

The Future is History

Restorative Nationalism and Conflict in Post-Napoleonic Europe

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Abstract. The recent revival of nationalism has brought with it the threatening return of revisionist conflict. Yet, because of its radically modernist orientation dismissing past references as irrelevant, current scholarship on nationalism and political violence offers little guidance. Taking the nationalists seriously if not literally, we study how they use narratives harking back to past “golden ages” to legitimize territorial claims and mobilize resources for action in post-Napoleonic Europe. Our analysis draws on geocoded data on state borders going back to the Middle Ages, combined with new spatial data on ethnic settlement areas from the 19th century retrieved from historical atlases. Our findings indicate that restorative nationalism, conceptualized as a loss of power and/or unity relative to past reference points, increases the risk of civil and interstate conflict.

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Introduction

Nationalism is back to haunt the world. Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 heralded a "return of geopolitics" (Mead 2014). Charismatic nationalists around the world invoke imperial legacies to claim territory, as illustrated by Russian revisionism (Plokhy 2018), China's claims to "reunify" Taiwan (Roy 2019) and Turkey's Ottoman nostalgia (Yavuz 2020). If globalization dominated the initial post-Cold War era, the world has now entered a less stable period characterized by "nostalgic nationalism" (Rachman 2017) and "territorial grabs" (Trofimov 2020).

Yet, expert opinion on nationalism offers surprisingly little help in confronting this precarious moment. Scholars have long been aware that nationalists construct myths to justify their political agendas. Following the seminal contributions by Gellner (1983), Anderson (2006), Hobsbawm (1990) and other modernists, most of the literature on nationalism has come to embrace a radically constructivist perspective that regards nations as being "invented" or "imagined," in many cases virtually from scratch. Building on Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983), much of this influential research has focused on cataloguing cases that exemplify the "invention of tradition," while disregarding narratives that build at least partly on established historical facts. In a rhetorically brilliant response to A. D. Smith's criticism in the famous "Warwick debate" shortly before his death in 1994, Gellner (1996) quipped: "nations have navels." That is, nations may have traits with a long history, but these have no contemporary impact.

While acknowledging that nations are socially constructed communities that emerged after the French Revolution, we argue that pre-modern historical reference points are more consequential for nationalist identity construction and claim-making than often assumed by the most uncompromising modernists. In fact, nationalists typically legitimize their claims with ethnic and political "building blocks" that mix historical facts and fiction, sometimes dating back hundreds, or even thousands, of years. Such narratives constitute what has been called "restorative nationalism" because they make the case for a restoration of a past, idealized "golden age" (Ding and Hlavac 2017; Ding, Slater, and Zengin, *forthcoming*). Rather than dismissing ethnic nationalists as exponents of irrational "hypernationalism," then, we have to take them seriously, if not literally. As long as millions share their views, aggressive nationalist projects cannot be written off as irrelevant aberrations. After all, the nationalist worldview has already caused massive violence during the past two centuries and may do so in the future as well.

Drawing on systematic historical evidence, this study addresses whether the availability of plausible historical "golden ages" has made a real difference for life-and-death decisions during the past two centuries. Based on systematic geocoded and disaggregated data, we trace how

historical shocks from 1100 A.D. onward triggered conflict in Europe during the past two centuries. We do so by identifying past polities that could have formed plausible bases of modern territorial claims ultimately leading to armed conflict, both within and between states. Such retrospective projections hinge on the real or imagined link between modern ethnic groupings and their distant, pre-modern “ancestors” supposedly in “possession” of these political entities. Our objective is to show that nationalists’ perceived loss of political power and/or national unity compared to some putative “golden age” increases the risk that conflict will erupt.

Any study that covers two centuries’ worth of conflict behavior and historical legacies spanning over almost a millennium has to cope with severe data limitations. Therefore, our approach is to study the structural preconditions of nationalist claim-making rather than the narratives themselves. Furthermore, data limitations leave no choice but to postpone the task of coding nationalist mobilization processes to future research, which means that our analysis can say little about the exact timing of conflict. It should also be noted that the macro-historical nature of this study forces us to rely on observational data and correlational analysis rather than stronger inferential methods. We deal with endogeneity by relying on fixed-effects estimation to reduce omitted variable bias and evaluate plausible alternative explanations, in addition to conducting extensive robustness testing of our variable and model specifications. This approach clearly leaves much room for improvement that will hopefully be filled by future work, but it should be stressed that this study reflects considerable efforts in collecting and analyzing large amounts of historical data. In fact, we are not aware of any previous study that attempts to analyze systematically the effect of restorative nationalism on conflict.

Despite these methodological difficulties, empirical research of nationalism’s historical legacies is badly needed given their obvious importance. Recent historical research shows how imperial ambitions often motivate contemporary nationalist politics (see e.g. Geiss 2007). This offers an important corrective of the modernists’ unilinear history, which typically regards empires as an obsolete developmental stage that has now been definitively and irreversibly superseded by nation-states (Gellner 1983; Wimmer and Min 2006). Yet, backward-looking historical claims and revisionist conflict are inherent to nationalist politics. They cannot be viewed as something that vanished with the disintegration of the great empires in the 20th century, the collapse of the Soviet Union presumably being the final nail in the imperialist coffin (for critiques of modernist irreversibility, see Beissinger 2005; Kumar 2017).

The paper proceeds as follows: After a survey of the relevant literature, we introduce our theoretical framework. Then follows a description of the data that prepares the ground for the

section on empirical analysis. The paper closes with a section reflecting on the theoretical and practical significance of our findings.

Literature

To see why the nationalism literature says relatively little about the threat of revisionist nationalism, we need to look more closely at existing scholarship on nationalism and conflict. As we have argued above, most constructivist scholars focus so much on historical fabrication that they lose sight of the long-term consequences of historical legacies. Vehemently rejecting nationalist historiography's over-romanticized renderings of nations' pre-modern origins with wit and eloquence, Gellner (1983, 48-49) conceived of nationalism as a fundamentally modern phenomenon representing an entirely new type of social organization:

Nations as a natural, God-given way of classifying men, as an inherent though long-delayed political destiny, are a myth; nationalism, which sometimes takes pre-existing cultures and turns them into nations, sometimes invents them, and often obliterates pre-existing cultures; *that* is reality.

Yet, perhaps the most explicit "myth-busting" dismissal of nationalists' historical claims can be found under the heading of "invention of tradition" (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). Delighting at punctuating nationalists' mythical reconstructions of their nations' allegedly ancient roots, this seminal contribution suggests that nationalist politicians frequently resort to outright fabrication for primarily instrumental and opportunistic reasons divorced from historical facts. Given this freedom to invent new traditions, there never was any fundamental and systematic continuity between pre-modern ethnic communities and modern political nations. On this view, then, national symbols are little more than malleable and essentially convenient cultural artefacts.

If Gellner and Hobsbawm were eager to show that nationalists engage in fabrication and distortion of history, Benedict Anderson (2006) offered a primarily ideational and culture-driven interpretation that views nations as "imagined communities." But by stressing the constructiveness of all social entities, this approach shifts the analytical focus to the act of constructing nations irrespective of historical facts: "Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined" (Anderson 2006, 6). Thus, despite its general insights about nationalism, Anderson's famous concept is less helpful in analyzing the impact of specific nationalist narratives.

Most studies of violent nationalist conflict have followed in the footsteps of these seminal contributions. Recent social-science scholarship on nationalism and armed conflict have largely accepted these far-reaching, constructivist principles (see e.g. Brubaker 2009; Mylonas and Tudor 2021). Rather than seeking the origins in historical legacies, this literature conceptualizes not only nationalism, but also nationalist conflict, as fundamentally modern phenomena. An influential example is Mann (2005), who explains ethnic massacres as the consequences of organic state ideologies in the modern era. Directly inspired by Gellner's modernism, Malesevic (2012) accounts for warfare in the Balkans as a response to the late modernization of the region's underdeveloped states. Along similar lines, but based on extensive quantitative data, Wimmer and Min (2006) analyze warfare as a consequence of an epochal and irreversible shift from pre-modern empires to nation-states.

There is, however, a dissenting minority of scholars, who do not fully embrace the modernist consensus. The most prominent opposition comes from the "ethno-symbolist" school, which, unlike primordialism, accepts the modernity of nations, but insists that national identities typically derive from pre-modern ethnic cores (Smith 1986). This perspective doubts that the French Revolution and its aftermath created a historical *tabula rasa* that "pulverized" previous structures and identities. Rather than dismissing nationalist myths and their associated ethnic symbols, then, these scholars consider them to be truly consequential for the way contemporary nationalist politics unfolds.

In particular, ethno-symbolism differs from modernism in the way it explains political violence. In a recent book, Hutchinson (2017) argues that it is impossible to gain a full understanding of nationalist conflict without scrutinizing what came before modern nations. In particular, Hutchinson (2018, 6) remarks that it is "simplistic both to claim that war has led to a transition from empires to nation-states and that contemporary practices of war-making have led to a postnational era."

Despite their suggestive criticism of modernist studies of nationalist conflict, ethno-symbolists have weakened their own case by insisting that ethnic cores are "necessary" for the emergence of modern ethnic nations (Smith 1986). Furthermore, beyond providing specific historical examples, they have so far not offered any systematic empirical evaluation of their claims. Of course, this is far from surprising, given the difficulty of validating their wide-ranging historical arguments. Nonetheless, "cliometric" investigations of how pre-modern legacies influence modern conflict patterns do exist, but this literature, which emanates mainly from political science and economics, has not focused on the link between nationalism and political violence (for a recent review focusing on Africa, see e.g. Michalopoulos and Papaioannou 2020). For instance,

Besley and Reynal-Querol (2014) study the influence of ancient conflict patterns on violent politics in Africa during the 20th century. Likewise, Abramson and Carter (2016) show that territorial claims in interstate disputes in Europe after the French Revolution tended to follow pre-revolutionary precedents based on historical borders. Rather than tracing the persistence of conflict or borders, we analyze how nationalists use historical configurations as points of reference that make revisionist claims resonate with target audiences and facilitate mobilization.

Inspired by ethno-symbolist critique of radical modernism, but without embracing its determinism and claims about historical continuity, we use new historical data to conduct a systematic assessment of whether pre-modern historical structures influenced modern conflicts patterns in Europe through the nationalists' more or less fact-based construction of narratives. To do so, we need to overcome formidable data challenges. In particular, it is essential to steer clear of "methodological nationalism," which continues to haunt the literature (see e.g. Chernilo 2011). Thus, rather than sampling on contemporary states as units of analysis, as do Wimmer and Min (2006), our spatial and disaggregated approach requires geocoded data on ethnic settlement areas going back to the 19th century, as well as state borders reaching back to the Middle Ages. Such a systematic assessment of the risks posed by nationalism allows us to take nationalist argumentation seriously rather than dismissing it as entirely mythical.

Theoretical argument

To understand how nationalism caused conflict in the past and may do it in the future, it is necessary to reconstruct nationalists' reasoning. To do so, we first consider the challenge of analyzing mixes of facts and myths. Then we outline the structure of nationalist narratives before identifying specific historical configurations that facilitate mobilization and thus increase the risk of conflict.

Categories of practice and analysis

What does it mean to take the nationalists seriously? First and foremost, it requires us to rethink the conceptual distinction between "categories of practice" and "categories of analysis" (Bourdieu 1991). While the former denotes the everyday, unscientific use of a term, the latter is restricted to its scientific application. Referring to "identity" in general, but also specifically to the concept of the "nation," Brubaker (2004) warns scholars against conflating the two types of categories since biases and misunderstanding associated with categories of practice may otherwise distort

scientific analysis. In particular, Brubaker advises against conceptualizing ethnicity in terms of groups since “groupness” risks reifying what is arguably an open-ended Bourdieuan “field” of social relations.

Despite its meta-theoretical appeal, this advice is hardly conducive to crafting empirical explanations of nationalist behavior, because, empirical accounts typically require that nationalists’ own motives for action be part of the theory. It should be noted that such an embedding does not entail uncritical adoption of the category of practice as being synonymous with the corresponding category of analysis.¹ Thus what is at stake is not whether the nationalists’ claims are entirely factually correct, but rather whether they are consequential. The key question in this regard is whether nationalists mobilize more effectively if they can draw on actual historical material. Smith (2001, 11-12) asks rhetorically:

if nationalism is an outgrowth of the modern centralized state, why and now can such symbols and ceremonies have popular resonance? Are we to appeal to mass psychological dispositions which transcend the divisions of historical development? Or could it be that some elements of antecedent “culture” provide the seabed of later political developments?

The question, then, is whether ethnic legacies are believed to exist by a sufficient number of political actors to make a difference, and whether the retrospective claims about their nations’ putative antiquity increase the risk of conflict. Modernists do not deny that nationalists appeal to prior history, but they do question whether such appeals make any difference:

It is, of course, true that nationalist intellectuals and politicians seize upon myths and symbols inherited from the past and weave these into arguments designed to promote national identity and justify nationalist claims. However, it is very difficult to correlate their degree of success with the “objective” importance of such myths and symbols (Breuilly 1996, 151).

In this paper, we equate the objective importance of nationalist claims with the degree to which they engender conflict. Our analysis considers both civil conflict and interstate disputes that occurred in Europe after the end of the Napoleonic Wars until the beginning of the 21st

¹Nor does it entail a rejection of “subnationalist” notions of nationhood as long as such substances are collectively held rather than imposed by the analyst (see e.g. Brubaker 1996, 16). In any case, in his empirical account of irredentism in the former Yugoslavia, Brubaker reluctantly has to retreat to using “groupist” notions such as “minorities.”

century. We first sketch the structural nature of nationality problems in general before turning to retrospective historical comparisons.

Following the French Revolution, conservative politicians led by Metternich tried to put the nationalist genie back into the bottle. Yet, under the influence of Napoleon's geopolitical onslaught, many intellectuals in the affected states started to identify with their ethnic groups. Some of this activity included cultural standardization, and in some cases even the invention of new high cultures erected on top of smooth dialectical landscapes, especially in Eastern Europe (Connelly 2020). Nevertheless, other parts of Europe featured relatively well-defined language families that served as the basic units in the process of nationalist mobilization around pre-modern "ethnic cores" (Smith 1986).

While state formation in Western Europe enabled mostly successful nation building around such cores, further east there was little congruence between state and nation. These disjunctions included the areas that would later become unified as Germany and Italy. These former were populated by large ethnic communities split into a multitudes of tiny political units loosely organized under the heading of the Holy Roman Empire. In Eastern Europe, the situation was precisely the opposite: here the polities were huge empires divided into a large number of ethnic groups, some of which were in the process of emerging as ethnic nations in the 19th century. If in the first zone a lack of unity was the main concern, further east alien rule through imperial domination caused the most serious problems.

Under the influence of diffusing nationalist ideas, activists became increasingly conscious of these instances of incongruence. Indeed, nationalism can be defined as the political principle that prescribes congruence between the state and the nation (Gellner 1983, 1). The motivation to resolve these "nationality problems" (Geiss 2007) emanated both from nations already enjoying state power but desiring more territory and stateless nations seeking self-determination. The geopolitical success of the western great powers, especially France and Great Britain, inspired these efforts. Nationalist politics introduced a status hierarchy by which success could be measured not only in terms of current territorial control and raw military power but also through past political and cultural achievements.

Before turning to the backward-looking logic of nationalism, we first need to identify an analytical baseline in terms of how conflict-prone these structural configurations can be expected to be. The nationalist principle can be violated through alien rule and division (Gellner 1983, 1). Alien rule tends to generate grievances that increase the risk of rebellion against the government, typically through secessionist violence (Hechter 2000). Divided ethnic groups can trigger interstate conflict if there is competition over which state will lead the unification pro-

cess. Finally, the combination of alien rule and division amount to irredentist configurations that may involve either civil or interstate conflict, or both. In this case, the actor constellation features a triadic relationship between an entrapped group segment exposed to alien rule by its host government, which in turn may get involved in an interstate dispute with a revisionist kin state (Weiner 1971; Brubaker 1996).

Restorative nationalism and the articulation of narratives

Revisionist claims, however, do not merely stem from unhappiness with static configurations, but also involve historical comparison. While eager to compare their status to other nationalist groups at any point in history, nationalists are particularly obsessed by the historical trajectory of their own group. As astutely observed by Kedourie (1960, 70), nationalists excel in “making use of the past in order to subvert the present.” Nationalist mobilization derives major inspiration from stylized, and often embellished, accounts of the nation’s history (see e.g. Coakley 2004). The German historian Geiss (2007, 94) offers the following summary:

Modern nationalism was formulated mostly by urban intellectuals, cut off from the peasant masses, whom they, however, idealized as the true representatives of their [people]. Their demand for a national state along the line[s] of Western national states, harked back to a romanticized “national” history, taking, wherever possible, a powerful state, usually in the Middle Ages, as their historic precedent: Modern nationalism claimed to restore former empires or great power structure of the Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, Greeks, Germans, Italians, Serbs and Bulgarians. Restoring the glories of past Empires by modern nationalism made for an explosive mixture, because Empires by definition usually had expanded beyond the boundaries of a given “nation.”

Besides poets, philologists and linguists, historians played a pivotal role in the creation of these narratives. In fact, the very emergence of history as an academic discipline coincided with the efforts of creating “national history.” Indeed, “[h]istory and the modern nation are inseparable” (Duara 1995, 27). Spearheaded by German historians in the early 19th century, this development emphasized fact-based scientific methodology, but left plenty of room for romanticized versions of the past. In particular, these scholarly activities focused on the intense search for nations’ origins in the Middle Ages (Berger 2015, 113-123).

Nationalists in established nation-states enjoyed considerable advantages in their efforts to craft such narratives. They were able to draw on state institutions to create and disseminate

an “official” version of the state’s history written from the vantage point of its dominant ethnic group (Coakley 2004). Threatened by cultural extinction, stateless and marginalized groups in Eastern Europe made particularly impressive efforts to reconstruct their nations’ origins and development (Connelly 2020), sometimes in conjunction with linguistic standardization, as exemplified by the prominent Czech historian Palacký and the Bulgarian monk Father Paisii (Coakley 2004, 538).

How are these national histories structured? Aggrieved and dissatisfied nationalists are prone to instrumentalize history for their specific mobilizational purposes. Therefore, their narratives typically follow the same restorative three-step logic:²

1. The first step is to identify an idealized “golden age” in the nation’s past, characterized by political and military influence, unity, and freedom from foreign influence, that stands in stark contrast to the current vantage point of the shrunken, oppressed and/or divided nation (Smith 1986; Coakley 2004). As mentioned above, European nationalists tend to search for such periods in the Middle Ages. Some histories, however, are much more recent, such as the collapse of the USSR, and some go further back, as for example Italian and Greek nationalists’ quest for historical greatness in classical antiquity.
2. The second step describes how a “dark age” of oppression and/or fragmentation brutally interrupted the golden age, leading to collective victimization and status loss. Typically, internal decline or foreign occupation is perceived to have arrested or reversed the nation’s cultural and political development (Coakley 2004, 548). Examples include the Serbs’ grievances caused by Ottoman domination following the battle of Kosovo in 1389.
3. The final step consists of remedial action that promises to restore the nation’s greatness, for instance through national liberation or revisionist campaigns aimed at restoring unity by reincorporating lost territory inhabited by nationalist kin. Today’s populist and charismatic politicians, including leading nationalists in Hungary and Poland, are particularly likely to use such rallying cries to fuel their mobilization campaigns (Ding and Hlavac 2017; Ding, Slater, and Zengin, *forthcoming*).

Given their ambitious temporal scope, restorative narratives of this type typically rest on questionable historical assumptions. Besides the obvious difficulties of uncovering specific facts

²Coakley (2004) provides a more complete classification consisting of myths of origin, development and destiny. We here focus on the latter two, although myths of origin can be of importance when it comes to advancing claims of territorial ownership.

in the distant past, the main problem is that the *longue durée* of these accounts presupposes ethnic groups' historical continuity despite centuries of migration, intermarriage and assimilation.³ According to Geary (2002, 11), this backward projection amounts to dangerous “pseudo history” that views the European peoples as “distinct, stable and objectively identifiable social and cultural units.” Far from inconsequential, “[t]his pseudoscience has destroyed Europe twice and may do so yet again” (p. 13).

It should be reiterated that our analysis in no way tries to vindicate the “pseudoscience” of sweeping retrospective projection of ethnicity. Instead, we adopt the intermediate position of backward-projecting ethnic groups as categories of practice for the analytical purpose of tracing their violent consequences. The primary task, then, is not to criticize nationalist narratives for deviating from historical facts, but rather, to study whether specific historical configurations are as dangerous as suggested by Geary. According to the political geographer Murphy (2002, 200), there is “no primordial/natural cultural or historical unity to any territory. Yet human societies have believed in such unities—and those beliefs have been used to ground regimes and territorial legitimation.” Along similar lines, Shelef (2016, 36) argues that nationalists construct their nations as “homelands,” by insisting that “a particular group of people (the ‘nation’) ought to control a particular territory because that land is part of who the people are.” While this identification may include historical legacies, Shelef views it as “primarily a social and political act.”

Nevertheless, based on recent historical scholarship reported in Weyland (2021), it seems increasingly clear that some of the radically constructivist scholars of nationalism have overstated their case through their blanket dismissal of the pre-modern roots of nationalism. While nationalist history exaggerates and distorts, it is difficult to imagine how it could achieve sufficient mobilizational resonance to change the course of history without at least some anchoring in historical facts (Smith 1986). If all were invented, we would be unable to find a structural link between historical polities and much more recent conflict patterns. Yet, while ethno-symbolists are right to stress the pre-modern roots of some modern nations, they arguably go too far in asserting that all nations “need” such cores.

The three-step narrative harbors particularly acute conflict potential in cases where more than one national group claims the same territory, as illustrated by Zionist and Palestinian nationalism (Silberman 2013). Other examples include overlapping claims to Macedonia by the Serbs, Bulgarians and Greeks as well as numerous other cases in the Balkans (Connelly 2020). The recent revival of nationalism around the world features many populist examples of charis-

³For a particularly thorough debunking of a backward-looking myth focusing on Jewish history, see Sand (2009).

matic politicians who pledge to “make their countries great again,” including the restorative nostalgia of Viktor Orbán and Recep Tayyip Erdogan for the historical greatness of their historical predecessor states (Ding and Hlavac 2017; Ding, Slater, and Zengin, *forthcoming*; Tas 2020).

These restorative appeals are more effective than mere complaints about the current slights and discrimination because they depict the situation as a particularly scandalous “injustice frame” (Benford and Snow 2000) amounting to “robbery” perpetrated by a specific outgroup. This attribution of blame invests mobilizational efforts with considerable emotional energy (see e.g. Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001). Other scholars argue that “status reversals” revoking groups’ political rights are likely to trigger mobilization and conflict (Hechter 2000; Petersen 2002). In addition, nationalist claims could serve as a “focal point” coordinating and facilitating collective action (Abramson and Carter 2016). Prospect theory also tells us that restorative narratives are particularly consequential since they aim to restore losses rather than realizing new gains (Zhou, Goemans, and Weintraub 2021).⁴

Linking historical configurations to the risk of conflict

To capture the effects of restorative nationalist grievances more precisely, we identify two main types: *lost home rule* and *lost unity*, each one corresponding to a major violation of state-nation-congruence. If an ethnic population segment resides in a state exposed to alien rule, the probability of conflict should be higher if the segment enjoyed home rule in the past than if it never enjoyed statehood (for a related argument applied to autonomy, see Siroky and Cuffé 2015). The same thing applies to division: if the group belonged to the majority segment within its aggregate group, but was subsequently cut off from the majority of its kin, this would also constitute a conflict-inducing grievance (see also Cederman, Rügger, and Schvitz 2021). Finally, both conditions could apply simultaneously.

We depict the three main configurations in Figure 1, with states shown as rectangular boxes and with stars marking capitals and shaded areas symbolizing ethnic groups. Each row contains two temporal phases corresponding to the status in the “golden age” followed by the current period, during which the nationality principle is violated in specific ways. We identify three configurations: either (I) home rule was lost, or (II) unity was lost, or (III) both.

⁴In his famous lecture “*Qu’est-ce qu’une Nation*,” Ernest Renan makes a similar point: “In fact, national sorrows are more significant than triumphs because they impose obligations and demand a common effort” (cited in Hutchinson 2018, 7).

Cases that involve lost home rule in Configuration I typically emerge as a consequence of conquest or less violent types of amalgamation. The Croatians fighting to leave the former Yugoslavia in 1991 fall into this category. Their leader, Franjo Tudjman, was a historian and retired general, who articulated a restorative claim to independence with references to Medieval statehood. While some historians dispute whether there was a distinctive Croatian identity among South Slavs in the Middle Ages, Tudjman proclaimed that “centuries-old dream of the Croatian people” has been fulfilled through independence, a claim that was also inscribed in the new constitution (see e.g. Bellamy 2003). There are several other historical cases of ethnic groups that rebelled to regain independence after geopolitical reversals. Still under Ottoman occupation in the 19th century, the Serbs, Greek and Bulgarians identified various Medieval political entities as their respective golden ages (see e.g. Connelly 2020).

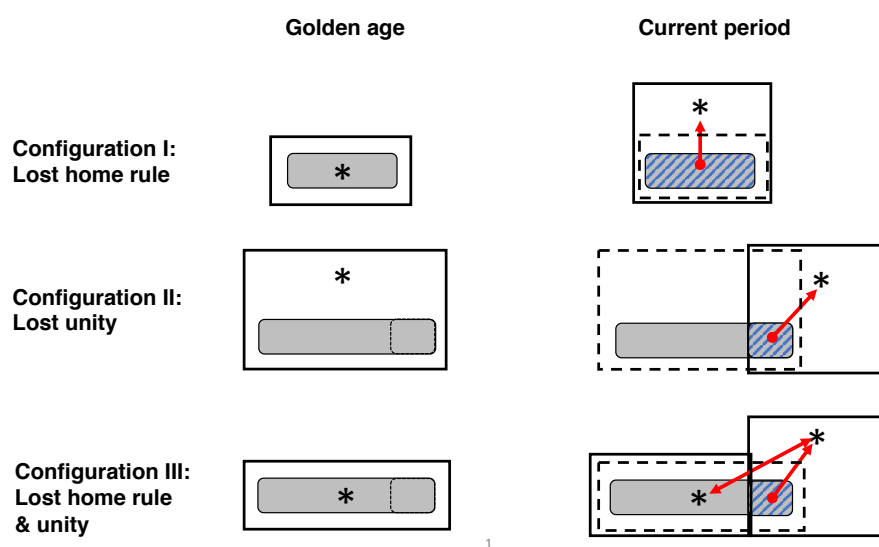


Figure 1: Three configurations of restorative nationalism causing civil and interstate conflict (shown as red arrows)

Alternatively, in Configuration II, lost unity may occur without any loss of home rule if the group in question did not enjoy access to power in the first place. This fate befell the Croatians in Bosnia Herzegovina when that country became independent in 1992. In this case, the Bosnian Croats were particularly aggrieved because they were cut off from the majority of their kin who

ruled the newly independent Croatia. As a result they rebelled against the central government, as did the Bosnian Serbs.⁵

Finally, in Configuration III, group segments fight the government because they are doubly aggrieved, having suffered both loss of home rule and unity. Polish nationalism following the partition of Poland in 1795 captures this case very well. Inspired by the French Revolution, Polish armed resistance to the partitioning can be seen as one of the first occurrences of reactive nationalism (Connelly 2020, 134). Desiring to regain unity, the Polish staged a series of rebellions against foreign rule by Russia and the Habsburgs in the 19th century. Relatively recent memories of established statehood together with a vivid literary tradition reinforced the nationalists' determination to regain sovereignty despite the high costs imposed by the occupying powers, Russia, Prussia and Austria-Hungary: "Poland had been a European state until recently, and less effort was required to create legends from its past. ... In 1800 there were thick histories of Polish statehood and literature as well as an unbroken literary tradition featuring dozens of outstanding political, military, and cultural figures" (Connelly 2020, 141). The Polish romantics contributed by crafting an elaborate Messianic narrative that saw Poland as the "Christ of nations," whose sacrifice and moral purity would ultimately bring about glorious resurrection (Connelly 2020, 153). In the 20th century, prominent Polish nationalists continued to make frequent use of historical facts and myths (see e.g. Dabrowski 2011).

Harking back to Celtic times, anti-unionist nationalists in Northern Ireland also hold compound grievances of this type. Before the permanent occupation by the Tudors in the 16th century, Ireland enjoyed far-reaching autonomy and retained its own native nobility (O'Leary 2021). Before World War I, nationalist mobilization radicalized against British direct rule, with reference to a "golden age" of Medieval statehood (see e.g. MacNeill 1920). The partition of Ireland in 1921 only resulted in partial Irish home rule, as an aggrieved Irish minority was cut off from their newly independent homeland while continuing to be exposed to British alien rule in Northern Ireland. In its armed rebellion against the British state and their unionist settlers, the Irish Revolutionary Army (IRA) fought for Irish "home rule" and unification of the entire Irish island (see e.g. O'Leary 2007). While unification became a more important theme, the IRA's argumentation continued to rely on pre-modern, historical claims as its various factions resumed armed struggle from the 1960s (see e.g. Sinn Féin 1979).

The combination of lost home rule and unity can also generate interstate conflict (see the bidirectional arrow in Figure 1). In this configuration, the kin state of the absorbed segment

⁵This scenario also applies following imperial retraction, as in the case of the Ossetians becoming divided as a consequence of the collapse of the USSR. In this case, the South Ossetians found themselves inside Georgia, against whose government they rebelled.

advances claims in support of the segment's autonomy, independence or outright reincorporation into its own territory. Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 represents a recent example of this category. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, a large minority of Russian speakers were stranded in the Ukrainian "near abroad." Bemoaning the loss of empire and the ensuing disunity of ethnic Russians, President Vladimir Putin justified the incorporation of Crimea and the support for the rebels in Donbas by appealing to restorative nationalism: "I heard residents of the Crimea say that back in 1991 they were handed over like a sack of potatoes. ... But the people could not reconcile themselves to this outrageous historical injustice. All these years, citizens and many public figures came back to this issue, saying that Crimea is historically Russian land and Sevastopol a Russian city" (quoted in Plochy 2018, 339). Likewise, but less dramatically, following the partition of Ireland in 1922, the Irish state expressed explicitly irredentist objectives striving for unification as well, although Irish revisionism never generated an armed conflict between Ireland and the United Kingdom (Coakley 2017).

Romania's 1916 entry into World War I provides another clear example of this dynamic. Motivated by clear irredentist goals in Transylvania and dreams of a "Greater Romania" that would unite all Romanian speakers, it joined forces with the Triple Entente against its previous allies Austria-Hungary and Germany. The explicit goal was to restore to union of the Romanian-speaking provinces of Wallachia, Transylvania, and Moldavia that Prince Michael had achieved for only a couple of months in 1599 and 1600. 19th and 20th century Romanian nationalists discovered Michael "the Brave" as their national hero and portrayed his extremely short-lived military successes as motivated by a heroic quest to unite a supposedly already existing Romanian "nation" (Connelly 2020, 348). Preparing his military and civilian subjects for the war effort and predictable sacrifices, Romanian King Ferdinand frequently referenced Michael's united Romania in public speeches.

Having analyzed all relevant configurations, we summarize our theoretical expectations in two main hypotheses corresponding to each conflict type:

Hypothesis 1. Lost home rule or lost unity increases the probability of civil conflict.

Hypothesis 2. Lost home rule and lost unity together increase the probability of interstate conflict.

Thus, Hypothesis 1 indicates that there will be an effect on conflict if at least one of the two losses applies. Based on the configurations shown in Figure 1, we can now break up the combined effect in Hypothesis 1 into three sub-hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1a. Lost home rule on its own increases the probability of civil conflict.

Hypothesis 1b. Lost unity on its own increases the probability of civil conflict.

Hypothesis 1c. Lost home rule and lost unity together increase the probability of civil conflict.

Data and variables

In what follows, we describe in more detail how we operationalize lost home rule and lost unity in line with the theoretical logic explained above. We lay out the basic intuition with reference to the Polish and Romanian examples from above, before presenting our data and key variables.

Intuition and examples

Actor constellations. Ethnonationalist conflict results from elites mobilizing in the name of an ethnically defined existing or aspiring nation. This basic assumption does not require that all individuals sharing the respective ethnic marker identify strongly, permanently, or even exclusively in ethnonational terms. Nationalist conflict results where leaders rally sufficient numbers of their potential followers around their revisionist political goals.

As Figure 1 and our hypotheses indicate, ethnonationalist conflict within and across country borders results from two distinct forms of ethnic mobilization. Intrastate conflicts are fought by politically powerless groups against an ethnically distinct ruling elite. One good example are the Polish population segments under Russian, Habsburg, and Prussian rule in 1863, the year of the Polish January uprising in the Russian partition (see segments A, B, and C in Figure 2). Interstate nationalist conflicts involve a state-leading group such as the Romanians in independent

Romania (segment A in Figure 3) fighting for co-ethnic territory under foreign rule in another state (segments B and C in Figure 3) as it occurred in 1916 when Romania entered World War I on the side of the Triple Entente rather than its long-standing allies Austria-Hungary and Germany in order to gain Romanian-populated territories in Transylvania (segment B). As such, nationalist rebellions involve groups without home rule that may or may not be united in one country, while interstate nationalist conflict requires division between at least two states and a combination of home rule and foreign rule across country borders. Foreign rule and/or division may in some cases be sufficient to motivate ethnic rebellions or irredentist campaigns against neighboring states. However, mobilization seems particularly likely where leaders can stir up more intense grievances by contrasting the already unsatisfactory status quo with a supposedly greater past in their nation's history.

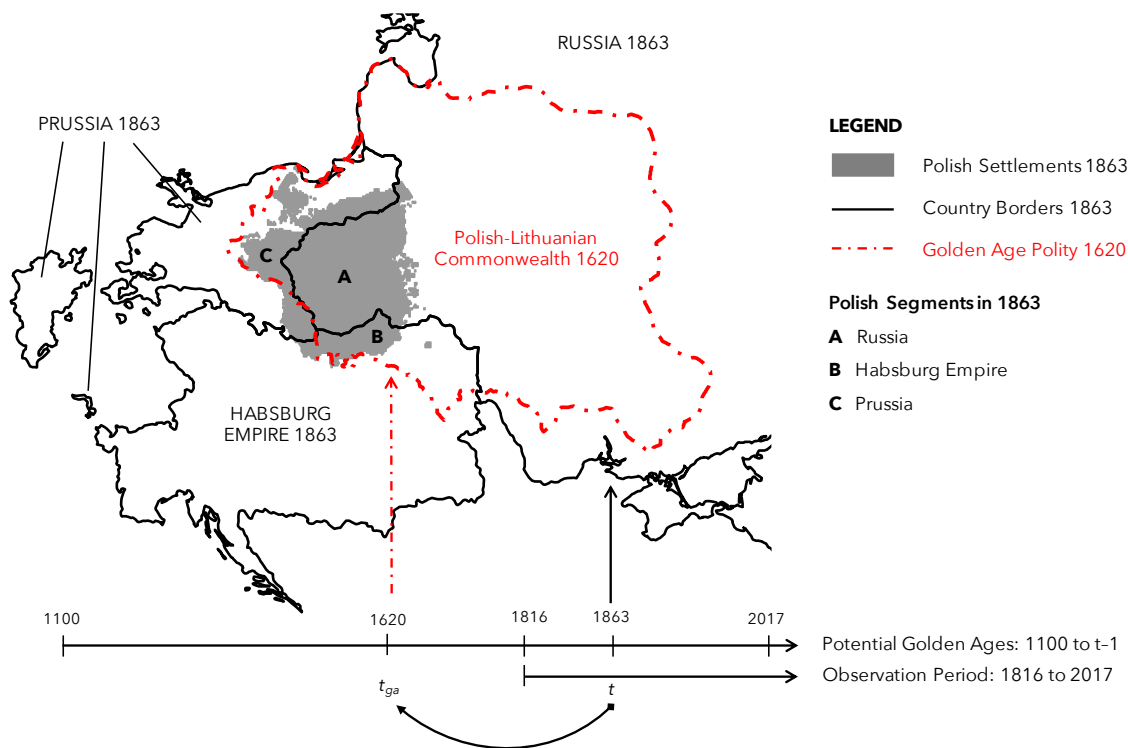


Figure 2: Coding lost home rule and lost unity: Polish example. Black borders indicate Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and Prussian country borders in 1863. The gray area depicts the Polish ethnic settlements in 1863. A, B and C refer to the respective segments within the three polities. The red, dashed borders delineate the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at its territorial apex in 1620.

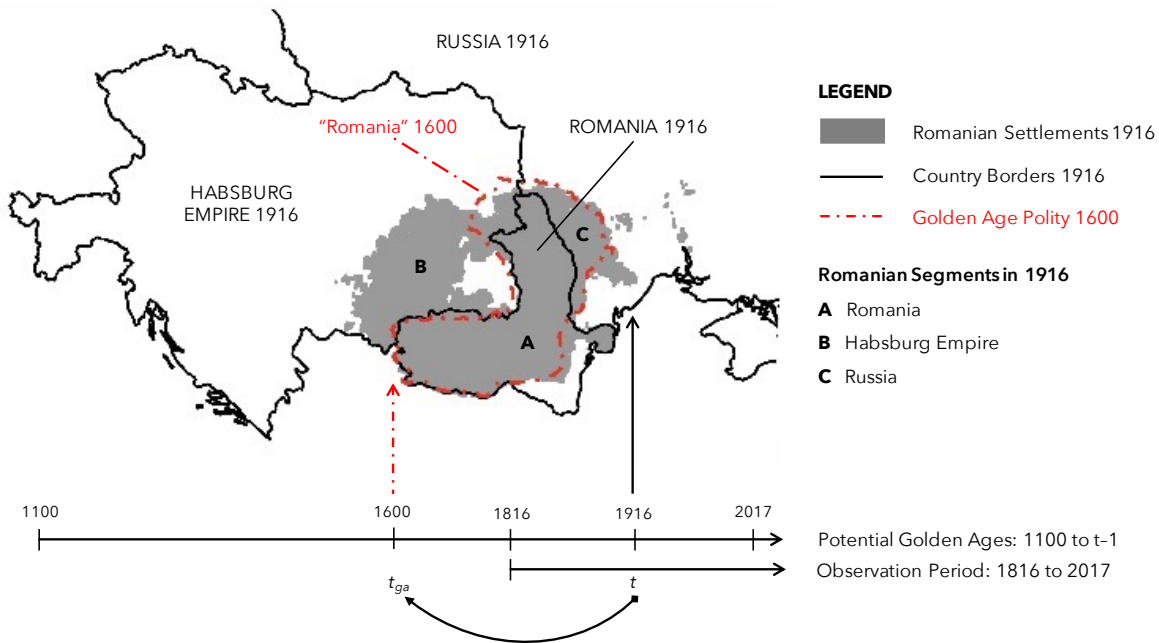


Figure 3: Lost home rule, lost unity, and interstate relations: Romanian example. Black borders indicate Romanian, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian country borders in 1916. The shaded area marks the Romanian settlements in 1916, and areas A, B and C correspond to the respective Romanian ethnic segments within the three states. The red, dashed borders delineate the short-lived “union” of Wallachia, Moldavia, and (parts of) Transylvania under Michael “the Brave” in 1600.

Golden-age polities. Nationalist leaders, writers and historians engage in historical fishing expeditions to unearth such national golden ages (see the backward-pointing arrows from t to t_{ga} in Figures 2 and 3). They search the *political history* of their *geographic region* for actually existing polities in the past that can be portrayed as having achieved ethnic home rule, national unity, or both. Past home rule requires that the ruling elites of the historical state are more or less plausible ethnic “ancestors” of the contemporary nation. Claims about past unity gain credence where the past polity contained very large shares of the contemporary ethnic nation’s main settlement areas.

In the Polish example, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at its territorial apex around 1620 clearly satisfies both conditions (marked by dashed red borders in Figure 2). The historical capital was Krakow and plausibly Polish kings and noblemen held political power. At the same time, the historical borders of the Commonwealth contain the vast majority of all Polish settlement areas in 1863 (the union of A, B, and C in Figure 2). The Polish-Lithuanian Com-

monwealth thus provides the necessary historical raw material to portray it as a national golden age, which is exactly what 19th century Polish nationalists did (Connelly 2020).

As for Romania, the short “union” in 1599/1600 (red borders in Figure 3) extended beyond 1916 Romania and comprised parts of the Romanian-speaking territories under Habsburg (segment B) and Russian rule (segment C). As the polity was ruled by a Wallachian and thus plausibly proto-Romanian prince, 20th century nationalists could refer to the “Romanian” polity in 1600 as independent and united golden age and discovered Prince Michael “the Brave” as their national hero (Connelly 2020, 134).

It is important to note the combination of fact, half-truths, and fiction in accounts of national golden ages. Nationalists project their contemporary conceptions and political goals onto the selected historical polity. Doing so often involves greatly exaggerated claims about past rulers’ proto-nationalist motivations, historical populations’ group consciousness, and their continuous lineage to the present ethnic nation. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was not exactly a modern nation state *avant la lettre*. Likewise, most Transylvanian peasants were arguably indifferent as to whether they were ruled by a Wallachian prince, the Habsburgs, or some Ottoman proxy. The main factual ingredients in narratives of national golden ages are an actually existing historical polity and its approximate geographical extent.

Historical comparisons and mobilization. By contrasting the current predicament of their nation with such idealized golden ages, nationalist can call for restorative action. Intrastate rebellion against ethnically distinct foreign rule becomes more likely where these historical comparisons reveal lost home rule (for groups that remain united in one country), lost unity (for groups that have no plausible claim to past independence), or the combination of both (for groups that can claim historical independence and unity, as for instance the Poles). As interstate nationalist conflict requires political control over at least one independent state, restorative nationalism can lead to international disputes where a contemporary nation rules a state but has an ethnic kin segment under foreign rule abroad that has lost both home rule and unity as compared to the historical golden age (Transylvanian and Moldavian Romanian-speakers under Austro-Hungarian and Russian rule). As such, irredentist interstate conflict tends to be fought in the name of nations that claim lost unity and partially lost home rule as illustrated by the Romanian example.

Operationalizing lost home rule and lost unity

How can one capture lost golden ages beyond individual examples? We use new data on European ethnic settlement areas since 1816 and state borders since 1100 to code plausible golden age losses for the universe of ethnic segment-years nested in aggregate ethnic groups and independent European states for the period 1816 to 2017. Our data construction pipeline proceeds in five main steps which we briefly explain in the following paragraphs.

(1) Ethnic settlement data. Information on historical ethnic settlements comes from the newly compiled Historical Ethnic Geography (HEG) dataset. This dataset is based on a candidate set of approximately 200 historical ethnic maps compiled from online map collections and leading libraries such as the British Library, Library of Congress, and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. From this candidate set, we selected 73 high-quality maps with (a) high geographic resolution, (b) broad spatial coverage (i.e. depicting large subregions or the entirety of Europe), (c) authors of varying nationality, and (d) no obvious political biases.⁶

Practically all ethnic categories appearing on our maps refer to linguistic rather than religious or regional ethnic identity markers. That said, some maps differ in the level of linguistic granularity they encode and therefore need to be standardized for our purposes. To address this “grouping problem” of European ethnolinguistic identities, we match all raw linguistic map labels to the Ethnologue language tree (Lewis 2009) and construct a time-invariant master list of relevant ethnolinguistic groups by subsuming linguistically closely related labels from different maps under the linguistic node that occurs on the majority of maps that depict the respective language family.⁷

To get at temporal variation in specific groups’ settlement areas, we combine the publication date of individual maps as well as hand-coded secondary data on periods of large-scale ethnic change due to forced resettlement, genocide, or mass migrations. This information is used to code, for each group on our ethnic master list, the maps that are valid for a specific sub-period between 1816 and 2017.⁸

Finally, we draw on all maps belonging to a specific group-time period combination to construct a best-guess settlement polygon. Figure 4 illustrates this procedure for the Hungarian

⁶The publication of these maps range from the 1850s to 2019. See Appendix Figure A1.

⁷If, for example, two maps contain the Bavarian dialect while twenty maps depict Germans, the Germans are listed as relevant group and subsume all dialects. In other cases, more disaggregate categories are chosen. Croats, Serbians, and Bosnians appear on many more maps than does the aggregate South Slavic language family.

⁸To address concerns that accurately reflecting temporal change in ethnic settlements comes at the cost of introducing endogeneity problems to our analyses, we run robustness checks only relying on the earliest available maps (NOTE: output tables and add to Appendix).

map period before WWII. The first step is to overlay the digitized multipolygons of all 12 maps that show the Hungarians. Second, we rasterize these polygons and calculate, for each raster cell, the share of maps that encode it as populated by Hungarians. The third and final step applies a 0.5 cutoff rule to construct a best-guess polygon that contains all cells that at least six maps regard as populated by Hungarians. These best-guess polygons may, of course, overlap, which indicates mixed settlements.

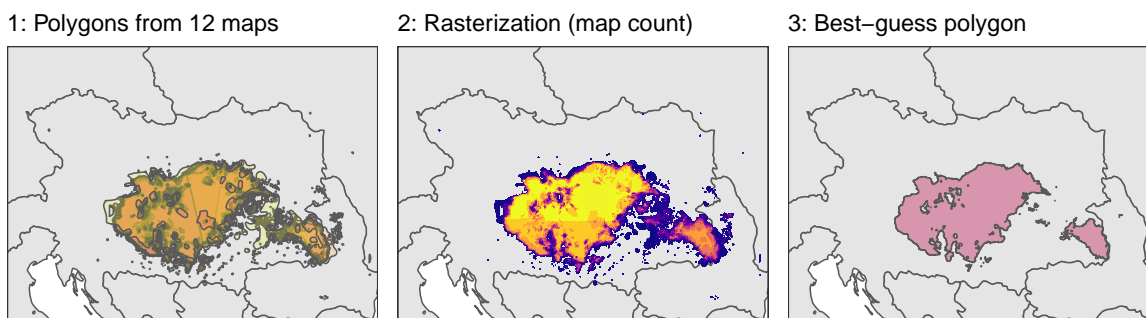


Figure 4: Constructing ethnic best-guess polygons: Hungarian example

Repeating this procedure for all group-time combinations results in a time-varying polygon dataset of all aggregate ethnic groups (e) in Europe since the early-to-mid 19th century. Any data on ethnic settlements covering as broad a geographic and temporal scope as 19th and 20th century Europe are prone to some imprecision and measurement error. We address this challenge by pre-selecting only the highest quality maps, hand-coding periods of significant change, and combining information from multiple maps. These steps ensure a relatively accurate dataset and minimize concerns about systematic biases in our units of analysis.

(2) Historical state borders. Spatial data on state borders since 1886 come from the recently released CShapes 2.0 dataset that offers global coverage on all sovereign states and their dependencies since the “Scramble for Africa” (Schvitz et al. 2021). We extend CShapes 2.0 for Europe back to 1816 drawing on non-spatial data from the Gleditsch and Ward (1999) dataset of independent states, the Correlates of War’s Territorial Change dataset (Tir et al. 1998), and historical GIS data from the Centennia Historical Atlas (Reed 2008).⁹

⁹We manually add dozens of microstates that were common prior to the German and Italian unifications but are not included in the Gleditsch and Ward (1999) and COW datasets.

While our analysis period starts in 1816, coding lost golden ages requires data on state borders that go further back in time. Scott Abramson’s (2017) dataset of historical European state borders covers the period 1100 to 1790 in five-year intervals. His data draws on Centennia, the Nüssli Euratlas, and additional sources to identify the borders of polities conforming to a consistent definition of historical statehood requiring direct military occupation, the capacity to tax, as well as a common executive. As already indicated by the time axes in Figures 2 and 3, the Abramson data allow us to identify potential golden age polities between 1100 and any year $t - 1$ between 1816 and 2017.¹⁰

(3) Ethnic segment years. Spatially intersecting the aggregate group polygons with yearly data on European state borders yields our main unit of analysis – ethnic segments years (*ect*) starting in 1816 (see e.g. the three 1863 Polish segments in Figure 2). For each segment year, we calculate absolute area and population as well as territorial and population shares in the country and aggregate group in which the respective segment is nested. Historical population data comes from the History Database of the Global Environment (HYDE) (Goldewijk, Beusen, and Janssen 2010), which provides decadal population rasters starting in 1700 that can be linearly interpolated to approximate annual population growth. Wherever ethnic segment or aggregate group polygons overlap, we equally divide area or population between overlapping polygons.¹¹ The nested structure of our data also allows to construct variables at the level of country or aggregate group-years as e.g. ethnic fractionalization indices.

Most importantly, we assign dichotomous indicators for home rule and national unity to each segment year in our data. Home rule is coded one for the ethnic segment that holds most power in the respective country’s capital. The largest ethnic segment that contains the capital serves as our first guess (e.g. the Romanian segment A in Figure 3 contains Bucharest) which we then manually correct wherever necessary.¹²

The nationalist ideal of unity requires that all, or at least significant shares, of an ethnic group’s members find themselves in a common state. Due to Europe’s complex political and ethnic geography, complete national unity has hardly ever been achieved. Even prime examples

¹⁰We do not have reliable data on country borders for the chaotic Napoleonic era between 1790 and 1816.

¹¹All baseline analyses rely on territorial information only to restrict temporal variation to border change or changing ethnic settlement patterns. Population-based replications of all main specifications can be found in the Appendix.

¹²Newly independent Lithuania in the 1990s provides one such example. Our algorithm mistakenly identifies ethnic Belarusians as state-leading group, since their segment polygon intersects with Vilnius while the much larger Lithuanian polygon misses the capital by some 500 meters. In cases like this, we rely on secondary sources to correctly identify politically dominant groups.

of unified nation states such as France or post-unification Italy feature small co-ethnic minority segments in neighboring states. The ethnic segment data described above enable us to calculate the territorial (and population) share of each segment in its aggregate group, which may or may not be composed of multiple segments in different states. We therefore define an admittedly arbitrary threshold for national unity requiring an ethnic segment to hold at least two thirds of its aggregate group's total territory or population (all three Polish segments in Figure 2 fall below that threshold and therefore receive a value of 0 on the unity dummy).¹³

(4) Coding lost home rule and lost unity. Indicators for lost home rule, lost unity, and lost united home rule for each segment-year *ect* can be derived by comparing values on the home rule and unity dummies in year t to the respective values in all potential golden age segments between 1100 and $t - 1$. We construct potential golden age segments by spatially intersecting the contemporaneous ethnic polygon of aggregate group e in year t with all country polygons between 1100 and $t - 1$. We further restrict the set of potential golden age segments to those that spatially overlap with segment *ect* to ensure the geographic plausibility of restorative claims. Going back to the Polish example, the potential golden age segment in Figure 2 comprises all Polish settlements in 1863 (grey) within the 1620 borders of the Commonwealth (red). This candidate segment overlaps with all three post-Partition segments (A,B,C) and thus serves as a valid historical reference point for all Polish segments in 1863.

We then assign home rule and unity dummies to all potential golden age segments in very much the same vein as for the post-1816 data described above and compare the maximum across all identified potential golden ages to the current value in *ect*. The powerless and divided Polish segments (A,B,C) in 1863 are affected by lost home rule and lost unity, as the 1620 golden age segment comprised more than 67% of the 1863 Polish settlement areas and we code the Polish as most plausible “ruling group” of the Commonwealth. We repeat this procedure for all segment-years *ect* and code an indicator for any kind of golden age loss (i.e. *Lost home rule or lost unity*) as well as mutually exclusive dummies for lost home rule only (Configuration I), lost unity only (Configuration II), and lost home rule and lost unity (Configuration III). These indicators serve as main independent variables in our analysis of ethnic civil wars.

For our analyses of interstate disputes and territorial claims, we slightly adapt the procedure to code lost home rule and lost unity. Since these analyses use country dyad-years as the unit of analyses, it is necessary to aggregate our ethnic segment data to this level. We do so by identifying

¹³In the Appendix, we show that our results remain robust to using alternative national unity thresholds (50% and 90% of the aggregate group). See Tables A10 and A11.

all dyad-years in which the politically dominant ethnic segment in country c_a (e.g. Romanian segment A in Figure 3) has a powerless kin segment in country c_b (Romanian segments B and C in Figure 3) and both of these segments spatially overlap with a potential golden age segment (i.e. all 1863 Romanian settlements within 1600 Wallachian/Romanian borders). The requirement that both the dominant and the powerless segment in year t have to overlap with the politically independent golden age segment in t_{ga} implies at least some division due to past border change. Therefore, we do not separately code lost unity, as lost home rule and lost unity go together. We repeat this procedure for all state-ruling ethnic segments in the post-1816 data to code lost golden ages at the level of directed country dyads. In our Romanian example, this variable is coded one for the Romanian-Habsburg and Romanian-Russian dyads in 1916 but zero for the reverse dyads (Habsburg-Romanian and Russian-Romanian). Our procedure does not identify any golden ages involving German or Russian minorities in Romania.¹⁴

Importantly, this operationalization does not rely on any essentialist claims that our candidate golden ages accurately reflect any kind of ethnic population distributions in the deep Middle Ages. We merely attempt to systematically capture the historical and geographic constellations that enable modern nationalists to more plausibly craft restorative narratives. The accuracy of our historical border data is obviously more important but even here, nationalists project modern notions of territoriality and neat demarcation lines onto geographically much fuzzier political units. The only assumption here is that the historical border data gets the rough contours and spheres of influence of pre-modern polities right.

(5) Conflict outcomes. This study features three distinct outcome variables to operationalize intrastate and interstate nationalist conflict:

- First, we code an ethnic civil war onset dummy at the ethnic segment-year level. For the post-1945 period, we use existing data from UCDP/PRIO (Gleditsch et al. 2002) and the ACD2EPR dataset (Wucherpfennig et al. 2012). We manually match the post-1945 EPR groups involved in conflict to their appropriate counterparts in our master list of European ethnicities described above. For the period 1816-1945, we identify all civil wars listed in the datasets provided by Gleditsch (2004) and Sarkees and Wayman (2010) that are fought in the name of a specific ethnic group. We rely on the same coding rules as the ACD2EPR dataset, requiring explicit ethnic claims and recruitment from a particular ethnic group.

¹⁴In the analyses of the undirected MID outcome described below, we further aggregate the lost golden age dummy to the undirected dyad level, taking the maximum value across the two relevant directed dyads.

- Second, the Dyadic Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID) dataset provided by Maoz et al. (2019) codes dispute onset at the level of undirected country-dyad years. We restrict the focus to territorial MIDs only, as these are most relevant for our theoretical mechanisms. Territorial MIDs are all cases that Maoz et al. (2019) code as involving at least one dyad member with revisionist goals pertaining to territory.
- Third, territorial claim onsets as coded by Frederick, Hensel, and Macaulay (2017) are defined in directed terms, as they involve country A claiming territory in country B. In a robustness exercise, we investigate irredentist territorial claims that target specific ethnic segments. To this end, we extend the original claims dataset and code, for each claim, whether it is ethnically motivated and targets an ethnic kin segment of country A's dominant group in country B.

Analyses and results

This section presents our main results. We first consider models at the level of ethnic segments with civil war as the dependent variable before turning to regression analyses of dyadic interstate disputes and territorial claims.

Ethnic civil war

Our first analysis investigates civil war onset at the ethnic segment-year levels. We restrict the sample to all non-dominant ethnic segment years between 1816 and 2017 as our ethnic conflict coding does not involve dominant ethnic groups rebelling against their ethnic peers in power. We present both logit models and OLS linear probability models (LPMs) with country and year fixed effects. All models control for relative segment size in country and aggregate group, a divided group dummy, as well as temporal controls for time since last conflict and calendar year. This minimum set of controls is intended to capture the effects of our lost golden age proxies conditional on contemporaneous values of division or foreign rule over large segments. In additional models, we extend the set of control variables and add absolute country and aggregate group size, country-level ethnic fractionalization, aggregate group-level territorial fractionalization, distance to capital, segment-specific civil war history, and time since last border change to account for likely sources of recent instability and conflict persistence that may confound our estimates.

Table 1: Civil War Onset in Ethnic Group Segments, 1816-2017

Dependent Variable: Model:	Ethnic civil war onset					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Logit	Logit	Logit	OLS	OLS	OLS
<i>Variables</i>						
Lost home rule or lost unity	1.375*** (0.2161)	1.313*** (0.1818)		0.0040** (0.0012)	0.0034*** (0.0009)	
Lost home rule only			1.322*** (0.1940)			0.0037* (0.0016)
Lost unity only			1.418** (0.5387)			0.0026* (0.0012)
Lost home rule & lost unity			1.805*** (0.4891)			0.0039** (0.0014)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
Year FE				Yes	Yes	Yes
State FE				Yes	Yes	Yes
Peace year FE				Yes	Yes	Yes
Border duration FE					Yes	Yes
Observations	39,834	39,834	39,834	39,834	39,834	39,834

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of Civil War Onsets. The unit of analysis is the ethnic segment year. Baseline controls: segment shares in country and aggregate group; split group dummy; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-3) or FE (Columns 4-6) of time since last conflict and calendar year. Extended controls: logged country and aggregate group size; ethnic fractionalization of country and aggregate group; logged distance to capital; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of segment-specific rebellions between 1816 and $t-1$); time since last border change (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on state and aggregate ethnic group in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

Table 1 presents our findings. In a test of Hypothesis 1, Models 1 and 4 show that ethnic segments that can claim *lost home rule* or *lost unity* are significantly more likely to rebel. Adding the extended set of controls only marginally reduces the size but not the significance of these estimates (Models 2 and 5). In substantive terms, the LPM coefficient from Column 5 implies that *lost home rule* or *lost unity* is associated with a 167% increase from the sample mean of ethnic rebellion (See Row 1 in 5 for a graphical illustration). Models 3 and 6 add the disaggregated indicators for lost golden ages that correspond to Configurations I, II and II respectively. All three variables enter with positive and statistically significant coefficients. These results lend support to Hypotheses 1a, 1b and 1c that lost home rule, lost unity, and the combination of lost home rule and lost unity all increase the risk of ethnic rebellion.

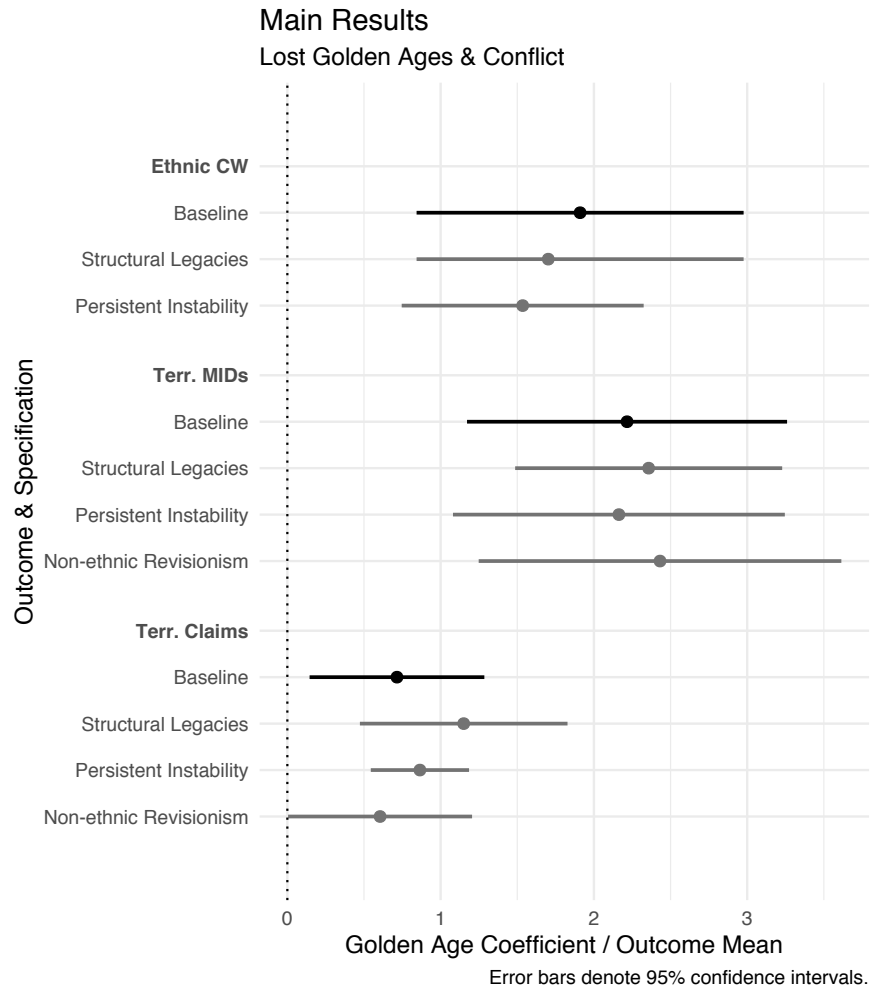


Figure 5: Overview of main results. All coefficients divided by the sample mean of the respective dependent variable

Territorial interstate disputes

Our first analysis of interstate conflict focuses on territorial MID onset encoded at the undirected country-dyad year. We restrict the sample to the theoretically most relevant subset of neighboring dyads, as irredentist territorial conflict mostly occurs between neighboring states. We again run both logit and fixed effects linear probability models that control for important baseline variables and temporal controls such as the maximum and minimum of country-level territorial fractionalization in the dyad and transborder ethnic links between state A and B operationalized as the maximum share of either of the dominant ethnic groups that is present as a kin segment in the other state.

Table 2: Territorial MID Onset in Undirected Neighboring Dyads, 1816-2009

Dependent Variable: Model:	Territorial MID onset			
	(1) Logit	(2) Logit	(3) OLS	(4) OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity	1.158* (0.5826)	0.9327* (0.4396)	0.0221*** (0.0044)	0.0244*** (0.0059)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State A FE			Yes	Yes
State B FE			Yes	Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	11,236	11,236	11,236	11,236

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial MID onsets. The unit of analysis is the undirected country dyad. Baseline controls: relative territorial size of bigger vs. smaller country; logged absolute size of smaller country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in other country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in own country; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last terr. MID and calendar year. Extended controls: maximum and minimum of logged aggregate group size across governing segments in A and B; maximum and minimum of ethnic fractionalization across countries A and B; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of dyad-specific territorial MIDs between 1816 and t-1); time since last border change in either A or B (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on dyad, state A and state B in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

The results are summarized in Table 2 and reveal positive and significant coefficients throughout. The *Lost home rule & lost unity* coefficient in the OLS specification with all controls (Column 4) amounts to a 221% increase in the risk of territorial MID outbreak from the sample mean of 1.10% (see also Row 4 in Figure 5). These findings confirm that lost unity combined with partially lost home rule within a country dyad makes dyadic conflict more likely (see Hypothesis 2).

Territorial claims

The second analysis of nationalist interstate conflict uses territorial claim onset as outcome variable. Irredentist territorial claims can be seen as a first step towards armed confrontation but may or may not escalate to the level of violent MIDs. The unit of analysis now is the directed country dyad-year, as we know the state that claims territory from its counterpart. We again restrict the focus to neighboring country dyads. The baseline and control variables are equivalent

Table 3: Territorial Claim Onset in Directed Neighboring Dyads, 1816-2001

Dependent Variable: Model:	Territorial claim onset			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Logit	Logit	OLS	OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity	0.6359*** (0.1030)	0.5566*** (0.1229)	0.0037* (0.0019)	0.0052* (0.0021)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State A FE			Yes	Yes
State B FE			Yes	Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	21,471	21,471	21,471	21,471

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial claim onsets. The unit of analysis is the directed country dyad year. Baseline controls: relative territorial size of state A vs. state B; logged absolute size of country B; Share of aggregate group governing in state A located in state B; Share share aggregate group governing in state A located in own country; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last territorial claim and calendar year. Extended controls: logged aggregate group size of governing segments in A and B; ethnic fractionalization of countries A and B; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of dyad-specific territorial claims between 1816 and $t-1$); time since last border change involving country A (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on dyad, state A and state B in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

to the MID analysis described above but we use their directed rather than undirected version wherever possible. All lost golden age variables in Table 3 are large, positive, and significant, again supporting H2. The substantive size of the lost golden age coefficient in Model 4 amounts to a 72% increase in the probability of territorial claim risk as compared to the average across neighboring dyad-years (Row 8 in Figure 5).

Taken together, these results provide strong support for all our hypotheses and show that historical reference points that can be portrayed as golden ages in urgent need of restoration make a clear difference for violent nationalist mobilization in both intrastate and interstate conflict.

Alternative explanations & Robustness

Without systematic data on nationalist claims and narratives, it is important to address alternative explanations that might account for the association between these past border config-

urations and conflict. There are three main challenges in this regard, which we discuss and empirically investigate in turn.

Structural legacies. A long history of statehood or unity may have endowed some ethnic groups with institutional legacies or social norms that facilitate political mobilization, including but not limited to conflict (e.g. Paine 2019; Michalopoulos and Papaioannou 2020). If this were the case, mobilization around very short-lived golden ages as it occurred in the Romanian example should be rare. Instead, we would expect the historically accumulated experience of home rule or unity to explain conflict. In additional specifications, we thus add two controls capturing the share of years between 1100 and $t-1$ with plausible statehood or unity. Our main results remain stable and significant suggesting that even short golden ages matter (see Figure 5 and Tables A1, A2, A3).

Persistent instability. Historical conflict may affect our golden age proxies through border change and at the same time cause recurring instability. Rather than identifying the violent effects of nationalist claims, we might just capture conflict persistence and regional clusters of instability. The analyses above partially address this issue by including war history, border duration, and country fixed effects but all of these terms rely on post-1816 data and may themselves be endogenous to earlier instability. We therefore add historically deeper conflict lags based on battle locations (1000-1800, Dincecco and Onorato 2018) and interstate conflict (1400-1790, Brecke 1999). The main findings remain unaltered (see Figure 5 and Tables A4, A5, A6).

Non-ethnic revisionism. Territorial conflict between states may entail attempts to recover lost territories for political, geostrategic, or military reasons that are unrelated to irredentism and the goal of national unity. To account for such ethnically colorblind revisionism, we identify all territories historically held by country A or B or any of their predecessor states and code the largest ever observed area that was once part of state A but is now located in state B (and vice versa). Controlling for this revisionism proxy in the MID and territorial claim specifications does not change our conclusions (see Figure 5 and Tables A7, A8).

Additional Robustness. We replicate all main specifications with population-based instead of purely territorial predictors. Lost unity, relative and absolute size controls, as well as fractionalization scores now rely on aggregated population rasters rather than mere area computations. As shown in Tables A9, A13, and A18, results remain very similar. We also investigate

whether pre-modern golden ages make a difference beyond the cases of Poland and Romania discussed above. Disaggregating the golden age proxy into its pre-1790 and post-1816 components reveals that both deep and more recently lost home rule or unity matter for civil and interstate conflict (see Tables [A12](#), [A16](#), and [A20](#)).

As for the MID results, we check whether our focus on territorial disputes within neighboring dyads is consequential. Results remain robust when using all European dyads (Table [A14](#)) or also including non-territorial MIDs in the outcome variable (Table [A15](#)). The territorial claim models yield somewhat weaker results when moving beyond neighboring dyads, but still show positive and largely significant coefficients.

While consistent with our predictions, the interstate conflict specifications so far do not pin down whether the dyadic MIDs or territorial claims are in fact about the specific ethnic kin segments informing our golden age proxies. In a complementary analysis, we therefore use our ethnic coding of territorial claims to analyze territorial claim onset at the level of targeted ethnic segment years. Territorial claim onset is coded one for each segment year in which ethnic segment *ect* is claimed by a co-ethnic kin state. The logit and LPM specifications presented in Table [A17](#) are equivalent to the civil war models presented above and reveal that the cross-border proxy of partially lost home rule and lost unity is associated with a significantly higher risk of territorial claims coded at the level of targeted ethnic segments.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have taken ethnic nationalists at their word, not because we believe that their claims always correspond to the truth, but because they have momentous consequences. These consequences include both internal and external conflict in Europe since the early 19th century. In fact, a good case can be made that the nationalist narratives analyzed here contributed importantly to both world wars since they destabilized European state borders, especially those of Germany (see e.g. Cattaruzza and Langewiesche 2013).

What do our findings imply theoretically? While being in line with constructivist and modernist interpretations of European nationalism, the results cast doubt on the most radical modernist accounts that dismiss pre-modern history as irrelevant. Clearly, far from everything was made up in the nationalists' backward-projected narratives building on legacies that were often much less innocent than Gellner's metaphorical "nations-as-navels." Referring to the famous metaphor, Bayly (2004, 219) argues that "this does not mean that 'navels' were unim-

portant where they did exist. ... Navels have unintended, unexpected, and sometimes deep consequences” (see also Roshwald 2015, 328).

Although myth-busting may be intellectually satisfying, scholarship on nationalism needs to pay more attention to the actual impact of nationalist narratives and how nationalists made, and still are making, use of history. By dismissing nationalist narratives as almost entirely fictitious and irrelevant, conventional modernists exaggerate the extent to which the modern world constitutes a total break with the past. This tendency is also present in developmental theories that relegate empires to the dustbin of history once they have been irreversibly superseded by modern nation-states (see e.g. Wimmer and Min 2006). This perspective is seriously mistaken, however, because imperial legacies are alive and well in the argumentation of contemporary nationalists. In principle, empires could reemerge, as reflected by foreign policy ideologies in Russia (Motyl 1999; Beissinger 2005). Even more importantly, it is questionable whether modern multi-ethnic states differ sufficiently from empires to write off imperial rule as an anachronism, at least to the extent that these states try to enforce non-consensual rule as do Moscow and Madrid, and, increasingly, Westminster in its relations with Scotland and the other remainders of its empire (Martin 2021).

Contradicting these narrowly modernist interpretations, this study does find that specific, sometimes even pre-modern, historical legacies are associated with conflict in modern Europe. Yet, these insights by no means contradict constructivist principles per se. In fact, some anti-modernist arguments run the danger of overemphasizing the continuity of pre-modern ethnic cores, arguing that they constitute prerequisites underpinning all modern nations (Smith 1986). The nationalists’ backward projection of ethnic identities often involve self-serving and anachronistic distortions overstating the extent to which Medieval populations could be said to be straightforwardly identified as their ancestors (Geary 2002). Moreover, their claims typically exaggerate the extent to which these populations possessed political consciousness along ethnic lines (see e.g. Breuilly 1996). As we have argued, however, the impact of nationalism does not require far-reaching assumptions of developmental progression from early stages of history to today’s world. All that is needed is that the claims of prior statehood and unity are associated with a modicum of plausibility.

Thanks to their allergy against the abstract and sweeping theorizing of social scientists, a new generation of historians has steered clear from both excessive modernism and historical determinism. This recent wave of historical scholarship stresses the contemporary relevance of historical legacies, especially the intimate relationship between nationalism and imperialism (see e.g. Geiss 2007; Osterhammel 2014; Berger and Alexei 2015; Kumar 2017). Yet, while providing

an excellent overview of how nationalism and imperialism interact based on numerous suggestive examples of historical long-term dependencies, this historical literature has so far been limited to qualitative accounts without attempting to engage in systematic impact assessment.

The current paper tries to fill this gap by following the lead of recent social-science research that uses systematic geocoded data to examine long-term legacies. By taking nationalists' argumentation seriously, our study also shifts the attention from what they say and think to what they actually do and what consequences their words and deeds have. In this sense, we have followed the pioneering work of Beissinger (1998), who stresses the need to consider nationalisms that “bite”, not only those that “bark.” Indeed, there are few consequences that are more “biting” than warfare, but populist nationalism also poses a major threat to democracy and the rule of law. Fortunately, innovative research on how restorative nationalism affects voting patterns has started to emerge (see e.g. Ding and Hlavac 2017).

Of course, it is difficult to speculate about what repercussions restorative nationalism may have in the future. Nevertheless, it can be hoped that systematic and detailed research of nationalist claims will help us develop a better understanding of the link between nationalism and political violence. With Chinese nationalism becoming more assertive, restorative narratives with respect to Taiwan increase the risk of interstate conflict. Post-Brexit English nationalism has the potential of rekindling the flames of the Northern Irish “troubles.” Furthermore, it would be a mistake to believe that in the Balkans, the nationalist genie has been put back into the bottle.¹⁵ A better understanding of the backward-looking and nostalgic nature of restorative nationalism will help analysts and policy makers better prepare to meet the geopolitical challenges of the future.

¹⁵In 2020, Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic called for the creation of a “Serbian empire” in order to revive Dusan’s Medieval empire, see <https://www.mod.gov.rs/eng/16537/ministar-vulin-srbi-moraju-da-postanu-jedinstven-politicki-narod-16537>.

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Supplementary Materials (Online)

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A1 More Data Description

TO BE COMPLETED.

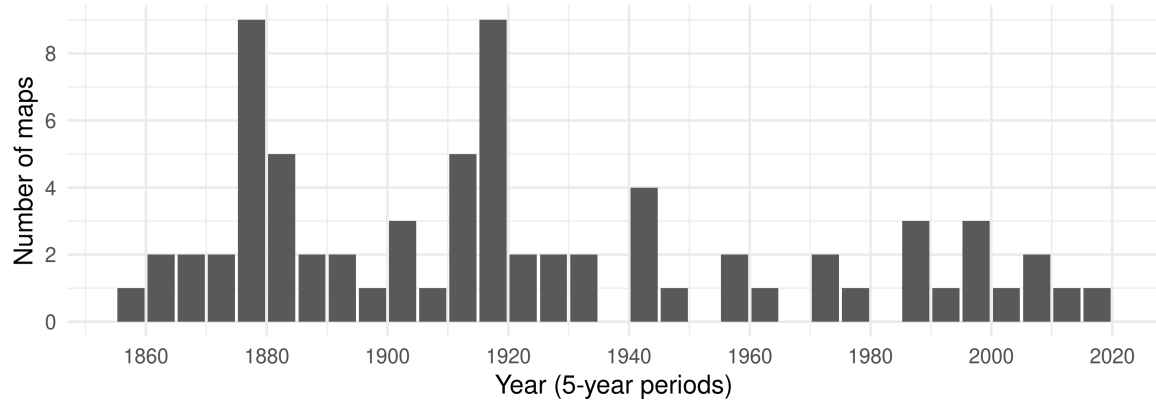


Figure A1: All 73 HEG ethnic maps by publication date

A2 Addressing Alternative Explanations

A2.1 Structural Legacies

Table A1: Civil War Onset: Structural legacies?

Dependent Variable: Model:	Ethnic civil war onset			
	(1) Logit	(2) Logit	(3) OLS	(4) OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule or lost unity	1.517*** (0.1893)	1.205*** (0.1754)	0.0037*** (0.0010)	0.0031*** (0.0008)
Mean home rule (1100 to $t - 1$)	-1.039* (0.5287)	-0.1064 (0.3872)	0.0001 (0.0015)	-0.0003 (0.0009)
Mean unity (1100 to $t - 1$)	1.320+ (0.7735)	1.611+ (0.8367)	0.0003 (0.0010)	0.0009 (0.0010)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
State FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	35,659	35,659	35,659	35,659

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of Civil War Onsets. The unit of analysis is the ethnic segment year. Baseline controls: segment shares in country and aggregate group; split group dummy; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last conflict and calendar year. Extended controls: logged country and aggregate group size; ethnic fractionalization of country and aggregate group; logged distance to capital; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of segment-specific rebellions between 1816 and $t-1$); time since last border change (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on state and aggregate ethnic group in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

Table A2: Territorial MID Onset: Structural Legacies?

Dependent Variable: Model:	Territorial MID onset			
	(1) Logit	(2) Logit	(3) OLS	(4) OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity	1.108 ⁺ (0.5895)	0.8724 ⁺ (0.4496)	0.0221*** (0.0044)	0.0259*** (0.0049)
Mean united home rule (1100 to $t - 1$)	0.4619** (0.1516)	0.5976 (0.3963)	-0.0007 (0.0075)	-0.0007 (0.0076)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State A FE			Yes	Yes
State B FE			Yes	Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	10,046	10,046	10,046	10,046

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial MID onsets. The unit of analysis is the undirected country dyad. Baseline controls: relative territorial size of bigger vs. smaller country; logged absolute size of smaller country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in other country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in own country; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last terr. MID and calendar year. Extended controls: maximum and minimum of logged aggregate group size across governing segments in A and B; maximum and minimum of ethnic fractionalization across countries A and B; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of dyad-specific territorial MIDs between 1816 and $t-1$); time since last border change in either A or B (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on dyad, state A and state B in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

Table A3: Territorial Claim Onset: Structural Legacies?

Dependent Variable: Model:	Territorial claim onset			
	(1) Logit	(2) Logit	(3) OLS	(4) OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity	0.7089*** (0.1577)	0.4970* (0.1937)	0.0080** (0.0025)	0.0084** (0.0025)
Mean united home rule (1100 to $t - 1$)	-0.0283 (0.2996)	0.2540 (0.2840)	-0.0045* (0.0019)	-0.0039 (0.0026)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State A FE			Yes	Yes
State B FE			Yes	Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	18,083	18,083	18,083	18,083

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial claim onsets. The unit of analysis is the directed country dyad year. Baseline controls: relative territorial size of state A vs. state B; logged absolute size of country B; Share of aggregate group governing in state A located in state B; Share share aggregate group governing in state A located in own country; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last territorial claim and calendar year. Extended controls: logged aggregate group size of governing segments in A and B; ethnic fractionalization of countries A and B; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of dyad-specific territorial claims between 1816 and $t-1$); time since last border change involving country A (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on dyad, state A and state B in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

A2.2 Persistent Instability

Table A4: Civil War Onset: Persistent instability?

Dependent Variable:	Ethnic civil war onset			
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Logit	Logit	OLS	OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule or lost unity	1.359*** (0.2291)	1.304*** (0.1735)	0.0036** (0.0010)	0.0031*** (0.0008)
No. battles (1000-1800, log)	0.0244 (0.1181)	0.0275 (0.1081)	0.0015 (0.0010)	0.0012 (0.0010)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
State FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	39,834	39,834	39,834	39,834

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of Civil War Onsets. The unit of analysis is the ethnic segment year. Baseline controls: segment shares in country and aggregate group; split group dummy; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last conflict and calendar year. Extended controls: logged country and aggregate group size; ethnic fractionalization of country and aggregate group; logged distance to capital; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of segment-specific rebellions between 1816 and t-1); time since last border change (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on state and aggregate ethnic group in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

Table A5: Territorial MID Onset: Persistent Instability?

Dependent Variable: Model:	Territorial MID onset			
	(1) Logit	(2) Logit	(3) OLS	(4) OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity	1.101 ⁺ (0.5689)	0.9052* (0.4457)	0.0209*** (0.0041)	0.0238*** (0.0061)
No. Wars (1400-1790, log)	-0.2047** (0.0785)	-0.1878 (0.1366)	-0.0026 (0.0025)	-0.0014 (0.0039)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State A FE			Yes	Yes
State B FE			Yes	Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	11,236	11,236	11,236	11,236

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial MID onsets. The unit of analysis is the undirected country dyad. Baseline controls: relative territorial size of bigger vs. smaller country; logged absolute size of smaller country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in other country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in own country; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last terr. MID and calendar year. Extended controls: maximum and minimum of logged aggregate group size across governing segments in A and B; maximum and minimum of ethnic fractionalization across countries A and B; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of dyad-specific territorial MIDs between 1816 and t-1); time since last border change in either A or B (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on dyad, state A and state B in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

Table A6: Territorial Claim Onset: Persistent Instability?

Dependent Variable: Model:	Territorial claim onset			
	(1) Logit	(2) Logit	(3) OLS	(4) OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity	0.6312*** (0.1179)	0.5686*** (0.1265)	0.0047* (0.0019)	0.0063** (0.0021)
No. Wars (1400-1790, log	0.0783 (0.0507)	0.1164 (0.0959)	0.0028+ (0.0016)	0.0028 (0.0017)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State A FE			Yes	Yes
State B FE			Yes	Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE			Yes	Yes
Observations	21,471	21,471	21,471	21,471

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial claim onsets. The unit of analysis is the directed country dyad year. Baseline controls: relative territorial size of state A vs. state B; logged absolute size of country B; Share of aggregate group governing in state A located in state B; Share share aggregate group governing in state A located in own country; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last territorial claim and calendar year. Extended controls: logged aggregate group size of governing segments in A and B; ethnic fractionalization of countries A and B; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of dyad-specific territorial claims between 1816 and $t-1$); time since last border change involving country A (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on dyad, state A and state B in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

A2.3 Territorial Revisionism

Table A7: Territorial MID Onset: Non-ethnic revisionism?

Dependent Variable: Model:	Territorial MID onset			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Logit	Logit	OLS	OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity	1.141* (0.5651)	0.9267* (0.4388)	0.0240*** (0.0050)	0.0267*** (0.0066)
Former terr. in other (max.)	0.0735 (0.1220)	0.0123 (0.0853)	0.0016+ (0.0009)	0.0019+ (0.0010)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State A FE			Yes	Yes
State B FE			Yes	Yes
Year	FE		Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	11,236	11,236	11,236	11,236

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial MID onsets. The unit of analysis is the undirected country dyad. Baseline controls: relative territorial size of bigger vs. smaller country; logged absolute size of smaller country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in other country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in own country; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last terr. MID and calendar year. Extended controls: maximum and minimum of logged aggregate group size across governing segments in A and B; maximum and minimum of ethnic fractionalization across countries A and B; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of dyad-specific territorial MIDs between 1816 and t-1); time since last border change in either A or B (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on dyad, state A and state B in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

Table A8: Territorial Claim Onset: Non-ethnic revisionism?

Dependent Variable: Model:	Territorial claim onset			
	(1) Logit	(2) Logit	(3) OLS	(4) OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity	0.5127*** (0.1348)	0.4240** (0.1547)	0.0029 (0.0021)	0.0044+ (0.0022)
Former terr. of A in B	0.0795* (0.0368)	0.0725* (0.0333)	0.0007+ (0.0004)	0.0008 (0.0005)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State A FE			Yes	Yes
State B FE			Yes	Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	21,471	21,471	21,471	21,471

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial claim onsets. The unit of analysis is the directed country dyad year. Baseline controls: relative territorial size of state A vs. state B; logged absolute size of country B; Share of aggregate group governing in state A located in state B; Share share aggregate group governing in state A located in own country; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last territorial claim and calendar year. Extended controls: logged aggregate group size of governing segments in A and B; ethnic fractionalization of countries A and B; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of dyad-specific territorial claims between 1816 and $t-1$); time since last border change involving country A (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on dyad, state A and state B in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

A3 Additional Robustness Checks

A3.1 Civil War

Table A9: Civil War Onset: Population-based variables.

Dependent Variable: Model:	Ethnic civil war onset					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Logit	Logit	Logit	OLS	OLS	OLS
<i>Variables</i>						
Lost home rule or lost unity	1.324*** (0.2142)	1.252*** (0.1267)		0.0039** (0.0013)	0.0034** (0.0011)	
Lost home rule only			1.252*** (0.1500)			0.0042* (0.0018)
Lost unity only			1.398** (0.4254)			0.0021* (0.0010)
Lost home rule & lost unity			1.581*** (0.4218)			0.0032** (0.0010)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
Year FE				Yes	Yes	Yes
State FE				Yes	Yes	Yes
Peace year FE				Yes	Yes	Yes
Border duration FE					Yes	Yes
Observations	39,834	39,834	39,834	39,834	39,834	39,834

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of Civil War Onsets. The unit of analysis is the ethnic segment year. Baseline controls: segment-level population shares in country and aggregate group; split group dummy; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-3) or FE (Columns 4-6) of time since last conflict and calendar year. Extended controls: logged country and aggregate group population; ethnic fractionalization of country and aggregate group; logged distance to capital; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of segment-specific rebellions between 1816 and $t-1$); time since last border change (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on state and aggregate ethnic group in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

Table A10: Civil War Onset: Unity Threshold at 50%

Dependent Variable:	Ethnic civil war onset			
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Logit	Logit	OLS	OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule only	1.145*** (0.2481)	1.119*** (0.2006)	0.0043* (0.0016)	0.0037** (0.0013)
Lost unity only	1.005 (0.7632)	1.363* (0.6228)	0.0017+ (0.0009)	0.0015 (0.0011)
Lost home rule & lost unity	1.519 (1.079)	1.834*** (0.5175)	0.0033* (0.0015)	0.0030* (0.0013)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
State FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	39,834	39,834	39,834	39,834

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of Civil War Onsets. The unit of analysis is the ethnic segment year. Baseline controls: segment shares in country and aggregate group; split group dummy; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last conflict and calendar year. Extended controls: logged country and aggregate group size; ethnic fractionalization of country and aggregate group; logged distance to capital; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of segment-specific rebellions between 1816 and t-1); time since last border change (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on state and aggregate ethnic group in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

Table A11: Civil War Onset: Unity Threshold at 90%

Dependent Variable: Model:	Ethnic civil war onset			
	(1) Logit	(2) Logit	(3) OLS	(4) OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule only	0.9201*** (0.1401)	1.000*** (0.1635)	0.0031* (0.0014)	0.0026* (0.0012)
Lost unity only	1.144+ (0.6543)	0.7694 (0.6033)	0.0017+ (0.0009)	0.0015* (0.0007)
Lost home rule & lost unity	2.347*** (0.2901)	1.734** (0.6113)	0.0041*** (0.0011)	0.0037*** (0.0010)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
State FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	39,834	39,834	39,834	39,834

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of Civil War Onsets. The unit of analysis is the ethnic segment year. Baseline controls: segment shares in country and aggregate group; split group dummy; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last conflict and calendar year. Extended controls: logged country and aggregate group size; ethnic fractionalization of country and aggregate group; logged distance to capital; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of segment-specific rebellions between 1816 and t-1); time since last border change (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on state and aggregate ethnic group in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

Table A12: Civil War Onset: Recent vs. older golden ages

Dependent Variable:	Ethnic civil war onset			
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Logit	Logit	OLS	OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost golden age (post-1816)	2.154*** (0.2321)	1.893*** (0.2601)	0.0048*** (0.0013)	0.0041** (0.0012)
Lost golden age (pre-1816)	1.109*** (0.3096)	1.037*** (0.2358)	0.0033+ (0.0017)	0.0029* (0.0014)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
State FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	39,662	39,662	39,662	39,662

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of Civil War Onsets. The unit of analysis is the ethnic segment year. Baseline controls: segment shares in country and aggregate group; split group dummy; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last conflict and calendar year. Extended controls: logged country and aggregate group size; ethnic fractionalization of country and aggregate group; logged distance to capital; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of segment-specific rebellions between 1816 and t-1); time since last border change (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on state and aggregate ethnic group in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

A3.2 MIDs

Table A13: Territorial MID Onset, population-based variables

Dependent Variable: Model:	Territorial MID onset			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Logit	Logit	OLS	OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity	0.9345* (0.4293)	1.212*** (0.3611)	0.0231*** (0.0041)	0.0249*** (0.0051)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State A FE			Yes	Yes
State B FE			Yes	Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	11,236	11,236	11,236	11,236

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial MID onsets. The unit of analysis is the undirected country dyad. Baseline controls: relative territorial size of bigger vs. smaller country; logged absolute size of smaller country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in other country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in own country; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last terr. MID and calendar year. Extended controls: maximum and minimum of logged aggregate group size across governing segments in A and B; maximum and minimum of ethnic fractionalization across countries A and B; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of dyad-specific territorial MIDs between 1816 and t-1); time since last border change in either A or B (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on dyad, state A and state B in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

Table A14: Territorial MID Onset: All dyads, 1816-2009

Dependent Variable:	Territorial MID onset			
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Logit	Logit	OLS	OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity	0.8967*** (0.2341)	0.8382*** (0.1363)	0.0022* (0.0010)	0.0022** (0.0008)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State A FE			Yes	Yes
State B FE			Yes	Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	97,198	97,198	97,198	97,198

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial MID onsets. The unit of analysis is the undirected country dyad. Baseline controls: Neighboring dyad dummy, logged minimum distance between state A and state B, relative territorial size of bigger vs. smaller country; logged absolute size of smaller country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in other country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in own country; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last terr. MID and calendar year. Extended controls: maximum and minimum of logged aggregate group size across governing segments in A and B; maximum and minimum of ethnic fractionalization across countries A and B; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of dyad-specific territorial MIDs between 1816 and t-1); time since last border change in either A or B (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on dyad, state A and state B in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

Table A15: MID Onset in Undirected Neighboring Dyads, 1816-2009

Dependent Variable:	mid_onset_do_gap			
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Logit	Logit	OLS	OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity	0.5046* (0.1970)	0.5037*** (0.1451)	0.0438*** (0.0090)	0.0462*** (0.0105)
<i>Fixed-effects</i>				
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State A			Yes	Yes
State B			Yes	Yes
Year			Yes	Yes
time_since_mid			Yes	Yes
Border duration				Yes
<i>Fit statistics</i>				
Observations	11,102	11,102	11,102	11,102

Clustered (dyad_id_cow_undirected & State A & State B) standard-errors in parentheses
*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1*

Notes:

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial MID onsets. The unit of analysis is the undirected country dyad. Baseline controls: relative territorial size of bigger vs. smaller country; logged absolute size of smaller country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in other country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in own country; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last MID and calendar year. Extended controls: maximum and minimum of logged aggregate group size across governing segments in A and B; maximum and minimum of ethnic fractionalization across countries A and B; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of dyad-specific territorial MIDs between 1816 and t-1); time since last border change in either A or B (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on dyad, state A and state B in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

Table A16: Territorial MID Onset: Recent vs. older golden ages?

Dependent Variable: Model:	Territorial MID onset			
	(1) Logit	(2) Logit	(3) OLS	(4) OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity (post-1816)	1.102 (0.6715)	0.7208 (0.5454)	0.0186*** (0.0051)	0.0208** (0.0063)
Lost home rule & lost unity (pre-1816)	1.322* (0.5309)	1.352** (0.4358)	0.0291*** (0.0047)	0.0312*** (0.0064)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State A FE			Yes	Yes
State B FE			Yes	Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	11,236	11,236	11,236	11,236

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial MID onsets. The unit of analysis is the undirected country dyad. Baseline controls: relative territorial size of bigger vs. smaller country; logged absolute size of smaller country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in other country; maximum and minimum share of governing ethnic segment's aggregate group located in own country; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last terr. MID and calendar year. Extended controls: maximum and minimum of logged aggregate group size across governing segments in A and B; maximum and minimum of ethnic fractionalization across countries A and B; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of dyad-specific territorial MIDs between 1816 and t-1); time since last border change in either A or B (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on dyad, state A and state B in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

A3.3 Territorial Claims

Table A17: Territorial Claim Onset in Ethnic Group Segments, 1816-2001

Dependent Variable: Model:	Ethnic Territorial Claim			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Logit	Logit	OLS	OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity	1.825*** (0.5375)	1.516** (0.4666)	0.0071** (0.0021)	0.0062*** (0.0016)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State FE			Yes	Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	39,562	39,562	39,562	39,562

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial claim onsets. The unit of analysis is the ethnic segment year. Baseline controls: segment shares in country and aggregate group; split group dummy; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-3) or FE (Columns 4-6) of time since last conflict and calendar year. Extended controls: logged country and aggregate group size; ethnic fractionalization of country and aggregate group; logged distance to capital; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of segment-specific territorial claims between 1816 and $t-1$); time since last border change (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on state and aggregate ethnic group in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

Table A18: Territorial Claim Onset, Population-based Variables

Dependent Variable: Model:	Territorial claim onset			
	(1) Logit	(2) Logit	(3) OLS	(4) OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity	0.5805*** (0.1175)	0.5771*** (0.1470)	0.0038* (0.0018)	0.0054* (0.0021)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State A FE			Yes	Yes
State B FE			Yes	Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	21,471	21,471	21,471	21,471

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial claim onsets. The unit of analysis is the directed country dyad year. Baseline controls: relative population size of state A vs. state B; logged absolute population of country B; Share of aggregate group governing in state A located in state B; Share of aggregate group governing in state A located in own country; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last territorial claim and calendar year. Extended controls: logged aggregate group population of governing segments in A and B; ethnic fractionalization of countries A and B; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of dyad-specific territorial claims between 1816 and t-1); time since last border change involving country A (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on dyad, state A and state B in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

Table A19: Territorial Claim Onset, All Dyads

Dependent Variable:	Territorial claim onset			
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Logit	Logit	OLS	OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity	0.5683** (0.1940)	0.3888 (0.2430)	0.0020* (0.0010)	0.0017+ (0.0009)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State A FE			Yes	Yes
State B FE			Yes	Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	191,989	191,989	191,989	191,989

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial claim onsets. The unit of analysis is the directed country dyad year. Baseline controls: Neighboring dyad dummy; logged minimum distance between state A and state B; relative territorial size of state A vs. state B; logged absolute size of country B; Share of aggregate group governing in state A located in state B; Share share aggregate group governing in state A located in own country; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last territorial claim and calendar year. Extended controls: logged aggregate group size of governing segments in A and B; ethnic fractionalization of countries A and B; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of dyad-specific territorial claims between 1816 and t-1); time since last border change involving country A (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on dyad, state A and state B in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1

Table A20: Territorial Claim Onset: Recent vs. Older Golden Ages

Dependent Variable: Model:	Territorial claim onset			
	(1) Logit	(2) Logit	(3) OLS	(4) OLS
<i>Variables</i>				
Lost home rule & lost unity (post-1816)	0.5989*** (0.1495)	0.4570*** (0.1347)	0.0025 (0.0021)	0.0044* (0.0021)
Lost home rule & lost unity (pre-1816)	0.7079*** (0.1715)	0.7405*** (0.2155)	0.0066+ (0.0034)	0.0070+ (0.0037)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Extended controls		Yes		Yes
State A FE			Yes	Yes
State B FE			Yes	Yes
Year FE			Yes	Yes
Peace year FE			Yes	Yes
Border duration FE				Yes
Observations	21,471	21,471	21,471	21,471

Notes: Logit and OLS estimates of territorial claim onsets. The unit of analysis is the directed country dyad year. Baseline controls: relative territorial size of state A vs. state B; logged absolute size of country B; Share of aggregate group governing in state A located in state B; Share share aggregate group governing in state A located in own country; cubic polynomials (Columns 1-2) or FE (Columns 3-4) of time since last territorial claim and calendar year. Extended controls: logged aggregate group size of governing segments in A and B; ethnic fractionalization of countries A and B; war history (logged count of 1 plus the number of dyad-specific territorial claims between 1816 and $t-1$); time since last border change involving country A (cubic polynomial or FE). Standard errors clustered on dyad, state A and state B in parentheses. Significance codes: ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1