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High-profile recent conflicts involving lucrative natural resources in such countries as Angola and Sierra Leone have drawn increasing attention to the link between natural resources and violence. While recent strategic, media, and academic attention has understandably focused on Iraq, the United States currently imports 15 percent of its crude oil from Africa, a figure that is forecast to increase to 25 percent by 2015. The Gulf of Guinea is poised to grow in strategic importance for the United States, and senior military and diplomatic officials are reportedly in advanced discussions with São Tomé e Principe about establishing a regional U.S. Navy base there.[1] This article argues that natural resource–related conflicts in places like West and Central Africa are not well understood. While such conflicts are unlikely to pose substantive operational risks to U.S. military forces, a failure to understand the dynamics underlying them risks exposing U.S. forces to smaller-scale Somalia-like military problems and, perhaps more importantly, to serious public relations and reputational risks.

One of the factors that makes natural-resource conflicts especially noteworthy is the alleged role played in them by leading private-sector actors. The sovereign governments of Angola and Sierra Leone both hired the services of Executive Outcomes, a private military company. De Beers has faced mounting pressure over its purchase of diamonds from these

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war-torn areas. Oil companies in Burma, Colombia, Nigeria, and the Sudan have been directly linked to state violence against local host communities.

Traditional security studies have generally neglected profit-oriented natural-resource conflicts. One recent large-scale empirical survey on conflict notes that nine of the thirteen wars identified in 1998 took place in Africa. Its authors posit that "this might be related to the phenomenon of weak states, to the increased erosion of boundaries, and to open or clandestine intervention from neighboring countries."[2] They make no mention of any role that natural resources or private-sector involvement might play in generating these conflicts. Similarly, this project limits its definition of armed conflicts to conflicts that result "in at least 25 battle-related deaths."[3] Thus, it lists no armed conflicts for Nigeria, because the thousands of fatalities suffered in recent years by groups like the Ijaw and Ogoni in violence surrounding oil extraction in the Niger Delta are not considered "battle related." Policy makers and senior members of Western armed forces might be inadvertently misled by such studies into thinking that resource-rich West African countries are far more peaceful than they really are. With a broadening, or loosening, of this "battle related" criterion, the Ogoni from 1993 to 1995 and the Ijaw from 1998 to 2001 would merit inclusion under this survey's categories of "intermediate armed conflict" or even of "war."[4]

The cited survey also limits itself to two types of conflict—incompatibility concerning government and concerning territory. As there is no category for wars to control natural resources, countries such as Angola and Sierra Leone are classified as incompatibilities concerning government. This neglect of natural resources is stunning, given that a recent World Bank study found that "the extent of primary commodity exports is the largest single influence on the risk of conflict."[5] Three-quarters of sub-Saharan African states still rely on primary commodities for half or more of their export income.[6]

Our focus here is on how the global economic incentives surrounding valuable natural resources facilitate and influence intrastate conflicts. One leading scholar has observed that "viewing the international system in terms of unsettled resource deposits . . . provides a guide to likely conflict zones in the twenty-first century."[7] Nonetheless, the argument advanced here does not extend to traditional interstate conflicts (water wars in the Middle East), let alone systemwide strategic geopolitics (great-power conflicts in the Caspian and South China Seas). Natural resources are increasingly important determinants of contemporary violence; they will not, however, necessarily produce "a new geography of conflict, a reconfigured cartography in which resource flows rather than political and ideological divisions constitute the major fault lines."[8]

TOWARD A TYPOLOGY OF NATURAL-RESOURCE CONFLICT

The diversity of civil wars is widely noted. One theorist observes, "The reasons for which civil wars are fought, the levels of organization among the various contesting parties, the degree of involvement by external powers and the political outcomes of such contests have all varied widely."[9] Much the same can be said for the smaller subset of natural-resource conflicts. These conflicts vary widely along a number of dimensions, including culture, religion, and location (cases can be found in Africa, Asia, and Latin America); the nature of the resource being contested (e.g., diamonds in Sierra Leone, hardwood forest products in Cambodia, oil in Nigeria); and the nature of the participants (degrees and types of corporate involvement, the presence or absence of organized opposition groups). We can construct a typology of natural-resource conflicts by focusing on three different variables: the nature of the resource being contested, the public-private composition of the resource extractors and the security providers, and the nature of the instigators and targets of violence.

The nature of the resource being contested and, specifically, how capital-intensive its extraction is influences the form that natural-resource conflicts take. As one observer notes, "Economic violence among rebels is more likely when natural resources can be exploited with minimal technology and without the need to control the capital or machinery of the state."[10] Thus, rebels are more likely to be able to fund their operations from easily mined gems than they are to control more capital-intensive processes, such as oil extraction. Angola was an interesting example of this phenomenon, in that the late Jonas Savimbi's UNITA rebels were concentrated in areas where diamonds could be mined easily with minimal equipment and sold by the briefcase or small plane load at a time while the government depended on revenues from the much more capital-intensive oil industry to fund its war effort. Thus, one is more likely to see a weak state losing control of its territory and calling in private-military assistance, à la Sierra Leone, when easily mined gems or minerals are at stake. Conversely, situations in which large corporations find themselves dependent on the protection of state security forces are more likely when the extraction of lucrative resources (like oil) requires huge investments.

Obviously, this "easily mined"/"capital-intensive" dichotomy is not absolute. One cannot, for example, rule out the possibility of large corporations involved in the extraction of surface mineral deposits or guerilla forces directing their efforts toward capital-intensive industries. By one estimate, Colombian guerillas attacked pipelines and other oil industry infrastructure 985 times between 1986 and 1996.[11] The type of resource involved does, however, suggest the likely nature of the resource extractors and security providers, as well as the instigators and targets of violence.

The mixture of public and private involvement in the extraction of resources and the provision of security can be visualized in a two-by-two matrix (see the table) where the columns represent the resource extractors and the rows represent the security providers. Each category can be divided into public and private participants.

Moving in a clockwise direction from top left, it is the second box (corporations depending on state security services) and the fourth box (states depending on private military companies) that have received the most academic attention to date, albeit in isolation from one another. The purely public activities in the first box have traditionally been viewed solely in terms of domestic human rights abuses, while the purely private activities in the third box have generally been discreet enough to escape attention. Viewing natural-resource conflicts in terms of such a matrix breaks down the artificial separation between similar phenomena—that is, the second and fourth boxes.

EXTRACTOR/SECURITY MATRIX

		Resource Extractors: Public	Resource Extractors: Private
Security	Public	Forest products in Cambodia and Indonesia (box 1)	Shell & Chevron in Nigeria; Total & Unocal in Burma; BP in Colombia (box 2)
	Private	States hiring private military companies à la Sierra Leone with Executive Outcomes and Papua New Guinea with Sandline (box 4)	Smaller-scale mining operations using private security forces (box 3)

The third dimension to consider in constructing a typology of natural-resource conflicts concerns the participants, instigators, and targets of violence. An important distinction here is between violence that is unidirectional and violence that is multidirectional. In this sense, "unidirectional" refers to violence that flows primarily in one direction—from an instigator to a target. "Multidirectional" refers to violence that flows back and forth between competing parties. These categories should be seen as ideal types representing different ends of a continuum, with many points in between. For example, the violence directed against the Ogoni in Nigeria was unidirectional in the sense that the Ogoni were the recipients of violence (more than two thousand civilians were killed) but were not instigators of violence (no Shell employees or Nigerian security personnel are known to have been killed by the Ogoni). The violence in Colombia, on the other hand, has tended to be multidirectional—comprising, for instance, government violence against rebels, rebel violence against the government, rebel violence against corporations, and corporate financial support for government violence against rebels.

The participants also vary. In some countries, like Colombia and Sierra Leone, sovereign governments face viable, well-organized competitors. In such situations, state officials and private corporations may act both as instigators and targets of violence. In other cases, such as Ecuador and the Niger Delta, the competitors that sovereign authorities face are seeking better terms from the exploitation of natural resources on their land but do so primarily through peaceful means. In these cases, indigenous host communities are likely to be the primary targets of violence.

LINKING RESOURCES AND VIOLENCE

In discussing the dynamics of for-profit violent resource extraction, it is important to consider what is and is not new about this process. While there have been some important changes since the end of the Cold War, there are also definite historical continuities. The practice seen in Nigeria by which state troops protect corporate operations goes back at least as far as 1707, when the German state of Wurttemberg provided troops to the Dutch East India Company.[12] The same company also hired Japanese mercenaries to subdue local opposition to its dominance of the spice trade in what is now Indonesia.[13] Describing the rubber boom in the Belgian Congo, one leading historian observes that "the entire system was militarized. Force Publique garrisons were scattered everywhere, often supplying their firepower to the companies under contract. In addition, each company had its own militia force."[14] Contemporary cases thus have long historical antecedents.

The end of the Cold War has, however, brought about changes that account for the seemingly increased importance of natural resources to both sovereign authorities and their nonsovereign challengers. In particular, faced with superpower disengagement and a more liberalized world economy, both sovereign and nonsovereign leaders have been forced to adopt market-oriented strategies in order to survive.

In and of themselves, lucrative commodities are not either creative or destructive forces. They do, however, seem to encourage particularly poor policy making on the part of government leaders. The fact that many diverse states that are richly endowed with resources have produced dismal economic and political results has variously been described as the "resource curse thesis" and the "paradox of plenty."[15] In terms of sovereign states, while the resource curse has a number of different aspects, we will focus on three here: the *internationalization*, *centralization,* and *privatization* of the state.[16] In the interaction of these three factors one can find reasons why lucrative natural resources often encourage state rulers to embrace violence.

The *internationalization* of a state signifies the increasing dependence of state leadership, particularly in the absence of Cold War superpower backing, upon the revenue earned by such fully internationalized commodities as diamonds, oil, and hardwood forest products. Such commodities are "fully internationalized" in the sense that their revenues are derived from the external global economy and are paid in dollars. The presence of such hard currency rents obviates the needs for domestic taxation and state building. This internationalization strategy is appealing, because "the ruler finds that encouraging these various external actors to align themselves with his political network's private interests maximizes the resources available to clients, reinforces his personal capacity to control resource distribution and hence increases the political authority at his command."[17]

A state becomes *centralized* "as a mechanism of accumulation and distribution."[18] In most tropical countries, the state claims exclusive ownership over valuable natural resources. The monies earned from these commodities are frequently paid directly into the central government's treasury. Local and regional authorities tend to have little, if any, claim on these revenue streams. In Nigeria, for example, the percentage of revenue allocated to regions of derivation declined from 50 percent at independence to a low of 1.5 percent in the early 1990s (it is presently 13 percent). The centralized receipt of natural-resource revenue encourages corruption and cronyism. The state is simultaneously amplified and destabilized as central power increases but "is typically combined with weak authority and limited administrative and institutional capacity in the context of intense competition for state resources."[19]

The public relations aspects of natural-resource conflicts will likely prove far more challenging for U.S. forces than the military aspects.

Finally, a state is *privatized* in the sense that rulers increasingly abjure formal bureaucracies and institutions in favor of their own, personalized networks of control. The result is the emergence of "strong networks of complicity between public and private-sector actors" outside formal state institutions.[20] The wealth generated from such networks is then translated into political resources to reward cronies and punish enemies.

Leaders of internationalized, centralized, and privatized resource-rich states depend upon commercially successful exploitation of natural resources for their survival. This dependence upon the revenue streams generated by natural resources promotes and encourages violence. The frequent end result of such vested interest in the efficient and uninterrupted exploitation of profitable resources is that "militaries, paramilitary organizations, and state agencies often create or exacerbate resource-based conflicts by their participation in protective activities, their involvement as actors, or their coercive tactics."[21]

The ending of Cold War financial support also shifted the calculus of guerilla movements in a more market-oriented direction. As one observer points out, the decline in external support and patronage "has not led guerrilla movements to conclude that they should stop fighting: it has just made them realize that their war economies have to change completely."[22] Thus, rather than trying to woo foreign patrons, opposition groups have increasingly focused on controlling remunerative commodities that can be traded globally. Gems and diamonds are ideal, in that they are easy to extract, can be transported economically, and, at least after processing, are difficult to identify by region of origin. Successful examples can be found throughout Africa. Between 1992 and 1998, UNITA obtained an estimated minimum revenue of $3.72 billion from diamond sales.[23] In the early 1990s, Charles Taylor's "Greater Liberia" earned an estimated eight to ten million dollars a month from various corporations extracting rubber, timber, iron ore, gold, and diamonds from territory it controlled.[24] Based on their demonstrated and long-standing abilities to finance themselves, one suspects that former warlords like Jonas Savimbi and Charles Taylor make reliable business partners.

The shift toward natural resources–based funding for rebel groups has had two distinct results, both of which lead to increased levels of violence. First, this shift has encouraged a fragmentation and proliferation in the number of rebel groups. Control over lucrative natural resources increases local actors' freedom of maneuver. During the Cold War, rebels had incentives to remain united—to assure outside supporters and enjoy the benefits of external funding, which usually came through a centralized channel. Today, however, financing "is directly raised at a local level by individuals who have less and less reason to accept the control of any hierarchy or authority."[25] This change is reinforced by the proliferation in light arms and the resulting buyers' market for such weapons: "Individuals and small groups can now easily purchase and wield relatively massive amounts of power."[26] The second shift concerns changes in the types of rebel groups. Employing a distinction between "stationary" and "roving" bandits, one scholar argues that the participants in today's resource-based conflicts are increasingly likely to be of the roving variety. Whereas stationary bandits depend on the prosperity of their host communities and thus have reason to establish viable systems of governance, roving bandits "merely extract resources from areas and move on. They will therefore tend to be extremely predatory and destructive."[27] This argument is correct about the predatory nature of today's rebel groups but wrong, at least in the context of natural-resource conflicts, about who it is that has to "move on"—it is the local civilian population that is forced to flee. Thus, the traditional guerilla emphasis on winning popular support has given way to a more vicious strategy of territorial control through population displacement.[28] The growth in the number of rebel groups and their increasingly predatory nature contribute to the escalation of violence surrounding natural-resource extraction.

While both states and rebel groups have incentives for violence, each ultimately depends upon the availability of willing corporate partners if it is to transform resources under its control into hard currency. Conflict-ridden tropical countries would initially appear to be unappealing locations for foreign investment. Poor enforcement of property rights and inability to guarantee physical and legal protection of assets effectively bar entry for most service and manufacturing firms. As one theorist maintains, "the former requires a government that can enforce property rights and prosecute infringement on them. The latter requires political stability that allows foreign business to operate and recoup investments."[29] Such concerns do not, however, affect self-sufficient, self-contained resource-extraction operations to the same degree. These enclaves do not depend on local firms as suppliers, nor do they require local markets for their goods. Their basic requirements are just secure working facilities and access to ports or airports from which their products can be transported to the global marketplace. The cash flow generated by lucrative resource extraction means that "firms earning resource rents can afford to pay criminal gangs, private militias, or nascent rebel armies for the private enforcement of their property rights while still earning a normal profit."[30] Such firms can also, as in the second quadrant of our table, afford to pay "field allowances" to sovereign militaries and, if necessary, purchase weapons for them.

The ability to cordon off operations from problems in the local economy and the fact that resource-extraction firms must go where the resources are allow these companies to bear political risks of a different order of magnitude than other firms will consider—thus Shell's decision in November 1995 to announce a three-to-four-billion-dollar investment in Nigeria a week after Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni leaders were hanged, and the continued refusal of companies like Total and Unocal to disengage from Burma long after other well known firms, like Levi Strauss, Motorola, and Pepsi, have done so. As one former oil executive puts it, for a resource-extraction firm, "dealing with the regime in place, regardless of its nature, is comparable to dealing with the owner of a property which is needed for a project."[31] One might add that the "regime in place" may or may not be a recognized sovereign government.

Opposition groups have increasingly focused on controlling remunerative commodities that can be traded globally.

The interesting question here is just how much of a role corporations play in the violence surrounding natural-resource conflicts. As one leading scholar argues, much of the "resource curse" literature treats criminal gangs and private militias as exogenous—that is, the decision of resource firms to employ them does not influence the strength, prevalence, or behavior of such groups. Yet in settings where the rule of law is already tenuous, "the presence of resource firms may help these groups form (or enable preexisting groups to expand) by giving them lucrative opportunities for extortion. Just as the presence of monopoly rents tends to foster rent-seeking behavior, the presence of resource rents may foster the rise of extralegal organizations that seek out 'protection rents.'"[32]

While this argument focuses exclusively on "extralegal organizations," the second box in our table (private resource extractors, public security providers) illustrates that this logic applies equally well to sovereign security forces that take advantage of these "lucrative opportunities for extortion." Some resource-extraction firms subcontract their security functions to rebel groups or private military companies; others utilize sovereign armies. The underlying logic remains the same.

Another way of framing this question is to ask whether corporations actively play a role in creating, maintaining, or exacerbating violence or whether, as the firms themselves would have it, they are merely innocent bystanders, complying with all relevant domestic regulations. In fact, and even beyond the enormous financial support they offer governments and rebel movements, the centrality of corporations in creating and exacerbating security threats to local populations can be demonstrated in two main ways.

First, corporations have a *catalytic* effect, tending to bring local populations into confrontation with military forces. Looking specifically at oil companies, in the Burmese case it is estimated that the troops stationed where the Yadana natural-gas pipeline was constructed increased from five battalions in 1990 to more than fourteen in 1996.[33] In the Nigerian case, it was corporate actions, such as polluting the environment and refusing to pay compensation for such pollution, that led to community protests in the first place. On numerous occasions, such community protests have brought security-force abuses, often "right next to company property or in the immediate aftermath of meetings between company officials and individual claimants or community representatives."[34] Perhaps the ultimate expression of this corporations-as-catalysts logic comes from the Sudan. The correlation there between planned corporate oil-exploration sites and subsequent Sudanese military offensives is striking:

> Military operations against rebel forces in Western Upper Nile and military operations designed to secure the oil fields are not distinct from one another. In fact, they are the same. Oil facilities and infrastructure are de facto military facilities, the oil fields are the most heavily militarized locations, oil company property and personnel are viewed as military targets by rebel forces and indigenous rural communities are considered security threats by forces protecting oil company property.[35]

Second, companies can have a *direct* effect on the security of local host communities. Oil companies have been accused of purchasing weapons for state security services in Colombia and Nigeria. They have also (in Burma and Nigeria) transported military troops in their helicopters and boats and (in the Sudan) shared airport facilities with helicopter gunships. Furthermore, corporations may make specific requests for military assistance, or not, as they choose. Oil companies have directly requested assistance from the Nigerian security services in a number of episodes that have subsequently resulted in the deaths of nonviolent protestors.[36] These companies claim credit for the peaceful resolution of disputes when they ask the military authorities not to intervene forcibly. Yet they disclaim responsibility for fatalities when they do request intervention, arguing that they are required to do so by domestic law. Companies are not powerless actors. They make choices that directly affect the security or insecurity of local populations.

Western armed forces might be misled into thinking that resource-rich West African countries are far more peaceful than they really are.

Unlike state leaders and guerilla groups, however, corporations are arguably the only leg of this tripod of actors on which in recent years incentives for *less* violent behavior have increased. In 1997, following a torrent of bad publicity in the wake of the Ogoni hangings in 1995, Royal Dutch/Shell became the first energy company publicly to declare support for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The following year, the company explicitly addressed human rights issues in the first of a series of annual reports on the firm's financial, social, and environmental responsibilities.[37] Texaco withdrew from operations in Burma in 1997. De Beers has recently announced plans to transform the way it conducts its business in the wake of mounting public opposition to its purchase of diamonds from rebel groups in Angola and Sierra Leone.[38]

The extent of such changes should not, however, be exaggerated. The British firm Premier Oil, for example, chose to remain in Burma for more than two years after the British government took the unprecedented step in April 2000 of asking it to withdraw from the country.[39] TotalFinaElf and Unocal still remain in Burma today. The Malaysian state oil company Petronas maintains investments in Angola, Burma, Chad, and war-torn southern Sudan. Even after the bad publicity surrounding Shell's links to the Nigerian military, Chevron transported military troops on two separate occasions in 1998 and 1999 that resulted in the deaths of unarmed civilians.[40] When asked at a shareholders meeting in May 1999 whether the company would officially demand that the Nigerian military not shoot protestors at Chevron facilities, the chairman and chief executive officer gave a one-word response: "No."[41]

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND SCHOLARSHIP

Conflicts surrounding the extraction of lucrative natural resources are becoming increasingly prevalent, but there are two particular reasons for caution before a decision to intervene. First, local rebel and guerilla movements consider the large revenue streams generated by natural resources worth fighting for. While such forces may not pose serious operational risks for the U.S. military, the possibility is very real of daring raids or ambushes meant to produce a few dozen U.S. casualties, as in Somalia, to undermine civilian support for the intervention. Second, and perhaps more importantly, engagement in such conflicts potentially opens U.S. forces to serious risks with respect to public relations and reputation. Activists, nongovernmental organizations, and what some observers have labeled "transnational advocacy networks" have proven increasingly adept at networking with local host communities in oil-rich regions like the Niger Delta and southern Chad and at "telling their story" to the outside world.[42] As local residents in such areas typically live in abject poverty, without access to piped drinking water or electricity, when billions of dollars of (say) oil wealth are being taken from their lands, that story is likely to resonate well. It is not difficult to envision a scenario in which U.S. forces intervening to preserve access to oil or other vital mineral supplies end up being portrayed, rightly or wrongly, as the military wing of large transnational corporations or as willing accomplices of corrupt and repressive regimes like those in Angola or the Democratic Republic of Congo. The public relations aspects of natural-resource conflicts will likely prove far more challenging for U.S. forces than the military, operational, or strategic aspects.

In terms of general policy, such bold and dramatic suggestions as the recent proposal to manage global resource stockpiles collaboratively, through the establishment of new international organizations, seem implausible.[43] Instead, the greatest leverage for improvement lies perhaps in pressuring private-sector actors to end their complicity in the violent extraction of lucrative natural resources. This strategy is certainly not guaranteed to succeed, but there are clear cases in which large corporations have changed (or at least acknowledged the need to change) their behavior. As a group, private-sector actors would seem more amenable to moral suasion than are either state leaders or guerillas.

There is the danger, however, that larger corporations obliged by public pressure to disengage from volatile regions will simply subcontract that business to smaller and less scrupulous operators. This was one of Shell's responses to calls to pull out of Nigeria: "If we leave," the company said in effect, "the oil will still be taken out, but by companies that are less open to responsible dialogue than we are." On one hand, this argument should be rejected summarily. As one philosopher comments on oil investment in the Sudan, "Providing strategic resources and moral cover to a regime which is committing crimes against humanity . . . is wrong. No one should be involved in it, regardless of what anyone else does."[44] On the other hand, however offensive and self-serving such a corporate rationale, there is some truth to it. While companies like Shell and Chevron may have much to answer for, fly-by-night proxies are not necessarily desirable alternatives. Indeed, in companies like Petronas and Unocal we may already be seeing the emergence of a new breed of second-tier transnationals with business models premised on their comparative advantage in unsavory markets where more socially responsible companies fear to tread. Still, the conclusion remains that for those concerned with improving human and environmental conditions in resource-rich regions, private-sector corporations offer the best prospect for positive movement of any of the three legs of the violent-resource-extraction triangle.

A number of theoretical implications also emerge. The first is the need to direct analytical attention toward the economic rationality underlying these conflicts. Theoretical explanations that focus on ancient hatreds or primordial ethnic differences are unlikely to be of much use in explaining the market-oriented behavior of participants in violent, for-profit extraction of natural resources.

While much of the academic international relations literature has focused on "failed" or "collapsed" states, the dynamics of natural-resource conflicts suggest a different focus. A more fruitful avenue of inquiry might be the de facto privatization of the state by warlords, state leaders, and their global corporate partners. Very few states actually collapse. Even those that do, like Cambodia, Lebanon, and Somalia, are propped up juridically by the international society of sovereign states, which has a compelling interest in their at least nominal preservation. The institution of sovereignty is not in widespread decline and we should not expect to see large numbers of states collapsing in the coming years: "The main danger lies less in the disappearance of States than in their takeover by business interests."[45] Juridical states will continue to survive; the idea and practice of the nation-state, however, "will become ever more marginal to deals negotiated between local chiefs and transnationals, an imbalance in bargaining power if ever there was one."[46]

Theories of international relations are often presented in universal terms. In reality, their relevance may be limited to very specific regions or time periods.[47] The insights generated by our focus on natural resource–related conflicts do not apply globally. Such factors as the simultaneous internationalization, centralization, and privatization of the state, and pressure on opposition groups to shift toward more market-oriented strategies, simply are not present in many instances. Nonetheless, if whatever theories are ultimately developed to explain the link between violence and resources are not universal, they will be relatively broadly applicable across an equatorial belt of resource-rich states in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Moving beyond this preliminary exploration of the conceptual issues surrounding natural resource–related conflicts, one of the first tasks would be to refine the typologies employed here and to see what (if any) generalizations, however contingent, emerge from them. In other words, is the violence surrounding natural resources higher or lower, or more or less amenable to peaceful settlement, when certain types of actors or resources are involved? Are there contingent generalizations that hold across particular subsets or types of natural resource–related conflicts?

A goal for further research should be to clarify how broadly or narrowly such contingent generalizations apply. It is still an open question whether or not economies based on commodities other than oil, like those of Botswana or Papua New Guinea, can fruitfully be compared to those of petro-states like Iraq and Venezuela.[48] Can all resource-rich or mineral-exporting states be treated similarly, or do, for example, diamond states have distinctly different dynamics than oil states? Recent empirical work suggests that both oil and other non-oil resources have strong and substantive anti-democratic effects, but clearly more needs to be done here.[49] Similarly, there is a potential selection bias at work toward cases like Angola, Burma, Colombia, and Sierra Leone. The danger here is that "in examining only cases of conflict, one is likely to find at least partial confirmation of whatever one is looking for."[50] To address this problem, further research needs to be conducted into the question of why some resource-rich countries, like Botswana and Chile, have been able to avoid such conflict.

NOTES

1. See, for example, James Lamont and Michael Peel, "Human Rights Issues in Focus as U.S. Interest in African Oil Surges," *Financial Times,* 29 October 2002.
2. Peter Wallensteen and Margareta Sollenberg, "Armed Conflict, 1989-98," *Journal of Peace Research* (September 1999), p. 596.
3. Ibid., p. 605.
4. Accurate casualty figures for the Ijaw and Ogoni are difficult, if not impossible, to come by. Most estimates are that between two and three thousand Ogonis were killed from 1993 to 1995. According to Patterson Ogon of the Ijaw Council for Human Rights, approximately 2,600 Ijaws were killed in oil-related protests or repression between December 1998 and November 1999. An additional 1,763 Ijaws were killed in the town of Odi alone in November 1999. Personal interview, Port Harcourt, Nigeria, 15 January 2001.
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6. Michael L. Ross, "The Political Economy of the Resource Curse," *World Politics* (January 1999), pp. 297–98.
7. Michael T. Klare, "The New Geography of Conflict," *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2001),

p. 53. See also Michael T. Klare, *Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2001).

8. Klare, "The New Geography of Conflict," p. 52.

9. Charles King, "Ending Civil Wars," Adelphi Paper 308 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1997), p. 15.

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13. "A Taste of Adventure," *The Economist*, 19 December 1998, p. 82.

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16. Andrew Apter, "Death and the King's Henchmen: Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Political Ecology of Citizenship in Nigeria," in *Ogoni's Agonies: Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Crisis in Nigeria*, ed. Abdul Rasheed Na'Allah (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 1998), pp. 121–60.

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18. Apter, "Death and the King's Henchmen," p. 133.

19. Michael J. Watts, "Oil as Money: The Devil's Excrement and the Spectacle of Black Gold," in *Money, Power and Space*, ed. Stuart Corbridge et al. (Oxford, U.K.: Blackwell, 1994), p. 418.

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