"Why China is Content to Stay at Home": Internal Ethnic Diversity and the Propensity to Engage in Interstate Conflict

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Abstract

This paper argues that more ethnically fractionalized states such as Iran or the United States, once they pacify internal divisions and become established polities, are more likely to be involved in power projection and international disputes. The converse is that ethnically homogeneous states such as China are less likely to project themselves abroad. Theoretically, we surmise that both realist postulates about the need for internally divided states to deploy chauvinist nationalism to gain legitimacy and symbolist arguments about diverse societies necessarily turning to missionary nationalism obtain. Related arguments about dominant minorities such as Syria's Alawis advocating legitimating expansionist ideologies like pan-Arabism or ethnic nationalists resisting territorial expansion for fear of ethnic dilution offer compatible frameworks of analysis. Analysis uses the MID and Kosimo dyadic datasets to assess the hypothesis that ethnic fractionalization in a state is associated with an enhanced risk of taking part in interstate conflict. It finds that the interaction between a state's ethnic fractionalization index and its age (a measure of how well established a state is) is positively associated with interstate conflict in both datasets. Most of today's rising powers, such as China, are established but relatively ethnically homogeneous states. As such, they are unlikely, from this research, to need to pursue interventionist foreign policies to find identity and legitimacy.

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For well over a decade, the role of ethnic pluralism in nation-states has been a staple subject for researchers in comparative politics and economics. Incumbent upon the pathbreaking work of Easterly and Levine (1997), Alesina et al. (1999) and Fearon and Laitin (2003), an extensive literature now exists on the relationship between ethnic fractionalization and political and economic outcomes such as economic growth (Easterly et al. 2006; Birnir and Waguespack 2011), public goods provision (Banerjee and Somanathan 2007; Putnam 2007) and violent conflict. In terms of violent conflict, the literature is divided. Studies which take conflict *onset* as the independent variable tend to find no relationship with ethnic fractionalization (i.e. Sambanis 2001; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Schneider and Wiesehomeier 2009). Those that focus on the *incidence* of civil war, by contrast, typically report a significant association (i.e. Ellingsen 2000; Montalvo and Reynal-Querol 2005; Urdal 2008).

Ethnic fractionalization indices provide a quantitative measure of the degree of ethnic pluralism contained under the political roof of each of the world's states. The ethno-linguistic fractionalization index, or ELF, measures the likelihood that any two random individuals in a state's population are members of the same ethnic group. The greater the number of ethnic groups and the more even their relative size, the more fractionalized the population[1]. ELF is calculated as $1 - \Sigma s_i^2$, where s_i is the proportion of the population comprised of group i, with $i = \{1, 2, \ldots, n\}$.

This paper seeks to transpose a debate which has focused on the domestic sphere to the international; to ask whether the internal ethnic fractionalization of states affects their behaviour toward other states. One analysis (De Soysa and Neumayer 2008) has examined this relationship and found that ethnic fractionalization does not abet state militarization. Indeed, diverse sub-Saharan Africa has had few interstate wars. Yet few have considered the possibility that the relationship between fractionalization and foreign policy is non-linear.

Namely, that ethnically fractionalized states are initially consumed by internal conflict and therefore unlikely to act aggressively towards others, but once internal rifts are brought under control and the state matures, its focus may turn outward.

Nationalism in International Relations Theory

Realism

This paper starts from the premise that nationalism is a factor in international relations. For classical realists, nationalism is largely about a drive for state aggrandizement and power. A definition of the nation as functional (Gellner 1983) or instrumental (Breuilly 1993; Tilly 1975) for state power fits the premises of realism exceedingly well. Indeed, both nationalism (the nation) and realism (the state) make particularistic units the primary source of international dynamics, with transnational ideologies and structures secondary. States harness the power of nationalism to advance their own interests. The French *levée en masse*, for example, mobilized mass patriotism for war, leading the French state to succeed on the battlefield (Posen 1993). Some two centuries later, Israel repeated the feat, using its highly institutionalised national consciousness to raise 20-30 times more of its citizens for battle than its Arab opponents (Mearsheimer 2011).

For realists, national chauvinism is a force that may answer to the needs of ruling strata but prove detrimental to the holistic interests of the state. Occasionally, nationalism is driven by an internal legitimation crisis in which insecure elites seek to defray pressures for genuine reform by appealing to populism. Once activated, however, the popular mood may carry state policymakers beyond the bounds of state interest. In democracies, especially illiberal ones, the mass media and electoral campaigns can lead to rash policymaking (Mann

1999; Zakaria 1997). Media-fanned populism pushed Britain into the Crimean War in 1853 over the protestations of its foreign policy establishment. German and Serbian miscalculations prior to World War I furnish further examples of popular nationalism prodding a state to overstep the bounds of prudence (Snyder 2000: 30, 117, 181) When regime legitimacy falters, there is often a recourse to national chauvinism in order to secure the ruling elite against domestic challengers. In addition to European oligarchies, this tendency can be found in autocratic postcolonial regimes where nationalist mobilization and militarism helped deflect public attention away from kleptocratic regimes with a poor record of economic development. (Vanevera 1994: 31)

Constructivism and the role of Missionary Nationalism in International War

A strict realism is arguably too narrow to capture the manifold links between heightened popular nationalism and aggressive foreign policy. The social psychologist Henri Tajfel writes that we possess both individual identities based on character traits and achievements, and social identities linked to our group memberships (Tajfel 1981). Both contribute to our self-esteem. Bloom (1990) adds that individuals' identities are bound up, at least in part, with those of the nation. This is why states can activate Bloom's 'national identity dynamic' by appealing to the mass nationalism of the populace to protect or enhance the national identity. In this way state interests both reflect and shape national identities.

Prizel (2003), like Huntington (1996 : 125-6), nicely conveys the importance of the content (myths, symbols, affinities) of national identity. This raises insights from constructivism, albeit identity constructions of nation-states rather than those of international networks (Wendt 1992). For Prizel, nations differ in their founding moments: they are incubated in diverse geopolitical contexts. These founding conditions, along with subsequent

foreign policy episodes, give rise to distinct types of national identity. Thus many East European nations, such as Poland or Ukraine, or postcolonial states, such as Pakistan or Indonesia, emerged from the shadow of empire with insecure identities. This inclines them to overestimate the aggressive intentions of competitor states, posing a risk to international security. Yet insecure states rarely seek to project themselves abroad for ideological reasons.

By contrast, western powers such as the United States and Britain, which have no history of recent conquest, possess secure national identities. However, such constructs may incline these states to intervene elsewhere or to act in an expansionist manner, threatening international order (Prizel 2003). Others cite the importance of geography: island civilizations like Britain enjoyed greater security than states with no natural defense such as Poland - or those located on major trade routes such as Iraq or Afghanistan. These kinds of states were more open to attack and therefore had to rely on militarism for security. The legacy of this past is etched in the myths and memories which orient the identity of the nation (Kaplan 2012: 304).

Finally, several writers highlight the signal role of 'missionary nationalism' for powers like Britain, France or Russia/USSR. Here the basis of the nation lies in a universalistic 'creed', be this liberalism (Britain, France, USA), socialism (USSR), or religion (i.e. Protestantism in the US and Britain, Orthodoxy in Czarist Russia) (Roshwald 2006; Kumar 2003; Colley 1992). Success in evangelizing or spreading the creed redounds to the reputation of the nation, which claims the mantle of chosen missionary for the belief, *primus inter pares*. In this sense, the glory of the universal crusade comes to rest on a particular nation, hence Soviet, American or Iranian universalism is in fact a species of nationalism (Kaufmann 2008).

Missionary nationalisms are not restricted to Great Powers but may encompass former powers (i.e. Turkey, Iran, Hungary) as well. At certain moments, strata within these nations may invoke a missionary narrative, perhaps - as with Iran or Turkey in the Muslim world - as a touchstone for foreign policy leadership. Nations are often the site of competing national identity discourses based on alternative usable pasts. Social actors from differing ideological, class or regional backgrounds view the layers of the national past through different lenses and adopt distinct archaeological strategies, foregrounding certain layers while neglecting others (Hutchinson 2005; Kaufmann 2008). Thus British imperialists competed with Whiggish 'Little Englanders'; expansionist Russian Westernizers with isolationist Slavophiles; Trotskyite world revolutionaries with Stalinism's Russophile 'socialism in one country'; pan-'Turanian' or neo-Ottoman expansionists with more exclusive Kemalist Turkish nationalists (Smith 1986: 143, 184; Hutchinson 2005: 96-9). These discourses about the national past carry sharply divergent foreign policy prescriptions, with ethnic nationalism aligned more closely with isolationism while missionary nationalism implicates the state in foreign campaigns.

Ethnic Fractionalization and Militarism

Realist writers on nationalism draw attention to how sub-state fissures, such as competing strata, incentivise a ruling elite to resort to nationalist appeals and international conflict. Fractionalization need not be based on class or status, however, but can take other forms, such as religion or ethnicity. Writing during the sixteenth century wars of religion, Montaigne opined: "There are many in our times who ...[wish]... that this heated passion that is among us might be deflected into some war with our neighbors, for fear that these peccant

humors which dominate our body at the moment, if they are not drained off elsewhere, may keep our fever still at its height and in the end bring on our total ruin. And indeed a foreign war is a much milder evil than a civil war." Though Montaigne was equivocal about foreign campaigns, contemporaries like Blaise de Monluc and Giovanni de Botero drew on Roman texts to argue that Rome's constant wars helped cleanse its body politic of division. Spain's internal peace and overseas battles were favourably contrasted with France's civil wars and lack of foreign entanglements. (Bonadeo 1985: 418-19).

A functionalist reading suggests external conflicts help bridge internal divisions, 'necessitating' an outward-focused nationalism. A less functional, more actor-centred perspective foregrounds the fact that external conflict, reinforced by an inclusive nationalism, assists a dominant minority by buttressing its legitimacy (Van Evera 1994 : 17). In an ethnically fractionalized polity, divisions are bridged through a narrative of civic nationalism based around the state. A national army and its exploits form a centrepiece of national identity. Creedal nationalism, which stresses a shared expansionist ideology or religious project, is ideally suited to surmounting sectarian, class or ethnic cleavages and deflecting attention from a dominant ethnic group - especially a ruling minority.

From a constructivist or ethnosymbolist (Smith 1998; Gat and Yakobson 2013: 9) standpoint, a similar dynamic emerges among nations with a civic rather than ethnic origin. Some nations are held to arise primarily on the basis of universal creeds, while others spring from a delimited community with a sense of common ancestry and bounded homeland. The Old Testament narrative of the Israelites, an Elect who are promised a territory by God and share descent from Abraham and the twelve tribes, is considered a template for ethnic nationalism (Hastings 1997). Ethnic groups such as the Ulster Protestants or Afrikaners whose identity was formed during a period of Calvinist return to the Old Testament, are held

to adopt a covenantal nationalism based on being a Chosen people (Akenson 1992; Roshwald 2006: 234).

Once a 'promised land' is attained, the reigning posture of covenantal nationalism is one of defense rather than expansion. By contrast, the New Testament, as well as Islam, are creedal and evangelical, as with Paul's ecumenical 'neither Jew nor Greek' are favoured by Christ passage (O'Brien 1988). Here nationalisms are more likely to be couched in missionary than ethnic terms (Roshwald 2006). Missionary nationalisms, while inclusive internally, lend themselves, on this reading, to external aggression and conquest in the name of a transcendent ideal. Ethnic nationalisms, while intolerant and sometimes genocidal, tend to focus on internal rather than external foes. A model of the causal pathways implied here is as follows, viz.:

Degree of ethnic fractionalization → Content of Nationalism → Extent of Military Expansion

Missionary Nationalism and Imperialism

Anti-Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century US

The connection between ethnic fractionalization, the content of nationalism and military expansion emerges with clarity in American history. Consider the debate as to whether the United States should assume the form of a multi-ethnic empire. The Mexican-American War (1846-8) and Spanish-American War (1898) permitted the United States to opt for empire. In both cases, some of the strongest resistance arose from Jeffersonian Anglo-

Protestant ethnic nationalists who feared that expansion into Latin America or the Philippines, culminating in statehood, would dilute the cultural basis of America as an Anglo-Saxon republic.

After the Mexican-American War, with U.S. forces having taken Mexico City, imperialist voices called for 'All Mexico.' Texas Senator Sam Houston expressed these sentiments well, declaring: “The Mexicans are no better than the Indians and I see no reason why I should not go in the same course now, and take their land.” (Horsman 1981: 243) Yet many voices counselled caution on racial grounds. Former Secretary of War Lewis Cass, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, made it clear that: “We do not want the people of Mexico, either as citizens or as subjects. All we want is a portion of territory… generally uninhabited, or where inhabited, sparsely so, and with a population which would soon recede or identify itself with ours” (Cass cited in Parsons 1963: 161-162). For James Buchanan, President Polk’s Secretary of State (and a subsequent President, “we have never dreamt of incorporating into our Union any but the Caucasian, the free white race” (Horsman 1981: 241). These voices for demographically-driven territorial constraint ultimately prevailed, with annexations restricted to lightly populated areas (Merk and Merk 1995: 189).

In 1898, after the defeat of Spain, the opportunity for the country to grasp the imperial nettle rose again. As in 1848, voices for expansion were strong. Religious themes of providential destiny infused calls for the young country to fulfil its imperial destiny. For Republican President McKinley, an enthusiastic proponent of American missionary activity, "There was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them." Rev H. K. Carroll of Plainfield, N.J. overflowed with missionary nationalism. In his view, America was "possessed of an idea capable of infinite expansion. This idea is that of individual liberty combined with universal cooperation…Our Gospel was meant for expansion… the world needs it, and it is our duty to

give it to the world." Yet those whose national identity remained rooted in Anglo-Saxon ethnicity rejected imperialism as dangerous. "Are we to bring into the body politic eight or ten million Asiatics, so different from us in race and history that amalgamation is impossible?," asked McKinley's opponent in the presidential race of 1896, William Jennings Bryan. "Are they to share with us in making the laws of the Republic?" (Moorhead 1994: 154-8; Beisner 1968; Love 1997). Bryan went on to denounce imperialism in a speech at the 1900 Democratic National Convention, and his ethno-national arguments played an important part in the American decision not to pursue a strategy of overseas territorial expansion.

Post-Communist Eastern Europe

Arguably the same constellation of forces was responsible for dampening the forces of international conflict after the collapse of the Soviet Union. draw attention to the fact that in a post-communist era, Hungary might have pressed to invade pre-Trianon Hungarian portions of Slovakia and Romania; Albanians might have pushed for Anschluss with Kosovo in pursuit of Greater Romania; and Romanians invaded Moldova. Yet the authors instead find that what they term 'xenophobic' considerations checked expansionist tendencies. In Hungary, many glanced warily at the large numbers of Slovaks, Romanians, Roma and ethnic others whom they would inherit if they annexed neighbouring territories. 'To kill Hungary, give it Transylvania,' quipped one nationalist. Kosovars, who traditionally looked down on Albania, resisted its overtures (Saideman and Ayres 2008).

Across post-communist Eastern Europe, parties pushing irredentist agendas were consistently defeated at the polls while those advocating an exclusionary ethnic nationalism were rewarded. Even where an irredentist agenda prevailed, as in Armenia or Croatia, this was driven by the political influence of diaspora and neighbouring ethnic kin rather than the

wishes of the inhabitants of Armenia and Croatia proper. Missionary nationalist states with a history of presiding over multi-ethnic empires - chiefly Serbia and Russia - had less difficulty sacrificing ethnic homogeneity for territorial acquisition (Hosking 2004). However, Russia's divestment of its republics after 1989 rekindled a Russian ethno-nationalism reminiscent of the Russian Tendency of the 1820s or Slavophile nationalism of the 1830s and 40s (Hutchinson 2005). This privileged xenophobia over reclaiming the Russian Near abroad, furnishing stony soil for Zhirinovsky's brand of neo-Soviet revanchism.

Revolutionary Iran

The Iranian case is instructive insofar as Persia has a long imperial history involving rule over minorities such as Turks and Kurds. Iran's ethnic Persian core, comprising no more than 45-50 percent of its population, compares with the ethnic Russian proportion of the USSR and is only slightly higher than the Serbian proportion of the former Yugoslavia (CIA World Factbook 2013). It thereby fits Saideman and Ayres' category of an ethnic plurality in a diverse nation whose history rendered it comfortable ruling over other peoples. Its alternative pasts include an expansionist Shia imperial narrative inaugurated by the Safavids in the sixteenth century, and a more recent, exclusive Persian ethno-nationalism constructed by the Pahlavis.

Whereas the Shah drew attention to Iran's Zoroastrian and classical Persian past, the Iranian Revolution of 1979 returned to the more ethnically inclusive Shia symbolism that characterised the Iranian monarchies prior to the Shah (Ram 2000). A more assertive, interventionist foreign policy followed this shift, with Iran competing for leadership of the Muslim world by espousing a strongly anti-Zionist ideology. Despite being a Shia power located far from Israel, Iran made Islamism and anti-Zionism the twin planks of its foreign

policy. Prior to the onset of the Syrian civil war in 2011, this strategy met with some success. Iran was able to reach beyond the Shia arc in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq to appeal to Hamas in Palestine as well as to disaffected 'rejectionist' Sunnis throughout the Arab world (El Husseini 2010: 812; Fuller 2006: 148). The connection to its polyglot ethnic makeup is evident in the composition of the Islamic Republic's leadership. Figures of Azeri background occupied a prominent place in the Revolution, notably Mir-Hossein Mousavi, Mehdi Bazargan, Sadeq Khalkhali, and the half-Azeri Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.

Baathist Syria and Iraq

Prior to democratization, many postcolonial regimes relied on a narrative of pan-Arabism, pan-Africanism and/or nonaligned socialism to reinforce their legitimacy with the powerless majority. This said, in many cases, ethnic power configurations emerged, with a particular ethnic group(s) dominating the state and its patronage networks. Wimmer, Cederman and Min (2009), for instance, find that states featuring an excluded majority (over the period 1946-2005) are especially prone to civil war. Baathist Syria and Iraq exemplified this strategy. Syria's Alawi minority of 12 percent, and Iraq's approximately 35 percent Sunni minority dominated the state and controlled its security apparatus. This situation was enforced in part through the *mukhabarat* police state, but also by an appeal to a transcendent anti-western, anti-Zionist Arabism which included most citizens bar Kurds and Jews (Haklai 2000). Party doctrine defined language, and not religion, as the pillar of national identity, seeking to appeal to Sunni, Shia and Christian alike (Baram 1989: 448). This said, at times of crisis, elites were willing to invoke a generalized, nonsectarian Islam in an attempt to win popular legitimacy.

Post-Apartheid South Africa and Tanzania are two prominent sub-Saharan African states which have appealed to pan-Africanism as a source of legitimacy. In the case of Tanzania, one of the world's most ethnically and religiously fractionalized societies, Julius Nyerere's program of pan-Africanism, symbolized by the implementation of Swahili as the national language, seems to have been a political success. This appears less evident elsewhere: whereas 88% of Tanzanians in a recent Afrobarometer survey rank their national identity above their ethnicity, this is true of only 42% of Africans, and a mere 17% of Nigerians (Green 2011). Ghana exemplifies a common situation wherein a missionary pan-Africanism coincided with sub-state ethnic exclusion, albeit at different levels within the machinery of state (Brown 2000).

The Role of Ethnic Minorities in Missionary Nations: the Case of American Neoconservatism

An important proximate mechanism through which missionary nationalisms may prompt militarism is via an ultra-patriotic cadre of ethnic minorities. In a state based on a creedal national identity, ethnic outsiders can burnish their patriotic credentials by adopting a militarist posture. Neoconservatism is a many-sided ideology which began as a revolt of left-wing thinkers against state socialism, beginning in the 1930s, and, later, in response to the student uprisings of the 1960s (Diggins 1994). In the 1990s and 2000s, the term became associated with a hawkish position in foreign policy which endorses the use of force to achieve regime change and promote democratization. Neoconservatism may be viewed as a form of missionary nationalism in the service of liberal democracy. Here the United States acts as the chosen servant for the ideology, just as Iran styles itself a chosen instrument of Allah. What is especially noteworthy about Neoconservatism is the participation of ethnic

outsiders in its ranks. As with the Turkmen of Iran, American Catholics, Jews, and, later, nonwhites, were able to attain leading positions within the movement.

The lineage of this development arguably stretches back as far as the Irish-driven Fenian raids into Canada in 1866 but its true beginning lies in the McCarthyism of the early 1950s. In championing an assertive anti-communism as the new litmus test of Americanism, Senator McCarthy, an Irish Catholic, was able to overturn the century-old elite view of Irish Catholics as less American than 'old stock' Protestants like his *bête noire* Alger Hiss. Some scholars claim McCarthyism helped legitimate John F. Kennedy's accession as the first Catholic president: Kennedy was a strong anti-communist who did not repudiate McCarthy (O'Brien 1988: 35-37; Baltzell 1964: 286-287). McCarthy's minority militarism finds an echo in that of Barry Goldwater, with his Jewish father, who campaigned on a hawkish platform for president in 1964. Beyond this, Jewish figures such as Irving Kristol or Paul Wolfowitz and Catholic 'theocons' like William F. Buckley have provided the intellectual leadership of modern American neoconservatism. Many Cuban-Americans have been traditionally anti-communist while racial minorities such as Francis Fukuyama (who subsequently repudiated neoconservatism) and Louisiana governor Bobby Jindal show demonstrate that missionary nationalism is a prominent avenue through which minorities may ascend to positions of national leadership and express their patriotism.

The American situation is far from unique. In diverse missionary nations, ethnic minorities often rise to leadership roles. In the USSR, the Georgian Stalin and Jewish Trotsky are among the many who incarnated Soviet missionary nationalism. In France, immigrants and minorities (albeit Europeans) provided the shock troops of the Foreign Legion and were overrepresented among *pieds noir* colonists in Algeria. French ultranationalists include the Corsican Napoleon and, more recently, the ethnically Hungarian Nicolas Sarkozy, a situation unimaginable in a more ethnically-defined nation such as Japan or Estonia.

Data Analysis

It is always possible that the cases cited may represent selections on the dependent variable. In order to assess the external validity of the thesis, we therefore turn to large-N dyadic analysis. The model uses the Militarized Interstate Disputes (MID) and Kosimo (www.kosimo.de) dyadic datasets to assess the hypothesis that ethnic fractionalization in a state is associated with an enhanced risk of taking part in interstate conflict. The unit of analysis is the dyad, which consists of a pair of countries in a given year. The MID records three forms of crises: war, violent crisis and nonviolent crisis. Kosimo adds a fourth to the list, latent crises. These are nonviolent conflicts defined as obtaining where 'groups, parties, or states question existing values, issues or objectives that pertain to an issue of national interest' (Pfetsch & Rohloff, 2000:386–387). Latent crises include, for example, the nonviolent tensions between Britain and Argentina before or after the Falklands War in 1982, or that between the United States and Cuba since 1962.

The universe of potential dyad-year pairings runs into the hundreds of thousands. Many are nonsensical (Mali and Andorra?) thus scholars have sought to find a statistically robust way of thinning out null data to focus on conflict events. Accordingly, we build on Chiozza's (2002) dataset and analytical strategy here. His work incorporates two datasets derived, respectively, from MID and Kosimo. Our MID dataset runs between 1946 and 1992 and consists of 30,144 dyads including 1,748 conflictual pair-years. The Kosimo dataset spans 1946-1997 and is constituted by 42,843 pair-year observations, including 3,142 conflicts - the larger number is accounted for mainly because of the inclusion of latent crises among the universe of conflicts.

In order to measure ethnic fractionalization, data are joined to the civil war data of Fearon and Laitin (2003) and the Ethnic Power Relations dataset of Wimmer et al. (2009).[2] These data include measures of ethnic fractionalization, state founding date, regime type, territorial contiguity, roughness of terrain, land area and population, and the presence of civil and ethnic war, and span the period from 1945 to 1999. Given our earlier discussion, the paper surmises that:

H_0: States that are older and more ethnically fractionalized are more likely to be engaged in interstate conflict; and

H_1: Great Powers that are more ethnically fractionalized are more likely to be engaged in interstate conflict than more homogeneous Great Powers

Results

Tables 1 and 2 present results of basic models of international disputes containing limited numbers of predictors, a strategy which some methodologists favour for reasons of parsimony (Achen 2002; Schrodt 2006). Table 1 shows that ethnic fractionalization is inversely associated with international conflict. This holds across all models in both datasets and confirms the findings of De Soysa and Neumayer (2008). Ethnically fractionalized states appear to be too consumed with internal divisions to project themselves abroad.

Table 1. Domestic Ethnic Predictors of International Conflict (Base Model)

	MID 1	MID 2	KOSIMO 1	KOSIMO 2
Ethnic Fractionalization (combined)	-.032 (.003)***	-.951 (.146)***	-.030 (.004)***	-1.529 (.146)***
State Founding Dates (combined)		0.000 (0.000)		.0003 (.0000)***
Ethnic Fractionalization*State Dates		1780.538 (280.621) ***		2981.192 (279.393)***
constant	.087 (.003)***	-.084 (.144)	1.02 (.003)***	1.281 (.141)***
Pseudo R^2	.003	.007	.002	.039
N	29,591	27,773	36,635	34,086

* p<.05; ** p<.01; ***p<.001

However, inserting a control for state founding date and an interaction of state founding date with ethnic fractionalization changes our understanding of how domestic ethnic heterogeneity affects international conflict. Specifically, this interaction contrasts older fractionalized states such as Ethiopia, Iran or Bolivia with newer homogeneous ones like Botswana, Libya or South Korea (see figure 1). Extremely fractionalized states such as Papua New Guinea or old states such as Spain both score highly on this measure, but those that combine the two characteristics tend to rank highest.

Figure 1.

Established Diverse States and Founding Dates, 1990

Ethnic Fractionalization*(1/Founding Date)

State Founding Date

In both the MID and Kosimo datasets, the results of table 1 confirm H_0, namely that established ethnically fractionalized states are more likely to be involved in international conflict than other states. Indeed, models which include the ethnic fractionalization-state date measures dramatically improve model fit (as signified by the jump in pseudo R^2), especially in the Kosimo data.

Table 2 runs an alternative set of parsimonious models to test H^1. The presence of a major power in a dyad is known to enhance the risk of conflict because the five major powers in these datasets (USA, UK, France, China, USSR) were much more likely to be involved in international conflict - as leaders or as part of a coalition - than other states between 1945 and the 1990s. The coefficient for major powers is significant in all models in table 2. Ethnic fractionalization, however, behaves inconsistently between the two datasets in the presence of

a parameter for major powers. We shall find, though, that these differences abate in more detailed models which carry a reduced risk of misspecification.

Turning to the interaction between Great Powers and ethnic fractionalization, we find a consistent effect across both datasets (MID2 and KOSIMO2 in table 2) whereby more fractionalized Great Powers (USSR, USA) are more likely to be involved in conflict than the less fractionalized (China, France, UK). Though the US and USSR were the leading actors in the bipolar Cold War system, their hard-power characteristics will be accounted for by other variables in the full models to be presented later. For now, it is worth noting that base model results offer confirmation of H_1. On the other hand, the interaction between Great Power status and ethnic fractionalization in general is significantly negative, suggesting that Great Powers tend to be less antagonistic toward diverse states than homogeneous ones. This may be because diverse states are less likely to harbour international foreign policy ambitions.

Table 2. Major Power- Domestic Ethnic Interactions and International Conflict (Base Model)

	MID 1	MID 2	KOSIMO 1	KOSIMO 2
Ethnic Fractionalization (combined)	-.290 (.071)***	-0.042 (.079)	.101 (.059)	.639 (.069)***
Major Power in dyad	1.782 (.056)***	1.710 (.168)***	2.164 (.045)***	2.343 (.142)***
Major Power(s) in dyad* Major Power(s') Ethnic Fractionalization score(s)		4.325 (.342)***		6.624 (.301)***
Major Power(s) in dyad* Ethnic Fractionalization (combined)		-1.945 (.197)***		-3.314 (.163)***
constant	-2.896 (.070)***	-3.121 (.079)***	-3.114 (.062)***	-3.641 (.075)***
Pseudo R^2	.074	.090	.113	.159
N	29,591	29,591	36,635	36,635

* p<.05; ** p<.01; ***p<.001

Parsimonious models carry the risk that many important predictors are omitted. In order to correct for underspecification, tables 3 and 4 present exhaustive models - largely limited to significant parameters. Coefficients vary greatly due to units of measurement, thus z-scores are presented as they offer a form of standardized coefficient which allows for a comparison of the relative predictive power of the independent variables.

Table 3 includes many well-known predictors of international conflict in International Relations research as used in the models in (Chiozza 2002). These include geographic distance and shared borders, balance of military power (Organski and Kugler 1980), differences of Civilization (Huntington 1996) and Cold War bloc, the lower of the two countries' democracy scores (Russett 1993) and modernization, measured as a combined factor encompassing the 'log of energy consumption per capita, the percentage of the total population living in cities, the percentage of students enrolled in primary schools, and the

number of radio receivers per 10,000 inhabitants' (Chiozza 2002: 723). These largely behave as expected, with more democratic, same-bloc and equally matched dyads less likely to conflict; those that share borders, are close together or are members of competing cold war blocs are more likely to conflict. Evidence for the role of civilization is mixed: when states share a border, divergent civilizational membership increases the likelihood of tension, but when they do not it reduces it. Modernization tends to increase the likelihood of conflict, which Chiozza noted as a counterintuitive finding, but accords with modernist theories of nationalism and mobilization, i.e. Gellner 1983. We also use years since last dispute (length of peace) and splines (lags) of years of peace to control for serial autocorrelation.

Next, a set of measures based on Fearon and Laitin's (1993) civil war data are included. Whether dummy variables or continuous measures, these are aggregated across the dyad. Thus an East European state paired with a sub-Saharan African state scores 1 on both East European and sub-Saharan African measures while two East European states produce a 2 on the East European variable. Both these regional measures are significantly and inversely correlated with international conflict. Elevation difference within a state, a predictor of civil war, is also pooled between states such that two mountainous ones score more highly than a mountainous state paired with a flat one. This variable is not significantly associated with international conflict. However, pooled values for territorial noncontiguity, land area and population density are. Newer states and ex-colonies are significantly more likely to be involved in militarized international disputes. All of which indicates that domestic factors associated with civil war also predict international conflict.

More striking and germane for H_0 is that the results of table 1 are robust to this expanded specification. Ethnic fractionalization of country 1 and country 2 in a pairing (analogous to the joint fractionalization measure in tables 1 and 2) inversely predicts conflict while our measure of older ethnically fractionalized states positively predicts involvement in

interstate disputes during 1946-1992. Numerous interactions with ethnic fractionalization were attempted, but few were significant. Among those of importance are interactions between fractionalization and sub-Saharan Africa, and between fractionalization and a shared border, both of which were positively associated with interstate conflict. Yet none rivalled the predictive power of the state date-ethnic fractionalization interaction. Support for H_1 is more equivocal: while the signs for the interaction between major powers and ethnic fractionalization are identical to table 2, they fail to reach significance at the $p<.05$ level in the MID model.

Table 3. Predictors of Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1946-1992

	Coefficient	S.E.	z-score
Distance Between States	-0.77***	0.06	-13.9
Military Power Balance	-0.33	0.29	-1.14
Different Cold War Bloc	0.37*	0.17	2.16
Different Cold War Bloc*Different Civilization	0.59**	0.20	2.88
Different Civilization	-1.10***	0.29	-3.76
Lower of Two Democracy Scores	-0.15***	0.02	-9.53
Lower of Democracy Scores*Different Civilization	0.06**	0.02	3.38
Shared Border	1.26***	0.27	4.63
Shared Border*Different Civilization	0.31	0.21	1.46
Major Power	0.73**	0.28	2.63
Modernization	5.50***	0.81	6.78
Modernization*Different Civilization	1.36	0.87	1.56
Years since last MID	-0.57***	0.03	-22.06
midyrs1 (spline 1)	-0.01***	0.00	-11.62
midyrs2 (spline 2)	0.00***	0.00	9.09
midyrs3 (spline 3)	0.00***	0.00	-6.19
Eastern European	-1.45***	0.16	-8.81
Sub-Saharan African	-0.52*	0.26	-1.99
Elevation difference (combined score)	0.00	0.00	0.32
Noncontiguous states (joint score)	0.64***	0.08	7.7
State founding dates (joint)	0.01***	0.00	6.4
log Land Area (kms)	0.11***	0.03	4.27
log Population Density	0.26***	0.03	8.02
Ethnic fractionalization state 1	-31.55***	5.66	-5.58
Ethnic fractionalization state 2	-40.02***	5.74	-6.97
Same religion	0.09	0.16	0.57
Ex-Colony (combined score)	0.38***	0.08	5.03
Ethnic fractionalization state 1*(1/state f. date 1)	56934.66***	10719.67	5.31
Ethnic fractionalization state 2*(1/state f. date 2)	75562.33***	11063.57	6.83
Major power score*combined ethnic fractionalization	-0.39	0.31	-1.27
Major power score*major power ethnic fractionalization	0.88	0.64	1.37
Ethnic fractionalization (combined)*shared border	0.80***	0.23	3.54
Sub-Saharan Africa*ethnic fractionalization (combined)	0.73***	0.20	3.71
constant	-36.22***	4.56	-7.94
Pseudo R^2	.586		
N	27,701		

* p<.05; ** p<.01; ***p<.001

Table 4 presents an analogous model using Kosimo data, which covers a wider range of disputes and extends further into the post-Cold War period (1946-1997). Major International Relations variables (bar modernization) run in the expected direction, with civilization again significant, but, as with MID data, signed differently when interacted with and without a shared border. Domestic variables tell a similar story to the MID data, though several are now insignificant while civil war enters the model as a positive predictor of interstate war. More pertinent is that H_0 receives powerful confirmation, with ethnically fractionalized states less likely to engage in international disputes while older fractionalized states are significantly more likely to.

Support for H_1 is clear from the model, and emerges more strongly than with the MID data. Major powers which are ethnically fractionalized now appear significantly more likely to be involved in an international disputes while interactions between diverse states and major powers are less likely to involve conflict.

Table 4. Predictors of Kosimo International Disputes, 1946-1997

	Coefficient	S.E.	z-score
Distance Between States	-0.637***	0.067	-9.56
Lower of Two Democracy Scores	-0.071***	0.010	-7.37
Military Power Balance	-1.138**	0.378	-3.01
Different Cold War Bloc	1.371***	0.213	6.42
Shared Border	2.261***	0.338	6.68
Log Energy Consumption	-0.358***	0.077	-4.64
Primary Education	0.074***	0.013	5.9
Major power in dyad	2.905***	0.368	7.9
Modernization	9.327***	1.105	8.44
Shared Border*Different Civilization	0.979***	0.258	3.79
Different Cold War Bloc*Different Civilization	-0.085	0.254	-0.34
Different Civilization	-0.919***	0.186	-4.94
Years of Peace	-1.197***	0.041	-29.42
_spline1	-0.010***	0.001	-17.95
_spline2	0.007***	0.001	13.32
_spline3	-0.002***	0.000	-8.18
Eastern European	-0.862***	0.135	-6.39
Sub-Saharan African	-0.215	0.149	-1.45
Elevation difference (combined score)	0.000**	0.000	-2.89
Noncontiguous states (joint score)	0.781***	0.105	7.47
State founding dates (joint)	0.001	0.002	0.73
log Land Area (kms)	-0.022	0.033	-0.66
log Population Density	0.321***	0.042	7.7
Ethnic fractionalization state 1	-29.585***	7.168	-4.13
Ethnic fractionalization state 2	-32.922***	6.727	-4.89
Same religion	-0.696***	0.195	-3.57
Ex-Colony (combined score)	0.397***	0.101	3.92
Ethnic fractionalization state 1*(1/state f. date 1)	56357.260***	13405.870	4.2
Ethnic fractionalization state 2*(1/state f. date 2)	32.710***	6.440	5.08
Sub-Saharan Africa*ethnic fractionalization (combined)	1.300***	0.219	5.95
Major power score*major power ethnic fractionalization	2.274	0.841	2.7
Major power score*combined ethnic fractionalization	-2.368***	0.364	-6.51
Ethnic fractionalization (combined)*shared border	0.210	0.275	0.76
Civil War	0.326*	0.141	2.31
constant	-10.872	5.940	-1.83
Pseudo R^2	.816		
N	33,703		

* p<.05; ** p<.01; ***p<.001

Discussion: Why China is Content to Stay at Home

This paper reviews case study and large-N evidence for the proposition that ethnic fractionalization has a non-linear effect on international conflict. When states are new, ethnic fractionalization may manifest itself in internal tension which absorbs the energies of the state. Thereafter, however, as state institutions become more established, fractionalized states begin to project themselves abroad in order to pacify internal conflicts, advance a missionary national identity, or both. Ethnic minorities may play important leadership roles in these international campaigns. The flipside of this, however, is that homogeneous established states are less likely to engage in interstate conflict. We find support for this relationship in both case study and large-N data.

What are the implications for a world rebalancing toward rising powers in Latin America and Asia? Of the BRICs, Russia and China are relatively homogeneous in ethnic terms. Turkey, a rising regional power, has a comfortable 70-75 percent ethnic Turkish majority (CIA World Fact Book 2013). Brazil and India are more difficult to assess. India, despite linguistic diversity, has a shared Hindu pan-ethnic identity which encompasses nearly 90 percent of the population. Brazil, though racially mixed, is overwhelmingly Lusophone, with race only tangentially related to ethnic boundaries and few overtly ethnic political movements. Only Indonesia is ruled by a potentially insecure dominant (Javanese) minority, though its peripheral location in the Muslim world renders it an unlikely candidate for a missionary Islamist foreign policy.

In the more distant future, elites in Nigeria, Ethiopia and Congo, all emerging regional giants, may find they need a missionary national creed to advance their popular legitimacy and weld together diverse populations. This may take the form of a universalist ideology such

as pan-Africanism or nonaligned socialism. However, in the medium term, this paper would suggest China and other rising powers will draw upon their ethno-cultural particularism as the basis for national identity and state legitimacy. Elites may compete over the interpretation of the national past, as with China's post-Maoist revival of memories of Japanese wartime atrocities. This may spark local tensions which could lead to a wider conflagration. Yet ethnically-based national states are less likely to turn to interventionist creeds as the basis for nationalism and thus stand a greater chance of refraining from international power projection. The ethnically homogeneous character of rising states may thereby facilitate a period of relative calm in the world system despite, or because of, its rebalancing to points East and South.

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