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**NAVAL  
POSTGRADUATE  
SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

**THESIS**

**AN ADAPTIVE SECURITY CONSTRUCT:  
INSURGENCY IN SUDAN**

by

Patrick T. Colloton  
Benjamin R. Maitre  
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December 2007

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<b>REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE</b>			<i>Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188</i>
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<b>1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)</b>	<b>2. REPORT DATE</b> December 2007	<b>3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED</b> Master's Thesis	
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b> An Adaptive Security Construct: Insurgency in Sudan		<b>5. FUNDING NUMBERS</b>	
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b> Patrick T. Colloton, Benjamin R. Maitre, Tommy E. Stoner		<b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b>	
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000		<b>10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER</b>	
<b>9. SPONSORING /MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> N/A		<b>11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b> The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.	
<b>12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b> Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited		<b>12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE</b>	
<b>13. ABSTRACT</b>  Internal wars are by default the business of others, until someone says they are not. Artificially contained within the confines of the current international system, insurgent conflicts are considered domestic affairs only until they threaten external interests. In judging intrastate conflict by and large from a crisis-response perspective, conventional assessment methodologies, oriented largely toward interstate wars, tend to fall short in objectively analyzing the historical and dynamic aspects of internal wars. This thesis develops an Adaptive Security Construct (ASC) that aims to correct such shortcomings through the multi-disciplinary integration of three conceptual lenses: a qualitative situation estimate, a game-theoretic dynamic conflict model, and geospatially oriented nexus topography. Using Sudan's internal wars as a case study, where the existence of signed peace-agreements in both the south and Darfur exist in apparent contradiction of these conflicts' causes, the ASC iteratively correlates the analysis of each of the three lenses to provide an observer a more objective external view of conflicts that are inherently "internal." This thesis presents the ASC as an iterative process and perspective that enables the formulation of general imperatives and specific approaches in response to contemporary arenas of conflict, both in Sudan and within the international community at large.			
<b>14. SUBJECT TERMS</b> Strategic assessments, Sudan, insurgency, internal wars, intrastate security, nation-states, game theory, network analysis, nexus topography, adaptive security construct			<b>15. NUMBER OF PAGES</b> 191
			<b>16. PRICE CODE</b>
<b>17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT</b> Unclassified	<b>18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE</b> Unclassified	<b>19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT</b> Unclassified	<b>20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b> UU

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**AN ADAPTIVE SECURITY CONSTRUCT: INSURGENCY IN SUDAN**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Internal wars are by default the business of others, until someone says they are not. Artificially contained within the confines of the current international system, insurgent conflicts are considered domestic affairs only until they threaten external interests. In judging intrastate conflict by and large from a crisis-response perspective, conventional assessment methodologies, oriented largely toward interstate wars, tend to fall short in objectively analyzing the historical and dynamic aspects of internal wars. This thesis develops an Adaptive Security Construct (ASC) that aims to correct such shortcomings through the multi-disciplinary integration of three conceptual lenses: a qualitative situation estimate, a game-theoretic dynamic conflict model, and geospatially oriented nexus topography. Using Sudan's internal wars as a case study, where the existence of signed peace-agreements in both the south and Darfur exist in apparent contradiction of these conflicts' causes, the ASC iteratively correlates the analysis of each of the three lenses to provide an observer a more objective external view of conflicts that are inherently "internal." This thesis presents the ASC as an iterative process and perspective that enables the formulation of general imperatives and specific approaches in response to contemporary arenas of conflict, both in Sudan and within the international community at large.

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## LIST OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

ARFWS	Alliance of Revolutionary Forces of Western Sudan
AU	African Union
AMIS	African Union Mission In Sudan
BC	Beja Congress
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement (2005)
DCM	Dynamic Conflict Model
DIME	Diplomatic Information Military Economic
DPA	Darfur Peace Agreement (2006)
FL	Free Lions
G19	Group of Nineteen
GNU	Government of National Unity
GoS	Government of Sudan
GoSS	Government of Southern Sudan
GSLM	Greater Sudan Liberation Movement
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
JEM	Justice and Equality Movement
JEM/EC	Justice and Equality Movement Eastern Command
JEM/PW	Justice and Equality Movement Peace Wing
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army (Uganda)
NCP	National Congress Party
NDA	National Defense Alliance
NIF	National Islamic Front
NMRD	National Movement for Reform and Development
NRF	National Redemption Front
NSF	National Salvation Front
NT	Nexus Topography
PFF	Progressive Front Forces
PMESII	Political Military Economic Social Infrastructure Information
QSE	Qualitative Situation Estimate
SAF	Sudanese Armed Forces

SFDA	Sudan Federal Democratic Alliance
SLM/A	Sudan Liberation Movement/Army
SLA/AS	Sudan Liberation Army Abdul Shafi
SLA/AWN	Sudan Liberation Army Abdul Wahid al Nur
SLA/FW	Sudan Liberation Army Free Will
SLA/JN	Sudan Liberation Army Jar al Nebey
SLA/KAC	Sudan Liberation Army Khamis Abdullah Command
SLA/MM	Sudan Liberation Army Minni Minawi
SLA/UC	Sudan Liberation Army Unity Command
SPLM/A	Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army
SSLM	South Sudan Liberation Movement
UFLD	United Front for Liberation and Development
UNMIS	United Nations Mission in Sudan
UNAMID	United Nations African Mission in Darfur
URFF	United Revolutionary Force Front

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The impetus for this thesis came from a strategic multilayer assessment workshop sponsored by U.S. Central Command in January, 2007. The varied membership of the workshop was challenged to create an objective assessment methodology for regions of emergent security concern, a means by which the U.S. Unified Combatant Commands with regional responsibilities can fuse qualitative and quantitative data sources into a comprehensive yet adaptable analytic output. As selected members of this workshop, faculty members and students from the Department of Defense Analysis at the Naval Postgraduate School were asked to conduct a parallel effort to this inter-agency project, to include a particular and detailed focus on insurgent conflict in Sudan. This thesis reflects the end-state of that effort. We hope that it will also represent the initial embrace of a new perspective in defense analysis.

As the primary authors of this thesis, we relied heavily upon the expertise and background in insurgency theory provided by our thesis advisor, Professor Gordon McCormick. Professor McCormick's model of intrastate conflict provides both the starting point and culmination of the iterative method inherent in the Adaptive Security Construct. Incorporating a conceptual perspective and detailed process, the latter facet of the construct could never have come to fruition without the input of our second reader, Professor Peter Gustaitis. His relentless efforts to have our thesis presented within the greater context of the Department of Defense community, along with a similar dedication by the department chair from U.S. Special Operations Command, Colonel Brian Greenshields, have successfully set the stage for both the theoretical validation and future implementation of this methodology. We would also like to thank Professors Anna Simons, Frank Giordano, and Nancy Roberts for their assistance and guidance in understanding the societal context, game-theoretic imperatives, and network analysis that allowed for the successful application of this multi-disciplinary framework.

Additionally, we would like to thank our families and peers for the support and constructive criticism they provided during our thesis efforts.

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# I. INTRODUCTION

*What remains peculiar to war is simply the peculiar nature of its means.*

*- Carl von Clausewitz*<sup>1</sup>

## A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

While war between nations may be on the wane, conflict within countries is not. Africa is rife with internal wars; eight of the top ten entries in “The Failed States Index 2007” are sub-Saharan states.<sup>2</sup> According to twelve political and economic indicators, these countries are in imminent danger of dissolution, continued violence, and escalating bloodshed. For the second year in a row, Sudan has topped the list, due primarily to the escalating violence in the province of Darfur. Internal wars are not new, yet the prevalence of intrastate conflict illustrates the extent to which rebels and regimes manipulate the conditions of internal wars to further their own interests. Deprived of the bipolar opposition of Cold War superpowers, contemporary international relations are mired in the ambiguities of sovereignty at the margin; countries that were once at least tenuously aligned with superpower patrons now find themselves immersed in internal crises of identity and self-determination. Internal wars, insurgencies, and the violence committed by non-state actors have come to the forefront of contemporary world affairs.

### 1. Purpose

This thesis develops a construct that allows for the iterative assessment and engagement of the factors influencing insurgent conflict in Sudan. Two premises are fundamental to this objective. The first acknowledges internal wars as a distinct expression of conflict. An internal war is fought between elements of states that might otherwise be considered singular entities in international affairs. Internal wars are not

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<sup>1</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. by Michael E. Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 87.

<sup>2</sup> The Fund for Peace and Foreign Policy Magazine, “The Failed States Index 2007,” *Foreign Policy* (July/August 2007): [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story\\_id=3865](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=3865) (accessed August 10, 2007). The other sub-Saharan states in the top ten were the Central African Republic, Chad, Somalia, Zimbabwe, Ivory Coast, Guinea, and Democratic Republic of Congo. The only non-African states in the top ten were Iraq and Afghanistan.

fought *between* states, they are fought *within* states; societies fight not just each other but within themselves as well. In these conflicts, insurgencies comprise those entities that violently oppose the formalized status quo, be that an incumbent regime or some other manner of recognized sovereignty. The second premise, reliant upon the first, asserts that internal conflicts are perceived differently by external actors who become involved in the domestic struggles of others. Here, the requirement for objectivity becomes increasingly important. Put bluntly, modern states experience difficulties when they become involved in the internal squabbles of others. In attempting to project their own universal perspectives onto internal wars, intervening nations are invariably perplexed by the apparent suboptimal behavior of warring factions. Such perspectives reflect biases of the observer; understanding why other countries fight within themselves is problematic.

This issue identifies the need for a systemic process and perspective for assessing internal wars. As a process, such a construct must allow for an adaptive and iterative analysis of internal conflict; it defines a method of assessment. That method becomes a means of translating theory into practical policy applications, a bridge that in US political history has a long record of tumultuous crossings.<sup>3</sup> As a perspective, the construct requires a familiarity with the history and contemporary relevance of the internal war being examined; it defines the context of assessment. A policy action will fail if it does not accurately account for the local conditions it is meant to address. Using the Sudan as a case study, this thesis incorporates both process and perspective within an Adaptive Security Construct (ASC) by which the insurgencies of internal wars are assessed in order to develop engagement options for exogenous actors.

The contemporary relevance of such a study is readily apparent. One source listed 19 major ongoing armed conflicts in 2003; there is “a growing preoccupation with these phenomena of violence in the world, and particularly in the ‘South’ or the ‘developing world’.”<sup>4</sup> Several theories exist that attempt to quantify the politico-military

---

<sup>3</sup> Alexander L. George, *Bridging the Gap: Theory and Practice in Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993).

<sup>4</sup> Christopher Cramer, *Violence in Developing Countries: War, Memory, Progress* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), 2. The source references the Uppsala Conflict Database, available online at <http://www.pcr.uu.se/database/> (accessed August 10, 2007).

aspects of weakened or failed states. A large portion of this literature is based upon analyses of historical examples of insurgent warfare, and then attempts to draw far-reaching parallels to current conflicts.<sup>5</sup> Using current modeling techniques, this thesis in part overcomes such limitations by applying several perceptual lenses to separate yet interrelated conflicts within Sudan, a nation of significant importance in African regional stability. Sudan provides a unique case study as government forces and rebel factions are engaged in conflict in several distinct areas, to include the escalating humanitarian crisis in Darfur, as well as secessionist engagements within the country's historical North-South divide. In contrasting insurgent conflict in several regions of Sudan, it is possible to substantiate the validity of the ASC, derive practical implications for external intervention in the region, and enhance a general conceptual perspective of internal wars.

## 2. Scope

The scope of this thesis involves the development of an assessment construct, the ASC. It does not purport to offer a means by which the specific conflicts in Sudan will be resolved, let alone provide a solution to internal wars in general. Rather it proceeds from the underlying supposition, already offered, that dealing with internal wars, particularly from the position of an outside actor, requires an objective process and perspective grounded within an analytic framework. Both mainstream academia and media portrayals of these conflicts tend to overly rely upon single-factor explanations for the violence in these areas.<sup>6</sup> “At times the attention of governments and of public opinion has seemed to lurch from one ‘crisis’ to another: from Bosnia to Somalia to Rwanda to Afghanistan to Iraq to Darfur.”<sup>7</sup> Sporadic assessments of these “crises” belie their historic origins; internal wars are not spontaneous. Time may also alter the reasons for which internal wars are fought: what started a war may not be what sustains it. This forms the underpinnings of an objective perspective in assessing insurgencies and internal wars; such a process requires a familiarity with specific chronology and context,

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<sup>5</sup> Cramer, *Violence in Developing Countries*, 2-9.

<sup>6</sup> Morten Bøås and Kevin C. Dunn, eds., *African Guerrillas: Raging against the Machine* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2007), 1.

<sup>7</sup> Cramer, *Violence in Developing Countries*, 2.

not a premature attempt to attribute causality. Internal wars and the insurgencies they spawn are a complex not simple phenomenon. The ASC provides a comprehensive means to analyze those complexities.

A second concept inherent in the scope of this project is that comprehensive analysis requires the integration of qualitative and quantitative analysis of insurgent conflict. Assessments of internal violence cannot rely solely upon empirical (primarily financial or economic) indicators to assess the status of “weak” or “failed” states. Such measures often disregard the complex and convoluted sociopolitical facets that would otherwise lead to a different assessment. Insurgencies themselves defy conventional theories of military engagement in that the numerical strengths of opposing factions provide a misleading indicator of their resilience. The further the insurgent force is reduced in number, the more difficult it is to defeat. The opposite holds true for government forces, as the greater the numerical defeat of the regime’s military, the weaker it becomes. It is therefore difficult to quantify the true strength of opposing factions, let alone to accurately predict the outcome of an internal war.

In concert with the limitations of purely statistical measures, an over-reliance on subjective assessments by subject matter experts can also result in erroneous conclusions, a phenomenon colloquially termed the “Chalabi effect” in reference to recent US involvement in Iraq. When coupled with the political, economic, and cultural factors that characterize internal wars, deriving purely empirical implications for external engagement options is increasingly arduous. Rather than directly attribute a singular causality, there are instead several groups of issues that appear to foment internal wars. Recent research has demonstrated a correlation between rainfall patterns and a propensity for conflict in Darfur, with distinct implications for the continuance of violence there.<sup>8</sup> Additional studies indicate that ethnic marginalization is positively correlated with the probability of civil conflict, regardless of whether the incumbent regime in fact represents

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<sup>8</sup> Mohamed Suliman, “Civil War in the Sudan: From Ethnic to Ecological Conflict,” *The Ecologist* 23, no. 3 (May/June 1993), 104. A conceptualization of “how environmental scarcity is linked to domestic political unrest” can also be found in Jason J. Morrisette and Douglas A. Borer, “Where Oil and Water Do Mix: Environmental Scarcity and Future Conflict in the Middle East and North Africa,” *Parameters* 4, no. 4 (Winter 2004-05): 87.



a minority or majority of the populace.<sup>9</sup> Though posits of causality are overstated, these issues do reflect the long history of sociopolitical and economic characteristics in Sudan.

## **B. BACKGROUND**

For all but ten years of the half-century since gaining independence in 1956, Sudan has been embroiled in internal warfare. Sudan is Africa's largest country and is also the current home to the Council of the Arab League. Sudan recently abstained from assuming the chairmanship of the African Union.<sup>10</sup> These factors begin to suggest root tensions of Sudanese internal strife: ethnicity and religion, territory and resources. Several areas of insurgent conflict exist within the geopolitical bounds of Sudan. Of these, the humanitarian crisis in Darfur and the persistence of a North-South divide are the most significant, both in terms of international effects and domestic upheaval. In Darfur, mostly ethnic African and Muslim pastoralists battle government-supported militias primarily composed of Arabic nomads, also known as "Janjaweed." In the contested divide of northern and southern Sudan, local insurgent factions and the central government in Khartoum continue to oppose each other in spite of a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).<sup>11</sup> Paradoxically, peace has been declared in the south while the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) has been disdained by both sides in the west. Violence is manipulated to benefit militant leaders on both sides of these conflicts.

The dynamic and geopolitically fluid global arena has demonstrated a requirement for irregular military engagement in areas of limited or absent governance. Countries like

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<sup>9</sup> Lars-Erik Cederman and L. Girardin, in "Beyond Fractionalization: Mapping Ethnicity onto Nationalist Insurgencies," *American Political Science Review* 101 no. 1 (February, 2007): 173, present findings that "cast doubt on the tendency to ignore ethnic politics as an explanation of civil wars." See also, James D. Fearon, K. Kasara, and D. D. Laitin, "Ethnic Minority Rule and Civil War Onset," *American Political Science Review* 101 no. 1 (February, 2007): 187, stating: "We find that although there has been a tendency for states with ethnic minority leaders to have had a higher risk of civil war, the tendency is weak. It is neither statistically significant nor substantively strong."

<sup>10</sup> The abstention is considered a political maneuver by which the regime in Khartoum acknowledged problems internal to its borders and thereby ironically improved external perceptions of its legitimacy. United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), "United Nations Sudan Bulletin," UNMIS (February 1, 2007): <http://www.unmis.org/english/2007Docs/UMAC-Bulletin-feb01.pdf> (accessed August 10, 2007).

<sup>11</sup> Theodore S. Dagne, Library of Congress, and Congressional Research Service, "Sudan: The Crisis in Darfur and the Status of the North-South Peace Agreement," *CRS Report for Congress RL33574* (Washington DC: Author, updated March 27, 2007).



Figure 1. Map of Sudan<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> United Nations, "Map of Sudan," Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Cartographic Section, May 2004.

the Sudan provide non-governmental actors and extremist fundamentalist organizations a power-vacuum within which conventional military means of employment are either cost-prohibitive (politically and/or legally) or logistically infeasible. Neither economic sanctions nor diplomatic initiatives have found a significant degree of success in curtailing violence in the Sudan. The struggle in Southern Sudan has resulted in over two million deaths over a 21-year period, while displacing four million people within Sudan.<sup>13</sup> While the CPA seeks to mitigate the antagonism of both sides, the pending independence referendum in 2011 itself questions the possibility of a lasting peace. In Darfur, at present it is estimated that approximately 450,000 persons have been killed since 2003, with an additional 2.3 million displaced either internally or into neighboring Chad.<sup>14</sup> The sole insurgent faction to sign the DPA has since broken ranks with the government of Sudan; an escalation of fractious insurgent conflict prevails and has spilled over into neighboring countries. Despite international sanctions, the efforts of humanitarian relief organizations, and the presence of both African Union (AMIS) and United Nations (UNMIS) peace-keeping forces, the Sudanese regime and opposing factions continue to resist an effective negotiation process or an arbitrated solution. Each of Sudan's internal wars presents a distinct set of challenges to both domestic opponents and the international community alike.

### **1. Conflict in Sudan's North-South Divide**

Civil war between northern and southern Sudan preceded independence, beginning in 1955. Southerners expected to be politically discounted in a unified Sudan, a view substantiated by the installation of a military regime in 1958 and the subsequent banning of southern political parties.<sup>15</sup> Following seventeen years of war, both sides signed the Addis Ababa accords on March 27, 1972. These accords guaranteed

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<sup>13</sup> United States Agency for International Development (USAID), "Sudan – Complex Emergency: Situation Report #14" (May 9, 2007): ¶1, [http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/humanitarian\\_assistance/](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/) (accessed August 10, 2007).

<sup>14</sup> Dagne and Congressional Research Service, "Sudan: The Crisis in Darfur and the Status of the North-South Peace Agreement," 8. Sources present a broad range of casualty estimates of civilians in Darfur, of which the quoted figure is on the high side. Measures of displaced persons are commonly considered more easily quantified and thus may serve as a better indicator of the scope of domestic conflict.

<sup>15</sup> Edgar O'Ballance, *The Secret War in the Sudan: 1955-1972* (Hamden, CT: Archon, 1977): 48-53.

autonomy for a southern region, encompassing the provinces of Equatoria, Bahr al Ghazal, and the Upper Nile, with a regional president appointed by the national president on the recommendation of an elected Southern Regional Assembly.<sup>16</sup> After ten years of tenuous peace, the Addis Ababa accords were abrogated by the Sudanese government under Gaafar Mohamad Nimiery following the discovery of petro-resources. The National People's Assembly and the Southern Regional Assembly were dissolved, and the national introduction of Islamic *Shari'a* law took effect on September 8, 1983. Conflict reignited between north and south, further intensified by repeated regime changes in Khartoum and a protracted suspension of peace negotiations following the August 16, 1986 shoot-down of a Sudan Air civil airliner by southern insurgents.<sup>17</sup> Deep-rooted ethnic divisions were further polarized along religious lines by the Islamist agenda of the National Islamic Front (NIF) government that came to power in 1989.

Several peace negotiations were initiated throughout the 1990's, all of them ineffective. The southern insurgency was divided into several factions that failed to attain a unified bargaining position. Southern opposition eventually coalesced at the turn of the century under the leadership of John Garang and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), which had until then steadfastly asserted sovereign autonomy for the south of Sudan. On January 9, 2005, the government of Sudan and the Sudan People Liberation Movement signed the Sudan Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in Naivasha Kenya, which "effectively ended the 21-year old civil war and triggered a six-year interim period."<sup>18</sup>

According to provisions of the CPA, at the end of the interim period southerners will hold a referendum that will decide their political future as either an independent or

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<sup>16</sup> Douglas H. Johnson, *African Issues: The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003), 222.

<sup>17</sup> Edgar O'Ballance, *Sudan: Civil War and Terrorism: 1956-99* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000): 156. The Nimiery regime was ousted by a coup in 1985.

<sup>18</sup> Dagne and Congressional Research Service, "Sudan: The Crisis in Darfur and the Status of the North-South Peace Agreement," 15. The authors misidentify Nairobi as the signing location. Other sources indicate a preference for independence within southern Sudanese public opinion, ironically coincidental with a pervasive distrust of the interim Government of South Sudan (GoSS). See "The Leading Website for South Sudan Secession and National Independence," (n.d.) <http://www.southsudannation.com> (accessed August 10, 2007).

federated Southern Sudan. Meanwhile, from the perspective of the newly termed Government of National Unity (GNU) in Khartoum, the regime's "central strategic and tactical objective [regarding the south] is to remain in power by whatever means necessary."<sup>19</sup> Though the CPA may foster a present aura of cooperation, the future expectations of both sides continue to reflect fundamentally opposed visions of what the final resolution should be. Illustrative of a paradox in peace agreements, the CPA appears to exist in spite of the mutually-exclusive objectives of its signatories.

## 2. Conflict in Sudan's Darfur

Conflict in Darfur is commonly identified as an opposition between ethnic African and Arab populations based upon patriarchal lineage and tribal affiliation. In actuality, this ethnic identification is not at all clear-cut; distinctions are further complicated by tensions over resource allocation. The area's tribal-based population is centered on two traditional economies: millet farming, which is generally practiced by African Muslim peasants, and nomadic camel and cattle pastoralism, long considered the domain of Arab nomadic tribes. Both forms of sustenance rely on increasingly scarce arable land. Neither farmers nor nomads can be assigned an exclusive ethnic affiliation, as years of intermarriage have occurred since Arabs arrived in the region in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. This has blurred the delineations between ethnic groups.<sup>20</sup> During a period of widespread famine and drought in the 1980s, conflict over resources and land-reform policies caused a Manichean split in Darfur's population; tribes began an autochthonous trend in identifying themselves as either distinctly African or Arab.<sup>21</sup> Following the resurgence of civil war in Southern Sudan, in which both the southern insurgency and the central regime sought to use Darfur as a mobilization and staging ground, opposing sides began to form local militias as a coping mechanism for the increasing violence. Both the

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<sup>19</sup> John Prendergast, "Resolving the Three Headed war from Hell in Southern Sudan, Northern Uganda, and Darfur," *Africa Program Occasional Paper Series*, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, no. 3 (2005), 1.

<sup>20</sup> Alexander De Waal, "Who are the Darfurians: Arab and African Identities, Violence and External Engagement," *African Affairs*, no. 105/415 (2005: 181-205).

<sup>21</sup> Autochthony refers to a process of nativism in constructed opposition to outsiders. For additional examples of autochthony in civil strife, particularly as institutionalized in the government policies of Cote D'Ivoire, see Bøås and Dunn, eds., *African Guerrillas*.

Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), the primary insurgent factions in Darfur, claim the government of Sudan has systematically targeted African ethnic groups since the early 1990s.<sup>22</sup>

In February 2003, these newly organized rebel groups began to openly target Government of Sudan (GoS) security forces and Arab militias, the latter known as the “Janjaweed.” On April 25, 2003, SLA forces attacked a military base at Al Fasher airport, in the provincial capital of Northern Darfur, destroying a half-dozen aircraft and capturing a Sudanese Air Force general.<sup>23</sup> In response, the regime’s counterinsurgency operations intensified as combined Janjaweed raids and Sudanese Armed Forces air strikes were directed at African villages throughout Darfur. Through the use of proxy militias, regime forces now targeted the civilian population in an escalating series of reprisal and repression to attain local control.

The first attempt at a negotiated solution, brokered by Chad, was the April 8, 2004 Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement. Indicative of the factionalism that pervades insurgent forces in Darfur, an element of the JEM declined to sign the ceasefire, fighting continued, and, in fact, escalated. The next attempt at a ceasefire was brokered by the United States on behalf of the African Union: the May 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). This agreement was signed by the GoS and only one faction from the SLA, led by tribal leader Minni Minawi, who has since recanted on the agreement in claiming non-compliance by the central regime. Both the SLA and JEM factions have periodically aligned to form a unitary opposition, but pervasive factionalism continues to derail any proposed negotiating process. International efforts to curtail the violence in Darfur have achieved little success. The United Nations peacekeeping forces (UNMIS) in Southern

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<sup>22</sup> Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), “Proposal for Peace in Sudan in General and Darfur in Particular,” (n.d.), available online at <http://www.sudanjem.com> (accessed August 10, 2007); and Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A), “Political Declaration,” March 14, 2005: available at: <http://www.sudan.net/news/press/postedr/214.shtml> (accessed August 10, 2007).

<sup>23</sup> Paul D. Williams and Alex Bellamy, “The Responsibility to Protect and the Crisis in Darfur,” *Security Dialogue* 36, no. 1 (March, 2005): 30. Additional sources present conflicting estimates as to the number of government soldiers killed, ranging from several dozen to over one hundred.

Sudan are hampered by government-imposed travel constraints. The African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) has been largely ineffective due to limitations on their mandate, size, and support base.<sup>24</sup>

The underlying conditions of internal war in Sudan are ethnopolitical marginalization and resource allocation. In the south, these conditions are expressed through the continued and violent tensions of Southern Sudanese relations with the north, resulting from the perceived imposition of an Islamic agenda, religious, ethnic, and economic repression, and the long-standing frustrations of unfulfilled expectations of autonomy and self-determination. In Darfur, conflict revolves around the ethnic polarization of Arab and African Muslim segments of the population, in conjunction with economic competition between sedentary peasants and nomadic tribes. These issues are exemplary of the sociopolitical and economic characteristics historically present in Sudan. When the underlying conditions of political marginalization and resource allocation are coupled with the factionalism of opposing sides, a dynamic analytical setting emerges. This setting presents a case study background allowing for the development of an assessment methodology. That methodology is the “Adaptive Security Construct” underlying the structure of this thesis. The ensuing section outlines the manner in which the ASC’s development takes place.

### **C. METHODOLOGY**

Fully encompassing an assessment model as both a perspective and process necessitates a multi-disciplinary approach.<sup>25</sup> “Perspective” refers to the removal of observer bias from the assessment, while the “process” provides an actionable set of steps by which the assessment takes place. The limitations of mono-causal explanations and solely quantitative or qualitative models suggest that relying on a single analytic lens produces a myopic resultant that may well obscure critical facets of the topic under

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<sup>24</sup> Paul D. Williams, “Military Responses to Mass Killing: The African Union Mission in Sudan,” *International Peacekeeping*, no. 13/12 (June, 2006): 175-177.

<sup>25</sup> The use of a mixed-methods approach is utilized in order to combine qualitative initial assessments with empirical follow-on analysis as subject to data availability. See also, John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2003), 136-9.

discussion. While not all-inclusive, this thesis' adaptive construct utilizes three analytic lenses to examine the specific case-study of Sudan's internal wars. Within that case-study, insurgent groups are selected as the predominant analytic focus, though the same overall methodology can potentially be used to examine any of several alternate sets of actors, to include formal state institutions and authority, or, instead, a more comprehensive analysis of population measures.<sup>26</sup>

The security environment of a state or region of interest is the result of numerous dynamic relationships that are unlikely to be captured in a single assessment. An adaptability of analytic focus is considered inherent in the iterative nature of this product, and lends itself to the titling of the Adaptive Security Construct (ASC). An outline of the rationale, concepts, and stages of the ASC is presented below; the outline and implementation of its development occurs in the chapters to follow.

### **1. The Adaptive Security Construct (ASC)**

In creating a comprehensive perspective of Sudan's internal wars, the core of the ASC consists of three distinct analytic stages. The first stage involves a qualitative estimate of "what" comprises the Sudan: the identification and outline of the topic environment. This involves an intentionally porous delineation of the study's geopolitical boundaries, as the realities of contemporary affairs rarely allow for a clear separation of what may be a domestic as opposed to an international concern. The same blurred distinction exists within the decision-making processes of actors within that environment; rarely are actions taken or courses selected in isolation of either inter- or intra-national factors. As an integrated model of internal wars derived from the literature and past experiences, the Qualitative Situation Estimate (QSE) provides an organizing framework for those considerations that further guides the ensuing analytic stages.

The second stage of the ASC involves the use of a game-theory approach to outline the dynamic interactions of opposing sides in Sudan's internal wars. This Dynamic Conflict Model (DCM) relies heavily upon tenets of rational-choice theory, though assumptions of unitary behavior on the part of opposing actors are tempered by

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<sup>26</sup> Suggestions for future research to this effect are briefly outlined in the conclusion of this thesis.



the contextual characteristics identified in the ASC's first stage.<sup>27</sup> Established methods of game-theoretic analysis are introduced and then employed in a multi-level process by which Sudan's internal wars are "gamed" to a set of possible outcomes. This stage of the ASC provides an analysis of the "why" and "how" of insurgent conflict in Sudan. As part of the ASC's comprehensive intent, the Dynamic Conflict Model also allows for a perceptual bridge between the Qualitative Situation Estimate and the detailed data requirements of the third stage, which entails the use of Nexus Topography (NT).

The NT stage of the ASC addresses the "who" and "where" of Sudan's internal wars. Whereas the second stage employed an analysis of opposing actors, the third stage extracts the insurgent factions themselves and examines their specific capabilities, structure, and development. Network analysis provides a useful set of tools to identify the internal "strengths and weaknesses" of Sudan's insurgent actors. The focus in this stage is on analyzing organizational facets of insurgent groups rather than the individuals that comprise them; specific areas of interest include comparisons of objective, coalition, and tribal affiliations. The analysis of these capabilities provides a valuable adjunct to the second stage's analysis of strategies and outcomes, while the sequencing of a game-theory approach and network analysis is based largely on the expected realities of operationalizing the ASC as an employable and feasible analytic tool. The complexities of foreign entanglements place distinct limitations on the timely availability of the data requisite of each form of approach. Previous analytic endeavors illustrate this juxtaposition of requirements: "Understanding the value-maximizing choices of nations demands chiefly an analytic ability in vicarious problem-solving. Analyses that concentrate on capacities and outputs of organizations, or on bargaining among individuals, demand more information."<sup>28</sup> The projected availability of data and a reliance on increasing levels of data granularity lead to the selected chronology of what remain in essence a set of complimentary yet distinct analytic approaches.

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<sup>27</sup> Additional corrections are addressed in this stage, to include issues of player *loss-aversion* and *bounded rationality*, according to which the information available to each player regarding the adversary maybe incomplete and distorted. These concepts are more fully articulated in Chapter IV, which discusses the underlying tenets of both rational-choice and game-theoretic models prior to "gaming" Sudan's wars.

<sup>28</sup> Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd. ed. pbk. (New York: Longman, 1999), 387.

Following the third stage of the ASC, the construct correlates the results from each of the three stages to identify commonalities, and, perhaps more importantly, gaps in derived information. Lessons drawn from each endeavor are thus substantiated, to be further validated by what is intended to be an iterative application of the ASC as a whole. This thesis in essence provides a theoretical “first-run” of an operationally applied ASC, a stepping stone from which future analyses can be further refined. From this analytic correlation, both general imperatives and specific avenues of approach can be extracted that may, in reference to the specific case-study of Sudan’s internal wars, yield an assessment that ultimately contributes to the successful resolution of that country’s protracted violence. Intended to provide an overall heuristic perspective and process, a summary view of the ASC is presented in Figure 2 below. The ASC is now broken down into a practical chronology that also serves as the chapter outline of this thesis.

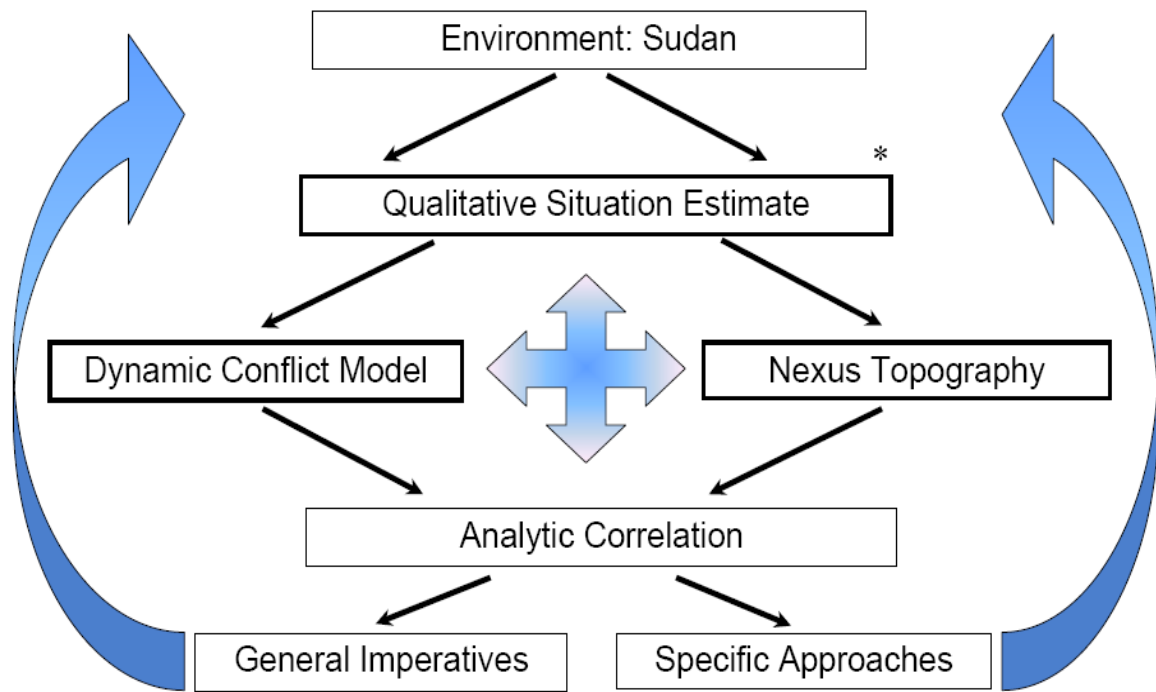


Figure 2. The Adaptive Security Construct (ASC) <sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> (\*) Depending on the availability of data in other applications of this construct, social network analysis can potentially be used for the situation estimate, thus allowing for additional model applications.

## 2. Structure and Outline

Chapter I has identified the relevant purpose and scope of this study of Sudan's internal wars. The introduction to this thesis has also laid the foundations for the ASC, an alternative and integrated methodological approach to the strategic assessment of evolving intrastate conflicts. The rationale for the selection of the subordinate steps of that approach forms the core of each subsequent chapter, portrayed within the specific context of Sudan. Each chapter presents a largely self-standing module, the individual values of which are then correlated to produce a comprehensive picture.

Chapter II identifies the primary "environment" of this study, in which insurgency is used as a keystone around which the remainder of the analysis is oriented. The same analytic framework may be applied to any other number of relevant aspects of conflict in Sudan, yet insurgencies present an oftentimes disregarded or marginalized aspect of Third World concerns, overshadowed by emotional appeals within the international community in regard to humanitarian or economic conditions. Insurgencies, rather than being a result of these conditions, exist as a correlated if not causal mechanism by which these conditions are facilitated and manipulated by the combatants involved. For example, insurgency in Sudan has direct implications for the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, for Sudan's possible appeal as a safe-haven to terrorist organizations, and for regional stability within the Horn of Africa as a whole.<sup>30</sup> Chapter II defines the relevant concepts and dynamics of insurgencies as organized movements.

Chapter III presents the QSE, a situation estimate of Sudan's history and contemporary context. The specific aspects of four intrastate actors are examined, to include the state, counterstate, population, and external forces, each of which are then identified and disaggregated. Relying heavily upon written academic record and the testimony of subject matter experts, Chapter III is qualitative in focus and reflects the practical requirement to draw upon those who have "been there" in first approaching an emerging and unfamiliar environment. This structure allows for the characterization of opponents, further assessed and refined in the game-theory applications of Chapter IV.

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<sup>30</sup> These conditions were identified by U.S. Central Command, J-8 Assessments Branch, Tampa, FL, in 2006, as issues of interest related to Sudan's internal instability. They formed the impetus for this thesis.

Chapter IV applies a game-theory based Dynamic Conflict Model to the behavior of the primary belligerents identified in Chapter III. A brief review of rational-choice and game theory is provided to familiarize the reader with the specific assumptions of these approaches. A generic model is then presented to capture both the internal and external constraints faced by opposing actors in Sudan's internal wars. Separated into the North-South divide and Darfur, the actors are defined and aggregated in relation to each side's minimally obtainable objectives and the limitations of the contested space. Then, the specific strategies and outcomes employed by each side are "gamed" so as to further illuminate the underlying nature of conflict in each of the two selected situations. In short, Chapter IV examines the "why" and "how" of Sudan's internal wars.

Chapter V then extracts Sudan's insurgent groups from the model in Chapter IV and individually assesses their structure and orientation using Nexus Topography. In effect, this allows for the answering of the "who" and "where" of Sudan's internal wars. Emphasizing socio-organizational rather than individual relationship categories, to include tribal, ethnic, and operational affiliations, Chapter V completes the ASC's final stage of granularity in measuring the distinct connections, bonds, and strengths of Sudan's insurgent groups.

Chapter VI presents the Analytic Correlation of the preceding three chapters. This chapter is the key to the iterative nature of this study's multi-disciplinary approach. It utilizes the correlated data from the previous chapters to outline avenues of approach toward the formulation of US engagement options toward Sudan. Two specific areas are delineated here: one of general imperatives, in which the interactions of Sudan's internal wars yield insights that may be more broadly applied in analyzing intrastate conflict as a whole, and a second of specific avenues of approach, offering means by which external involvement in Sudan's internal wars may bring these conflicts to a stable conclusion.

In Chapter VII, the thesis conclusion summarizes the experience and result gained by the development of the ASC, and provides guidance for future research and application. Thus the thesis ends and returns to its original purpose, the development of an adaptive security construct that allows for the iterative assessment and engagement of the factors influencing insurgent conflict in Sudan.

## II. INSURGENCY AND THEORY

*The mere existence of privations is not enough to cause insurrection; if it were, the masses would always be in revolt.*

*- Leon Trotsky* <sup>31</sup>

### A. DEFINING INSURGENCY

The introductory chapter provided a brief summation of the scope and relevance of this thesis. Since the insurgencies of internal wars were selected as the primary focus of effort, it is necessary to first define what is meant by “modern insurgencies.” The term insurgency fosters a number of distinct impressions, from ones of rag-tag rebels to ones of immense occupying armies. This chapter expands on these impressions and definitions, and then presents a derived framework within which insurgent conflict in internal wars is objectively assessed. The ensuing chapters, as part of concurrent development of the ASC, apply the tenets of this framework to Sudan’s internal wars.

The portion of a society seeking to rebel against the state authorities in power can be broadly called the “counterstate.” Within that term, conventional literature has produced a plethora of related words that both further refine as well as obscure the concept at hand. Though far from all-inclusive, this set of terms includes rebellion, insurrection, revolution, civil war, guerrilla war, and insurgency. It is that last of these that will be used for this study. This chapter then has two purposes: to define “insurgency” as a concept by examining its development as an inherently social and organizational process, and to establish a model by which insurgencies can be measured and addressed in an operational manner.

As rebellious entities, insurgencies foster negative impressions. They exist outside of the law and are then automatically “illegal”; thus most military thought is focused on counter-insurgency, or COIN, instead of insurgencies themselves.<sup>32</sup> Defining

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<sup>31</sup> Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution* (New York: Monad Press, 1980 [1932]).

<sup>32</sup> A notable exception to this is the U.S. Army’s identification of Unconventional Warfare (UW) as a means of fomenting and supporting rebellious entities within other nations. See also United States Department of Defense, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations (JP 3-05)* (Washington, D.C: Author, 17 December 2003).

insurgency is problematic; as insurgents exist outside of conventional norms, the term is used to refer to any groups or individuals opposed to the government. The *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* uses the following definitions:

Insurgency – An organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through use of subversion and armed conflict.

Insurgent – Member of a political party who rebels against established leadership.<sup>33</sup>

These two definitions in and of themselves illustrate the problem of objectively evaluating insurgent conflict. While the DoD definition of *insurgency* postulates a requisite intent to overthrow the government, an *insurgent* must only seek to rebel against that government. The purest application of these terms would exclude a majority of commonly accepted insurgencies, to include many of the opposing factions in Sudan. For instance, the opposition groups in Darfur are not necessarily focused on overthrowing the Khartoum regime; rather, most efforts intend to establish a greater degree of regional representation within the Sudanese regime.<sup>34</sup> Do insurgencies always seek to overthrow governments? Do they also exist as a mechanism by which politically marginalized groups express dissent in forums that otherwise do not allow for popular expression?

Further complicating an objective set of definitions is the concept of state legitimacy, that the “constituted government” or “established leadership” of a state is inherently sovereign. More often than not, the term insurgency is used to negatively characterize the opposition of an incumbent regime, fostering an emotional response as opposed to an objective one. To preclude a bias in perspective it is perhaps useful to remember Charles Tilly’s definition of “state legitimacy” as simply an expression of “the probability that other authorities will act to confirm the decisions of a given authority.”<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> US Department of Defense (DoD), *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms (JP 1-02)* (Washington, D.C: Author, 12 April 2001 as amended through 22 March 2007), 265.

<sup>34</sup> The one rebel faction that signed the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) thereby theoretically secured political positions in the Government of National Unity (GNU). See Dagne and Congressional Research Service, “Sudan: The Crisis in Darfur and the Status of the North-South Peace Agreement,” 11.

<sup>35</sup> Charles Tilly, “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime,” in *Bringing the State Back In*, eds. P. Evans et al. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 171. Tilly’s definition is perhaps oversimplified, yet it does eliminate the “good” versus “bad” connotations of insurgent conflict.

If the incumbent authority is internationally recognized as the state, those factions that act out against that authority can be considered the counterstate. Insurgency then exists as an organized political activity that seeks to politically undermine or alter the authority of those in power. Insurgencies challenge the established status quo by violent and subversive means, the latter occurring in part as a result of marginalization in the established political process. As insurgencies directly challenge the stability of sociopolitical relationships, it is now appropriate to further examine the established literature on why and how insurgent movements develop as a method of revolt.

### **1. Dissent in Society**

A large body of literature examines the relationship of human society and the concept of revolution. The predominance of such writing uses historical analysis to extract generalities from specific instances of social revolt. Such works juggle a delicate balance of universalism and specificity; one need only compare the commonly lauded analyses of American involvement in Vietnam in order to view the dangers of extrapolating the specific to the general.<sup>36</sup> A distinct portion of theoretical literature attempts to distill the revolutionary process within empirical analysis. In dissecting notions of *Revolutionary Change*, Chalmers Johnson refrains from attempting to define a specific revolution, nor is the work about “the ‘philosophy’ of revolution in general.”<sup>37</sup> The author asserts that revolution is best examined by creating a synthesis of prevailing theories on the subject in order to develop a model that provides insight into a given situation within its social context. Although a revolutionary outcome cannot be guaranteed (if such an outcome could be accurately predicted, revolutions would likely not occur at all, as the change would simply happen), the factors involved can be actively influenced in any number of directions. The outcomes of revolutions and insurgencies may not be pre-determined, but they are malleable.

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<sup>36</sup> In the 1980s, Harry Summers’ *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1982) was considered the authoritative discourse on military action in Vietnam. Later, Andrew Krepinevich’s *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986) took an opposing view that has been commonly accepted as the “correct” interpretation of U.S. military action in the Vietnam conflict. The issue remains debatable despite the plethora of analysis oriented to the topic.

<sup>37</sup> Chalmers A. Johnson, *Revolutionary Change*, 2nd ed. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1982), xi.

Johnson's synopsis of various theories addresses identification of the societal system (coercion and value theory) and the associated definitions of societal characteristics (i.e., norms, roles, and "disequilibrium"), while providing a reconciliation of several descriptive discrepancies (i.e., "rebellion" vs. "revolution"). A society's values provide its context, and thus form the basis of the ruling party's legitimate authority. Revolution becomes possible when a society's values no longer coincide with the distribution of power and in the absence of other mechanisms for resolving such a disagreement peacefully, a situation Johnson calls "disequilibrium." The process required to equalize "disequilibrium" defines the strategic problem of revolutions: the need to legitimize the resort to violence. The important distinction is that the incumbent government is not being deprived of force itself, but rather of their complete control of its legitimate application. Once this occurs, revolution is possible as each faction maneuvers to minimize coercion (the required use or threat of physical force) and achieve consensus (societal agreement as to the location of legitimate authority). Revolution should not be regarded as a process requiring the rebels "to seize the 'levers' of government to achieve their objectives."<sup>38</sup> Instead, revolutionary change occurs not upon transfer of the instruments of power, but rather when a society's impression of the seat of legitimate authority favors the challenging faction(s). Popular preferences matter.

This leads to an assertion that revolution in its essence consists of a struggle between the need for physical coercion and the consensual seat of legitimate authority. This defines the first conceptual point that underlies this study of insurgent conflict: Insurgencies present a coercive struggle for political legitimacy that rests upon the consensual perceptions of the populace. That struggle exists not as a chronological process, but rather as a result of the societal context within which it occurs. Academics have debated the extent to which modern insurgent conflict takes place with or without any sort of popular legitimacy, and use terms such as "warlord insurgencies" to classify revolts that seem to lack a clear ideological motive.<sup>39</sup> This thesis considers that argument

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<sup>38</sup> Johnson, *Revolutionary Change*, 151. Here again, the term "disequilibrium" suggests that societal change occurs at a deeper level than is accomplished by simply swapping out those in the seat of power.

<sup>39</sup> Christopher S. Clapham, ed., *African Guerrillas* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), and Bøås and Dunn, eds., *African Guerrillas: Raging against the Machine*, 3.



from a more practical perspective, in that regardless of popular allegiance with an insurgent cause, ideological or otherwise, insurgent organizations must develop a following that at the very least allows them to recruit the personnel required to carry on the fight. The mere existence of “disequilibrium” does not identify when, or even if, a revolution will take place. Something must occur to catalyze the struggle for control. Insurgency exists as an organized manner of insurrection, a means by which an opposing faction mobilizes the masses towards the insurgent cause, be that ideological or economic. Insurgent factions inherently rely upon characteristics of the local populace in order to advance their own agendas. The process by which an insurgency comes into existence and mobilizes the population is the focus of the next section.

## 2. Organization and Mobilization

Classical perspectives on the organization and process of insurgencies are broadly encompassed within two camps. The first, popularly characterized by the writings of Ernesto “Che” Guevara, idealizes insurrection as a phenomenon in which the charisma of a popular leader serves to instigate the revolt of the masses. The *foco* (focus), or rebel leadership, itself is the catalyst for revolutionary change and motivates the masses that follow.<sup>40</sup> A second perspective, fundamentally contained in Maoist thought, presents a process of development in which insurgent organizations nurture and foster the mobilization of a populace towards an ultimate end of supplanting the incumbent authority. Though premised on differing assumptions, both camps acknowledge that in order to succeed, an insurgency must foment the engagement of the populace at large.

In an examination conducted in the context of the Vietnam conflict (ongoing at the time of publication), Nathan Leites and Charles Wolf Jr. assert that “insurgencies are unique yet have shared features.”<sup>41</sup> In analyzing insurgency as a systemic process, the authors discuss prevailing and alternative views of insurgency theory. The fundamental

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<sup>40</sup> Originally derived in respect to rural uprisings based on the Cuban revolution, the same concept was later adapted for urban guerrilla conflict. See also Carlos Marighella, “Minimanual do guerrilheiro urbano,” translated by Robert Moss, *Urban Guerrilla Warfare; with an Appendix: Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, Adelphi Papers, no. 79 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1971).

<sup>41</sup> Nathan C. Leites and Charles Wolf Jr., *Rebellion and Authority: An Analytic Essay on Insurgent Conflicts*, Rand Corporation R-462 (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 1970), 2.

point of their position against prevailing theory argues that a successful insurgency does not require the allegiance of a majority of the population. Instead, the insurgency only requires enough support to enable the skilled manipulation of popular choices.<sup>42</sup> In essence, through deliberate control of available opportunities, the insurgency can “volunteer” people to enable the insurgent cause. This then is the crux of how an insurgent minority can get out of its disadvantaged starting block; it does not require the active support of the majority, only a tacit acceptance of the movement’s existence.

Due to a perceived bias regarding the terms insurgency and counterinsurgency, Leites and Wolf instead use the words *rebellion*—an organized and armed resistance, and *authority*—a legitimized right and capacity to command. The essay “is an attempt to identify and assess the characteristics and operational modes of rebellion and authority under conditions of stress.”<sup>43</sup> The pervasive view of insurgency—the hearts and minds approach—defines rebellion as a primarily political endeavor. The authors argue a limitation of this theory in that it overstates the requirements of popular majority allegiance to the rebellion, and that historically this has not always been the case. They equate this theory with a *demand-pull* economic inference, summarized as follows:<sup>44</sup>

An *emphasis* on popular support based on hard work and likes or dislikes, also termed *pure preferences*.

A *primacy of internal grievances and influence* while discounting external support/influence.

An *emergent strength* of the rebellion *directly correlated* to level of economic deprivation & inequality.

The *progress* of insurgents and regime reflect the affiliation of a significant portion of the population.

Leites and Wolf go on to present an alternative view of insurgency—a systems approach. In this view, the authors essentially redefine popular support as the

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<sup>42</sup> Recent quantitative literature has also questions the notion of a correlation between ethnic minority regimes and a propensity for civil strife. See Fearon, Kasara, and Laitin, “Ethnic Minority Rule and Civil War Onset.”

<sup>43</sup> Leites and Wolf, *Rebellion and Authority*, 4.

<sup>44</sup> Leites and Wolf, *Rebellion and Authority*, 24.

“nondenunciation” of the insurgency. All that is required for insurgents to exist is that the population doesn’t fight them or turn them in to the regime. The emphasis is on the population as rational actors.<sup>45</sup> Individuals are not motivated as much by preferences (likes and dislikes) as they are by opportunity (cost-benefit analysis). This alternative theory can be equated to *cost-push* economics, with the following characteristics:<sup>46</sup>

Success (progress) of the rebellion depends not only on popular “demand”, but also on “supply” of choices provided by the insurgents which in turn affect the population’s *assisted preferences*.

Though a minimum level of internal demand may exist, to a large extent it can be balanced and even supplanted by external resources in creating and sustaining an insurgency.

Economic improvements cannot be assumed to benefit either side; rather it is the balance of factors contributing to the improvement that will determine the benefactor.

The progress of both sides influences popular allegiances as much as it is influenced by them.

Fundamental to both views of insurgent development is the premise that an insurgency is essentially a war of production, in which both sides struggle for control of inputs (people, food, materiel, information) and how those inputs are applied to the existing social and political structure. The concept of insurgency as a production effort, regardless of the relevance of a purely economic analogy, inherently suggests an organizational aspect to the development of an insurgency, as well as the counter-insurgent efforts of the regime. Reliant upon the population base, both sides strive to expand, or alternatively, maintain, their control from a localized to a national level, through the use of both internal (endogenous) and external (exogenous) resources. The actions of both rebels and the regime correspond to each level of the insurgent system, which can be visually expressed as follows in Figure 3 below, and corresponds to the following sequential actions on the part of the insurgency:

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<sup>45</sup> This notion imposes several limitations on the derived theoretical framework, to include an implied assumption of unitary behavior. That limitation is further addressed in the model development to follow.

<sup>46</sup> Leites and Wolf, *Rebellion and Authority*, 150-151.

*Sources* of inputs and their costs: Insurgency struggles to acquire them while the regime impedes their availability.

*Conversion* of inputs into activities (outputs): The insurgency indoctrinates, trains, and equips operations while the government applies counterforce to destroy the forces produced by the insurgents.

*Application* of outputs: Insurgents target activities against the existing structure while the government attempts to build the structure in such a manner as to envelop and persevere over their opponents.

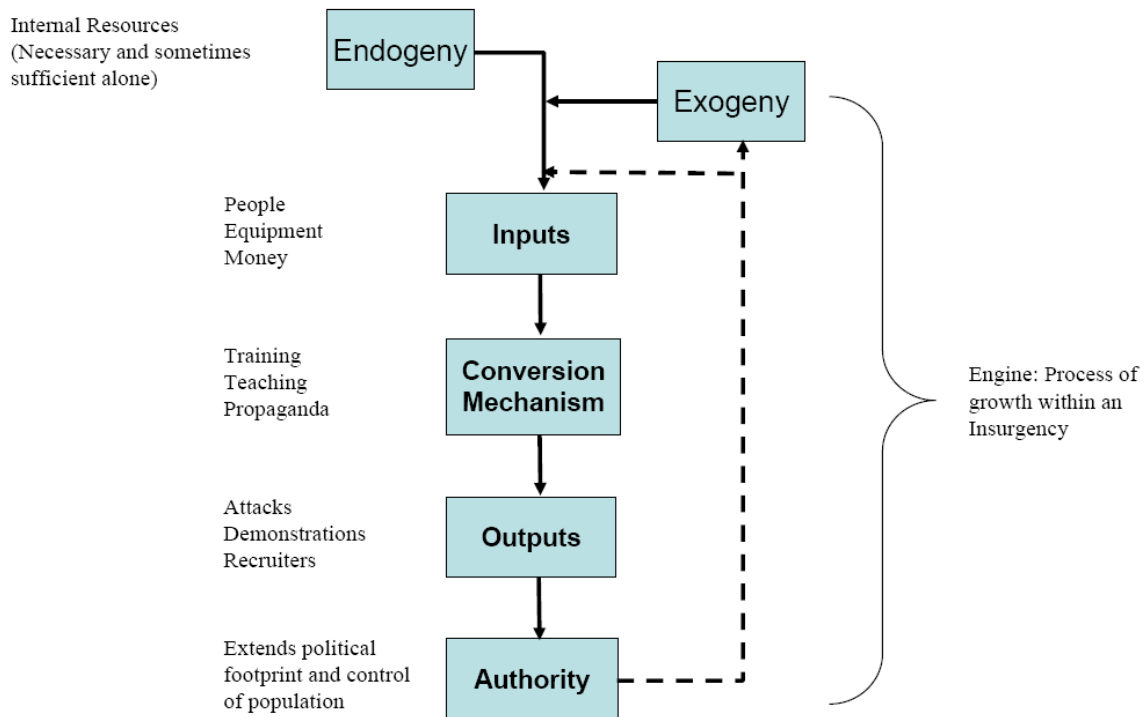


Figure 3. Insurgency as a Systemic Approach <sup>47</sup>

This alternative framework is fundamentally easier to quantify (and thus evaluate) than the “hearts-and-minds” approach. It is simpler to measure a cost-versus-benefits analysis of a population than it is to attempt to assess their individual preferences and motivations. However, the underlying presumption that the population is essentially

<sup>47</sup> Leites and Wolf, *Rebellion and Authority*, 35. Dotted lines are additions to the original figure and illustrate the iterative effect of production output (activities) on external inputs to the insurgent system.

composed of rational actors is perhaps overextended. It fails to account for the influences of societal structure itself (family, religious, and moral implications) and minimizes ideological compulsions of the minorities (extremes). The focus remains on aggregate individuals and separate identities, and fails to account for a communal identity and an accompanying sense of self-worth.<sup>48</sup> Though contemporary literature suggests that there is little if any correlation between ethnic minority regimes and civil war, there is evidence to support the assertion that “specific ethnonationalist configurations are more prone to generate violence in civil wars.”<sup>49</sup> The ethnic composition of a given population plays a significant role in the development of insurgent warfare, a premise that underlies the root conditions of the conflicts examined in this study (see also Chapter III to follow).

A second limitation of the systems approach of insurgency is that it fails to account for the importance of time as an indicator of success for either side of the struggle. Insurgents are most vulnerable during the initial struggle to acquire resources, while the government has already largely lost when trying to directly engage insurgent forces. The insurgency seeks to utilize an advantage in information to create sufficient forces to challenge the regime. At the same time the government attempts to develop the intelligence necessary to allow effective employment of its force advantage. In short, the winner is the side that negates the other’s advantage first. Time plays an important role in the dynamics of the insurgency process, a role that has asymmetric implications for both sides in the intrastate game. The key role of the populace as a foundation for the development of the insurgent system has been identified. A second conceptual point of insurgent conflict is evident: Insurgent organizations mobilize and grow through the manipulation of the population base and its corresponding adjusted preferences. Having conceptually defined insurgent conflict as an organized process, it is now appropriate to further discuss the dynamics by which insurgencies relate within the overall arena of

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<sup>48</sup> The integration of individual *selective incentives* and *communal goods* has been expanded upon in Samuel L. Popkin, “Political Entrepreneurs and Peasant Movements in Vietnam,” *Rationality and Revolution*, ed. Michael Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). It has also found renewed interest in contemporary studies of the psychology of suicide terrorism, as a mechanism by which an instilled allegiance to a collective sense of self allows individuals to forgo their own continued existence.

<sup>49</sup> Cederman and Girardin, “Beyond Fractionalization: Mapping Ethnicity onto Nationalist Insurgencies,” 173. The authors suggest it is not the actual percentage of populace that matters, but rather a marginalized population.

internal wars. The next section will identify a framework within which the actors of internal wars operate in relation to one another.

## **B. DYNAMICS OF INSURGENCY**

The previous section defined “modern insurgencies” as counterstate entities that seek to politically undermine or alter the authority of those in power. It is now necessary to characterize the organizations that are in power, the “state,” as well as the internal and external actors that are integral to the inherent oppositional framework of insurgent conflict. In this section, internal wars are framed within the interaction of state, counterstate, population, and external actors. The relationships between these “players” form the essence of intrastate conflict. Prior to addressing this essence, it is first necessary to discuss prevalent notions of causality in internal wars. This removes a tendency towards mono-causal explanations of conflict, and eliminates the bias of an oversimplified two-sided approach to an assessment of internal wars.

### **1. Causes and Contexts**

Governments and academics attempt to assign wars mono-causal explanations that in turn present diametrically opposed sides. An infamous example of this trend is Samuel Huntington’s 1993 argument, considered prescient in the minds of many, of “The Clash of Civilizations” between societies today and tomorrow.<sup>50</sup> Yet one author has suggested that such an argument disregards local specifics in trying to postulate universal truths; it attempts “to analyse international politics without discussing real politics. . . . It is international relations with politics taken out.”<sup>51</sup> Yes, rebels and regimes also foster an image of fundamental opposition amongst their followers; defining an “us versus them” enables mobilization and collective action. Yet these actions, which serve to further internally entrench a conflict, may also mislead an external perspective. When outside observers characterize wars in general, and internal wars in particular, as being composed of two distinct sides fighting over a specific set of disagreements, they often miss the

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<sup>50</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, “The clash of civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (1993): 22-49.

<sup>51</sup> Ervand Abrahamian, “The US Media, Huntington and September 11,” *Third World Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (2003): 535.

point entirely. Wars may start over one thing or another, but what “causes” them to continue may be someone and something different altogether.

Causal explanations of war are based on an assumption that wars can be solved, thereby implying that all wars are problems to begin with. Two fundamental perspectives envelop these causal explanations of conflict. The first is a general liberal presumption that all wars are negative. When they occur in developing countries, they do so as a result of barbarity and irrationality. From this perspective, war is perceived as an aberration, that peace is a norm from which wars deviate. Instead it seems hardly refutable, especially in light of even the briefest snapshot of history, that wars are perhaps more of a norm than is peace. Still, analytic explanations for the causes of war tend to fall into several common categorical asymmetries, of which one is the “culture clash” idea already mentioned. Other causalities include, though this list is far from complete, ethnicity, political inequality, and resource scarcity (or alternatively, resource abundance). Each causal theory attempts to pin down a single “problem” of war.<sup>52</sup>

If general liberalism identifies war as a problem, neo-classical economics appears determined to offer a “solution.” Comprising the second fundamental perspective on war, neo-classical economics hypothesizes violence as a set of independent variables, or causes, that lead to a dependent result, namely war. Such a perspective can be overly simplifying and misleading:

For now, the main point is that this kind of explanation of violent conflict can only deal in certain types of evidence: quantifiable evidence that can be assumed to ‘mean’ similar things across different contexts, in different countries and over a given span of time captured in the dataset that is matched to the model. Theoretical debates about violent conflict are as much about what evidence may be admitted as about substantive claims.<sup>53</sup>

When the causalities presented by the two prevailing perspectives on violence are taken in total, two broad themes emerge: politics and economics. It is not the

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<sup>52</sup> Cramer, *Violence in Developing Countries*, 7, 114-124. The author examines war as integral to a process of societal transition, as opposed to occurring as a result of that transition.

<sup>53</sup> Cramer, *Violence in Developing Countries*, 8-9.

appropriateness of these themes that is problematic as much as is an over-reliance on their singular explanatory power. In fact, such explanations stand in marked contrast to more subjective and anthropological definitions of traditional warfare, “fought for a host of social-psychological purposes and desires, which included conquest, prestige, ego-expansion, honor, glory, revenge, vengeance, and vendetta—motivations that could be remote in time and place and to the Western observer could appear obscure, idiosyncratic.”<sup>54</sup> Mono-causal explanations of internal wars are just as if not more likely to miss the mark as they are to attain it.

The level of analysis employed for any attempt at an explanatory endeavor of internal wars is also subject to misapplication. “Micro-level theories of war, or what could be called individualist, rational choice explanations of war, regard the poor as prone to violence simply as a function of cost-benefit decisions.”<sup>55</sup> On the other side of the spectrum, a state-centric level of analysis irresponsibly defaults to defining countries as monolithic actors, engaged in a scripted game of global billiards, where each country’s interactions composes a predictable set of angles and outcomes. In between these extremes, conflict origins are blurred within competing analyses of social constructs, of which ethnicity currently appears to be the most popular. More appropriate is a holistic picture that both accommodates and mitigates systemic preferences across various levels of analysis. For example, “it is not sufficient to simply claim that long-standing ethnic animosities explain the post-Cold War upsurge in ethnic conflict, but we must also consider how that hostility affects political and economic realities.”<sup>56</sup> The glue that binds such a comprehensive analysis together is not a postulation of presupposed causality, but rather a detailed exploration of the particular and locally specific characteristics of the conflict itself.

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<sup>54</sup> Richard H. Shultz, Jr. and Andrea J. Dew, *Insurgents, Terrorists, and Militias* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 6. The anthropological work on “traditional warfare” referenced in this source is Harry Turney-High, *Primitive Warfare* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1949).

<sup>55</sup> Cramer, *Violence in Developing Countries*, 75.

<sup>56</sup> Shultz and Dew, *Insurgents, Terrorists, and Militias*, 33. Despite this engaging insight, the authors also assert: “Internal wars are the result of *political conflicts over the distribution of resources by competing elites*” (emphasis in original). Through this assertion, the authors end up applying the very explanatory oversimplification they so astutely critiqued in their earlier point.



This thesis argues that while quantifiable evidence does have a distinct role in examining internal wars, and will be utilized in this project, it must be used in concert with a holistic perspective that seeks to primarily understand rather than simply solve an internal war. As Tolstoy wrote: “The deeper we delve in search of these causes the more of them do we discover; and each separate cause or whole series of causes appears to us equally valid in itself and equally unsound by its insignificance in comparison with the size of the event.”<sup>57</sup> It is unproductive to simply search for causes; instead, internal wars should be analyzed as having been fostered by an underlying set of conditions that interact within a framework of actors and relationships. In doing so, the outside observer gains an illuminating perspective on how the rebels and regimes themselves frame the context of conflict toward their own benefit. While the conditions of internal wars are of a specific local context, the framework of actors and relationships can be universalized and is the focus of the section to follow.

## **2. The “Diamond Model”**

Internal wars and the form of insurgent conflicts that characterize them are not easily evaluated by conventional military methods. Quantified variables of military strength, such as statistics of materiel production and an enemy order of battle, rarely provide an adequate picture of the relative strength of opposition. The same limitations apply to assessing insurgent objectives and strategy: “There are many strategic theories related to insurgency and counterinsurgency that, while academically stimulating, cannot be applied effectively. Likewise, there are countless tactical remedies for dealing with insurgent warfare that are not strategically grounded.”<sup>58</sup> As stated before, bridging the gap between theory and local context requires a perspective that is flexible enough to accommodate local specifics while retaining the rigidity required of a universal construct. The first step of that construct’s ability to assess an internal war is a means by which the specifics of an “emergent” situation can be objectively identified.

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<sup>57</sup> Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy, *War and Peace* (London: Penguin, 1982), Book Nine: 1812–Ch. 1.

<sup>58</sup> Eric. P. Wendt, “Strategic Counterinsurgency Modeling,” *Special Warfare* 18, no. 2 (September, 2005): 2.

The “Diamond Model,” developed by Dr. Gordon McCormick at the Naval Postgraduate School, provides a valuable framework for such an assessment. The model, outlined in Figure 4 below, presents an objective lens for the analysis of internal wars by incorporating both insurgent and counter-insurgent (COIN) approaches.

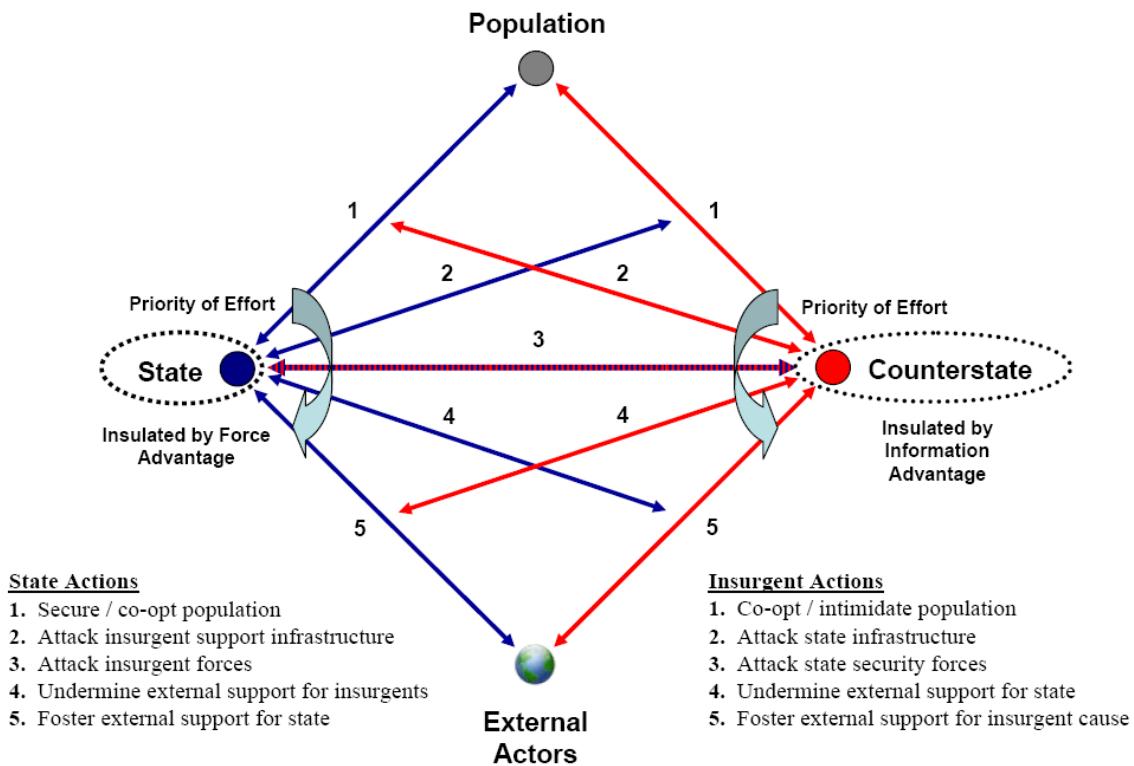


Figure 4. The "Diamond Model" <sup>59</sup>

A key to the relationships depicted in Figure 4 above is the premise already identified in previous sections of this chapter, that both the government and insurgent forces (or “authority” and “rebel,” to use Leites and Wolf’s terminology) rely upon the population at large to execute their own comparative advantages. On one level, this is expressed by Chalmers Johnson’s definition of legitimacy, that the government remains in power either by the consensus of its constituents or by its ability to coerce them into

<sup>59</sup> Figure adapted from authors’ course notes, *SO3802: Seminar in Guerrilla Warfare* (Monterey, CA: Naval Postgraduate School, summer, 2006). See also, Wendt, “Strategic Counterinsurgency Modeling,” 6.

compliance.<sup>60</sup> The insurgency faces the same challenge in its attempt to gain power. This effectively summarizes the strategic objectives of both the state and counterstate. On another level, the relationship to the population also characterizes each side's tactical approaches in engaging the other. Stated briefly, the government inherently relies upon the population to identify where the insurgents are, while the insurgency depends upon the population to shield it from the government. This trifocal relationship, in addition to each side's relationships with external sponsors or opponents, defines the "Diamond."

The "Diamond" is composed of four cornerpoints, broadly encompassing the "State" and the "Counterstate" as the primary antagonists, with the "Population" and "External Actors" existing as both foundational and supporting relatives. The "Legs" between cornerpoints, in addition to defining the tactical approaches employed by each side, also define a set of relationships between the actors of internal wars. A key underlying premise here is that the government possesses an advantage in force at the outset of conflict, while the insurgency possesses an advantage in information. This defines the "asymmetry" of insurgent conflicts, a relationship that changes as each side maneuvers to minimize its disadvantage while applying its superior capabilities.<sup>61</sup> For example, in order for the government to apply its force advantage, it must first be able to identify the opposition, which is likely hidden amongst the populace, or at the very least shielded by its covert nature. Next, the government must engage the insurgency's connection to the population at large, undercutting its legitimacy and support structure. Only then can it resort to direct action against insurgent forces, in what should then be a final assurance of regime victory. On the other side, the insurgency follows much the same progression, in first engaging the population to establish its own credibility, then undermining the government's legitimacy with the people, and finally engaging the government directly. In a simplified mirror-image, the same progression of legs underlies each side's connection with international or non-governmental external actors. Opposing belligerents require internal and external support in order to engage each other.

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<sup>60</sup> Johnson, *Revolutionary Change*, 151.

<sup>61</sup> Gordon H. McCormick and Frank Giordano, "The Dynamics of Insurgency," paper presented to the Insurgency Board of Experts (Naval Postgraduate School: Department of Defense Analysis, June 2002):17.

The process of assessing insurgencies along the approaches outlined in this insurgency model then returns to the previous discussion of the organization and mobilization efforts of the insurgent forces. In having a force disadvantage, the insurgency's ability to coerce popular "support" is limited. The insurgents must foster popular consensus by fostering "popular expectations" of a successful conflict outcome:

Popular expectations concerning which side is likely to win, in this respect, will have a key influence over each side's level of popular support. Expectations, in turn, are shaped by the size of the opposition, which is used as a means of measuring its future prospects given the historical power of the state.<sup>62</sup>

It becomes clear that internal wars are not simply a matter of force-on-force contests of material advantage, but instead are inherently political endeavors in which each side seeks to optimize its own particular advantages while negating that of the opposition.<sup>63</sup> These advantages are operationally realized through the proactive shaping of expected utilities to both the combatants and population at large. These utilities will play a fundamental role in Chapter IV, where the relational dynamics of internal wars are further explored. Chapter III, the Qualitative Situation Estimate, sets the stage for that exploration by examining Sudan's internal wars through the actor-based relationships of the Diamond Model. This framework objectively identifies the primary players involved in Sudan's internal wars, while refraining from an attempt to exclusively "shoe-horn" them into one definition or another. "Alternative conceptual frameworks are important not only for further insights into neglected dimensions of the underlying phenomenon. They are essential as a reminder of the distortions and limitations of whatever conceptual framework one employs."<sup>64</sup> Chapter III provides a conceptual foundation from which Sudan's insurgencies are "extracted" and further analyzed in the chapters that follow.

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<sup>62</sup> Gordon H. McCormick and Frank Giordano, "Things Come Together, symbolic violence and guerrilla mobilization," *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (2007): 299.

<sup>63</sup> The idea of maximizing relative advantages in warfare is, of course, not a recent development. Nonetheless, the identification of the primarily political relationships within internal wars is an oftentimes understated perspective. For a particularly insightful illumination of the frailty of a "conventional" military perspective, see Edward N. Luttwak, "Notes on Low-Intensity Warfare," *Parameters* (December, 1983).

<sup>64</sup> Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, 8.