Classification of Interstate Wars

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One of the recent lessons suggested by the scientific study of war is that different wars have different causes. Related to this lesson is the belief that war is multicausal and that there are different paths to war. Both these claims imply the need to create a typology of war and set the domain of various explanations of war. This article constructs a scientific typology and classifies all interstate wars from 1816 through 1997. Wars are classified along three dimensions—their size, the issues that give rise to them, and the behavior of states before the war. The classification portrays what are the similarities and dissimilarities in the underlying causes of each type of war. The analysis demonstrates that a clear typology of wars (mutually exclusive and logically exhaustive) can be created and is empirically informative.

A long-held conventional assumption of those who have taken a quantitative approach to the study of the onset of warfare is that war is a general phenomenon whose causes are the same (e.g., Bueno de Mesquita 1981). One of things that becomes clearer when one reviews the various statistical findings on war and the history of war is that this assumption does not seem plausible; rather, it seems the case that war is multicausal in the sense that there are different paths to war or differing sets of variables that are sufficient to bring about war (Levy 1989, 227, 279, 281; Vasquez 1993, 48–52). While one set of factors may regularly give rise to war, there will be other wars not associated with these factors or causal processes. If some wars have different causes than others, then it will greatly aid research if the wars thought to have the same causes can be grouped together.

Failing to account for such different causal paths will result in scholars testing their theories on cases that they cannot explain and thereby reduce the strength of the findings. Even case study research can give rise to inconsistent results because of a failure to group wars according to their different causes. Most and Starr (1989, 68–69) recognized this problem long ago in their call for specifying the domain of a theory or hypothesis, especially in the analysis of the onset of war. Yet, their advice has gone unheeded by researchers.

The main reason to develop a classification of wars is that it will help advance theory and research by specifying that certain classes of war have causes

that differ, and that therefore, we should develop explanations of war confined to certain domains. Split population analyses should be undertaken to properly test such explanations by grouping cases according to the types of war. A secondary benefit of classifying wars is that it will aid the study of comparative historical case studies by providing a theoretical basis for case selection.

Two tasks arise from the assumption of multicausality. First, to specify the domain of an explanation of war, one must specify which wars are different. Second, one must ultimately specify what the different causes are for each different type of war. This analysis will complete the first task by classifying all interstate wars from 1816 through 1997 into a mutually exclusive and logically exhaustive typology based on their purported underlying causal processes. In doing so, the analysis will specify the domain of wars to which the explanation of primary interest in this article—the steps-to-war (Vasquez 1993)—applies. This will address the second task by identifying the causes of war relevant to that explanation. This analysis will also identify the various wars that are alleged to have causes different from those specified by the steps-to-war explanation. The causes of these wars need to be detailed by other theories of war, some of which will be noted here.

Despite Most and Starr's (1989) call to specify domains, no one has presented a fully developed typology of interstate wars and applied it to existing

data. In order for the multicausality assumption to be tested, there must first be some theoretical classification of war. Without a classification scheme that clearly delineates the various criteria employed for categorizing individual wars, the multicausality assumption cannot be tested in a deductive manner. The advantage of an *ex ante* theoretical classification is not only that it clearly delineates and operationalizes criteria for grouping cases, it also permits the typology to actually be tested against data, thereby subjecting the classification to the principle of falsifiability.

It is one thing to think a classification of wars would be useful, but it is another to actually develop one. The major existing typology was developed in the Correlates of War project for the purposes of collecting data and separating interstate wars from internal or civil wars (Small and Singer 1982; see also Sarkees 2000). While we build on this typology by focusing only on the wars labeled as interstate, the Correlates of War typology deliberately avoids making theoretical judgments about the causes of war.

The difficulty in classifying wars according to their different causes is that at this stage of inquiry we do not know what the various types of war are. Since there is no generally accepted theory of war, we will not know the extent to which our classification is accurate until after a theory of war becomes accepted. At the same time in the absence of a classification we are not apt to find an acceptable theory. The solution to this chicken and egg problem is to use the theoretical approach(es) that we believe is most on track, construct a classification on the basis of that theoretical foundation, investigate if it can be applied to wars, and then see if research informed by the classification produces useful findings. Since we have abandoned the pretensions of a universalist theory of war onset, we focus, instead, on the scope conditions laid out by theories in the field. International relations scholars do have some theories that can be used to think about types of interstate war, and the next section will outline the existing literature we draw on to construct a typology of wars.

Theoretical Foundation

We use the steps-to-war explanation originally propounded by Vasquez (1993) and recently tested by Senese and Vasquez (2008) as our main theoretical guide (see also Vasquez 2009). Using this theoretical approach, as well as a review of the literature, leads us to the conclusion that the three most theoretically significant facts about war are: (1) the number of participants, (2) the grievance or issues that give rise to the war in the first place, and (3) the behavior of states preceding the war. Of all the possible characteristics of wars, are these three the most likely to be consonant with the actual underlying causes of war?

Richardson (1960, 258–59) was the first to suggest that the number of participants is a theoretically significant factor by which to distinguish wars. He based this conclusion on the observation that two-party wars were the typical (modal) war and that as wars got bigger (especially with more than four participants) they became rarer. Large wars could be rare either because they are caused by different factors than those that cause two-party wars or because there are additional variables present that make these wars bigger and rarer.

Bigger wars usually become that way through war joining. Bremer (1995) goes further and argues that the explanation for the onset of war is different from war joining. The latter likely requires some model of war diffusion and contagion. Since Bremer believed that big wars grow out of small wars, this implies that an explanation of big wars required a two-fold explanation, one for the initial onset of the war and a second for why they spread.

The question of whether "big wars" are so different that they require a separate theory has been a subject of debate within the literature. Midlarsky (1990) maintains that such wars are different and have causes separate from "little wars." Thompson (1990) argues that certain kinds of big war—global wars for system leadership—have causes different from other kinds of wars. Each of these proponents believe that big wars are different, but they do not fully agree on which wars should be considered "big wars," and they clearly disagree on the unique causes associated with these wars. Bueno de Mesquita (1990) takes the position that a single theory can account for both big and little wars. For him, a single set of variables can account for both kinds of wars.

Before size can be used as a criterion for distinguishing wars, the question of what constitutes a "big war" must be analytically clarified. Most of the authors think of the two world wars as "big wars" and two-party wars as "little wars." In prior research (Valeriano and Vasquez 2010) we have defined "big" and "little" based on the number of belligerent dyads (e.g., 2 vs. 1, 3 vs. 1, and so forth). Richardson makes a similar calculation. On this basis, there are few "very big" wars; only six wars out of a total 28 multiparty wars have more than seven dyadic pairings.

However, both the 1914 war and the 1939 war arose out of two-party wars that spread quickly. This

raises the analytical question of at what stage does one classify a war: at the very beginning (one day to five days) or over the entire course of the war? If one wants to create a classification of war based on distinguishing the underlying causes of the war, one might favor the former on the supposition that the subsequent spread of the war is a function of the dynamics of the war and not the initial causes. The alternative view is that the subsequent spread of the war is already embedded in the conditions that precede the war. In other words, given the same dynamics of war fighting, some wars will spread and others will not. From this perspective, whether the war spreads is inherent in the underlying conditions that precede the war and not in the conditions that emerge after war breaks out. Typically such conditions are captured by structural variables (like the hierarchical equilibrium model Midlarsky (1988) postulates) or by the nature of the networks states find themselves in prior to a war.

We take the position that wars should be classified on the basis of the entire course of the war (in terms of the number of participants) and not classified simply on the basis of the number of initial belligerents. Examining the entire course of the war makes it clearer that something is going on in the bigger wars that is fundamentally different from the dyadic road to war. In these larger wars, diffusion models seem to be relevant, which means that larger wars will at least have additional variables operating, if not entirely different variables. Even Altfeld and Bueno de Mesquita (1979, 93–94) in their trenchant analysis of war joining limit their sample to war joining to the first two months. After that, they believe the original decision to remain neutral can be altered by other variables, like "bandwagon effects."[1]

Finally, some of these questions are based on the notion that most wars that spread grow out of two-party wars. Bremer (1995) believed this, and this was the case of two world wars. However, our own investigation (Valeriano and Vasquez 2010) shows that a considerable number of these begin as multi-party wars. A total of 18 of the 28 multiparty wars in our dataset are multiparty from the start (first day). Four more wars spread by day three and two more by day five leaving only four wars that spread after the first five days of conflict (4 of 28).

Following Vasquez (1993, 71–72), we label two-party wars, *dyadic wars*. It is the typical war and should be the simplest to explain, especially from a historical point of view since there are only two foreign policies, sets of motives, and diplomatic interactions to examine. In science we should try to explain the simplest first, and then use the models and knowledge acquired from that study to inform us in investigating more complex phenomena. We label multiparty wars, *complex wars*. Because these wars are rarer we believe the factors giving rise to them are more complicated than those that give rise to dyadic wars. They can be considered complex because they may either have: (a) the same variables present that bring about dyadic wars, but also additional variables that perhaps interact with the original variables to make the war spread or (b) a totally different set of variables that rarely occur and are associated exclusively with "big" wars. The key point is that the causal sequence preceding these wars are different from dyadic wars, and therefore the wars should be seen as different types.

The rationale we have given to this point for using size is primarily theoretical; is there any empirical evidence that size matters? In a separate analysis (Valeriano and Vasquez 2010: Table 2) we find that the distinction does matter empirically. There are significant differences between the complex and dyadic war classification groups. Complex wars are more likely to have alliances prior to war onset (89% percent of complex wars compared to 57% of dyadic wars). Complex wars (71.4%) are also much more likely to be preceded by escalating rivalry behavior when compared to dyadic wars (39.2%). Overall, a power politics index demonstrates that complex wars (77.8%) are significantly more likely to exhibit power politics practices on the road to war (when compared to dyadic wars 31%). In all, 17 of 28 complex wars are territorial by our classification. Only 26 of the 51 dyadic wars are territorial in nature.

A second criterion by which we classify wars is the issues that give rise to them. We select this criterion because we think what states fight over is theoretically significant and that some issues, like territorial disputes, are more war prone than others (Vasquez and Henehan 2001, see Vasquez and Valeriano 2009 for a review). One of the few explanations of war that emphasizes issues is the territorial explanation of war (Vasquez 1993, chap. 4). According to the explanation, part of the reason for this is that human territoriality encourages the establishment of borders through aggressive displays. All other factors being equal, this means that two neighbors

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[1]Now some might argue that a good theory of diffusion should be able to explain both why wars diffuse and others do not, so that there is no need to distinguish wars by size. This is only partially true, because the diffusion explanations in the literature (like that of Siverson and Starr, 1991) only tell us the likelihood of war diffusing *once* war breaks out, not before.

have a higher probability of going to war than any other two states if their borders have not been mutually accepted. If this is true, then one of the typical wars in history should be between neighbors fighting over territory. While many of these wars can be over the specific demarcation of the boundary, they can also be over large stretches of land.

The territorial explanation of war maintains that there is something about territory that makes states more willing to go to war. The factor that makes humans sensitive toward territory and more conflict prone is treated as exogenous, especially since a complete answer would require insights from the life sciences. The task for international relations as a field is to determine if it is true that territory is one of the major sources of war and how territorial disputes politically lead states to war. To test the territorial explanation of war, it is necessary to see just how many wars are over territory, and to do that it is necessary to identify and classify them. At minimum, we want to distinguish territorial wars from wars fought over other (nonterritorial) issues.[2]

A third criterion on which we classify wars is the behavior of states that precedes wars. We assume that one of the major causes of war derives from how states treat each other. The steps-to-war explanation assumes that it is not just that certain issues or grievances, like territorial issues, produce war, but how they are handled that is critical. Wars arise not only because of goals that are worth fighting over, but because certain processes that states engage in make war likely.

The steps-to-war explanation is useful because it specifies in detail what those processes are (see Vasquez 1993, chap. 5). It maintains that the resort to power politics among equals to coerce the other side will lead to a set of escalatory actions that increase the likelihood of war. Examining realist prescriptions, the steps-to-war explanation posits that states responding to security issues by increasing their power through the making of alliances and the building up of their military. These policies instead of producing security lead to the making of counteralliances and arms races, resulting in a classic security dilemma. The explanation also posits that in bargaining over salient issues, states will resort to realpolitik tactics, which

tend to escalate in their severity across crises. Each of these practices can be seen as steps to war.

There is some evidence to indicate that power politics practices increase the probability that any MID will escalate to war (see Senese and Vasquez 2008). Valeriano (2003) also argues that the practices of power politics, specifically politically relevant alliances, mutual military buildups, rivalry linkages, and grand strategy form a series of steps to rivalry. These factors are seen as jointly sufficient conditions for the development of rivalry.

These studies suggest that wars can be usefully classified by the degree to which belligerents have employed various power politics practices before the war. These would include the making of alliances, involvement in repeated disputes to form a rivalry, and engaging in an arms race. The reliance on these realist practices signify a different type of war where the actors resort to a specific strategic orientation prior to the conflict and hence a different causal path to war. It is our contention that these realist strategies are paths toward war, not toward peace.

Since this particular behavioral profile is posited as increasing the likelihood of war, we would expect it to be present before many wars.[3] However, power politics is only one (of presumably several factors) that increases the probability of war. Since it is not a necessary condition of war, it follows, that wars can arise even in the absence of power politics. These wars would be different and the classification identifies them as such, even though they may be infrequent. We now move to an empirical investigation of the classification system.

The Classification System

Typologies and taxonomies are often discussed in the field, yet few truly try to delineate the property space under investigation (see Bailey 1994). This research represents an effort to classify wars so as to provide ultimately an inventory of the different paths, sequences, and interactions on the road to war (George and

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[2]This is not to deny some territorial disputes are more war prone than others. Huth (1996) finds that territory involving ethnic questions is the most conflict prone, followed by strategic territory. Hensel et al. (2008) find that salient territorial claims (like homeland territory) are more conflict-prone than non-salient claims (like colonial territory) Nonetheless, as a class we argue that territorial MIDs are more war prone than non-territorial MIDs (for evidence, see Senese and Vasquez 2008).

[3]The steps-to-war explanation maintains that any issue handled by the use of power politics will increase the probability of war. Does this mean that issues themselves are relatively unimportant and that process is the key? No, because states that have territorial disagreements are more likely to resort to power politics and are less likely to resort to power politics to handle *other* issues. For some evidence that the effect of power politics varies by issue, see Senese and Vasquez (2008, chaps. 5–6). The theoretical rationale regarding power politics coupled with this limited evidence warrants including power politics as a third criterion for classifying wars.

Bennett 2005, 233, 236). By outlining our expectations regarding the interstate wars in the post-Napoleonic system, we will be able to help other researchers specify the domains of inquiry in their analyses.

George and Bennett (2005, 234) suggest the benefit of a typology is to facilitate cross-case comparisons. Our goal is broader; we hope to get scholars to consider the theoretical nature of the sample under consideration before research is conducted. As Bailey (1994, 13), notes classification provides for the inventory and management of theoretical types so that a researcher can figure out which types are available for investigation. Scholars must move beyond the assumption that the theoretically appropriate sample in most instances is all interstate wars.

The analysis will combine the three criteria of size, issue, and power politics behavior to provide a classification based on the ordering principle in Table 1. The ordering principle reflects what we believe *ex ante* to be the relative potency of each of the variables. First, we think that dyadic wars are going to be most dissimilar from complex wars. Complex wars are more apt to start over territorial grievances and more apt to attract the use of power politics. Secondly, territorial wars are more likely to be associated with the use of power politics than are nonterritorial wars.

The size of wars, the issues that give rise to them, and the use of power politics embody different paths to war. In the table we depict eight basic genotypes. Type I, for example, is a dyadic war which begins with a territorial dispute and comes to war with the use of power politics. Conversely, Type VII is a complex war which begins with a nonterritorial dispute and also comes to war with the use of power politics. The fact that it is a complex war indicates different causal processes at work (namely, diffusion processes) as does the fact that it arises out of a nonterritorial issue. The eight genotypes also specify the domain of the steps-to-war explanation (along with the concomitant territorial explanation of war). Types I, II, III, V, VI, and VII can be explained by this theory, while Types IV and VIII are beyond its domain.

A theoretical analysis of types of wars is important for clarifying conceptual distinctions and delineating assumptions about causal processes. The real utility of a classification, however, is whether it can guide empirical research. Can it be applied to an existing list of interstate wars so that the resulting classification is mutually exclusive and logically exhaustive—the standard criteria for assessing scientific typologies (Bailey 1994, 3)? The next three sections will classify each of the 79 interstates wars in the Correlates of War

data (Sarkees 2000)[4] according to our three criteria. Each section will begin with a research design that presents the operational indicators for the criterion in question and end with the findings.

Dyadic versus Complex Wars

Table 2 classifies the 79 wars and reports the number of cases in each category. There are eight genotypes of war based on the size of the war, the issues that give rise to them, and the behavioral practices prior to the war. We begin by discussing dyadic and complex wars. A war is operationally defined as a complex war if it has more than two parties engaged in conflict.

Findings

From 1816 to 1997, we note that 64.6% (51) of the wars are dyadic and 35.4% (28) are complex. An analysis of the data in the table confirms Richardson's (1960, 259) hypothesis that multiparty wars are rarer than two-party wars. As with Richardson, we would expect to find few complex wars that have more than two parties versus one or three versus one. Of the 79 wars, only 12 include more than four participants. The rarest wars are, of course, world wars, and there are only two in the post-Napoleonic period.

How might complex wars differ from dyadic wars in ways that require a different explanation? This was a major concern of Bremer (1995) who insisted on treating "joiners" to an ongoing war separately. In one of the few models of world war, Vasquez (1993, chap. 7) argues that three basic factors make wars spread: (1) an alliance with one of the originators of the war, (2) being contiguous with an originator, and (3) being a rival of one of the originators. It is theorized that each of these factors are far from sufficient for spreading a war, but that states that have these characteristics have a higher probability of joining an ongoing war, either through their own choice or by being attacked, than states that do not have these characteristics.

Early work on war diffusion provides evidence that alliances are a mechanism associated with the spread of war (Siverson and Starr 1991) or with big "Great Power" wars (Levy 1981, 598). More recent work, consistent with this hypothesis, is Leeds, Long, and Mitchell (2000), which shows states are reliable allies and will go to war (most of the time), if the conditions recorded in a treaty requiring them to go to

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[4]In these data an interstate war must have at least 1,000 battle deaths between legally recognized nation-states.

TABLE 1 Classification System of War by Genotype

Dyadic Wars				Complex Wars			
Territorial		Nonterritorial		Territorial		Nonterritorial	
Power Politics (Type I)	Nonpower Politics (Type II)	Power Politics (Type III)	Nonpower Politics (Type IV)	Power Politics (Type V)	Nonpower Politics (Type VI)	Power Politics (Type VII)	Nonpower Politics (Type VIII)

war are met. The end result, as Leeds (2005) shows, is that if defense pacts fail to "deter" MIDs and they escalate to war, then allies are apt to be drawn in because they are reliable allies, thereby making wars expand. Likewise, there is evidence that territorial contiguity encourages the spread of war and that a combination of territorial contiguity and alliances with belligerents further increases the likelihood of a war spreading (Siverson and Starr 1991). Unlike the work on alliances and contiguity, there have been no major statistical studies on rivalry and the spread of war.

What is theoretically interesting about all of these factors is that they are embedded in the system and in the relations of states before the outbreak of the initial war. The point here is not to argue in favor of this particular explanation of the spread of wars, but simply to point out that it presents an explanation that is different in kind from those typically given of dyadic war. As a field we do know much about complex wars, but because they appear to involve processes of contagion and diffusion, they are definitively a different type, thus requiring a different theoretical explanation.

Territorial versus Nonterritorial Wars

To identify territorial wars one must have some indicator available in existing data for the issues that might have given rise to a war. Wars of course have a way of including multiple issues, especially once they get started. Issues do not remain the same and actors who intervene often bring in new issues. These facts have prevented the rigorous collection of data on the issues that give rise to war.

Our approach is to try to be more concrete. We do not look at war aims, but rather the issue that gives rise to the original militarized interstate dispute (crisis) that escalates to a war.[5] There are several

advantages to this approach, not the least of which is the availability of data that have become fairly conventional—(the Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID 3.02) data of the Correlates of War project, see Ghosn, Palmer, and Bremer 2004). The MID data set purports to record every instance of the threat or use of force between legally recognized states from 1816 through 2001. MIDs typically have been coded on the basis of official claims that give rise to attempts to revise the status quo with the threat or use of force. These claims are coded on the basis of statements made before the MID, so the issue is fixed in time and kept separate from those issues that emerge after the war has started. The data are then coded in terms of whether the revision being sought is over territory, attempts to change the existing regime; or a disagreement over general foreign policy questions, such as prohibiting slave trading in the nineteenth century. The revision type code of the MID will be one of the indicators we use to classify wars.

A potential validity problem with using the MID that gives rise to a war is that the dispute in question may not embody the "real" underlying issue; the MID may escalate to war because the underlying hostility produced by previous disputes made things get out of control in this dispute. To see if this might be a case we use a variable created by Leskiw (see Vasquez and Leskiw 2001) that examines all the MIDs between these two parties to see whether their relations have been dominated primarily by territorial disputes, policy, regime, or "other" disputes. This variable is called "issue dominance" and provides an indicator of the issue dominating the relations of any dyad over time. Here we use the moving average of the "issuedom" variable to determine the modal type of MID over which the pair of states have contended over (up to and including the MID that escalates to war).[6]

[5]Examining war aims might be an interesting and useful alternate way to operationalize the concept of issues at stake in wars, but there are no such data, so we look at the revision being sought in the originating MID.

[6]For dyadic wars, measuring issue dominance is fairly straightforward, since only one pair of states needs to be examined. For complex wars, there are multiple issue dominance scores, one for each dyad in the war. See the discussion below on power politics wars for how we aggregate multiple dyads.

TABLE 2   Classification of Interstate War

War #	Name	Year	Complex	PPScore	Revision Type	Issue_Dom
Type I: Dyadic Territorial/Power Politics, N = 11						
85	Russo-Japanese	1904	0	3	1	1
121	Manchurian	1931	0	3	1	2
142	Russo-Finnish	1939	0	3	1	1
160	Assam (Sino-Indian)	1962	0	3	1	1
172	Israeli-Egyptian	1969	0	3	1	1
199	Iran-Iraq	1980	0	3	1	1
130	Sino-Japanese	1937	0	5	1	2
133	Changkufeng	1938	0	5	1	2
166	Second Kashmir	1965	0	5	1	1
205	Israel-Syria (Lebanon)*	1982	0	3	2	1
178	Bangladesh*	1971	0	3	3	1
Type II: Dyadic Territorial/Nonpower Politics, N = 20						
19	La Plata	1851	0	0	1	1
34	Italo-Roman	1860	0	0	1	1
37	Italo-Sicilian	1860	0	0	1	1
76	Greco-Turkish	1897	0	0	1	1
109	Russo-Polish	1919	0	0	1	1
115	Greco-Turkish	1919	0	0	1	1
117	Lithuanian-Polish	1920	0	0	1	1
125	Saudi-Yemeni	1934	0	0	1	1
147	First Kashmir	1948	0	0	1	1
72	Franco-Thai	1893	0	1	1	1
127	Italo-Ethiopian	1935	0	1	1	1
145	Franco-Thai	1940	0	1	1	1
202	Falklands	1982	0	1	1	5
7	Mexican-American	1846	0	2	1	1
79	Spanish-American	1898	0	2	1	2
116	Franco-Turkish	1919	0	2	1	2
124	Chaco	1932	0	2	1	1
193	Sino-Vietnamese*	1979	0	1	2	5
67	Sino-French*	1884	0	0	2	5
175	Football**	1969	0	1	4	12
Type III: Dyadic Nonterritorial/Power Politics, N = 3						
118	Sino-Soviet	1929	0	3	0	2
4	Russo-Turkish	1828	0	3	2	2
83	Sino-Russian	1900	0	3	2	2
Type IV: Dyadic Nonterritorial/Nonpower Politics, N = 17						
1	Franco-Spanish	1823	0	0	2	2
31	Spanish-Moroccan	1859	0	0	2	2
65	Anglo-Egyptian	1882	0	0	2	2
70	Second Central American	1885	0	0	2	7
13	First Schleswig-Holstein	1848	0	1	2	2
25	Anglo-Persian	1856	0	1	2	2
61	Russo-Turkish	1877	0	1	2	2
94	Spanish-Moroccan	1909	0	1	2	2
97	Italo-Turkish	1911	0	1	2	2
184	Turco-Cypriot	1974	0	1	2	2
208	Sino-Vietnamese	1987	0	1	2	2
154	Russo-Hungarian	1956	0	1	3	3
40	Franco-Mexican	1862	0	1	3	3

TABLE 2 (Continued)

War #	Name	Year	Complex	PPScore	Revision Type	Issue_Dom
60	First Central American	1876	0	0	3	3
43	Ecuadorian-Colombian	1863	0	2	3	3
73	Sino-Japanese	1894	0	2	3	2
187	Vietnamese-Cambodian	1975	0	2	3	7
Type V: Complex Territorial/Power Politics, N = 15						
10	Austro-Sardinian	1848	1	3	1	6
28	Italian Unification	1859	1	3	1	2
55	Seven Weeks	1866	1	3	1	1
100	First Balkan	1912	1	3	1	1
103	Second Balkan	1913	1	3	1	1
136	Nomohan	1939	1	3	1	2
151	Korean	1950	1	3	1	2
169	Six Day	1967	1	3	1	1
181	Yom Kippur	1973	1	3	1	1
189	Ethiopian-Somalian	1977	1	3	1	1
190	Ugandan-Tanzanian	1978	1	3	1	1
211	Gulf War	1990	1	3	1	2
139	World War II	1939	1	5	1	2
52	Spanish-Chilean**	1865	1	3	4	4
58	Franco-Prussian**	1870	1	3	4	2
Type VI: Complex Territorial/Nonpower Politics, N = 4						
112	Hungarian	1919	1	0	1	1
46	Second Schleswig-Holstein	1864	1	1	1	5
64	Pacific	1879	1	1	1	1
148	Palestine	1948	1	1	1	1
Type VII: Complex Nonterritorial/Power Politics, N = 6						
16	Roman Republic	1849	1	3	2	2
22	Crimean	1853	1	3	2	2
82	Boxer Rebellion	1900	1	3	2	2
157	Sinai	1956	1	3	2	2
106	World War I	1914	1	5	2	2
163	Vietnamese	1965	1	3	3	3
Type VIII: Complex Nonterritorial/Nonpower Politics, N = 3						
91	Fourth Central American	1907	1	0	0	0
88	Third Central American	1906	1	0	3	3
49	Lopez**	1864	1	1	4	2

*This broader list of wars considers some wars as territorial but they do not originate out of a territorial MID. These wars are listed either as territorial, policy, or regime based on the issue dominance measure. Unless otherwise noted these wars are not included in statistical calculations.

**Denotes wars listed as 'other' according to their revision type.

Revision type and Issue Dominance codes: 1 = Territory, 2 = Policy, 3 = Regime, 4 = Other, 5 = Territory and Policy, 6 = Territory and Regime, 7 = Policy and Regime, 8 = Territory and Other, 9 = Policy and Other, 12 = Regime and Other

The main problem in using revision type to code wars is that there may be wars that occur because of a long tension over territorial disputes even if the MID at hand is not over territory. An example of this is the 1971 Bangladesh War. This war does not involve a preexisting territorial claim, but there is little doubt that Indian intervention and the war occur because of the Indian-Pakistani rivalry over Kashmir (see Ganguly 2001, chap. 3). The (moving average of the) Issue Dominance variable is meant to tap this sort of case by investigating if territorial disputes dominated previous relations.[7]

[7]Only four cases are affected by this procedure. The one remaining difficult in coding the issues over which wars are fought is that four of the wars in the data set have a MID that is coded as "4" (other). These have been discussed in previous papers and three of these cases (the Football War, the Franco-Prussian War, and the Spanish-Chilean War) have been found to have strong territorial elements (see Vasquez and Henehan 2001, fn 9, 129). So, we have classified these as territorial, but have also asterisked them and excluded them from the data analysis.

Findings

Table 2 lists the territorial wars according to the revision type of the MID that escalates to war, grouping them according to their genotype. Types I, II, V, and VI are the territorial wars under our classification system. The table identifies, on the basis of this indicator, 43 of 79 of the interstate wars that occur from 1816 through 1997 as territorial. This makes territorial wars the majority of wars that have occurred (54.4%). Within these 43 territorial wars, 26 are dyadic and 17 are complex.[8]

The territorial wars can also be grouped into some well-known historical categories. A number of the territorial wars are associated with the formation or unification of new states. These include the wars of Italian Unification (four wars), German Unification (three wars, plus the First Schleswig-Holstein War), the formation of Balkan states out of the Ottoman Empire (four wars), the formation of modern Israel (five wars) and India-Pakistan (three wars).

Several other wars are wars over adjacent territory of established states. These typically involve neighbors fighting with subsequent interventions by other neighbors or major states. These wars include the Hungarian War of 1919, the War of the Pacific, Ethiopian-Somalian, the Persian Gulf War, the Nomohan War, and the start of World War II (Germany-Poland). The Ugandan-Tanzanian War is similar to these other wars, but has the additional element of at least one side objecting to the head of the regime of the other as well as territorial ambitions. Lastly, the Korean War is a territorial war where one side is using force to unite with the other. The latter is similar to the Vietnam War, although Vietnam is coded as a regime war. In both of these last cases the regime issues (at least in part) seemed to prompt major state intervention. Territorial wars have been separated out because it is believed that they can be explained in terms of a territorial theory of war. These cases are the natural domain of the territorial explanation of war both in terms of its explanatory power and the sample upon which it should be tested. It is, therefore, interesting to see just how many of the interstate wars arise out of territorial disputes between neighbors, as the territorial explanation of war posits (Vasquez, 1993, 140–41, 310).

This question is theoretically significant because according to Vasquez (1993, 140–41) the underlying logic of the territorial explanation of war maintains that human collectivities are prone to use aggressive displays to mark and defend their territory. It follows from this assumption that neighboring states will use aggressive displays to establish boundaries where they meet. If this is the case, wars between neighbors over territory should be a common form of warfare within history, even though other factors can also increase the probability of war. Although several studies have shown that there are many territorial wars, no one has specifically looked at the existing 79 interstate wars in the Correlates of War data to see just how common territorial wars between neighbors are.

We already know from the analysis in the first section that dyadic wars greatly outnumber complex wars and an analysis of contiguity[9] shows that wars that start with neighbors greatly predominate over wars that start between nonneighbors (66 vs. 13 or 83.5%). How many of the dyadic wars are between neighbors? The answer is that 39 of the 51 dyadic wars (76.5%) are between neighbors, quite a high number.[10] The crucial question for the territorial explanation of war is how many of these dyadic wars between neighbors arise from territorial disputes. Table 3 rank orders the frequency of dyadic wars by the type of issue associated with them and whether they are fought by neighbors.[11] Using the precise revision type variable as an indicator of the type of issue, it can be seen in the table that territorial wars between neighbors are the highest ranked type of war (18 of 51 or 35.3%). Policy wars come in second with 13 wars (25.5%) and regime wars a distant third.[12] This finding demonstrates that territorial wars between neighbors to be the modal type of interstate war, which is highly consistent with the theoretical expectation of the territorial explanation of war that the typical war is a dyadic war between neighbors over territory.

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[8]The issue dominance indicator adds four more territorial wars, making the number of territorial wars 47 (59.5%). Note the summation of territorial wars excludes the wars in Table 2 with one or two asterisks.

[9]Contiguity is measured as adjacent by land or by sea up to 150 miles. For complex wars, the presence of any contiguous dyad that goes to war on the first day of the war is taken as a war *starting* between neighbors.

[10]Interestingly, the percentage of complex wars that *start* between neighbors is even higher—only one of 28 (the Spanish-Chilean War) does not start in this way.

[11]Table 3 is based on 37 cases. The two dyadic wars between neighbors—the Lopez War and the Football War—that are coded as ''other'' are excluded.

[12]If the broader list of territorial wars (which add four wars based on issue dom) is used, then there are 22 territorial wars of 38 wars between neighbors (43.1% of 51 dyadic wars) with policy reduced to 10 wars (19.6%). The broader list adds the four asterisked wars listed in Table 2. Three of these reduce the policy list and one reduces the regime list. The fifth, the Football War, which is coded as ''other'' is excluded.

TABLE 3   Rank Order of Dyadic Wars between
           Neighbors by Revision Type

# Wars	Issue	% Dyadic (51)
18	Territory	35.3
13	Policy	25.5
6	Regime	11.8

51 dyadic wars of which 37 are between neighbors

Table 4 lists the policy wars clustered by their genotype. They constitute 24.1% of the interstate wars (19 of 79),[13] fewer than territorial wars, even though policy MIDs constitute about half of all MIDs and territorial only around one-third (see Vasquez and Henehan 2001, 127–28). This calculation includes the brief 1929 Sino-Soviet war since the moving average of the issue dominance variable shows its previous MIDs dominated by policy disputes (even though the MID that actually escalates to war is coded (0) nonapplicable).[14]

As with territorial wars, policy wars are classified as a type because it is hypothesized that policy wars have a separate causal path. This hypothesis can be addressed by seeing what these wars have in common. A large number deal with colonial questions, which means that a theory of imperialism is most relevant here. Put another way, a theory of war derived from an imperialist perspective would find these wars as its natural domain. Examples of such wars include the Anglo-Persian War of 1856, the Boxer Rebellion, and the Anglo-Egyptian War of 1882. Future policy wars might include questions regarding support of terrorist organizations.

Complex policy wars also seem to have more complicated processes at work than the dyadic policy wars. Certainly, this is the case with the intervention by the imperial powers to put down the Boxer Rebellion. This is even more the case with the two very large wars classified as Type VII wars—World War I[15] and the Crimean War. Contagion plays an important role in these wars and, in each, alliance commitments serve as a mechanism for spreading the war. Because these wars involve rarer causal conditions, it is also expected that they would be less frequent than dyadic wars. This is borne out: only five of the 20 policy wars (25%) are complex.

What is most informative about the listing of policy wars is that it answers the question of whether there is a policy issue that is highly war prone. Of the three revision type codes in the MID data—territorial, policy, regime—policy is the broadest and most elastic. The listing suggests that policy issues that go to war seem to be confined to questions of colonialism and imperialism (and rebellion against this).

Table 5 lists the regime wars. This is the smallest category with only nine wars (of 79) and constituting only 11.4% of all the interstate wars fought from 1816 through 1997.[16] Included in this list are classic wars fought over attempts to change the regime of a country, such as the 1956 Russo-Hungarian War, the 1965 Vietnam War, and the 1862 Franco-Mexican War.[17] All of the regime wars require a different sort of explanation than territorial wars. It is interesting to note that two of the wars on this list relate to an ideological struggle between major rivals in the Cold War.

This perusal of regime wars suggests that some broader theory of imperialism based on political rather than economic considerations might provide the best theoretical perspective on these wars. Our main concern in this analysis is simply to show that they are different from the territorial wars in their origins and underlying causes. Another significant aspect of regime wars is that they have very low scores on the use of power politics prior to the war. This is the third dimension on which we classify wars, and it is to that which we now turn.

Power Politics Wars

We have collected data on several power politics practices used by states before they go to war—the making of politically relevant alliances, participating

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[13]This excludes the three wars— (Lebanon-1982, Sino-French-1884, Sino-Vietnamese-1979)—that have territorial MIDs dominating previous relations and are classified as such even though the actual MID that escalates to war is over policy. If these are included then there are 22 policy wars out of 79 (27.8%).

[14]This dispute involves a Chinese attempt to wrest control of the Chinese Eastern Railway and the Soviet use of troops to restore their control. It thus concerns a policy question, even though the MID is coded as nonapplicable.

[15]World War I is a war whose originating dyad—Austria-Hungary-Serbia—has extensive territorial elements brought to the fore by the Serbian nationalists who assassinate the Archduke. Concerns about the rising power of Serbia and its desire to unify with Southern Slavs lead Austria-Hungry to fear any territorial claims made by Serbia (see: Valeriano 2003, chap. 9; Williamson 1991, 8–9, 28).

[16]This excludes the Bangladesh War since it has been classified as a territorial war based on issue dominance.

[17]The nine regime wars include the related Fourth Central American War (1906) between Nicaragua and Honduras, which has a nonapplicable code for revision type. The Lopez War, which is coded as ''other,'' is also placed in this category making for a total of 10 regime wars (12.7%).

TABLE 4   Policy Wars

War #	War	Year	Complex	Revision Type	Issue_Dom
Type III: Dyadic Nonterritorial/Power Politics, N = 3					
4	Russo-Turkish	1828	0	2	2
83	Sino-Russian	1900	0	2	2
118	Sino-Soviet*	1929	0	0	2
Type IV: Dyadic Nonterritorial/Nonpower Politics, N = 11					
1	Franco-Spanish	1823	0	2	2
13	First Schleswig-Holstein	1848	0	2	2
25	Anglo-Persian	1856	0	2	2
31	Spanish-Moroccan	1859	0	2	2
61	Russo-Turkish	1877	0	2	2
65	Anglo-Egyptian	1882	0	2	2
94	Spanish-Moroccan	1909	0	2	2
97	Italo-Turkish	1911	0	2	2
184	Turco-Cypriot	1974	0	2	2
208	Sino-Vietnamese	1987	0	2	2
70	Second Central American	1885	0	2	7
Type VII: Complex Nonterritorial/Power Politics, N = 5					
16	Roman Republic	1849	1	2	2
22	Crimean	1853	1	2	2
82	Boxer Rebellion	1900	1	2	2
106	World War I	1914	1	2	2
157	Sinai	1956	1	2	2

*The 1929 Sino-Soviet War is considered a policy war because of the issuedom variable, even though the revision type of the MID that escalates to war has no issue code (0.00). Unless otherwise stated this war is not included in statistical calculations.

in a series of recurring crises (rivalry), and engaging in arms races.[18] Each of these measures are taken from other data sets so we will give only a brief description here of each indicator. The three indicators are then combined into a 5-point index intended to measure the extent to which a war is preceded by the use of various power politics practices. If the war receives a score of three or more out of five (indicating that at least two of the power politics practices are used), it is coded as a power politics war.

In realist theory, there are two classic ways of increasing power—to make an alliance and to build up one's military. We look at whether states involved in a dispute have engaged in one or both of these practices. If one or more belligerents in a war has an outside, politically relevant alliance (Senese and Vasquez 2008, chap. 2), the case is coded as 1, otherwise 0.[19] If both sides build up their military, it can result in an arms race. Since there are now data on arms races for both major and minor states, we

use Sample's (2002) dichotomous measure of the presence of an arms race prior to a war as our second indicator of the use of power politics.

To get at rivalry we take a two-fold procedure. First, we use Diehl and Goertz's (2000, 44–45) operational definition of rivalry to distinguish when states are in isolated conflicts (one to two disputes), proto-rivalries (three to five disputes), and enduring rivalries (six or more disputes in roughly 20 years), with the last two categories being seen as rivals. We record the actual rivalry phase a particular dyad finds itself in at the time a war starts.

Second, we develop a measure of whether rivals escalate their interactions across MIDs. This measure, which we call escalating rivalries, is based on an index that requires rivalries to engage in repeating disputes that escalate in hostility and severity across MIDs (Valeriano 2006). This measure is meant to capture precisely the idea within the steps-to-war explanation that nation-states use escalatory realpolitik tactics across crises if they fail to attain their goal in the previous crisis. It cannot be assumed that states in a proto- or enduring rivalry automatically escalate their tactics across MIDs. There may be some pairs of states that do not fully utilize all the escalatory aspects of the power politics path to rivalry. Valeriano (2003, chap. 8)

[18]This operational definition is confined to three practices and as such does not measure all realpolitik techniques.

[19]Politically relevant alliances are alliances that include either a major state, a minor state adjacent to a participant in a MID or in the same region as a participant. The alliance data are based on Gibler and Sarkees (2004).

TABLE 5 Regime Wars

War #	War	Year	Complex	Revision Type
Type IV: Dyadic Nonterritorial/Nonpower Politics, N = 6				
73	Sino-Japanese	1894	0	3
40	Franco-Mexican	1862	0	3
43	Ecuadorian-Colombian	1863	0	3
60	First Central American	1876	0	3
154	Russo-Hungarian	1956	0	3
187	Vietnamese-Cambodian	1975	0	3
Type VII: Complex Nonterritorial/Power Politics, N = 1				
163	Vietnamese	1965	1	3
Type VIII: Complex Nonterritorial/Nonpower Politics, N = 3				
88	Third Central American	1906	1	3
91	Fourth Central American*	1907	1	0
49	Lopez*	1864	1	4

*Wars that are considered regime wars, but that do not originate out of a regime MID. Unless otherwise stated these wars are not included in statistical calculations.

shows that although this is the most common path, the theory does not explain all possible cases of rivalry.

To examine whether rivals utilize escalating tactics during the course of the rivalry, the rival is given a score of one if either the proto- or enduring rivalry shows a pattern of increased dispute severity before the onset of the war in question. Severity is taken from Diehl and Goertz basic rivalry-level variable (see Diehl and Goertz 2000, Appendix B). If a proto-rivalry shows an increased severity from the time period between dispute one to three, it is coded as an escalatory rivalry. If an enduring rivalry shows an increased severity level from the time period between dispute one and six, it is coded as an escalating rivalry.

These three indicators are combined into a Power Politics Score with 0 indicating no power politics practices are present and 5 when all three are present. Escalating rivalries and arms races are weighted more heavily (given a weight of two) than outside politically relevant alliances on the supposition that they might have a greater impact on the probability of war (see Senese and Vasquez 2008, chaps. 5–6 for some evidence on this).[20]

One problem in coding the complex wars in terms of the above indicators is that individual dyads can have different scores on the various components we consider power politics behavior. For example,

World War II starts as a war between Poland and Germany, but it includes many other joiners. The originators and the joiners do not always engage in the same power politics practices—some may be enduring rivalries and be engaged in arms races and others not. How can we reach a single aggregated score of the entire war?

This question and the problem of coding multiparty wars have been discussed at length in Valeriano and Vasquez's (2010) analysis of complex wars. Suffice it to say here when joining dyads have discrepant codes we need a way of determining whether there are key joiners that should govern the aggregated code or whether all originators and joiners should be treated equally. Our basic rule is that when joiners change the fundamental character of a war, then the joiners who do that should have their codes reflected in the overall classification of the war. We assume that when major states intervene they change the character of the war. Clearly, the entry of Great Britain and France dramatically changed the 1939 war between Germany and Poland, as did the intervention of the United States in the 1950 Korean War and the subsequent intervention of China.[21] Hence, the codes of major states are given precedence over those of minor states in the

[20]The formula is: Power Politics Score (PPScore) = [(Escalating Rivalry ×2) + (Outside Ally ×1) + (Arms Race ×2)].

[21]Without these major states, these wars would be seen in history as very different from how they are seen today. Thus, the rule on major states has a certain face validity.

aggregated measure. For each of the individual indicators of having an outside alliance, rivalry, escalating rivalry, and arms race: (a) the highest code for the major-major dyad that is an originator is used, if there is no major-major originator, then (b) the highest code of the major-major joiner is used so long as this major state dyad enters the war within the first two years, (c) if there is no major-major dyad, then the highest code of major-minor originator is used and if none the minor-minor originator. The highest codes are utilized in order to see if these factors are "ever" present prior to the war in the dyads that are seen as most important for the origination or expansion of the war. Likewise, to determine the aggregate Power Politics Score for a complex war, the same rules are followed.

Some may object to a procedure that weighs major states as key players. Therefore, we also used a more straightforward procedure that examines whether a given power politics practice was ever used by any of the dyads that entered in the first three days. The results using this simpler measure are the same as those reported below with the exception of the Korean War, which would not be considered a power politics war until China's intervention four months later. For all the other cases the results are exactly the same because by the third day any major state that would have affected the coding had already entered.[22]

Findings

Using the Power Politics Score, we find in Table 6 that 35 of the 79 wars (44.3%) are power politics wars. This means that typical power politics techniques like alliance making and mutual military build-ups, as well as escalating hostility across disputes are utilized in these wars. The idea that force and military might should be used to counter a rival is a typical example of power politics, and we believe this may be the most precise measure of power politics wars developed to date.

Only five of the wars reach the highest scores, indicating that they use the full gamut of power politics strategies available. We can also see from Table 6 that 22 of the 43 territorial wars (51.2%) are

power politics wars. It is also of note that eight of the 21 (38.1%) policy wars are power politics wars. The wars with a score of five include World War I and World War II and three dyadic wars—the 1937 Sino-Japanese War, the 1939 Changkufeng War, and the Second Kashmir War (1965). These power politics wars represent a common path to war, especially between equal states, as identified by Vasquez (1993, 7). Lastly, only one of the nine (11.1%) regime wars are power politics wars.[23]

These findings show that some wars are more apt to be brought about by the use of power politics whereas others are not. In addition, it also seems to be the case that power politics is more associated with some issues than others. Lastly, only a few wars are preceded by outside alliances, rivalry, *and* arms races, but when the complex wars are, they are world wars.

Discussion and Conclusion

The above classification system suggests that there are several fundamentally different types of war that scholars need to be aware of in their analyses. What are the most important types and what do they tell us that we did not know before? We will begin by discussing the territorial wars (Types I, II, and V). We then turn to the nonterritorial complex wars that utilized power politics (Type VII) and show how they are related to the complex territorial wars that utilize power politics (Type V). We conclude with a review of the wars that fall outside the domain of the territorial and steps-to-war explanations (IV and VIII).[24]

One of the main contributions of the typology is to distinguish the dyadic territorial wars (Type I and Type II) from the complex wars involving power politics, both those that arise from territorial grievances (Type V) and those that do not (VII). These wars are the major domain of the territorial explanation of war and the steps-to-war explanation. The dyadic wars can be explained in a fairly straightforward fashion by the territorial explanation of war. The complex wars are more within the purview of the steps-to-war explanation. The classification shows,

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[22]In fact only two complex wars have codes altered by joiners after day one—Korea, which has already been noted, and World War II. In World War II, the initial participants (Poland and Germany) have an arms race and outside allies. France enters on day 2 and adds an escalating rivalry.

[23]These percentages are all in the correct hypothesized direction: territorial (51%) policy (38%) regime (11%). A cross-tab of revision type and power politics produces a -.355 gamma significant at the .084 level (N = 73) with the two nonapplicable and four "other" cases dropped.

[24]The remaining types (III and VI) are more marginal and for reasons of space will be discussed in the footnotes.

TABLE 6   Power Politics Wars

War #	War	Year	Rival Phase	Rivalry	Complex	Escal Rival	Alliance	Arms	PPScore	Highest # MIDs
Type I: Dyadic Territorial/Power Politics, N = 11										
85	Russo-Japanese	1904	2	1	0	1	1	0	3	6
121	Manchurian	1931	3	1	0	1	1	0	3	24
142	Russo-Finnish	1939	1	0	0	0	1	1	3	2
160	Sino-Indian	1962	3	1	0	1	1	0	3	9
172	Israeli-Egyptian	1969	3	1	0	1	1	0	3	25
178	Bangladesh*	1971	3	1	0	1	1	0	3	31
199	Iran-Iraq	1980	3	1	0	1	1	0	3	18
205	Lebanon	1982	3	1	0	1	1	0	3	45
130	Sino-Japanese	1937	3	1	0	1	1	1	5	31
133	Changkufeng	1938	3	1	0	1	1	1	5	21
166	Second Kashmir	1965	3	1	0	1	1	1	5	23
Type III: Dyadic Nonterritorial/Power Politics, N = 3										
4	Russo-Turkish	1828	2	1	0	1	1	0	3	6
83	Sino-Russian	1900	3	1	0	1	1	0	3	8
118	Sino-Soviet**	1929	3	1	0	1	1	99	3	26
Type V: Complex Territorial/Power Politics, N = 15										
28	Italian Unification	1859	2	1	1	1	1	0	3	3
52	Spanish-Chilean*	1865	2	1	1	1	1	0	3	4
55	Seven Weeks'	1866	2	1	1	1	1	0	3	2
58	Franco-Prussian*	1870	3	1	1	1	1	0	3	7
10	Austro-Sardinian	1848	2	1	1	1	1	0	3	2
100	First Balkan	1912	3	1	1	1	1	0	3	14
103	Second Balkan	1913	2	1	1	1	1	0	3	1
136	Nomohan	1939	3	1	1	0	1	1	3	22
151	Korean	1950	2	1	1	1	1	0	3	8
169	Six Day	1967	3	1	1	1	1	0	3	32
181	Yom Kippur	1973	3	1	1	1	1	0	3	36
189	Ethiopian-Somali	1977	3	1	1	1	1	0	3	10
190	Ugandan-Tanzanian	1978	2	1	1	1	1	0	3	5
211	Gulf War	1990	3	1	1	1	1	0	3	9
139	World War II	1939	1	0	1	1	1	1	5	20
Type VII: Complex Nonterritorial/Power Politics, N = 6										
16	Roman Republic	1849	2	1	1	1	1	0	3	3
22	Crimean	1853	2	1	1	1	1	0	3	4
82	Boxer Rebellion	1900	3	1	1	1	1	0	3	9
157	Sinai	1956	3	1	1	1	1	0	3	8
163	Vietnamese	1965	2	1	1	1	1	0	3	4
106	World War I	1914	2	1	1	1	1	1	5	14

*Territorial wars under broader criteria.
**Policy war based on Issue Dom, Revision Type coded 0.00

theoretically, that the underlying causes of the latter are more complicated and involve different factors. A brief discussion of the key types will show how the classification can inform the study of interstate war.

In terms of specifying the domain of the main explanations of war guiding this inquiry—the territorial and steps-to-war explanations, the basic type of war of relevance is the dyadic territorial war, regardless if it resorts to the use of power politics (both Type I and II). The emphasis on human territoriality within this explanation suggests that humans are very prone to defending their own territory. Because borders and territorial contiguity are hypothesized to be a widespread source of war, it is expected that this type of war should be one of the most common. The territorial explanation of war maintains that,

unless neighbors have natural borders, there is a high probability of them having at least one war in their history to establish their boundaries. If this is true, this class of war can be seen as one of the most important in shaping history.

What are these territorial wars and how important have they been in history? The dyadic wars tend to be between neighbors for the purpose of demarking boundaries. The Mexican War (with the United States) and the India-Pakistan (1948, 1965) wars are examples of dyadic territorial wars that do not utilize power politics before the outbreak of the war (Type II). The Russo-Turkish War of 1828 and the Sino-Indian war of 1962 are examples of dyadic territorial wars that are preceded by power politics tactics (Type I).

Closely related to these wars are the complex territorial wars associated with power politics (Type V wars). One of the distinguishing features between these wars (and Types I and II) is that other neighbors are drawn in. In this regard, it is interesting to compare the India-Pakistan wars with the Arab-Israeli wars. Beginning with the 1948 Palestine War, these wars are generally multiparty. In the India-Pakistan case, there are no interested neighbors to be drawn in due to the mountainous geography and the absence of states that are allied with the belligerents. In the Middle East, the opposite is the case. Complex wars require other variables, usually alliances, to be fully explained.[25] The classification shows how the two basic types—dyadic and complex—are connected and why they are different theoretically.

The territorial explanation of war also provides insights on how to control such wars—settle your borders and you can have long stretches of peace. The creation of stable borders is the key policy implication flowing from this explanation. If territory is a major source of war, establishing stable borders is the basis of a territorial peace (see Gibler 2007) that (potentially) can eliminate this entire class of war, but not all wars since there are other causes of war. Looking at types of war, then, gives us a different perspective on both the past and what needs to be done in the present.

While all the territorial wars bear a similarity, so do the complex wars regardless of whether they arise from territorial disputes. Thus, very different from dyadic territorial wars are the complex wars that utilize power politics whether or not they arise from territorial disputes. Because both these types of wars involve interventions, they are more complicated and often involve mix motives that frequently link the territorial concerns of one set of actors with the positional and power politics concerns of other actors (typically major states). A comparison of the two world wars, which respectively involve Type VII and Type V wars, can illustrate the complexity. Type V wars, involving territory, fall within the purview of the territorial explanation of war; whereas, Type VII war, which arise from nonterritorial issues, fall within the purview of the more general steps-to-war explanation and other theories, like Thompson's (1990) theory on global wars. Both types can be compared because they are both complex wars that utilize power politics. Major states that are drawn into either type of these wars often have broader concerns with each other than just territorial grievances. As Colaresi, Rasler, and Thompson (2007, 164–69) point out, major states are typically involved in positional struggles, but as the steps-to-war explanation points out such struggles often emerge out of the hostility generated by a resort to power politics in the first place.

The territorial explanation of war maintains that there are two general paths to war—wars among contiguous neighbors over territory and wars between nonneighbors that come to war by intervening in territorial wars between neighbors (see Vasquez 1996). While major states are sometimes drawn into a war because of the territorial conflicts of others, this does not mean that they do not have their own (often positional) concerns with one of the originating belligerents, especially if one is a major state rival. Struggles related to the use of power politics make the motivation of major states that join "big" wars different (and more complicated) from neighbors that start or join such wars. The most extreme example of this type of war is World War II.

World War II is classified as a Type V war—a complex territorial war preceded by the use of power politics. It begins with a territorial dispute between two neighbors—Germany and Poland—a major state and a minor state who has major state allies. Britain and France intervene in the MID as allies of Poland with the intention of preventing a German attack. For France and Britain, it is not the territorial dispute that is the primary concern but their rivalry with Germany. Rivalry, alliances, and power politics play an important role in the early expansion of this war.

These last three factors also act as crucial diffusion mechanisms in the other major type of complex war of theoretical interest—complex nonterritorial

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[25]Complex territorial wars without prior power politics (Type VI) are atypical territorial wars in that they involve only a handful of cases. The lack of power politics is because the wars occur early in the relations of the states.

wars that are preceded by power politics (Type VII wars). Here World War I is the prime example. As with World War II, this war begins between two neighbors—in this case Austria-Hungary and Serbia, one of whom is major state and the other a minor state aligned with a major state. Once Russia enters the dispute to protect Serbia, alliance commitments rapidly ensnare the originators, as well as Germany, France, and Britain.

The two world wars are the most complicated in the data and applying the classification scheme to them illuminates some of their commonalities and differences as well as some of their respective nuances. Their origin in a two-party neighborhood war has already been noted. Both world wars also seem to spread because of diffusion factors associated with rivalry, alliances, and power politics. Colaresi, Rasler, and Thompson see both of these wars as arising out of strategic rivalries over position (2007, 79–80). Does the classification identify positional rivalry and does it tell us anything new about these wars?

The classification divides the two world wars into Type V and Type VII. Both types are complex and suggest the utilization of power politics practices as a behavioral profile associated (in these instances) with the diffusion of war. The types differ only on the issue that gives rise to the war. It will be recalled, however, that the issue code of complex wars is an aggregated score. If one goes to the issue dominance code of each participant dyad, some interesting features are uncovered. First, most major-major dyad joiners in both wars do not have their relations dominated by territorial MIDs, but by policy MIDs. Second, if one looks at the role of nonstate actors in World War I then one sees that irredentist territorial claims play an essential role, which makes the origin of World War I not that different from the irredentist claims that gave rise to World War II. As a tool for research, the classification scheme is able to classify the two world wars and show how they are related yet different. A further breakdown of the wars into its individual participant dyads provides a more nuanced reading of each war

This discussion of the classification provides not only an overview of the underlying causal processes at work, but also a guide to inquiry and future research that aids in seeing the commonalities, differences, and nuances involved in each type. The classification also shows that some classes of war, namely the dyadic territorial wars between neighbors are much better understood and therefore more amenable to management than other classes of war. Indeed, the territorial explanation of war, at present, maintains

that if states can accept their boundaries they can have long periods of peace. This means that with concerted effort, an entire class of warfare can be managed and perhaps eventually eliminated.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the complex wars, whether they be over territory or not. The diffusion mechanisms most likely at work here need to be much better understood than they have at present before precise policy implications can be derived, let alone serve as a basis of action.[26]

Lastly, Types IV and VIII are of the least relevance to the steps-to-war explanation in that they arise out of nonterritorial issues and do not employ power politics. These two types of wars are outside the domain of the steps-to-war explanation, which means that they are caused by other factors and require different theories to explain them. Type IV wars (like the Anglo-Egyptian War of 1882) typically are colonial in nature. These wars are within the domain of the various theories of imperialism, although which one is an empirical question.

Type VIII wars—complex wars that are non-territorial and do not have power politics preceding them—would seem to be related, logically, to Type IV wars. The lack of power politics means that this important source of diffusion is absent, so it is not surprising that there are not many cases in this type. The emphasis on nonterritorial issues would suggest that imperial questions might also be at stake. The few cases in this category seem consistent with these inferences—Sinai (1956), the Lopez War, and the Third and Fourth Central American Wars.

What can we conclude from this analysis? Although the classification can serve several functions, the most important is to show in what ways wars are different so scholars can give more thought to what wars fall within the domain of their explanations and what wars do not. The eight genotypes presented in Table 2 are meant to capture the different types of causes underlying the interstate wars fought in the post-Napoleonic era. Each genotype depicts a different set of paths to war. It also depicts which wars are within the domain of the territorial explanation of war (Types I, II, V, VI), which are within the domain of the steps-to-war explanation (I, III, V, VII), and which are beyond the domain of both (Types IV, VIII).

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[26]Type III wars are similar to Type VII (e.g., World War I) in that they arise out of non-territorial issues and use power politics; however, these are dyadic. They are in the domain of the steps-to-war explanation because they involve rivals and the use of power politics.

We believe that wars have different causes, and if international relations inquiry is to succeed in explaining the causes of war, we need to group wars according to their different causes. The first step in attaining that goal is to develop a classification of interstate wars.

Acknowledgments

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