Targeting Civilians in Ethno-Territorial Wars: Power- and Preference-Based Sources of Ethnic Cleansing and Mass Killing Strategies

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In internal ethno-territorial conflicts, what explains why state or rebel group leadership uses civilian-targeting strategies—expulsion or mass killing strategies designed to punish enemy civilians or to decimate the enemy civilian presence on contested territory? One argument is that those living under the worst initial conditions—defined in terms of collective goods such as weak collective autonomy, policy outcomes, and material conditions—are most likely to target enemy group civilians. Another approach focuses on relative power—arguing that the enemy civilian population is targeted either because of weaker or stronger relative power. A third approach argues that differences in leadership preferences—in particular, more ideologically extreme or power-seeking preferences—are likely to drive direct assaults on enemy civilians. We examine these proposed mechanisms in terms of expected effects on benefits and costs in a simple ethno-territorial bargaining framework. We argue that relative power advantages and more extreme nationalist preferences seem most likely to predict decisions to target enemy civilian populations. We expect strongly power-seeking preferences to lead to civilian targeting more conditionally—where there is a greater internal political threat along with either greater relative power or a more moderate enemy. Last, we do not expect that variation in initial conditions will have a significant direct effect. We apply the framework to explain patterns of civilian targeting following the collapse of Yugoslavia in 1991.

[Supplementary material is available for this article. Go to the publisher’s online edition of Studies in Conflict & Terrorism for the following free supplemental resource: online appendix.]
In typical internal ethno-territorial wars, a state leadership associated with a dominant ethnic group fights elements of a minority ethnic group for control over territory that both claim as all or part of their homeland. In such wars, what factors explain whether each side is more or less likely to target enemy-group civilians? If enemy-group civilians are targeted, what explains which methods are more likely to be used, and which side is more likely to use them first?

Internal ethno-territorial wars typically involve both conventional and guerrilla warfare. In conventional warfare, large military formations fight along frontlines to control contested territory. In guerrilla warfare, small fighting units avoid direct clashes with enemy conventional forces, and use mobility and local knowledge to target enemy forces, resources, and administration where they are weakest, typically behind their frontlines. Neither conventional nor guerrilla warfare necessarily involves the intentional targeting of enemy civilians. There are two main ways in which enemy civilians may be targeted in internal ethno-territorial wars. One is mass killings, in which significant numbers of enemy civilians are killed intentionally. Another is often called “ethnic cleansing,” in which significant numbers of enemy civilians are forcibly expelled from contested territory. Here we use the term “expulsions,” because expulsions need not involve significant killings, while the term “ethnic cleansing” is sometimes used to describe simultaneous use of mass killings and expulsions. There are also scale differences in the extent to which killings or expulsions are used against the enemy population. We use the terms “harassment” or “suppression” to refer to consistent local use of killings or expulsions, which does not rise to the level of causing significant demographic change to the enemy population settled on contested territory. We use the old Roman term “decimation” to refer to killings or expulsions that are designed to cause significant demographic change—which we somewhat arbitrarily demarcate at ten percent or more of the enemy population on contested territory.

This article attempts to explain variation in civilian targeting in a number of distinctive ways. First, we assume that state and ethnic group leaders make a strategic choice to target enemy civilians. Civilians are often targeted spontaneously by individual combatants or by semi-independent field commanders or militia leaders. But, in large-scale conflicts, this is unlikely to determine the overall strategy and pattern of targeting civilians unless it is acceptable to state or ethnic group leaders. Second, if civilian targeting strategies are chosen by comparing benefits against costs, it is important to take account of all major expected benefits and costs. Thus, we seek to synthesize the approaches of many studies that have focused on one or a small number of benefits or costs of civilian targeting.

Next, we focus on civilian targeting as a strategy chosen to achieve goals in a particular type of war—internal ethno-territorial war. Different types of wars involve different war aims, and are fought under different conditions. It seems likely that particular war strategies, including the targeting of enemy civilians, will tend to deliver different benefits and costs in different types of wars. Therefore, factors influencing civilian targeting may have varying explanatory power in different types of wars or conflicts. Similarly, looking at specific conflict-types makes it easier to explain levels of mass killings and expulsions as strategies that are chosen jointly to achieve various objectives. Note, for example, that mass killings may be constrained to the extent that expulsions can be used as a substitute to achieve the same objectives.

We use a standard conflict bargaining framework, which we adapt to incorporate benefits and costs of civilian targeting in ethno-territorial wars. The three main variables in conflict bargaining frameworks are status quo conditions, relative military power, and leadership preferences. We assume that war has resulted from bargaining in an ethno-territorial conflict, and we itemize four main benefits and two main costs of civilian targeting.
in such a war. We then generate hypotheses about how variation in status quo conditions, relative power, and leadership preferences is likely to affect decisions to target civilians. We illustrate the theories and hypotheses by examining causal process evidence in three wars that followed the 1991 break-up of Yugoslavia.

**Theory: Benefits and Costs of Targeting Civilians in Ethno-Territorial Wars**

In a standard bargaining theory of war onset, it is assumed that two players struggle for control over disputed goods. Either player may choose to deviate from the status quo to start a crisis; if the crisis cannot be ended with a mutually agreed bargain, then more intense conflict (war) results. Three variables determine whether the outcome is no deviation from the status quo, a mutually agreed bargain to move to a new status quo, or war. First, relative power determines the expected outcome of war—more precisely, the probability that each side will win or lose all of the disputed goods—and also the costs each side incurs in starting a crisis and in fighting a war. Second, the status quo is the initial distribution of disputed goods, which determines how much the war outcomes—and any mutually agreed bargain that avoids war—are expected to change the distribution for better or worse. Third, preferences determine, for intrinsic nationalists, how much the status quo is valued relative to the expected changes in the status quo and the costs due to crisis and war; and, for power-seeking leaders, how much the expected political consequences of crisis and war are valued relative to the political status quo under peace.

It can be shown formally that a peaceful status quo will give way to crisis and then war under the following conditions: 1). if one side benefits from sufficiently large changes in the balance of power, and cannot credibly commit not to use this new power advantage to extract the maximum benefit from the other side; 2). if either side sees sufficiently large shifts toward more extreme nationalist leadership preferences, that is, preferences that disproportionately value ideal outcomes potentially obtainable through war relative to the status quo or the less ideal outcome obtainable through a mutually agreed bargain; 3). and if either side has sufficiently power-seeking leadership preferences where there are political benefits to crisis and war that exceed those of either the status quo or a crisis-induced, mutually agreed bargain.

Assuming that an ethno-territorial conflict is underway, we identify at least four potentially significant benefits and two potentially significant costs of civilian-targeting strategies. For each benefit or cost, we discuss how the incentive might be affected by variation in relative power or in leadership preferences. The different benefits and costs are then aggregated to generate hypotheses about how variation in relative power and in leadership preferences would be expected to affect decisions to target civilians. We then note that, in contrast, variation in initial conditions would not be expected to have a direct effect on decisions to target civilians.

**Benefit 1: Higher Outcome Benefits (Particularly Through Decimation)**

If done on a large enough scale, expelling or killing civilians of the enemy group on contested territory may make it more likely that the attacking group will win the war and gain a more exclusive and more secure future claim to the territory settled by those expelled or killed. How are such gains affected by variation in relative power or leadership preferences? The outcome gains are likely to be larger for the side having greater relative power, because such greater power will allow the strategy to be used more decisively and imposed over a larger share of contested territory. The upside outcome gains of
greater long-term territorial control are expected to be more highly valued by more extreme nationalist leaders, who place greater value upon progress toward the ideal goal of exclusive control over all contested territory than do either more moderate nationalists or strongly power-seeking leaders.

**Benefit 2: Lower Conflict Costs (Through Harassment/Suppression or Decimation)**

Targeting civilians on contested territory may reduce the enemy capacity to impose war costs. Both expulsions and killings may reduce the enemy capacity to conduct low-intensity warfare behind front lines, by targeting some civilian supporters and by deterring others from providing support. Killings also may reduce any resulting increase of enemy manpower available for front-line fighting. With greater relative power, such reductions in conflict costs are likely to be greater. This is because more contested territory will be held behind front lines, and because any resulting increase in enemy manpower for front-line fighting is less likely to matter. Such reduced conflict costs are likely to be valued more by moderate nationalists than by extreme nationalists or strongly power-seeking leaders.

**Benefit 3: Internal Political Polarization Benefits (Through Harassment/Suppression or Decimation)**

Targeting of enemy civilians may be a part of a larger political process, in which the enemy group is demonized as a way of imposing more exclusive political control and ideological uniformity in own-group politics. The intensified inter-group violence is used to justify an us-versus-them choice in intra-group politics, in which political rivals or opposition groups can be more easily attacked as de facto allies of the enemy. Such a strategy may be motivated by either power-seeking or ideological radicalism. Greater political control may be desirable for its own sake. It can also be used to destroy the potential for inter-group coexistence and normalcy, commit to more radical goals, and make compromise more difficult. In addition, it may make it easier to impose other power-seeking strategies—such as more corrupt patron–client arrangements—or more ideologically radical policies in other areas—as with (say) communist or Islamist agendas. Ability to pursue such a political strategy effectively does not seem likely to be affected by relative power. On the other hand, such polarization benefits are expected to be valued more highly by more extreme nationalists or more strongly power-seeking leaders than by moderate nationalists.

**Benefit 4: Higher Outcome Benefits Due to Bargaining Advantage Gained by Imposing Higher Temporary Costs on the Enemy (Through Harassment/Suppression or Limited Decimation).**

To gain such a bargaining advantage, it must be credible that the higher costs will be ended once the deal involving increased concessions is made. For that reason, there must also be a credible commitment that civilian targeting will not involve unlimited decimation of enemy civilians. Also, the enemy must care a lot about higher conflict costs, so that ending them would warrant significant concessions. Since greater relative power is expected to allow greater costs to be imposed, it is likely to be associated with greater potential bargaining leverage. Again, it must be possible to commit credibly to stop imposing costs following an agreement. To the extent that greater relative power makes greater gains available from breaking a commitment, there is a second-order effect that reduces the expected benefits—since the target becomes less likely to believe that a commitment to
forego greater future gains by ending the costs is credible. On balance, then, greater power is likely to deliver greater outcome benefits due to increased ability to impose temporary costs, but this advantage is likely to be somewhat mitigated by greater difficulty committing to stop such costs following an agreement. More extreme nationalist leaders value further gains toward ideal goals more highly than more moderate leaders, and hence are expected to have greater difficulty in committing credibly to stop imposing costs following an agreement. Strongly power-seeking leaders are also expected to have greater difficulty than moderate leaders in credibly committing to uphold an agreement. We also note that greater bargaining leverage will be gained by imposing higher conflict costs on more moderate enemies, because extreme nationalists discount such costs and more strongly power-seeking leaders are likely to view them as diverting attention from less advantageous issues. To summarize, preference-based bargaining benefits of this type are likely to be largest for more moderate nationalists facing other, more moderate nationalists.

**Cost 1: Normative Costs (of Harassment/Suppression and Decimation)**

To the extent that political norms view enemy civilian costs as significant negatives, these enemy costs are internalized. There is no reason to expect that such preferences depend on relative power. On the other hand, more moderate nationalist leaderships should be more likely than more extreme nationalist leaderships to internalize enemy civilian costs to some extent. More strongly power-seeking leaders should also be less likely than more moderate nationalist leaders to do so.

**Cost 2: Higher Conflict Costs and Lower Outcome Benefits Due to Conditional, Adverse Changes in Enemy Strategies**

There are at least two reasons why an enemy might escalate their use of force both quantitatively and qualitatively in response to civilian-targeting strategies. One mechanism might be uncertainty about the other side’s preferences. Civilian-targeting strategies may be taken as a signal that preferences are more extreme or that any negotiated settlements are less credible. This would tend to worsen negotiated conflict outcomes or prolong conflicts—in the latter event increasing conflict costs. Another mechanism might be the logic of “emergency.” In this logic, greater certainty that one is facing a more brutal, implacable enemy leads to a greater strategic emphasis on avoiding downside outcome risks relative to minimizing war costs and normative costs. This might lead to quantitative escalation, reflecting a reduced relative value placed on minimizing conflict costs. And it might lead to qualitative escalation, for example the use of expulsions in retaliation against enemy targeting of civilians, when such expulsions would not otherwise have been conducted. With greater relative power, such enemy response costs are likely to be smaller, because the enemy is less likely to be able to escalate with significant military effect. Relative to a more extreme nationalist leader, a more moderate nationalist is likely to care more about potential increases in conflict costs, potentially reduced benefits from negotiated outcomes, and greater downside conflict outcome risks. A more extreme leader more often prefers to fight for an even greater outcome benefit rather than accept a lesser one as a means of lowering conflict costs and reducing downside conflict outcome risks. A more strongly power-seeking leader is most concerned with military defeat that would threaten political power. So a strongly power-seeking leader’s attitude is likely to be conditional on relative power. With lesser relative power, the more strongly power-seeking type will
be more worried about the negative consequences of enemy escalation—especially for its potential effects on conflict outcomes. With greater relative power, the power-seeker is more likely to discount the potential conflict costs and downside outcome risks. Turning to dyadic preference structure, enemy response costs are also more likely to be incurred against a more moderate nationalist enemy than a more extreme nationalist enemy. This is because a more moderate nationalist enemy is more likely to be constraining its use of force to begin with, so as to reduce conflict costs, normative costs and downside outcome risks. As compared with a more extreme nationalist, a strongly power-seeking enemy is also more likely to be constraining its use of force—particularly due to fear of downside outcome risks.

To summarize, the costs associated with enemy escalation are likely to be more highly valued by more moderate nationalists, as well as by power-seekers that are either less powerful or that face an enemy with preferences that initially constrain its use of force. Similarly, there is likely to be greater scope for enemy escalation from more moderate nationalist enemies, and more conditionally, from more strongly power-seeking enemies. The second, enemy response cost of targeting civilians looms larger when one also considers the possibility of third-party intervention, particularly by external states. Here there may be one or more actors with limited interests that initially do not intervene, but that might consider intervening if a conflict intensifies in ways that pose greater threats.

The four benefits and two costs can also be used to assess the relative value of different civilian-targeting strategies. There seem to be three main variants or ideal-types of civilian targeting in ethno-territorial wars. One is low-intensity harassment or suppression, using both killings and expulsions on a limited scale. This approach is intended to cow rather than decimate the enemy population on contested territory, and possibly to extract concessions from the enemy leadership. The other two are higher-intensity strategies intended to decimate the enemy population on contested territory—one by relying almost entirely on expulsions, and the other by relying heavily on killings as well as expulsions. Table 1 shows expected differences in benefits and costs among these three strategies. Note that all the strategies deliver polarization benefits. Any gains in bargaining leverage (Benefit 4) are likely to be lost if civilian targeting is escalated to decimate the enemy population. Otherwise, benefits and costs are expected to escalate as civilian targeting intensifies qualitatively. Therefore, factors favoring onset of civilian targeting in general are also likely to favor its qualitative escalation.

| Relative benefits and costs of three main types of civilian-targeting strategies |
|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| **Benefit 1: Outcomes** | Harassment or suppression (low-intensity killing and cleansing) | Decimation, primarily through expulsions (killings remain low-intensity) | Decimation, largely through killings (expulsions also likely to be extensive) |
| **Benefit 2: War Costs** | Low | High | Highest |
| **Benefit 3: Polarization** | High | High | High |
| **Benefit 4: Bargaining** | High | Low | Low |
| **Cost 1: Norms** | Low | High | Highest |
| **Cost 2: Enemy Response** | Low | High | Highest |
By aggregating the four benefits and two costs, it is possible to generate theoretical expectations about the effects of variation in relative power and leadership preferences. The expected effect of greater relative power on the decision to target civilians is most clear. Suppose first that the players are “ordinary nationalists,” in the sense that they trade off outcome benefits against downside outcome risks and conflict costs in a linear manner, while polarization benefits and normative costs are assumed to be insignificant. Greater relative power is expected to yield greater benefits and lower costs of civilian-targeting strategies by making victory more likely, gaining more extensive long-term control over contested territory and reducing enemy capacity to conduct low-intensity warfare (Benefits 1 and 2); and by capturing gains from increased bargaining leverage (Benefit 4) with a lesser expected downside risk of a damaging enemy response (Cost 2). There is no expected effect of relative power on the value of polarization benefits (Benefit 3) or normative costs (Cost 1), even if these were significantly valued. Greater relative power thus seems likely to deliver higher net benefits to a player targeting civilians, whether or not the other player responds by targeting civilians or otherwise escalating its use of force (Cost 2). In most ethno-territorial conflicts, the state side has greater relative power, so the implication is that the state side is more likely to benefit from targeting civilians. Therefore we have the following probabilistic hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Combatants with greater relative power are more likely to use civilian-targeting strategies.

Hypothesis 2: Combatants with greater relative power are more likely to initiate civilian-targeting strategies.

Suppose now that we differentiate the three main types of civilian-targeting strategies, from low-intensity harassment or suppression, to decimation more exclusively by expulsion, to decimation through killing as well as expulsion. A similar logic of greater relative power delivering greater benefits and lower costs applies to escalation of civilian targeting strategies from low-intensity harassment or suppression to decimation more exclusively by expulsion—albeit in a somewhat weaker manner. As discussed, the gain in bargaining leverage (Benefit 4) is likely to decline upon escalation to a decimation strategy—and this gain at the suppression/harassment level is expected to be larger for more powerful players. On the other hand, greater outcome benefits (Benefit 1), lower conflict costs (Benefit 2), and lower enemy response costs (Cost 2) are expected for more powerful players. On balance, then, we expect more powerful players to be more likely to escalate to decimation primarily through expulsions. As compared to decimation via expulsions, the net benefit of escalation to decimation largely through killing seems least clear. This is because decimation more exclusively by expulsion delivers the primary outcome benefits; while decimation largely through killing is expected to prompt more desperate resistance from an enemy that now has little to lose, and hence may escalate enemy efforts so as to increase own war costs and possibly also downside outcome risks (Cost 2). Nevertheless, more powerful players stand to capture greater outcome benefits of more “final” solutions (Benefit 1), and greater cost reductions (Benefit 2), while they are better insulated from the downside risks (Cost 2).

Hypothesis 3: Combatants with greater relative power are more likely to initiate a qualitative escalation of civilian-targeting strategies.

Turning to leadership preferences, consider first the comparison between more moderate and more extreme nationalist leaders. Compared to more moderate nationalists, more extreme nationalists are expected to place more value on greater territorial control (Benefit 1) and internal polarization (Benefit 3), and to place lesser value on normative costs (Cost 1)
and on the cost and outcome consequences of enemy escalation (Cost 2). By contrast, more moderate nationalists are expected to care more about reducing conflict costs (Benefit 2), and to be both more able to impose higher costs conditionally and more interested in extracting the limited cost and outcome benefits that may follow from such increased bargaining leverage (Benefit 4). To summarize, for more extreme nationalists, there are strong inducements to target civilians (Benefit 1 and to a lesser extent Benefit 3 are more highly valued), while the potential negative consequences are likely to be less salient. For more moderate nationalists, the potential benefits from driving down war costs and gaining better outcomes are likely to be more incremental, and are counterbalanced by higher normative costs and the potential adverse cost and outcome consequences of enemy escalation. Although it is possible that something like an “emergency” situation could dramatically raise the value of the potential benefits for more moderate leaders, it seems in general that they would be less likely to target civilians. Yet it remains true that, once the enemy has initiated civilian targeting, more moderate leaders become more likely to reciprocate its use—because the enemy initiation will have already imposed some of the downside costs and outcome risks. So we have the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 4: More extreme nationalist leaders are more likely than more moderate nationalist leaders to use civilian-targeting strategies.

Hypothesis 5: More extreme nationalist leaders are more likely than more moderate nationalist leaders to initiate civilian-targeting strategies.

The balance of expected benefits and costs for more extreme as against more moderate nationalist leaders also points to a qualitative hypothesis about the type of civilian targeting chosen. Relative to more moderate leaders, more extreme leaders are expected to place the highest value on outcome benefits related to territorial control (Benefit 1). By contrast, more moderate leaders targeting civilians are likely to place greater relative value on limiting conflict costs (Benefit 2), downside outcome risks of the enemy response (Cost 2), and normative costs (Cost 1). They are also expected to care more about incremental gains from bargaining advantages (Benefit 4) than extreme nationalists. These differences indicate that decimation—either primarily through expulsions or with significant killings as well as expulsions—is likely to be chosen more often by more extreme nationalist leaders. Decimation strategies are most likely to achieve the outcome gains that more extreme nationalists value most, while eliciting costs they value least. While more moderate nationalists may expect to increase outcome benefits and reduce conflict costs, decimation strategies are likely to reduce bargaining leverage by imposing permanent costs on the enemy, as well as increasing enemy response costs and normative costs. Thus, more moderate nationalists are expected to show greater restraint, either by limiting the scale of killings, or by foregoing decimation altogether. This logic of relative payoffs holds regardless of what type of civilian targeting the enemy pursues. To be clear, we are comparing more moderate behavior to more extremist behavior. The hypothesis is that moderates adopt a given type of behavior less frequently than extremists.

Hypothesis 6: More extreme nationalist leaders are more likely than more moderate nationalist leaders to initiate a qualitative escalation of civilian-targeting strategies.

For strong power-seekers, the most highly valued benefits and costs are expected to be polarization benefits (Benefit 3) and potential enemy (including third-party) escalation risks that might threaten political power (Cost 2). Strongly power-seeking leaders are likely to be more concerned with avoiding significant downside outcome risks than with maximizing upside outcome gains (Benefit 1); are likely to discount war costs (Benefit 2), which can
be more readily blamed on enemies; and are expected to care little about normative costs (Cost 1). Stronger power-seekers are also likely to have difficulty committing credibly to restrain future violence, which is necessary to capture upside concessions resulting from greater bargaining leverage (Benefit 4). One crucial question is whether the leader has a greater need for polarization benefits, due to a higher level of internal political threat. Strong power-seekers with significant legitimacy problems, or above all, facing significant internal opposition threats, have a greater polarization benefit upside.25 On the other side of the ledger, potential enemy escalation risks are lower under two conditions. First, they are lower if the strong power-seeker’s side has greater relative power. Second, they are lower if the enemy side, in the face of limited provocations, is more likely to show restraint to minimize its own costs and downside outcome risks. Such restraint might reflect either relative moderation or, particularly if the enemy side has weaker relative military power, more strongly power-seeking preferences.

What about a stronger power-seeker’s incentives for qualitative escalation of civilian targeting? While killings of enemy group civilians seem more likely to deliver reliable polarization benefits than expulsions alone, such killings do not have to occur on a large scale to deliver such benefits. On the other hand, decimation, and especially decimation using killings on a large scale, are more likely to elicit a significant enemy response that increases downside outcome risks and thus regime insecurity. Hence, a strong power-seeker seems less likely to escalate beyond low-intensity harassment/suppression than a more extreme nationalist. If the enemy is expected to want to avoid escalation to minimize war costs and downside conflict risks, even a weaker power-seeker can capture polarization benefits without high enemy response costs. This seems particularly likely if civilian targeting is kept below the decimation threshold.26

Hypothesis 7: Relative to more moderate leaders, stronger power-seekers facing greater internal political threats and having greater relative power are more likely to use civilian-targeting strategies.

Hypothesis 8: Relative to more moderate leaders, stronger power-seekers facing greater internal political threats and having greater relative power are more likely to initiate civilian-targeting strategies.

Hypothesis 9: Relative to more moderate leaders, stronger power-seekers facing greater internal political threats and having more moderate enemies are more likely to use civilian-targeting strategies.

Hypothesis 10: Relative to more moderate leaders, stronger power-seekers facing greater internal political threats and having more moderate enemies are more likely to initiate civilian-targeting strategies.

Hypothesis 11: Relative to more extreme leaders, stronger power-seekers that target civilians will more frequently engage in harassment/suppression than in decimation.

How are more or less adverse initial conditions expected to affect the benefits and costs of targeting civilians? Here the focus is on the direct effects of variation in initial conditions. It is possible that more adverse conditions may have indirect effects on other proximate causes—for example, through a tendency to yield less moderate leaders. This may or may not be true, but it is beyond the scope of this article to seek to explain leadership preferences. Similarly, variation in initial conditions seems likely to be affected by variation in relative power. But we should be careful not to attribute the effects of variation in relative power to variation in initial conditions. Variation in initial conditions per se would not be expected to have significant direct effects on any of the benefits or costs of targeting civilians—not on the potential for higher territorial control benefits (Benefit 1), nor on conflict costs
Hypothesis 12: More adverse initial conditions are not expected to have a significant direct effect on the frequency of civilian-targeting strategies.

To summarize, the strongest expected effects on relative frequency of civilian-targeting strategies are associated with variation in relative power and with variation between more moderate and more extreme nationalists. Behavior of more power-seeking leaders is expected to be more conditional—to depend on whether there is a more severe internal political threat, on whether relative power is favorable, and on whether enemies are expected to show greater restraint (particularly due to more moderate preferences). Variation in initial conditions is not expected to have a significant direct effect. There are similar patterns in terms of the expected quality of civilian-targeting strategies. More powerful leaders are expected to target civilians more intensively. Compared to more extreme leaders, more moderate leaders seem more likely to constrain their targeting of civilians—to limit themselves to harassment/suppression while avoiding decimation; or to rely more exclusively on expulsions while avoiding mass killing. Stronger power-seekers are expected to be more like more moderate nationalists in using harassment/suppression more frequently than decimation, as compared to more extreme nationalists.

**Three Conflict-Dyads from the Collapse of Yugoslavia**

This section applies the theories to three ethno-territorial conflict dyads that emerged from the collapse of Yugoslavia in 1991. There are two main goals. First, we illustrate an approach to measuring leadership preferences that is designed to allow large-sample hypothesis testing in the future. Second, we check the logic of the power- and preference-based theories against causal process evidence in the cases. To the extent that the causal process evidence is broadly consistent with theory, the motivation to undertake a large-sample measurement effort is strengthened.

We begin by presenting measures of the main independent variables: initial conditions, relative power, and leadership preferences. We then describe patterns of civilian targeting in the three conflicts. In each case, we are interested, not just in consistency of civilian targeting outcomes with hypotheses, but also in examining process evidence of such consistency. In the extent and manner of civilian targeting, how apparent are the hypothesized cost–benefit logics of relative power and of leadership preference motivations? Note that these logics are not in general mutually inconsistent. Both are expected to have a significant impact. For relative power, the main evidence would be a concern to take account of power disparities to maximize net benefits of civilian targeting. For variation between more moderate and more extreme nationalist preferences, the main evidence would be greater willingness to accept high downside risks and costs in pursuit of maximum upside goals for more extreme leaders. In particular, as compared to more moderate nationalist leaders, more extreme nationalist leaders should be more likely to pursue their ideal goals despite an adverse balance of power and the associated higher downside outcome risks and costs. For more strongly power-seeking preferences, the primary tradeoff is between polarization benefits and downside outcome risks. Unlike a more moderate nationalist leader, and like a more extreme nationalist leader, a strong power-seeker is concerned to maximize polarization benefits. Targeting of enemy civilians should be coupled with targeting of the own-group opposition, and the rhetoric of more total war against an external enemy.
should be used to justify internal repression. But unlike a more extreme nationalist leader, and like a more moderate nationalist leader, a power-seeker is expected to limit or compromise pursuit of ideal upside outcomes to avoid significant downside outcome risks, which are also likely to threaten political power. Thus, over time, a stronger power-seeker’s behavior is more likely to appear inconsistent—like a more extreme nationalist in times of greater internal political threat, and then veering in a more moderate nationalist direction when the threat of downside outcome risks looms larger. Similarly, a power-seeker is more likely to choose strategies that capture short-term polarization benefits at the cost of having longer-term downside outcome risks. In addition to civilian targeting strategies, corroborating evidence is also available from other strategy choices—such as war onset and war termination. Where there are multiple conflicts, it is also helpful to look at whether there is consistent evidence across the conflicts.

We begin by noting that no effort has been made to measure leadership preferences in ethno-territorial conflicts consistently over a large sample. Table 2 shows a template of the kind that might be used for this purpose. In the Appendix, we use this template to measure leadership preferences for the three leaders involved in the case studies. We use a five-point scale to measure the moderate-extremist dimension and a three-point scale to measure the principled-power-seeking dimension. Note that the more unprincipled a leader is, the more intrinsic nationalist goals are expected to be compromised in the service of power-seeking goals.

Table 3 shows measures of the bargaining framework’s main independent variables: initial conditions, relative power, and leadership preferences. Initial conditions are ranked on a five-point scale capturing variation within the former Yugoslavia. In the abstract, the ideal status quo gives an ethno-national group full independence on all of the territory claimed as its homeland. In a less-than-ideal federal arrangement, such as existed in the former Yugoslavia, it is better for an ethno-national group to have maximum local autonomy, to have influence at the federal level greater than or equal to its share of the population, and to have as much of its claimed homeland as possible included in its federally allocated territory. There was also the lesser issue of which Republics or autonomous provinces gained or lost the most as a result of federal policies, such as inter-regional income transfers.

To measure relative power, we begin with a simple ranking based on pre-break-up economic strength—using Yugoslav Gross Material Product statistics from 1988. We then deduct the strength of potential secessionist minorities from home Republics and, where relevant, add these to the strength of ethnic kin Republics. The resulting numerical rankings in Table 3 do not take account of differences in objectives in a potential conflict, or of major geographical barriers. In our cases, the most important difference in objectives is between contesting control over all of the territory of the weaker side of a directed dyad, or only that portion where ethnic kin have concentrated settlement. It is much more difficult to take or hold a territory where another ethnic group has dominant settlement. Turning to geographical barriers, reliable Serbian control over Serb regions of Croatia required occupation either of large, non-Serb parts of Croatia, or of large parts of Bosnia, or some combination of the two. Roughly, this tended to offset the relative power benefit to Serbia of seeking the more limited objective of the heavily Serb regions in a conflict with Croatia. Therefore, to take account of how relative power is likely to affect pursuit of such more limited or geographically difficult objectives, there should be some additional upward adjustment of the relative power of Serbia vis-à-vis the Bosnian Muslims, and of Croatia vis-à-vis the Bosnian Muslims—since in these two cases territorial objectives were mostly limited to regions of ethnic kin settlement.
Table 2
Template for coding leadership preferences in potential ethno-territorial conflicts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Executive leadership</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Moderate versus Extreme Nationalist Dimension</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1) <strong>Statements</strong> indicating the <em>nature and intensity of nationalist goals and the costs and downside risks accepted in pursuing them</em>, in the time-period examined. Includes will to initiate violence against the rival group in given relative power conditions; any proposed compromise agreements to avoid violence; will to initiate violence against own-group rivals; norms toward rival group, including legitimate goals and costs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) <strong>Actions</strong> indicating the <em>nature and intensity of nationalist goals and the costs and downside risks accepted in pursuing them</em>, in the time-period examined. Includes initiation of violence against rival group in given relative power conditions; acceptance of compromise proposals to end violence; initiation of violence toward own-group rivals; treatment of rival group, including substantive concessions and treatment. May <em>not</em> include evidence on the dependent variable of interest.</td>
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<td>3) Indirect evidence in the time-period examined: moderation or extremism concerning <em>other political goals or in personal life</em>.</td>
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<td>4) Direct and indirect evidence of moderation or extremism, before and after the period of potential conflict.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Moderate or extremist characteristics of promoted or supported fellow leaders within own political organizations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Principled versus Unprincipled Dimension**

1) Consistency of stated goals; and consistency of strategies with stated goals. Includes record before and after the period of potential conflict. |
| 2) Will to take political or personal risks to achieve stated goals. Includes record before and after period of potential conflict. |
| 3) Evidence of principled beliefs and behavior in other policy areas and in personal life. Includes nature and extent of personal and client corruption. Includes record before and after period of potential conflict. |
| 4) Principled or unprincipled characteristics of promoted and supported fellow leaders. |
Table 3

Former Yugoslavia directional dyads with codings for initial conditions, relative power, and leadership preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Directional dyad</th>
<th>Initial conditions (1–5 scale, 5 worst)</th>
<th>Relative GMP 1988, adjusted for ethnic composition*</th>
<th>Leadership preferences in dyad order: (Group I’s 1–5 Moderate-Extremist Scale; Group I’s 1–3 Principled-Unprincipled Scale), (Group II’s 1–5 Moderate-Extremist Scale; Group II’s 1–3 Principled-Unprincipled Scale)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serbia–Croatia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.58 (3–4;3), (4;1)</td>
<td>(3–4;3), (4;1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia–Serbia</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.58 (4;1), (3–4;3)</td>
<td>(3–4;3), (4;1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia–Bosnian Muslims</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.02 (4;1), (3–4;3)</td>
<td>(4;1), (3–4;3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnian Muslims–Serbia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.14 (4;1), (3–4;3)</td>
<td>(4;1), (3–4;3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia–Bosnian Muslims</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.98 (3;1), (4;1)</td>
<td>(3;1), (4;1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnian Muslims–Croatia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.25 (4;1), (3;1)</td>
<td>(4;1), (3;1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Relative power estimates are not adjusted for more limited objective of taking and holding ethnic kin territory or for significant geographical barriers.

Note: As discussed in the Appendix and the text, Serbia’s Slobodan Milošević typically began conflicts speaking and acting like a strong nationalist, and ended them speaking and acting like an ordinary nationalist. Source for GMP data: Dijana Plestina, *Regional Development in Communist Yugoslavia: Success, Failure, and Consequences* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1992), 180.

Last, Table 4 describes broad patterns of civilian targeting in the three cases. We now turn to discuss process evidence in each conflict dyad.

Consider first Serbia–Croatia. As indicated in Table 3, Serbia was the more powerful entity. Serbia’s leader, Slobodan Milošević, initiated not only the war itself, but also the civilian targeting up to the point of decimation through expulsions. On the other hand, while Croatia’s Franjo Tudjman was careful not to initiate civilian targeting, he did reciprocate it, also up to the point of decimation through expulsions. Moreover, Tudjman waited until relative power had shifted in Croatia’s favor before reciprocating decimation through expulsions on a significant scale.

What about evidence of more moderate attention to downside risks and costs, as against a more extremist focus on upside benefits regardless of the downside risks and costs? Milošević often seemed to disregard significant downside outcome risks. Thus, the initial expulsion of Croat civilians, coupled with unnecessary and sensational civilian killings by Serb militias, led directly to international recognition of the Yugoslav successor states, thus beginning the process of changing the military balance. On the other hand, when the military balance began to favor Croatia late in the war, Milošević was much more willing to make compromises to end the war despite the catastrophic consequences for the
Table 4
Patterns of civilian targeting by conflict-dyad\textsuperscript{31}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict-dyad</th>
<th>Sequence and extent of civilian targeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serbia/Croatian Serbs-Croatia</td>
<td>Serbia initiates decimation primarily through expulsions. After reconquering contested territory, Croatia reciprocates decimation primarily through expulsions. Both sides use killings to spur expulsions, but the Serbs do so on a much larger scale. Neither side uses killings to decimate the enemy population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia/Bosnian Serbs-Bosnian Muslims</td>
<td>Serbia initiates decimation primarily through expulsions. Bosnian Muslims reciprocate with decimation primarily through expulsion of Serbs from almost all Muslim-controlled territory. Both sides use killings to spur expulsions, but the Serbs do so on a much larger scale. The Bosnian Serbs also do so to kill significant numbers of fighting-age males. Neither side does so to decimate the enemy population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnian Muslims-Croatia/Bosnian Croats</td>
<td>Bosnian Muslims initiate decimation primarily through expulsions in Central Bosnia. Bosnian Croats reciprocate with decimation primarily through expulsions in Herzegovina. Both sides use killings to spur expulsions. Neither side uses killings to decimate the enemy population.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we shall see, such seeming inconsistency of nationalist preferences is evident in other behavior and in other conflicts, indicating that Milošević’s war strategies were motivated primarily by power-seeking.

For Tudjman, war strategies show both a will to accept significant risks and costs to attain outcome gains, as well as care to minimize downside risks. To achieve Croatia’s independence, Tudjman was willing to accept the costs of war, and was also willing if necessary to risk the loss of contested territory to Serbia and the Croatian Serbs. But on the other hand, he was careful to try to minimize costs and downside risks, and was willing to compromise to do so. Despite the advice of his own Defense Minister, Tudjman refused to follow Slovenia’s example in launching a preemptive operation against Yugoslav People’s Army bases in Croatia. He was worried about the adverse diplomatic consequences for international recognition and support.\textsuperscript{33} As a means of finalizing Croatia’s independence and building her strength, Tudjman accepted a cease-fire in late 1991 that left large contested territories in Serb hands. Although Tudjman hoped to regain these territories in the future, this was highly unlikely at the time of the cease-fire. Tudjman waited until he was in a much stronger position to restart the war and attempt a reconquest; and he took advantage of this power shift and of international hostility to the Serb cause to reciprocate Serbia’s decimation through expulsion on the contested territory, thus securing a more reliable long-term hold on the territories at little or no cost to Croatia.\textsuperscript{34} As we shall see, there is similar evidence of strong, but not extreme nationalism, in the Croat–Muslim conflict.
There is much evidence that Milošević’s war strategies were motivated mostly by power-seeking. From the beginning, he used violent acts and rhetoric in the Croatia war to justify killings and intimidation of domestic political opponents and control over the mass media in Serbia. Milošević’s use of killings made more sense as a diversionary device than as a strategy to achieve substantive nationalist goals. They were much more widespread than was necessary to expel civilians from contested territories, and were devastating to Serbia’s international standing. In contrast to his rivals, Milošević made little effort to conceal civilian targeting by Serb forces, presumably because he was more focused on its internal diversionary uses. We also see behavior that seems inconsistent for a strong nationalist. Milošević started out as an uncompromising nationalist firebrand. But when the fortunes of the Serbs in Croatia declined, largely due to his own mismanagement, he was quick to cut a peace deal that handed a total victory to Croatia. Conveniently, this deal ended a war he seemed increasingly likely to lose, thus helping to preserve his power in the short run. By contrast, Tudjman was more principled. He did not seek to undermine or destroy democracy in Croatia. He only targeted Serb civilians insofar as this allowed him to achieve significant nationalist gains at little cost. In general, he showed a strong, consistent commitment to achieving his nationalist goals, but one that was still tempered with a desire to minimize downside risks to these core goals.

Consider now the Serb–Bosnian Muslim conflict, which broke out after the onset of the Serb–Croat conflict. Again, the pattern of initiation and reciprocation of civilian targeting is consistent with relative power patterns, with the stronger Serb side initiating decimation primarily through expulsions and the weaker Bosnian Muslim side reciprocating it.

At the same time, albeit in different ways, both Milošević and Bosnian Muslim leader Alija Izetbegović tended to discount downside costs and risks. As in the Croatia war, the initial expulsion of Muslim civilians featured unnecessary and sensational civilian killings by Serb militias. As the similar Serb attacks on Croat civilians had led directly to international recognition of the Yugoslav successor states, these attacks on Bosnian Muslim civilians led to economic sanctions directed at Serbia and its ally Montenegro. Because this international reaction was more predictable given the Serb–Croat precedent, it is notable that Milošević made no significant effort to calibrate or control civilian targeting to limit the damage. And as in the Croatia war, when the military balance began to favor Croatia, the Bosnian Croats and the Bosnian Muslims late in the Bosnia war, Milošević became more willing to make compromises to end the war despite the negative consequences for the Bosnian Serbs.

Izetbegović’s war strategies also showed a strong disregard for costs and downside risks—although in his case this was more clearly in the pursuit of his maximum nationalist goals of independence in a centralized state in which the Bosnian Muslims would be the titular people. Although these goals were nominally the same as Tudjman’s, there were significant differences in circumstances. In contrast to Croatia’s small, approximately 10% Serb minority, Bosnia’s Muslims were not even an outright majority, and Bosnia was surrounded by the mother states of her large Serb (over 30%) and Croat (nearly 20%) minorities. Moreover, the example of what Milošević was liable to do was already evident from the Croatia war. Under these conditions, it is remarkable that Izetbegović did not make a stronger effort to compromise—for example by offering territorial autonomy for all three major groups in a decentralized Bosnian state—either to avoid war altogether, or at least to secure more reliable Croat allies against the Serbs. In addition, during the early part of the war, Izetbegović made no significant effort to restrain sensational killings of Serb civilians—both by Bosnian Muslim militias and by foreign Islamist volunteers. If the narrative of Serb villainy had not already been so strongly established, this might
have been a much greater barrier to the international support that was so crucial to the Bosnian Muslim cause. It is also notable that, when Izetbegović was later forced to share more power with the secular wing of the Bosnian Muslim Party of Democratic Action, led by Haris Silajdžić, many of the commanders and units most notorious for attacks on enemy civilians were disciplined. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that Izetbegović tacitly supported such killings, along with the associated expulsions, as a way of pursuing his goal of a more purely Islamic, Bosnian Muslim-dominated state. Even after the war started, and the costs for the Bosnian Muslims became so catastrophic, Izetbegović repeatedly refused the kind of painful territorial compromise that Tudjman made to gain some breathing space and prepare to fight another day. On the other hand, there were limits to Izetbegović’s more extreme nationalism. He tolerated more moderate nationalists within his party and government; and as it became clear that he would have to fight on without Croatian and U.S. support to achieve his maximum goals, he ultimately proved willing to make a peace agreement that accepted de jure Serb autonomy and de facto Croat autonomy.

Again, there is considerable evidence that Milošević’s war strategies were strongly power-seeking. As with the Croatia war, violent acts and rhetoric in the Bosnia war were used to justify killings and intimidation of domestic political opponents and control over the mass media in Serbia. Again, Milošević’s use of killings made more sense as a diversionary device than as a strategy to achieve substantive nationalist goals. They were much more widespread than was necessary to expel civilians from contested territories. Serbia’s international standing was decimated along with enemy civilians. As in Croatia, when the fortunes of the Serbs in Bosnia declined, largely due to his own mismanagement, he was willing to force compromises that might have ended the war earlier and on more advantageous terms. Why? Again, such a deal helped to preserve his power in the short run. As discussed, Izetbegović, like Tudjman, was consistently more principled. He also did not seek to undermine or destroy democracy among the Bosnian Muslims. Compared to Tudjman, however, he showed a stronger commitment to achieving his maximum nationalist goals, showing a will to accept larger costs and downside risks to minimize compromise.

We now turn to the less well-known third case, the 1993–94 war between Croats and Bosnian Muslims, which broke out after the Serbs initiated war in Bosnia and ended while the war with the Serbs was still underway. Following the initial Serb attacks in Bosnia, the Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Muslims generally formed separate fighting units, but cooperated openly in the war against the Serbs. Despite constant frictions over territorial control, burden-sharing and logistical arrangements, they manned different sections of a common front line in an improvised pattern that reflected the scrambled settlement patterns of central Bosnia. The Bosnian Muslims predominated in central Bosnia, while the Bosnian Croats predominated in the southern Herzegovina region. Beginning in January 1993, the Bosnian Muslims launched an offensive against the Croats designed to impose exclusive control in central Bosnia. This was coupled with decimation, primarily through expulsions, of Bosnian Croat civilians, who were replaced with Bosnian Muslim refugees. Apart from resisting this attack directly, the Croats retaliated by conducting their own decimation, primarily through expulsion, of Bosnian Muslim civilians in Herzegovina. The war ended in February 1994, with a renewed Croat–Muslim alliance, this time backed by the United States.

Since all-out war along with ethnic cleansing primarily through expulsions was initiated by Izetbegović, it was the much weaker Bosnian Muslim side that initiated civilian targeting and the much stronger Croat side that reciprocated it. This war also provides further evidence of the nationalist preferences of Izetbegović and Tudjman. It is hard to exaggerate the risks Izetbegović was taking. It is not simply that the Bosnian Croats backed by Croatia were
stronger militarily. The Croats and Muslims shared a defense line against the Serbs, and the Serbs indeed took advantage of the Croat–Muslim fighting to make significant local advances. Thus, in addition to losses as a result of Croat retaliatory attacks and expulsions, the Bosnian Muslims suffered additional losses to the Serbs. Moreover, since Bosnian Muslim-held territory was encircled by Serb- and Croat-held territory and an international arms embargo remained in place, military supplies for the Bosnian Muslim army had to come through Croatian and Bosnian Croat–held territory. As is turned out, the Bosnian Muslims were ultimately rescued—after about a year of fighting both the Serbs and the Croats—by U.S. carrots and sticks that were used to broker a Croat–Muslim alliance against the Serbs. At the time the Bosnian Muslims launched the war, however, the Western powers seemed divided and indecisive, and there was little reason to believe that such an outcome would occur. Last, there was little to be gained by attacking the Bosnian Croats, since the Croats, while bearing a large share of the burden of fighting the Serbs, had no significant territorial objectives in central Bosnia, and could not realistically have been dislodged from Herzegovina. The upside for Izetbegović, then, was a more exclusive military and demographic hold over central Bosnia, which could be expected to make it easier to develop Muslim-controlled Bosnia into a titular ethnic state with explicitly Islamic political characteristics. This was not the goal of the secular-nationalist wing of Izetbegović’s party, which sought to conserve Bosnia’s multi-ethnic character as a means of maintaining a unified, centralized Bosnian state.

By contrast, Tudjman’s management of the Bosnian Croats again shows a careful pursuit of his core nationalist goals, which emphasized the interests of Croatia proper first, and beyond that, sought to attain maximum Bosnian Croat autonomy. Although Tudjman was criticized both domestically and internationally for supporting the Bosnian Croats, the value of this intervention was obvious. It did not just protect the Bosnian Croats, but also involved propping up the Bosnian Muslims. This was a way of bleeding the Serbs and diverting their efforts from the Croatian into the Bosnian theater. Moreover, when Tudjman was confronted with strong U.S. pressure to end the fighting with the Bosnian Muslims, he traded away his goal of de jure autonomy for the Bosnian Croats for U.S. training and arms supplies. This deal enabled him to move forward with plans to reconquer Serb-held territory in Croatia, which was conducted successfully 18 months later. Also worth noting is the tight leash on which Tudjman held his Bosnian Croat allies. He made sure to control their ruling party, which was a wing of his own ruling party in Croatia; and he made early, effective efforts to bring Croat military forces fighting in Bosnia under central control. In this way, he sought to make sure that all dimensions of the war effort would be calculated to advance his own nationalist priorities. This contrasts clearly with Milošević’s management of his Croatian Serb and Bosnian Serb allies, which reflected a desire for short-term political gain and largely ignored strategic considerations.

We have already discussed other evidence that civilian targeting by Izetbegović and Tudjman were motivated by principled rather than power-seeking considerations. Here we can add that the Croat–Muslim war and the associated civilian targeting created significant short-term political threats, which both Izetbegović and Tudjman chose to accept so as to pursue their long-term strategic goals.

To summarize, we find some evidence consistent with the relative power explanation of civilian targeting, but also much evidence that leaders also used civilian targeting in ways that reflected their varying emphasis on nationalist and power-seeking goals. In the Serbia–Croatia and Serbia–Bosnian Muslims cases, the stronger side initiated civilian targeting and the weaker side reciprocated it. In both cases, the stronger side also initiated the maximum escalation of civilian targeting, to decimation primarily through expulsions. In
contrast, in the Croat–Muslim war, the weaker Bosnian Muslim side initiated civilian target-
ing and escalation to decimation primarily through expulsions. The latter was reciprocated
by the stronger Croats. Izetbegović’s behavior indicates that more extreme nationalism
may override relative power logic in spurring civilian targeting. Similarly, Milošević’s
behavior indicates that civilian targeting may be used to pursue power-seeking goals differ-
cent from the intrinsic nationalist motivations assumed by the balance of power explanation.
If the power-seeking motives are strong enough, as Milošević’s case again shows, they may
undermine the supposed nationalist goals behind civilian targeting strategies.

Last, we note that the process evidence linking variation in prewar status quo conditions
to civilian targeting patterns seems quite weak. It is true that Serbia was worst off of the
three entities under the Yugoslav status quo, but it is also true that the Bosnian Muslims
were the best off. Due to the unique characteristics of the Yugoslav communist system,
stronger relative power did not predict better status quo conditions. Similarly, status quo
conditions seem like weak predictors of what types of leaders came to power. In the cases
of Serbia and the Bosnian Muslims in particular, it is easy to imagine leaders with quite
different preferences coming to power, with this in turn leading to different patterns of war
onset and civilian targeting. At most, one can argue that status quo conditions were one of
a number of important factors influencing leadership preferences.

Conclusions

Theoretically, we expect that, due to greater expected net benefits, the more powerful side
in ethno-territorial conflicts will be more likely to use and initiate civilian targeting and
more likely to escalate the intensity of civilian targeting. For similar reasons, the weaker
side is more likely to reciprocate than to initiate such use and such escalation. Aggregating
into larger samples, the same implications apply to comparisons between stronger and
weaker state leaders and stronger and weaker minority group leaders. Independently of
the effects of relative power, more extreme nationalist leaders are expected to be more
likely to initiate, use, and escalate civilian targeting than more moderate nationalist leaders.
More strongly power-seeking leaders are expected to initiate and use civilian targeting
more conditionally—where they face greater internal political challenges, and where their
enemies are weaker or more moderate—and are expected to be less likely than more extreme
leaders to escalate beyond harassment and suppression.

Because there are currently no large-sample measures of leadership preferences, and
because even relative power measures are not well-refined for large samples, we are unable
to do more here than examine causal process evidence in some case studies of ethno-
territorial war. Generally speaking, we find evidence of leaders taking account of relative
power in making civilian targeting decisions. For example, in the Serbia–Croatia dyad,
Milošević initially targeted Croat civilians when he felt stronger; and Tudjman was initially
more cautious, but, after relative power turned in his favor, he expelled Serb civilians
from reconquered territories. At the same time, we see evidence of both more extreme
and more strongly power-seeking preferences having an influence. Despite the relative
weakness of the Bosnian Muslims, Izetbegović initiated expulsions of the Bosnian Croats
as part of his offensive in central Bosnia. This is consistent with Izetbegović’s more extreme
nationalism—not only in statements, but as indicated by his willingness to go to war against
an overwhelmingly superior, brutal Serb enemy to achieve his maximum nationalist goals,
and then to start a second war against the Croats while the Serbs remained strong. If we
compare behavior on the stronger sides of dyads, there is different evidence of leadership
preferences having an independent influence. Comparing how Milošević and Tudjman
fought the Bosnian Muslims, power advantages were used in different ways, because they were made to serve different ends. Milošević’s use of civilian targeting was quite reckless from an intrinsic strategic perspective, because it used far greater violence than was necessary to accomplish nationalist strategic goals, and perhaps more notably, it did so repeatedly. It is hard to explain such behavior except as part of a polarization strategy that was intended to serve internal political goals, while largely ignoring the consequences for supposedly primary war aims. On the other hand, Tudjman used civilian targeting only to achieve strategic goals, first in securing Herzegovina for the Bosnian Croats following the Bosnian Muslim offensive in central Bosnia, and later in driving the Croatian Serbs from reconquered parts of Croatia. When civilian targeting of the Bosnian Muslims threatened to imperil Tudjman’s primary strategic goal—control over all of Croatia’s territory—he backed off and compromised—accepting a U.S.-backed alliance with the Bosnian Muslims that sacrificed the secondary goal of de jure autonomy for the Bosnian Croats.

Such logic and case study process evidence remains only suggestive until tests can be conducted on large samples. However, it creates a stronger rationale for making labor-intensive investments in measuring leadership preferences and relative power over large samples. Logic and case study process evidence also indicate that there are likely to be selection effects on the sample of conflict dyads over which the use and pattern of civilian targeting is being explained. It seems likely that dyads with greater power disparities are less likely to go to war to begin with, because the weaker side is more likely to acquiesce in the stronger side’s demands in order to avoid war. Similarly, dyads with more moderate leaderships seem more likely to avoid war; as do dyads with more strongly power-seeking leaderships that have either secure internal power, or that face stronger or less moderate enemies. Statistical estimation techniques should be chosen to take account of such selection effects.

**Notes**

1. There are also cases where more than one dominant ethnic group is associated with the state, or where the group fighting the state for greater territorial self-determination is the largest ethnic group.

2. Following the Genocide Convention, “genocide” is usually defined as involving intent to destroy all or part of a group per se. In an ethno-territorial conflict, this may or may not be a goal of intentional mass killing.

3. The term “designed” refers to intent rather than outcome. Thus, measuring such a threshold depends on observing what was done on territory under sufficient control to implement the desired strategy. Choosing a particular threshold is difficult in the way that choosing a threshold for “genocide” has been difficult. It is certainly possible that mass killings and expulsions of less than 10 percent of the enemy population may still reflect a more gradual or limited strategy of removal rather than one of subjugation alone. We tentatively choose 10 percent because it seems a reasonable rough dividing line between large-scale removal and pure subjugation strategies. However, better understanding and data-gathering on removal strategies may make it reasonable to alter the threshold in future research. In discussing scale differences, it is also possible to distinguish more than two levels of mass killings and expulsions. We distinguish only two levels for the sake of theoretical clarity and simplicity as well as ease of measurement. As discussed below, the explanations we offer have a continuous logic, so that the analysis of scale differences generalizes to more than two levels.


9. The all-or-nothing outcomes are a simplifying assumption. The assessed probability of victory can also be interpreted as the mean of a range of possible outcomes, including intermediate, “stalemate” outcomes.

10. A sufficiently large adverse change in the status quo may also lead the party made worse off to initiate crisis and war. But such a significant change in the status quo is typically an effect of exogenous shocks to relative power or preferences, and thus would be considered an effect rather than a cause of crisis.


12. See Valentino et al., “Draining the Sea.”


14. Pape, “Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism,” emphasizes the bargaining leverage gained from imposing such costs.

15. Hatred or dehumanization of the enemy, along with leadership preferences more generally, are emphasized in much of the genocide literature (e.g., Harff, “No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust?” and Straus, “Second-Generation Comparative Research on Genocide,” *World Politics* 59 (2007): 476–501.

16. For example, Abrahms, “Why Terrorism Does Not Work.”


19. Targeting civilians also tarnishes the international reputation of the nationalist causes. Such reputational costs, in turn, may changes third-party behaviors in ways that strengthen the enemy.

20. The change in payoffs to the “ordinary nationalist” player of targeting civilians can be written as $b_1(r) + b_2(r) + b_3 + b_4(r) - c_1 - c_2(r)$, where the subscripts stand for the type of benefit $b$.
or cost $c$. As discussed, all of these benefit and cost types are expected to be increasing or unchanged in relative power $r$. (Note that the payoffs derived from polarization benefits $b_3$ and normative costs $c_1$ are not expected to be affected by relative power.) Such linear preferences are standard in the general conflict bargaining literature. Fully specified bargaining models are available from the authors.

21. The state will not always have greater power. For example, state capacity may be extremely low; there might be state failure; powerful external actors may support internal secessionist groups; and so on.

22. An extreme nationalist’s change in payoffs from targeting civilians can be written as $E^*[b_1(r) + b_3] + b_2(r) + b_4(r,E) - c_1(E) - c_2(r)$. $E^* > 1$ indicates the greater relative weight, as compared to an ordinary nationalist, placed on upside outcome benefits and polarization benefits, and $E$ indicates the likely decrease in bargaining benefits (due to lower credibility of any commitment to stop imposing costs in exchange for concessions) and in normative costs. As a leader becomes more extreme, the $E^*$ and $E$ terms have larger effects. As before, $r$ indicates the effect of relative power on benefits and costs.

23. Symmetrically to an extreme nationalist, a moderate nationalist’s change in payoffs from targeting civilians can be written as $M^*[b_1(r) + b_3] + b_2(r) + b_4(r, M) - c_1(M) - c_2(r)$. $M^* < 1$ indicates the lesser relative weight, as compared to an ordinary nationalist, placed on upside outcome benefits and polarization benefits, and $M$ indicates the likely increase in bargaining benefits (due to higher credibility of any commitment to stop imposing costs in exchange for concessions) and in normative costs. As a leader becomes more moderate, the $M^*$ and $M$ terms have larger effects. As before, $r$ indicates the effect of relative power on benefits and costs.

24. The hypothesis is not about whether a given preference type adopts one strategy more often than another strategy—although such hypotheses are also worth investigating.

25. A power-seeker’s change in payoffs from targeting civilians can be written as $P^*[b_3(r, d) - c_2(r)] + b_1(r) + b_2(r) + b_4(r, P) - c_1(P)$. $P^* > 1$ indicates the greater relative weight, as compared to an ordinary nationalist, placed on polarization benefits and enemy response costs, and $P$ indicates the likely decrease in bargaining benefits (due to lower credibility of any commitment to stop imposing costs in exchange for concessions) and in normative costs. The $d$ term indicates that polarization benefits are increasing in the extent of the internal political threat. As a leader becomes more strongly power-seeking, the $P^*$ and $P$ terms have larger effects. As before, $r$ indicates the effect of relative power on benefits and costs. If the level of internal threat is very low, then the stronger power-seeker likely has a weaker incentive to target civilians than an ordinary nationalist. As the level of internal political threat grows, the polarization benefits create a stronger incentive to target civilians. But whether this is sufficient to trigger the decision depends most on whether polarization benefits are strongly offset by enemy response costs, which in turn depend on relative power and on enemy preferences.

26. If we think of qualitative escalation of civilian targeting as a more continuous choice, strongly power-seeking leaders seem most likely to capture what they consider to be the largest net benefits with very limited harassment or suppression—“token” killings that are enough to capture the internal polarization benefits. We thank an anonymous reviewer for this point.

27. Another similarity is that both are expected to discount war costs.

28. As compared to more extreme nationalists, there is at least one notable difference in how stronger power-seekers are expected to pursue polarization benefits. Strong power-seekers are expected to pursue them more strongly where there is a greater internal opposition threat, so that the polarization strategies are expected to be more episodic—to rise and fall with the level of internal opposition threat. In contrast, the more extreme nationalist is more likely to seek polarization benefits throughout the conflict period—to prevent own-group moderates from compromising away any of the extremists’ ideal goals.

29. See the Appendix for details.

30. For Bosnia and Herzegovina, we use the abbreviated “Bosnia.”

Targeting Civilians in Ethno-Territorial Wars


46. If “terrorism” is defined as intentional killing of civilians to achieve political objectives, this contradicts the well-known argument that terrorism is a “weapon of the weak.”

47. The same thing occurred again in the Kosovo war of the late 1990s, but that is beyond the scope of this article.
Targeting Civilians in Ethno-Territorial Wars: Power- and Preference-Based Sources of Ethnic Cleansing and Mass Killing Strategies

Appendix: Ideal-Types and Templates for Leadership Preferences

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Note: This Appendix is a supplement to the following article:


Below we provide the three filled-in templates for the executive leaders involved in the three ethno-territorial conflicts examined in the former Yugoslavia in 1991-1995. At the bottom of each template, there is a classification of leadership preferences on a five-point scale on the non-nationalist-to-extreme-nationalist dimension, and on a three-point scale on the principled-to-unprincipled or principled-power-seeking dimension. Ideal-types for points along each scale are given below. Such ordinal scales are only one way of summarizing the variation in the templates. Other approaches may be reasonable.

Information on the dependent variable or variables of interest may not be used to code leadership preferences. Here we indicate two ways of excluding such information. First, it is possible to exclude all information classified in the templates under the second heading: “Actions
indicating the \textit{nature and intensity of nationalist goals and the costs and downside risks accepted in pursuing them}, in the time-period examined.” Second, it is possible to exclude only the information related to the particular dependent variable or variables of interest. In this paper, we have taken the second approach. The outcome of interest is civilian targeting once war is underway. In the templates, note that, within the cells containing information about actions, there is no information about targeting enemy civilians during wartime. We also note that there was no example in which the information about actions other than civilian targeting changed preference classifications from what they would have been in the absence of such information. In other words, information about actions other than civilian targeting was consistent with the other information in the templates. But this does not allow us to conclude that gathering information about actions beyond the dependent variable or variables of interest is superfluous in general.

\textbf{Five Ideal-Typical Categories for Nationalist Preferences Dimension}

1) Non-nationalist:

a) \textit{Statements directly indicating preferences}: In official statements, there is no significant interest in collective political goals. For the outsider group, these would be independence, or institutional and cultural autonomy; and for the dominant group or groups, expulsion or assimilation of the outsider group. Proclaimed goals are similar for political organizations representing both dominant and outsider ethnic groups.

b) \textit{Emphasis on collective goals and treatment of own ethnic group}: Normatively, pursuit of collective goals of both dominant and outsider groups are discouraged. There is no significant effort to elicit support for collective goals from either own or other groups.
c) War onset and termination: Strong efforts made (including willingness to make significant compromises) to avoid or end war so as to minimize downside outcome risks and war costs, with no value placed on upside outcome changes.

d) Political organization: Within dominant political organization leaderships, collective goals are either ignored or discouraged.

2) Moderate nationalist:

a) Statements directly indicating preferences: In official statements, independence or assimilation goals may exist theoretically. Maximal and intermediate collective goals are valued. But there is a dominant emphasis on coexistence and improvement under existing conditions, while avoiding significant political confrontations and economic disruptions. Political pressure may be endorsed to bargain for institutional and policy changes within the existing political system, but there is little or no proclaimed will to use violence or even extra-political activities such as protests and strikes. War would not be threatened except to achieve the highest collective goals—such as independence—and even then only if success was viewed as highly likely.

b) Emphasis on collective goals and treatment of own ethnic group: Normatively, collective goals of own group are prioritized; but there is also tolerance of collective goals of other groups. Efforts to elicit own-group support for collective goals do not involve violence or even extraordinary political tactics, but are limited to ordinary politics.

c) War onset and termination: Significant efforts made (including willingness to make some significant compromises) to avoid or end war so as to minimize downside outcome risks and war costs, with little value placed on upside outcome changes.
d) Political organization: Within dominant political organization leaderships, moderate nationalist views are encouraged but not enforced.

3) Ordinary nationalist:

a) Statements directly indicating preferences: In official statements, there is an active interest and policy agenda aimed at independence or state-sponsored assimilation, as well as other collective goals such as territorial autonomy and cultural policies. Both maximal and intermediate goals are highly valued, so that compromise is viewed as acceptable if the costs of pursuing maximal goals are much higher. To be willing to threaten war, either a strong probability of success, or a significant probability of success at relatively low cost, would be necessary.

b) Emphasis on collective goals and treatment of own ethnic group: Normatively, collective goals of own group are prioritized; and collective goals of other groups are discouraged. Efforts to elicit own-group support for collective goals do not involve violence, but may involve extraordinary political tactics.

c) War onset and termination: Some efforts made (including willingness to make limited concessions) to avoid or end war so as to minimize downside outcome risks and war costs, but significant value placed on upside outcome changes.

d) Political organization: Within dominant political organization leaderships, ordinary nationalist views are encouraged but not enforced.
4) Strong nationalist:

a) **Statements directly indicating preferences:** In official statements, there is an active interest and policy agenda aimed at independence or state-sponsored assimilation, as well as other collective goals. The value of intermediate goals is discounted relative to the maximal goals, such as independence on all contested homeland territory. But lesser goals are sufficiently valued so as to make compromise possible. In threatening war, high costs are viewed as acceptable if there is a significant chance of victory, but not if there is little prospect of success.

b) **Emphasis on collective goals and treatment of own ethnic group:** Normatively, collective goals of own group are strongly prioritized; collective goals of other groups are strongly discouraged. Efforts to elicit own-group support for collective goals may involve violence; but violence is likely to be targeted primarily at leaders and military formations of the organized own-group political opposition. Actions aimed at own-group individuals and civil society organizations are unlikely to go beyond extraordinary political tactics.

c) **War onset and termination:** Little effort made to avoid or end war so as to minimize downside outcome risks and war costs, due to high value placed on upside outcome changes. But grudging will to make concessions if necessary to conserve incomplete outcome gains.

d) **Political organization:** Within dominant political organization leaderships, strong nationalist views are more likely to be a prerequisite for high positions. Internal democracy is possible, but is likely to be restricted if it threatens incumbent leadership.

5) Extreme nationalist:

a) **Statements directly indicating preferences:** In official statements, there is an active interest and policy agenda aimed at independence or state-sponsored assimilation or expulsion, as well as
other collective goals. The value of intermediate goals is heavily discounted relative to the maximal goals (such as independence on all contested homeland territory). In threatening war, there is a stated will to pursue maximal goals at almost any cost with little short-term prospect of success.

b) Emphasis on collective goals and treatment of own ethnic group: Normatively, collective goals of own group are strongly prioritized; collective goals of other groups are totally excluded. Violence is likely to be targeted not only at own-group organized political opposition, but also against own-group individuals and civil society organizations.

c) War onset and termination: No effort made to avoid or end war so as to minimize downside outcome risks and war costs, due to paramount value placed on upside outcome changes.

d) Political organization: Within dominant political organization leaderships, extreme nationalist views are strictly enforced for all significant positions. Internal democracy is extremely unlikely.

**Three Ideal-Typical Categories for Principled-Unprincipled (Power-Seeking) Dimension**

1) Highly principled:

a) Apparent commitment to principle: An ideologue. Near-absolute commitment to one or more political goals. Uncommon in professional politicians.

b) Riskiness and consistency of behavior: Expect frequent evidence of will to risk power or personal safety in pursuit of core goals. Expect near-absolute consistency in pursuit of core goals and priorities, as well as near-absolute consistency of strategies with stated core goals and priorities.
c) Political organization: Within own organization, strong emphasis on recruitment of other purely principled leaders, including those of independent political stature.

d) Corruption: No personal corruption expected; client corruption strongly discouraged. Client corruption acceptable only if viewed as a necessary evil in service of substantive political goals.

2) Balanced:

a) Apparent commitment to principle: A typical career politician. Significantly committed to one or more particularly substantive political goals. But willing to trade off many supposedly core political goals for a large enough political advantage.

b) Riskiness and consistency of behavior: Expected to avoid risks to power or personal safety except when core priorities are significantly concerned. Expect moderate consistency in pursuit of core goals and priorities, as well as moderate consistency of strategies with stated core goals and priorities.

c) Political organization: Within own organization, strong emphasis on recruitment of leaders that are both principled and effective, including those of independent political stature.

d) Corruption: Little personal corruption expected. Client corruption acceptable if viewed as serving substantive political goals and power goals.

3) Highly Unprincipled or Power-seeking:

a) Apparent commitment to principle: An opportunist. No convincing commitment to any substantive political goals. Willing to sacrifice all supposedly core political goals for a significant political advantage.
b) Riskiness and consistency of behavior: Expect no evidence of will to risk power or personal safety in pursuit of goals. Expect pronounced inconsistency in pursuit of core goals and priorities, as well as pronounced inconsistency of strategies with stated core goals and priorities—where inconsistency delivers short-term political advantage.

c) Political organization: Within own organization, emphasis on top-down loyalty at the expense of political effectiveness. Desire to maintain top-down control of organization leads to predominance of “yes-men,” which tend to be drawn heavily from relatives and personal networks.

d) Corruption: Personal corruption common except where it threatens power. Client corruption a primary mechanism of serving power goals.
Leadership Templates for Potential Ethno-Territorial Conflicts

Table A1. Leadership Preferences in Potential Ethno-Territorial Conflicts: Serbia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Executive Leadership: Slobodan Milošević</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moderate vs. Extreme Nationalist Dimension:</td>
<td>Initially sought Serbia-centered recentralization of power in Yugoslavia; but also declared that, if Slovenia, Croatia and other Republics seceded, would support secession of Croatian and Bosnian Serbs rather than fight to preserve a unified Yugoslavia. After crushing Albanian protests following reimposition of Serbian control in Kosovo, spoke of using force if necessary to defend Serb interests in Yugoslavia. Support for cultural but not political autonomy for Kosovo Albanians. In run-ups to wars in Croatia and Bosnia, supported local Serb efforts to acquire arms, consolidate local power, and set up de facto statelets. Negotiated on partition of Bosnia with Croatia, including possible Muslim “buffer state.” Criticized Slovenian moves toward independence, but responded to emphasizing narrower Serbian nationalists within a rump Yugoslavia that would result from Slovenia’s withdrawal. Made some statements in support of Serb interests in Macedonia, but didn’t show any significant interest in imposing Serbian control.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 1) Statements indicating the nature and intensity of nationalist goals and the costs and downside risks accepted in pursuing them, in the time-period examined. Includes will to initiate violence against the rival group in given relative power conditions; any proposed compromise agreements to avoid violence; will to initiate violence against own-group rivals; norms toward rival group, including legitimate goals and costs. | Seized power in Kosovo in 1989, but was not resisted by Kosovo Albanians. Accepted secession of Slovenia as means of gaining control over Yugoslav presidency, state, and especially JNA. Subsequently negotiated secession of Macedonia. Initiation of war in Croatia war. Similar initiation of war Bosnia. Croatia war initiation helped lead to shift of international (especially European) approach from emphasizing territorial integrity of Yugoslavia, to declaring Yugoslavia “dissolved” and recognizing any Republics that seceded through a democratic process. Bosnia war onset helped lead to international economic sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro alone. No commitment to democracy in Serbia, with political enemies targeted for harassment, beatings, and sometimes killings; elections regularly manipulated. Independent mass media almost entirely suppressed. From 1994, Milošević applied increasing pressure on Bosnian Serbs to make concessions, |

Foreshadowing his negotiations and agreement at Dayton, which later imposed a settlement. Late 1995 Croatian and Bosnian Croat-Muslim offensives were not resisted by Milošević, including “Z4 Plan” for autonomy in Croatian Serb regions. Use of force to achieve nationalist goals in Kosovo, Croatia and Bosnia was feasible, given collapse of all-Yugoslav institutions, significant relative military, economic and demographic strength, not only against much weaker Kosovo Albanians and Bosnian Muslims, but also against stronger Croatia. In 1995 Dayton Agreements, formally accepted defeat in Croatia, and severe setback in Bosnia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3) Indirect evidence in the time-period examined: moderation or extremism concerning other political goals or in personal life.</th>
<th>Campaigned for leadership of Serbian nationalist movement in 1987, despite lack of any previous commitment to the cause. Claimed simultaneous commitment to socialist principles, especially through his wife’s political activities. But routinely violated socialist principles in economic policymaking as well as in nationalities policies. Little evidence of consistent commitment to any substantive principles.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| 4) Direct and indirect evidence of moderation or extremism, before and after the period of potential conflict. | Little evidence of strong ideological commitment in early life and career. Before making bid for control of Serbia, was an “anonymous, great apparatchik” advanced by his patron Stambolić. In a long career as an LC functionary, rose quietly to a high position within the Serbian LC by 1986. After 1997, when Kosovo Liberation Army-led attacks and decentralized fighting commenced, ethnic cleansing and large-scale refugee flows twice prompted international intervention—the second time including bombing and invasion preparations that led to loss of Kosovo. Acquiesced in 1999 Kosovo defeat by withdrawing, albeit without formal acceptance. Concessions occurred only when military defeat was imminent. |

| 5) Moderate or extremist characteristics of promoted or supported fellow leaders within own political organizations. | Unlike the situations in Slovenia and Croatia, “Serbian dissidents, especially left-oriented and nationalist intellectuals, were assigned a relatively insignificant role…” Did not support leaders of stature within Serbian Socialist Party—rather eliminated or marginalized them where they existed or emerged. No commitment to internal party and general democracy; rather, used violence and |

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5 Judah, *Kosovo*, 75-102.
other state powers extensively to prevent political rivals from emerging or consolidating.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principlled vs. Unprincipled Dimension:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Consistency of stated goals; and consistency of strategies with stated goals. Includes record before and after the period of potential conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having hitherto shown little interest in Serbian nationalism in prior career as banker and party cadre and reliable loyalist of Yugoslav communism, Milošević used April 1987 Kosovo Polje speech to assume leadership of Serbian nationalist movement—following which he immediately purged Stambolić and other rivals from Serbian LC and state.7 “Tudjman, unlike Milošević, was a genuine nationalist…”8 Avoided limelight and was by every indication a reliable communist, until made bid for control of Serbia by “playing nationalist card.”9 Prewar move of Socialist Party (reformed Serbian LC) away from relations with Yugoslav LC also contradicted Milošević’s appeal for unity of the LC Yugoslavia.10 Before and in early stages of wars, took strong nationalist positions; but as political and military conditions deteriorated, struck more compromising, ordinary nationalist poses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Will to take political or personal risks to achieve stated goals. Includes record before and after period of potential conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 1987, never took actions that threatened his personal power in order to pursue proclaimed ideological goals. Rather, pursued or retreated from confrontation in manner that seemed calculated to solidify power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Evidence of principled beliefs and behavior in other policy areas and in personal life. Includes nature and extent of personal and client corruption. Includes record before and after period of potential conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No evidence of personal corruption, but evidence of nepotism. Massive corruption actively pursued in building politically supportive patron-client network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Principled or unprincipled characteristics of promoted and supported fellow leaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massive corruption among peers or subordinates cultivated as means to retain power and achieve political goals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Categorization: Highly power-seeking (3). Toward Kosovo, Croatia, and Bosnian Muslims, veered back and forth between more uncompromising strong nationalism (4) before and sometimes during conflicts, to more compromising ordinary nationalism (3) when wars went badly and political legitimacy was weakened. Took non-nationalist (1) position toward Slovenia and Macedonia in face of early resistance to recentralization of LC power in Yugoslavia. Rationale: Little or no evidence of consistently principled behavior. Statements and actions in Serbian nationalist cause became more or less extreme as political and military conditions dictated. While consistent goals existed, war initiation occurred repeatedly, apparently for short-term political advantage, regardless of the consequences for proclaimed nationalist goals. After

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7 Goldstein, Croatia, 202-4; Silber and Little, Death of Yugoslavia, 31-47.
8 Silber and Little, Death of Yugoslavia, 83.
9 Judah, Kosovo, 65.
10 Andrejevich, “Political Crisis in Serbia.”
political and military setbacks that began to pose significant risks to political power, showed little hesitation in accepting concessions and outcomes that were initially rejected out of hand. In Dayton Agreements, formally accepted defeat in Croatia, and severe setback in Bosnia. Acquiesced in Kosovo defeat by withdrawing, albeit without formal acceptance. Concessions occurred only when military defeat was imminent—indicating myopic focus on political consequences rather than long-term emphasis on stated nationalist goals. Lack of consistent commitment to any substantive goals makes it implausible to categorize even as moderately principled, e.g., in the manner of a “balanced” machine politician.

Sources: Andrejevich, “Political Crisis in Serbia”; Burg and Shoup, War in Bosnia-Herzegovina; Slavoljub Djukić, Milošević and Marković: A Lust for Power (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001); Goldstein, Croatia; Judah, Kosovo; Silber and Little, Death of Yugoslavia; Tanner, Croatia; Robert Thomas, Serbia under Milošević: Politics in the 1990s (London: Hurst, 1999).

Table A2. Leadership Preferences in Potential Ethno-Territorial Conflicts: Croatia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Executive Leadership: Franjo Tudjman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **1) Statements indicating the nature and intensity of nationalist goals and the costs and downside risks accepted in pursuing them, in the time-period examined.** Includes will to initiate violence against the rival group in given relative power conditions; any proposed compromise agreements to avoid violence; will to initiate violence against own-group rivals; norms toward rival group, including legitimate goals and costs. In 1989, principal founder of Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), the main center-right party that prioritized nationalist goals (independence) more than economic and political reforms of the Yugoslav system. Pursued independence peacefully, but ultimately with a will to initiate use of force to seize and defend it. Use of force to achieve independence feasible but not easy, given collapse of all-Yugoslav institutions and high Croatian state capacity on one hand, but large internal, border-concentrated Serb minority and determined support from Serbia proper and Bosnian Serbs. Support for cultural but not political autonomy for Croatian Serbs. Croatian Serb Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) leader Rasković: Tudjman ‘‘…represents what most Croats accept…..’’ He opined that Tudjman was ‘Croato-centric,’ but no Ustasha. His real hatred was reserved for the communists…’’ Yet Tudjman praised Tito for keeping Yugoslavia independent. After coming to power in April 1990 elections, “The new HDZ bosses were strong nationalists with an intolerant streak.” “Franjo Tudjman’s authoritarian behavior and style of governing contributed greatly to the general climate. He had absolute support and authority within his party, and transferred his style to his new state functions.”

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12 Silber and Little, Death of Yugoslavia, 86.
13 Tanner, Croatia, 230.
14 Goldstein, Croatia, 211.
proclaimed a policy of ‘reconciliation of all the Croats,’ which meant tolerance for extreme nationalism.”

“Tudjman’s HDZ was a broad church, more a movement than a party, of moderate and extreme nationalists. Tudjman spanned both wings.”

“Tudjman considered it was his historic mission to create an independent Croatian state and he found compromise on this issue extremely difficult.”

Although condemned Ustashe as “fascist criminals,” argued that fascist state advanced legitimate goal of Croatian statehood, and reportedly said, “Thank God my wife is not a Jew or a Serb.”

New constitution removed official recognition of Serbs as a “co-official” nationality, made widespread nationalist changes in symbols and names, maintained politicization of state media, and purged many Serbs from police and civil service. In meeting with Rasković, offered to consider Serb autonomy proposals, but did little in practice to reassure Serbs. “One must ask whether the Croatian authorities could have prevented the Serb insurrection and the war if they had followed a more considered policy: probably they could not have done so….However, fewer of them could have joined the other side if Croatian policy had been more intelligent, and the overall damage would have been less.”

Tudjman tried to get Rasković to enter his government. Rasković demanded equal titular status of Serbs with Croats within Croatia, rather than a specific autonomous region.

After clandestine rearming, Tudjman resisted Defense Minister Spigelj’s proposal to attack Croatian Serb de facto statelets preemptively. After June 1991 declaration of independence, during brief fighting in Slovenia, again rejected Spigelj’s plan to launch a preemptive encirclement of JNA bases in Croatia, on grounds that it would be “political suicide for democratic Croatia,” largely because of expected international condemnation.

Before Bosnia war, also sought to append Croat-controlled regions of Bosnia to Croatia, for example in meetings with Milosević. But also held out possibility of Muslim “buffer state.”

Aspired to maximum control over Bosnian Croat regions,

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15 Goldstein, *Croatia*, 212.
16 Silber and Little, *Death of Yugoslavia*, 96.
18 Silber and Little, *Death of Yugoslavia*, 86.
but also did not adopt an uncompromising position as he did toward Croatia proper.\textsuperscript{22}

| 2) Actions indicating the nature and intensity of nationalist goals and the costs and downside risks accepted in pursuing them, in the time-period examined. Includes initiation of war against rival group in given relative power conditions; acceptance of compromise proposals to end violence; initiation of violence toward own-group rivals. | Unilaterally declared and seized independence in June 1991, predictably triggering Serbian invasion to support Croatian Serbs. Agreed to cease-fire in November 1991, signed January 1992, that left large parts of Croatia in Croatian Serb hands. This was a recognition of the need for time to build strength, rather than a commitment to accept the outcome, but it might have been indefinite. Orthodox churches were often destroyed. Opposition media in Croatia were harassed, but no violence was used against Croat civilians. Democratic process in Croatia was preserved. Commitment to internal democracy qualified by some harassment of opposition, backtracking on democratic norms. But no violence against Croatian political opponents. Force used only to dismantle unofficial HOS (Croat) militia of Paraga.\textsuperscript{23} Sought to append Croat-controlled regions of Bosnia to Croatia. In Bosnia, initial cooperation between Tudjman and Izetbegović was formalized in July 1992. November 1991 declaration of separate Herceg-Bosna signaled dominance of interests of regionally dominant Herzegovina Croats over the dispersed Croat communities of Central Bosnia. International pressure (sanction threats) led Tudjman to agree to joint Federation with Bosnian Muslims in exchange for diplomatic and military support from U.S. (February 1994 Washington Agreement). Tudjman showed a general though grudging willingness to compromise, except on issues—such as independence—deemed fundamental and attainable. Lord Owen: “…unlike Milosević, who is a total pragmatist, Tudjman is an opportunist in the cause of Croatia…. He has one purpose in life, to control all the territory that he thinks historically belongs to Croatia, and to that end he will use any means.”\textsuperscript{24} “Z4 Plan” to exchange Croatian Serb autonomy for Croatian sovereignty accepted by Milosević and with reservations by Tudjman, but rejected by Croatian Serbs.\textsuperscript{25} As military tide turned and Croatian Serbs started to cave in diplomatically, Tudjman rushed the final offensive that quickly overran the Croatian Serb zones (except for eastern Slavonia). The Dayton Agreement was an outright victory on all of Croatia’s territory, and a de |

\textsuperscript{22} Burg and Shoup, \textit{War in Bosnia-Herzegovina}, 102-4; Goldstein, \textit{Croatia}, 204-6, 210-22; Silber and Little, \textit{Death of Yugoslavia}, 82-91, 105-17; Tanner, \textit{Croatia}, 221-60.
\textsuperscript{23} Tanner, \textit{Croatia}, 261-7.
\textsuperscript{24} Tanner, \textit{Croatia}, 293.
\textsuperscript{25} Tanner, \textit{Croatia}, 282-95.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>3) Indirect evidence in the time-period examined: moderation or extremism concerning other political goals or in personal life.</strong></th>
<th>Other priorities, such as political and personal freedoms, and economic reforms, were viewed more pragmatically rather than ideologically, and sometimes compromised to serve nationalist goals.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>4) Direct and indirect evidence of moderation or extremism, before and after the period of potential conflict.</strong></td>
<td>Tudjman showed tendency to make strong (if not extreme) ideological commitments throughout life—initially to Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav People’s Army (YPA). Fought as a partisan, became a YPA general at 38, and gravitated to ideological work. “He was ambitious and hard-working, and his historical texts were primarily those of a politician who wanted to adapt the interpretation of history to suit his political goals.” Fired during suppression of Croatian Spring, he developed “a kind of Croatian national programme.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5) Moderate or extremist characteristics of promoted or supported fellow leaders within own political organizations.</strong></td>
<td>HDZ included all types from far-right to center, with Tudjman functioning as the unifying force. Some of these leaders later became political rivals, though mainly after leaving the HDZ out of frustration. Significant if not total commitment to internal party democracy and statewide democracy helped generate many leaders with broadly similar preferences.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Principled vs. Unprincipled Dimension:**

| **1) Consistency of stated goals; and consistency of strategies with stated goals. Includes record before and after the period of potential conflict.** | Fought as a partisan and rose to rank of general before joining Croatian Spring nationalist movement. Thereafter remained solidly committed to the nationalist cause. Croatisan Serb SDS leader Rasković “accused the HDZ of harboring Ustashe sympathizers, but admired Tudjman personally as an honest politician. ‘He is a tough politician of clear conceptions who represents what most Croats accept. Tudjman is the kind of character who speaks quite openly about his intentions, and we like that…’” Lord Owen: “…unlike Milosevic, who is a total pragmatist, Tudjman is an opportunist in the cause of Croatia…. He has one purpose in life, to control all the territory that he thinks historically belongs to Croatia, and to that end he will use any means.” “Tudjman, unlike Milosevic, was a genuine nationalist…” “In spite of his Communist past, Tudjman’s nationalist credentials were in good order.” |

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27 Goldstein, *Croatia*, 204-6, 303-4.
28 Tanner, *Croatia*, 224.
29 Tanner, *Croatia*, 293.
30 Silber and Little, *Death of Yugoslavia*, 83.
2) Will to take political or personal risks to achieve stated goals. Includes record before and after period of potential conflict. Fought as a partisan during World War II. For dissident activity, sentenced to two years (served one) in prison during Croatian Spring, and again for three years in 1981. From 1989, was willing to risk confrontation and either arrest or war; risk to personal position and freedom greater than risk to life. Did not seek to create an authoritarian regime; left a party that ceded power after losing elections, and later returned to power in elections.32

3) Evidence of principled beliefs and behavior in other policy areas and in personal life. Includes nature and extent of personal and client corruption. Includes record before and after period of potential conflict. Fought as a partisan during World War II. Gravitated to ideological activity his whole adult life, first in YPA and later as a nationalist dissident. Significant corruption among HDZ elites used to solidify party control and personal influence. No evidence of personal corruption, but some nepotism.

4) Principled or unprincipled characteristics of promoted and supported fellow leaders. Many leaders of both types active in HDZ. A number of prominent HDZ members became critical of Tudjman and defected to join or form other parties.

Categorization: highly principled (1), strong nationalist (4) in the Serbia dyad. But an ordinary nationalist (3) vis-à-vis Bosnia, with the Bosnian Croat regions a lower priority both in statements and actions.

Rationale: Evidence on ideological commitment to nationalist cause uniform and strong. Stated will to go to war for independence, with high costs but also high probability of success to be expected. Careful to plan onset and conduct of war in manner that didn’t jeopardize objectives. On one hand, before war, failed to reassure Croatian Serbs about their future status, and refused any significant autonomy or official status compromise with Croatian Serbs. On other hand, agreed to cease-fire leaving large Croatian territories in Serb hands in late 1991; and compromised in setting up Bosnian Muslim-Croat Federation to avoid sanctions and gain support for restoring control over all of Croatia’s territory. Clearly not an extreme nationalist (5). Failure to consider more significant compromises before or during war indicates that he was more than an ordinary nationalist (3) vis-à-vis Serbia and the Croatian Serbs. Showed much more flexibility and will to compromise over Bosnian Croat regions. Consistent with this, strong internal control of HDZ and limited restrictions on opposition press freedoms and opposition political power, balanced by catch-all party encompassing many political notables (including potential rivals).


### Table A3. Leadership Preferences in Potential Ethno-Territorial Conflicts: Bosnian Muslims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Executive Leadership: Alija Izetbegović</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moderate vs. Extreme Nationalist Dimension:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) <em>Statements indicating the nature and intensity of nationalist goals and the costs and downside</em></td>
<td>Committed to long-term goal of making Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH) the titular nation-state of Bosnian Muslims, including a vague political role for Islam. In</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31 Silber and Little, *Death of Yugoslavia*, 84.
32 Goldstein, *Croatia*, 204-6; Tanner, *Croatia*, 201, 205.
risks accepted in pursuing them, in the time-period examined. Includes will to initiate violence against the rival group in given relative power conditions; any proposed compromise agreements to avoid violence; will to initiate violence against own-group rivals; norms toward rival group, including legitimate goals and costs.

short-run, acknowledged that this is not possible until Muslims constitute either 50% of the population (Islamic Declaration), or 70% of the population. At same time, agreed with secular-nationalist faction that BH should retain all of its territory and be administered as a centralized state. Embraced religious-nationalist identity, rather than secular-nationalist Muslim identity or pan-ethnic territorial-cultural identity. According to Mahmutćehajić, Izetbegović’s statements in the Islamic Declaration about how Islam could not peacefully coexist with non-Islamic institutions, and his rejection of state secularism, “robbed of legitimacy” those Muslims advocating multi-ethnic Bosniak identity. “When this statement of Izetbegovic’s is cited in the political arena, Bosniak policy—reasonably enough—cannot but appear to be a danger threatening all.” In advance of war, Izetbegović stated repeatedly that war would be preferable to remaining within Serbia-dominated rump Yugoslavia, even if “submission” would be for “15 years”; but at same time he minimized the likely cost, despite a highly adverse balance of power, given minority status with BH, near-certain support of Serbia and Croatia for their ethnic kin, encirclement with no outlet to the sea, and little expectation of active external support. Did not recognize collective goals of Serbs and Croats, but only their individual rights. Although insisted on war if necessary, did not seem to undertake any serious planning or preparation, which seems to have been organized, largely independently, by others. In parliamentary debate before declaring sovereignty, stated that “there will not be war” and “sleep peacefully” and at the same time, “the Muslims will defend themselves with great determination and survive.” Izetbegović emphasized multi-ethnic Bosniak identity in contacts with West, but emphasized Muslims as titular people in contacts with Islamic world. In December 1993, Izetbegović spoke out against “common life” of the three ethnicities.

2) Actions indicating the nature and intensity of nationalist goals and the costs and downside risks

Although didn’t initiate fighting, declaration of independence was the key step in precipitating fighting. Insisted on fighting rather than accepting either de jure

33 Silber and Little, Death of Yugoslavia, 208.
35 Burg and Shoup, War in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 77.
36 Burg and Shoup, War in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 77-8.
37 Silber and Little, Death of Yugoslavia, 215.
38 Burg and Shoup, War in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 194-7.
**accepted in pursuing them**, in the time-period examined. Includes initiation of war against rival group in given relative power conditions; acceptance of compromise proposals to end violence; initiation of violence toward own-group rivals.

Once war underway, long tolerated tremendous costs rather than compromise, but ultimately proved willing to compromise at Dayton. He showed a pattern of appearing to compromise and then drawing back, from prewar Cutleiro negotiations through late-war Tudjman-Milosevic negotiations. Did not use violence against Muslim political rivals except where they actively rebelled—as did Fikret Abdić.\(^{40}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3) Indirect evidence in the time-period examined: moderation or extremism concerning <em>other political goals or in personal life.</em></th>
<th>Committed to pan-Islamic political unity.(^{41}) Emphasis on Muslim religious identity in education and cultural policies.(^{42})</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4) Direct and indirect evidence of moderation or extremism, before and after the period of potential conflict.</td>
<td>As young man, during World War II, member of religious-nationalist Muslim Youth. In SFRY, early declaration of support for pan-Islamic state across Muslim world. Such public statements and activities predictably led to his imprisonment.(^{43})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Moderate or extremist characteristics of promoted or supported fellow leaders within own political organizations.</td>
<td>Within Bosnian Muslim Party for Democratic Action (SDA), frequently alleged to be “autocratic”; encouraged leaders that shared his strong religious-nationalist beliefs, but tolerated secular Muslim nationalists and those committed to multi-ethnic Bosniak identity. Examples are Zulfikarpašić and Silajdžić. Those that disagreed too much—e.g., over seeking prewar compromise with Serbs (Zulfikarpašić)—sooner or later ended up leaving the SDA and starting new parties.(^{44})</td>
</tr>
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### Principled vs. Unprincipled Dimension:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1) Consistency of stated goals; and consistency of strategies with stated goals. Includes record before and after the period of potential conflict.</th>
<th>For many decades, remained committed to long-term goal of Bosnia as titular state of Bosnian Muslims, defined religiously as well as ethnically.(^{45})</th>
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<tr>
<td>2) Will to take political or personal risks to achieve stated goals. Includes record before and after period of potential conflict.</td>
<td>During World War II, member of Young Muslims nationalist youth movement with ties to Ustashe (Croatian fascist) youth movement, but did not fight in the Ustashe-Partisan war. Was imprisoned in 1946 for Young Muslims membership. Imprisoned again in 1983 for advocating pan-Muslim religious nationalism that directly challenged...</td>
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\(^{42}\) Mahmutčehajić, *Denial of Bosnia*, 87.


incumbent Yugoslav system. From 1989, was willing to risk confrontation and either arrest or war; there was a risk to life as well as to personal position and freedom. Briefly seized and imprisoned by Bosnian Serb forces at Sarajevo Airport in May 1992.\textsuperscript{46}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3) Evidence of principled beliefs and behavior in other policy areas and in personal life. Includes nature and extent of personal and client corruption. Includes record before and after period of potential conflict.</th>
<th>No evidence of personal corruption. Tolerated corruption or criminality among subordinates insofar as this seemed necessary to pursue his goals. “Lack of transparency in use of funds,” but apparently in service of religious-nationalist goals.\textsuperscript{47}</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4) Principled or unprincipled characteristics of promoted and supported fellow leaders.</td>
<td>High-profile SDA leaders were generally principled. Sought to promote fellow leaders sharing his ideological beliefs.\textsuperscript{48}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Categorization: highly principled (1), strong nationalist (4), in both the Serbia and Croatia dyads. Rationale: Far-reaching religious-nationalist identity with titular national and substantively Islamic political goals, combined with repeatedly stated will to risk war under highly adverse conditions indicates at least strong nationalist. Prior to declaring independence, repeatedly stated will to go to war under prevailing circumstances. Treatment of own-group political organization indicates not an extreme nationalist. Also corroborated by ultimate willingness to compromise at Dayton. All evidence indicates purely principled. Tolerance of corruption seems intended instrumentally to consolidate and maintain personal political control so as to safeguard pursuit of objectives.  

\textsuperscript{46} Burg and Shoup, \textit{War in Bosnia-Herzegovina}, 66-8.  
\textsuperscript{47} Mahmutčehajić, \textit{Denial of Bosnia}, 87.  
\textsuperscript{48} Burg and Shoup, \textit{War in Bosnia-Herzegovina}, 66-8.