-nationalist policy. The

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[7]Multinomial probit is inappropriate here because, as described below, the sample of cases is different between models for civic-nationalist foreign policy and those for ethno-nationalist foreign policy.

[8]A lower threshold of water equal to, or less than, 150 miles did not change the main findings (see Tables A5 and A6 in the Supplementary File).

leadership's foreign co-ethnics are identified by the Transborder Ethnic Kin 2014 dataset, a part of the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) 2014 dataset (Vogt, Bormann, Rüegger, Cederman, Hunziker, and Girardin 2015).[9] The data were retrieved from the GROWup website (Girardin, Hunziker, Cederman, Bormann, and Vogt 2015) on April 10, 2016. The temporal scope is 1950–2007, where all data for the explanatory variables are available. The data frame was created by EUGene software (Bennett and Stam 2000a).

### Main Explanatory Variables

The hypotheses are tested by the following two binary variables on the side of an actor state: a small size of a leadership's ethnic group and a relatively high level of democracy. These two variables and their interaction exhaust all combinations of a small/large size of a leadership's ethnic group and a relatively low/high level of democracy: the baseline = large group size, low democracy level; the small group size as a single variable = small group size, low democracy level; the high democracy level as a single variable = large group size, high democracy level; the interaction = small group size, high democracy level.

The ethnic group of the leadership is identified as the most powerful ethnic group in the state apparatus, which includes the ethnic group that monopolizes or dominates national politics (e.g., the Japanese in Japan) or that is a senior partner in a powersharing regime (e.g., the English in the UK); or the only ethnic group that engages in national politics (e.g., Germans in Germany).[10] The size of the leadership's ethnic group is measured by its proportion to the sum of all politically relevant ethnic groups ($0 < Group\ Size \leq 1$), according to the EPR 2014 dataset (Vogt et al. 2015; see also Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009).[11] The level of democracy is measured by the

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[9]If the EPR dataset reports that a country has no politically relevant ethnic group because of the lack of ethnic politics in the domestic arena, I consider only those countries where there is one ethnic group, to be an ethnic parent country (e.g., Koreans in South/North Koreas or Germans in Germany). In addition, if there is more than one senior partner in a powersharing regime, the presence of foreign co-ethnics in a target state is identified only when all senior partners share the same ethnic tie with them. Unlike excluded groups or junior partners, senior partners have equal power; therefore, one's ethno-nationalist policy is likely to be opposed by other senior partners unless they share the same ethnic identity (e.g., Kashmiris for all Pakistani Muslims though Pakistani Muslims also have different ethnic identities within Pakistan). Even if the foreign co-ethnics of any senior partner were specified, the results were robust (see Table A7 in the Supplementary File).

[10]Powersharing here means "any arrangement that divides executive power among leaders who claim to represent particular ethnic groups. Such an arrangement can be either formal, as in Lebanon, or informal, as in Switzerland" (Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009: online appendix).

[11]Ethnic groups are politically relevant where "at least one significant political actor claims to represent the interests of that group in the national political arena, or […] members of an ethnic category are systematically and intentionally discriminated against in the domain of public politics" (Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009: 325). Though in a few cases the size of a junior partner in a powersharing regime is greater than that of its senior partner, the size of senior partners is still used to code the variable, because the theoretical focus here is the role of the leadership, and senior partners by definition have more power in national politics than junior partners. If there is more than one senior partner, the size of the largest group is used. The EPR data suppose that there is no politically relevant ethnic group in the "countries or specific periods in which political objectives, alliances, or disputes were never framed in ethnic terms, thus avoiding using an ethnic lens for countries not characterized by ethnic politics, such as Tanzania and Korea" (Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009: online appendix). In such cases, the size of the leadership's ethnic group is coded 1, indicating no ethnic division in national politics.

democracy scale in the Polity IV data (Marshall 2016), ranging from 0 (no democratic element) to 10 (all democratic elements).

I use the threshold of the size of the leadership's ethnic group ≤/> 0.5 (i.e., whether or not the leadership's ethnic group is the majority) and the democracy scale ≤/> 5 (i.e., whether or not the democracy scale is beyond the middle level of democracy). For robustness checks, I also used a tighter threshold of the size of the leadership's ethnic group ≤/> 0.4; the democracy scale ≤/> 6; the results remained substantively the same (see Tables A1 and A2 in the Supplementary File). While the Polity scale (or Polity2, an adjusted version for time-series analysis) is more common in the literature, the author of the data warns that the Polity scales may be problematic as a continuous measure of autocracy-democracy (Marshall 2016: 16–17). If I used a binary measure of democracy, defined as the Polity2 scale ≥ 6, to define a relatively high level of democracy, the results did not change substantively (see Tables A3 and A4 in the Supplementary File).

I use the binary categories of the size of the leadership's ethnic group and the democracy scale, rather than the original continuous measures, as this is consistent with my theoretical predictions as summarized in Tables 1 and 2. Modeling an interaction effect between continuous variables correctly is often difficult because of untenable assumptions, as suggested by methodologists (Hainmueller, Mummolo, and Xu 2017). This is particularly so when constitutive terms are distributed in a skewed way and difficult to transform into a balanced distribution, as in the cases of the size of the leadership's ethnic group and the democracy scale (Hainmueller et al. 2017).

## Control Variables

The literature on the diversionary use of force has examined whether domestic unrest increases the probability of a leader's use of external military action for a rally-round-the-flag effect. Following the literature, I use the sum of general strikes, riots, and mass demonstrations per country-year to operationalize domestic unrest (Haynes 2016: 263). The data are from the Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive (Banks and Wilson 2016).

I also control for realpolitik explanations. Nationalist foreign policy exchange might be just another consequence of power politics. To take this possibility into account, I control for major power status, dyadic power relationships, and shared alliance (Bremer 1992). Major power status is measured by a binary variable, coded 1 if an actor state is a major power; 0 otherwise (Correlates of War Project 2011). Major power states may be more likely to engage in nationalist foreign policy exchange because of their broad range of foreign interests. For example, as China has grown as a major

power, it has become more demanding over territoriality in the East and South China Seas.[12]

The effect of dyadic power relationships is measured by the capability ratio, or the ratio of the weaker state's Composite Index of National Capabilities (CINC) to that of the stronger state (Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972), which is transformed to the natural logarithm form to increase the normality of the distribution. Power transition theory suggests that a closer power gap between states should provoke hostility between states (Organski and Kugler 1980), which might include nationalist foreign policy exchange.

Alliance is coded 1, if a dyad shares an alliance; 0 otherwise (Gibler 2009). Allies may not engage in hostility in general, because it could make national security worse.

According to the liberal peace proposition (Russett and Oneal 2001), joint democracy reduces hostility between states. Thus, I control for a relatively high level of democracy in a target state (coded in the same way as that for an actor state), and let it interact with a relatively high level of democracy in an actor state. Trade dependence is measured as the proportion of bilateral trade to GDP per capita (Barbieri, Keshk, and Pollins 2009; Gleditsch 2002). If an acting state is more trade-dependent on a target states, it may refrain from engaging in hostility for fear of losing economic benefits.

To control for the temporal dependence of the binary dependent variables in the time-series cross-sectional data, I use the cubic polynomials of year counts (D. B. Carter and Signorino 2010). The cubic polynomials are created separately for each of the dependent variables. They are also created both for dyad-years when the dependent variables take 0 and for dyad-years when the dependent variables take 1, in order to control for the temporal dependence of the ongoing years of both peace and civic/ethno-nationalist foreign policy.

The summary statistics of all variables except time controls are presented in Table 3. For the sake of reference, I also present the summary statistics of all possible combinations of the size of the leadership's ethnic group and the level of democracy; the main findings hold even if I use these additive interaction terms instead (see Table A9). While both civic-nationalist policy and ethno-nationalist policy are rare events (3% and 2% of the total N, respectively), the results did not change significantly, even if I used rare-event corrected logit models (King and Zeng 2001; see Tables A10 and A11 in the Supplementary File).

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[12]While it is not as common to control for as a major power actor state, a major power target might also have some effect here. A major power target might be more likely to be the target of nationalist foreign policy, because it helps to increase the reputation of leaders to be a "tough" nationalist against "bully" major powers. The main findings do not change, while major power targets are statistically insignificant as a predictor of civic-nationalist policy and statistically significant as a predictor of ethno-nationalist policy and reduce the probability of being a target of ethno-nationalist policy. This is an interesting finding, suggesting that leaders direct ethno-nationalist policy at "easy" targets. See Table A8 in the Supplementary File.

**Table 3.** Summary statistics, 1950–2007.

| Variables | Obs. | Mean | Std. Dev. | Min | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Civic-Nationalist Policy | 46,362 | 0.03 | 0.17 | 0 | 1 |
| Ethno-Nationalist Policy | 46,362 | 0.02 | 0.15 | 0 | 1 |
| Small Group Size | 42,782 | 0.28 | 0.45 | 0 | 1 |
| High Democracy Level | 42,001 | 0.41 | 0.49 | 0 | 1 |
| Small Group Size, High Democracy Level | 41,083 | 0.06 | 0.23 | 0 | 1 |
| Small Group Size, Low Democracy Level | 41,083 | 0.22 | 0.41 | 0 | 1 |
| Large Group Size, High Democracy Level | 41,083 | 0.35 | 0.48 | 0 | 1 |
| Large Group Size, Low Democracy Level | 41,083 | 0.38 | 0.48 | 0 | 1 |
| Domestic Unrest | 45,551 | 1.26 | 3.63 | 0 | 85 |
| Major Power Status | 46,452 | 0.08 | 0.28 | 0 | 1 |
| Capability Ratio (log) | 46,402 | −1.94 | 1.62 | −9.69 | 0 |
| Alliance | 46,452 | 0.46 | 0.50 | 0 | 1 |
| High Democracy Level of Target | 42,001 | 0.41 | 0.49 | 0 | 1 |
| High Democracy Level (both actor and target) | 38,818 | 0.26 | 0.44 | 0 | 1 |
| Trade Dependence | 42,760 | 0.25 | 1.17 | 0 | 49.79 |

## Results

Table 4 displays the results of the probit regressions of civic-nationalist policy to test my first hypothesis (the small size of the leadership's ethnic group and a relatively high democracy level → a higher likelihood of civic-nationalist

**Table 4.** Probit regression of civic-nationalist policy, 1950–2007.

| | Model 1–1 | Model 1–2 | Model 1–3 | Model 1–4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Small Group Size | 0.34** | 0.12 | 0.13 | 0.02 |
| | (0.15) | (0.10) | (0.15) | (0.11) |
| High Democracy Level | 0.02 | 0.09 | −0.19 | −0.06 |
| | (0.15) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.16) |
| Small Group Size × High Democracy Level | | | 0.62** | 0.46** |
| | | | (0.27) | (0.21) |
| Domestic Unrest | | 0.01 | | 0.00 |
| | | (0.01) | | (0.01) |
| Major Power Status | | 0.14 | | 0.15 |
| | | (0.18) | | (0.18) |
| Capability Ratio (log) | | 0.10** | | 0.10** |
| | | (0.04) | | (0.04) |
| Alliance | | 0.09 | | 0.09 |
| | | (0.09) | | (0.09) |
| High Democracy Level of Target | | 0.06 | | 0.05 |
| | | (0.14) | | (0.14) |
| High Democracy Level × High Democracy Level of Target | | −0.53** | | −0.43* |
| | | (0.22) | | (0.23) |
| Trade Dependence | | 0.06*** | | 0.06*** |
| | | (0.02) | | (0.02) |
| Constant | −1.97*** | −1.06*** | −1.88*** | −1.01*** |
| | (0.11) | (0.14) | (0.10) | (0.15) |
| $\beta_{\text{Small Group Size}} + \beta_{\text{High Democracy Level}} + \beta_{\text{Small Group Size} \times \text{High Democracy Level}}$ | NA | NA | 0.57** | 0.42** |
| | | | (0.25) | (0.18) |
| AIC | 11605.47 | 1359.00 | 11475.06 | 1355.05 |
| Observations | 41,030 | 34,962 | 41,030 | 34,962 |

Robust standard errors clustered on dyads in parentheses

Time controls not shown

***$p < 0.01$, **$p < 0.05$, *$p < 0.1$ by two-tailed tests

policy). There are models without any control variable and models with all control variables in order to check whether the control variables affect the main explanatory variables in a misleading way (Achen 2005). The first two models use the small size of the leadership's ethnic group and the relatively high level of democracy without the interaction; the other two models include the interaction term. These two types of model allow us to check whether a change in the probability of civic-nationalist policy is because of the combination of the small size of the leadership's ethnic group and the relatively high level of democracy and not because of either of the two conditions alone.

In the first two models, the relatively high level of democracy is statistically insignificant, whereas the small size of the leadership's ethnic group is statistically significant and associated with a higher probability of civic-nationalist policy only if there is no control variable, suggesting that its effect is not robust. In the other two models, the small size of the leadership's ethnic group and the relatively high level of democracy are statistically insignificant as constitutive terms; the interaction term between these two variables is statistically significant, implying the presence of the interaction effect. The total effect of the interaction is presented as the linear combination of the coefficients of the small size of the leadership's ethnic group, the relatively high level of democracy, and their interaction term ($\beta_{\text{Small Group Size}}$ + $\beta_{\text{High Democracy Level}}$ + $\beta_{\text{Small Group Size} \times \text{High Democracy Level}}$). The effect is statistically significant and associated with a higher probability of civic-nationalist policy. The Akaike Information Criteria (AIC) also indicate that models perform better when the interaction term is specified. In short, only the combination of the small size of the leadership's ethnic group and the relatively high level of democracy increases the probability of civic-nationalist policy. The substantive effect is also significant, as displayed in Figure 1. The predicted probability of civic-nationalist policy, estimated based on Model 1–4, is 22.1%, if the size of the leadership's ethnic group is small and the level of democracy is relatively high, which is significantly higher than the predicted probabilities in the cases of the remaining categories.[13] In short, the results are consistent with my first hypothesis.

Next, I investigate my second hypothesis (the small size of the leadership's ethnic group and a relatively high democracy level → a lower likelihood of ethno-nationalist policy). In Table 5, the models use ethno-nationalist policy as the dependent variable, in the subset of directed dyad-years where the leadership of an actor state has foreign co-ethnics in a target state. As in Table 4, there are models without any control variable and models with all control variables. In the first two models, the small size of the leadership's ethnic group is statistically insignificant, whereas the relatively high level of democracy is

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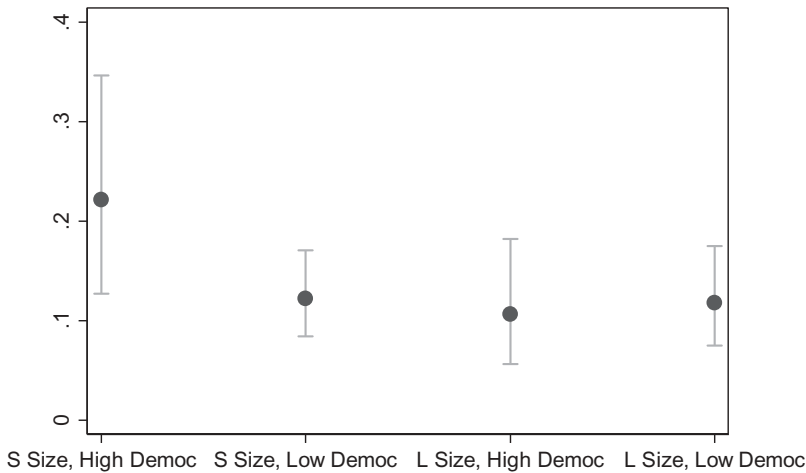[13]The control variables are fixed at the mean or mode.

**Figure 1.** Predicted probabilities of civic-nationalist policy. S/L Size: small/large group size; High/Low Democ: high/low democracy level; Dots and bars: mean and 95% confidence intervals.

**Table 5.** Probit regression of ethno-nationalist policy, 1950–2007.

| | Model 2–1 | Model 2–2 | Model 2–3 | Model 2–4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Small Group Size | −0.17 | −0.03 | −0.12 | 0.03 |
| | (0.21) | (0.12) | (0.23) | (0.13) |
| High Democracy Level | −0.55** | 0.05 | −0.47* | 0.16 |
| | (0.24) | (0.20) | (0.26) | (0.21) |
| Small Group Size × | | | −0.78* | −0.83*** |
| High Democracy Level | | | (0.40) | (0.31) |
| Domestic Unrest | | −0.02 | | −0.02 |
| | | (0.02) | | (0.02) |
| Major Power Status | | −0.02 | | −0.03 |
| | | (0.22) | | (0.22) |
| Capability Ratio (log) | | 0.11** | | 0.10** |
| | | (0.05) | | (0.05) |
| Alliance | | 0.17 | | 0.15 |
| | | (0.12) | | (0.12) |
| High Democracy Level of Target | | 0.05 | | 0.06 |
| | | (0.18) | | (0.19) |
| High Democracy Level × | | −0.40 | | −0.46* |
| High Democracy Level of Target | | (0.24) | | (0.25) |
| Trade Dependence | | −0.29* | | −0.29* |
| | | (0.15) | | (0.15) |
| Constant | −1.27*** | −0.70*** | −1.29*** | −0.73*** |
| | (0.14) | (0.18) | (0.15) | (0.18) |
| $\beta_{Small\ Group\ Size} + \beta_{High\ Democracy\ Level}$ | NA | NA | −1.38*** | −0.65** |
| $+ \beta_{Small\ Group\ Size\ \times\ High\ Democracy\ Level}$ | | | (0.35) | (0.28) |
| AIC | 4690.14 | 666.23 | 4676.52 | 665.49 |
| Observations | 9,171 | 7,771 | 9,171 | 7,771 |

Robust standard errors clustered on dyads in parentheses
Time controls not shown
***$p < 0.01$, **$p < 0.05$, *$p < 0.1$ by two-tailed tests

statistically significant and associated with a lower probability of ethno-nationalist policy only if there is no control variable, suggesting that its effect is not

robust. In the other two models, the small size of the leadership's ethnic group is statistically insignificant as a constitutive term. In Model 2–3, where no control variable is included, the relatively high level of democracy is statistically significant as a constitutive term and associated with a lower probability of ethno-nationalist policy; however, this is attributable to the omission of the interaction with the relatively high level of democracy in a target state, as adding this interaction term is enough to make the statistical significance disappear. The interaction term between the small size of the leadership's ethnic group and the relatively high level of democracy is statistically significant with and without the control variables, implying the presence of the interaction effect. Again, the total effect of the interaction is presented as the linear combination of the coefficients of the small size of the leadership's ethnic group, the relatively high level of democracy, and their interaction term ($\beta_{\text{Small Group Size}}$ + $\beta_{\text{High Democracy Level}}$ + $\beta_{\text{Small Group Size} \times \text{High Democracy Level}}$). The effect is statistically significant and associated with a lower probability of ethno-nationalist policy. The AICs also indicate that models perform better when the interaction term is specified. In short, only the combination of the small size of the leadership's ethnic group and the relatively high level of democracy decreases the probability of ethno-nationalist policy, when the leadership has its foreign co-ethnics in a target state.

I estimate the predicted probabilities of ethno-nationalist policy based on Model 2–4, indicating that the substantive effect of the small size of the leadership's ethnic group and the relatively high level of democracy is also significant. As in Figure 2, among the cases where the leadership has its foreign co-ethnics in a neighboring country, the predicted probability of ethno-nationalist policy is 4.8%, if the size of the leadership's ethnic group is small and the level of democracy is relatively high, which is significantly lower than the predicted probabilities in the cases of the other categories. In short, the results support my second hypothesis.

Finally, I review the results of the control variables. Conforming to Sobek's (2007: 29) statement that diversionary theory "has not received consistent empirical support," domestic unrest is statistically insignificant across all models. Major power states and alliances are also statistically insignificant across all models. The effects of the capability ratio are as anticipated theoretically: if a power gap between states is smaller, they are more likely to experience nationalist foreign policy exchange using either civic-nationalist or ethno-nationalist policy.

The relatively high level of democracy in target states is statistically insignificant, whereas the relatively high level of democracy in both actor and target states has a statistically significant total effect to reduce the probability of a civic-nationalist policy but not that of an ethno-nationalist policy. In both Model 1–4 and Model 2–4, the interaction term between the high democracy level of actor states and the high democracy level of target states is statistically
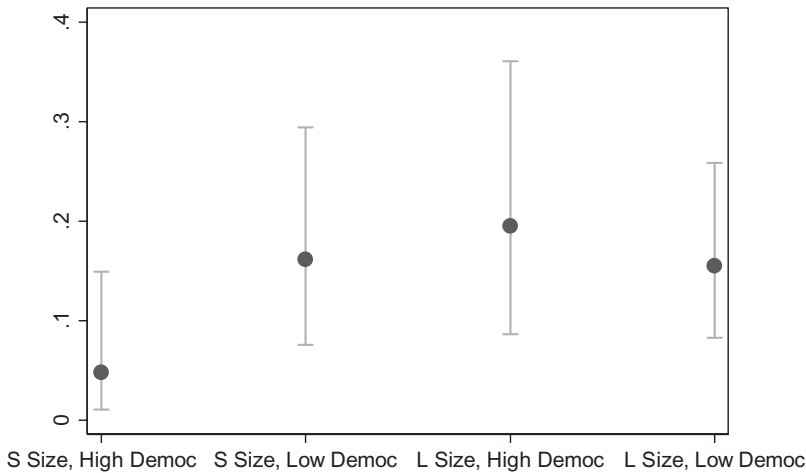
**Figure 2.** Predicted probabilities of ethno-nationalist policy. S/L Size: small/large group size; High/Low Democ: high/low democracy level; Dots and bars: mean and 95% confidence intervals

significant, implying the presence of the interaction effect. However, the total effect of the high democracy level of actor states, the high democracy level of target states, and their interaction term is statistically insignificant in the case of Model 2–4 (calculated as the linear combination of the coefficients; the sum of the coefficients is −0.25 with a *p*-value of .28), unlike in the case of Model 1–4 (the sum of the coefficients is −0.44 with a *p*-value of .02). This finding implies that the dyadic version of democratic peace applies to civic-nationalist policy, whereas the monadic version of democratic peace applies to ethno-nationalist policy, though only under the condition where the size of the leadership's ethnic group is small.

Trade dependence demonstrates an interesting effect. It is statistically significant both in the model that predicts civic-nationalist policy and in the models that predict ethno-nationalist policy. However, the direction of the effect is opposite. Higher trade dependence is associated with a *higher* probability of civic-nationalist policy, while correlated with a *lower* probability of ethno-nationalist policy. One possible interpretation is that, if a state is trade-dependent on a neighboring country, it creates a domestic constituency that criticizes the dependence and claims greater economic autonomy from that country. To alleviate this nationalist criticism, the leadership may dispute its state's territoriality with the neighboring country on which it is trade dependent. Meanwhile, in the models that explain ethno-nationalist policy, trade dependence may work as a proxy for a good transborder relationship. If the state has a good transborder relationship with a neighboring country where the leadership's ethnic kin live, the leadership may not have to use ethno-nationalist policy to satisfy its own ethnic constituency in domestic politics.

## Conclusion

As suggested by recent crises in Eastern Ukraine and Nagorno-Karabakh, nationalist foreign policy exchange remains problematic in world politics. In this article, I have theorized how state leadership's desire for political survival results in nationalist foreign policy exchange with a neighboring country, focusing on where the size of the leadership's ethnic group is small and the level of democracy is relatively high. I have hypothesized that, in such a situation, a state is more likely to direct a civic-nationalist policy against a neighboring country, whereas it is less likely to direct an ethno-nationalist policy against a neighboring country that hosts the leadership's foreign co-ethnics. The empirical models using the original dataset have supported these arguments and have been robust to several alternative explanations and alternative model specifications.

The findings of this article present a somewhat different picture from the common belief that civic nationalism is peaceful (Ignatieff 1993: 5–9; Muller 2008; Snyder 2000: 74, 80–82). The findings imply that if the leadership resorts to civic nationalism to avoid ethnically divided politics within its own state, it will result in hostility against another country.

The findings also present a dilemma for conflict resolution. Logically speaking, the probability of nationalist foreign policy exchange should decrease, if each ethnic group has its own ethnically homogenous state (so that the leadership does not have to use civic-nationalist foreign policy), and if no foreign co-ethnics of the leadership exist (so that there are no grounds for ethno-nationalist foreign policy). In practice, this is not a plausible policy goal that could be achieved. First, it would require a massive population transfer, which has itself been the tragic consequence of nationalist violence. It is difficult (or probably impossible) to draw borders perfectly along the lines of all ethnic groups, as members of one group often live together with those of other groups in one region. Second, because ethnic groups and nations are socially constructed, there is always some possibility that even the perfect separation of ethnic groups at one point would be broken as the result of a new social construction of ethnic or national identities in future.

An agenda for future research is to find what other factors could mitigate against nationalist foreign policy exchange and how realistic these would be to implement as a policy. One potential avenue may be conditioning the effect of institutional factors such as the size of the leadership's ethnic group and the level of democracy, using the characteristics of leaders (J. Carter and Nordstrom 2017). Institutional factors are less dynamic than the turnover of leaders. Thus, previous research has found that the characteristics of leaders can explain variation in international conflict even when institutional factors are controlled for (Chiozza

and Goemans 2011; Horowitz, Stam, and Ellis 2015). Future research might theorize and empirically examine what kind of leaders are less likely to use both civic-nationalist and ethno-nationalist foreign policy, even when the institutional conditions that this article has specified should encourage such policies.

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## Appendix. List of nationalist foreign policy exchange

| Dyad | Period | Ethno-nationalist policy | Civic-nationalist policy |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Honduras-El Salvador | 1969–1989 | El Salvador | Honduras |
| Colombia-Venezuela | 1982–2010 | - | Both |
| Venezuela-Guyana | 1966–1999 | - | Both |
| Ecuador-Peru | 1946–1955 | - | Both |
| | 1977–1998 | - | Both |
| Chile-Argentina | 1952–1984 | - | Both |
| Argentina-United Kingdom | 1976–1983 | UK | Argentina |
| Spain-Morocco | 1957–1975 | Morocco | Spain |
| German FR-German DR | 1961–1971 | GFR | GDR |
| Italy-Yugoslavia | 1946–1947 | Both | - |
| | 1948–1954 | Italy | Yugoslavia |
| Albania-Greece | 1946–1949 | Greece | Albania |
| Croatia-Yugoslavia | 1992–1995 | Both | - |
| | 1996–2000 | Yugoslavia | Croatia |
| Croatia-Bosnia | 1992–1996 | Croatia | Bosnia |
| Yugoslavia-Bosnia | 1992–1994 | Yugoslavia | Bosnia |
| Greece-Turkey | 1958–2010 | Both | - |
| Russia-China | 1964–1986 | - | Both |
| Armenia-Azerbaijan | 1992–1994 | Armenia | Azerbaijan |
| | 1995–2010 | Azerbaijan | Armenia |
| Mali-Burkina Faso | 1974–1986 | - | Both |
| Ghana-Togo | 1961–1963 | Both | - |
| | 1964–1965 | Ghana | Togo |
| Cameroon-Nigeria | 1981–2005 | - | Both |
| Chad-Libya | 1976–1977 | Libya | Chad |
| | 1983–1987 | Libya | Chad |
| | 1988–1994 | - | Both |
| Chad-Sudan | 2004–2009 | Both | - |
| DR Congo-Rwanda | 1996–2004 | Rwanda | DRC |
| Uganda-Tanzania | 1971–1979 | - | Both |
| Uganda-Sudan | 1994–1998 | Uganda | Sudan |
| Kenya-Somalia | 1963–1977 | Somalia | Kenya |
| Somalia-Ethiopia | 1960–1985 | Somalia | Ethiopia |
| Djibouti-Eritrea | 1998–2008 | - | Both |
| Ethiopia-Eritrea | 1998–2010 | - | Both |
| Ethiopia-Sudan | 1967–1982 | Sudan | Ethiopia |
| | 1983–2000 | Both | - |
| | 2001–2008 | - | Both |
| Eritrea-Sudan | 1994–2005 | Both | - |
| Mozambique-South Africa | 1983–1984 | Both | - |
| | 1985–1987 | South Africa | Mozambique |
| Zambia-Zimbabwe | 1965–1979 | Zambia | Zimbabwe |
| Zambia-South Africa | 1968–1987 | Zambia | South Africa |
| Morocco-Algeria | 1962–1984 | Morocco | Algeria |
| Libya-Sudan | 1979–1984 | Libya | Sudan |
| Libya-Egypt | 1975–1985 | Both | - |
| Sudan-Egypt | 1991–1996 | Sudan | Egypt |
| Iran-Iraq | 1959–2010 | Both | - |
| Iran-Saudi Arabia | 1984–1988 | Both | - |
| Iran-Afghanistan | 1998–1999 | Iran | Afghanistan |
| Turkey-Syria | 1955–2004 | - | Both |
| Iraq-Egypt | 1959–1961 | Both | - |
| | 1990–1999 | Both | |
| Iraq-Syria | 1976–1991 | Both | - |
| Iraq-Israel | 1948–2003 | Iraq | Israel |
| Iraq-Saudi Arabia | 1973–2001 | Both | - |

(Continued).

| Dyad | Period | Ethno-nationalist policy | Civic-nationalist policy |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Iraq-Kuwait | 1961–2003 | - | Both |
| Egypt-Jordan | 1948–1951 | Both | - |
| | 1952–1962 | Egypt | Jordan |
| Egypt-Israel | 1948–2009 | Egypt | Israel |
| Egypt-Saudi Arabia | 1962–1967 | Both | - |
| Syria-Jordan | 1958–1978 | Syria | Jordan |
| | 1979–1980 | Both | - |
| | 1981–1982 | Syria | Jordan |
| Syria-Israel | 1948–2007 | Syria | Israel |
| Jordan-Israel | 1948–1949 | Jordan | Israel |
| | 1950–1966 | - | Both |
| | 1967–1973 | Jordan | Israel |
| Saudi Arabia-Yemen | 1994–1998 | - | Both |
| Yemen People's Republic-Oman | 1972–1982 | - | Both |
| Afghanistan-Pakistan | 1949–1974 | Afghanistan | Pakistan |
| | 1975–1989 | Both | - |
| China-Taiwan | 1949–1991 | Both | - |
| | 1992–2007 | China | Taiwan |
| China-Japan | 1996–2010 | - | Both |
| China-India | 1950–2009 | - | Both |
| China-Vietnam | 1975–1977 | - | Both |
| | 1978–1986 | China | Vietnam |
| | 1987–1988 | - | Both |
| North Korea-South Korea | 1949–1960 | Both | - |
| | 1961–2010 | North Korea | South Korea |
| India-Pakistan | 1947–2010 | Pakistan | India |
| Cambodia-Republic of Vietnam | 1956–1967 | Cambodia | Rep. of Vietnam |
| Vietnam-Republic of Vietnam | 1960–1975 | Both | - |