ABSTRACT

In this essay, I outline the concept of rivalry as it currently stands, its foundational elements and evolution, and I propose a broader conceptualization of rivalry that promises to explain armed conflict between states that previous models fail to recognize as resulting from rivalry. I evaluate the current working definitions and conceptualizations of interstate rivalry, and I outline the utility of the concept of rivalry for explaining conflict, asserting that, in seeking to explain conflict, rivalry cannot be defined only by conflict, as current authors continue to do.
The term “rivalry” entered international relations theory to explain the occurrence of disproportionately high levels of armed conflict between the same pairs of states. It has been defined by security—past or potential conflict. Currently, the literature has us explaining the occurrence of conflict at best by states’ self-stated proneness to engage in it, and at worst by their having engaged in it already. This constitutes a serious tautological error; the phenomenon we venture to explain defines that which we claim explains it. Since its inception, rivalry has undergone some dramatic and useful changes to remedy this ailment; still, the need for rivalry to have its own definition apart from the occurrence of militarized interstate dispute (MID), even potential conflict, persists in the literature.

In this essay, I outline the concept of rivalry as it currently stands, its foundational elements and evolution, and I propose a broader conceptualization of rivalry that promises to explain armed conflict between states that previous models fail to recognize as resulting from rivalry. I proceed as follows: First, I evaluate the current working definitions and conceptualizations of interstate rivalry. Second, I explore two cases in which the non-military facets of rivalry led to conflict between states. For the time period in question, both of these dyads are missed by all existing rivalry datasets. Finally, I outline the utility of the concept of rivalry for explaining conflict, asserting that, in seeking to explain conflict, rivalry cannot be defined only by conflict, as current authors continue to do.\textsuperscript{1,2,3} I put forth a new definition, reorienting the concept towards interstate competition on various fronts to yield potentially better predictive and explanatory abilities. I argue that the concept of rivalry should rest on relations between states partially separate from armed conflict. In other words, the “high probability of

\textsuperscript{1} Colaresi et al, 2007. *Strategic Rivalries*, p.23
\textsuperscript{2} Cox, 2010. *Why Enduring Rivalries*, p.3
\textsuperscript{3} Valeriano, 2012. “Becoming Rivalries,” p.63
serious conflict or crisis’’⁴ should be stripped from the working definition. In order to make a non-tautological argument that rivalries are more likely to engage in armed conflict than non-rivalries, we must cease defining them as the dyads that are likely to do so. The data must speak for itself. It is a simple critique, and to fix it would require many layers of revision. I propose a continuous classification of rivalry that includes quantifiable international geographic, economic, diplomatic, and identity-related points of tension, in addition to military history between countries.

RIVALRY AS IT STANDS

Rivalry emerged in the peace and conflict literature to highlight the tendency of recent history’s MIDs and wars to be fought disproportionately between the same few dyads.⁵ This observation implied serious modifications to structural theories of war, which insist that all states are functionally identical in the international environment,⁶ but by itself both this observation and the novel concept of “enduring rivalries” explain conflict relatively little. The root of the problem is in the definition and stance of classification. “Enduring rivalries” for Diehl are “those in which two nations engage in at least three militarized disputes within a period of fifteen years.”⁷

This arbitrary classification of rivalries set off a still ongoing disagreement of which dyads should make the list of international rivalries and why. Though the definition has changed

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⁴ Ibid., p.3
⁶ Waltz, 1979. Theory of International Politics
relatively little—“…a pair of states [that] create and sustain a relationship of atypical hostility for some period of time…a distinctive class of conflict…of path dependent hostility”\(^8\)—the datasets of international rivals vary wildly. Bennet\(^9\) points to 63 enduring rivalries, Maoz and Mor\(^10\) to 110, and Klein, Goertz, and Diehl\(^11\) to 290, of which 170 are “proto-rivalries.”\(^12\) Colaresi, Rasler, and Thompson\(^13\) point to 173 “strategic rivalries,” a secondary, expanded conceptualization that will be expounded shortly. As Cox points out, “only 23 cases appear in all of the datasets…the lack of agreement between datasets arises largely due to different manners of measuring the number of disputes between the parties, the number of disputes required, and the temporal connection of the disputes.”\(^14\)

Disputes thus define rivalry for everyone, and all notions of rivalry so far have been strictly security driven. Instead of basing the concept of rivalry on the conventional definition as “competition for the same objective or for superiority in the same field,”\(^15\) scholars have rivalry rooted in “a zero-sum game where one side seeks to ensure its own security through the destruction or immobilization of another state.”\(^16\) If it were a zero-sum game, a state would have few options if it hoped to survive; security crisis would be constant. Such a definition is no different from simple enmity.

A slightly different critique is that of Vasquez, who insists that balance of capabilities must enter the equation, “Relative capability places the actors in a situation from which neither can make a decision without the agreement of the other…which fuels both hostility and recurring

\(^8\) Colaresi et al, 2007. *Strategic Rivalries*, p.21
\(^10\) Maoz and Mor, 2002. *Bound by Struggle*
\(^12\) Ibid., p.340
\(^13\) Colaresi et al, 2007. *Strategic Rivalries*
\(^15\) Oxford Dictionary, “Rivalry”
\(^16\) Valeriano, “Becoming Rivals,” p.64
disputes.”\textsuperscript{17} Other rivalry authors have disputed Vasquez on this condition, citing such rivalries as that between Vietnam and Cambodia or Uruguay and Brazil, and ultimately concluding, “objective capability ratios do not always govern the way decision-makers behave.”\textsuperscript{18} Thus, they allow for rivalries between major and minor powers. Still, in spite of critiques like Colaresi et al.’s, this divergence in classification method continues to color the literature.

I point out these discrepancies not to cast doubt upon any particular method of selection, but to demonstrate how the main drive of the rivalry discourse has been overly concerned with mere classification of specific instances of rivalry—it has not treated rivalry substantively. It has been based on largely arbitrary determinants—number, duration, and frequency of disputes, or the time between the first and last occurrence of dispute.\textsuperscript{19} For the most part, it has also been entirely dependent on the outbreak of conflict, and even then, the identification of rivalry in most definitions is retrospective, undetectable until the first dispute, at earliest. In their critical “hot hands” analysis, Gartzke and Simon highlight this problem with rivalry theories’ utility: “All enduring rivalries must begin in an initial dispute…other theoretical explanations for international conflict must be used to account for initial disputes in series.”\textsuperscript{20} A definition of rivalry as conflict precludes the possibility to explain conflict’s occurrence. The utility of rivalry lies in its recognition that the accumulation of grievances between states can cause them to interpret their interactions more distrustfully than normal. This causes the frequent outbreak of conflict between them. This simple characterization is intuitive enough, but it misses an important detail: grievances come from more places than just violent interaction. Soured economic ties and diplomatic betrayal are poignant sources of grief, and capable of generating

\textsuperscript{17} Vasquez, 1996. “Distinguishing Rivals,” p.533
\textsuperscript{18} Colaresi et al, 2007. Strategic Rivals, p.32
\textsuperscript{19} Goertz and Diehl, 1993. “Power Differentials and War in Rival Dyads,”
\textsuperscript{20} Gartzke and Simon, 1999. “Hot Hands,” p.785
security dilemmas. We cannot use the outcome to define the unit of analysis. Such a definition only looks at the last occurrence in a series, even when dynamics many would recognize as rivalrous alter interstate relations prior to the fall of the last domino—the outbreak of conflict.

Alongside this tautological flaw, another confounding dynamic characterizes much the rivalry literature. Goertz and Diehl hold that “…it must be demonstrated that conflicts within rivalries are not independent of one another.”21 “Conflicts within rivalries are linked [emphasis in original]; that is, they are related over space and time.”22 If two states repeatedly go to war with each other, they are not rivals unless the conflicts are related to each other. They aim to establish a rivalry context, which inherently changes perceptions between the two states, but in restricting their concept this way, they effectively make rivalry indistinguishable from “protracted conflict,” a concept already established and utilized in conflict research.23 Any “[sustained] relationship of atypical hostility” should theoretically be capable of generating conflicts that are unrelated to the first conflict aside from participation of the same pair of states. Thompson notes this problem, “If one overemphasizes the ‘enduring’ aspect at the expense of the rivalry facet, one may mistake long-running problems for genuine rivalries.”24

Fortunately, this flaw in the literature has been mended somewhat by Colaresi et al25 and Mitchell and Thies.26 However, even their pre-outbreak measures of rivalry still require an orientation of the concept towards conflict, rather than towards competition. Colaresi et al introduce the term “strategic rivalry” to supplement the term “enduring rivalry,” which has dominated the discussion for decades. They accept the initial premise here that defining rivalries

23 Brecher and James, 1988. “Patterns of Crisis Management”
24 Thompson, 1995. “Principal Rivalries,” p.197
by past occurrence of conflict alone, especially if those conflicts must be related, constitutes a problem large enough to prevent useful utilization of the concept at all. Their analysis and reconfiguration of rivalry rests on the question, “Must relationships become sufficiently militarized before we recognize it as a rivalry?”27 In their answer, they maintain that “strategic rivalries are very much about conflict,”28 but instead of tabulating past MIDs, as the past measures had, they use the official stated positions of national leaders. “Beginning and ending dates are keyed as much as possible to the timing of evidence about the onset of explicit threat, competitor, and enemy perceptions on the part of decision-makers.”29 They strip the term of its need for a minimum duration, and they adopt an elevated level of skepticism about when a rivalry can be said to end, but in the end they maintain the primary elements that have been used to classify rivalry thus far.

Rivalries are “strategic” for Colaresi et al because state decision-makers verbally single out other states and orient their relations towards distrust and military competition. The rivalry is made explicit and used to justify actions and cultivate domestic support for policy. The public internalization of rivalry binds the leaders to further hostility vis-à-vis the rival state.30 In taking a step back from armed conflict and incorporating the explicit statements of decision-makers, Colaresi et al vastly expand the ability to detect rivalries. However, the proclamation of rivalry on the part of a state leader is still fundamentally an outcome of a rivalrous dynamic already present. Their state leaders are consciously selective in their categorization of “friends and enemies,” but the criteria of selection remains inexplicit. Interestingly, competition serves as the lynchpin in their model of rivalry, “Threatening enemies who are also adjudged to be

27 Colaresi et al, 2007. Strategic Rivalries, p.22
28 Ibid., p.23
29 Ibid., p.30
30 Ibid., p.28
competitors in some sense, as opposed to irritants or simply problems, are branded as rivals.”\textsuperscript{31} Competition makes the difference between a thorn in a state’s side and a rival. Unfortunately, they do not provide a clear definition of competition in their framework, and they do not seem to count anything except military one-upmanship as competition. In the end, because they still identify rivalries by explicit signs of military rivalry, they offer no mode of recognizing the cultivation of the relationship prior to the statements of state officials.

One more revision to the rivalry definition has worked towards addressing the tautological problem. Mitchell and Thies point out, “existing approaches often conceptualize the substance of rivalry in terms of issues, but generally fail to incorporate them into empirical measures of rivalry…”\textsuperscript{32} They make the same argument as Colaresi et al\textsuperscript{33} and Gartzke and Simon,\textsuperscript{34} that to define rivalry retrospectively constitutes an error that prevents classification of rivalries before they develop. “The concept of rivalry requires that something provides the impetus for the initiation, duration, and termination of such a relationship.”\textsuperscript{35} They remedy the problem by incorporating “contested issues,” which bring “causal origin and linkages across disputes in rivalries, thus effectively countering the ‘hot hand’ critique.”\textsuperscript{36} They use Hensel et al’s\textsuperscript{37} Issue Correlates of War (ICOW) data on territorial, maritime, and river claims and develop a two-track method of determining rivalries. They yield three categories of rivalry: (1) militarized rivalries, which go to war often over a few issues; (2) issue rivalries, which have a high number of issues between them, but go to war relatively rarely; and (3) issue-militarized rivalries, which clash militarily frequently and on many fronts. In employing certain issues this

\textsuperscript{31} Colaresi et al, 2007. \textit{Strategic Rivalries}, p.27
\textsuperscript{32} Mitchell and Thies, 2011. “Issue Rivalries,” p.231
\textsuperscript{33} Colaresi et al, 2007. \textit{Strategic Rivalries
\textsuperscript{34} Gartzke and Simon, 1999. “Hot Hands”
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., p.232
\textsuperscript{37} Hensel et al, 2008. “Bones of Contention”
way, Mitchell and Thies begin to detect the straws that break the camel’s back, and they come up with an intuitive way of getting at rivalry before its militarized onset. Still, their conceptualization fails to incorporate many of the issues that states may go over, such as regime change or economic factors.

Colaresi et al. and Mitchell and Thies begin to rectify the problems embedded in determining international rivalries. To refer back to the domino metaphor, where earlier definitions and classifications of rivalry have been founded on the frequent occurrence of conflict—the last domino to fall—these authors manage to recognize the fall of the second to last domino, namely the issues claimed and explicit threats exchanged between states and their leaders. However, these definitions are still oriented towards military conflict. Instead of counting outbreaks of conflict, they utilize the state’s official perception of itself militarily vis-à-vis the other state. This extends the definition to include the implications of past instances of fighting on future disputes and the state-perceived probability that current threats or contentious issues will lead to militarized dispute. However, as useful and valuable as these additions may be, they still do not serve to predict or explain the rise of contention between states. They still require that all threats and issues be explicitly stated.

Doubtlessly this makes the recognition and coding of rivalries much easier, but it precludes the possibility for rivalries to exist that are unacknowledged by the states themselves. In Colaresi et al.’s dataset, state decision-makers can falsely claim other states as their rivals:

“The mere utterance of the terms by appropriate sources, therefore, is not sufficient evidence of the existence of a rivalry.”

Two states must also behave as military rivals. In contrast, it is not

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38 Colaresi et al, 2007. Strategic Rivalries
40 Colaresi et al, 2007. Strategic Rivalries, p.31
possible for two states to be categorized as rivals unless they explicitly claim rivalry. Simply put, states may claim to be rivals but not actually be; however, states may not be classified as rivals unless they claim to be. Likewise, Mitchell and Thies adhere to only obvious statements by state decision-makers: “…contentious issue claims [are] based on explicit evidence of diplomatic contention involving official representatives of two or more states over a particular issue.”

Hence, every current conceptualization of rivalry either requires that the tension be explicit and public, or it depends on the repeated outbreak of militarized conflict. The possibility of unstated, silent rivalries remains unexplored. Later in this essay, I lay out two exploratory case studies in which I argue that unstated rivalries yield newly contested issues. If we insist on rivalry and contestation being explicit between states, and we postpone evaluation of state behavior until militaries clash, then we defeat the rivalry theories’ main utility, predicting or explaining the emergence of not only militarized disputes but also contentious issues. A revised measure of rivalry is needed to detect it before the penultimate domino falls.

All current conceptions of rivalry also accept the seemingly paradigmatic view that rivalries are equally perceived between states. No one makes allowance for unrequited rivalry, in which one state views the other as a competitor, but the perception is not mutual. Colaresi et al do provide for unbalanced rivalries, but their specification is based not on the perception of enmity, competition, or rivalry, but instead on the disparity in military capabilities between the actors. Thus a “major-minor” rivalry for them is not one in which one actor holds darker ambitions than the other, but one in which one state has a much stronger military than the other. This is done to contrast Vasquez’s early critique of rivalry categorization. Still, it fails to capture the possibility that within a rivalry, one state may be more gung-ho than the other in terms of

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42 Colaresi et al, 2007. Strategic Rivalries
domestic support and willingness to resort to force. Maoz and Mor come close to addressing this issue when they discuss when and how a rivalry is terminated. For them, if one state continues to contest and has some capability to challenge the status quo, the rivalry can be counted as ongoing. “The underlying conflict of interest due to the failure to resolve the issues under contention may flow beneath the surface, while the two states maintain diplomatic relations with each other, trade with each other, and even ally with each other.”

Unacknowledged in this line of logic is the implication that rivalries may be not only asymmetrical but also silent. If two states cease to identify each other as enemies, but the rivalry persists, as they argue, then it must be classified as silent. However, in their framework, the rivalry still must have been born in militarized conflict. Thus, even though they make a peripheral acknowledgement of the possibility of unrequited rivalry—only after it has already bubbled up in the form of military dispute—and, in so doing allow for rivalries to carry on silently, they still fail to grant the existence of a silent or unrequited rivalry before the initial outbreak of conflict. Consequently, they also fail to classify any grievances between states that take forms other than military clash to contribute to the rivalry dynamic.

The reason silent and unrequited rivalries might be largely disallowed in the current literature is that the determination of rivalry itself is dyadic. So far, all evaluations of and based upon rivalry have taken the unit of analysis to be the pair of states, the dyad, rather than either state and its perceptions and actions. Following this trend do Maoz and Mor classify a dyad as a rivalry even when only one side perceives and engenders the continuance thereof. Within the current rivalry paradigm, perhaps this is necessary, but the oddity of a supposedly dyadic

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43 Maoz and Mor, 2002. *Bound by Struggle*, p.6
relationship being determined by the actions of only one side of that dyad seems to call for a reevaluation of the dyadic method.

Equally implicated in this oddity is the binary nature of the determination of rivalries. Without exception, all authors who have written on interstate rivalry so far have come to count all dyads since 1816 as either rivalrous or not—1 or 0. There is no allowance for the potential concept of the escalation of rivalry—possibly preceding both militarized conflict and establishment of contentious issues—between countries. Hence, neither is there a concept of various degrees of rivalry in the minds of one or more decision-makers involved. In establishing their three categories of rivalry, Mitchell and Thies\textsuperscript{44} do start to bestow rivalry with a multi-dimensional existence; still, doubling the possible configurations of rivalry from two to four does little to address the concerns outlined here, especially since their determination is strictly dyadic.

A final concern with the concept of rivalry as it stands concerns the role of state’s constituencies in influencing the potential level of rivalry between states. Following the rivalry forbears, Colaresi et al’s method of identifying rivalries insists on using only the statements and perceptions of government officials. “Unless they control the government, constituency views are not considered the same as those of the principal decision-makers.”\textsuperscript{45} Excluding the base of a state, whether it consists of a democratic citizenry or an autocratic support base, blinds us to potential sources of contentious issues in the form of nationalist, economic, or other forms of competition between national groups. As stated before, Mitchell and Thies make the same decision, so that rivalries are “based on explicit evidence of diplomatic contention involving official representatives…”\textsuperscript{46} This decision to discard constituent views within countries, whether

\textsuperscript{44} Mitchell and Thies, 2011. “Issue Rivalries”
\textsuperscript{45} Colaresi et al, 2007. \textit{Strategic Rivalries}, p.33
\textsuperscript{46} Mitchell and Thies, 2011. “Issue Rivalries,” p.245
parties or mass opinion, must be justified for more than the simple sake of parsimony, since there is ample evidence that dynamics within the state of either rivalry member may contribute to the development of both the contentious issues and the decisions to escalate.

Snyder\textsuperscript{47} and Hixson,\textsuperscript{48} for example, outline the way nationalism on a mass scale can embolden decision-makers in their pursuing bellicose policies or even cause such policies. Schrock-Jacobson argues that nationalism may itself be a source of conflict beyond the control of leaders, whether democratically elected or not. She argues that when present in the right form, “nationalism significantly increases the probability that a state will initiate an interstate war.”\textsuperscript{49}

Another sort of interstate rivalry driven by each state’s constituents, which may engender new issues of contention, is the economic. Fordham\textsuperscript{50} demonstrates how international competition and trade can lead to fresh involvement in warfare. With these sorts of findings in mind, one can envision the possibility of elements of sub-state rivalry, whether consisting of national groups or economic competitors, constructing and articulating issues of contention before any state leader manages to express an opinion, either personal or official.

**DEMONSTRATIVE CASES: JAPAN-KOREA AND KENYA-UGANDA**

I have chosen two cases to demonstrate the blindness the current literature has to certain types of fierce rivalries in international politics, and the manner in which they may quickly generate new

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\textsuperscript{47} Snyder, 2000. *From Voting to Violence*
\textsuperscript{48} Hixson, 2008. *The Myth of American Diplomacy*
\textsuperscript{50} Fordham, 2007. “Revisionism Reconsidered”
issues of contention. The first consists of two major global economic players, both democracies and vital members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); the second is a democratic-autocratic dyad in the developing world. I argue that both rivalries are contemporary, citing current events to demonstrate the point. These cases show that even despite years of superficially peaceful relations and trade between two countries, silent rivalries may prove themselves capable of generating intractable conflicts, in these cases indivisible territorial disputes.

**Korea and Japan**

By any of the current rivalry literature’s standards, Japan and South Korea do not constitute a rivalry. The Japanese have only a national police force and are bound to the US for protection. Japan can even be said to depend somewhat on South Korea as a buffer against North Korean nuclear and military ambitions. Neither Japanese nor Korean government officials refer to the other in terms of enmity or crisis. Still, South Korea and Japan are rivals, nationally and economically, and their rivalry has ignited a territorial dispute over the Liancourt Rocks between the two that neatly fits Hassner’s conceptualization of an “indivisible territory”: “…perfectly cohesive, has unambiguous boundaries, and cannot be substituted or exchanged for another good or issue.”

The land itself is relatively worthless, but the rivalry between the two countries has persisted throughout their post-WWII peaceful relations strongly enough that what would normally be a minor issue has emerged between them as a volatile test of restraint.

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51 Hassner, 2003. “To Halve and to Hold,” p.8
Korea and Japan fit the first half of Valeriano’s definition of rivalry rather well: “A situation of long-standing, historical animosity between two entities…”\textsuperscript{52} Again, I ignore the conflict proneness aspect of the definition because that is the driving force of this revisionist critique. Japan and Korea have had centuries of both rivalry and exchange. As members of a China-centered ‘tribute system’ from the 14\textsuperscript{th} to 19\textsuperscript{th} centuries, the two differed deeply on how the Chinese state should be treated:

“Korea was a willing participant in the Chinese world and self-consciously adopted and copied Chinese ideas, norms, and values. Japan was the liminal, or boundary, case…Japanese elites were always skeptical of China’s central position.”\textsuperscript{53}

Korea also has both ancient and recent history with Japanese occupation, starting in 1592, when the daimyo Toyotomi Hideyoshi attempted to invade Korea several times from 1592-1598 with the professed goal of conquering Joseon Dynasty Korea.\textsuperscript{54} More recent are the memories of the 35-year Japanese colonization of Korea before and during World War II, which are still carried by some living people.

“Indigenous Koreans suffered under the brutal rule of Japanese militarism in various forms, including conscription of Korean men to the Japanese military in the Pacific War; and so-called ‘comfort women,’ Korean women forced into sexual slavery and exploitation, held within Japanese brothels on various war fronts during the Pacific War.”\textsuperscript{55}

Following the end of WWII and the decolonization of Korea, Japan has been no threat to Korea. Anti-Japanese sentiment still characterizes the perceptions of Korea’s body politic. Koreans view Japan as a cultural rival; this feeling permeates Korean society and government deep into seemingly innocent facets such as entertainment. Between the end of Japanese colonization and the onset of Korean democracy, the Korean government banned all forms of

\textsuperscript{52} Valeriano, 2012. “Becoming Rivalries,” p.63
\textsuperscript{54} Turnbull, 2002. \textit{Samurai Invasion}
\textsuperscript{55} Shin, 2013. “Dokdo/Takeshima,” p.2
Japanese cultural import, including music, film, and other artworks. Only in 2003 did Korea finish relaxing its ban on Japanese culture.\textsuperscript{56}

As the Korean state has grown and prospered internationally, so have its perceptions of rivalry with Japan. It has become a major player in the G20, a huge cultural exporter throughout Asia and across the seas, and seems poised to overtake Japan on many fronts. At the same time, Japanese economic and cultural significance in the world are felt to be waning. Its economy remains listless, and it faces a growing demographic crisis: by 2050, 40\% of Japanese citizens will be over 65 years of age.\textsuperscript{57}

This has not weakened the Korean perception of rivalry with Japan, and Koreans continue to relish opportunities to augment their status relative to Japan. Cho Wan Bok, secretary general of the Northeast Asian History Foundation, demonstrates the relations, "Even in sports, such as Olympic baseball, South Koreans get twice as happy when they beat Japan as when they defeat, say, the United States."\textsuperscript{58} As Korea and Japan continue to trade with each other and cooperate on some security issues, such as North Korean relations, they still maintain significant aspects of what might be the reverse of the conventionally known “special relationship” between some states. They continue to “deny any gains to their rival.”\textsuperscript{59}

In this context of rivalry and transition in the relative global economic and cultural significance between Japan and Korea, a bizarre, seemingly irrational territorial dispute between the two has surfaced. In 1996, newly elected Japanese conservatives renewed claims of sovereignty over what the British and French called the Liancourt Rocks, known as “Dokdo” to

\textsuperscript{56} Japan Times, 2003. “South Korea to ease ban on Japan cultural goods”
\textsuperscript{57} The Economist, 2010. “Japan is ageing faster than any country in history”
\textsuperscript{58} Choe, 2008. “A fierce Korean pride in a lonely group of islets.”
\textsuperscript{59} Valeriano, 2012. “Becoming Rivalries,” p.64
Korea, and “Takeshima” to Japan. I will use the English name here to evade casting an opinion on the subject, as well as to remind the reader that the territory in question is less than one-fifth of a square kilometer in area, or about 46 acres. The two minuscule islands have no natural resources and sit above no known mineral wealth, though they do bring access to fishing grounds. However, this dispute is not predicated on material riches by anyone’s account; rather it is the embodiment of a nationalist rivalry between Korea and Japan that has persisted throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Korea administers the islands, ferrying 1800 citizens there daily to set foot on the islands, take photos, and generally rack up the tally of South Koreans who have been there. Choe relays the sentiments of a South Korean Coast Guard Captain:

“‘If the Japanese try to take this island from us, we will fight to the end…If we run out of firepower, we will ram our ship against the intruders…Our national pride is at stake’…Passengers on [the captains’] ship are shown an animated film in which a gigantic Robot Taekwon V figure soars up out of sea and routs Japanese pirates trying to invade Dokdo.”

From the perspective of at least some Koreans, the Japanese claims represent a realistic, if faint, threat to sovereignty and national pride, enough to ponder the possibility of military action.

This would not be much evidence as a case of rivalry breeding new issues of contention if these conflicting claims had been salient throughout the period since the end of Japanese decolonization. However, that is not the case. The Japanese contestation of Korean rights to the islands only resurfaced first in the mid-1990s, and then in 2005, when one of its prefectures declared February 22 to be “Takeshima Day” on the 100th anniversary of the original Japanese

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61 CyberDokdo, 2013
62 Choe, 2008. “A fierce Korean pride in a lonely group of islets”
63 Ibid.
annexation of the islands from Korea. After decades of quiet on the subject, this territorial claim
came from nowhere. Though the Japanese government had recommended putting the issue to the
International Court of Justice before, this issue lay either dead or dormant for decades. Likewise,
only through stretching the term severely could one refer to this as a “protracted conflict.” Most
had considered it to have ceased to be an issue; even Hensel et al’s ICOW data declines to
include it.64

So, how did this issue resurface? Shin explains it in reference to relative changes in
international status between the two countries, “…this inverse rise and decline of the two
countries’ international standings contribute to the contemporary flare-ups surrounding the two
sets of tiny rocks in the seas situated between them.”65 A key word in her description of the
relationship is “contemporary.” This modern conflict is perhaps justified by historical claims, but
it is chiefly the result of a national rivalry between the two countries.

Of course now, the dispute over the Liancourt Rocks has bolstered and even come to
embody the rivalry between the two countries. Since 2005, Korean authorities have detected
Japanese patrol boats in the waters surrounding the rocks with increasing frequency. In addition,
in summer 2008, the Japanese Ministry of Education distributed a manual to schoolteachers and
textbook publishers urging them to begin instructing Japanese students that the islands rightfully
belong to Japan. Korea promptly recalled its ambassador to Japan, Korean citizens decapitated
pheasants, Japan’s national bird, in front of the Japanese embassy, and Seoul’s subway had all
advertisements for a Japanese company removed.66 Though such flurries of fervent nationalist
activity surrounding the Liancourt Islands are certainly not the norm, this dispute has become

66 Choe, 2008. “A fierce Korean pride in a lonely group of islets”
increasingly intractable and having sprung from the Korean-Japanese rivalry, it has now come to embody it. And it embodies it for both nations. When the Korean president landed on the islands in summer 2012, Japanese authorities defiantly referred to the event as an “illegal landing.”

Rivalry is alive, well, and growing between the nations of South Korea and Japan. It has persisted since the end of WWII up to the reemergence of the Liancourt Rocks dispute, and it can be argued to be responsible for the dispute’s existence at all, not to mention its intractability. Cha argues that these “recent events have disrupted the equilibrium in a more permanent way.”

Both Korean and Japanese politicians face a new public standard that expects open animosity towards the other nation, and the souring of Korean-Japanese relations has even begun to affect both nations’ relations with the US. Only in evaluating this rivalry in terms of nationalism and economics can we come to recognize it for what it is and for the new contentious issues it engenders. This relationship between Korea and Japan demonstrates the need for a more intuitive, inclusive definition of rivalry if we ever hope to explain the emergence of new conflicts using the concept.

KENYA AND UGANDA

The current relationship between Kenya and Uganda is not as fiery as that between Japan and Korea. They have been close trading partners for about twenty years, share similar security concerns with rebel activities in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia, as well as open skepticism towards Western intervention in African affairs, and have generally maintained civil

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68 Ibid.
69 Ibid.
70 Bevege, 2009. “Kenya, Uganda to withdraw form disputed island: Nairobi”
diplomatic relations. However, the rivalry between the two nations, which Thompson and Dreyer\textsuperscript{71} report to have ended in 1995, still manifests itself loudly. The two constitute a case when Colaresi et al’\textsc{'}s skepticism about criteria for selection of termination dates of international rivalries\textsuperscript{72} is duly earned.

Their rivalry is rooted in allegations of rebel support and has culminated in cross-border fire and sporadic trade disputes. In 1986, when Yoweri Mousevini assumed the Uganda presidency, the Ugandan government decided to shift Uganda’s trade relationship to favor Dar es-Salaam, Tanzania as a port, rather than Mombasa, Kenya.\textsuperscript{73} The Kenyan government closed its border to Uganda. Uganda has a history of rebel forces overthrowing the government—indeed, Mousevini himself came to power through two rebellions in the decade prior to his rise—and the new government accused Kenya of assisting nascent rebel forces. Kenyan President arap Moi similarly accused Uganda several times of arming dissidents within Kenyan borders.\textsuperscript{74}

Following the trade row and the rebel support allegations, relations soured quickly. In summer 1988, Ugandan soldiers attacked Kenyan fishermen on Sumba Island in Lake Victoria in recognized Kenyan territory. The Kenyan military responded with several Ugandan casualties. It opened and closed the borders sporadically throughout the late 1980s, regularly detained and delayed Ugandan vehicles, and generally held Ugandan relations at arms length. In 1989, three hundred armed Ugandans crossed the border to steal cattle and killed a Kenyan officer. The Kenyan military responded by killing seventy-two of the supposed cattle rustlers. Within a week, two bombs were dropped from a military aircraft on Kenya’s police post of Oropoi, and several

\textsuperscript{71} Thompson and Dreyer, 2012. \textit{Handbook of International Rivalries}, p.244
\textsuperscript{72} Colaresi et al, 2007. \textit{Strategic Rivalries}, p.30
\textsuperscript{73} Uganda Index, 1990. “Uganda-Kenya”
\textsuperscript{74} Thompson and Dreyer, 2012. \textit{Handbook of International Rivalries}, p. 244
more people were killed. Uganda denied its involvement and sought mediation, and in 1990 the two countries officially restored diplomatic ties.\(^7\)

Relations between the two generally warmed up following the tumultuous late 1980s, though allegations of rebel support continued throughout the 1990s. In 2000, the governments of Uganda, Kenya, Burundi, Rwanda, and Tanzania revitalized the East African Community (EAC), which was founded in 1967 and collapsed in 1977 due to Cold War era ideological splits and disagreements between the governments of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania.\(^7\),\(^7\) The reestablishment of the EAC, however, did not spell an end to competitive tendencies between the two governments. Their trade relationship became rocky once again, threatening the potential establishment of a federation made up of the five EAC countries. In fall 2012, Ugandan trade minister Amelia Kyambadde threatened a ban on Kenyan imports after the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) began requiring cash bond equivalents before clearing Ugandan imports.\(^7\) Trade tension continued to escalate as Kenya ratcheted up tariffs on Ugandan sugar imports and even began impounding Ugandan sugar trucks entering the country. As a result, contentious interstate trade issues multiplied through the beginning of 2013, and the EAC secretariat had to step in early April.\(^7\)

The hot-cold relationship between the two also continues to breed collusive allegations between them. In 2011, the United Nations released a report that a Ugandan rebel group, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), which was then recruiting al-Shabaab militants from Somalia and aiming to overthrow President Museveni, had been using Nairobi as its financial center.\(^7\)

\(^7\) _Uganda Index_, 1990. “Uganda-Kenya”
\(^7\) _East African Community_ website, 2013. “History of the EAC”
\(^7\) _Reuters_, 2010. “Factbox—East African common market begins”
\(^7\) _New Vision_, 2012. “Uganda threatens ban on Kenyan imports”
\(^7\) Otage, 2013. “Kenya-Uganda trade fight nears resolution”
\(^7\) _The East African_, 2012. “Kenya risks row with Uganda over ADF militia”
Media outlets in both countries flurried with reminiscent pieces on Kenyan support of the ADF’s parent organization, the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU), throughout the 80s and 90s. At that time, Kenyan President arap Moi had believed that Uganda was sending disgruntled Kenyan citizens to Libya for military training with the goal of overthrowing the arap Moi government as an extension of the new rebel-founded Ugandan government.

These perceptions between the two countries, whether well-founded or not, keep the two from establishing a perfectly stable relationship, and national elements in either country are prone to stoke the embers. As an example, when Kenya’s fourth president Uhuru Kenyatta was sworn in on April 4, 2013, a prominent Ugandan newspaper blithely claimed that the new leader was, in fact, Ugandan. It cited a colonial era tale of a 19th century Ugandan king fathering a child with a nurse in the Seychelles as a British captive, and that the child was the grandfather of the new president. Kenyan newspapers dismissed it as a light-hearted conspiracy theory, a sentiment that was generally accepted as true.

The competition between the countries is milder than in the Japanese-Korean case, but it is still capable of yielding the same intractable disputes. Like those two countries, Kenya and Uganda recently entered a heightened territorial dispute, which sprang from nowhere in 2009. Migingo Island, situated in Lake Victoria between the two countries, is literally less than an acre in area. However, that did not prevent hundreds of Ugandans and Kenyans from colonizing the island within the year, over the following three years, the number grew to over a thousand.

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83 Kabuye, 2013. “Could Kenya’s president Uhuru be our grandson?”
85 Shead, 2012. “A real treasure island!”
Tensions between the settlers have remained constantly high, and both governments have intermittently sent forces to police the island, each in response to the other.

These developments led to nationalist manifestations in both states. At a 2009 rugby match between the two, Kenyan fans chanted, “Migingo, united, can never be defeated.” Shortly thereafter, Ugandan soldiers landed on the island and planted a flag. Several Kenyan fishermen also reported beatings and theft by Ugandan police officers on the island. Responding in national indignation, Kenyan youth ripped up a section of railway running into their country from Uganda. This had not been the first time Kenyans had expressed anger towards the Ugandan government this way; youths in 2007 blamed Ugandan interference for a botched presidential election, tore up railway lines, blocked trade routes, and even ambushed Ugandan trucks en route to Nairobi. The Ugandan newspaper *The Independent* subtitled one of its headlines with the apparently serious question “Should Uganda go to war with Kenya?” It reported,

“Kenyan MPs Simon Mbugua (Kamukunji) and Omondi Anyanga (Nyatike) were also quoted in the local press challenging President Mwai Kibaki to speak out and show some macho: ‘If you cannot protect an island, how can you protect the whole country,’ Mbugua asked. Another seven MPs led by Nicholas Gumbo (Rarieda) petitioned President Kibaki to declare Uganda a ‘hostile neighbor’ and forcibly take control of Migingo Island. They demanded that the navy and army be sent to the island. ‘Uganda is no longer a friend. It has invaded our land and it is time we acted to protect our sovereignty,’ said Gumbo.”

This pressure on politicians to take a firm stand regarding the other state echoes the sentiments faced by Korean and Japanese politicians when dealing with their own public sentiments. From 2009, Ugandan and Kenyan newspapers have continually volleyed allegations and threats, and acrimonious sentiment silently waxes and wanes in both nations. The dispute has made it

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87 Ibid.
difficult for fishers from either country to sell their catch in markets of the other without risking illegal impromptu taxes from the authorities.\textsuperscript{89} Like in the Korean-Japanese case, the territorial dispute has bolstered and added to the underlying elements of rivalry between the countries; indeed it has become part of the rivalry, in addition to other supposedly settle diplomatic and spatial rows. Kenya and Uganda may continue to have a relatively stable relationship despite these tendencies, including steady trade between the two, but the divergence between the two has proven itself able to crop up suddenly with new issues and inspire hostile threats and calls to arms against the neighbor. It would behoove us to account for such developments when we label international rivalries.

**REVISING THE RIVALRY MEASURES**

Rivalry scholars can rightfully answer my selection of these two cases by pointing to their insignificance and irrelevance to literature on predicting or explaining. Bennet,\textsuperscript{90} Maoz and Mor,\textsuperscript{91} and Klein, Goertz, and Diehl’s\textsuperscript{92} measures will dismiss them since they have not exchanged fire recently and seem improbable to do so anytime soon. Colaresi, Rasler, and Thompson’s\textsuperscript{93} dataset will exclude them because there is even if there are proclamations of rivalry, the hostility is not manifest enough between the pairs at the state level. Mitchell and Thies\textsuperscript{94} may include them if it can be shown that these territorial, economic, and national issues between them are salient enough to be deemed contentious issues. All of these measures will be

\textsuperscript{89} Mwanzia, 2011. “Survey on disputed Mugingo Island to resume”
\textsuperscript{90} Bennet, 2007. “Measuring Rivalry Termination”
\textsuperscript{91} Maoz and Mor, 2002. *Bound by Struggle*
\textsuperscript{93} Colaresi et al, 2007. *Strategic Rivalries*
\textsuperscript{94} Mitchell and Thies, 2011. “Issue Rivalries”
slow to recognize these relationships as rivalries because, given the circumstances, they seem unlikely to escalate into armed conflict. However, the inclusion in the term “rivalry” of the probability of conflict explicitly made by Valeriano⁹⁵ taints the utility of the concept at all. The data needs to be allowed to speak for itself, and our scholarship should not ascribe the outcome we aim to determine—likelihood of conflict—to the definition itself.

Another response to these two cases might be that they merely lie in the error term, giving no proven indication of a grand bias that runs through the whole literature. If there is a bias running through the literature, Korea/Japan and Kenya/Uganda do not demonstrate it single-handedly. Rather, these two cases ought to be considered exploratory, demonstrating the potential abundance of signs of rivalrous competition before armed conflict breaks out. Additionally, they manifest symptoms of rivalry we ought to start paying attention to in our assessment.

Rivalry needs to be pulled back to its conventional definition of simple competition for the same objective, regardless of whether is manifests violence or not. In reconsidering rivalry, it may be helpful to look to two familiar forms of rivalry: sibling and sports. Sports rivalries occur in a context of routine competition: teams, which exist to compete, are systematically matched against each other to determine which is superior. The international system may be anarchic, but the underlying rule of rivalry has been that competition is not inevitable. Its root has been the observation that the majority of conflicts do not occur randomly, but rather between relatively few dyads.⁹⁶ So if competition is conceptualized as conflict, then we cannot assume universal competition. The second metaphor, sibling rivalry, is much more useful. Competition for superiority is not inevitable between siblings, and rivalry arises through their own choices. There

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⁹⁶ Diehl and Goertz, 2000. War and Peace in International Rivalry
is no “zero-sum game” in sibling rivalry except the one they create, and the context in which two compete is normally their own device. It may be driven by desire for superiority in the eyes of parents, or merely each other’s eyes, but entrance into competition is originally elected. In the metaphor of sibling rivalry, the violent exchange of blows between siblings would reflect the militarized relationship utilized by current measures of international rivalry. Certainly the exchange of blows is a matter of choice between siblings, one preceded by a framework of competition already established by the two themselves. The same conceptualization should be applied to interstate relations. Whether rivalry is first indicated by outbreak of conflict, as per Goertz and Diehl, or proclamation of rivalry, as per Colaresi et al, it certainly takes place within a competitive context already established by the two states themselves. The competitive relationship precedes the violent relationship, and the former ought to characterize rivalry in order to really predict and explain the outbreak of the latter.

I propose a series of changes to way the field describes and determines rivalry between states. Instead of basing our rivalry measures entirely on conflict—past, present, or future—we should revise them to be founded in indices of geography, economic, diplomatic, and national cohesion, and military conflict, between states. These indices should be kept distinct from each other so that each aspect of a given rivalry can be weighed against the other, and patterns detected.

The core argument here is that rivalry in international relations ought to conform to its conventional definition as competition. In the interstate context, this competition may still be most strongly manifested militarily, but when such competition is preceded by economic, diplomatic, or identity-related forms, we ought to be equipped to detect it. Domestic interests, explicitly excluded at this point in all measures, or dismissed as inconsequential, are often
pivotal in escalating international competition. A fishermen’s rivalry can relight flames long extinguished, and trade wars can lead to real wars. The risk of including seemingly irrelevant forms of competition between states disappears if all forms of competition are taken to be salient. Rivalry is competition and ought to be defined by it.

First, though, the very base of our classification of rivalry needs to take a new form. So far, all measures have had rivalry as a binary measure. A pair of states either had a large enough conflict with enough people killed, or it did not. Either they had enough of these conflicts in the right span of time, or they did not. Either their diplomats called the other a national enemy in the right way, or they did not. This arbitrary nature of this system of classification has had the discourse on a tangential track since its inception. Most of our efforts have been invested not in developing the utility our data on international rivalries towards explaining other facets of international relations, facets like economic exchange and regime evolution, but in a still ongoing disagreement on exactly which current and historical dyads make the cut. Everyone sticks to their own definition and dataset, and works from there. Thus, a distinct lack of cohesion characterizes our literature, and our empirical findings are simply challenged with questions of our choice of data.

Instead of using a dichotomous measure, I propose the development of a continuous measure of rivalry as interstate competition. Colaresi et al characterize the range of state behavior as constituting “a conflict-cooperation continuum” at one point, but they decline to utilize the concept in their development, opting instead for the dichotomous measure based on a threshold of violent interaction and explicit recognition of enmity. They critique Klein et al for the capriciousness of their rivalry measure, but they choose not to adopt a continuous measure to

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differentiate obvious rivalries from subtler ones. The conflict-cooperation continuum can indeed be used to create a cumulative measure of rivalry, allowing for some especially hostile dyads to have higher scores than other milder, though still competitive, pairs. A useful analog here is to refer to the ways in which democracy is currently measured in the comparative democratization literature. Przeworski et al\textsuperscript{98} insist on a dichotomous measure of democracy, and for certain questions, their simple measure answers the most directly. However, many prefer the Polity IV measure created by Marshall and Jaggers\textsuperscript{99} because it allows for flexibility in testing hypotheses about different levels of democratization, and it evades disagreement about why a particular case is included or excluded. The data is compiled, and the accumulation of several determinants of democracy—constraint on the executive, number of parties, independence of the judicial branch, etc.—yields a score.

A benefit of such a system is that it allows us to track the evolution of democracy over time. The same principal can be applied to rivalry. Instead of indicating a year or date in which a rivalry breaks out suddenly, or is decisively terminated through an official statement or signature, we can monitor rivalries as they wax and wane over time. The tendency for rivalries to oscillate this way is at least partially responsible for the disparity between our current measures, and a continuous system would remedy that. Perhaps it is far-fetched to expect that such a set-up would eliminate the division in the field about which dyads are or are not rivals, but it would certainly provide scholars who have other questions about rivalry a more inclusive method of identifying the relationships they seek to test.

Second, we need to justify measuring rivalry dyadically or else allow for the possibility of monadic measures. Cross-state perceptions and levels of animosity are not always

\textsuperscript{98} Przeworski et al, 2000. Democracy and Development

\textsuperscript{99} Marshall and Jaggers, 2002. Polity IV Project
reciprocated, but that does not mean that the competitive relationship is absent. In other words, at
times the desired unit of analysis is the perspective and actions of one state or the other, and our
current measures of rivalry only allow us to analyze the space between the states. Rousseau et
al\textsuperscript{100} are able to venture an answer to the question of whether the democratic peace is a monadic
or dyadic effect because they are equipped to detect each side’s individual contribution to the
relationship. We can break no such ground by our current measures of rivalry. Another benefit to
this change is that it would allow us to view rivals in a hierarchical context. As sibling rivalries
often center on the competition for parental favor, so may international rivals vie for the favor of
regional hegemons or the international community at large. This relationship may be completely
unbalanced initially, and there is an argument to be made that until both states view it as rivalry,
a competition between them, it is merely an aspiration. However, to say so is to make rivalry a
symbol of status. If the actions of state-A to prove itself to be state-B’s rival are what inspire
state-B to categorize A as its rival, then we ought to consider state-A’s initiative in our concept.
Otherwise, we are left with the problem Colaresi et al still have, namely that diplomatic
statements of enmity are endogenous to problems already between the states.

Third, and most centrally, rivalry should be defined by more than the occurrence of
conflict. The two chosen cases demonstrate how the dynamics of economic relations between
states may be the cause of escalating conflict or an arena of reprisal, or even both at the same
time. A revised rivalry measure should thus have an economic index as its first measure. We
already have extensive quantitative data indicating the state of economic relations between
states: trade volume, balance of imports and exports, tariff levels, state membership in trade
agreements and international organization, state involvement in sanctions and embargos vis-à-vis

other states, or the lack of any those features of a globalized market. It is not implausible to envision an interstate and international economic index as a key indicator of rivalry between states. To account for a state’s decision to engage in economic sanctions or embargos against another state is to add a nuanced facet of rivalry and a valuable predictor of conflict. Likewise, a state’s decision to enter a new trade agreement or lift a tariff indicates a step towards openness.

The second index should be official diplomatic relations. One quantitative indicator might be cohesion in voting in the UN General Assembly. The precise way in which such an index would be constructed will have to be teased out; perhaps only votes on issues that specifically concern one side of the rivalry should be counted, since Uganda and Kenya would likely find themselves in default agreement on many issues brought before the UN. Co-membership in intergovernmental and regional organizations could be tallied and compared; selection into such groups is often a decision with grand international and domestic political implications, and an indicator of relative status. Additionally, the presence of embassies and consulates and restrictions placed on those by host countries varies depending on the nature of the interstate relationship; this is an easily traceable measure, if an imprecise one. A more qualitative measure might be in order here too. Statements before the UN of grievance with neighbors or those urging specific sorts of action against other states may add to the nuance of the measure. Likewise, statements like those delivered by the Kenyan MPs declaring open hostility with their neighbor should count for something; including such activities in this measure would make for at least a minimal level of inclusion of domestic constituencies and their influence on foreign policy decisions. At the same time, gestures such as key diplomatic visits between state leaders, the existence of student exchange programs or “sister cities”, and
cooperative UN voting can provide evidence of parity. Data collected by Colaresi et al\textsuperscript{101} or Hensel et al\textsuperscript{102} on official positions and contentious issues might also add to this index.

As the two illustrative cases show, interstate competition manifests in many ways. Korean citizens decapitating Japan’s national bird before its embassy demonstrates a keenness of nationalist tension undetectable in the official statements of diplomats, as do Kenyan youths ripping up Ugandan railroad tracks. Thus, a third measure might be that of cohesion between ideological, nationalist, and other identity-related elements. Tracking the occurrence of protests against the activities of foreign governments might be one clear way to detect nationalist acridity. Attacks on or demonstrations at embassies would be a similar one. Conversely, enrollment numbers in student exchange programs or the consumption of cultural exports may be useful proxies of inter-national harmony. One particularly useful proxy for nationalism, one interestingly present in both of my cases, is behavior at international sporting events. Bertoli\textsuperscript{103} finds that the World Cup actually causes aggression between states, in that states with teams that narrowly lose or win important matches increase in likelihood to escalate conflict. On an opposite note, the elimination of wrestling from the Olympic games yielded a curiously concerted effort between the US, Russia, and Iran, known rivals, to block the change in policy.\textsuperscript{104}

One possible method of quantifying this element might be through attendance and viewership at specific international events, as well as media coverage within the countries in question. In some cases, counting the deaths and injuries inflicted between fans at matches may also be an apt measure. Rarely do national rivalries manifest themselves in ways more visible than through

\textsuperscript{101} Colaresi et al, 2007. *Strategic Rivalries*
\textsuperscript{102} Hensel et al, 2008. “Bones of Contention”
\textsuperscript{103} Bertoli, forthcoming. “Does the World Cup make states more aggressive?”
\textsuperscript{104} Elser and Meyer, 2013. “Wrestling’s Olympic Ouster Binds Russia, U.S. and Iran”
international sporting events, which provide us with a useful, if somewhat flawed, window into national sentiment.

Fourth, some short provision for geographic contiguity or proximity would need to be made in these measures. It is well-established, perhaps plain intuitive, that states next to each other interact more, yielding a greater volume of both positive and negative impressions. National groups next to each other know each other better and have more mature impressions and feelings about each other. There is more trade and generally more exchange of every type between neighbors, so observations would probably have to be weighted differently depending on proximity.

Finally, it would be remiss to outright reject all that rivalry research has yielded so far, in terms of both theory and empirics. Thus, the fifth index I propose here, perhaps the most informative, is founded upon the measures of rivalry we already have. The number and intensity of conflicts between states has certainly been shown to indicate rivalry between states by most of the authors cited so far. To fit in this rivalry index, the previous measures would still need to accommodate a continuous classification, so a lot of data would probably remain to be collected and classified. Through the rivalry data already available and data to be gathered, variables such as time since last conflict, amount killed in last conflict, frequency of last conflict, display of military force, declarations of war, and relative military capability could all inform the way we weigh rivalry.

With our notion of rivalry founded on more than simple occurrence of conflict, we will be better equipped to answer questions about how it affects other aspects of international relations.

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CONCLUSION

Our current method of identifying rivalry between states is flawed. We depend on the occurrence of conflict to tell us whether a pair of states are rivals, when the likelihood of conflict is that which we seek to predict and explain. Meanwhile, the main topic of discussion and development has not been as substantive as it could be, and much energy has been wasted on defining arbitrary temporal and spatial boundaries for the determination of rivalries. As a result, after two decades of research, there is still relatively little agreement on which current and historical dyads constitute rivals, proto-rivals, or any other pre-rivalry category of relationship. In addition, there are clear examples of dyads that have at least some elements of rivalry, whether self-proclaimed or merely acted out, but which are overlooked entirely by our dominant methods of identification. These dyads may even be generating new issues of contention, the precursor to armed conflict, but our current framework does not allow us to recognize them for their competitive relationship. In short, we have been basing our identification of rivalry almost entirely on the last domino to fall. We do this even while we have volumes of theory and extensive data that can support more robust, intuitive, and exhaustive methods of classifying rivalries.

To rectify this tautological dilemma, we ought to implement three changes. First, we should cease identifying rivalries as binary: by forcing interstate relationships to be either 1s or 0s, we not only perpetuate the further fragmentation and disagreement on identifying rivalries, we also make it much more difficult to track the evolution of rivalries. Second, we should cease
identifying rivalries as strictly dyadic: as it is now, unrequited rivalries are undetectable. States often have unequal evaluations of the relationship between them, and we ought to allow for the possibility of lop-sided rivalries. This has implications for the framing of the definition, but we should allow the possibility in any case. Third, we should incorporate non-military measures into our identification of rivalry. This would allow us to cross-examine the multiple facets of rivalry, as well as test them against other aspects of interstate relations.

Making these changes to our methods of identification will require an incredible amount of time and a highly concerted effort. It might also implicate retesting many of the hypotheses we already have. To embrace this lofty challenge, however, would be to enhance the explanatory ability of our theories of rivalry and expand them to answer question of how certain aspects of interstate competitiveness affect others, and ultimately anticipate conflict. Refining our definition of rivalry and revising our modes of measurement would constitute a leap forward in detecting relational preludes to conflict, and hence would better serve the original purpose of discussing rivalry—predicting and explaining patterns of conflict.
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