

Nationalism, Threat, and Support for External Intervention: Evidence from Iraq

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Abstract:

What drives citizens' attitudes toward external military intervention in a society experiencing an armed conflict? From colonial Algeria to contemporary Afghanistan, conventional wisdom holds that *nationalism* is a critical source of opposition and resistance to such intervention. In contrast, we argue that the impact of nationalism on views of external intervention hinges on the strategic context facing the target nation. When the country's principal threat is from the intervener itself, nationalism will indeed reduce support for outside intervention. But when the threat comes from elsewhere, nationalism will actually *boost* support for external intervention in order to defeat it. In order to investigate these dynamics, we use public opinion data from a unique survey fielded across Iraq in 2016 that includes questions about the military interventions against ISIL by both the U.S.-led Coalition and Iran, as well as a potential military intervention by Russia. The results are broadly consistent with our argument, showing that unlike other factors such as sectarianism, nationalism pushes Iraqis to seek foreign military help from any quarter when it is deemed necessary for national survival.

Iraq is a country that has, in many ways, been torn between multiple foreign interventions on its soil since 2003. On the one hand, the American-led Coalition invaded Iraq in March of that year and has been deeply engaged in Iraqi politics ever since. While the U.S.-led intervention has gone through several different periods, from the initial occupation to the ensuing transition to the “Surge” and the subsequent withdrawal of 2011, Western forces have remained heavily involved in the fighting to stabilize post-Saddam Iraq. Recently, this intervention has escalated again, with the U.S. and its allies being invited by the Iraqi government to help fight the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). On the other hand, the fall of Saddam Hussein and the subsequent rise to power of Iraq’s Shi’a Arab majority also brought far more Iranian intervention into the country, with powerful Iranian-backed militias and proxies often playing a leading role in Iraq’s politics. Now officially invited to help fight ISIL as well, Iran’s role has grown substantially since 2014. In this sense, the rise of ISIL only deepened the military intervention of both the U.S. as well as Iran in Iraq. So, too, has the ISIL threat increased the prospect of other key regional powers like Russia and Turkey becoming involved militarily in Iraq.

What shapes the Iraqi population’s support for these foreign military interventions? Are Iraqis willing to accept help against ISIL from any quarter, or only from their preferred patron? More broadly, what drives public support for external intervention in an ongoing civil conflict? From Yemen to Afghanistan and Somalia to Ukraine, these questions are of critical importance. For foreign interveners, local public support provides clear benefits that help them achieve their goals, such as collaboration with local military forces, information from local civilian communities, and backing from the nation’s political elite (Lyall 2010, Pape 2012). In contrast, public alienation can push these actors to ignore or even actively resist the intervening power. Moreover, in cases of multiple rival interventions, alienation from one intervener can push the society into

the arms of a rival, with serious political consequences for the target state. For example, if public opinion in Iraq tilts toward the “orbit” of Iran or Russia, it may lead to a very different internal security policy and power-sharing arrangement in the country than if it tilts toward the U.S.

Perhaps the most pervasive argument in the literature about what fuels popular opposition to foreign military occupation and intervention is that it is the product of nationalism (Pape 2005, Moaddel, Tessler, and Inglehart 2008). From the anti-colonial struggles in the mid 20th century to contemporary resistance campaigns in countries like Iraq or Afghanistan, nationalism is seen as a force that promotes resistance and opposition to foreign forces on one’s soil. Building on work on the pragmatic nature of nationalism in other arenas of world politics, however, we argue that this image is often inaccurate. In fact, we contend that when the nation is perceived as facing a dire security threat, people who have a strong national identity will actually be *more* supportive of foreign military help to defeat it. Moreover, under such conditions nationalists will be flexible about who provides that help. While strong sub-national identifiers will only support intervention from their group’s preferred champion, nationalists will accept help from any quarter if required. In this sense, nationalism is not always about xenophobia and anti-foreign resistance; sometimes it means simply putting the nation above other parochial interests.

In order to investigate these issues, we examine public opinion data from a unique survey fielded by the Iraqi polling firm IIACSS in late 2016 across government-controlled areas of Iraq. Fielded amid intense fighting to wrest parts of northern and western Iraq back from ISIL control, the survey asked civilians about their support for Coalition and Iranian – as well as possible Russian – intervention against the group, while also including questions about their group identities, political ideologies, perceptions of the security situation, and demographic profiles. Overall, the results are broadly consistent with our key propositions: while sectarian identities push Iraqis to

back their preferred foreign patron – with Sunni Arabs and Kurds supporting intervention by the Coalition, and Shi'a Arabs supporting the involvement of Iran and Russia – national attachment promotes greater support for intervention from all three sources. Moreover, these effects mainly occur among citizens whose sectarian identities would otherwise clash with the intervener, with nationalism pushing Shi'a Arabs toward the Coalition and Sunni Arabs toward Iran and Russia. Ultimately, these results challenge the simplistic view that nationalism only produces opposition to foreign military interventions on one's soil; it can often do just the opposite, depending on the circumstances facing the country.

Existing Literature on Nationalism and External Intervention

Before discussing how nationalism can impact public views toward foreign intervention, it is crucial to define what is meant by nationalism. There are a variety of specific definitions of nationalism in the literature, and scholars tend to use one or another depending on their theoretical or their empirical focus. But most widely-used definitions of nationalism stress that it is the idea that the national and political unit should be the same (Gellner 1983). Thus, those who are nationalists think that national identity – belonging to a particular nation-state – should be paramount over other kinds of identity (see, e.g., Ignatieff 1993). Nations may be defined by a number of different characteristics, such as shared ethnicity, language, religion, culture, or common sense of history. What is most important is that the individuals within the nation share the same concept of what the nation is and define themselves accordingly (Gellner 1983).

We use the concept of nationalism in the same manner addressed above. It is meant to be the idea that national identity – identifying with the nation-state – should supersede identification with other types of characteristics or attributes. Meanwhile, nationalism is also at times conflated

by scholars with a sense of national superiority, or what is sometimes called “ultra-nationalism.” This has fueled some conceptual confusion as to what nationalism constitutes as a basic concept. In this study, we treat nationalism not a sense of national superiority or chauvinism, but follow literature in political science and economics that treats it as the idea that national identity trumps sub-national or extra-national attachments (e.g., Huddy and Khatib 2007, Robinson 2016).

The notion that nationalism prompts resistance to foreign military troops or activities on one’s soil comes primarily from two literatures. The first is the literature on foreign occupation. The basic logic here is that nationalism becomes particularly potent during foreign occupations because they violate key norms of national sovereignty or self-determination, mobilizing target populations to defend their own institutions, practices, and values. At its core, foreign occupation is “incongruous with the goals of a national group to govern itself” (Edelstein 2004: 58). Indeed, from Algeria to East Timor, resistance movements against foreign occupation have often framed their appeals – and even named their movements – in terms of nationalism and the liberation of their national homelands (Collard-Wexler 2013: 35). Moreover, there is micro-level evidence to support this claim as well; Moaddel, Tessler, and Inglehart (2008) found that, while its impact varies across sub-national blocs, national pride was among the strongest predictors of public opposition to U.S. military occupation in a 2004 survey of Iraqis.

The second relevant literature from which this idea flows is research on civilian loyalties in conflicts. Recent contributions to this literature treat civilian populations as “ethnic partisans” whose wartime attitudes and behaviors are strongly shaped by preexisting in-group vs. out-group attachments (Lyall 2010, Lyall, Blair, and Imai 2013). In this view, civilians distinguish between the “home team” whose behavior is perceived more favorably and whose abuses are more easily forgiven, and the “away team” whose behavior is seen in a more hostile and cynical light (Lyall,

Blair, and Imai 2013). This framework is important for our purpose because foreign belligerents – as a clear “away team” – are particularly likely to provoke backlash among target populations. Indeed, there is empirical evidence that civilians are more likely to react hostilely to violence by foreign (as opposed to domestic) counterinsurgent forces (Silverman 2018). These dynamics are often aggravated because foreign combatants tend to resort to more indiscriminate tactics due to their limited intelligence and experience in the targeted areas (Lyll 2010).

In sum, based on extant conflict research, there is substantial reason to view nationalism as a force that generates public opposition to external military intervention in an armed conflict. While other variables have been identified as important in shaping attitudes toward intervention as well, nationalism has a special place in theoretical models of what fuels opposition to foreign military presence or activity in a given society.

Theoretical Argument: Nationalism, Threat, and Support for Intervention

In contrast to this existing literature, we argue that nationalists are not reflexively against external military interventions on their soil; rather, their attitudes hinge in important ways on the strategic context facing the country in question. Indeed, the argument builds on research showing that nationalism often serves pragmatic and internationalist ends in other arenas of world politics. For example, in the realm of foreign economic policy, Shulman (2000) shows how the traditional idea of nationalists as fundamentally against globalization and economic integration is erroneous. Rather, while nationalist actors do sometimes support isolationism and protectionism as a means of economic or cultural control, they also often have strong incentives for integration as a way to strengthen their economies and advance the national interest. Shulman illustrates these dynamics through case studies of the foreign economic policies promoted by nationalist parties in Quebec,

India, and Ukraine, tracing how different sets of incentives pushed many nationalists to embrace – rather than eschew – deeper integration into global markets.

Yet, while studies like these have shown that nationalists often invite foreign influence in the economic or political domains, does this apply to the military domain as well? In some ways, this is a “hard test” for these arguments.¹ Nationalists are heavily invested in the sovereignty and autonomy of the nation-state (e.g., Breuilly 1985), something often in sharp tension with the idea of allowing foreign armies onto one’s soil. Moreover, while foreign influence in the economic or political arenas may simply mean allowing foreign advisors in the halls of power, it is arguably a much more visible affront to national sovereignty to have foreign troops or forces roaming one’s streets (or skies) and policing one’s populace. As a poor Confederate recruit stated simply when asked why he was fighting by some Northern troops: “I’m fighting because you’re down here.”² Indeed, the presence of “outside” forces in one’s historic homeland might simply be too difficult for many who identify deeply with it to accept. In sum, there are substantial reasons to think that nationalists may not be as “pragmatic” when it comes to allowing external military interventions on their soil as they are when thinking about joining the global economy.

In this article, however, we build on the existing literature and argue that nationalists *are* often willing to embrace external interventions on their soil depending on the strategic situation. In particular, we argue that nationalism makes citizens more opposed to whatever is seen as the main threat to the nation. When that threat emanates from the intervener itself, nationalism will indeed *reduce* support for outside intervention. However, when it emanates from another source, nationalism will actually *bolster* support for external intervention as a way to defeat it. The logic of this is that, when the survival or sovereignty of their nation is at risk, nationalists – those who

¹ We thank an anonymous reviewer for suggesting this framing of our contribution.

² Quote from Shelby Foote in Ken Burns et al. *The Civil War*. Burbank, CA: PBS Home Video. 2004.

put the fate of their nation above other interests – will be more likely to support whatever means are needed to save it. Indeed, the argument is rooted in the oft-overlooked record of pragmatism on the part of countries under occupation with regards to their security situation. In the words of David Edelstein, “nothing provides legitimacy to an occupation more than the provision of security” (2004: 71). From the U.S. occupations of West Germany and Japan post WWII to the Soviet occupation of Armenia in 1920, foreign troops have often provoked little resistance when target populations have felt that they were the “lesser evil” and helped to deter a powerful invader on their doorstep (Collard-Wexler 2013: 46). Under these conditions, we argue, nationalists will actually be *more* supportive of external military intervention to defend the nation.

At the same time, we also recognize that nationalism is not the only identity that matters; sub-national communal identities – such as tribal, ethnic, sectarian, or religious affiliations – are likely to play a key role as well. Indeed, such identities are often highly salient in civil conflicts, and there is evidence that they can strongly shape civilian views (Kaltenthaler and Miller 2015). Yet, we argue that sub-national identities operate differently than nationalist ones with regard to foreign intervention. Specifically, sub-national communal identities are likely to push citizens to support only the foreign interveners seen as the patrons of their own sub-national identity group. This is because such citizens care most about the fate of their own sub-national identity group, and interveners will not be seen as equally favorable to all such groups.³ In contrast, nationalism will make citizens more opposed to whatever is viewed as the primary threat to the nation, rather than to their own sub-national community. Thus, whereas sub-national identities push citizens toward particular foreign interveners, national ones push them toward any intervener that can aid the nation when it is under threat.

³ This is because external military intervention is likely to help some communities in the conflict more than others, either intentionally (by explicitly intervening on their behalf) or unintentionally (by attempting to stop the fighting, which will benefit the weaker side and constrain the stronger one).

How does this theoretical argument apply to popular support for the Coalition and Iranian interventions against ISIL in Iraq? Following the theory, we should first expect to see differences between the three key sub-national identity groups in Iraq – Sunni Arabs, Shi’a Arabs, and Kurds – in terms of their support for the different interventions. The place to start thinking about this is with the Shi’a Arabs, the largest of the three groups. While Iraq’s Sunni Arabs initially harbored the strongest grievances against the U.S. and its allies after the 2003 invasion and elimination of Sunni minoritarian rule, that status has since passed to the country’s Shi’a Arab majority. This is because Shi’a Arabs share an important sectarian identity with Iran, which has pushed to expand their influence in post-Saddam Iraq by backing militias and parties that pursue Shi’a dominance of the country (Al-Ali 2014, Sowell 2015). In contrast, the U.S. and its allies have largely acted as a check on Iranian and Shi’a Arab supremacy in Iraq by promoting a “power-sharing model” and pressuring successive Shi’a-led governments in Baghdad – first under Prime Minister (PM) Nouri Al-Maliki from 2006-14, then PM Haider Al-Abadi from 2014-18 – to *share power* with the Sunni Arabs (and Kurds) in order to foster stability and avoid sectarian strife (Phillips 2005, Gordon and Shadid 2010). Thus, for over a decade, Iraq’s Shi’a Arabs have found their new majority status *stifled* by the U.S. and *unshackled* by Iran, leading them to be the major sect in Iraq most opposed to the U.S. and its allies and supportive of Iranian involvement.⁴ Meanwhile, with Russia positioning itself close to Iran and Shi’a power in the region (including in its unwavering military backing of the Bashar Al-Assad regime in Syria) (e.g., Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2018), we expect this sectarian logic to extend there and Iraqi Shi’a to largely support Russian involvement in the country as well. In sum, we thus hypothesize:

⁴ Indeed, a recent public opinion survey in Iraq fielded in 2012 shows that Shi’a Arabs are the major identity group most supportive of increased Iranian involvement in the country, and that they are among the most negative toward greater American involvement (Kose, Ozcan, and Karakoc 2016).

H1a: Shi'a Arabs will be significantly more likely to support the Iranian and the potential Russian interventions, and to oppose the Coalition intervention.

Due to the nature of sectarian competition in post-Saddam Iraq, the allies of Shi'a Arabs are likely to be perceived as adversaries by Sunni Arabs. In particular, Iran will be viewed more unfavorably by Sunni Arabs due to its support for expanded Shi'a Arab influence (Kose, Ozcan, and Karakoc 2016). In contrast, while there is still substantial lingering hostility toward the U.S. and its allies in the Sunni Arab community, they will generally be seen more favorably by Sunni Arabs as a counter-weight to this Iranian power. Moreover, because the Coalition has used force with more restraint than Iranian-backed militias toward the Sunni Arab communities under ISIL control, it will receive a more positive assessment from them. In sum, Iran is likely to be seen as a dire threat by Sunni Arabs, whereas the Coalition is much more likely to be seen as a protector. Russia, too, due to its close ties with Iran as well as its support for the oppression of Sunni Arabs in neighboring Syria, is likely to be opposed by the country's Sunni Arab population. This logic yields the hypothesis:

H1b: Sunni Arabs will be significantly more likely to support the Coalition intervention and oppose the Iranian and the potential Russian interventions.

Iraqi Kurds are an ethnic community that has endured a long history of mistreatment and oppression in the country. During Saddam's reign, the treatment of Kurds bordered on genocide (as during the infamous 1988 Halabja Massacre), and in post-Saddam Iraq relations between the country's Kurds on the one hand and the Shi'a and Sunni Arabs on the other have been severely strained by the Kurds' desires for more autonomy and control over their oil wealth. Dating back to at least the 1st Gulf War, the U.S. has actively aided and protected the Iraqi Kurds in one way or another. This aid continues today, as the Iraqi Kurds are perceived by the U.S. as an essential

and powerful ally against ISIL. In contrast, we do not have a clear prediction about Iraqi Kurds' views toward Iranian intervention, as their relationship with Iran is mixed and dependent on key factional differences in the Kurdish community. Russia, again due to its increasingly close affiliation with Iran in the region, is likely to be seen in a similarly mixed way by the nation's Kurds. In sum, based on the sub-national identity logic we thus hypothesize:

H1c: Kurds will be significantly more likely to support the Coalition intervention and will have no clear pattern of support toward the Iranian or Russian intervention.

While sub-national communal identity is vitally important in Iraq, so is national identity. Iraq has a tradition of nationalism that pre-dates the founding of the modern state (Wien 2008). Under Ottoman and British rule, Iraqi nationalists – people who argued that there was a unique and unifying Iraqi sense of identity that should result in the creation of a sovereign Iraqi state – admonished those who lived in modern-day Iraq to forgo old allegiances to tribe, clan, territory, sect, religion, or ethnicity and focus on their emerging national identity as “Iraqi” (Eppel 1998). In the post-independence period, Iraqi nationalism became the main credo of the Ba’athists, who ruled the country from 1958 until 2003 (Dawisha 1999). Under their rule, nationalism was a concept taught in every school and used liberally in state-controlled media. Of course, as indicated by the various ethnic and sectarian insurrections that occurred in Iraq, particularly in the 1980s-1990s, this effort at promoting nationalism never met with complete success. That said, surveys show that there is a strong sense of nationalism and national pride in contemporary Iraq even in the face of the country’s recent political turmoil (Moaddel, Tessler, and Inglehart 2008).

Following our theoretical framework, we contend that nationalists care above all about the sovereignty and integrity of the nation and will oppose whatever is viewed as the principal threat to the nation-state, rather than to their own sub-national identity group. In particular, we

hypothesize that given the acute threat to the sovereignty and integrity of Iraq posed by ISIL's insurgency after 2014, nationalism will push Iraqis to seek assistance from any source against it. Indeed, ISIL represented an acute threat to Iraqi nationalists as a *transnational* Islamist insurgency across both Iraq and Syria (among other nations), with a stated desire to erase the borders of the Levant and establish a transnational Islamic Caliphate, and an organizational structure comprised in no small part of foreign fighters hailing from beyond Iraq. With the group achieving a string of victories in 2014 and threatening to make this aspiration a political reality, then, Iraqis who cared deeply about the fate of their country would back intervention from any source in order to preserve it. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H2: Iraqi nationalists will be significantly more likely to support the Coalition, Iranian, and potential Russian interventions against ISIL.

In addition to this, we can also extract some predictions about the impact of nationalism not just nationally but by sub-national identity group – that is, among Shi'a Arabs, Sunni Arabs, and Kurds. In particular, when we look by sub-group, we should expect nationalism to have the clearest impact in generating support for intervention *among those groups that would otherwise oppose an intervention*. In Iraq, for instance, we should see nationalism pull Sunni Arabs toward Iranian and Russian intervention and Shi'a Arabs toward Coalition intervention. This is because, among groups already supportive of a specific intervener for sectarian reasons (e.g., Shi'a Arabs toward Iran), being more nationalist should do little to elevate this already-high level of support. Rather, it is only among communities whose sectarian loyalties “naturally” lean in another direction where we should see the pragmatic impact of nationalism open them up toward the need for an undesirable intervention if circumstances warrant. Indeed, if we see this pattern in the data, it will offer the strongest evidence in favor of our thesis, since we will not be finding that national-

ism makes “co-sectarians” more zealous supporters of an intervention, but that it makes “non-co-sectarians” – those who might otherwise oppose it – more sympathetic. In sum:

H3: Nationalism will have the strongest effect in fueling support among the Shi'a Arabs in the case of the Coalition's intervention, and among the Sunni Arabs in the case of the Iranian and potential Russian interventions.

Data and Variables:

In order to explore these hypotheses, we use data from a unique nationally representative survey of Iraq administered by the Iraqi polling firm IIACSS in September and October of 2016. Fielded amid intense fighting to reclaim parts of northern and western Iraq from ISIL, the survey was conducted with multi-stage stratified probability sampling of the entire adult (18+) populace of the country, excluding territory under direct ISIL control (chiefly Mosul). The survey spanned urban and rural areas throughout the country; the Primary Sampling Units (PSUs) were blocks in urban areas and villages in rural areas. The interviews were done face-to-face by a mixed-gender team of veteran Iraqi enumerators, with women interviewing women and men interviewing men. Ultimately, the survey includes 3,500 respondents, with a 2,500 N original sample and a 1,000 N “booster sample” of Sunni Arab governorates and internally displaced persons (IDPs) from areas under ISIL control.

Great care was taken to ensure the safety of all of our respondents as well as enumerators. No interviews from ISIL-controlled areas were used in the study. After the interviews were done, the survey was weighted using demographic information from the 1997 and 2010 enumeration of all households in Iraq supplemented with 2015 projections from the Iraqi Central Organization of Statistics (COSIT). To probe for falsification of responses, we used the program “Percentmatch”

and found no evidence that it occurred (see Online Appendix, Figure A1). Analysis of these data has been IRB approved.

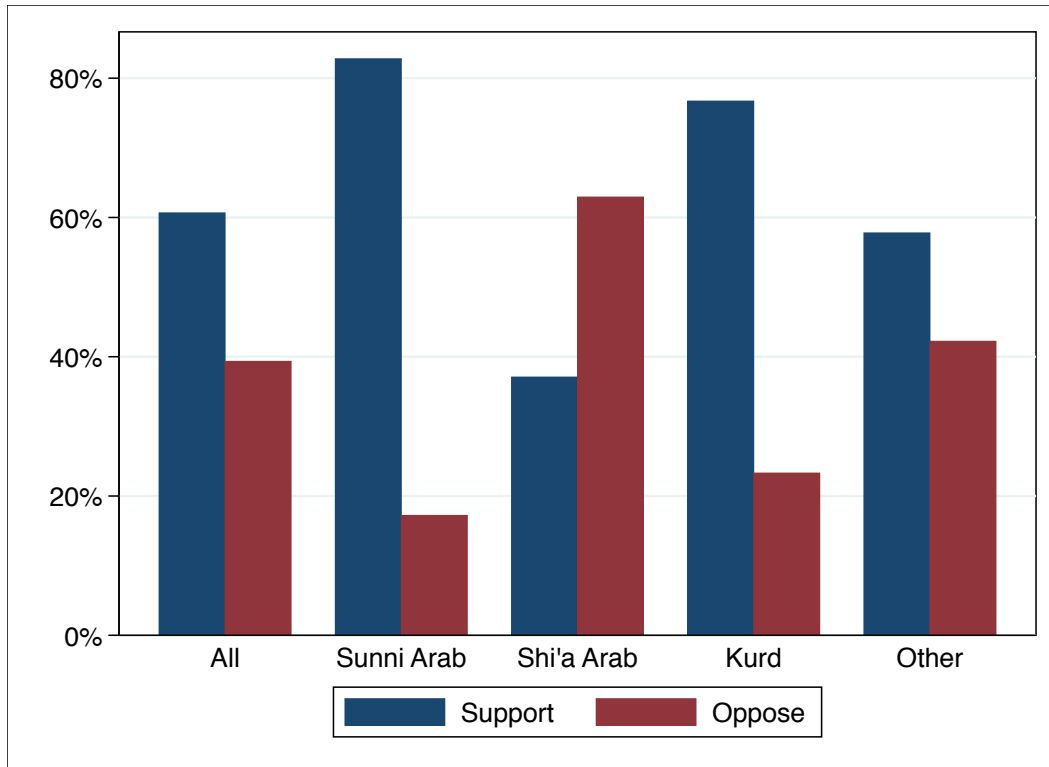
Demographically, the sample is 54.2% male, with roughly half of the respondents under age 35 and over half not reaching secondary school. The ethnic and sectarian distribution of the sample is 12.9% Kurd, 39.0% Sunni Arabs, and 45.4% Shi'a Arabs (the Sunni Arab percentage is slightly inflated given the intentional oversample). Overall, these demographics are similar to other high-quality surveys in Iraq such as the Arab Barometer. Key demographic characteristics of our sample are compared with the second and third waves of the Arab Barometer – fielded in Iraq in 2011 and 2013 respectively – as well as recent Iraqi COSIT projections in more detail in Table A1 in the Online Appendix.

Substantively, the survey contained a number of different batteries of questions, with key modules about citizens' perceptions of the major challenges that face Iraq, their levels of support for the political leaders and groups in the country, their means of acquiring political information, their views of sectarian and ethnic tensions in the country, and their attitudes toward ISIL and its opponents (including external interveners) in the ongoing conflict. We also collected a wealth of demographic information about each person, notably their socioeconomic profile, experiences in the conflict, and ethnic and sectarian affiliation. Overall, these data afford a unique opportunity to examine the sources of public support for – and opposition to – multiple external interventions in a country engulfed in armed conflict.

Within this context, our central focus is Iraqi public support for the military interventions against ISIL by the U.S.-led Coalition and Iran and the potential military intervention against the group by Russia. The question on support for the Coalition's intervention is: *“As you may know, a Coalition of Arab and Western countries have been engaging in military airstrikes against the*

group known as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Do you support or oppose these airstrikes?” Possible responses ran along a four-point scale ranging from oppose strongly (1) to support strongly (4).

Figure 1: Iraqi Views of Coalition Military Campaign Against ISIL



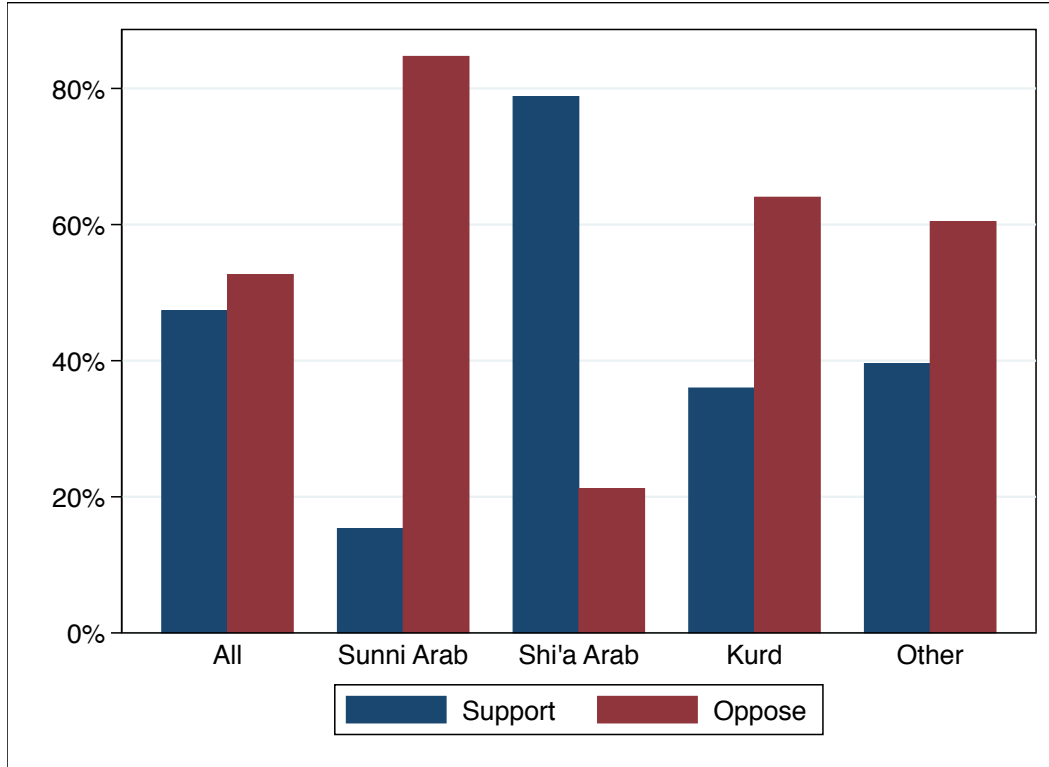
Note: figure shows the percentage of respondents who reported that they support (strongly or somewhat) vs. oppose (strongly or somewhat) the Coalition military campaign against ISIL, among the full sample and sectarian blocs.

Figure 1 shows the breakdown of support for the Coalition airstrikes among the primary ethnic and sectarian groups in the country. As can be seen, there is a strong ethnic and sectarian divergence in attitudes toward the campaign. In particular, Sunni Arabs are the most supportive of the Coalition’s airstrikes with a vast majority (82%) in favor of the operations, followed by a solid majority (67%) of the Kurds and only a minority (36%) of Shi’a Arabs, with other smaller minority groups in between. Overall, this is broadly consistent with conventional perceptions of

how Iraq's three key communal groups view the U.S. and its allies' involvement in the country. Indeed, while Iraqi Shi'a Arabs had originally been more favorable toward the U.S. role in their country following the 2003 invasion that overthrew Sunni Arab minoritarian rule, many have to come to view the U.S. not as an ally but as a biased partner or even direct opponent. In contrast, while Sunni Arabs had initially been quite hostile toward the U.S. following the invasion, many have become more favorable toward the Coalition over time as a constraint on Shi'a dominance and Iranian influence. Meanwhile, the Kurds have generally seen the U.S. as an ally due to their close relationship with Washington dating back several decades.

To capture Iraqi popular support for Iranian military operations against ISIL, respondents were asked the following question: "*Thinking now about Iran: do you support or oppose Iranian military activities against ISIL in Iraq?*" As before, the potential responses ran along a four point scale ranging from oppose strongly (1) to support strongly (4). The distribution of support across groups is shown in Figure 2. Overall, support for Iranian intervention is not as strong as support for Coalition intervention.. Yet when viewed through an ethnic and sectarian lens, the same clear differences again emerge. In particular, only a small minority of Sunni Arabs back Iranian military actions against ISIL in their country from 2015 to 2017, while the vast majority of Shi'a Arabs back these actions (and Kurds and other minorities again fall in the middle). These differences reflect the starkly divergent perceptions of Iran's influence in Iraq, with most Sunni Arabs (and some Kurds) seeing an oppressor and threat and most Shi'a Arabs (and some Kurds) seeing a protector and patron.

Figure 2: Iraqi Views of Iranian Military Activities Against ISIL

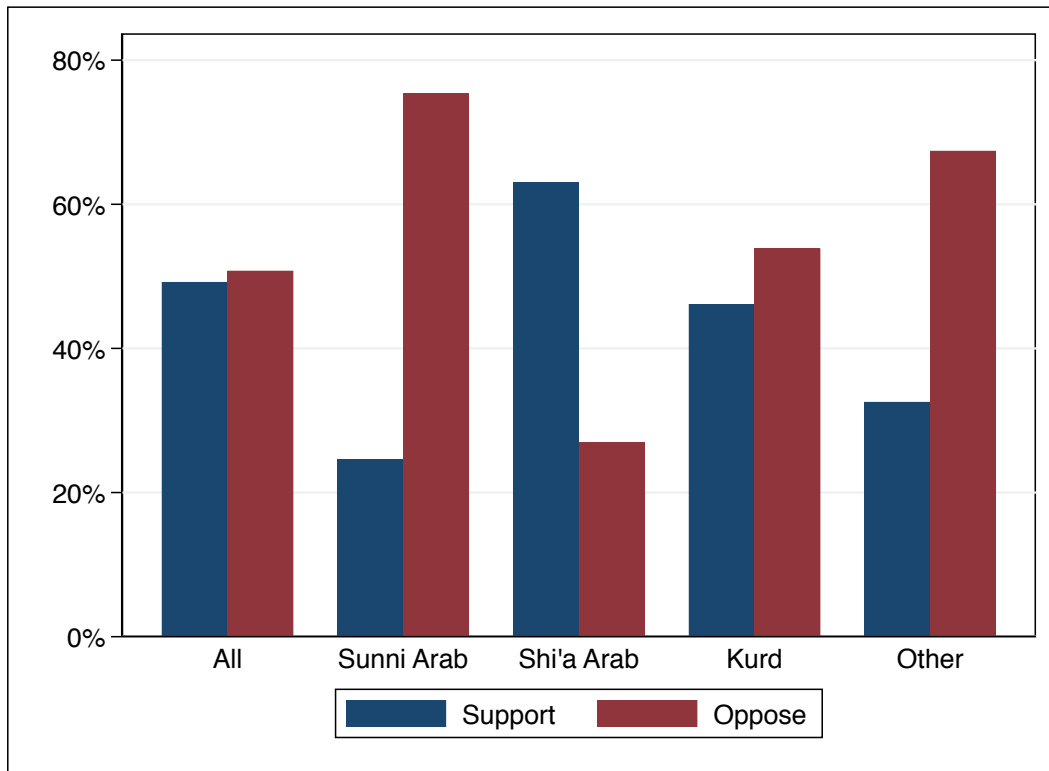


Note: figure shows the percentage of respondents who reported that they support (strongly or somewhat) vs. oppose (strongly or somewhat) Iranian military activities against ISIL, among the full sample and sectarian blocs.

For the possibility of Russian intervention against ISIL, we used the following question: *“If Russia began military activities in Iraq, would you support or oppose those activities?”* The question was embedded squarely in a battery of questions about the ongoing conflict with ISIL – right after the question about Iranian activities to fight ISIL and before one about Iranian-backed militias fighting it – so the anti-ISIL context was clear. Once again, possible responses ran along a four-point scale from strongly oppose (1) to strongly support (4). The distribution of attitudes by group is shown in Figure 3. Overall, the picture mirrors the Iranian case, with a similar level of overall support (49.2%) along with a clear Shi’a vs. Sunni divide. In particular, the vast majority of Sunni Arabs (74.4%) are against Russian intervention, while most Shi’a Arabs (63.0%) are in favor (though this Shi’a-Sunni gap is not quite as stark as it was with Iran). Meanwhile, Kurds

are fairly evenly split on the issue, with 46% of Kurdish respondents supporting Russian military intervention in the country and 54% being opposed.

Figure 3: Iraqi Views of Potential Russian Military Intervention against ISIL



Note: figure shows the percentage of respondents who reported that they support (strongly or somewhat) vs. oppose (strongly or somewhat) Russian military intervention against ISIL, among the full sample and sectarian blocs.

To capture sub-national identity groups, we simply use respondents' self-reported ethnic and sectarian identification. While there are numerous ethnic and sectarian communities in Iraq, given the dominant cleavages in Iraq's political landscape, we separated Iraqis into Sunni Arabs (N=1,365), Shi'a Arabs (N=1,589), Kurds (N=451), and other (N=95) (which consists primarily of smaller minority groups in the country).

To measure Iraqi national identity, we use the following question: *Which of the following do you consider the most important for giving you a sense of who you are (identity) as a person?*

The potential responses included “My town/locality/region,” “Shi’a/Sunni/Christian distinction,” “My tribe,” “My job/occupation,” “My ethnicity (Arab/Kurd/Assyrian/Turkmen, etc.),” “Being a citizen of Iraq,” or “Being a citizen of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (only asked in IKR)” as well as don’t know and no response options. Using this question, nationalists were coded as those whose primary identity derives from *identification with the nation-state* (here, Iraq) as opposed to other (local, regional, tribal, religious, occupational, etc.) social groupings or categories. Indeed, while there are different ways to measure nationalism (De Figueirido and Elkins 2003, Davidov 2009), national identity is perhaps the most fundamental and non-ideological measure available (Huddy and Khatib 2007). In the U.S., for instance, while a particular set of national symbols, leaders, or institutions may appeal more to liberals or conservatives, the notion of identifying as “American” does not depend on one’s political ideology.

In addition, to gauge more material considerations, we use a question about respondents’ perceptions of the security situation: “*Would you say that the country’s security situation is very good, somewhat good, somewhat poor, or very poor?*” While we would ideally use more direct questions about the consequences of the interventions themselves, these are not available across all interventions; as a result, we use the perceived national security situation as a proxy measure in the base model. The basic idea is that, because the survey was fielded in the midst of substantial ongoing military interventions against ISIL, and among respondents residing in areas under government control, the perceived security situation and perceived efficacy of the interventions will be closely linked in their minds. That is, Iraqis who believe that security is still “very poor” in mid-2016 are far more likely to see the military interventions against ISIL as failing, whereas those who see it as “very good” are far more likely to view them as having been successful.

We also include a measure of Islamist ideological orientations in order to account for the role of more values-based considerations on Iraqi attitudes toward the two foreign interventions. In particular, we use the following item in the models: *“Are the religious views expressed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) very close to your own views, somewhat close to your own views, somewhat different from your own views, or very different from your own views?”* Over 17% of our sample said something other than “very different” in response to the question. While at first glance this question appears to be tapping into attitudes toward ISIL in particular, closer inspection shows that many of these individuals are in fact culturally conservative Kurds and Shi’a Arabs who oppose ISIL when asked in a direct fashion. Thus, this item may be better seen as a general gauge of Salafist leanings or theocratic religious orientations.

Finally, we include several basic demographic characteristics about the respondents (age, gender, education, and income) as covariates in our models, with additional demographic factors added later in the robustness checks. Table A2 in the Appendix contains descriptive statistics for all of the key variables used in the analysis, and Table A3 presents a variance-covariance matrix. Because the dependent variables are inherently ordered in nature (with four values indicating increasing levels of support) but the differences between their values may not be equal (that is, the gap from “oppose strongly” to “oppose somewhat” may not equal that from “oppose somewhat” to “support somewhat”), we employ ordered probit regressions to test our hypotheses.⁵ To ensure that our results are not sensitive to model selection choices, however, we also replicate them with ordinary least squares (OLS) and find no substantive change (see Appendix, Table A8).

⁵ Indeed, if the outcomes were not ordered, a multinomial logit model would likely be most appropriate, and if the gaps between values were about equal, one might reasonably think of the outcome as continuous and opt for OLS. Conventionally, ordinal probit and logit models are also frequently used when the outcome is ordinal and has more than two and less than five different values, as is the case here.

Empirical Results

Table 1: Base Models of Iraqi Support for Coalition, Iranian, and Russian Intervention

	(M1) Coalition	(M2) Iran	(M3) Russia	(M4) Coalition	(M5) Iran	(M6) Russia
Sunni Arab	0.59** (0.12)	-0.72** (0.12)	-0.44** (0.12)	0.53** (0.13)	-1.00** (0.13)	-0.50** (0.13)
Shi'a Arab	-0.47** (0.12)	0.97** (0.12)	0.76** (0.12)	-0.47** (0.12)	0.76** (0.13)	0.73** (0.13)
Kurd	0.60** (0.13)	0.06 (0.13)	0.17 (0.13)	0.59** (0.15)	0.06 (0.15)	0.27+ (0.15)
National identity	0.13** (0.04)	0.07+ (0.04)	0.10* (0.04)	0.12** (0.04)	0.11* (0.05)	0.09* (0.05)
Security situation				0.59** (0.12)	-0.72** (0.12)	-0.44** (0.12)
Islamist ideology				-0.47** (0.12)	0.97** (0.12)	0.76** (0.12)
Age				0.60** (0.13)	0.06 (0.13)	0.17 (0.13)
Gender				0.13** (0.04)	0.07+ (0.04)	0.10* (0.04)
Education				0.59** (0.12)	-0.72** (0.12)	-0.44** (0.12)
Income				-0.47** (0.12)	0.97** (0.12)	0.76** (0.12)
1 st Cutpoint	-0.88** (0.12)	-0.41** (0.12)	-0.44** (0.12)	-0.51** (0.17)	-0.93** (0.17)	-0.98** (0.17)
2 nd Cutpoint	-0.14 (0.12)	0.31** (0.12)	0.28* (0.12)	0.26 (0.17)	-0.22 (0.17)	-0.27 (0.17)
3 rd Cutpoint	0.90** (0.12)	1.39** (0.12)	1.46** (0.12)	1.31** (0.17)	0.89** (0.17)	0.94** (0.17)
Observations	3,343	3,430	3,348	2,960	3,013	2,948

Note: Results from ordered probit regressions. Standard errors in parentheses

** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1

We begin these tests with simple models including only sectarian dummies as well as our measure of nationalism, and then add additional explanatory factors in order to account for other sources of support for the two interventions.

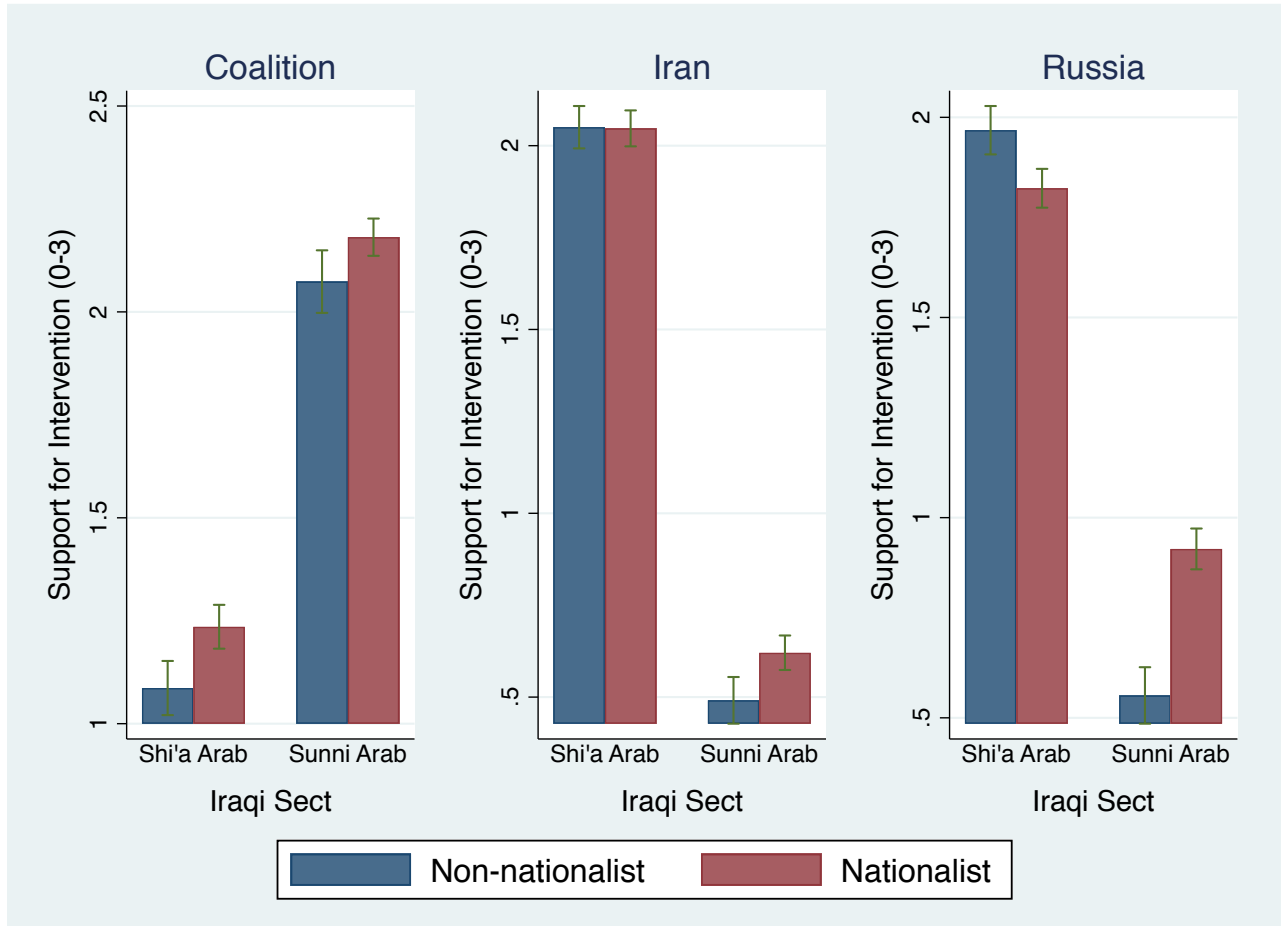
The results of these base models are shown in Table 1. Models 1 and 4 predict support for Coalition intervention, Models 2 and 5 predict support for Iranian intervention, and Models 3 and 6 predict support for Russian involvement. Two key points emerge. First, sub-national identity is

a strong predictor of support for intervention, but different identities work in different directions. Indeed, being a Sunni Arab significantly predicts support for the Coalition's campaign and opposition to the Iranian and Russian interventions. In contrast, being a Shi'a Arab significantly predicts support for Iranian and Russian involvement, and opposition to the Coalition's campaign. And being an Iraqi Kurd significantly predicts endorsement of the Coalition's campaign, as well as (to a lesser degree) backing Russia's (but not Iran's) involvement. Overall, these results show that sub-national identities are pushing citizens to support involvement by their preferred patron (*H1*). Second, we can see that nationalism is also a significant predictor of support for intervention but in a more uniform fashion. Specifically, national identity significantly predicts support for intervention by the Coalition ($p < 0.01$), Iran ($p < 0.1$), and Russia ($p < 0.05$) against ISIL (*H2*). This offers preliminary evidence that, while sub-national identities push Iraqis to seek help from the sources favorable to their group, nationalism pushes them to seek aid from any quarter when necessary for the nation.

Other variables have some notable effects as well. In particular, favorable perceptions of the nation's security situation significantly boost support for intervention by the Coalition but not Iran or Russia. This may imply, as suggested earlier, that those who think that Iraq is safe believe the Coalition's activities are an important part of the reason why. Additionally, Islamist ideology has no influence on support for Coalition intervention, but it does elevate support for Iranian and Russian involvement. Lastly, the demographic variables exert some influence as well, with lower levels of income and higher levels of education boosting support for the Coalition interventions – and the reverse being true for Iranian and Russian participation.

Sub-Group Analysis:

Figure 4: Support for Each Intervention Among Nationalists and Non-Nationalists, by Sect



Note: figure shows the mean levels of support for each intervention among those who did and did not identify chiefly with the nation for both Shi'a and Sunni Arab respondents.

Next, we turn to the results by sub-group in order to dig more deeply into our hypotheses. Indeed, Figure 4 shows the average level of support for all three interventions among nationalists and non-nationalists of each group, with 90% confidence intervals. The panel on the left displays these levels of support for the Coalition intervention, the one in the middle presents them for the Iranian intervention, and the one on the right shows them for the Russian intervention. We focus here on Sunni Arabs and Shi'a Arabs and exclude the Kurds, both because Kurds have very few

(n=15) national identifiers to investigate, and because, following H3, we are focusing on groups that tend to be opposed to one of the major interventions to see if nationalism effectively softens that opposition.

As can be seen, we find intriguing evidence consistent with our hypotheses. In particular, we can see that where a sect already shows strong support for a particular intervention – notably, Sunni Arabs toward the Coalition’s intervention, and Shi’a Arabs toward the Iranian and Russian intervention – nationalism has little to no impact. In contrast, it is where a sect is already rather opposed to a particular intervention – that is, Shi’a Arabs toward the Coalition intervention, and Sunni Arabs toward the Iranian and potential Russian ones – that we see nationalism significantly boost that support (H3). In this sense, the sub-group results suggests that nationalism helps to generate support for foreign intervention in wartorn societies among those who might otherwise not “normally” extend it, pushing them to transcend their sub-national group allegiances for the good of the nation.

Substantive effects:

We also examine the magnitude of the effects in order to gauge their substantive impact. Specifically, we use the Stata program CLARIFY in order to calculate first differences based on changing the explanatory variables in the base models (that is, Models 4-6 in Table 1) from their minimum to their maximum values while holding other factors constant, allowing us to compare their influence (King et al. 2000). For illustrative purposes, we focus on their impact only on the chance of respondents expressing the strongest level of support for each intervention (though the story is similar at other values).

Figure 5: First Differences in Strong Support for Coalition Intervention

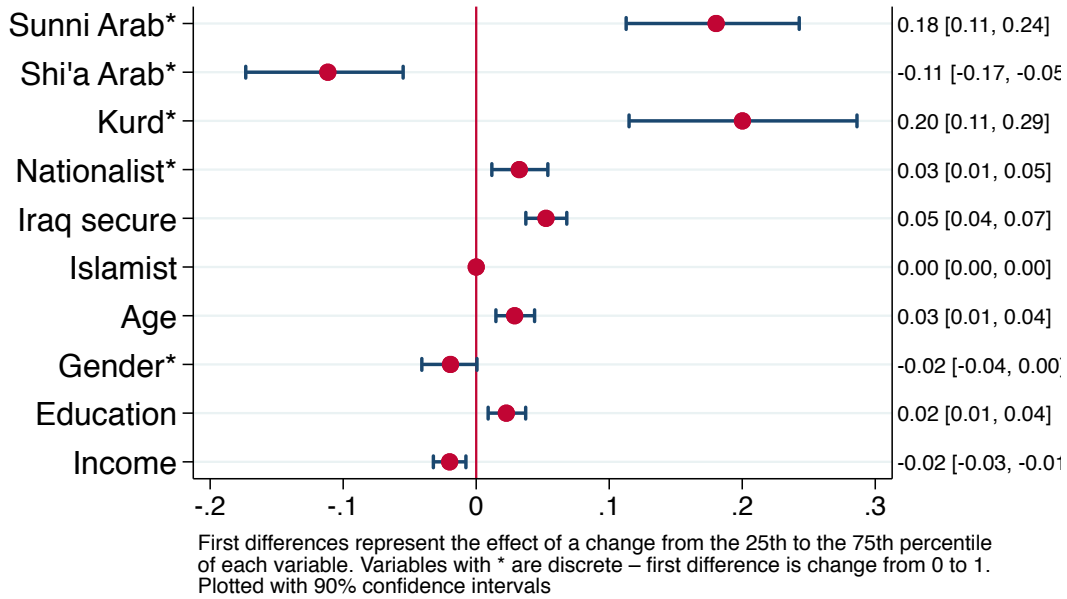


Figure 5 plots these first differences in the case of the Coalition, based on the full model of support for the Coalition intervention (Table 1, Model 4). As is clear, the strongest predictive variable is Kurdish identity. Indeed, being a Kurd makes one 20.8% more likely to fully back the Coalition campaign. The other sectarian identities are also important: being a Sunni Arab boosts the chance of fully backing Coalition anti-ISIL intervention by 18.7%, while being a Shi'a Arab diminishes it by 11.6%. Meanwhile, viewing the national security situation positively boosts the likelihood of full support by 5%, and identifying primarily with the nation (as an Iraqi) increases the chance of fully supporting the airstrikes by 3.5%.

The story in the case of the Iranian intervention (Table 1, Model 5) and potential Russian one (Table 1, Model 6) is relatively similar. We highlight the first differences for key statistically significant variables in those models here, and include the full plots in the Appendix (Figures A2 and A3). In the case of Iran, sectarian identities are again powerful: being a Shi'a Arab raises the

chance of fully supporting the Iranian intervention by 23%, while being a Sunni Arab diminishes it by around 13%. Additionally, viewing the country's security situation in a positive light boosts the chance of supporting the Iranian intervention by 3%, and identifying as an Iraqi elevates it by 2.3%. Meanwhile, in the Russian case, being a Shi'a Arab elevates the chance of full support for involvement from Russia by 18%, while being a Sunni Arab reduces it by 6%. Additionally, positive perceptions of the country's security situation decrease the likelihood of full support by 2%, while identifying chiefly as an Iraqi raises it by 1.3%.

On the one hand, these results suggest that – while nationalism matters in all three cases – sectarianism may be more substantively impactful. To some extent, this is true. We do not argue that nationalism is the only or even primary factor shaping attitudes toward outside intervention, only that is an important factor whose effects are not fully appreciated. Yet three points can help us view these results in proper perspective. First, sectarian identities are the *sine qua non* of Iraqi politics, so finding that a factor exerts less influence than them is somewhat expected and akin to finding that something is less influential than partisanship on public views of major policy issues in the U.S. Second, nationalism's influence is fairly comparable to the effects of many of the key demographic factors included in the models, such as education and income, which are often seen as key drivers of attitudes in conflicts (e.g., Blair et al. 2013). Finally, nationalism's influence is felt more strongly among some of the specific subgroups shown in Figure 4 above, where its impact “cuts against the grain” of sectarian allegiances. For instance, among Sunni Arabs, national identity reduces the chance of full opposition to Iranian intervention by 10%, a figure roughly as large as that of anything else included in the model.

In sum, the first difference results shown here broadly support the theoretical predictions presented in the article. In a situation like contemporary Iraq, nationalism does predict increased

support for foreign intervention, no matter the source. While factors like sectarianism in deeply divided societies like Iraq remain among the most important in shaping these attitudes, national attachment can lead to a softening of the “pull” of sectarian rivalries and loyalties, cultivating a more pragmatic view among citizens about foreign interventions on their soil when their nation is perceived as under threat.

Robustness Checks

We conduct several robustness checks in order to increase our confidence in these results. First, since one of the main findings is that nationalism in this context boosts support for external military intervention, we replicate the primary models with an additional measure of nationalism. Indeed, recognizing the fact that nationalism is a complex and multilayered concept that has been understood in many ways (Li and Brewer 2004, Davidov 2009), we use the following question as an alternative measure: *“Despite our differences, in the end there is more that unites Iraqis than divides us.”* The response options ran along a four-point scale ranging from “Agree Strongly” to “Disagree Strongly.” In contrast to the primary measure, which is a more general question about national identity, this question is a measure of *cognitive national identification* (Robinson 2016) – that is, of how homogeneous people perceive the national group to be. With this new variable, we proceed to replicate the full models for all three foreign interventions. The results of this test are substantively unchanged (Appendix, Table A4). As before, nationalism significantly elevates support for all three interventions, whereas the sub-national identities have more divisive effects. This robustness check helps bolster confidence in our main findings.

Second, another concern is that given the challenges of fielding surveys in situations like Iraq, some individuals may not have answered candidly. To help lessen this concern, we include

enumerator observations about the amount of: (10) privacy, (11) comfort, (12) honesty, and (13) comprehension of each individual during their interview. The results of this addition (Appendix, Table A5) reveal that the findings are not sensitive to these measures; even when accounting for the perceived honesty of the respondents and context of their interviews, the core results persist. This militates against the notion that our key findings are the product of social desirability biases surrounding the willingness of different types of Iraqis to answer questions about intervention by foreign powers in their society.

Third, one core alternative theory on the topic stresses the role of effective governance in legitimizing foreign occupation (Hechter 2013). Specifically, the theory holds that occupation or “alien rule” is often tolerated by citizens when it provides material benefits and operates in a fair and transparent manner. Unfortunately, there were no questions about the perceived efficacy of the interventions in our survey that were asked about all three relevant interventions. However, the survey does contain several additional items on the perceived efficacy of the Coalition campaign in particular. Most notably, respondents were asked whether they agreed with each of the following negative statements about the conduct of the Coalition’s anti-ISIL bombing campaign: that (1) “*Coalition airstrikes mostly help ISIL,*” and (2) “*Coalition airstrikes are inaccurate and harm civilians.*” While these questions were only asked about one case, they get at the perceived efficacy and selectivity of the intervention and thus allow us to account for its perceived material consequences in a much more precise manner. We thus replicate the full model of public support for the Coalition intervention with these intervention-specific covariates included. The results of this model (Appendix, Table A6) produce no substantive change in the principal findings – even when accounting directly for the perceived effects of the intervention, the sub-national identities diverge while national identity has a pro-intervention impact.

Fourth, we add a series of other covariates in order to ensure that the results are robust to other key drivers of Iraqi conflict attitudes. These include (1) two items capturing perceptions of the country's domestic security efforts and institutions,⁶ (2) three items capturing other types of Iraqi identities besides nationalism and sectarianism,⁷ and (3) three items about Iraqis' personal experiences in the fighting.⁸ All three of these types of variables could potentially shape Iraqis' degree of national identity as well as their demand for foreign intervention, thus warranting inclusion and analysis as robustness checks. Yet, as seen in the Appendix (Table A7), our main findings are substantively unchanged when including these factors in all three cases. As before, the sub-national identities push in opposing directions, while nationalism again has a more uniform and pro-intervention impact, boosting support for external intervention from all three parties. In other words, even when accounting for a number of additional material, ideational, and experiential factors related to the fighting with ISIL, then, the key findings about the impact of nationalism on support for external intervention in the conflict remain.

Conclusion

This paper has sought to explain the factors driving support for and opposition to external military intervention in a civil conflict. We have argued that it is individuals' collective identities – both sub-national and national – that play a crucial role in shaping these attitudes. In particular, we argued that sub-national communal identities push individuals to back intervention from their

⁶ In particular, these two questions focus on (1) the perceived efficacy of the Iraqi government at combatting ISIL, and (2) the perceived commitment of the Iraqi army to the country. Perceiving Iraq's internal security apparatus as less capable or willing to defend it might lessen nationalism and boost demand for intervention.

⁷ The three additional questions on identity measure whether Iraqis identify mostly as (1) followers of their faith, (2) members of their ethnicity, and (3) citizens of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR). This helps ameliorate concerns that nationalism is merely proxying for the absence of other major unmeasured communal identities.

⁸ These variables are: (1) experience under ISIL rule, (2) proximity to Coalition airstrikes, as measured by data from the strike-tracking NGO Airwars, and (3) proximity to ISIL violence, as captured by data from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD). These help control for personal victimization in the dispute, which might also shape one's feelings toward the nation and support for outside help to end it.

preferred patron, while national identities push them to favor intervention from any quarter when the survival of the nation is at stake. We explored this argument in the context of popular support for Coalition, Iranian, and prospective Russian interventions against ISIL in Iraq.

Overall, our analysis provides significant support for the hypotheses offered in this paper. As predicted, sub-national identities had powerful but sharply divergent effects on Iraqi views of these interventions. In particular, Kurds and Sunni Arabs were much more supportive of the Coalition's intervention against ISIL, while Shi'a Arabs were far more supportive of the involvement of Iran and Russia. In contrast, national identity had a more uniform influence, boosting support for intervention against ISIL by all three of the interveners. The findings persist across a rich set of robustness tests, including the use of an alternative measure of Iraqi nationalism, measures of interview quality designed to address concerns about social desirability bias, and a wide array of attitudinal and demographic covariates.

These results have some important implications. At the most basic level, they suggest that collective identity factors play a powerful role in shaping support for external interventions in the target society. In this sense, the findings can be broadly seen as supporting the “ethnic partisans” view on wartime loyalties (Lyall 2010, Lyall, Blair, and Imai 2013); whether civilians in a given identity group see foreign combatants like the U.S.-led Coalition, Iran, or Russia as an out-group or “away team” strongly shapes the legitimacy of their military campaigns. Yet at the same time, the analysis shows that determining who is an “away team” can be complicated and multilayered for any individual. Civilians often harbor several strong in-group identities (e.g., Shi'a, Arab, and Iraqi nationalist) pushing in opposing directions with regard to any particular combatant (e.g., the U.S.-led Coalition). In addition, there are often multiple external interventions in a given dispute which complicates the use of a clean insider vs. outsider distinction. In the case of contemporary

Iraq, for instance, it is likely that many Iraqis view not only the Coalition or Iran but also ISIL (a transnational insurgent group comprised largely of foreign fighters seeking to control the nation) as a foreign military intervention. Ultimately, such ideas imply that the impact of identity factors on wartime loyalties may be best understood through an “identity repertoire model” (Lustick and Miodownik 2009) in which civilians have a menu of key social identities whose relative salience is quite fluid and contested in a conflict. If so, one logical next step would be conducting survey experiments that *prime* different identities or *frame* different combatants as their champions and exploring whether their role is in fact highly dynamic.

Second, and most importantly, these results add particular nuance to our understanding of the role of nationalism in external intervention. Steeped in anti-colonial or anti-imperial imagery, nationalism is often seen as the principal driver of resistance to any foreign military presence and influence on one’s soil. While nationalism has sometimes had this idealistic role, it has also often had a more pragmatic role in galvanizing support for external military intervention that might not normally be desired when the nation-state is under severe attack and threat (e.g., Edelstein 2004). This article provides micro-level public opinion evidence for this neglected claim in the literature on occupation, building on related research in the political and economic arenas (Shulman 2000). Indeed, such dynamics are not unique to contemporary Iraq – nationalism has likely had a similar role in the face of other serious internal threats to national sovereignty, such as bolstering support for Israeli intervention in the Jordanian Civil War in 1970, UK intervention in the Sierra Leonean Civil War in 2000, and the U.S. drone strikes in the War in Northwest Pakistan in the late 2000s. Further study in these and other cases may reveal the generalizability of this argument that – like negotiations – “nationalism makes strange bedfellows” in times of conflict.

That said, the analysis does have some key limitations that point toward opportunities for additional research. Most notably, the survey offers a snapshot of these dynamics at one moment in time, indicating that they characterize Iraqi attitudes toward Coalition and Iranian intervention in the early fall of 2016. While this is three years into each of these two foreign interventions and thus not at the “peak” of the Iraqi sense of threat, nationalism may be a relatively fickle force and may turn against external interveners once the threat to national integrity has dissipated – that is, once the “job is done.” It would be revealing to know whether similar results would emerge now in the wake of the liberation of Mosul from ISIL’s control and the mass surrender of much of its remaining forces in Iraq to the Kurds. Yet, a different set of findings would still be very useful – showing how nationalism generates popular support for “windows of intervention” but that these windows will be brief and limited to the eradication of an immediate threat. Moreover, given our discussion earlier of how the role of these identities may be contested and even manipulated, this suggests that one way external interveners might attempt to “extend their stay” is by stressing the severity or the potential recurrence of the threat to national integrity and their own role in serving as a buffer against the disintegration of the nation-state.

What are the key practical implications of this research moving forward for Iraq? As the remnants of ISIL as a fighting force within Iraq have been eliminated, it is likely that Iraqis will perceive the security situation in the society as less dire. This will likely diminish public support for foreign intervention within the country in general. Given the country’s sectarian distribution, with Shi’a Arabs significantly outnumbering Sunni Arabs as well as Kurds, this could mean that the U.S. will feel greater pressure than Iran to end its military presence. This might very well tilt politics in the country in a more Shi’a sectarian direction. Such a scenario would have some real negative ramifications for Iraq’s long-term security, as Shi’a sectarianism at the highest levels of

Iraqi government contributed greatly to the rise of ISIL in Iraq after 2009 in the first place. Thus, the question of *who* Iraqis want to help secure their country – shaped largely by which identities dominate in Iraqi society, nationalism vs. sectarianism – could be a very significant factor in the fate of the country (and the region) moving forward.

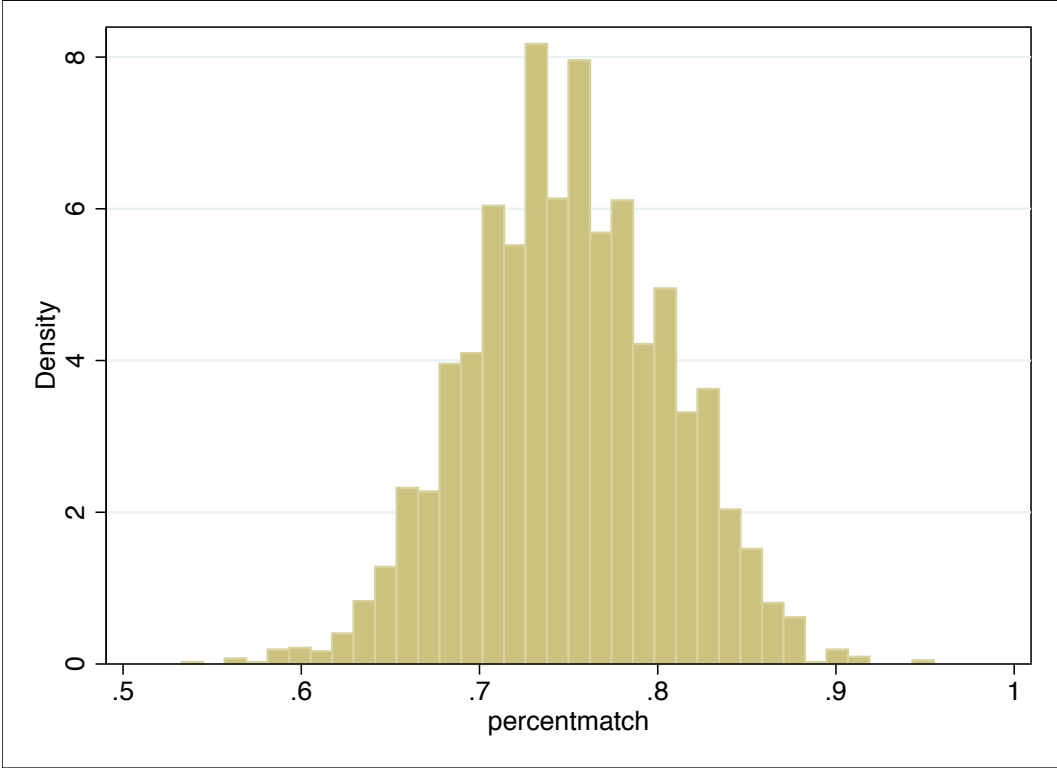
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Support for Intervention Appendix:

Figure A1: Percentmatch Plot to Check for Data Falsification



Note: plot shows healthy normal distribution centered at 0.75, with no suspicious outlier clusters close to 1.

Table A1: Comparison of Sample Demographics with Arab Barometer Surveys and Iraqi Central Organization of Statistics (COSIT) Projections

	IACSS 2016	AB 2012	AB 2013	COSIT 2014
<u>Urban</u>				
Urban	66.5%	71.6%	69.1%	69.7%
Rural	33.5	28.4	30.9	30.3
<u>Gender</u>				
Male	54.2%	52.6%	50.0%	50.9%
Female	45.8	47.4	50.0	49.1
<u>Age</u>				
18-24	16.7%	22.8%	25.3%	25.2%
25-34	28.0	25.9	27.4	27.0
35-44	24.2	22.8	20.0	20.4
45-54	19.0	19.1	16.8	14.1
55+	12.1	9.6	10.5	13.3
<u>Unemployed</u>				
Yes	14.2%	14.0%	12.5%	14.3%
No	85.8	86.0	87.5	85.7
<u>Ethnicity</u>				
Arab	85.8%	83.5%	83.5%	
Kurd	12.9	14.6	14.6	
<u>Islamic Sect</u>				
Sunni	47.6%	45.9%	44.3%	
Shi'a	52.4	53.4	51.7	

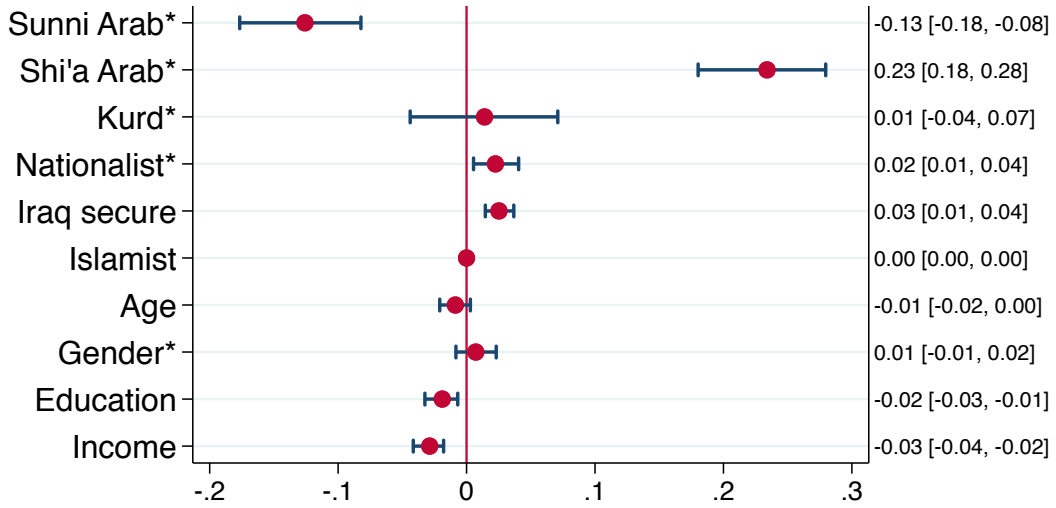
Note: Arab Barometer respondents who identified as just Muslim were split between Sunni and Shi'a proportionally for purposes of comparison. There is no contemporary census data on the country's ethnic or sectarian composition (due to the political sensitivity of these issues).

Table A2: Descriptive Statistics for All Variables Used

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Coalition intervention	3,343	1.688	1.048	0	3
Iranian intervention	3,430	1.337	1.111	0	3
Russian intervention	3,348	1.359	1.039	0	3
Sunni Arab	3,500	0.390	0.488	0	1
Shi'a Arab	3,500	0.454	0.498	0	1
Kurd	3,500	0.129	0.335	0	1
National identity	3,500	0.591	0.492	0	1
Security perceptions	3,478	1.470	0.811	0	3
Islamist ideology	3,489	0.184	0.423	0	3
Age	3,500	37.78	12.71	18	80
Gender	3,500	0.542	0.498	0	1
Education	3,323	2.227	1.489	0	6
Income	3,259	3.763	1.776	0	6
Cognitive national ID	3,475	2.362	0.813	0	3
Privacy	3,500	1.715	0.508	0	2
Comfort	3,500	0.896	0.305	0	1
Honesty	3,500	0.923	0.267	0	1
Comprehension	3,500	2.605	0.767	0	3
Coalition inaccurate	3,285	2.360	1.258	0	4
Coalition helps ISIL	3,391	1.962	1.407	0	4
Govt. effective vs. ISIL	3,451	1.763	0.939	0	3
Iraqi army committed	3,474	0.790	0.408	0	1
Religious ID	3,500	0.041	0.198	0	1
Ethnic ID	3,500	0.746	0.263	0	1
Kurdistan ID	3,500	0.013	0.114	0	1
Lived under ISIL rule	3,496	0.213	0.410	0	1
Distance to airstrike	3,500	87.18	125.8	0.233	469.3
Distance to ISIL attack	3,500	6.188	12.06	0.004	180.9

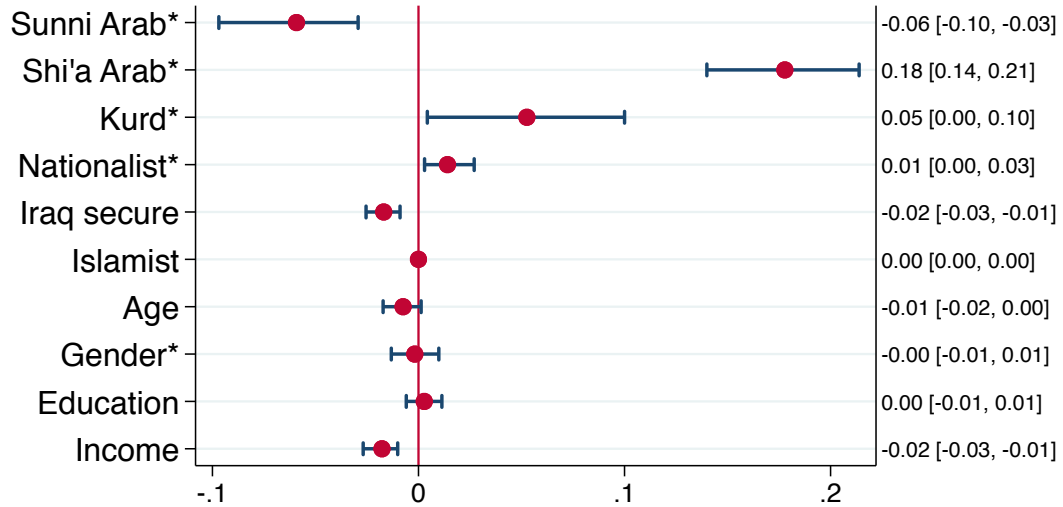
Note: table shows number of observations, mean, standard deviation, and minimum and maximum value for each of the variables used in the analysis.

Figure A2: First Differences in Strong Support for Iranian Intervention



First differences represent the effect of a change from the 25th to the 75th percentile of each variable. Variables with * are discrete – first difference is change from 0 to 1. Plotted with 90% confidence intervals.

Figure A3: First Differences in Strong Support for Potential Russian Intervention



First differences represent the effect of a change from the 25th to the 75th percentile of each variable. Variables with * are discrete – first difference is a change from 0 to 1. Plotted with 90% confidence intervals

Table A4: Replication with Alternative Measure of National Identity

	Coalition intervention	Iranian intervention	Russian intervention
Sunni Arab	0.53** (0.13)	-1.00** (0.13)	-0.50** (0.13)
Shi'a Arab	-0.48** (0.12)	0.75** (0.13)	0.72** (0.13)
Kurd	0.67** (0.15)	0.14 (0.15)	0.33* (0.15)
Cognitive national ID	0.14** (0.03)	0.13** (0.03)	0.11** (0.03)
National security	0.16** (0.03)	0.09** (0.03)	-0.12** (0.03)
Islamist ideology	0.02 (0.06)	0.16* (0.07)	0.00 (0.07)
Age	0.01** (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00+ (0.00)
Gender	-0.07+ (0.04)	0.03 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.04)
Education	0.04** (0.02)	-0.04* (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)
Income	-0.03** (0.01)	-0.06** (0.01)	-0.05** (0.01)
1 st Cutpoint	-0.27 (0.18)	-0.71** (0.18)	-0.80** (0.18)
2 nd Cutpoint	0.49** (0.18)	0.01 (0.18)	-0.08 (0.18)
3 rd Cutpoint	1.55** (0.18)	1.12** (0.18)	1.13** (0.18)
Observations	2,952	3,005	2,940

Note: Cognitive national identification is a measure of how homogeneous Iraqis perceive their national group to be. Results from ordered probit regressions. Standard errors in parentheses.

** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table A5: Replication with Enumerator Observations of Interview Quality

	Coalition intervention	Iranian intervention	Russian intervention
Sunni Arab	0.59** (0.13)	-1.00** (0.13)	-0.46** (0.13)
Shi'a Arab	-0.44** (0.13)	0.77** (0.13)	0.75** (0.13)
Kurd	0.62** (0.15)	0.06 (0.15)	0.30* (0.15)
National identity	0.11* (0.05)	0.10* (0.05)	0.10* (0.05)
National security	0.16** (0.03)	0.11** (0.03)	-0.11** (0.03)
Islamist ideology	0.05 (0.06)	0.16* (0.07)	0.00 (0.07)
Age	0.01** (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Gender	-0.08* (0.04)	0.02 (0.04)	-0.02 (0.04)
Education	0.03* (0.02)	-0.04** (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)
Income	-0.04** (0.01)	-0.07** (0.01)	-0.06** (0.01)
Privacy	0.13** (0.04)	0.07+ (0.04)	0.11* (0.04)
Comfort	0.29** (0.08)	0.06 (0.08)	0.01 (0.08)
Honesty	-0.09 (0.09)	0.10 (0.09)	-0.12 (0.09)
Comprehension	0.08** (0.03)	-0.02 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)
1 st Cutpoint	0.06 (0.20)	-0.74** (0.20)	-0.87** (0.20)
2 nd Cutpoint	0.83** (0.20)	-0.02 (0.20)	-0.15 (0.20)
3 rd Cutpoint	1.89** (0.20)	1.09** (0.20)	1.06** (0.20)
Observations	2,960	3,013	2,948

Note: Enumerator observations include the comfort, honesty, comprehension, and privacy of each Iraqi interviewed. Results from ordered probit regressions. Standard errors in parentheses.

** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table A6: Support for Coalition Intervention, with Perceived Consequences

	Coalition intervention	Coalition intervention	Coalition intervention
Sunni Arab	0.53** (0.13)	0.56** (0.13)	0.37** (0.13)
Shi'a Arab	-0.47** (0.12)	-0.42** (0.13)	-0.40** (0.13)
Kurd	0.59** (0.15)	0.32* (0.15)	-0.06 (0.16)
National identity	0.12** (0.04)	0.16** (0.05)	0.16** (0.05)
National security	0.18** (0.03)	0.17** (0.03)	0.19** (0.03)
Islamist ideology	0.02 (0.06)	-0.02 (0.06)	-0.09 (0.07)
Age	0.01** (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)
Gender	-0.06 (0.04)	-0.03 (0.04)	0.03 (0.04)
Education	0.04** (0.02)	0.05** (0.02)	0.06** (0.02)
Income	-0.03** (0.01)	-0.04** (0.01)	-0.07** (0.01)
Airstrikes harm civilians		-0.25** (0.02)	-0.10** (0.02)
Airstrikes help ISIL			-0.34** (0.02)
1 st Cutpoint	-0.51** (0.17)	-1.12** (0.18)	-1.70** (0.18)
2 nd Cutpoint	0.26 (0.17)	-0.30+ (0.18)	-0.81** (0.18)
3 rd Cutpoint	1.31** (0.17)	0.79** (0.18)	0.37* (0.18)
Observations	2,960	2,865	2,840

Note: Perceived consequences measure whether Iraqis think that the airstrikes: (1) harm civilians and (2) help ISIL. Results from ordered probit regressions. Standard errors in parentheses.

** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table A7: Replication with All Additional Attitudinal and Demographic Covariates

	Coalition intervention	Iranian intervention	Russian intervention
Sunni Arab	0.45** (0.13)	-0.89** (0.13)	-0.28* (0.13)
Shi'a Arab	-0.22+ (0.13)	0.57** (0.13)	0.51** (0.13)
Kurd	0.55** (0.16)	0.05 (0.16)	0.23 (0.16)
National identity	0.16** (0.05)	0.15** (0.05)	0.14** (0.05)
National security	0.15** (0.03)	0.07* (0.03)	-0.14** (0.03)
Islamist ideology	0.04 (0.07)	0.14* (0.07)	0.01 (0.07)
Age	0.00** (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Gender	-0.05 (0.04)	0.05 (0.04)	0.01 (0.04)
Education	0.03+ (0.02)	-0.03 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)
Income	-0.03** (0.01)	-0.05** (0.01)	-0.05** (0.01)
Govt. effective vs. ISIL	0.13** (0.02)	0.18** (0.02)	0.14** (0.02)
Iraqi army committed	0.02 (0.06)	0.42** (0.06)	0.35** (0.06)
Religious ID	-0.12 (0.11)	-0.11 (0.12)	-0.05 (0.11)
Ethnic ID	0.37** (0.10)	0.25* (0.10)	0.30** (0.10)
Kurdistan ID	0.85** (0.23)	-0.03 (0.22)	0.17 (0.22)
Lived under ISIL rule	0.34** (0.07)	-0.02 (0.07)	-0.21** (0.07)
Distance to airstrike	-0.00** (0.00)	0.00** (0.00)	0.00** (0.00)
Distance to ISIL attack	-0.00 (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
1 st Cutpoint	-0.32+ (0.19)	-0.07 (0.19)	-0.30 (0.19)
2 nd Cutpoint	0.47* (0.19)	0.67** (0.19)	0.44* (0.19)
3 rd Cutpoint	1.57** (0.19)	1.82** (0.19)	1.70** (0.19)
Observations	2,960	3,013	2,948

Note: Results from ordered probit regressions. Standard errors in parentheses.

** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1

Table A8: Replication with Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) Regressions

	Coalition intervention	Iranian intervention	Russian intervention
Sunni Arab	0.46** (0.11)	-0.81** (0.10)	-0.41** (0.11)
Shi'a Arab	-0.43** (0.11)	0.69** (0.10)	0.66** (0.11)
Kurd	0.53** (0.13)	0.07 (0.12)	0.26* (0.13)
National identity	0.11** (0.04)	0.07+ (0.04)	0.07+ (0.04)
National security	0.16** (0.02)	0.10** (0.02)	-0.08** (0.02)
Islamist ideology	0.01 (0.05)	0.12* (0.05)	-0.01 (0.05)
Age	0.00** (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Gender	-0.07+ (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)
Education	0.04** (0.01)	-0.03** (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Income	-0.03** (0.01)	-0.05** (0.01)	-0.05** (0.01)
Constant	1.23** (0.14)	1.56** (0.13)	1.56** (0.14)
Observations	2,952	3,005	2,940
R-squared	0.21	0.39	0.23

Note: Results from OLS regressions. Standard errors in parentheses.

** p<0.01, * p<0.05, + p<0.1