

CHAPTER 3

The Empirical Importance of the Rivalry Concept

We argue throughout this book that the rivalry approach provides a different, and novel, perspective on the issues of international war and peace. Enduring rivalries have drawn the attention of researchers because they represent dangerous dyads. Although it is easy to name prominent enduring rivalries—as one can do with prominent wars—we need to investigate systematically the population of rivalries. How dangerous are enduring rivalries? To what extent do wars and disputes occur within rivalries?

Naturally our descriptive analyses focus on the enduring rivalry category. Nevertheless, the isolated and proto-rivalry types are essential in the process of studying enduring rivalries. It is only by comparing *across* these three categories that we can distinguish key features of enduring rivalries. In chapter 5 we develop in detail the methodological aspect of a rivalry concept that runs from isolated to enduring. This chapter provides a foretaste of those arguments. For example, we discuss the debate about power symmetry in enduring rivalries (see the previous chapter for the conceptual issues). There was the suggestion that enduring rivalries occur primarily or exclusively in power symmetrical dyads. If we limited our analysis to enduring rivalries, however, we would conclude that this is incorrect because we identify some major-minor enduring rivalries. Yet, if we examine the trends from isolated to proto- to enduring rivalries, we find some support for the proposition.

In summary, if much war and dispute activity occurs within long-term rivalry contexts, then theories of conflict need to take rivalry characteristics into account. The rivalry concept has empirical importance if we find distinctive patterns of conflict activity within rivalries that cross-sectional approaches to war cannot see. We now turn to a descriptive analysis of the rivalry data set generated in the last chapter in order to discover what empirical facts about international conflict the rivalry approach reveals.

TABLE 3.1: Distribution of Cases Across Rivalry Types

Rivalry Type	<i>N</i>	(%)
Isolated	880	(76)
Proto	223	(19)
Enduring	63	(5)
6–13 disputes	36	(3)
>13 disputes	27	(2)
Total	1,166	(100)

Basic Patterns and Characteristics of Rivalries

Rivalries are a constant feature of international relations, evidenced by the large number of them over the past two hundred years. A closer inspection reveals a number of distinct patterns in rivalries across space and time. We use our categorization of rivalry—isolated, proto, and enduring—created in the last chapter, to give a new view of conflict phenomena. For analytical purposes, we also divide the enduring rivalry category in two, between more (greater than 13 militarized disputes) and less (6–12 disputes) intense variations of those rivalries.

Types

In the definitional chapter, we noted that most rivalries tended to be rather short (the median duration was less than a year, the mean less than five years) and involved very few disputes. Not surprisingly, the overwhelming majority of rivalries fall into the isolated category.

Over 75 percent of all rivalries are isolated ones, indicating that although conflict may be common across a wide range of dyads, it tends to end quickly and not reoccur in a narrow time frame (see table 3.1). An example of an isolated rivalry is United States–Grenada. Just under 20 percent of rivalries develop into proto-rivalries, but die out before reaching enduring status. An example is the United States–United Kingdom proto-rivalry centered in Latin America around 1900. Finally, barely more than 5 percent of all rivalries are of the enduring variety. These tend to be among the most famous of militarized competitions, including the Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union after World War II, between Israel and its Arab neighbors, between India and Pakistan, and between Greece and Turkey (at two different junctures in history).

A second way to classify rivalries is by reference to the status of their participants. A conventional method has been to divide states into major or minor powers according to their capabilities and global importance. Classifying states into major and minor powers (for criteria and lists, see Small and Singer 1982)

TABLE 3.2: Distribution of Rivalry Cases by Relative Power Status of Rivals

Rivalry Type	Major-Major <i>N</i> (%)	Major-Minor <i>N</i> (%)	Minor-Minor <i>N</i> (%)
Isolated	31 (4)	443 (50)	406 (46)
Proto	27 (12)	95 (43)	101 (45)
Enduring	11 (18)	19 (30)	33 (52)
6–13 disputes	4 (11)	14 (39)	18 (50)
>13 disputes	7 (26)	5 (19)	15 (56)
Total	69 (6)	557 (48)	540 (46)

also allows us to see to what degree rivalries are conducted between states of approximately equal power. It has been the contention of some scholars (Vasquez 1993) that rivalries are best understood as competitions between states with symmetrical capabilities. Table 3.2 shows the breakdown of rivalries by the capability status of its participants.

Although major powers number only nine states maximum¹ at any given point in 1816–1992 period, and therefore a tiny fraction of all possible dyads, they are involved in over half (54 percent) of all rivalries. These are primarily with minor power (this is also reflected in an analysis of the states most active in rivalries, below in table 3.3). Thus, any claim that rivalries take place exclusively between equal powers is misguided.

We can ask more generally about the relationship between power, power asymmetry, and the duration of rivalries. This can be accomplished by noting patterns as one descends each column of table 3.2. It is of note that major powers rarely get involved in isolated conflicts with one another, just 4 percent of the isolated cases. As rivalries become more severe, however, a larger percentage of them involve major-major dyads. Twelve percent of the proto-rivalries occur between major-major pairs, while this figure reaches 18 percent for enduring rivalries. Among minor-minor rivalries—also cases of power symmetry—there is little change in the relative frequency as rivalries become more severe, from 46 percent in the isolated category to approximately 52 percent in the enduring category.

The patterns of major-major and minor-minor rivalry imply that the major-minor category must exhibit decline as rivalry severity increases. Indeed, the

¹According to Small and Singer (1982), major powers are United States (1899–1992), United Kingdom (1816–1992), France (1816–1940 and 1945–92), Germany/Prussia (1816–1919 and 1925–45), Austria-Hungary (1816–1918), Italy/Sardinia (1860–1943), USSR/Russia (1816–1917 and 1922–92), China (1950–92), and Japan (1895–1945).

rate drops precipitously from about 50 percent in the isolated category to 30 percent in the enduring category. These trends support the general claim that enduring rivalries are much more likely to take place between countries of roughly equal power; that is, asymmetrical rivalries are more likely to die out or be resolved sooner than symmetrical ones. Nevertheless, major-minor rivalries are possible. Certainly, some of these lie embedded in major-major rivalries, such as the United States–Cuba rivalry, which is embedded in the United States–USSR rivalry, but in other cases the major-minor rivalry occurs relatively independently of others (e.g., United States–Haiti). Thus, it may be misguided to exclude a priori rivalries between states with asymmetrical capabilities, but there is some merit to the argument that major-minor power rivalries do become less likely as rivalries get more severe.

Rivalry Participants

With the prevalence of major powers in rivalries (as noted above), it is probably not surprising that a listing of the states most involved in rivalries includes a disproportionate number of major powers near the top of the list. Table 3.3 lists all the states with more than 20 rivalries over the period under study.

The six states most frequently involved in rivalries were major powers for some or all of the years under study. The United Kingdom is at the top of the list with over 123 separate rivalries; Germany/Prussia follows closely behind. The United Kingdom, France, Germany/Prussia, Italy, and USSR/Russia, as the leading European and colonial powers through the middle of the twentieth century, not surprisingly have a large number of rivalries, both between themselves and with many smaller states (both in Europe and abroad). A more recent member of the major-power club, the United States, is third on the list of states most involved in rivalries. Significantly, most of its rivalries occur in the twentieth century, *after* it attained major-power status. Not far behind the first group of six are two other major powers, Japan and China, which have been part of 58 and 48 rivalries respectively—both as major and as minor powers. Turkey/Ottoman Empire has also been frequently involved in rivalries, first as a declining former major power in the nineteenth century and more recently with other states in its region, most prominently against Greece.

The list of minor powers most involved in rivalries yields a few surprises. That Iran and Iraq occupy positions in the top 12 of states most involved in rivalries reveals that their recent propensity for conflict with neighbors and the United States is part of a longer pattern of violent involvement. Most notable is that both Iran and Iraq have been historically involved with other minor-power states (those in the region) and not major powers from outside that region.

Nine minor powers from the Western Hemisphere also are among those most involved in rivalries. At first glance, this may seem contrary to the idea of Latin America as a “zone of peace” and the relative lack of war in the Western

TABLE 3.3: Nations Most Frequently Involved in Rivalries

Nation	Total	Maj.- Maj.	Maj.- Min.	Min.- Min.	Total War	Mean Dur.	Isol.	Proto	E-R
UK	123	21	102		24	4.64	93	23	7
Germany	121	17	102	2	47	3.63	89	27	5
USA	103	14	76	13	18	6.00	70	24	9
USSR	92	19	73		29	9.20	61	23	8
France	87	20	67		25	4.61	63	20	4
Italy	84	15	61	8	35	3.79	69	11	4
Iraq	58		10	48	11	4.34	44	10	4
Japan	58	14	36	8	20	5.31	50	5	3
China	48	5	39	4	31	12.88	28	14	6
Turkey	47		22	25	25	9.93	28	12	7
Spain	44		18	26	6	2.90	35	7	2
Iran	44		10	34	2	5.02	29	13	2
Aus.-Hun.	39	12	27	0	21	3.64	33	6	0
Yugoslavia	35		12	23	11	4.39	28	5	2
Greece	31		19	12	12	7.38	20	8	3
Argentina	30		10	20	3	4.25	23	5	2
Brazil	27		13	14	3	2.73	23	3	1
Bulgaria	27		11	16	19	6.24	17	8	2
Romania	26		12	14	15	2.85	19	7	0
Chile	25		7	18	3	6.24	18	5	2
Portugal	25		9	16	3	2.66	19	6	0
Hungary	24		9	15	10	2.66	19	5	0
Egypt	24		8	16	9	5.06	16	7	1
Jordan	24		4	20	3	4.08	21	1	2
Cuba	23		8	15	1	2.85	21	1	1
Denmark	23		10	13	3	0.71	22	1	0
Nicaragua	22		9	13	2	3.34	16	5	1
Colombia	22		8	14	3	2.14	18	4	0
Israel	22		3	19	16	9.58	15	2	5
Peru	21		3	18	2	9.48	13	6	2
Haiti	20		10	10	0	1.88	18	2	0
Venezuela	20		11	9	0	2.96	17	3	0

Hemisphere cited by many analysts (e.g., Kacowicz 1998). Yet a closer inspection reveals that this familiar idea is not in contradiction to the large number of rivalries taking place in these regions. First, states in the Western Hemisphere have been independent for longer than states in almost all other regions, except for Europe, and many states have been independent since the early 1800s.

This means that there has been more opportunity for rivalries in the time period under study. If one were to control for the number of years that a state has been a full-fledged member of the international system, then Western Hemisphere states (except for the United States) would fall precipitously down the list. Second, although the number of rivalries for certain Western Hemisphere states is large, it is worthy to note that very few of these rivalries remain militarized over time, and indeed the average rivalry for those states is very short. Thus, although these states get involved in militarized conflict, they do so only briefly and are able to resolve their disputes without cycles of repeated confrontations. Thus, the relative infrequency of war in Latin America, for example, does not mean that competitions between states in the region do not exist, but rather that militarized conflict has been less likely to repeat.

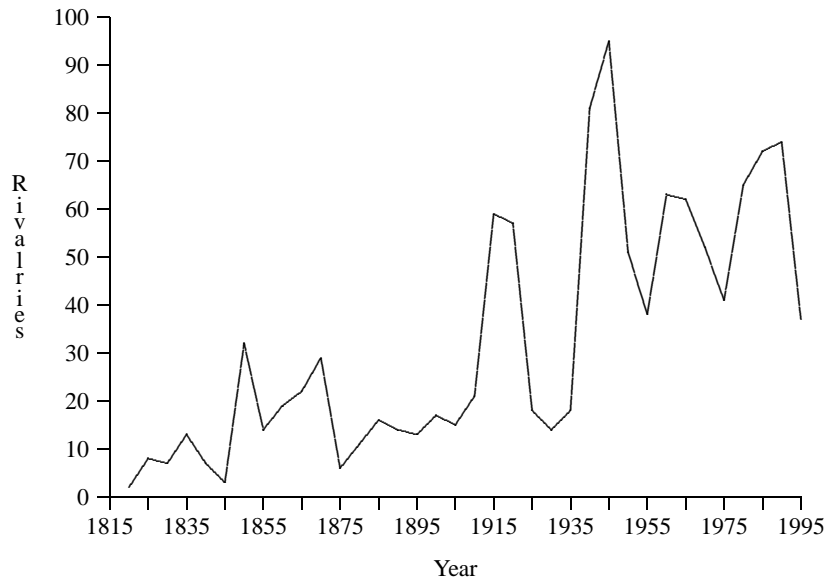
With the exception of China and Japan, Asian states are generally absent from the list of states most frequently in rivalries. One has to go down to North Korea, at 17 rivalries, for the first Asian minor power on the list. Clearly, however, India has been involved in some of the most violent rivalries (with Pakistan and China), even if its aggregate number of rivalries has not been great. China has an unusual configuration of rivalries. Typically, most (overwhelmingly so) of the rivalries for any given state are of the isolated variety. For China, 42 percent of its rivalries are either proto- or enduring rivalries. Apparently, militarized competitions with the Chinese tend to be longer and more serious than with other states, in which rivalries tend to be more sporadic and die out quickly.

The African continent also has relatively few rivalries, with Uganda the most involved of sub-Saharan countries with 15 different rivalries. This is probably the product of the late independence of most of the states in that region. Yet it may also be the product of the agreement among states in the Organization of African Unity not to challenge existing border arrangements through the use of military force. As we suggest in the second part of the book, territorial disputes may be one of the primary mechanisms that generate recurring conflict and enduring rivalries.

Rivalries over Time

Just as rivalries are not evenly distributed across space, neither are they constant across time, although the patterns are considerably less distinct. Figure 3.1 plots the occurrence of rivalries in five-year blocks across the 1816–1992 time period. Just looking at the raw numbers, it is evident that the Concert of Europe did indeed provide a period of calm and stability, at least until it began to break down in the 1840s, when we see an increase in rivalries. There is another period of relative calm from about 1870 to the end of the century, when rivalries spiral upwards through two period of world wars.

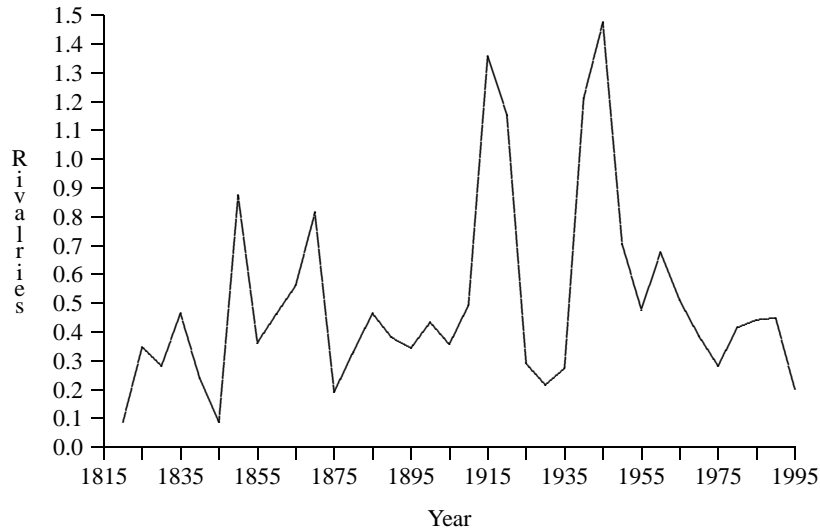
FIGURE 3.1: Rivalries over Time, 1816–1992



Rivalries have also become more frequent in the twentieth century. Is this a function of the greater number of states in the international system? Or does it reflect the greater conflict propensity of the system's members? It is conceivable that, because of improvements in technology, states have greater interactions (both positive and negative) with one another than in earlier times, and therefore more rivalries as a result. Technology may also permit the projection of military force more rapidly and over greater distances, thereby increasing the number of militarized confrontations that help define rivalries. To control the number of states in the system, and hence the "opportunity" for rivalry formation, we replotted rivalries over time, controlling for international system size (the number of independent states at any given time). Figure 3.2 shows that revised analysis.

Controlling for system size, the number of isolated and proto-rivalries does not increase over time, making the greater propensity for rivalries in the twentieth century a function of the increased number of states rather than some other, theoretically relevant factor. This analysis confirms that of Gochman and Maoz (1984), who find a relatively flat pattern of dispute initiation over the past two centuries, once they controlled for the number of states in the international system. This is not to say that rivalries are evenly distributed across time. There are obvious spikes in the number of rivalries around the times of the world wars.

FIGURE 3.2: Rivalries over Time, 1816–1992, Controlled for System Size



Yet this is largely what made them such global conflicts of epic proportions (Midlarsky 1988). Several rivalries converged around those wars, and those wars further diffused to create new rivalries (albeit some very short) as a result.

Patterns over time in enduring rivalries are less easy to discern. In large part, this is because enduring rivalries are relatively infrequent—they begin about only once every three years, whereas five isolated rivalries begin in the typical year. Thus, fluctuations in enduring rivalry formation are more apparent than real, reflecting that infrequency of occurrence rather than important patterns. The absence of enduring rivalries forming in the last decade or two is the result of data censoring rather than any positive trend toward less serious conflict or successful conflict resolution; all of the rivalries formed during this time have not had the requisite time (20 years) to qualify as enduring rivalries (although some of them surely will).

The Empirical Importance of Rivalries

The second part of this chapter explores the empirical significance of the rivalry concept for the study of international conflict. We examine whether conflict occurring in enduring rivalries was more frequent and severe than international conflict in other contexts, specifically conflict in isolation and in proto-rivalries.

The empirical or theoretical importance of the phenomena more or less intuitively guides the choice of research question. Studies of the major-power subsystem argue that this group of states generates the most conflict and war and has the greatest impact on international affairs as a whole. Statistical studies (e.g., Gochman and Maoz 1984) have demonstrated that the most powerful states are those most involved in international militarized disputes. The recent attention to democratic states' lack of war proneness (e.g., Russett 1993; Ray 1995) is motivated by the same impulse: as an empirical fact, democracies rarely go to war with one another. This has potentially great significance if the global trend toward democratization continues. In this chapter, we point to another phenomena of great empirical import: certain pairs of states—enduring rivalries—account for a large portion of international conflict and war. Enduring rivalries merit study for the same reasons as major powers and democracies. Their empirical significance imposes them on our attention. In part, this is the justification for our focus on the dynamics of enduring rivalries in the second half of this book. Nevertheless, we point out in the following chapter that consideration of other kinds of rivalries (as control groups and other functions) is essential even if the primary focus is on rivalries of the enduring variety.

Just as the peace-proneness of democratic states presents a theoretical and empirical puzzle, so too does the war-proneness of certain dyads. What theoretical perspective can best solve this puzzle? Some theoretical frameworks come immediately to mind because they emphasize repeated dyadic interaction. They pose questions such as the following. Do arms races always occur in rivalries? Can rivalries be modeled with sequential or repeated games? Is there a conflict learning process over time? Other frameworks, particularly those that emphasize system-level factors, pose other related questions. Are rivalries more common in bipolar systems? Does the rise and fall of a hegemon affect the formation or termination of rivalries? We discuss many of these questions elsewhere. Our goal in this chapter is not to solve the puzzles of enduring rivalries, but to demonstrate that they are puzzles worth solving.

We examine here the extent to which important phenomena, such as war and territorial changes, occur within the context of different kinds of rivalries. The dimensions along which we compare these types of conflict include the number of militarized disputes, severity of dispute hostility, frequency of war, and involvement in territorial changes.

Some Initial Expectations

If rivalry is an empirically important concept, we would anticipate that a large percentage of conflict-related phenomena occurs within the context of enduring rivalries. Specifically, we suggest the following:

1. *Dispute Proneness*: We expect that a large number of militarized international disputes will occur in the context of an enduring rivalry. This is contrary to a random conflict distribution model, which suggests that isolated conflict—sporadic conflict between all possible state dyads—would constitute the largest category. Because the number of enduring rivalry dyads is small relative to other conflictual dyads, we might also predict few disputes in the enduring rivalry category. There are good reasons to think that this is not the case, and we anticipate that enduring rivalries, despite their small numbers, will include many disputes. This is largely because disputes in the context of enduring rivalries will tend to generate future confrontations, albeit not necessarily in a mechanistic or linear fashion. Rivalry disputes prompt more rivalry disputes, unlike sporadic conflicts. As the proto-rivalry category is an intermediate one, we expect that its proportion of disputes lies between those of isolated conflicts and enduring rivalries. Thus, we suspect that a large percentage of disputes will fall within an advanced rivalry context, either proto or enduring.
2. *Dispute Severity*: We also hypothesize that the severity of disputes in an enduring rivalry will be greater on average than in other forms of conflict. Leng (1983) discovered that conflict became more severe with repeated disputes between two states; states adopted increasingly coercive bargaining strategies (and learned the lessons of *realpolitik*) in repeated interactions with the same enemy. Enduring rivalries may also include more salient disputes between the most bitter of enemies. Isolated conflict may actually occur between normally friendly states (e.g., a fishing dispute between Iceland and Great Britain). States involved in isolated conflict may not want to escalate tensions such that normally friendly, or at least less than completely hostile, relations are not jeopardized. There are no similar constraints in enduring rivalries, and there may be domestic political pressures to take hard lines against traditional enemies.
3. *War Proneness*: Beyond greater dispute frequency in enduring rivalries, we believe that wars will be more frequent in an advanced rivalry context (Brecher 1984). Not only is the hostility level higher for a given dispute, but the opportunity for escalating tensions, culminating in war, is always present. Disputes without a violent past are more likely to be resolved peacefully, or at least without resort to all-out military force.

4. *Increased Territorial Changes:* Beyond greater frequency and severity of military conflict, we also expect that enduring rivalries will be associated more with other significant international relations phenomena. In particular, we believe that enduring rivalries are the context for a large number of territorial changes, themselves a source of international conflict. According to some (Holsti 1991; Vasquez 1993), territory has been the primary source of interstate conflict over the past five centuries. Indeed, enduring rivalries may go hand in hand with territorial changes, as Weede (1973, 87) has noted: “the history of war and peace is largely coterminous with the history of territorial changes as results of war and causes of the next war.” If territorial changes occur with more frequency in enduring rivalries than in proto-rivalries, then this is further evidence for the importance of enduring rivalries.
5. *Violent Territorial Changes:* A corollary is that those territorial changes that do occur in enduring rivalries are more likely to be achieved by military force than those that occur in other contexts. If a territorial change occurs between two historical enemies, it is more likely to be the result of military force than of peaceful diplomatic initiatives.

In summary, we suggest that a large percentage of important phenomena, such as disputes, wars, and territorial changes, occurs within the context of enduring rivalries.

Design and Measurement

In order to test these expectations, we look at patterns of conflict over the period 1816–1992, using the operational definitions of enduring, proto-, and isolated rivalries outlined in the previous chapter. With these three categories of rivalry defined, we compare them along several dimensions. Dispute severity is measured on a 0–200 scale. The indicator is constructed first with consideration for the level of hostility (Gochman and Maoz 1984; Jones, Bremer, and Singer 1996) exhibited by *each* rival in the dispute. Consideration is next given to the number of battle-related fatalities for the rivals in the dispute. Unlike other measures of dispute severity or hostility, wars are scaled together with nonwar disputes, and there can be significant differences in severity among wars. (See appendix B for a full explication.) Full-scale war is defined according to Small and Singer (1982) as one thousand or more battle-related fatalities. Territorial exchanges are the formal transfer of territorial sovereignty involving two recognized states of the international system (as identified by Goertz and Diehl 1992a and updated in Tir et al. 1998). Violence in those territorial changes is defined as armed conflict between organized forces of the gaining and losing sides of the territorial change within one year prior to the transfer.

TABLE 3.4: Rivalry Context and the Frequency of Disputes, 1816–1992

Rivalry Type	Number of Rivalries		Dispute Frequency	
	<i>N</i>	(%)	<i>N</i>	(%)
Isolated	880	(76)	525	(26)
Proto	223	(19)	705	(35)
Enduring	63	(5)	804	(40)
6–13 disputes	36	(3)	222	(11)
>13 disputes	27	(2)	582	(29)
Total	1,166	(100)	2,034	(100)

Empirical Results

The first concern is with the percentage of militarized, nonwar disputes that occurs within different rivalries. Table 3.4 provides the distribution of those disputes for each category of rivalry. There are some cases of multilateral disputes, and therefore a dispute (or war) can be part of more than one rivalry. In this instance, the dispute is counted only once and placed in the most severe rivalry category. This seems reasonable in that many of the multilateral disputes and wars stem from large competitions such as World War II and result in a number of isolated rivalries between those on the Allied side and Germany or Japan, for example. Furthermore, the original dyads prompting such multilateral wars are almost always part of proto- and enduring rivalries, whereas those pairs that join the conflict later are more likely to be part of isolated rivalries. To include all the dyads from multilateral wars in this analysis would have the latter drive the results and do so in a misleading fashion.

We first note that just 26 percent of militarized disputes occur within isolated rivalries. This suggests that assumptions of independence between conflict events in traditional war studies may be badly misplaced. Forty percent of militarized disputes occur within the context of enduring rivalries. Thus, only a small percentage of all conflictual dyads (5 percent), and an even smaller percentage of all possible dyads, accounts for a disproportionate amount of international conflict. The results are even more dramatic with respect to the most severe of enduring rivalries. Almost 30 percent of all disputes are generated by 2.5 percent of the rivalries, or 27 dyads.

Militarized disputes are used to define rivalries, and therefore one might expect greater dispute propensity in that context. Yet, even controlling for this effect, it is still stunning that more than twice as many disputes as expected occur in enduring rivalries than in isolation.² The effect is even more dramatic

²The expected percentage of disputes for each rivalry category is calculated by reference to the minimum number of disputes necessary for each rivalry category and the actual number of rivalries in each category.

TABLE 3.5: Rivalry Context and the Severity of Disputes, 1816–1992

Rivalry Type	Mean Severity	<i>N</i>
Isolated	81.23	1,082
Proto	79.34	938
Enduring	81.37	964
6–13 disputes	78.77	316
>13 disputes	82.64	648
Total	80.68	2,984

Note: Unit of analysis is dyadic dispute.

for those in the most severe category of enduring rivalries. The vast majority of disputes (almost three-fourths) take place in some advanced rivalry context, be it proto or enduring.

In contrast, the results in table 3.5 on the severity of those disputes are less dramatic.³ The relative severity of disputes does not increase as we move along the rivalry continuum.⁴ There is a greater propensity for the most severe events, full-scale war, in enduring rivalries. But every dispute in enduring rivalries is not more severe than every dispute in other rivalry contexts. Rather, enduring rivalries usually include disputes of a variety of severities. Indeed, the average severity of a dispute may be misleading for enduring rivalries, because it is unlikely that war erupts frequently in repeated disputes within the same rivalry. In rivalries with greater than thirteen disputes, three or four wars is a large number, but with so many disputes the average level of severity is reduced by the other, lower level disputes. A more useful comparison of the relative severity level is the occurrence of war in the rivalry; this can indicate how frequently the most severe level of conflict is reached in a rivalry.

Tables 3.6 and 3.7 provide clear evidence that enduring rivalries have a greater propensity for war than other categories of international conflict. Table 3.6 uses war as the unit of analysis, and thus each war is counted only once. Table 3.7 uses rivalry as the unit of analysis, and hence multilateral wars may be counted more than once. Only 18 percent of wars occur in isolation, whereas almost half (49 percent) take place in enduring rivalries. In addition, a dispute in an enduring rivalry is almost twice as likely to end in war as one in isolation (this can be calculated from the data in tables 3.4 and 3.6).

Another test is to treat the rivalry as a unit of analysis in order to see if at least one war occurs at some point in the rivalry. As table 3.7 reveals, the

³This analysis includes all disputes, including all combinations from multilateral wars. Unlike the analysis of wars above, there is a different severity score of each dyad, and the inclusion of multilateral wars does not necessarily distort or drive the results.

⁴The results reported in table 3.5, which uses disputes as the unit of analysis, are quite similar to those that use whole rivalries as the unit of analysis.

TABLE 3.6: Rivalry Context and the Frequency of War, 1816–1992

Rivalry Type	Number of Rivalries (percent)	War Frequency (percent)
Isolated	880 (76)	14 (18)
Proto	223 (19)	26 (33)
Enduring	63 (5)	39 (49)
6–13 disputes	36 (3)	10 (13)
>13 disputes	27 (2)	29 (37)
Total	1,166 (100)	79 (100)

Note: Unit of analysis is war.

propensity for war grows dramatically as one moves from isolated conflict to the most severe enduring rivalries (almost four times as great in enduring rivalries as in the lowest rivalry category). In enduring rivalries, the chances are 59 percent that the two states will go to war at some point in their competition. These findings show that not only is the propensity of a single dispute ending in war greater, but so is the chance of war sometime in the relationship as the rivalry becomes longer and more serious.

Moving from a consideration of disputes and wars, we turn now to the intersection of rivalries and territorial changes.⁵ We first note that most territorial changes take place outside of the context of rivalries. Indeed, about three-fourths of all territorial changes involve no interstate rivalry, with the territorial transfer taking place between states at peace or between a state and a nonstate political entity. Nevertheless, 210 territorial changes take place in the context of rivalries.⁶ Table 3.8 presents the distribution of those changes across the rivalry types.

The first notable pattern is that when a territorial change takes place in a rivalry context, the chances are almost half that it will occur in an enduring rivalry (96 out of 210). As we noted with respect to militarized disputes, the small number of enduring rivalry dyads accounts for a disproportionately large percentage of international relations phenomena. For every 10 isolated rivalries, there is typically less than one territorial change among them. In contrast, the average enduring rivalry includes 1.5 territorial changes, more than eight

⁵The results reported below, and directly above, may be somewhat different than those originally given in Goertz and Diehl 1992a. This is largely because of the more restrictive definition of enduring rivalry used here, and the application of revised and updated data on militarized disputes and territorial changes.

⁶If a territorial change occurred within 10 years of the beginning or 10 years of the end of a rivalry, we considered it to fall into the context of the rivalry.

TABLE 3.7: Rivalry Context and the Probability of at Least One War

Rivalry Type	Number with War	Probability of War
Isolated	139	0.16
Proto	71	0.32
Enduring	37	0.59
6–13 disputes	20	0.56
>13 disputes	17	0.63
Total	247	0.21

Note: Unit of analysis is rivalry.

TABLE 3.8: Rivalry Context and Territorial Changes, 1816–1992

Rivalry Type	Number of Territorial Changes (%)	Changes per Rivalry
Isolated	69 (33)	.08
Proto	45 (21)	.20
Enduring	96 (46)	1.52
6–13 disputes	50 (28)	1.39
>13 disputes	46 (22)	1.70
Total	210 (100)	.18

times the overall norm and more than seven times what is typical even of proto-rivalries. Thus, our expectation that territorial changes would be more common in enduring rivalries than other rivalry contexts is confirmed.

The findings with respect to violence in territorial changes are less clear, as shown in table 3.9. It is important to note that most territorial changes are completed peacefully (Goertz and Diehl 1992a; Tir et al. 1998). Yet territorial changes occurring in any rivalry context are significantly more likely (a 40 percent probability) to involve violence than territorial changes outside of any rivalry context (22 percent). Thus, there is again something about the rivalry context (hostility, suspicion, etc.) that makes peaceful interactions of all varieties more difficult, although not impossible. Nevertheless, one finding inconsistent with our expectations is that the probability that a given territorial change will involve violence is not substantially greater in an enduring rivalry than in an isolated one. Indeed, for reasons we cannot explain, it is the category of proto-rivalries that have the highest probability of conflict, almost 60 percent.

TABLE 3.9: Rivalry Context and Violent Territorial Changes, 1816–1992

Rivalry Type	Probability of Violent Territorial Change	Probability of One or More Violent Changes
Isolated	.32	.36
Proto	.58	.58
Enduring	.38	.71
6–13 disputes	.26	.50
>13 disputes	.50	1.00
Total	.40	.51

More consistent with our expectations are the findings from using the rivalry as the unit of analysis. Consistent with the findings on war, the probability of at least one violent territorial change increases with the severity of the rivalry context. Almost three-quarters of enduring rivalries experience at least one militarized transfer of territory, with the most severe enduring rivalries certain (probability = 1.00) to clash over territory during the course of the rivalry.

Conclusion

In this brief empirical analysis, we set out to examine whether conflict occurring in enduring rivalries was more frequent and severe than international conflict in isolation or in proto-rivalries. Our empirical results indicate that a large portion of nonwar militarized disputes takes place in the context of rivalries, especially enduring rivalries. Enduring rivalries are also the setting for almost half of the interstate wars since 1816; enduring rivalries at the extreme are almost four times as likely to experience a war as a pair of states in an isolated conflict. Enduring rivalries are also involved in a disproportionate number of territorial changes.

We set out to pose more questions than we answer, but in one respect the concept of enduring rivalries may have provided an answer to at least one question. The literature on war diffusion (e.g., Siverson and Starr 1991) has produced evidence for the clustering of conflicts across space, but has found little in the way of the spread of conflict across time (temporal diffusion), whether at the system (e.g., Levy 1983) or nation-state (e.g., Stoll 1984) level of analysis. Just as conflicts are concentrated over space (as the spatial diffusion hypothesis argues), so too we have seen that they are related over time in certain dyads.

The results in this chapter, and implicit in others' use of enduring rivalries, confirm that the basic intuition behind the temporal diffusion concept is correct. What has been lacking is the proper framework within which to investigate the problem. Instead of focusing on the system or individual nation, the

rivalry concept emphasizes the dyad. Conflict addiction studies have focused on correlating conflicts that occur within a short period of time, typically within one to five years of one another. Conflicts that occur in enduring rivalries do not necessarily occur on a regular basis, nor do the conflicts necessarily succeed each other in a rapid fashion, as most previous diffusion work has implicitly assumed. The rivalry framework is thus better able to reflect actual conflict patterns and to allow scholars to understand irregular, but interconnected, conflict over long periods of time.

We proposed that the rivalry approach generates a new perspective on international conflict. Our empirical analyses quite consistently showed that wars, disputes, and territorial changes occur disproportionately within medium- to long-term rivalry contexts. This provides *prima facie* evidence that we need to consider conflicts, not atomistically, but as part of a wider rivalry relationship. The next two chapters explore some of the theoretical and methodological implications of thinking about international conflict in terms of militarized rivalries. As we shall demonstrate, this involves significant theoretical and methodological challenges to standard ways of thinking about the causes of war.

