

My research examines how international conflict and security competition shape domestic political behavior in democracies. I develop this agenda through three questions: (1) why democratic citizens resist reconciliation with foreign adversaries, (2) how foreign intervention from democracies affects civil war dynamics, and (3) how digital environments shape democratic representation and public discourse on foreign affairs. Looking ahead, I will examine how authoritarian threats reshape democratic attitudes and resilience in East Asia. Across these research topics, I employ quantitative methods, including computational text analysis and survey experiments.

Theme 1: Public Resistance to Peace in Democracies

Why do citizens in democracies resist peace with foreign adversaries? Even when state leaders successfully secure concessions from rival states, many citizens remain hostile toward these adversaries and resist reconciliation. My research examines the socio-psychological mechanisms that sustain these attitudes and constrain public support for peace, particularly in East Asia. My two published works under this theme examine how identity-based biases shape public interpretations of adversaries' cooperative gestures. In [Han \(2026a, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*\)](#), my analysis of a three-wave panel survey in South Korea shows that North Korea's cooperative signals reduced perceived threats only among supporters of the incumbent party and respondents who viewed North Koreans as co-ethnics. Additionally, in [Han, Han, & Zhang \(2026, *Journal of Contemporary China*\)](#), our survey experiments in the U.S. demonstrate that highlighting China's authoritarian characteristics significantly weakens the extent to which its engagement with liberal multilateral institutions alleviates perceived threats. My working papers currently under review extend this research by broadening its spatial and temporal dimensions. In [Han \(2026b\)](#), I argue that perceptions of foreign adversaries in East Asia are shaped not only by bilateral interactions but also by the wider configuration of interstate relations involving third-party states. Drawing on survey experiments and social media analysis in the U.S., South Korea, and Japan, I show that conflicts involving a democratic ally and autocratic enemies can reinforce negative perceptions of adversaries and deepen public opposition to rapprochement. Complementing this spatial perspective, [Han & Chadeaux \(2026\)](#) examines the temporal dynamics of cooperation during rapprochement. Using paired survey experiments on the U.S.–China and inter-Korean rivalries, I show that declining or inconsistent patterns of cooperation over time reduce public willingness to reciprocate, thereby undermining prospects for lasting peace.

Theme 2: Foreign Intervention of Democracies and Civil Wars Dynamics

A second strand of my research examines *the relationship between civil conflicts and foreign intervention by democratic states*. Motivated by my broader interests in democracy, foreign policy, and public opinion, this agenda brings these perspectives into collaboration with civil war scholars to investigate the political consequences and domestic foundations of foreign intervention. First, using cross-national observational data, I investigate how interventions involving democratic states shape civil war dynamics and rebel governance. In [Han & Keskin \(2026, *R&R at Security Studies*\)](#), I show that interventions by rival states, particularly democracy-autocracy pairs, prolong civil wars by complicating bargaining over conflict termination. In [Han & Park \(2026a, *R&R at International Interactions*\)](#), I demonstrate that support from democratic states increases the likelihood that rebel organizations hold elections, highlighting how external actors can shape political institutions even within conflict-affected societies. Complementing these studies, my research also examines how citizens in democracies form attitudes toward humanitarian intervention. In [Han & Park \(2026b\)](#), I

use survey experiments in the U.S. and U.K. to demonstrate that more inclusive rebel governance increases perceptions of rebel legitimacy and credibility, thereby strengthening public support for humanitarian intervention. Extending this research, my ongoing project, “[From Algorithm to Humanitarian Action](#),” employs a cross-national survey experiment in the U.S., U.K., and France to examine whether and how AI-based conflict forecasts reduce uncertainty about future humanitarian crises, thereby enhancing public support for military intervention.

Theme 3: Political Behavior in Digital Information Environments

A third strand of my research examines *how digital information environments shape democratic representation and public attitudes toward international affairs*. Bringing together my interests in political behavior, international relations, and computational methods, this agenda investigates how online platforms influence whose political voices are heard and how citizens interpret domestic and international political developments. First, my research on online political violence examines how digital platforms create unequal conditions for democratic participation. In [Han, Finkel, Finkel, et al. \(2026, *European Journal of Political Research*\)](#), I analyze more than three million tweets from Türkiye’s 2023 parliamentary and 2024 local elections, showing that greater political visibility disproportionately exposes women candidates to online abuse. Extending this analysis to the United States, [Han, Finkel, Thakur, et al. \(2026, *R&R at Political Behavior*\)](#) demonstrates that online violence against women during the 2024 election is structured not only by gender and race but also by partisanship. Second, I investigate how digital information environments shape public perceptions of international affairs. In [Da Silva & Han \(2026\)](#), I analyze approximately one million online news articles from 324 outlets across 26 countries, demonstrating that media ideology systematically influences which countries and regions receive public attention. Additionally, my ongoing project, “[U.S. Coercion and Hawkish Chinese Netizens](#),” analyzes thousands of foreign-affairs videos and millions of comments on Chinese social media to examine how portrayals of U.S. coercion against democratic and autocratic states are associated with support for assertive Chinese foreign policy.

Theme 4: International Security and Democratic Backsliding in East Asia

My future research will investigate *how international security influences democratic erosion in East Asia*. This question is especially salient in a region where democratic states coexist with authoritarian rivals and where domestic political development has long unfolded under conditions of geopolitical competition. Building on my dissertation research, which examined how diplomatic engagement with authoritarian adversaries shapes domestic political attitudes ([Han, 2026c](#)), I will extend this agenda to investigate how perceived authoritarian threats contribute to political polarization and democratic backsliding. My first project, “[Authoritarian Alignment and Democratic Backsliding](#),” uses survey experiments in South Korea and Japan to examine whether growing alignment between China, Russia, and North Korea strengthen democratic identity while paradoxically increasing tolerance for illiberal behavior by hawkish domestic elites in South Korea and Japan. Another project, “[Border Fortification and Far-right Diffusion](#),” employ similar experiments to investigate whether exposure to foreign border fortifications reinforces exclusionary political attitudes and facilitates the transnational diffusion of far-right nationalism. My third project, “[Politicizing Authoritarian Threats in Local Elections](#),” analyzes 2,936 candidate debates from South Korean legislative and local elections between 2020 and 2026 to examine how political elites invoke foreign authoritarian threats in domestic electoral competition.

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