Domestic Political Constraints and Interstate Rivalry Processes

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Abstract: Most large-*N* research on recurrent interstate conflict and rivalry has downplayed the role of domestic politics, either overlooking the domestic political context within states entirely or mentioning domestic politics only implicitly. This paper presents a more domestically-grounded theoretical model of recurrent conflict and rivalry, focusing explicitly on the domestic political actors and processes that may be relevant to processes of conflict recurrence. The basic model examines the ways that domestic constraints relating to the selection of leaders and the ratification or implementation of policies can contribute to militarized conflict and rivalry, extending an earlier approach that emphasizes contentious issues and recent interactions between two adversaries. Hypotheses based on this model are tested empirically using newly-developed measures of domestic political constraints. The results support the general model with regard to militarized conflict severity and recurrence, and are used to suggest implications for future research.

Domestic Political Constraints and Interstate Rivalry: An Empirical Analysis

Most large-N empirical research on militarized interstate rivalry has minimized the role of domestic political factors in the outbreak, evolution, or ending of rivalry. As Mor (1997: 198) notes, research on rivalries has generally followed a state-as-unitary-actor assumption, leaving no room for domestic factors. Where domestic factors have been considered in relation to rivalries, these factors have typically been treated only implicitly, and have been assigned a secondary role behind the international influences of the rivalry itself.

The present study explicitly considers the impact of domestic political pressures and constraints on foreign policy making. I develop a general two-level model of rivalry that considers the role of domestic political constraints on two states' chief executives who are involved in bargaining over some contentious issue. This model is used to generate hypotheses on rivalry, focusing on the issues at stake between two adversary states and on recent interactions between them as well as on domestic political constraints. The resulting hypotheses are tested empirically with recently developed measures of specific political constraints that are meant to reflect the constraints discussed in the theoretical model, rather than a general aggregated measure of democracy or autocracy. The results indicate that domestic political constraints have strong effects on militarized conflict behavior, some of which would not be identified by the traditional comparison of democracies against non-democratic political systems. Also, factors identified by the general evolutionary approach to rivalry (drawing heavily from both international and domestic influences on decision making) continue to play important roles consistent with past research. Although this is a very preliminary study along both theoretical and empirical dimensions, it does suggest the value of explicit emphasis on domestic political factors in studying militarized conflict and rivalry.

Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy

Moravcsik (1993: 9) argues that "the question facing international relations theorists today is not *whether* to combine domestic and international explanations into a theory of 'double-edged' diplomacy, but *how* best to do so." The first section of this paper proposes a way to study interstate rivalry through both domestic and international lenses. This examination begins with Putnam's (1988) notion of the two-level game, which is then extended by identifying specific types of domestic actors and processes that might be involved in making foreign policy.

It should be noted that the domestic political elements in this model are intended to be general enough to represent any type of political system, whether democratic or authoritarian, parliamentary or presidential. As Hagan (1993) suggests, both democratic and authoritarian governments face important domestic political constraints; it would be misleading to argue that all democratic ("open") systems offer equal constraints or that all authoritarian ("closed") systems are free from constraints. Putnam (1988: 436-437) emphasizes that the domestic portion of his two-level model is meant to apply for both democratic and authoritarian states. Similarly, the arguments of Bueno de Mesquita, et al., (1992, 1995, 1997) are applied to democracies, monarchies, or autocracies, all of which are characterized by some type of domestic constituency that must be addressed. Thus, while there may be some differences in the effects of public opinion between democratic and monarchic systems (for example), for now these systems are not distinguished -- although future work is certainly encouraged to address their differences in greater detail.

A Two-Level Model of Interstate Conflict and Rivalry

Militarized interstate rivalry refers to a longstanding, competitive relationship between two adversaries who engage in numerous militarized confrontations (Goertz and Diehl 1993; Hensel 1996). Although there have been relatively few rivalries in the modern era, enduring rival adversaries account for one-fourth of all interstate wars and territorial changes since 1816, roughly forty percent of all militarized interstate disputes and violent territorial changes, and approximately half of all international crises (Goertz and Diehl 1992; Hensel 1998a). Relations between rivals have been argued to be more conflictual than relations between other types of states, largely because of the distrust and hostility that are said to characterize rivalry. Despite the apparent importance of the rivalry concept, though, little systematic research has addressed the origins of rivalries, with most research focusing on the dynamics of established rivalries or on the termination of rivalry. Perhaps the most prominent explanation of interstate rivalry suggests that most rivalries can be explained by exogenous factors such as "shocks" in the external environment (Goertz and Diehl 1995). The model presented in the present paper is meant to account for the origins of rivalry with an internal focus, emphasizing interactions between two adversary nation-states as sources of rivalry.

The scholarly literature on interstate rivalry has been dominated by the unitary actor assumption, generally treating nation-states as the central actors and ignoring any political actors or processes within either state's "black box." This paper focuses more explicitly on the potential role of domestic political actors and processes within each state, in order to develop a more complete model of the sources and consequences of rivalry. A useful way to frame the connection between domestic and international politics involves Putnam's (1988; Evans et al. 1993) notion of the "two-level game." Putnam characterizes international negotiation as a game involving both national and international levels. The national level involves interaction between political leaders and various domestic actors, while the international level involves interaction between two state leaders. Because the two state leaders in the international game are playing both the international and national games simultaneously, they face both opportunities and constraints that they would not encounter in a strictly national game or a strictly international game.

To be successful at the two-level game, the involved leaders must be able to reach an agreement that each considers acceptable and that both sides' domestic constituencies are willing to ratify.[1] Leaders in such a game are thus constrained simultaneously by the domestic and international implications of their actions, and must choose policies based on their expectations of both what the other player will accept and what their (and their opponents') constituents will be willing to ratify (Moravcsik 1993). The constraints and opportunities of this "double-edged diplomacy" (Evans, et al. 1993) differ dramatically from those under a strictly international emphasis on pursuing the "national interest" in an anarchic world or a strictly domestic emphasis on satisfying one's constituents.

Most research employing Putnam's notion of the two-level game has focused on peaceful

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[1] It is important to note that "ratification" in this sense does not necessarily imply a democratic political system in which a legislature is required to ratify all treaties. Ratification could involve any formal or informal process at the domestic level that has the effect of endorsing, implementing, or rejecting an actual or potential agreement from the international-level game. Also, as Moravcsik (1993) points out, the term "ratification" may also misleadingly imply that the international game is resolved before the domestic game begins. Rather, the international and domestic games "are intertwined and simultaneous, as expectations and unfolding developments in one arena affect negotiations in the other arena."

negotiations, with little attention to the militarized dimensions of world politics. Yet there appears to be no reason that this notion could not be applied to militarized relationships such as rivalry. Instead of negotiations over international trade or monetary stabilization policies, a two-level game of rivalry would center around attempts by two states' leaders to settle the contentious issue(s) separating their states while facing domestic political constraints. In a rivalry involving territorial issues, for example, the leaders of the two rival states would be negotiating over the status of the disputed territory, attempting to reach (through peaceful and/or military means) a peaceful settlement that would be acceptable to both of their constituencies. The next sections of this paper address central elements of both the international and domestic levels as applied to rivalry, before formulating specific hypotheses on militarized conflict behavior and rivalry.

The International Level: Contending over Issues

The basic model traces the origins of militarized interstate conflict and rivalry to the existence of conflicts of interest between two or more adversaries over contentious issues (for more details see Hensel 1999). Numerous policy options are available to foreign policy makers for attempting to resolve their contentious issues, including maintaining the status quo, taking unilateral action up to and including the threat or use of militarized force, pursuing bilateral negotiations with the adversary, or employing third party assistance such as mediation or adjudication. The initiation of overt militarized conflict can thus be seen as a conscious decision by leaders on at least one side, representing the feeling that unilateral military action is the best or only way to achieve their goals with regard to the issue(s) under contention.

The international level of this model focuses on interaction between the chief executives of two adversary nation-states (or their representatives), each of which is pursuing goals over the issues under contention. Regardless of the specific structures of its political system, any modern nation-state can reasonably be assumed to have a leader (a president, king, dictator, or some other top official) who is officially responsible for making foreign policy decisions. As Bueno de Mesquita (1981: 20-23) argues, even if many other domestic actors and structures may influence a leader's decision for war or peace, the final decision remains that of the leader. Regardless of the views of other actors in government or in society, the approval of the chief executive remains necessary for starting a war, and the executive's disapproval can be considered sufficient to prevent war.

In a strictly international-level game, the primary source of policy choices is the issue-related goals of the two states' chief executives. One useful way to think about these goals involves the salience that leaders attach to the issue in question, or "the extent to which (but principally, the intensity with which) peoples and their leaders value an issue and its subject matter" (Randle 1987: 2; see also Hensel 1999). All else being equal, leaders can be seen as expending greater effort (and risking higher costs) to achieve favorable settlements on highly salient issues than on issues that are attributed less importance. Issue salience can be assumed to be an important source of leaders' preferences and decisions from the outset of contention over an issue. Once contention begins, though, past interactions over the issue can also affect leaders' subsequent preferences and decisions.

Past interaction can influence leaders by producing changes in the issue(s) under contention, or by altering the leader's expectations of the adversary's likely future actions. For example, a history of frequent militarized conflict between two states or a history of unsuccessful peaceful settlement attempts is likely to create the expectation of future conflict and the perception that peaceful means of settlement are

unlikely to succeed in settling the issues at stake, while a history of settling problems peacefully may create the opposite expectation. Additionally, the outcome of a previous confrontation between the adversaries may change the status quo regarding the disputed issues, such as by leading to a violent transfer of disputed territory or by raising additional issues that had not been disputed previously.

Beyond the issues under contention, decisions in a strictly international-level model are influenced by additional factors that are seen as affecting the probability of success. For example, a positive balance of relative capabilities may make the prospects for successful military action more favorable, increasing a state's willingness to use militarized means in pursuit of goals. A state that is weaker than its adversary may have important incentives to pursue a peaceful settlement and avoid military action if at all possible. The voluminous literature on the democratic peace proposition would also suggest that two adversaries that are both political democracies may be more likely to pursue peaceful means of settlement with each other, recognizing that the costs of settlement are lower than military action and expecting that both sides will respect the process and outcome of a negotiated or third-party settlement (thereby increasing the prospects for a successful settlement as well).

The Domestic Level: Policy Ratification and Leader Selection

When the basic international-level model described above is expanded to introduce the domestic political level within each state, a number of new actors, processes, and influences become important. Two specific types of domestic constraints are often discussed in the theoretical literature on domestic politics and foreign policy. The need to achieve domestic approval of international agreements is often described as a "policy ratification" constraint[2] or as the need to build policy coalitions, while the need to consider implications for tenure in office can be described as a "leader selection" constraint or as the need to retain political power (Putnam 1988; Hagan 1993). Each type of domestic constraint is now discussed, before considering how their inclusion changes the nature of interaction between two leaders.

Policy Ratification Constraint

Although the chief executive is the primary maker of foreign policy decisions, most political systems offer at least a nominal role for other governmental actors.[3] In the United States, for example, certain foreign policy decisions – typically those involving the expenditure of money, declaration of war, extended deployment of troops abroad, or ratification of treaties – require the concurrence of Congress. This concurrence role is different from the executive's ability to negotiate treaties or to order the initial deployment of troops, so the legislature (or other non-executive actors) does not actually participate in the selection of foreign policy alternatives. Because the ratification process can lead to the rejection of a treaty or reversal of a policy chosen by the executive, though, the requirement of ratification should allow the legislature to limit the actions that the executive is likely to take because of the danger of policy reversal (Milbrath 1967). A pacifist legislature may be able to undercut a rivalry by refusing to pass a costly or provocative defense spending bill, and a belligerent legislature may be able to prolong a rivalry by rejecting

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[2] It should be noted that this ratification role does not mean than domestic politics only becomes relevant once an agreement is signed. Leaders' decisions on whether or not to sign agreements, or on the specific provisions of agreements, may be influenced by their perception of the prospects for eventual ratification.

[3] Hagan (1993) notes that coalition building occurs in most types of political systems, ranging from established Western democracies to strict authoritarian regimes.

any treaty the leader may sign with the rival to settle their issues.[4]

In short, although the chief executive can sign any desired international treaty, implementing the treaty typically requires the agreement of other domestic actors with authority over resource commitment or policy implementation. In the strictly international-level model of rivalry, the international agreements that may be reached depend heavily on the leaders' "acceptability sets," or the possible agreements that each leader prefers to the status quo. When the policy ratification constraint is introduced, though, each negotiator in the international game must also consider the "win set" for his or her domestic-level constituency, defined as the set of all possible international-level agreements that could be ratified at the domestic level (Putnam 1988; Moravcsik 1993). A chief executive is unlikely to sign an international agreement outside of his or her domestic win set, because of the low probability that such an agreement would be ratified by the relevant domestic actors. International agreement only becomes possible when the two sides' win sets overlap, suggesting that the larger these win sets, the greater the likelihood that an agreement can be reached. Depending on the size of two adversaries' win sets, this could be a major constraint on the leaders' actions, perhaps preventing any agreement from being reached.[5] Essentially, then, the policy ratification constraint establishes the outer limits of an acceptable agreement that the leader can reach in the international game, doing more to limit the way that leaders can pursue their own goals than to determine new goals or policy alternatives (see also Hagan 1993).

Leader Selection Constraint

Beyond attempting to achieve desired goals on specific international issues, leaders are assumed to wish to remain in political power (or in the presence of term limits, to be succeeded by a preferred new leader with similar policy preferences). While a chief executive is concerned with pursuing personal and/or state interests in the international game, then, he or she also seeks to maintain and enhance the electoral or other bases necessary for staying in office. As a result, when domestic political pressures threaten to shorten a leader's tenure in office (or when the leader expects that a controversial decision is likely to lead to such pressures), he or she is likely to consider adjusting policies in order to reduce domestic opposition (Hagan 1993). Confrontation with a foreign adversary is likely to be an especially important source of public evaluations of a leader's performance (Hagan 1993), with an overly aggressive foreign policy indicating a willingness to risk war and an overly accommodative foreign policy indicating a leader's weakness.

Bueno de Mesquita, et al. (1992) argue that governments are likely to be held accountable by their constituents for the success or failure of their foreign policies. As a result, leaders must be concerned with the domestic consequences of foreign policy decisions, which should dampen leaders' enthusiasm for risky foreign adventures (with their potential for costly defeat). Similarly, Fearon (1994) suggests that – at least for political democracies – a leader's statements and actions during a crisis will be used by his or

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[4] The general populace may also be able to play a role in the policy ratification process. The mass public is occasionally (albeit rarely) given a direct say in policy making or ratification through a plebiscite, as with the 1929 plebiscite in Tacna and Arica over the question of Peruvian or Chilean ownership and the 1990s votes in Europe over the European Union.

[5] The domestic level alone can not determine the exact content of any international agreement that might be reached. Any agreement that falls within this win set is likely to be ratified, meaning that the leader may sign any agreement that falls somewhere within the win set -- and allowing the leader to pursue some personally preferred outcome in his or her personal "acceptance set," as long as that outcome lies within the domestic win set (Putnam 1988; Moravcsik 1993).

her constituents to evaluate the skill and performance of the leader.[6]   A leader who escalates a crisis before backing down should thus be likely to encounter serious domestic political problems afterward, because his or her actions cost the state dearly in terms of credibility, face, or honor.   Consistent with these expectations, Bueno de Mesquita, et al. (1992) find that failure in full-scale war – whether due to defeat, high costs, or both – greatly increases the probability of the leader's removal from office.

As with the policy ratification constraint noted above, the leader selection constraint does more to limit the ways that leaders can pursue their own goals than to determine new goals or to choose among policy alternatives. It should also be noted that this constraint is not unique to democratic political systems. Democratic elections may be the most prominent example of this constraint, but many authoritarian systems also select (and potentially de-select) leaders through decisions of the ruling party or the military, and leaders in any type of system could potentially fall victim to a military coup or popular revolution. Many different types of actors and processes, then, can fill the role of the "selectorate."

The Impact of Domestic Political Constraints

Taken together, the domestic imperatives of policy ratification and leader selection constraints offer an important addition to the strictly international game discussed above, allowing for both domestic and international influences on a leader's choices and actions. Each chief executive in the game will continue to pursue a settlement of the disputed issues that favors his or her state's position, as noted earlier, and will still consider the probabilities of success for the various options available to them. When domestic constraints are introduced, though, the leader must also consider what type of agreement will be acceptable to the domestic actors (in both states) who are responsible for ratification and what the implications may be for his or her continued tenure in office. The primary international-level goal of achieving a desired issue settlement must then be supplemented by the goal of remaining in political power.

In light of these considerations, policy makers are likely to use at least two important guidelines to evaluate and choose among the various policy options available to them. First, as in the international level, they wish to maximize the probability of achieving most or all of their goals. While trying to do so, though, leaders facing domestic constraints also face strong incentives to minimize the (military, economic, political, or social) costs incurred while pursuing these goals. If a state's leaders can accomplish their goals successfully and at a relatively low cost, then they are more likely to be able to retain political power. Alternatively, if they fail to accomplish their goals (or end up worsening the situation) or if their decisions lead to high costs for their state or their constituents, then they are likely to pay a heavy price in domestic political support and in their prospects for remaining in power (see also Bueno de Mesquita, et al. 1992; Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson 1995; Fearon 1994).[7] While an aggressive or risky foreign policy may increase the likelihood of achieving goals over the disputed issue,

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[6] Mor (1997) raises a similar point with regard to audience costs and peace initiatives within ongoing rivalries. A public peace initiative in the presence of high audience costs may be a strong signal of a commitment to peace, because it raises the domestic political exit costs for the leader in case the initiative fails.

[7] It should be noted that this model excludes a leader's performance in the domestic arena, although it is clear that domestic economic and social phenomena contribute significantly to the prospects for retention in power.   Because this is a model of foreign policy, rather than a model of domestic economics or political elections, the focus here is on the contribution of foreign policy-related calculations to political power.   None the less, no claim is made that domestic policies are unimportant, or even that domestic policy is less important than foreign policy.

making it attractive to leaders in a strictly international game, such a policy in a two-level game may lead to sufficient domestic wrath that the leader's policy is rejected or the leader is removed from office. Similarly, while a leader in the strictly international level may prefer to move slowly and cautiously in dealing with a dangerous adversary, such a policy in a two-level game may generate wide dissatisfaction among the selectorate or among domestic actors charged with policy ratification responsibilities.

Political Activation

The discussion of domestic factors so far has not specified the conditions under which domestic actors are likely to play important roles in the foreign policy process (through either the policy ratification or leader selection constraints). The key to understanding domestic political actors in foreign policy, and particularly with regard to militarized conflict and rivalry, is the concept of political activation. Many domestic political actors pay little attention to foreign affairs most of the time, focusing primarily on social or economic issues, and they are thus unlikely to offer effective constraints on foreign policy until they become activated politically by international events or circumstances. Research on public opinion suggests that the public generally treats foreign policy issues as confusing or uninteresting, and public opinion is best described as "latent" -- having the potential for expression, but only if activated by an international crisis, war, or other serious event (e.g., Holsti 1996; Powlick and Katz 1998; Rosenau 1980). Opinions are thought to be aroused "only by events that seem to impinge on one's interests, activities, or aspirations," and as long as the external environment does not change too rapidly, it is unlikely to appear linked to the welfare of average citizens in potentially damaging ways (Rosenau 1980: 475, 480; Powlick and Katz 1998). Public opinion on foreign policy issues thus usually lies dormant, with foreign affairs left to the management of political leaders.

As a result, when there is little or no history of recent conflict with an adversary, the primary determinants of a leader's political fitness should involve his or her domestic policies. A leader facing a new adversary thus has little to worry about from the domestic political scene in reaction to foreign policy initiatives, unless the leader dramatically bungles foreign relations in such as way as to bring on an unintended war or to give away what is perceived as an important national interest. The leader's popularity and ability to remain in office, in short, should be affected primarily by domestic policies (which are beyond the scope of the current model).

Foreign policy is likely to become more important, though, when it creates the perception that individuals' personal safety or interests are at stake. Militarized interstate rivalry is typically described as involving decades of competition between the same actors, with each side perceiving that the other poses a serious security threat to important interests (e.g., Goertz and Diehl 1992; Vasquez 1993). Rivalries often feature dozens of militarized confrontations, some of which may escalate to full-scale war, and even in peacetime each rival will generally pay close attention to the actions and military deployments of the other. This combination of a decades-long threat from a specific adversary, frequent confrontations (perhaps leading to the death or injury of friends or relatives), and constant military vigilance and preparations (perhaps leading to military stationing abroad) is likely to create the perception that one's own safety and interests are at stake in the rivalry, thereby making the management of the rivalry directly relevant to one's own well-being.

As two adversaries come to see each other as serious security threats, more domestic actors on each side are likely to see their chief executive's foreign policy behavior as an important indicator of his or

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her competence. Foreign policy issues, particularly those involving the rival, should then be more important sources of the leader's political fitness, with regard to both policy ratification and leader selection or deselection.[8] Unlike a non-rivalry context, in which the management of foreign relations has little impact on the leader's fitness, the domestic and international environment in a context of rivalry is much more threatening politically -- potentially leading the leader to reevaluate his or her desired policies in light of recent events and recent trends in public attitudes or to risk removal from office in favor of a more desirable leader.[9]

Once activated, the domestic politics associated with rivalries can create serious domestic impediments to a peaceful settlement of the issues involved in the rivalry (Mor 1997). Continuing the rivalry rather than acquiescing to the rival's demands requires increased defense spending and the occasional mass mobilization of human and material resources for potential or actual use against the rival. The continual societal costs of such activities require the leader to attempt to mobilize support for his or her foreign policy, which is best accomplished by demonizing the enemy and creating a societal "enemy image" or "inherent bad faith" image of the rival (e.g., McGinnis and Williams 1993).[10] As a result of both this mobilization and the history of confrontations making up a rivalry, Mor (1997) suggests that the rivalry becomes ingrained in domestic politics, shaping domestic perceptions of the rival in a way that obstructs any attempt to settle the rivalry peacefully. A protracted period of rivalry is thus likely to create a convergence of preferences among domestic actors that supports continuation of the rivalry and that opposes peace initiatives requiring cooperation with the rival; indeed, such a convergence of preferences may be necessary for rivalry to be sustained.

Hypotheses on Domestic Politics and Interstate Rivalry

The general discussion above suggests that both international and domestic political actors and processes can play an important role in militarized conflict and rivalry, particularly when events related to the rivalry have led to the political activation of important domestic actors. The next section of this paper applies these factors to develop specific testable hypotheses. Three groups of factors are considered from both international and two-level perspectives, including contentious issues, the general historical context, and specific historical details of past interactions; these three factors form the central core of an evolutionary approach to rivalry (Hensel 1996, 1998b).

Contentious Issues

The first factor that must be considered is the nature of the issues at stake between two adversary

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[8] During a rivalry, the leader's policies vis-a-vis the rival are not the only influence on his or her prospects for remaining in office, but they are important. If the leader is unable to please the selectorate with policies regarding the rival, then removal from office is likely. Even if the leader is able to please the selectorate, he or she can still be removed from office for other (social, economic, political, or other) reasons.

[9] It should be noted that several different "selectorates" may exist for a given leader or political system, each of which may have different policy preferences. For example, a leader in a weak democratic system may be voted out of office in the next election, or may be overthrown by a coup or revolution. Policies that please the voting public may alienate the military or other groups with the power to select leaders (and vice versa), resulting in a greater probability of losing office. For now the model assumes the existence of a single unified selectorate, but future research could benefit by expanding this assumption to consider multiple selecting actors.

[10] Mor (1997) also notes that these human and resource demands may eventually become too great for the society to bear, at which point they offer an incentive to end a rivalry instead of prolonging it.

states. As several scholars have argued (e.g., 1991; Vasquez 1993; Hensel 1999), conflict -- military or diplomatic -- occurs for a reason, and the salience of the specific issues or stakes behind a given conflict can be an important influence on the course and consequences of that conflict. Issue salience for any given actor depends on that actor's evaluation of the value of that issue, whether for him/herself or for the country as a whole. An example of a generally low-salience issue might be a question of foreign default on a debt owed to a bank or individual; although this may be important for the bank or individual whose money was not repaid, the average citizen is unlikely to see the issue as worthy of attention or as deserving any great sacrifice. A higher-salience issue might involve territory that the state has historically claimed or occupied, and which contains valuable resources and strategic military positions; Vasquez (1993) describes territory as perhaps the most salient type of issue. Many citizens would be affected by the loss of such territory to an enemy, in terms of both lost resource revenue and the enemy's newly threatening military positions, although the effects would be strongest for citizens whose careers depend on extracting or using those resources and for those who live near the territory.

Low-salience issues are likely to have little impact on domestic political activation, as most citizens, legislators, and other actors perceive that even a total defeat over the issue is unlikely to carry high costs for themselves or for the country. Because of their greater perceived importance to more actors, though, high-salience issues are likely to be followed by many different political actors. As a result, leaders are likely to face much greater domestic constraints when dealing with high-salience issues than when dealing with low-salience issues, and policy failures over high-salience issues are more likely to lead to the replacement of the leader. Unlike many of the other factors discussed herein, the political activation effect of high-salience issues may be felt almost from the beginning of contention over the issue, at least to the extent that the public recognizes that a high-salience issue is under contention. As two or more adversary states continue to contend over high-salience issues, more and more people are likely to become aware of the issue, thereby increasing the constraints on leaders attempting to manage the issue (and making it much more difficult for them to settle the issue when large portions of the selectorate or other political groups are agitating for success over the issue).

It has already been argued that issue salience is an extremely important influence on decisions made in a strictly international game. As this discussion suggests, the importance of issue salience is only increased once the domestic constraints of the two-level game are considered. This suggests the hypothesis (based on both levels of the model) that conflict levels between two adversaries will be greatest when highly salient issues are at stake.

General Historical Context

A central tenet of the evolutionary approach to rivalry, with its emphasis on cumulative changes over time, is that the context of relations between states changes in response to earlier events between those states. Hensel (1996, 1998a, 1998b) describes two distinct types of evolutionary factors that help to account for movement toward or away from rivalry, beyond the impact of contentious issues or control variables like relative military capabilities or political democracy. The first type of factor is the general context of past relations, with relations expected to become more conflictual as two adversaries accumulate a longer history of militarized conflict or more cooperative as they buildup a longer history of friendship and cooperation. The second type involves specific details of past interactions, such as the outcomes and severity levels of specific militarized confrontations.

Before two states become involved in a string of recurrent militarized conflict, they are unlikely to recognize each other as primary security threats or as primary obstacles to the achievement of desired goals. Although journalists, political activists, or individual members of government may warn about the dangers posed by the adversary, it is unlikely to be seen as a serious rival in the military sense by most of the population or the government. For example, books appeared in the 1980s proclaiming "the coming war with Japan" and similar arguments are made in the 1990s about "the future U.S.-Chinese war" or the future rivalry between the West and the Islamic world, but most current observers view such proclamations as alarmist and not as prudent bases for policy making. As noted earlier, a variety of public opinion literature suggests that foreign affairs are of little day-to-day consequence to the average citizen, at least until his or her personal interests are perceived as being threatened. In the absence of a clear military rival, then, this chapter's evolutionary approach suggests that the primary determinants of a leader's popularity and prospects for remaining in power are domestic in nature (typically involving social or economic policy). A leader may thus pursue foreign policy goals with little risk of domestic backlash, at least as long as the leader is able to avoid a dramatic misadventure such as a costly or unsuccessful war (Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson 1995).

As two adversaries begin to confront each other militarily, though, foreign policy vis-a-vis the rival is likely to become more important as an influence on both the selectorate and the chief executive. Each confrontation between two adversaries is likely to lead to a general deterioration in relations due to increased feelings of hostility, distrust, or enmity, as well as any death or losses that may have resulted. Beyond these direct effects on the chief executive, a longer history of conflict is likely to lead to the political activation of a larger portion of the selectorate, for whom foreign affairs are becoming more menacing. Any confrontation that has led to fatalities or to the extended stationing of military forces in harm's way is likely to create the perception of a threat to personal interests for the soldiers and their friends and families, and any domestic social or economic hardships as a result of the budding rivalry are likely to have a similar (if less intense) effect on a wider scale. As a result, the leader's policies regarding the rival state are likely to be seen as an important indicator of his or her overall quality of leadership, and a leader with unpopular policies must either change the policies (i.e., undergo evolutionary "adaptation") or risk being removed from office by the selectorate (i.e., risk being "selected out" in favor of a more "fit" political competitor).

It is important to note that past interactions may influence domestic political actors -- and, as a consequence, the foreign policy-making process -- in either a more conflictual or a more cooperative direction. A longer history of conflict and distrust should be expected to produce more suspicion and conflict, as the history of past conflict leads to self-fulfilling prophecies that the enemy can not be trusted and must be stopped by force if needed. Indeed, each successive confrontation that occurs should have such an effect, all else being equal; it is difficult to imagine a circumstance where confronting an adversary militarily improves relations with the adversary (although characteristics of the confrontation, such as its outcome, may produce this effect; see below). A longer history of cooperative interactions -- such as arms control agreements, confidence-building measures, or attempts to settle disputed issues peacefully through negotiations -- should be expected to produce more cooperation in the future, perhaps helping bring a long-time rivalry to a close. This is consistent with the result of U.S. opinion polls taken during the Cold War that show the U.S. public seeing the Soviets as more trustworthy (and cooperation as more likely) in periods such as detente, when recent history seemed to show successful examples of U.S.-Soviet

cooperation, and seeing the Soviets as less trustworthy with each successive incident or crisis in the early Cold War period (Holsti 1996: 66 ff).

From both the international and two-level versions of the basic model, then, the general historical context is likely to be important. With regard to militarized conflict, both would suggest (ceteris paribus) that conflict levels will be higher in relationships characterized by a longer history of past conflict. Of course, all else is not always equal, and specific details of past interactions can change this general expectation; these details are addressed in the next section.

Specific Historical Details

Past Conflict Outcomes

Beyond the general contextual effects discussed above, the unfolding processes of change that characterize the evolutionary approach to conflict and rivalry are also influenced by specific details of past interactions. With regard to past episodes of militarized conflict, relevant details include the outcomes and severity levels of each past confrontation, which may exacerbate the conflictual effect of the confrontation itself or may help to counterbalance it in a more cooperative direction. For example, a confrontation that ends in a stalemate is likely to increase distrust and hostility between two adversaries without resolving any of their disputed issues to either side's satisfaction. In contrast, a confrontation ending in a negotiated compromise may settle some or all of the disputed issues and may create a more cooperative atmosphere. A decisive victory for one side may be able to settle the issues if the loser should recognize the futility in continued contention against a demonstrably stronger adversary; even if contention is not abandoned altogether, a substantial period of time may be required before the loser begins to feel confident in its ability to reverse its earlier losses.

Focusing more specifically on domestic actors beyond the chief executive, the impact of past conflict outcomes may also depend on the political activation of relevant domestic actors. If most domestic actors are uninterested in the rivalry or the issue(s) under contention, then leaders face few constraints on policy making, and defeat might not be enough to spur a disinterested selectorate to remove a leader from power. To the extent that domestic actors are activated (either by the outcome itself or by events occurring before the confrontation), though, the impact of dispute outcomes on policy should be much greater. For example, an outcome in which the state was defeated by its rival and lost control of disputed territory appears likely to activate more of the public by convincing them that the rival poses a serious threat to their interests (and that the leader's policies were ineffective). If the defeat was so overwhelming as to indicate that even a more effective leader is unlikely to achieve better results against this adversary, though, domestic political actors may begin to prefer a more accommodationist strategy vis-a-vis the rival, and may pressure future leaders in that direction.

Returning to more cooperative forms of interaction, we might also expect specific details to have important effects. As noted earlier, we should generally expect a history of cooperation to increase the prospects for future cooperation. Yet not all negotiations or other peaceful interactions will have the same effect, and some may work in the opposite direction. Negotiations that produce successful treaties that are ratified and carried out are likely to produce a positive effect on future relations. The opposite result is likely, though, for talks that end without agreement or for agreements that are not ratified or carried out by one or both sides. Such cases may indicate to one or both sides that the other side can not be trusted or has no interest in reaching a genuine peaceful settlement of their contentious issue(s), rendering future

cooperation more difficult.

In the strictly international level version of the model, changes in the status quo related to past conflict outcomes are expected to influence subsequent behavior in important ways, with outcomes that failed to resolve the status quo in either side's favor likely producing the most conflictual aftermath. Conflict outcomes do not matter as much early in the two-level model, as a largely disinterested public is less likely to follow foreign affairs closely or to pressure leaders based on foreign policy. Once the relevant domestic actors become politically activated, though, specific details of recent conflict can be important sources of pressure on the leader -- likely reinforcing (or even surpassing) the conflictual effects that result from the chief executive's focus on the status quo and the issues at stake. Additionally, past confrontations -- particularly when they produce unsatisfactory outcomes -- are likely to contribute to further political activation of domestic actors.

Past Conflict Severity Levels

The severity level reached in a previous confrontation between two adversaries may also affect their subsequent relations, independent of the outcome of the confrontation. If a confrontation reaches a high level of escalation, the involved nations may need to rearm or replace the loss of much of their military hardware or trained military personnel. Public opinion may develop an aversion to belligerent foreign policies as the result of previous experiences with wars or perhaps crises that raised the strong possibility of escalation to war. Either separately or in conjunction with the effects of public opinion, a state's policymakers may develop a similar aversion to war that will lead them to hesitate before seeking to initiate another confrontation, often referred to as a "war-weariness" or "negative reinforcement" effect. A previous confrontation that led to heavy losses could lead policymakers to reevaluate or abandon the policies that led to those losses, as the leader attempts to adapt his or her policy preferences or is replaced by a new leader favoring a less hard-line policy. Alternatively, a confrontation that ended with few or no losses may contribute to more aggressive foreign policy actions in its aftermath, relative to confrontations that produced heavier losses in men or material.

The present paper's emphasis on domestic actors also suggests that such a dramatic international event as a full-scale war is likely to lead to the political activation of a large segment of domestic society, because so many people's interests were likely affected by the war. In general, then, the evolutionary model suggests that especially severe conflicts between two rivals should have the twin effects of activating a sizable portion of the public and generating opposition to such costly conflict in the future. The result should be that the government will be less belligerent in the near future after the war, because of the high political costs of pursuing a belligerent policy that the public is likely to oppose.[11] It is instructive that Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson (1995) find that involvement in a costly war increases a government's likelihood of losing political power, whether the war ended in victory or defeat.

Research Design
Dependent Variables

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[11] If the issue at stake is highly salient and the bloody confrontation did not result in overwhelming defeat, losses of life may actually product the opposite impact, as leaders and other actors decide that the deaths of their countrymen must not be in vain. Such an effect is likely to be rare, though, depending on a sufficiently salient issue and sufficiently low expected future costs that the issue is seen as worth risking further bloodshed.

This paper's hypotheses are tested using data on militarized interstate disputes from the Correlates of War project (Jones, et al. 1996), which cover the entire world from 1816-1992. One group of analyses covers the aftermath of militarized disputes, examining the likelihood that two past adversaries will become involved in a subsequent dispute after the end of the first. These analyses involve annual observations for a maximum of fifteen years after the end of each militarized dispute in the data set, up to the time when a new dispute (if any) breaks out between the same adversaries.[12]

A second group of analyses covers the severity levels of militarized disputes, examining each dispute in the data set to attempt to understand the factors that lead states to escalate their disputes. The specific severity measure employed is a dummy variable indicating whether the dispute escalated to the point of fatalities among the participants. The loss of human life appears to be an important threshold in world politics, with death among one's military forces attracting a great deal of attention and controversy among state leaders, selectorates, and most other segments of society; a dispute in which fatalities have occurred can reasonably be considered more severe than one in which nobody dies, all else being equal.

Domestic Political Constraints

Data on domestic political structures and constraints are adapted from the Polity 98 data set. Consistent with past quantitative research on domestic politics and interstate conflict, several of this paper's analyses use the standard "Democ-Autoc" measure that subtracts the Polity index of autocratic characteristics from the index of institutionalized democracy, producing a total range from -10 to +10.[13] An important contribution of the present paper, though, is the development of new measures of specific domestic constraints on leaders. These measures are designed to reflect the specific constraints discussed in the hypotheses, which is not possible with an aggregated measure of a state's overall democracy level. Table 1 reveals the specific factors that go into each of the three indicators of political constraints.

[Table 1 about here]

An index of leader selection constraints is based on the Polity 98 scores for "executive recruitment competition" and "executive recruitment openness." These Polity variables measure the extent to which executives are chosen through competitive elections and the opportunity for non-elites to attain executive office. One point is added to the constraint index for factors that involve some kind of constraint in the selection of leaders, whether this involves democratic elections or designation by the ruling party; either type of process indicates some external source that could remove a leader from office. Two points are added for especially strong constraints, as in systems where there is not at least one leader chosen through hereditary succession or similar non-constraining means along with the constraints posed by election or designation. The resulting index ranges from zero (a system with no effective constraints on the selection or deselection of leaders) to four (a system with much stronger constraints of some type).

An index of operational constraints on leaders is used to measure the policy ratification constraint. This index is based on the Polity "executive constraints" variable, which reflects the de facto operational

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[12] This time frame is consistent with past research on recurrent militarized conflict and rivalry, and is meant to include the period in which the impact of the previous dispute is likely to influence policy. Most research on rivalry (e.g., Hensel 1996; Goertz and Diehl 1995) considers a period of rivalry to end if fifteen years pass with the renewal of militarized conflict, although a new dispute occurring in this period is considered to prolong the rivalry in question.

[13] All of the dyadic measures of democracy or of political constraints in this paper follow Dixon's "weakest link" principle, which argues that the best way to measure dyadic democracy is to measure the democracy (or constraints) of the least democratic (least constrained) member of the dyad.

independence of the chief executive. The total index ranges from zero (no real constraints related to policy ratification) to four (where the chief executive has equal or less effective power than the accountability groups in the system), depending on the strength of the constraint identified by the Polity project.

An index of political participation is used to supplement both the leader selection and policy ratification constraints; both leader selection and ratification constraints are presumably strengthened by active political contention. This index is based on the Polity "regulation of participation" and "competitiveness of participation" variables, which reflect the development of institutional structures for political expression and the extent to which non-elites have access to institutionalized structures for political expression. The resulting index ranges from zero (unregulated systems with no enduring national political organizations and no organized structures for political expression) to four (political systems with relative stable and enduring political groups regularly competing for influence, little use of political coercion, and no regular exclusion of significant groups or issues from the political process).

[Table 2 about here]

These three indicators offer important advantages over traditional measures of democracy. Table 2 compares high constraints (a value of three or four on each indicator) with a common dichotomous measure of democracy (using a score of six or higher in the Polity 98 institutionalized democracy index) for the 1816-1992 period covered by the remainder of this study's analyses. Not surprisingly, most political democracies feature high constraints on the chief executive; 98 percent of democracies have high leader selection constraints, and 97 percent have high policy ratification constraints. Similarly, most non-democratic systems feature low constraints; less then six percent of such systems place high policy ratification constraints on the leader, and less than two percent feature high public participation in politics. Yet one third of democracies feature low or no constraints in the form of public participation, and nearly half of all authoritarian systems feature high leader selection constraints -- although virtually all of these authoritarian cases with high constraints reach values of three rather than four.[14]

It seems clear from Table 2 that these indicators offer a more detailed picture of political constraints on leaders than aggregated measures of democracy. They highlight specific types of constraints that correspond more directly to common theoretical arguments about how domestic politics can influence foreign policy making. Presumably, hypotheses about the impact of leader selection or policy ratification constraints can be tested more meaningfully with specific measures of those constraints than with an aggregated measure that is highly but only imperfectly correlated with them. Additionally, while these constraints often produce the same assessment of a political system that an aggregated measure would, many democracies lack high values of at least one type of constraint, and many authoritarian leaders find themselves limited by high constraints of at least one type. An accurate assessment of the role of political constraints, then, requires measures such as these.

Additional Independent Variables

The analyses to be run also involve a number of factors related to recent interactions between two adversaries. First are the number of recent militarized disputes between them and a dummy variable indicating whether or not there has been a recent war between them. Drawing from the rivalry literature,

[14] Similar results are found in additional types of comparisons. For example, the policy ratification constraint correlates highly (around r=.90) with the Polity 98 democracy index or with the (Democ - Autoc) measure based on Polity data, while correlations are somewhat weaker for the public participation (r = .77) and leader selection (r=.64) constraints. A difference of means test also reveals significant differences in each type of constraint between democratic and non-democratic systems.

these variables refer to the number of disputes that have occurred without a fifteen year gap (i.e., the number of previous disputes in the adversaries' rivalry so far), and whether or not any of these disputes have escalated to full-scale war (where both sides in the dispute have a "level of hostility" of five and at least 1000 deaths occurred between the two sides). Focusing on the previous dispute between the same adversaries, I include dummy variables indicating whether that dispute ended in a decisive ("victory" or "yield") outcome or a compromise outcome, a continuous measure of that dispute's severity level (see Hensel 1996 for an explanation of this measure), and a dummy variable measuring whether or not territorial issues were at stake for either or both adversaries in their previous dispute.

The analyses control for two additional factors that are thought to affect conflict behavior. A dummy variable for rough military parity (Kugler and Lemke 1996) indicates whether or not the weaker adversary has at least eighty percent of the military capabilities of the stronger, as measured with the COW national material capabilities data set. A final dummy variable indicates whether or not the adversaries are both "major powers" under the COW classification, drawing from Thompson's (1995) arguments that relations (and particularly rivalries) between major powers are quite different from relations (or rivalries) between other states.

Empirical Analyses

Table 3 presents five logistic regression models of dispute recurrence, using different measures of democracy and political constraints. All five models produce very similar results, with the aggregated democracy indicator and each individual constraint measure each significantly decreasing the likelihood of militarized conflict recurrence (p < .01). Whether we are looking at constraints involving leader selection, policy ratification, political participation, or an overall measure of democracy, dyads in which both states are highly constrained are much less likely to experience recurrent militarized conflict than those in which one or both states lack such constraints. It appears clear that chief executives facing substantial domestic political constraints are less likely to reopen militarized conflict against similarly constrained adversaries, which is consistent with the structural explanation for the democratic peace phenomenon.

[Table 3 about here]

Consistent with the evolutionary approach discussed earlier, the general context of past relations between two recent adversaries has a very strong impact on the likelihood of militarized dispute recurrence in all five models. The number of past disputes in a conflictual relationship has a significant positive impact (p < .01), indicating that a longer history of past conflict makes future conflict much more likely -- or in other words, that conflict begets conflict. Similarly, a relationship that has already experienced full-scale war at least once is much more likely to see recurrent conflict in any given year (p < .05), suggesting that the past war experience has helped to "lock in" a conflictual relationship and has complicated the relationship to an extent that future conflict is much more likely. Specific characteristics of the previous dispute between the adversaries also play an important role, with decisive and compromise outcomes significantly decreasing the likelihood of dispute recurrence and the severity level of the past dispute significantly increasing this likelihood. Finally, as expected (and consistent with a variety of research on territory), contention over territorial issues in the previous dispute makes future conflict much more likely; regardless of the outcome or severity level of a past dispute over territory, such issues appear to be much more difficult to resolve to both sides' satisfaction, particularly through military means.

[Table 4 about here]

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Table 4 breaks down the results from the final model in Table 3 by the specific rivalry context of relations between the adversaries, or the number of past militarized disputes in their current rivalry relationship (and thus how close they have come to true enduring rivalry). Three separate logistic regression analyses cover the recurrence of militarized conflict during the early (1-2 disputes), intermediate (3-5 disputes), and advanced (at least six disputes) rivalry phases, drawing from past research on rivalry (see Hensel 1996 for further explanation of these phases). Most of the effects in the model remain relatively constant across these different phases, with several exceptions. First, the impact of a past war only becomes meaningful in the advanced phase of rivalry (i.e., after the adversaries have fully qualified as enduring rivalries with at least six militarized disputes). Second, major power status makes little systematic difference after the early phase, indicating that while major powers do indeed behave differently than other types of adversaries initially (as suggested by Thompson among others), both major and minor power rivals appear to show somewhat similar conflict dynamics as they accumulate a lengthy history of past conflict.

With regard to political constraints, leader selection constraints significantly reduce the likelihood of militarized conflict in the early rivalry phase (i.e., when the adversaries have only had one or two recent militarized disputes), while having little systematic impact in later phases; this suggests several possible explanations. It could be that such constraints simply have little impact on conflict behavior later in a rivalry relationship, with leaders being less concerned about the possible domestic fallout when dealing with a more established adversary; it may even be that leaders can take advantage of the rivalry in diversionary fashion to unite their people behind them. Another possible explanation is that there is some sort of selection effect at work, with highly constrained adversaries generally ending their conflict short of the more advanced rivalry phases; those few constrained adversaries that reach more advanced phases may simply be too small in number to produce a meaningful statistical impact, or there may be some additional factor that distinguishes them from their counterparts that ended their conflict in the early phase (perhaps the nature of the issues under contention between them).

Additionally, the impact of policy ratification constraints appears to become stronger over time, with the statistical significance increasing substantially between the early and intermediate phases ($p < .07$) and the advanced phase ($p < .001$). Again, there are several possible explanations. This result may indicate that such constraints become more important when dealing with a more established rival; the legislature or other ratification-related actors may attempt to play more of a balancing role with regard to making policies involving a long-term enemy. As before, it may also be the result of a type of selection effect. Recall from Table 2 that leader selection was the only one of this study's three constraint measures that is relatively common in generally autocratic political systems. It may be that those relatively constrained autocratic systems differ systematically from other states with both strong leader selection and policy ratification constraints, and that once they are removed from the sample by settling their disputes (or at least by ending the militarized portion of contention), the remaining states' ratification constraints outweigh the impact of their leader selection constraints. It seems quite clear that additional investigation is needed with regard to such question, focusing on the interconnections between different political constraints in each rivalry phase and on the possibility of selection effects rather than straightforwrad increases or decreases in the impact of constraints on militarized conflict.

[Table 5 about here]

Table 5 presents five logistic regression models of militarized dispute severity, as measured by

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whether or not the dispute in question leads to at least one fatality among the participants. Political constraints act to decrease dispute severity in all five models, but the strength of the effect depends on the type of constraint being examined. The traditional aggregated measure of democracy levels has a significant negative effect, indicating that more democratic adversaries are less likely to reach the use of force in their disputes than are other adversaries. The remaining models, though, indicate that these results vary with specific types of constraints. Both leader selection and political participation constraints on leaders produce significant negative effects, indicating that greater constraints of each type typically reduce dispute severity. High policy ratification constraints have little systematic impact on dispute severity, though, suggesting that leaders' conflict management is strongly affected by the prospects of removal from power and by the existence of numerous active political organizations in society, but that operational constraints on decisionmaking are less relevant in the short-term environment of managing an ongoing militarized dispute or crisis.

The results in Table 5 also indicate the importance of evolutionary factors related to recent interactions between two adversaries. The general context of relations, as indicated by the number of recent militarized disputes and by whether or not there has been a war in the relationship so far, appears to have little systematic impact. The only meaningful result among these factors is that recent experience with full-scale war appears to increase the severity level of subsequent disputes. With regard to specific effects from the most recent confrontation, the severity of the most recent dispute appears to increase subsequent severity significantly, while decisive outcomes significantly decrease subsequent dispute severity. Consistent with past research, contention over territorial issues also significantly increases dispute severity.

[Table 6 about here]

As before, Table 6 breaks down the results from Table 5 by the rivalry context. The impact of past conflict becomes much greater in later rivalry phases, with both recent war experience and past decisive outcomes producing significant results in the intermediate and advanced phases but nothing systematic in the early phase. The impact of political constraints on leaders varies slightly over time, but even where the impact of leader selection constraints loses stastical significance it remains in the same direction and does not weaken much beyond the point of a borderline effect (p < .15).

The results presented in Tables 3 through 6 suggest that both political constraints and recent interactions between two adversaries play important roles in decision making, both during and after militarized confrontations. Many of the factors examined affect both conflict severity and conflict recurrence in meaningful ways, usually in the expected direction. It appears that higher domestic political constraints generally act to decrease conflict levels at both the dyadic and nation-state levels of analysis, including the aggregated measure of democracy as well as the specific measures of policy ratification constraints and public participation in politics. Yet not all types of constraints produce the same type or level of effects on conflict behavior, and not all of the effects of constraints remain constant over time. Each type of constraint (including the overall democracy index) significantly decreases the likelihood that recurrent militarized conflict will break out between two former adversaries in any given year, although leader selection constraints only appear to have a meaningful impact in the early phase of rivalry while policy ratification constraints play an increasingly important role in later phases of rivalry. Each type of constraint also reduces the likelihood of dispute escalation to the point of fatalities, although the impact of policy ratification constraints is far from statistical significance and even leader selection constraints

weaken somewhat in the intermediate rivalry phase.

After comparing all of these effects, it appears that most of these measures of political constraints produce similar results so there may not be much immediate concern about which measure or measures will be used in a given study. Indeed, similar results were also produced by alternative analyses using the full zero-to-four measures of each individual constraint rather than these dummy indicators of high constraints in each state, and by the zero-to-ten Polity institutionalized democracy index or (Democ - Autoc) measure. This similarity in results greatly increases our confidence in the robustness of the impact of democratic or other political constraints on leaders.

Yet these analyses have been relatively narrow in nature, focusing on the occurrence and severity of militarized conflict between former adversaries. It may be that different constraints produce different effects when a wider variety of foreign policy outputs are considered. For example, a leader facing strong policy ratification constraints may hesitate before signing a controversial treaty that must be ratified by a disagreeable legislature, for example, but ratification would appear less relevant for the question of militarized conflict. Even in the case of the United States with the War Powers Act, the president can commit troops abroad for a relatively short time without the need to obtain Congressional approval; many other political systems lack even this constraint on the military option. The lack of significance for policy ratification constraints in some of this study's analyses is thus not surprising.

The remaining factors in the model produce results that are generally in the expected direction, and that are generally consistent with both the international and two-level models discussed earlier. This is a very preliminary study, and the analyses presented here have not been capable of distinguishing clearly between the effects of the two models. The concluding section of this paper addresses some of the shortcomings of the current form of this basic theoretical model and of these preliminary analyses, and offers suggestions on how to overcome them in future work.

Conclusions and Implications

This paper has attempted to introduce domestic politics to the study of interstate rivalry. After reviewing the notion of two-level games and the central domestic actors involved in the foreign policy process, I have formulated and tested a series of central hypotheses on rivalry from a domestic politics perspective. The results indicate that specific forms of domestic political constraints play an important role in conflict behavior. Importantly, none of the constraints examined here are either present in all democracies or absent from all authoritarian states, and not all constraints produce identical results. Of course, this has been a very preliminary attempt to test propositions based on a preliminary theoretical model, and much remains to be done. The paper concludes with a series of suggestions for future research, involving both empirical extensions of the analyses reported in this paper and theoretical extensions of the basic model.

Empirical Extensions

The analyses presented in this paper have loosely tested some of the central ideas involved in the model developed earlier, but there is plenty of room for improved analyses. For example, the analyses presented here have emphasized the militarized dimension of world politics, but the general model presented earlier has much broader implications. The discussion at the outset of the model mentioned militarized force as only one option available to leaders for pursuing their issue-related goals. The basic

logic of this model would appear to be as applicable to peaceful options as it is to militarized options. Domestic selectorates or policy ratification actors are likely to be concerned with any action by leaders -- whether peaceful negotiations, submission to third-party adjudication, or militarized conflict -- that could obtain or lose a sought-after piece of territory or other desired stake. Various peaceful options may have different risks or costs for leaders than militarized options, but signing a treaty withdrawing a longstanding territorial claim would appear likely to have the same negative implications for continued tenure in office that result from initiating unsuccessful wars. In each case, domestic leadership selection and policy ratification constraints are likely to affect a leader's evaluation of different policy options.

Non-militarized options might reasonably be tested using recently-collected data from the Issue Correlates of War (ICOW) project, which currently includes data on the number and characteristics of territorial claims over the past two centuries as well as data on attempts to settle such claims through bilateral negotiations or with (binding or non-binding) third party assistance.[15] Because all states engaged in territorial claims are included, ICOW data may be used to identify a set of cases with measurable contentious issues that need to be resolved (in military or other fashions). Additionally, because all peaceful attempts to settle their claims are collected, ICOW data may be used to determine the timing and success of attempts to settle their issues in non-militarized ways, supplementing the MID data employed in the present paper. Hensel (1999), for example, examines the impact of both the peaceful and militarized context of recent relations on a variety of dependent variables ranging from the outbreak of militarized conflict to attempts to settle a territorial claim peacefully through bilateral negotiations or submission of the claim to binding or non-binding third party assistance. The results of these analyses indicate that past interactions (in both the peaceful and militarized senses) have a very important influence on subsequent attempts to manage issues (using both peaceful and militarized means), which is very consistent with the evolutionary approach presented here.

Beyond extending empirical tests of the model to new dependent variables involving peaceful forms of interaction, this paper's tests of hypotheses from the model might be improved by including a number of additional independent variables. ICOW data will also allow the use of non-militarized evolutionary independent variables, focusing on the general context of relations between two states in both militarized and peaceful senses. Hensel (1999), for example, uses the number of recent peaceful settlement attempts between territorial claimants to indicate the general diplomatic context of their relations, supplemented by specific details such as the success of past settlement attempts (such as the number of attempts that failed to produce agreement and the number of agreements that were not ratified or implemented by both participants). Such measures allow a much broader perspective on the context of relations between two states than has been possible with this paper's focus on militarized conflict.

Similarly, this paper's measures of political constraints produce results that are generally consistent with the structural explanation for the democratic peace, but no measures are used to address the normative explanation. At least to the extent that high levels of structural constraints on leaders are correlated with political democracy (and thus with democratic norms), these empirical analyses may not be telling the entire story about domestic political constraints and foreign policy behavior. Future research would benefit from explicit measures of norms that are thought to be related to democracy, in order to increase our confidence that these results actually reflect the specific political constraints being studied and do not

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[15] ICOW data collection is now complete for claims to territory located anywhere in the Western Hemisphere, preliminary data collection is complete for Europe and the Middle East, and data collection is currently underway for Africa and Asia.

instead derive from a correlated but unmeasured concept. Although democratic norms are quite difficult to measure directly, one promising possibility might involve a state's acceptance of compulsory jurisdiction by the International Court of Justice (or the earlier Permanent Court of International Justice), or its signature and ratification of multilateral treaties calling for the peaceful settlement of disputes and renouncing the use of force. Such measures can be calculated from the ICOW international organizations data set, which includes declarations of compulsory jurisdiction, ratifications of the 1899 and 1907 Hague treaties on peaceful settlement of disputes as well as the Kellogg-Briand Pact, and membership in a variety of regional organizations calling for the peaceful settlement of disputes among member states.

The analyses reported in this paper have also been additive in nature, with a number of independent variables added to the logistic regression model individually; more complex relationships such as interaction effects have not been considered. Future tests of this model could benefit from careful consideration of the possible existence and possible forms of interactions between variables. For example, the impact of past conflict may depend in important ways on the existence of certain types of domestic constraints; in the absence of such constraints the leader may be able to proceed as if playing the strictly international version of this game. Certain effects in the model may also depend on the level of political activation within the selectorate or the groups charged with policy ratification; a disinterested selectorate would not be expected to constrain leaders nearly as much as one that has become highly politically activated. This paper's empirical analyses have not measured political activation directly, making it difficult to distinguish between results based on the international version of the model (or on the two-level model in the absence of political activation) and those based on domestic constraints; for example, the impact of issue salience may be due to leaders' evaluation of salience (as in the strictly international-level model), the influence of activated domestic actors who are concerned with the salience of the issues, or some combination. It would be desirable in future research to measure political activation in such a way that these effects could be distinguished more clearly.

It would also be worth considering the possibility of diversionary politics or scapegoating, which involves a connection between internal support for a leader and the external use of force. As Levy (1998: 154) and Enterline (1998) suggest, a long-time rival adversary would appear to offer the ideal opponent for scapegoating, because the people are already predisposed to see the rival as a threat. John F. Kennedy's use of the "missile gap" with the Soviet Union in the 1960 presidential campaign and Ronald Reagan's military buildup against the Soviet "evil empire" offer two prominent cases where the threat posed by a rival state appears to have been used for one's own political gain. The connection between rivalry and scapegoating has not been explored systematically, but it would be desirable to do so.[16] Such an analysis could examine the possibility of a more active role for public opinion than is often assumed; a relatively dovish leader might be pushed into a belligerent foreign policy by a more hawkish selectorate that appears to be on the verge of removing the leader from office (or, potentially, a more dovish selectorate may be able to moderate the policies of a more hawkish leader). At least for countries whose political processes have been subjected to extensive survey research, public support for the executive might be measured through public opinion surveys (or some comparable measure) and incorporated into analyses of interstate conflict behavior. Until such variables are added to the research design, large-*N*

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[16] Enterline (1998) examines the prospects for leader survival during ongoing rivalries, although his measure of executive constraints is based on the Polity index of executive constraints (XCONST) and thus measures policy ratification constraints rather than leader selection constraints or the importance of public opinion. He finds that leaders facing greater (ratification) constraints appear to be able to increase their duration in office by increasing the level of conflict versus a recent adversary.

analyses will be limited to conclusions that may be consistent with a domestic or two-level explanation of rivalry, but are likely to be equally consistent with a strictly international explanation of rivalry.

It should be noted that diversionary pressures operate at the state level rather than the dyadic level. Indeed, each of the domestic pressures or constraints discussed in this paper functions within an individual nation-state, although -- as with most of the recent literature on the pacifying effects of political democracy more generally -- there are likely to be dyadic consequences, as even a highly constrained democracy may interact quite differently when dealing with another highly constrained state rather than a loosely constrained autocratic leader. A more detailed test of these measures of political constraints would ideally test more state-level propositions about constraints and foreign policy behavior, rather than simply aggregating to the dyadic level and examining the "weak link" in terms of constraints within the dyad. Meaningful state-level analyses are somewhat more difficult, though. For example, adequate data on militarized dispute initiation (i.e., which state in a dyad first took militarized action in a dispute) are hard to come by for multilateral disputes (as well as for certain strictly dyadic disputes). Similarly, it is difficult to measure a state's escalation patterns in a militarized dispute from a strictly state-level rather than dyadic perspective; measuring the fatalities suffered by a state's forces may tell us more about what the state's adversary did during a dispute, and measuring the state's level of hostility (in terms of the threat, display, or use of force) may also capture some interactive dynamics that are more closely related to the adversary's actions than to the state's own choices. Nonetheless, state-level analyses in some form are vital for a more appropriate test of this study's measures of political constraints.

Theoretical Extensions

The basic theoretical model presented in this paper could also be expanded in a number of ways. For example, the present model does not address the specific policy views of either the chief executive or other political actors. A hard-line, militaristic leader at the beginning of a potential rivalry relationship may produce very different evolutionary dynamics than a more pacifistic, accommodationist leader, and popular support for the leader's policies may depend on the specific political views of the selectorate or of other domestic political actors; Mor (1997) suggests the potential importance of these kinds of divergent preferences in the dynamics of rivalries. There may even be important differences within the executive branch, such that the leader must face executive-level debate before selecting policies, and the initial preferences of the chief executive may not always carry the day. Future extensions of this model may benefit from an explicit consideration of the specific policy preferences of leaders and other important domestic actors.

Finally, the basic model in its current form does not address many of the more interesting or important implications of the two-level game for world politics. In the two-level game as described by Putnam (1988) and others, each side's chief executive may attempt to influence the other side's society and vice versa, and the two sides' societies may attempt to influence each other. The present paper has not allowed for this possibility, focusing on interaction between the two chief executives in the international level of the game and on interaction within (but not between) each side's political system in the domestic level. It may be that such cross-state relationships are important in the dynamics of rivalry, and that (for example) two leaders attempting to resolve the underlying issues behind their rivalry can improve their chances by communicating directly to each others' societies in support of a settlement.

Similarly, the literature on two-level games identifies a number of important strategic dynamics that

are implied by the game, in the form of strategies that each leader may attempt to use in dealing with either his own society or her counterpart in the other state. For example, a leader might attempt to use a difficult public ratification process to negotiate a more favorable deal in the international level of the game. While such dynamics have not been directly relevant to the model presented in this paper, they could certainly be considered in future extensions.

In summary, this paper has presented a preliminary model of militarized conflict and rivalry that explicitly incorporates domestic politics. New indices of domestic political constraints have been introduced to measure the domestic components of this model more directly, and empirical analyses offer preliminary support for the basic model. By no means should this be considered a final product, though, as numerous avenues for both empirical and theoretical extensions remain. It is to be hoped that future research will be able to extend this basic model and to test its propositions more directly, in order to advance our understanding both of domestic political influences on world politics and of the processes that lead to militarized conflict, rivalry, and similar outcomes.

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Table 1: Operational Measures of Political Constraints

A. Leader Selection Constraints   (0-4)

XRCOMP: Executive recruitment competition

+1   1 (Selection): Chief executives are chosen by hereditary succession, designation, or by a combination of both (Note: only counts as leader selection constraint if XRREG=2, indicating that chief executives are chosen by designation within the political elite)

+1   2 (Dual/transitional): Dual executives in which one is chosen by hereditary succession, the other by competitive election.

+2   3 (Election): Chief executives are typically chosen in or through competitive elections matching two or more major parties or candidates.

XROPEN: Executive recruitment openness

+1   2 (Dual/designation): Hereditary succession plus executive or court selection of an effective chief minister.

+1   3 (Dual/election): Hereditary succession plus electoral selection of an effective chief minister.

+2   4 (Open): Chief executives are chosen by elite designation, competitive election, or transitional arrangements between designation and election.

B. Policy Ratification Constraints   (0-4)

XCONST: Executive constraints

+1   2 (Intermediate category)

+1   3 (Slight to moderate limitations): There are some real but limited constraints on the executive.

+2   4 (Intermediate category)

+2   5 (Substantial limitations): The executive has more effective authority than any accountability group but is subject to substantial constraints by them.

+3   6 (Intermediate category)

+4   7 (Executive parity or subordination): Accountability groups have effective authority equal to or greater than the chief executive in most areas of activity.

C. Political Participation Constraints   (0-4)

PARREG: Regulation of participation
+1   2 (Factional/transitional): There are relatively stable and enduring political groups which compete for political influence at the national level but competition among them is intense, hostile, and frequently violent.
+1   3 (Factional/restricted): Polities which oscillate more or less regularly between intense factionalism and restriction: when one group secures power it restricts its opponents' political activities until it is displaced in turn.
+1   4 (Restricted): Some organized political participation is permitted without intense factionalism but significant groups, issues, and/or types of conventional participation are regularly excluded from the political process.
+2   5 (Institutionalized): Relatively stable and enduring political groups regularly compete for political influence and positions with little use of coercion. No significant groups, issues, or types of political action are regularly excluded from the political process.

PARCOMP: Competitiveness of participation
+1   2 (Restricted/transitional): Some organized, political competition occurs outside government, without serious factionalism, but the regime sharply limits its form, extent, or both in ways that exclude substantial groups from participation.
+1   3 (Factional): Polities with factional or factional/restricted patterns of competition.
+1   4 (Transitional): Any transitional arrangements from Restricted or Factional patterns to fully competitive patterns, or vice versa.
+2   5 (Competitive): There are relatively stable and enduring political groups which regularly compete for political influence at the national level; competition among them seldom causes widespread violence or disruption.

Table 2:   Comparison of Political Constraint Measures

A.   Leader Selection

	High Constraints	Low or No Constraints
Political Democracy	3035 (97.8%)	70
Non-Democracy	4487 (44.0%)	5702

B.   Policy Ratification

	High Constraints	Low or No Constraints
Political Democracy	3006 (96.8%)	99
Non-Democracy	575 (5.6%)	9613

C.   Public Participation

	High Constraints	Low or No Constraints
Political Democracy	2021 (65.1%)	1084
Non-Democracy	185 (1.8%)	10,003

Table 3: **Recurrence of Militarized Disputes within Ongoing Rivalries**

Variable	Model I Est.(S.E.)	Model II Est.(S.E.)	Model III Est.(S.E.)	Model IV Est.(S.E.)	Model V Est.(S.E.)
Intercept	- 2.44***	- 2.34***	- 2.45***	- 2.45***	- 2.34***
	(0.04)	(0.10)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Constraints:					
Leader Selection	---	- 0.28***	---	---	- 0.24***
		(0.05)			(0.05)
Ratification	---	---	- 0.44***	---	- 0.35***
			(0.05)		(0.11)
Participation	---	---	---	- 1.26***	---
				(0.20)	---
Joint Democracy	- 0.78***	---	---	---	---
	(0.11)				
Past Interactions:					
# Past MIDs	0.07***	0.07***	0.07***	0.07***	0.07***
	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)
Recent War	0.15**	0.20***	0.14**	0.16**	0.20***
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Past Dec. Outcome	- 0.32***	- 0.41***	- 0.34***	- 0.33***	- 0.38***
	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.08)
Past Compromise	- 0.69***	- 0.72***	- 0.70***	- 0.70***	- 0.72***
	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.12)
Past Severity	0.11***	0.11***	0.11***	0.11***	0.11***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Territorial	0.47***	0.45***	0.47***	0.46***	0.47***
Issues	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Controls:					
Military Parity	0.31***	0.29***	0.30***	0.30***	0.29***
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Major Powers	0.42***	0.37***	0.43***	0.41***	0.38***
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
LL (null model):	11,930.26	11,930.26	11,930.26	11,930.26	11,930.26
LL (full model):	11,092.34	11,121.86	11,130.15	11,092.06	11,110.18
Improvement:	837.87	808.40	799.71	838.20	820.08
Significance:	p<.001	p<.001	p<.001	p<.001	p<.001
	(9 d.f.)	(9 d.f.)	(9 d.f.)	(9 d.f.)	(10 d.f.)
N:	16,875	16,875	16,875	16,875	16,875

* p < .10; ** p < .05; *** p < .01

Table 4:   Recurrence of Militarized Disputes, split by Rivalry Phase

Variable	Early Phase Est.(S.E.)	Intermediate Est.(S.E.)	Advanced Est.(S.E.)
Intercept	– 2.47***	– 1.92***	– 1.23***
	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.12)
Constraints:			
Leader Selection	– 0.27***	0.06	0.09
	(0.07)	(0.11)	(0.05)
Ratification	– 0.25*	– 0.40*	– 0.99***
	(0.14)	(0.21)	(0.28)
Past Interactions:			
Recent War	0.13	0.13	0.25**
	(0.13)	(0.14)	(0.12)
Past Dec. Outcome	– 0.36***	– 0.36**	– 0.65***
	(0.10)	(0.18)	(0.17)
Past Compromise	– 0.63***	– 0.80***	– 1.24***
	(0.17)	(0.23)	(0.25)
Past Severity	0.13***	0.09***	0.15***
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Territorial Issues	0.29***	0.63***	0.72***
	(0.08)	(0.12)	(0.12)
Controls:			
Military Parity	0.48***	0.48***	0.29**
	(0.10)	(0.17)	(0.16)
Major Powers	0.83***	0.21	0.09
	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.15)
LL (null model):	6450.64	2595.22	2329.79
LL (full model):	6225.31	2529.45	2195.48
Improvement:	225.33	65.77	134.31
Significance:	p<.001	p<.001	p<.001
	(9 d.f.)	(9 d.f.)	(9 d.f.)
N:	11,736	3141	1198

* p < .10;   ** p < .05;   *** p < .01

Variable	Model I Est.(S.E.)	Model II Est.(S.E.)	Model III Est.(S.E.)	Model IV Est.(S.E.)	Model V Est.(S.E.)
Intercept	- 1.10*** (0.07)	- 0.93*** (0.08)	- 1.12*** (0.07)	- 1.10*** (0.07)	- 0.93*** (0.08)
Constraints:					
Leader Selection	---	- 0.50*** (0.10)	---	---	- 0.50*** (0.10)
Ratification	---	---	- 0.19 (0.19)	---	- 0.01 (0.19)
Participation	---	---	---	- 1.03** (0.44)	---
Joint Democracy	- 0.54*** (0.21)	---	---	---	---
Past Interactions:					
# Past MIDs	- 0.01** (.001)	- 0.01 (0.01)	- 0.01* (0.01)	- 0.01* (0.01)	- 0.01 (0.01)
Recent War	0.26** (0.12)	0.32*** (0.12)	0.26** (0.12)	0.26** (0.12)	0.32*** (0.12)
Past Dec. Outcome	- 1.10*** (0.22)	- 1.23*** (0.22)	- 1.10*** (0.22)	- 1.10*** (0.22)	- 1.23*** (0.22)
Past Compromise	0.10 (0.23)	0.09 (0.23)	0.08 (0.23)	0.07 (0.23)	0.10 (0.23)
Past Severity	0.22*** (0.03)	0.22*** (0.03)	0.22*** (0.03)	0.22*** (0.03)	0.22*** (0.03)
Territorial Issues	0.93*** (0.10)	0.93*** (0.10)	0.93*** (0.10)	0.91*** (0.10)	0.93*** (0.10)
Controls:					
Military Parity	0.39*** (0.13)	0.36*** (0.13)	0.38*** (0.13)	0.37*** (0.13)	0.36*** (0.13)
Major Powers	0.25** (0.12)	0.29** (0.12)	0.24** (0.12)	0.26** (0.12)	0.29** (0.12)
LL (null model):	3151.36	3151.36	3151.36	3151.36	3151.36
LL (full model):	2967.53	2945.74	2973.63	2967.79	2945.73
Improvement:	183.82	205.62	177.73	183.56	205.62
Significance:	p<.001 (9 d.f.)	p<.001 (9 d.f.)	p<.001 (9 d.f.)	p<.001 (9 d.f.)	p<.001 (10 d.f.)
N:	2596	2596	2596	2596	2596

* $p < .10$; ** $p < .05$; *** $p < .01$

Table 6:   Militarized Dispute Fatalities, split by Rivalry Phase

Variable	Early Phase Est.(S.E.)	Intermediate Est.(S.E.)	Advanced Est.(S.E.)
Intercept	− 0.83*** (0.10)	− 1.47*** (0.21)	− 1.04*** (0.22)
Constraints:			
Leader Selection	− 0.54*** (0.12)	− 0.32 (0.22)	− 0.58*** (0.20)
Past Interactions:			
Recent War	− 0.03 (0.20)	0.87*** (0.26)	0.42** (0.21)
Past Dec. Outcome	− 0.56 (0.37)	− 1.56*** (0.44)	− 1.47*** (0.38)
Past Compromise	0.09 (0.39)	0.27 (0.37)	− 0.12 (0.48)
Past Severity	0.18*** (0.06)	0.22*** (0.06)	0.23*** (0.05)
Territorial Issues	0.94*** (0.14)	1.01*** (0.24)	0.96*** (0.19)
Controls:			
Military Parity	0.37** (0.17)	0.80** (0.35)	0.01 (0.27)
Major Powers	0.08 (0.15)	0.98*** (0.27)	0.34 (0.32)
LL (null model):	1813.46	592.54	741.50
LL (full model):	1729.27	522.21	666.88
Improvement:	84.19	70.33	74.62
Significance:	p<.001 (8 d.f.)	p<.001 (8 d.f.)	p<.001 (8 d.f.)
N:	1469	515	612

* p < .10;   ** p < .05;   *** p < .01

Note: ratification constraint excluded due to high degree of overlap with leader selection constraint (in the intermediate and advanced rivalry phases, only nine and two MIDs respectively have high ratification constraints without high selection constraints, with a negative impact on the results)