Ethnicity Matters: Transnational Ethnic Alliances and Foreign Policy Behavior

DAVID R. DAVIS
Emory University

AND

WILL H. MOORE
University of California, Riverside

This article investigates the influence of transnational ethnic alliances on the international interactions of states. Transnational ethnic alliances exist when both states in a dyad contain members of the same ethnic group. We argue that two types of dyads will experience higher levels of conflict than other dyads: (1) those where an advantaged minority in state A has an ethnic tie to a nonadvantaged minority in state B, and (2) those with a transnational ethnic alliance where the group in one of the states is politically mobilized. Using data from the COPDAB, Minorities at Risk, Polity II, COW, and Penn World Tables projects we find support for these contentions.

There has been a recent upsurge of interest in ethnic conflict among international relations scholars, policy makers, and pundits. Given recent world events, this increase is not surprising. Over the last few years, increasing emphasis has been placed on the importance of ethnic conflict as a security concern for the United States in particular, and the international system in general. Scholars have begun to debate the magnitude of the security threat and the most appropriate techniques for managing the threat (see Posen, 1993; Snyder, 1993; Fearon, n.d.; Lake and Rothchild, n.d.). Yet the magnitude of the threat posed by ethnic conflict is undetermined. Some policy makers have gone so far as to argue that "animosity among ethnic groups is beginning to rival the spread of nuclear weapons as the most serious threat to peace that the world faces" (Maynes, 1993:5), while others have asserted that "[t]he ethnic perspective can lay claim to some predictive power. Only some. [sic] But enough to warrant more respect than it has perhaps received".

Authors' note: Earlier versions of this article were presented at the 1995 annual meetings of the International Studies Association and American Political Science Association. The authors would like to thank David Carment, Keith Jaggers, Pat James, David Lake, Brett Ashley Leeds, Doug Lemke, Manus Midlarsky, Suzanne Werner, and the anonymous referees for comments and suggestions. This research was funded in part by a grant from the National Science Foundation (SBR-9423762). In addition, Davis's contribution to this effort was supported in part by a grant from the University Research Committee, Emory University. Moore's contribution was supported in part by the Academic Senate of the University of California, Riverside and by a grant from the Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation. A replication data set has been deposited at the ICPSR's Publication-Related Archive and can be obtained via anonymous ftp (ftp.icpsr.umich.edu).

Published by Blackwell Publishers, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148, USA, and 108 Cowley Road, Oxford OX4 1JF, UK.
Ethnicity Matters

(Moynihan, 1993:32). Moynihan is not speaking solely about international relations, but it is clear that he believes that ethnicity ought to be considered an important variable when discussing international relations, global order, and peace. Yet he, like Maynes, fails to specify for us precisely what linkage exists between ethnic conflict and foreign policy behavior.

In this article, we develop and test an argument about the linkage between the ethnic structure of states (and, hence, pairs of states or dyads) and international hostility. It is what we call an “ethnicity as attribute” argument. Zinnes (1980:327) argues that “international violence is probably not the result of special conditions but rather the consequences of certain attributes of nations.” Garment (1993) develops a research agenda for an “ethnicity as attribute” approach to the study of international relations, though in his empirical work he has focused more on ethnicity as an attribute of crises (Garment and James, 1995, 1997). We build on this notion of attributes that identify conflict proneness, but instead of focusing on attributes of individual states, as suggested by Zinnes, or attributes of events, as has Garment, we develop an argument that focuses on the ethnic attributes of dyads, which we introduce briefly below.

Garment’s contention about the utility of the “ethnicity as attribute” approach has received empirical support from a number of statistical analyses including Brecher and Wilkenfeld (1995, 1997), Garment and James (1995, 1997), and Davis, Jaggers, and Moore (1997). In this study we build on the Davis et al. (1997) finding that ethnic ties across state boundaries—what we call transnational ethnic alliances—influence dyadic foreign policy behavior. A transnational ethnic alliance is said to exist when two states contain members of the same ethnic group (i.e., co-ethnics). We go beyond the descriptive analysis reported by Davis et al. (1997) and explain why the ethnic composition of dyads is an important attribute. Our argument is that transnational ethnic alliances serve as conduits to conflict behavior.

The study proceeds as follows. In the following section, we lay out the theoretical argument and develop two hypotheses concerning the relationship between the ethnic composition of states and dyadic foreign policy behavior. In the next section we describe our research design and the data used to test our hypotheses. The results support the argument, and in the conclusion we briefly discuss the policy implications of this study.

Transnational Ethnic Alliances and International Interactions

We build our argument on two assumptions. Before turning to the assumptions, however, it will be useful to specify what we mean by the ethnic composition of dyads. We are interested in understanding the role that politically relevant ethnic cleavages within states play in the relations between states. Operationally we want to examine either groups that have members who self-identify as members of a politically relevant ethnic group, or groups that have engaged in collective action in the political arena to pursue collective ends. Further, we are interested in groups that have been excluded from political or economic advantages enjoyed by a given majority or minority group. Once we have identified such groups, we want to know whether they have co-ethnics across an international border, and we want to distinguish dyads based on these relationships. Fortunately, as we discuss in detail below, Gurr’s Minorities at Risk project provides data on just such groups.

1 We use the term alliance more loosely than is often the case in international relations, simply denoting “a similarity or relationship in character, structure, etc.; affinity” (McKechnie, 1983).

2 We wish to emphasize that we limit—both conceptually and operationally—our interest to a subsample of the world’s ethnic populations: those that are politically active. This sample probably represents less than 10 percent of all of the ethnic groups in the world (for a discussion see Gurr, 1995a). Hence, we do not suggest, nor do our results imply,
Turning to our theoretical argument, we begin with the assumption that states respond to domestic pressure from groups incorporated into the polity: foreign policy is not usefully modeled as "high politics," independent of domestic politics. This assumption has recently been invoked by a number of scholars including Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman (1992), Morgan and Bickers (1992), Richards et al. (1993), Fearon (1994), and Smith (1996, n.d.) among others. Some might object that while this assumption is useful for the study of democratic states, authoritarian states are not similarly constrained. We disagree: in democratic states, the government may respond to the demands of the majority of the population, while in more authoritarian states the government may only respond to members of the coalition the government relies upon for support. In all states, however, titular leaders cannot repress everyone and must take care to retain the support of some constituents (Morgan and Palmer, n.d.).

Our second assumption is that members of an ethnic group are concerned with the welfare and condition of other members of the ethnic group. One might contend that this "ethnic affinity" is driven by a primordial bonding among kith and kin, or one might suggest a more utilitarian approach where, given that information is expensive to collect and verify, elites are likely to assume that people who share a common history, culture, etcetera, will likely have fairly similar policy preferences vis-à-vis a given set of issues. Rather than delve into the primordialist versus instrumentalist debate regarding the genesis of ethnic identification—a topic more ably addressed by others—we simply assume that even if members of an ethnic group are divided by an international border, their ethnic affinity will serve as a conduit for the exchange of information and as a potential motivation for action. Therefore, we assume that if members of an ethnic group are dispersed across two or more states, they will monitor the status and behavior of their brethren across the border.

We suggest that these assumptions lead to important expectations in the following stylized situation:

\[
\text{IF} \quad \begin{align*}
\text{an ethnic group experiences persecution from state B, or mobilizes and challenges state B's authority/sovereignty, and} \\
\text{co-ethnics share power or are dominant in state A, and} \\
\text{state B falls within the politically relevant international environment (PRIE)} \\
\text{(Maoz, 1997) of state A,}
\end{align*}
\text{THEN} \quad \begin{align*}
\text{state A will take an interest in the relations between state B and the ethnic group, and will respond to the situation by increasing its hostility toward state B.}
\end{align*}
\]

To elaborate, we expect that the status of the ethnic group in each country can have an important impact on the intensity of conflictual relations between the states, especially if members of a single ethnic group distributed across an international border are treated differently by the two states. Differential status of co-ethnics is

that multiethnic states cannot sustain pacific foreign policies. Rather, we suggest that when multiethnic states are composed of ethnic groups that have a political identity, they will likely have more conflictual foreign policy interactions under the additional conditions described below.

\footnote{A different instrumentalist view would suggest that ethnic affinities are driven by the convenience of the ethnic label for mobilization. In other words, some political entrepreneurs interested in mobilizing people will turn to ethnic identification as a means of establishing what Tilly (1978) refers to as a "category" around which to mobilize people. To the extent that these entrepreneurs are successful, ethnic affinities are likely to cross borders. For an alternative instrumental view see Kuran (n.d.).}
hypothesized to motivate co-ethnics to act on behalf of their ethnic brethren. We expect that if members of the ethnic group are polity members\textsuperscript{4} in one state and are disadvantaged in the other, the interactions of the states that share co-ethnics will be affected. More specifically, we assume that in dyads where members of the ethnic group are incorporated into the power structure of state A, and their ethnic brethren do not have access to the power structure in state B, co-ethnics in state A will place demands on state A to pressure state B to redress the status differential. Second, we also expect that transnational ethnic linkages will have a greater influence on the interactions of states if the members of the ethnic group in the target state are politically active in an effort to modify their status. A politically active ethnic group is more likely to attract the attention of ethnic brethren because supporting them is more likely to be viewed as a worthy investment than supporting a politically dormant group. Thus, we expect that the international interactions of two states will be affected by the existence of common ethnic groups if members of the ethnic group have access to power in one state and do not have access in the other state, or if the members of the ethnic groups are politically organized and active. In general, we would expect the foreign policy behavior within such a dyad to exhibit more conflict, less cooperation, and an overall negative tone.

The argument leads to two hypotheses:

**H1:** The level of conflictual relations between two states will be higher if both states contain group members from the same ethnic group, and one of the co-ethnics is politically and/or economically privileged in its society, but its brethren in the other state are not.

**H2:** High levels of ethnic mobilization within a disadvantaged ethnic group will be associated with high levels of dyadic conflict.\textsuperscript{5}

Lest we be misunderstood, we do not believe that ethnic attributes are the major cause of international conflict. Instead, we suspect that they are only important at the margins. As such, to evaluate these hypotheses about the influence of transnational ethnic alliances, we need to construct a base-line model of international interactions and determine whether ethnic attributes matter when included in such a model. In the following section we develop a reciprocity-based model of dyadic foreign policy interactions that takes into account the alliance structure, power differential, level of development, and regime types of the participants.

**Model Development and Operationalization**

To test our hypotheses we specify a statistical model of the international interactions of states and estimate the model using ordinary least squares regression. We are interested in determining whether the ethnic composition of dyads influences conflictual and cooperative behavior, yet we do not believe that the ethnic composition of dyads is the most critical determinant of such behavior. Rather, we suspect that the ethnic composition of dyads will have an impact at the margins. Thus, to develop our statistical model, we must specify a set of variables that influence dyadic

\textsuperscript{4} Tilly (1978:52) defines polity members as groups that have "routine, low-cost access to resources controlled by the government."

\textsuperscript{5} We would further hypothesize that the existence of a mobilized co-ethnic in an advantaged ethnic alliance dyad would make that dyad even more conflictual than advantaged ethnic alliance dyads that do not have a mobilized co-ethnic. Unfortunately, we do not test that hypothesis because the effort required to produce that data was prohibitive (i.e., to aggregate from group-level data to dyadic-level data is labor intensive, and we did not have sufficient support to construct that variable).
conflictual and cooperative behavior. If the ethnic composition variables perform well in such a model (i.e., a multivariate statistical model in which relevant variables serve as controls), then we will have confidence in the results reported in Davis et al. (1997). Below we first discuss our operationalization of the dependent variable and the ethnic variables, and then we discuss the specification and operationalization of the control variables.

The Foreign Policy and Ethnic Attribute Variables

We focus on the behavior of each state in dyadic interactions with all other states that fall within the actor state's politically relevant international environment (PRIE) (Maoz, 1997). Unlike traditional dyadic interaction studies that examine only the aggregate amount of conflict occurring within a dyad, we maintain actor and target distinctions within each dyad and examine the behavior directed by each state in the dyad toward the other state in the dyad. A state's PRIE contains all other states with which it is geographically contiguous and all major powers that are capable of interacting militarily with the focal (or actor) state. Our unit of analysis is state behavior toward a PRIE dyadic partner in 1978. Employing the PRIE criteria for case selection allows us to avoid inflating our sample with implausible dyads. However, because of the salience of transnational movements of people across borders, we have also coded contiguity for each state.

We employ a broad conceptualization of our dependent variable—international interactions—and include measures of the complete range of foreign policy interactions, focusing on three interrelated facets of international interactions. Conflict includes events ranging from minor verbal discord and threats, to the imposition of political and economic sanctions, to military clashes and war. Cooperation includes events ranging from meetings of officials and verbal statements of support, to military and economic agreements, to voluntary unification. Both of these components are also incorporated in the broader measure of net interactions, which represents the overall flow of relations from a state to its dyadic partner.

We measured our dependent variables with Azar's (1982) COPDAB data set. In COPDAB events are coded on a fifteen-point scale with categories one through seven measuring cooperation and nine through fifteen measuring conflict. In order to create indices of cooperation, we assign weights to cooperative events according to their intensity and then sum the weighted values for the year to create aggregate scores (see Azar (1982), section V for a discussion of the intensity weights). This aggregate score is then divided by the number of events to create a measure of the average level of cooperation sent by an actor to its dyadic partner in a given year. Indices of conflict are created in the same manner for events in COPDAB categories nine through fifteen. Net interactions is a measure of the difference between the average level of cooperation and the average level of conflict. Positive values indicate that the relationship is generally cooperative; negative values indicate a conflictual relationship.

Our primary independent variables measure the two types of ethnic linkages identified in the previous section. First, an advantaged transnational ethnic alliance exists where an advantaged minority lives in one state and members of the same minority group are at risk in the other state. An advantaged minority is one that has access to the existing power structure in the actor state. Conceptually, we employ

---

6 Davis et al. (1997) is an exploratory study and does not include relevant control variables, thus raising the possibility that the results they report may be spurious.
7 The year 1978 was selected because it is the most recent year for which COPDAB data—which we use for our dependent variable as described below—is available. As discussed in the conclusion, using a single slice of time inhibits our ability to generalize our findings.
Tilly's "contender" concept. It is operationalized using three types of "advantaged groups" identified in Gurr's (1993a) Minorities at Risk data set, which uses the minority group as the unit of analysis: politically dominant groups, politically advantaged groups, and economically advantaged groups. For example, during the 1980s, Europeans in South Africa were politically dominant, Sunnis in Lebanon were politically advantaged, and Chinese in Malaysia were economically advantaged vis-à-vis other ethnic groups. See Gurr (1993a) for a list of the advantaged minorities in his Minorities at Risk data.

We created the ADVANTAGED TRANSNATIONAL ETHNIC ALLIANCE variable by recoding Gurr's measures of the existence and status of the minority group into dyads. If both states in a dyad had members of the same politically salient ethnic group living within their borders, then that dyad was assigned a 1 for a TRANSNATIONAL ETHNIC LINKAGE variable (all other dyads were assigned a zero). If one of the minority groups was coded by Gurr as being politically dominant, politically advantaged, or economically advantaged vis-à-vis other ethnic groups, and had a nonadvantaged co-ethnic group in the other state, ADVANTAGED ETHNIC LINKAGE was coded 1. Second, we measured the political activity and organization of the ethnic group in the target state. The variable POLITICALLY ACTIVE TRANSNATIONAL ETHNIC ALLIANCES was created by using the Minorities at Risk data to determine whether a minority group was engaged in protest activity in the target country in each dyad (i.e., state B): we multiplied the TRANSNATIONAL ETHNIC LINKAGE variable by a TARGET PROTEST LEVEL variable, which assesses the extent of political protest during the 1975–79 period. Each of these is a dummy variable measuring the absence/presence of the attribute.

The Control Variables

As noted above, to control for the influence of potentially confounding factors, we construct a baseline model composed of a number of control variables which impact international interactions. In particular, we find substantial evidence in the scholarly literature that suggests that strategies of reciprocity, joint democracy, the level of economic development, and power capabilities have a strong impact on the amount of conflict between states.

Recent work on international cooperation and conflict—particularly among rival states—has focused on reciprocity (Ward, 1982; Dixon, 1986, 1988; Goldstein and Freeman, 1990, 1991; Rajmaira and Ward, 1990; Goldstein, 1991, 1995; Ward and Rajmaira, 1992) and rational expectations (Williams and McGinnis, 1988; McGinnis and Williams, 1989). Results in both cases indicate that states tend to respond to the actions of others in kind. We expect that the behavior received by an actor from its dyadic partner will influence the state's behavior toward its counterpart; for all types of activities a strong positive relationship should exist between behavior received and behavior sent. Consequently we include a measure of the behavior of the target state toward the actor as an explanatory variable in each equation.

We adopt a similar operationalization of regime type employed by Maoz and Russett (1993) for the measure of democracy. Maoz and Russett (1993) develop their indicator of regime type from the Polity II data set (Gurr, Jaggers, and Moore, 1989) by subtracting a state's autocracy score from its democracy score and multiplying this quantity by the state's power concentration score. However, unlike Maoz and Russett, we use this raw measure of regime type rather than converting it into their JOINREG (i.e., joint regime type) measure. From this raw measure, we create a

---

8 To learn more about the Minorities at Risk project, please point a World Wide Web browser to: http://wizard.ucr.edu/~wm/M@R.HTM.
dummy variable representing joint democracy for all dyads in which both states have regime-type scores greater than thirty.

With respect to economic development, several scholars have argued that more developed states behave differently toward other actors in the international system (e.g., Russett, 1993). Cooperation, for instance, may be heavily influenced by the wealth of a state actor. Wealthy states are generally more extensively integrated into the international system. They have numerous transnational ties and involvements. They also tend to be more satisfied with the system (see, for instance, Organski and Kugler, 1980). We generally expect that more developed actors exhibit more cooperative international behavior. Therefore, we include measures of the level of development in our model. Data measuring the level of development was collected from Penn World Tables (Sommers and Heston, 1991) for most countries. Unfortunately, most of the members of the socialist block were not included in the Penn World Tables data set so we used data from the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (1985) for these countries. For each state we calculate national income per capita as a percentage of the U.S. per capita national income for 1978. States with per capita incomes of at least 30 percent of the U.S. per capita income in the given year are coded as wealthy.

Another potentially influential factor in determining the foreign policy behavior of states is the relative capabilities of the states involved. Following Bremer (1993), we control for the difference between the capabilities of the actor and the capabilities of the target. Many theories hypothesize that particular power distributions are violence prone (for a detailed discussion of the debate see Sullivan, 1990; Waltz, 1979; and Organski and Kugler, 1980). The value of the capabilities score for each state was constructed in accordance with Bremer (1993) and reflects the percentage of the total systemic capabilities controlled by each state in the given year.

Thus, our statistical model is a simple linear regression model constructed of the following variables:

- Advantaged Ethnic Alliance/Politically Active Ethnic Alliance
- Border
- Joint Democracy
- Joint International Alliance
- Wealth of the Actor
- Power Differential between Actor and Target

Advantaged ethnic alliance and politically active ethnic alliance are included on the same line with a slash separating them because we include them in separate equations. They are included in separate equations because politically active ethnic alliances include all advantaged ethnic alliances (i.e., the former is a subset of the latter). Returning to the hypotheses described above, we first test H1 (using advantaged ethnic alliance) and, having demonstrated that it is not falsified by the data, we then test H2 (using politically active ethnic alliances).

We developed three measures of our dependent variable—net interactions, cooperation, and conflict—because we are interested in determining whether transnational ethnic alliances influence conflict, cooperation, or both. We present the results in Tables 1 and 2, respectively. The same set of control variables is included in both equations, each of which was estimated using an OLS technique. To ensure that the assumptions of the OLS model were met, we tested for collinearity and heteroskedasticity and found neither to be a problem.9 Since our study focuses on a single time period, temporal autocorrelation is not an issue.

---

9 Because of the volume of output from the auxiliary R² tests for collinearity and Goldfeld-Quandt tests for heteroskedasticity, we merely report that no auxiliary R² value exceeded .24, and the Goldfeld-Quandt F-statistics for each independent variable were insignificant, indicating that the variances were homoskedastic.
Results

Tables 1 and 2 present the results using each measure of the dependent variable. We used the same control variables in all estimated equations; the only difference between the two sets of estimated equations is the ethnic variable included in the equation (either advantaged ethnic alliance or politically active ethnic alliance). The first column of each table lists the independent and control variables included in the model. The second through fourth columns present the estimated coefficients for each independent variable. The associated standard errors are in parentheses below the coefficients. Because the same control variables are included in all three equations, we expected that the influence of the independent variables would be quite similar across the tables and that the overall fit of the model would also be about the same. Both expectations are met. In order to simplify the discussion to follow, we begin by examining the control variables and then turn our attention to the impact of ethnic structure on international interactions.

In Tables 1 and 2, we find—as expected—that a number of the control variables have statistically significant coefficient estimates, supporting our contention that the concepts they represent influence the foreign policy interactions of states. First, the BEHAVIOR RECEIVED variable, which tests the reciprocity hypothesis, is positively signed and statistically significant in all six equations. Next, we find that states generally tend to interact with their neighbors: the cooperation and conflict equations in both tables exhibit a positive and statistically significant relationship between bordering states and their patterns of conflict and cooperation (i.e., the BORDER variable is statistically significant and positively signed). Third, we find that democratic dyads—as represented by the JOINT DEMOCRACY variable—enjoy less conflictual overall relations than nondemocratic dyads, but that they do not exhibit significantly more cooperation or conflict. Fourth, we find that allied states tend to cooperate more with each other than with other states (i.e., JOINT ALLIANCE produces a statistically significant parameter estimate in both COOPERATION regressions, but not in the NET and CONFLICT regressions). Fifth, we find that wealthy states—as represented by the WEALTH OF ACTOR variable—display patterns of behavior that are generally more cooperative than other states, and that they tend to enjoy better overall relations with their dyadic partners than less well off states. However, we do not find that wealthy states engage in less conflict than other types of states (i.e., the parameter estimate in both of the CONFLICT equations cannot, statistically speaking, be distinguished from zero). Finally, we find that the power differential between the actor and target impacts the net interactions in both tables, and the level of dyadic conflict in Table 1 (i.e., POWER DIFFERENTIAL produces a statistically significant parameter estimate in the NET regressions in both tables and the CONFLICT regression in Table 1). In those dyads where there is a major difference between the capabilities of the two states, we see significantly less conflict. However, we also see little difference in the patterns of cooperation in dyads where there are large differences in capabilities. Yet, we further find that when there is a significant power differential in a dyad, the states experience worse overall relations. As noted, we are interested in these variables as controls on the relationship of interest—ethnic structure and international interactions—but when taken in total, these results indicate that the general model does a solid job of capturing the dynamics of international behavior.

With respect to the central focus of this study, we find support for both of our hypotheses: advantaged ethnic alliances and mobilized ethnic groups both increase dyadic conflict levels. To begin, we consider the estimated coefficients for ADVANTAGED TRANSNATIONAL ETHNIC ALLIANCE in the three equations in Table 1: it is statistically significant in the NET and CONFLICT regressions, with a negative and positive sign, respectively. The fact that the sign is negative for NET
Table 1. Advantaged Transnational Ethnic Alliances and Foreign Policy Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Net Interactions</th>
<th>Cooperation</th>
<th>Conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behavior (received)</td>
<td>0.591**</td>
<td>0.693**</td>
<td>0.509**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.020)</td>
<td>(0.017)</td>
<td>(0.021)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advantaged transnational ethnic alliance</td>
<td>-2.342*</td>
<td>0.169</td>
<td>2.659**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.995)</td>
<td>(0.642)</td>
<td>(0.819)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Border</td>
<td>0.554</td>
<td>1.064**</td>
<td>0.992*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.514)</td>
<td>(0.335)</td>
<td>(0.452)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint democracy</td>
<td>1.494*</td>
<td>0.664</td>
<td>-0.652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.714)</td>
<td>(0.461)</td>
<td>(0.584)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint alliance</td>
<td>0.292</td>
<td>0.316*</td>
<td>0.160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.238)</td>
<td>(0.155)</td>
<td>(0.196)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wealth of actor</td>
<td>0.960*</td>
<td>0.928**</td>
<td>0.103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.475)</td>
<td>(0.307)</td>
<td>(0.391)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power differential</td>
<td>0.010**</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>-0.007*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.622</td>
<td>1.156</td>
<td>1.220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>1678</td>
<td>1678</td>
<td>1678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We used the OLS command in Shazam (ver. 7.0) to obtain the estimates reported in this table (i.e., they are ordinary least squares estimates). The standard errors are reported in parentheses. Estimates denoted with two asterisks are statistically significant at the 99% confidence interval; those with one asterisk are statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

interactions, positive for CONFLICT, and not statistically significant for COOPERATION suggests that dyads with an advantaged alliance have roughly the same level of cooperative interactions, but greater levels of conflictual interactions (and, hence, more conflictual overall relations). Thus, dyads that are characterized by the presence of an advantaged minority in state A and a disadvantaged co-ethnic in state B experience higher levels of conflict—on average—than dyads that do not share this characteristic. Interestingly, the level of cooperation is not affected: dyads with an advantaged transnational ethnic tie increase their foreign policy belligerence, but do not decrease the amount of cooperation. In sum, advantaged alliances increased dyadic conflict levels in 1978.

We now turn to Table 2 and the impact of politically active ethnic groups on dyadic interactions. The estimated coefficients for the POLITICALLY ACTIVE TRANSNATIONAL ETHNIC ALLIANCES variable suggest that it increases dyadic conflict, does not influence dyadic cooperation, and—interestingly—does not influence net interactions: the estimated coefficient was not statistically significant in either the NET or COOPERATION regressions, but was statistically significant and positively signed in the CONFLICT regression. These results suggest that while the presence of a politically active ethnic group in state B will—on average—lead to higher levels of dyadic conflict, the impact is small enough that it washes out when
TABLE 2. Politically Active Transnational Ethnic Alliances and Foreign Policy Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Net Interactions</th>
<th>Cooperation</th>
<th>Conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behavior received</td>
<td>0.594**</td>
<td>0.692**</td>
<td>0.507**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.020)</td>
<td>(0.018)</td>
<td>(0.021)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politically active</td>
<td>-0.006</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>0.151*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transnational</td>
<td>(0.090)</td>
<td>(0.058)</td>
<td>(0.075)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethnic alliance</td>
<td>0.512</td>
<td>1.158**</td>
<td>1.185*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Border</td>
<td>(0.521)</td>
<td>(0.340)</td>
<td>(0.434)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint democracy</td>
<td>1.426*</td>
<td>0.633</td>
<td>-0.639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.716)</td>
<td>(0.460)</td>
<td>(0.585)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint alliance</td>
<td>0.296</td>
<td>0.311*</td>
<td>0.145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.238)</td>
<td>(0.155)</td>
<td>(0.196)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wealth of actor</td>
<td>1.020*</td>
<td>0.965**</td>
<td>0.106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.477)</td>
<td>(0.307)</td>
<td>(0.395)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power differential</td>
<td>0.011*</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>-0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.504</td>
<td>0.949</td>
<td>0.997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>1678</td>
<td>1678</td>
<td>1678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We used the OLS command in Shazam (ver. 7.0) to obtain the estimates reported in this table (i.e., they are ordinary least squares estimates). The standard errors are reported in parentheses. Estimates denoted with two asterisks are statistically significant at the 99% confidence interval; those with one asterisk are statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

we examine overall interaction patterns. In sum, we find evidence that fails to falsify either hypothesis, though advantaged ethnic alliances appear to produce more conflict than does the presence of a politically active ethnic group in the target state.

Having established that ethnicity matters, it is prudent to ask two important questions: How much does ethnicity matter?, and In what ways does ethnicity matter? Our statistical analyses shed light on both questions. First, as discussed in the context of the politically active linkage, though these variables have a significant impact, they are marginal impacts. The variable that soaks up most of the variance in the model is, as one would expect, the reciprocity variable: states reciprocate one another’s behavior. No claim is advanced that the ethnic structure of states determines dyadic foreign policy behavior. Instead, our study demonstrates that, in 1978, the ethnic structure of states affected—at the margins—conflictual dyadic foreign policy behavior, but did not affect cooperative dyadic foreign policy behavior. Yet, we can further probe this issue by calculating the mean score of the conflict sent by state A in each dyad without an advantaged ethnic alliance (μ = 3.0; n = 1259) and those

---

10 This weak effect would be stronger, we suspect, if we were able to examine the presence of a mobilized co-ethnic in advantaged alliances as discussed in footnote 5. Future analyses would do well to probe this further.
with an advantaged ethnic alliance (μ = 6.2; n = 69): the mean conflict sent score in dyads characterized by an advantaged ethnic alliance is over twice that of other dyads. Thus, while foreign policy behavior is primarily influenced by other factors, the difference between these two types of dyads is nontrivial. We can delve deeper by comparing the mean levels of conflict sent by state A (μ = 6.2; n = 69) versus that sent by state B (μ = 3.5; n = 69) in advantaged ethnic alliance dyads (where state A is that with the advantaged minority and state B is that with the disadvantaged co-ethnic): the state with the advantaged minority is generating the conflict, just as H1 anticipates. These findings both clarify and reinforce the argument above: while advantaged ethnic alliances do increase the level of conflict sent—but only marginally increase the level of conflict received—they are not a prevalent part of the international landscape (5 percent), and hence their impact is only marginal when studying all PRIE dyads. That they double the conflict sent is consistent with our hypothesis, but the small number of dyads that are so affected tempers the conclusions one would wish to draw about the impact of the ethnic composition of states on the international system.

Returning to our findings, the second question, then, is What types of foreign policy behavior are influenced? In other words, is this increased dyadic foreign policy conflict a "war of words," or are lives at stake? Of course, such a simple dichotomy ignores linkages between words and action that surely exist, but is a useful way to lead us to consider the intensity of the increased conflict. Unfortunately, our one-year sample restricts our ability to draw conclusions: not many war events occurred in 1978, and thus our dependent variable has limited variance. That said, an examination of the advantaged ethnic alliance dyads suggests that lives are not often at stake (in fact, in our sample, no war events occurred in those dyads). Unfortunately, this question is not well answered in our study, and requires future analysis.

To summarize, this study adds to those by Brecher and Wilkenfeld (1995, 1997), Carment and James (1995, 1997), and Davis et al. (1997), adding further credence to the claim that ethnicity matters. However, as noted, the circumscribed temporal domain of the analysis limits our ability to generalize. That said, the standard call for additional empirical work is justified. In the conclusion we review the argument and findings, then discuss the policy implications of this study.

Conclusion

The analysis reported above provides evidence that supports our contention that transnational ethnic alliances influence foreign policy behavior. It is an "ethnicity as attribute" argument, and thus builds on work by Zinnes (1980) and Carment (1993). The findings are also consistent with those reported in other statistical analyses that argue that ethnicity as an attribute of crises/dyads influences conflict behavior (i.e., Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1995, 1997; Carment and James, 1995, 1997; and Davis et al., 1997). We have emphasized, however, that the ethnic composition of dyads matters on the margins in two senses: first, few dyads have the advantaged ethnic alliance or mobilized transnational ethnic alliance attributes; second, although conflict levels were higher among the dyads with those attributes, the conflict levels were not deadly. As noted, we need to be cautious about these findings because they draw from a single year, 1978. Hence, as data covering a more broad temporal domain become available, additional analyses will be warranted.11

11 We should note that Phase III of the Minorities at Risk project was recently released, and it provides data for 1990-95. In addition, Reuveny and Kang (1996) report that they have successfully integrated a COPDAB-WEIS (World Event Interaction Survey) time-series covering 1948-94. However, we understand that they are not yet willing to share this data.
In closing, we would like to briefly consider policy implications. Our analysis suggests that, to borrow a phrase from Stuart Bremer, there are some dangerous dyads that warrant monitoring. To be specific, the evidence from testing H1 suggests that dyads with the advantaged ethnic alliance attribute are “dangerous”; and the evidence from testing H2 can be interpreted to suggest that the effect of advantaged ethnic alliances may be exacerbated by ethno-political mobilization (though we were not able to test this directly). Indeed, recent studies of ethno-political conflict by Gurr (1993b), Lindström and Moore (1995), and Gurr and Moore (1997) find that ethno-political mobilization leads to ethno-political protest and rebellion, and the finding reported here regarding H2 suggests that there is some spillover or contagion to dyadic-level international conflict behavior. It follows, then, that dyads characterized by an advantaged ethnic alliance ought to be monitored—particularly with respect to the mobilization level of the disadvantaged co-ethnic—as they are likely to exhibit higher than average levels of international conflict. A potential dynamic implication of the static analysis presented here is that increasing levels of ethno-political mobilization by a disadvantaged co-ethnic (in state B) will likely produce an increase in what is likely to already be a relatively high level of conflict sent by state A to state B. Our analysis does not directly examine that supposition, but it does seem plausible given our argument and results, and it would, we think, be prudent to monitor such situations.

References


KURAN, T. (n.d.) “Ethnic Dissimilation and Its Global Transmission.” In Ethnic Fears and Global Engagement:
The International Spread and Management of Ethnic Conflict, edited by D. A. Lake and D.
LAKE, D. A., AND D. ROTHCHILD (n.d.) “Containing Fear: The International Spread and Management of
Ethnic Conflict.” In Ethnic Fears and Global Engagement: The International Spread and Management of
Forthcoming.
on State Behavior, 1816–1986.” In The International Politics of Ethnic Conflict: Theory and Evidence,
Political Science Review 87:640–654.
Political Science Review 83:1101–1124.
Conflict Resolution 36:25–52.
MORGAN, T. C., AND G. PALMER (n.d.) “Room to Move: Security, Proaction and Institutions in Foreign
Policy Decision-making.” In Strategic Politicians, Institutions and Foreign Policy, edited by R. M.
RAIMARA, S., AND M. D. WARD (1990) Evolving Foreign Policy Norms: Reciprocity in the Superpower
Princeton University Press.
40:133–153.
In Strategic Politicians, Institutions and Foreign Policy, edited by R. M. Siverson. Ann Arbor: University
Carolina Press.
UNITED STATES ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY (1985) World Military Expenditures and Arms
