

Spatial Model Analysis and the Rational Choice Approach about Brinkmanship and Inadvertent War*

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Abstract

This paper formalizes territorial disputes between two countries as the challenger's armed approximation to the target and the defender's countermeasures against it, which are chosen as either appeasement or coercive diplomacy. The challenger has incentives to approach his armed forces to the target, but this approximation raises the possibility of happening inadvertent wars. The defender basically prefers to resolve the dispute by territorial division, but her tolerance range against the rival's military invasion is finite and depends on the enforcement costs of coercive diplomacy. We derive the following two claims from our game-theoretical model. First, the challenger's invasion distance is restricted by the defender's tolerance range against it if his willingness of invasion is enough strong or his audience costs of evacuation are enough low. Then, the defender's informational uncertainty about the challenger's types stimulates the challenger's armed provocation to the target. Second, the challenger's less military power or the defender's more military power may paradoxically stimulate the challenger's provocative military actions and then increase the degree of military tensions.

JEL Classification: F51, H56

Key Words: Brinkmanship, Territorial Conflict, Inadvertent War, Appeasement, Coercive Diplomacy, Arms Races.

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