Understanding Violence and Insurgency: A Framework for the Study of Civil Wars

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Current approaches within Professional Military Education (PME) and joint doctrine neglect cutting-edge findings regarding key aspects of civil war interventions. PME's and joint doctrine's approaches to civil war dynamics neglect scientifically rich causal stories on violence, insurgent group fragmentation, and third-party intervention used to bring these conflicts to a peaceful conclusion or, at least, reduce the likelihood of violence. After drawing out the principal lessons from current Army War College PME on civil war, I propose a framework for studying civil war that exploits current research and is appropriate for Senior Service College PME. This framework, which outperforms the current Army War College approach, provides one example of blending scholarship and military education on the important topic of civil wars. This paper has implications for PME curriculum and doctrine as it relates to civil wars.

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Abstract

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Understanding Violence and Insurgency: A Framework for the Study of Civil Wars

Current approaches within Professional Military Education (PME) and joint doctrine neglect cutting-edge findings regarding key aspects of civil war interventions. I propose a framework for studying civil war that exploits current research and is appropriate for Senior Service College PME. Contemporary views of the makeup of civil wars disregard root causes of violence, insurgent group formation, and interventions used to bring these conflicts to a peaceful conclusion, or at least reduce the likelihood of violence. Evaluating conflict in simple binary terms like Chechens against Russians; Israelis against Palestinians disregard local actor dynamics that lead to an escalation or perpetuation of violence. The United States misunderstands the depth and complexity of these conflicts at its peril; as we shift from over seventeen years of counter insurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan to a more conventional mindset, wars within states are expected to become more common than wars between them.[1] Furthermore, our understanding of this framework dictates the intervention and bargaining policies we make; diplomatic, information, military and economic interventions can have second and third order consequences if we get it wrong. Therefore, we must seek a greater understanding of civil wars at the strategic level to implement policy interventions across the range of the instruments of national power.

First, it is important to distinguish between the terms theory and framework; often these terms are used interchangeably, but in this context will describe concepts from the most general to the "most precise set of assumptions used by a scholar."[2] This paper employs Elinor Ostrom's distinction between theory and framework. Ostrom, the 2009 Nobel Laureate for economic science, says a framework "is intended to contain the most general set of variables that an institutional analyst may want to use to

examine a diversity of institutional settings including human interactions in an array of environments."[3] Theory, on the other hand, "is used by an analyst to specify which working parts of a framework are considered useful to explain diverse outcomes and how they relate to one another."[4] I will focus on a framework that by Ostrom's definition will "enable scholars to analyze systems that are composed of a cluster of variables, each of which can then be unpacked multiple times depending on the question of immediate interest."[5]

Method

Although joint doctrine seeks to push planners to discover the interconnectedness between actors and the master cleavage in conflict, it misses the root cause and relationships between local actors and master cleavages. However, the contemporary literature suggests a different set of variables to identify the source of violence and likelihood of civil war. This paper poses several components to incorporate in Senior Service College PME as a framework to study civil war; my method is to aggregate current, cutting-edge work into a framework for security professionals. I follow Rudra Sil and Peter Katzenstein's concept of analytic eclecticism; this approach utilizes existing theoretical designs in contemporary research "to build complex arguments that bear on substantive problems of interest to both scholars and practitioners."[6] This approach offers a practical view of seemingly disparate and unrelated concepts, ignores their complexities and accepts differing points view. Also, rather than taking a traditional narrow research approach, analytic eclecticism takes a sampling of wider research topics providing a closer approximation to real world problem sets. Lastly, in examining these problems "eclectic approaches offer complex causal stories that extricate, translate, and selectively recombine analytic components,

most notably, causal mechanisms from explanatory theories, models, and narratives embedded in competing research traditions."[7] Through this lens, a close analysis of civil war as a complex process, actor fragmentation, civilian responses, and external factors push the study of civil war forward and give strategic leaders a basis to determine the likelihood of violence and possible interventions.

Several prominent thinkers have argued that military professionals lack appreciation for the socio-political environment in which they operate. This lack of awareness is critical insofar as understanding the social, political environment is requisite for bringing our wars to an end. Most recently, this poor strategic performance has been evident in civil wars in which the United States has been involved, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, and Syria. For example, in Syria, as I write this paper two allies of the United States, Turkey, and Kurdish Rebels, in Syria's civil war are battling each other. To even complicate the situation further, Turkish backed militias fight Kurdish backed militias, who simultaneously fight Syrian regular forces and regime-backed militias. Also, the Los Angeles Times reports militias trained and backed by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Pentagon fight each other over territory, suspicion, ethnic, and religious differences.[8] Syrian, Russian, and Iranian regular forces and militias fight militias backed by the United States. These examples show United States' security professionals narrowly focused political ends fail to consider the constellation of dynamics that lead to violence and the start of new conflicts. Strategy formulation and conflict resolution bargaining cannot begin until the dynamics of these groups is understood.

Nadia Schadlow writes "American political and military leaders have consistently avoided institutionalizing and preparing for the military and political activities that are associated with the restoration of order during and following combat operations."[9] Through experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, our deficiencies at the senior level education are evident in our failure to analyze potential social, economic, and political fissures at the local level. Senior political and military leaders missed key indicators in religious, ethnic, tribal, and political cleavages that led to violence. Further, Linda Robinson finds "both a deficit of socio-cultural and historical knowledge that is critically needed for understanding conflict, the formation of strategy, and the assessment of its implementation.[10] We fall back on technological and conventional approaches to strategy formation, war, and conflict, failing to inculcate the most basic human dynamics into our institutional learning. Finally, Richard Hooker reminds us that many of our failures are "the result of an inability to understand local conditions or to accept another army or society on its own terms.[11] Conflicts demand a deeper socio-political appreciation and analysis to incorporate into senior level education or at least planning considerations; we continue to ignore the implications to our disadvantage. Therefore, the framework I develop shows one way to integrate a representative sampling of the policy-relevant work contemporary scholars propose, but military professionals and federal partners are neglecting. This approach shows a way of analyzing civil wars for strategists and not the way; many cutting-edge scholars worthy of consideration are not represented in this framework.

<div align="center">Analysis</div>

Stathis Kalyvas notes "Civil wars are typically described as binary conflicts, classified and understood on the basis of what is perceived to be their overarching issue

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dimension or cleavage: we thus speak of ideological, ethnic, religious, or class wars."[12] Not all organized groups with a list of grievances speak for the entirety of their causes, nor do the desperate local divisions have the master cleavage as their theme. Dynamics at the individual and group level including personal grudges, common crime, blood feud, local cleavages, past business dealings, vendetta, hatred, and envy provide the context for much of the violence in civil war. Actors hide behind the greater conflict to carry out violence centered around their own self-interests apart from any ideas of independence, self-determination, or marginalization. Many times, the relationship is symbiotic; the master cleavage provides a theme and legitimacy for local violence, and local violence provides "muscle" for the master cleavage at the local level.[13] It may not always represent the foundation for the war or result in violence, but this simple dynamic at the local level explains why we cannot infer the root causes of violence from the macro level.

The invasion of Iraq and the ensuing insurgency illustrates binary views of civil war, in this case, Shi'ite versus Sunni, often misinterpret what is really happening at the local level and confuse and frustrate interventions. "This disjunction is consistent with the observation that civil wars are "welters of complex struggles" rather than simple binary conflicts arrayed along a single-issue dimension."[14] While United States' senior leaders sought a solution to end increasing violence between the two main cleavages, underneath the conflict really consisted of "multiple challenges of separatists, insurgents, extremists, militias, and criminals" at local, regional, and international levels that threatened to destroy the country.[15] These disparate groups used violence to settle centuries-old religious and ethnic disputes, run criminal organizations, retake lost

territory, incite sectarian violence, settle personal vendettas, and various other reasons for violence. Repeated shifts in loyalty for financial, religious, strength, or self-preservation characterized the insurgency in Iraq; for the coalition, these constantly changing alliances between groups confused efforts to stem the violence.

The second element to the framework is the level of fragmentation within an insurgent group which can determine, or at least increase the likelihood of violence. Kathleen Cunningham states "examining fragmentation of opposition movements, rather than the fragmentation in the state as a whole (such as the number, or potential number, of opposition movements in the state), allows for examining how the characteristics of actors affect the propensity for civil war.[16] Not only do the number of groups play a factor, but actor fragmentation poses a distinct problem in civil wars; the level of fragmentation within each group is a more likely indicator of civil war onset because when bargaining, a fragmented group has inherent information and credibility problems."[17] Both issues lend themselves to bargaining breakdown and an increase in the likelihood of violence for various reasons. First, information in fragmented insurgencies is difficult to control, much less articulate a consensus among its factions to present to the other side. "In internally divided opposition movements, there are multiple factions making disparate claims about what the population they represent wants and the extent to which these demands are supported by that population base." 9Multiple factions articulating different and overstated goals make it difficult for states to determine at what point insurgencies will bargain and where they will fight.[18] States can't reasonably bargain when they can't guarantee what they are being told is the consensus of the group.

Also, competing factions within a group cannot make credible commitments to the state as to its, or other factions future behavior. Groups with varying degrees of commitment to violence and extreme views cannot tell where and when the other will act in the future, making it difficult for the state to agree to future events. This uncertainty prolongs bargaining and makes negotiation a tedious and confusing affair in civil wars. Factions have no single, representative leader to make commitments at the bargaining table giving states no official opposition voice to bargain with. Further complications arise when the rapid pace of leadership change among the disparate groups makes a commitment to any future bargain suspect in the minds of the state. With no consistent or stable way of selecting successors, competing factions may not ever be able to bring a consistent or believable message to the table; this dynamic makes conflict resolution almost impossible.

It is not enough only to consider the level of fragmentation and its effects on conflict as factors in determining violence; this would ignore further studies of fragmentation dynamics that help determine its characteristics. While the importance of appreciating fragmentation as a factor is now established, it is important to conceptualize fragmentation by determining another set of elements. Fragmentation can be conceptualized in three dimensions; the number of groups, the degree of institutionalization within the groups, and the distribution of power between them. "With this multidimensional concept, we can capture the reality of fragmentation as a characteristic can change over time, with the degree and type of fragmentation shifting as organizations are eliminated, and new ones emerge, institutions coordinate actions in the larger struggle or become irrelevant, and power within the group is dispersed

across organizations or concentrated within each of them."[19] Otherwise, if only the number of groups are considered we suppose all groups are equal, and the connections are the same in all environments.

It is essential to understand each of the dynamics in isolation to understand the relationships between them. The number of groups beneath a single entity cause can vary greatly between conflicts; either united tightly or heavily fractured. However, to be counted as a group it must be united under a single leader answering to no one above it, its own hierarchy, and "make demands related to the group's collective aims or status."[20] Also, groups do not have to wholly identify with the cause, demands, or strategy of another faction. Often fractured groups have many disparate interests and present themselves in the conflict as armed factions, political parties, paramilitary organizations, union groups, and civic organizations.[21] Groups with a history of highly political, social, ideological differences are highly fractured, while external supporters, existential threats, and unity movements may also drive them together.

The second component is the degree of institutionalization within fractured groups. The presence, strength or weakness of institutions guiding group behaviors determine the degree they will work together towards a common goal, even highly fractured movements can act with unity through formal and informal institutions.[22] States' strong institutions make behaviors predictable and even in weak or failing states institutions provide a degree of stability. However, among fractured organizations in self-determination movements, greater differences exist in the formal and informal rules, norms, practices, customs, and traditions guiding behavior.[23] Strong, highly formalized institutions can drive fractured organizations to act cohesively while informal institutions

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lack rules and structures leading to disparate behaviors among entities. Highly formalized institutions though, require mechanisms to enforce and punish belligerent groups within the movement; this makes compliance difficult even in mature ones. While "control of institutions, access to structures in civil society, social networks, civic organizations can provide infrastructure for coordinating actions and allow for greater unity," varying degrees of institutionalization can determine the level of cooperation and fragmentation between groups.[24]

The final determining dynamic along with the number of groups and institutionalization in fractured organizations is the distribution of power across different organizations. The level of power can be interpreted in many ways; in civil wars, money, troops, or equipment can determine the balance of power between groups. However, the use of arms in pre or post-conflict environment can be counterproductive; in these cases, ideology, influence, political institutions, culture, legitimacy, and community can be determinant factors.[25] In any case, the greater the disparity in the power amongst groups the more fragmented the organization will be. However, when a single group dominates several weaker ones, internal fragmentation is lessened because the weaker groups ability to influence others or the larger conflict is reduced. The differences in power distribution can be attributed both internal and external factors. Internally, "intragroup politics, variable access to power resources, different levels of organizational efficiency and cohesion, historical and sometimes path-dependent legacies, alliances across organizations, and realignments within the movement" can factor into power dispersion.[26] Externally, changes and interventions in external support,

shifting alliances and state intervention and support to collaborating organizations can quickly change power distribution.

The number of groups within an organization, the degree of institutionalization, and the distribution of power are closely related. Institutionalization can directly affect the fragmentation within a group; if institutions are absent or cannot affect influence over different organizations "the power of the coalition of organizations that are linked through institutions versus those organizations operating outside these institutions can contribute to the creation of rival blocs."[27] Conversely, the stronger the institutions within an organization, the more restrained the actors become and less likely to act against organizations they are related to. These factors affect fragmented organizations in interrelated ways and must be considered together to effectively evaluate actors in civil wars. Together, they add to the constellation of causal dynamics whose relationships create a framework for evaluating conflict.

While actor fragmentation plays an important role in the framework, another dynamic provides insight into the stability of these organizations and possibly into civil wars themselves. Shifting alliances among actors contribute to much of the violence in wars; it provides a basis for much of the causal stories behind these conflicts. As noted earlier in this paper, the Syrian civil war is characterized by constantly shifting alliances among actors, even causing fissures among allies and increased unneeded tension between our traditional foes. "Unstable alignments among fragmenting factions are more than just a characteristic of these wars in many ways, they are the war, with repeated side switching fueling cycles of protracted violence."[28] This dynamic is worth a

closer look as it speaks to the foundations of conflict and predicts future outbreaks of violence.

Alliance shifting comes with its share of pitfalls for fragmented organizations; according to Lee Seymour it impedes collective action, increases suspicion, creates legal risk for leadership, destroys relationships, and isolates newly formed groups. Despite the negatives, shifting alliances frequently occur in civil wars and sometimes can even be attributed to insurgent success, but most realignment leads to increased violence, prolonged conflict, and is associated with the probability of conflict reoccurrence.[29] Therefore, it becomes a critical dynamic in the framework to study civil wars along with cleavages and fragmentation. The previous study suggests shifting is limited by ethnic and ideological cleavages and driven by group survival and long-term goals of maximizing post-conflict positions. However, two key mechanisms emerge in Seymour's work for consideration as drivers of shifting alliances in which "short time horizons emphasize immediate payoffs."[30]

First, political rivalries drive alliances with the side offering weapons, ammunition, and support against local competitors. This finding is significant because instead of focusing on ethnic or ideological reasons for alliances it instead suggests relationships between outside actors and local political struggles as a primary cause. Actor techniques in civil war seek to shatter opposition networks to later spread influence by offering an alliance with disparate local groups. In exchange, local groups seek advantage against rivals through alliances with good resources external actors against their common enemies.[31]

Second, he argues alignment "often reflects material incentives to engage in patronage relations."[32] This argument focuses primarily on the material gain in political economies as the reason for shifting alignment. In economies shaped by violence, "patronage-based incentives shape alignments through networks connecting local clients to wealthier patrons."[33] Ultimately, this environment pushes political and military leaders to seek better terms in the patronal system; additionally, groups of jobless males in post-conflict economies are ripe for recruitment by those seeking to profit from chaos. However, this system requires a steady flow of material from the patrons to function; loyalty is dependent upon material rewards. Local economies shattered by civil war are manipulated by outside power brokers through pressure of local leaders desperate to maintain power. Local politicians will shift alliances for a better position in this new system if it means keeping order amongst their supporters.[34]

Seymour's findings suggest intervention at the local level vice a macro level approach is best to prevent alliance shifts. First, he recommends "mending rifts within local communities, particularly where groups were divided into factions fighting on opposite sides."[35] Second, "targeting the local wartime processes that militarize political competition" in fractured economies as a method to interrupt structures in patronal networks.[36] Both recommendations target local causal stories similar to what Kalyvas suggests where a focus at the periphery of violence gets at the root cause rather than a narrow focus at the center.

Now that various dynamics of insurgent behavior are established for the framework, it is important to focus on their interaction with civilian populations and its effect on civil war outcomes. This interaction is important to study as research suggests

the level of violence in civil wars does not just boil down to winning hearts and minds of the population.[37] Similar to the violent actors, it is worth recognizing the dynamics of civilian populations and how they influence the environment through diffusion of their norms into violent actors, the level of resistance in civilian populations, and civilian attitudes towards those groups. Also, multiple factors within each of these dynamics are worth exploring as they are indicators of the level of violence and actor behaviors.

These dynamics can have intervention and bargaining policy implications as well; often, non-governmental aid organizations (NGOs) and government interventions have the opposite effect they intend. First, the norms of NGOs and external governments many diverge from the standards of the civilian population. Second, they have limited levels of influence and legitimacy among the people and, lastly, they lack overarching mechanism of enforcement.[38] As we have seen repeatedly in Iraq and Afghanistan cultural missteps by outside entities can have devastating consequences. Assuming acceptance of western values, norms, and beliefs can shift allegiance between the people and towards violent groups. The misplaced well or humanitarian aid can change the balance of power between groups and the recognition of one ethnic group's power over another can lead to more violence. It is important then, to understand how effectively civilian populations can influence violent groups; we may then change our approach to intervene by educating the civilian community so they may, in turn, use their influence to change behaviors in violent organizations.

To gain an appreciation for the impact of civilian dynamics on insurgent behaviors, it is important to recognize why the civilian population influences violent actors. The level of influence can be attributed to three main factors; first, civilians have

greater consistent access to actors than the state or external organizations. Second, they have greater legitimacy among those actors because they are more likely to share language, ethnicity, norms, and values. Third, with greater access and legitimacy, they can influence groups through protest, non-cooperation, and persuasion.[39] Civilians are more likely to interact with violent actors either through their proximity or through meetings where groups seek the support of the population using coercion or threat of violence. For self-preservation, civilians, in turn, persuades through protest or non-cooperation. Influence over just a few individuals in a violent group can push the entire organization in a non-violent direction. According to Oliver Kaplan, "this cascade of norms can lead to rebellions within the rebellion: latent norms held by reformers may spread to more rank-and-file members and encourage them to stand up to transgression-prone commanders, ultimately producing a broader internalization of these norms and reshaping the culture of the group."[40]

Civilians are key actors in civil wars; the diffusion of norms from the civilian population to another group establishes a new "pathway to non-violence.[41] However, it is important to recognize additional dynamics among civilian populations as critical indicators for violence. Weather civilians migrate from conflict, follow actor demands, or actively resist is vital in understanding actor behavior, the character of the conflict, and the disposition of the population after the war. According to Ana Arjona, particular attention should be given to the level of civilian resistance to rebel groups; careful study can show the degree of actor governance over a population. "Rebel (violent actor) governance limited to the spheres of public order and tax collection tends to trigger only partial resistance-that is, opposition to some aspects of the rule, without demanding its

removal."[42] Conversely, full resistance depends on the quality of pre-existing institutions in a geographic area before the arrival of armed actors. Societies with high-quality institutions tend to engage in total resistance where those with low quality or non-existent institutions tend to partial resistance.

Additionally, we can analyze civilian attitudes as an indicator of violence; similar to resistance movements within civilian populations, civilian acceptance of counter-insurgency attitudes can determine the level of, and location of violence.[43] While we continuously try to win hearts and minds, we fail to see the second order effects of turning the civilian population against violent actors. Kentaro Hirose argues not only can civilian attitudes be used to predict actor violence, but they are also not a reliable predictor of civilian information. Surveys of Afghan villages revealed that pro-counterinsurgency attitudes among villagers could be used as predictors of the frequency and location of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). Similarly, "little evidence that pro-counterinsurgent attitudes are associated with 'found' IEDs, suggesting that winning hearts and minds may not translate into actionable intelligence."[44] Consequently, the civilian dynamic in analyzing violence in civil wars cannot be discounted; cutting-edge research suggests diffusion of norms from civilians to violent organizations, the level of resistance in civilian populations, and attitudes all matter as indicators of violence.

So far, the examination of multiple causal dynamics in civil wars have focused on internal actors; both the violent organizations themselves or the effect of civilian populations on those organizations. However, we must now look at external influences to complete the analysis. Although foreign interventions in civil wars are previously

mentioned, several factors influence the effectiveness of external states and organizations ability to control outcomes and should be included in the framework. Although the term civil wars imply only internal actors are at play, the majority of these conflicts have a "high degree of external influence.[45] States' intervention in a civil war is seen through a positive lens; however, David Cunningham argues intervention likely prolongs civil war.

External actors, either state or non-state entities, can perform many roles in civil wars; they may host negotiations, offer incentives to negotiate, deploy peacekeepers, provide economic assistance, or even military forces.[46] Conventional wisdom says that states intervene either to bring an end to the fighting through negotiation or by assisting one side to victory. However, evidence shows external entities involved in civil wars increase violence and prolong the conflict.[47] When states intervene, they are pursuing an agenda independent of those whom they are trying to help. This manifests itself in two ways; first, because there are now more fighters on the battlefield in pursuit of their own ends and second, there is "less gain from negotiating than internal combatants, and so inducing them to stop fighting becomes more difficult."[48] This added dimension complicates conflict resolution in several ways, making everything from negotiations to interpreting battle outcomes more difficult.

Cunningham argues the introduction of external intervention effects negations in four distinct ways. First, when it comes to negotiations, external states complicate matters by bringing another set of interests to the table; additional issues make the range of acceptable settlements shrink for combatants. "This dynamic makes it more difficult to find one specific agreement that all of the combatants will accept."[49] Second,

actors enter conflict thinking they will win. Generally, this is a gross overestimation of their capabilities. As the conflict progresses, they update their beliefs in winning by outcomes on the battlefield; when enough data is collected "a bargaining range emerges and agreement is reached."[50] However, as external combatants are added, data from the battlefield becomes less reliable and therefore updating beliefs is more difficult thus reducing the idea of any negotiated settlement. Third, as additions to the negotiating table increase so too is the likelihood participants will hold out in the hopes they strike a better deal. The last signers to any agreement can make demands to add to the settlement or threaten to end negotiations; this provides excellent leverage for holdouts to get what they want. Lastly, multilateral talks suffer from shifting alliances which prolong and even shutter talks. Although fragmented insurgents are often represented by a single entity they can be unstable; as new issues are brought to the fore, parties shift allegiances to create a new "coalition on different issue areas."[51]

External entities bring a new dimension to the framework and possible policy implications. Cunningham's data suggest the international community should increase pressure on external actors to withdraw in civil wars to eliminate their destabilizing effects on conflict. Resolving the external dimension first removes their independent agendas and adverse impact on the negotiation process. If the pressure to exit is not enough than according to Cunningham, "it may be necessary to use sequenced negotiations to resolve the separate dimensions of these wars."[52] Analysis of external actors is worth consideration equally with other dynamics of the framework; it provides an additional window into the constellation of causes of civil war and conflict that are neglected in doctrine and senior PME.

Little attention is given to the study of civil wars in senior service college PME; one lesson of three academic hours is dedicated to the study of civil wars with a primary focus on early practitioner's theory rather than underlying causal stories of insurgencies. Learning outcomes in the Theory of War and Strategy Lesson 14 guide students to focus on theories of civil wars of Carl Von Clausewitz and Mao Zedong and not local level dynamics of conflict. While the historical context and methods employed by actors in civil wars are important for senior leaders to understand, it neglects cutting-edge contemporary scholars. Additionally, Joint doctrine indicates a limited number of dynamics provides a framework to evaluate the nature and root cause of insurgencies. "The increasing influence of commercial, informational, financial, political, and ideological links between previously disparate parts of the world has created new dynamics that further shape insurgencies and other irregular forms of conflict."[53] Assembling a framework out of these various cutting-edge theories in a way that outperforms the United States Army War College's approach proffers a more complex, richer context for civil war dynamics.

Findings/Conclusion

In some atoms, the binding energy is not strong enough to hold the nucleus together, and the nuclei of these atoms are said to be unstable; these atoms will lose neutrons and protons as they attempt to become stable. The same can be said civil wars; each atom represents a component of the framework I have presented in this paper. Careful analysis of each element can determine the stability of internal conflicts and assist senior leaders in building a complete picture of the operational environment and competent policy interventions. Kalyvas's complex causal stories, Bakke's views on actor fragmentation, Seymour's alliance shifts, Hirose's civilian attitudes, and

Cunningham's external factors of intervention together provide a constellation of factors for determining civil war outcomes and policy considerations.
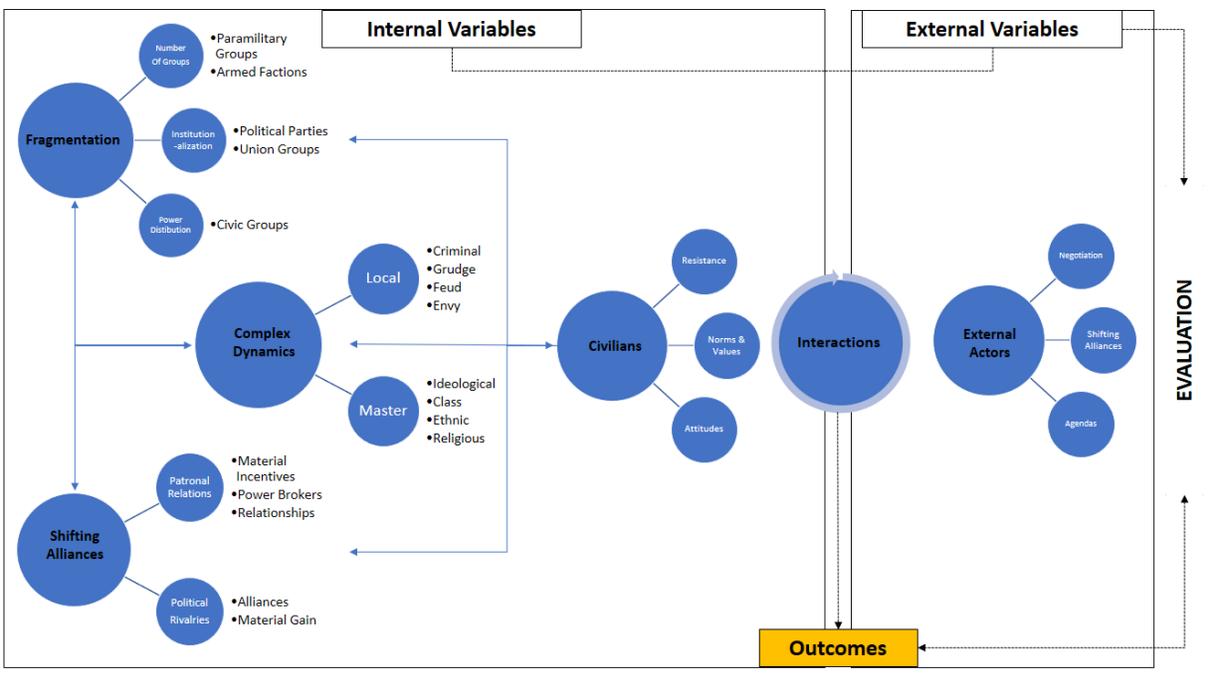

Figure 1. Framework[54]

This framework attempts to fill a gap in senior service college PME and current doctrine; while it touches on several cutting-edge contemporary works, it only represents a fraction of the material available on civil war dynamics. Figure 1 shows each component of the framework and their associated relationships; while it provides a foundation for professionals to consider, it is only a starting point. By looking at these cutting-edge authors, we gain a new perspective on how civil wars develop, the underlying causes, and why they persist. Strategy formulation and conflict resolution are impossible if at least some of these elements of actor dynamics are not understood. A close inspection of local causes paints a complete picture of civil war and the

continuation of violence. Celestino Perez suggests two errors hinder senior leaders from

realizing strategic satisfaction.

> "The first error, anti-politics, indicates the Servicemember's tendency to discount the military importance of ground-level politics. The second error, which aggravates the anti-politics error, is the macro bias in strategic thinking. This bias leads strategists and military professionals to neglect the importance of local knowledge and bottom-up dynamics. This error eclipses crucial strategies to mitigate violence through local solutions."[55]

> To the degree his account is compelling, this paper and the approach it

recommends contributes to the remediation of these shortfalls.

Endnotes

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