



Utrecht University

# China's Non-Intervention in Sudan and South Sudan: Finding Traces of Remote Warfare

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Master Thesis

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## CHINA'S REMOTE INTERVENTION STRATEGY

Remote Warfare facilitates the minimisation of risks when intervening in complex conflict theatres through intricate and liquid warfare tactics. The emergence of new military strategies constantly alters the way in which remote warfare is employed. Therefore, contemporary scholarship still seeks to grasp the functions of these warfare strategies.

This thesis develops a hybrid framework based on the alliance theory and the political economy of conflict to identify the strategies and functions of non-Western approaches to remote warfare. By applying this framework to the case of China's remote intervention in Sudan and South Sudan from 2005 to 2018, Chinese remote intervention strategies and their inherent functions are discovered.

The study investigates Sino-Sudanese interactions in empirical reports to uncover their underlying dynamics. The findings demonstrate that China innovatively learned to adapt its remote strategy for realising its changing ambitions in the shifting conflicts in the Sudans. Moreover, this strategy is determined to function for securing China's oil investments, while diminishing its footprint in the Sudans to not contradict the Chinese non-intervention policy. Finally, China's strategy is revealed to deliberately support human rights abuses to create a hostile investment environment for the West. After first providing massive armaments to the Sudans, China later placed substantial investments to monopolise themselves as the primary customer of the Sudanese oil production. Consequently, this thesis explains how and why China procedurally developed its own approach for non-*direct* intervention to secure its access to oil in Sudan and South Sudan.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

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<b>BRI</b>	<i>Belt and Road Initiative</i>	<b>PLA</b>	<i>People's Liberation Army</i>
<b>CNPC</b>	<i>China National Petroleum Corporation</i>	<b>PRC</b>	<i>People's Republic of China</i>
<b>CPA</b>	<i>Comprehensive Peace Agreement</i>	<b>PSMC</b>	<i>Private Security or Military Contractors</i>
<b>CPoC</b>	<i>Communist Party of China</i>	<b>SAF</b>	<i>Sudanese Armed Forces</i>
<b>GNU</b>	<i>Government of National Unity</i>	<b>SALW</b>	<i>Small Arms &amp; Light Weapons</i>
<b>GoS</b>	<i>Government of Sudan (North)</i>	<b>SOE</b>	<i>State-Owned Enterprise</i>
<b>GRSS</b>	<i>Government of the Republic of South Sudan</i>	<b>SPLA-IO</b>	<i>Sudanese People Liberation Army In Opposition</i>
<b>HSBA</b>	<i>Human Security Baseline Assessment</i>	<b>SPLM/A</b>	<i>Sudanese People Liberation Movement/ Army</i>
<b>ICE</b>	<i>International Conflict Entrepreneur</i>	<b>UAV</b>	<i>Unmanned Aerial Vehicle</i>
<b>LCE</b>	<i>Local Conflict Entrepreneur</i>	<b>UNMIS</b>	<i>UN Mission in Sudan</i>
<b>NOR- INCO</b>	<i>China North Industries Corporation</i>	<b>UNMISS</b>	<i>UN Mission in South Sudan</i>

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# MASTER THESIS

“First, we should uphold sovereign equality [...] No infringement upon the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a country is allowed [...] Second, we should uphold common security. Security should be universal. All countries have the right to participate in international and regional security affairs on an equal footing and shoulder the shared responsibility to maintain security both internationally and in various regions.

(Speech by Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China at the 60th Anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, 2014)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The five principles of peaceful coexistence are the basis for the foreign policy of the People's Republic of China (PRC). They guide their policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. Yet, these principles have a contradictory disposition. According to the above quote of President Xi Jinping, the first principle upholds territorial sovereignty, but the second entitles any state to enforce security in foreign regions. Considering China's increasing foreign investments, it is reasonable that China seeks to defend the integrity of its partner states in order not to damage its reputation as a trustworthy partner (Shambaugh 2013: 4-10). Nevertheless, the ambiguity of the principles suggests that as soon as Chinese interests abroad are endangered, they will get involved to ensure the security of their investments.

A prominent example is the case of the South China Sea, where China ignores the territorial claims of Southeast Asian states in its endeavour to expand its naval capacity (Alden & Yixiao 2018: 46). Likewise, China is extraordinarily involved in Sudan and South Sudan, where it strives to extract oil resources for its domestic economy (Alden 2006: 148; Besada & O'Bright 2017; Patey 2007; Taylor 2006). Despite local instability and staggering conflict in the countries, China evolved as one of the primary investors and close ally of both Sudans during the last decades. Even though China claims not to interfere with Sudanese internal affairs, its State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) dominate the local resource production and construction business (Patey 2017). Given China's enormous investments in the Sudanese oil market, it becomes clear why it intervenes in the Sudans. However, it is peculiar *how* China gains access to these regions, especially considering the contradiction to its non-intervention policy. One way for states to critically intervene in a conflict region without deploying large military forces is remote warfare.

*“Remote warfare refers to the trend within many Western states towards countering security threats at a distance with a minimal cost in blood and treasure” (Biegon & Watts 2017: 4).*

Western states increasingly employ remote warfare since its alleged effectiveness and low cost are welcome features to justify their interventions in conflict regions. However, remote interventions, as any warfare, can have devastating effects on the designated countries. Hence it is important to understand how they function and why they are utilised. Yet, this type of contemporary warfare has, so far, nearly exclusively been studied in Western foreign policies. Thus, little is known about the use of remote intervention strategies by other major powers. China's interactions with the Sudans have all the traits of remote warfare, as it influences the conflicts in both countries without the direct involvement of the Chinese People's Liberation

Army (PLA). Consequently, the case of the Sudans presents a chance to understand *why* China employs remote warfare as the chosen form of intervention. Therefore, this study investigates China's remote interventions and their functions in the Sudans to answer the question:

*What dynamics of interaction allowed the People's Republic of China to secure access to local resources through remote warfare in Sudan and South Sudan between 2005 and 2018 and what are the functions of China's remote intervention strategy?*

By means of process tracing, this study examines the interactions of China with different Sudanese actors to shed light on their underlying dynamics which permit China access to the Sudans. Thereafter, a hybrid framework based on Stathis Kalyvas' alliance theory and David Keen's thoughts on the political economy of conflict will be utilised to detect China's remote strategy and analyse its functions. On the grounds of diagnostically extracted reports from the regions, this study shows how China's remote interventions carry a distinctive signature. Moreover, the thesis elaborates that Chinese remote warfare in the Sudans gradually developed over time to ensure an effective securing of interests throughout the changing realities of the conflict. This investigation contributes to the debate around the functioning of remote warfare by discovering how non-Western states secure their interests abroad in the 21st century.

First, Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature to introduce the underlying considerations of this study. Then, Chapter 3 introduces the theoretical foundations and presents the operational analytical framework for the study of remote interventions. Chapter 4 exhibits the research design and clarifies how the data for the analysis were gathered and organised. In the following, Chapter 5 establishes the necessary contexts by identifying the reasons, risks and opponents of China's intervention in the Sudanese conflicts. Thereafter, Chapter 6 examines the Sino-Sudanese dynamics of interactions to find out *how* China remotely intervened in the Sudans and determines China's remote intervention strategy. Chapter 7 discusses this strategy to ascertain the functions of China's intervention for understanding *why* China is using remote warfare to intervene. Finally, Chapter 8 concludes the implications of the findings for the research question as well as for contemporary debates about the conduct of remote warfare.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

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### 2.1. REMOTE WARFARE

The shape of modern warfare is changing away from the deployment of large military forces as ever new forms of combat strategies, weapons and technological advances emerge. In an effort to understand the rationale behind the increasing employment of non-conventional military strategies, the recent scholarly debate identifies a variety of phenomena under differing names, such as liquid warfare, proxy warfare, vicarious warfare or simply remote warfare (Adelman & Kieran 2018; Demmers & Gould 2018; Geiß & Lahmann 2017; Hughes 2012; Krieg & Rickli 2018; Mumford 2013; Ohlin 2016; Schulzke 2016; Waldman 2018).

*“Remote warfare constitutes a strategy of countering threats at a distance, without the deployment of large military forces. It generally involves a combination of drone strikes and air strikes from above [and] the deployment of special forces, intelligence operatives, private contractors, and military training teams on the ground” (Biegon & Watts 2017: 1).*

Consequently, scholars engage in debates that seek to grasp the variety of aspects revolving around these 'new' types of warfare which have the goal to minimise the risks of interventions (Demmers & Gould 2018:



365). The idea of creating a distance between an intervening force and local conflict theatres started to develop through the studies about local proxy forces, security cooperation and security assistance (Adelman & Kieran 2018; Biddle et. al. 2018; Biegon & Watts 2017; Brown 2016; Mumford 2013; Ross 2016; Shapiro 2012; Sullivan et. al. 2018). These types of warfare function through building capacities for local allies, allowing them to achieve common objectives with an intervening actor (Biegon & Watts 2017: 2). Subtle external support in forms of the gifting, selling or leasing of infrastructure, arms, weaponry, information, resources or military training to local allies, is meant to tip the tides in conflicts for the benefit of remotely intervening forces (Ibid: 2-4; Mumford 2013; Ross 2016; Shapiro 2012). Another aspect is the increasing involvement of technology in warfare. In this regard, scholars direct most of their efforts to the study of autonomous weapon systems and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), as well as the employment of digital and information-based warfare (Chapa 2017; DeShaw Rae 2014: 19-50; Gregory 2011; Gusterson 2016; Knowles & Watson 2017; Richards 2018; Vertic 2018). Yet, the employment of isolated remote intervention tactics might be insufficient to achieve meaningful objectives (Biddle et. al 2018). They become effective measures when strategically employed in connection with each other (Thaler et.al. 2016). The debate about remote warfare investigates the origins, manifestations, and consequences of these remote warfare strategies as well as what this means for the contemporary understanding of war (Adelman & Kieran 2018: 2).

### PREMATURE DEVELOPMENTS

With regard to human rights, democratic war and critical military ethics, scholars point towards the moral and legal implications of the ability to impact wars without own military on the ground (Galliott 2012; Henriksen & Ringsmose 2015; Sauer & Schörnig 2012). Studies show that remote warfare can destabilise conflict zones and have psychological effects on the remotely operating forces (Ibid; DeShaw Rae 2014: 123-125; Schulzke 2016: 98-102). Moreover, scholars criticise the inhumanness of robotic war machinery alongside the danger of low-cost warfare through asymmetry and raise concerns about the implications for a 'just war' (Boyle 2013; Chapa 2017: 261-264; Der Derian 2003; Gusterson 2016: 60-64; Lee 2013; Zehfuss 2011). These debates about ethical implications are important in order to unveil the dangers of remote interventions. However, they tend to attain an overly critical view and to miss important implications that arise for the distinction between remote warfare and traditional approaches. Warfare always raises delicate ethical considerations. Nonetheless, the distinctive aspect of remote warfare lies within its internal logic of diminishing an intruding state's *footprint* to avoid casualties while still operating quickly and effectively (Day 2002: 2-7; Gusterson 2016:1, 2, 27; Mumford 2013; Schulzke 2016; Smith 2009). For instance, Krieg (2016) argues that for the US deployed UAVs specifically because they constitute a way to sell the success and low cost of military missions to the public. Yet, in fact, agencies of surrogate forces and autonomous weapons are tougher to trace, making it harder to establish responsibilities. Thereby, most considerations of accountability for the intervening state are removed (Krieg 2018; Krieg & Rickly 2018). Consequently, the aspect of functionality of war and the purpose of remote warfare strategies must be studied more thoroughly before engaging in normative discourses.

### FUNCTIONALITY & LIQUIDITY

Remote warfare has to be seen as a flexible tool that functions for the realisation of context-specific goals in the changing nature of conflicts and shifting global structures. Therefore, the debate recently took a turn in discussing more flexible approaches, which study the connection between the employment of different technological and ally-featuring strategies to achieve interests while avoiding risks in warfare. Krieg (2016), for example, reappraises the former debates and introduced the concept of surrogates, which encompasses

“terrorist organizations, insurgency groups, transnational movements, mercenaries or private military and security companies” (p. 99). It works as an umbrella concept for any substitute to an indirect international intervention in a given conflict and hence applies to contemporary developments of warfare. Furthermore, insights about the flexibility of remote warfare reissue the debate as scholars point out how interveners use networks of different measures, which might at an instance appear to not even be connected (Demmers & Gould 2018; Thaler et.al. 2016). In this context, Demmers and Gould (2018) reconceptualise the thought of remote warfare by emphasising the aspect of liquidity in space and time. The idea of liquidity becomes increasingly important to understand the *how* for recent studies of remote warfare, as it allows to grasp not just the connection, but the dynamics of the interchanging measures that intervening states employ. Demmers and Gould (2018) show how new types of interventionist warfare are characterised by a tendency towards risk aversion in connection with a networked nature of war. This plays out in “flexible, open-ended, ‘pop-up’ military interventions, supported by remote technology and reliant on local partnerships and private contractors, through which [coalitions of] parties aim to promote and protect interests.” (Ibid: 366). It is important to mention that parts of these intervention-instances may become rather reactionary than strategic (Ibid). Nevertheless, it can be concluded that, despite its recency, the debate has reached a stage in which the gathered insights contribute substantially to the way that foreign interferences are understood and studied. This is where this thesis picks up the debate and attempt to further the insights into the strategies, as well as the functions of remote warfare.

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## 2.2. THE MISSING PERSPECTIVE

The debate on remote warfare revolves around a number of fairly new phenomena and scholars are still establishing the conceptual and methodological basis to conduct thorough research in this regard. Hence, studies are still scarce that apply the emerging concepts to relevant cases and extend the deeper knowledge about the strategies behind remote warfare. Until now, the debate is mainly based on studies about Western military interventions and more specifically the contemporary military doctrines of the US, UK and France (Krieg 2016; Ohlin 2016; Waldman 2018). It is rather rare to gather founded insights about contemporary remote intervention strategies in the foreign policy of other major superpowers like the Russian Federation or China. This is particularly curious as China, the country with the highest rise in military spending increases its technological warfare capabilities, builds high capacity combat UAVs and increases its cooperation with Private Security or Military Contractors (PSMC) (Arduino 2017; Custers 2016: 220, 221; Wu 2006).

China is advocating a so-called non-intervention policy. Consequently, they refuse to describe their military and security efforts in other countries as warfare. Nevertheless, remote warfare is the ideal tool for a country that has an interest in a conflict-ridden area, but for political reasons wishes not to be physically involved. This could, potentially, constitute another dimension of functionality of these types of warfare methods. Thus, the questions arise, *how* and *why* China employs these types of remote warfare strategies to intervene in foreign conflict regions. Daniel Large (2007) shows that China had an extraordinary influence on the conflicts in Sudan and later South Sudan. Despite their claim to have not interfered, the findings of Large (2008) indicate that China actively exerted influence in many ways starting in 1995 without the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) being physically present. Moreover, China secured its standing as the major trading partner of South Sudan, receiving 95 per cent of their total exports, which consisted to 99,2 per cent of crude petroleum in 2017 (Simoes & Hidalgo 2019). The findings of Large and the current Sino-Sudanese relations give a strong indication of the presence of remote warfare and thus the case of Sudan offers a suitable starting point for the study of Chinese remote intervention strategies.

## ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTION

This study investigates the dynamics of China's interactions with various actors in the Sudans to not just understand *how* but also *why* the PRC employs remote warfare strategies to secure their access to local resources. Hereby, it contributes to the contemporary debate about remote warfare by providing further insights about its employment by non-Western actors. Several authors have shown that Chinese foreign policy differs considerably from Western ones. Subsequently, an approach that allows studying the remote interventions of any state is required (Alden & Large 2011; Callahan 2012; Zhang 2013). This study contributes such an approach, by developing a conceptual and analytical lens for examining remote warfare strategies in non-Western contexts. Thereby, it feeds into the debate about how to study the dynamics and functions of remote interventions (Demmers & Gould 2018; Knowles & Watson 2017; Krieg & Rickly 2018). Lastly, researching the Chinese intervention in the Sudans enhances the understanding of China's involvement in domestic affairs of African countries as it adds a piece to the puzzle of its rising international influence (Alden & Yixiao 2018; King 2013, Large 2016; Patey 2017; Shambaugh 2013; Zhang 2013). Consequently, this research project strives to produce the first concrete study of China's use of remote warfare and, thereby, add to the knowledge about contemporary warfare strategies and liquid types of intervention.

## 3. THEORY

An analytical frame can be described as a “detailed sketch of outline of an idea about some phenomenon” (Ragin & Amoroso 2011: 58) which is connected to a larger theoretical debate. The literature review established that, on the one hand, the study of remote warfare revolves around the notion of risk aversion, which resembles the political economy of conflict. On the other hand, remote warfare aims to strategically acquire access to different areas of conflict theatres, which conceptually connects to the instrumentality of conflict. A hybrid approach between the alliance theory of Stathis Kalyvas and David Keen's functions of conflict theory accommodates these two aspects of remote warfare and therefore qualifies for conceptually guiding this study. The following sections introduce Kalvas' and Keen's approaches and draw on them to develop an operational theoretical framework.

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### 3.1. ALLIANCE THEORY & THE FUNCTIONS OF CONFLICTS

#### ALLIANCE AND ACCESS TO CONFLICTS

According to the alliance theory of Kalyvas, (*individual*<sup>1</sup> & *central*<sup>2</sup>) elitist<sup>3</sup> conflict<sup>4</sup> entrepreneurs<sup>5</sup> form alliances with (*individual*) Local Conflict Entrepreneurs (LCE) in a given area to strategically gain access

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<sup>1</sup> Individuals mean (groups of) human or robotic individuals in this case.

<sup>2</sup> In the centre-periphery model, the centre refers to an economically, militarily or politically superior part of a given social construct while the periphery is less advanced in contrast to the centre. Social constructs are social structures<sup>6</sup> that contain individuals.

<sup>3</sup> Elites are individuals situated at the centre.

<sup>4</sup> Conflicts are social constructs<sup>2</sup> that contain a dispute between or within different structures or different individuals.

<sup>5</sup> Conflict entrepreneur refers to an individual (or a group of individuals) that actively alters a conflict.

to the (*structural*<sup>6</sup>) situation on the ground (2003: 484-486). This theory was developed as an expansion to the elite theories for capturing the chaotic nature as well as the complexity and dynamics of contemporary wars. Elitist strands of constructivist instrumentalism claim that elitist conflict entrepreneurs strategically instrumentalise dynamics in conflict theatres to attain political or economic objectives (Fearon & Laitin 2000; Lemarchand 1994). Kalyvas (2003) explains that the elitist theories only focus on the *central master cleavage* between two or more elitist conflict entrepreneurs (p. 479). A cleavage constitutes a deep ideological or material discrepancy between two or more fractions and establishes the role of an actor in an armed conflict. Elitist theories, however, dismiss the role of (*peripheral*<sup>2</sup>) local conflict entrepreneurs (LCEs), wherefore they fail to provide sufficient understanding for the complexity behind conflicts (Ibid). Conflicts can neither be understood by only studying overarching master cleavages nor *peripheral* local cleavages in isolation (Ibid). Instead, the dynamics of the interactions (*connections*) between the master and the local cleavages can provide insights which adequately capture the chaotic nature of conflicts (Ibid). Elitist conflict entrepreneurs can, thus, only gain *access* to conflictual situations and influence the local cleavages if they interact with LCEs to forge allegiances of convenience (Ibid: 478). This means that, according to the alliance theory, the interaction dynamics between different *central* and *peripheral* actors are crucial for understanding how conflicts are constructed (Ibid: 366-369; 486-487). Hence, the alliance theory can serve to understand *what* the dynamics in a conflict are and *how* conflict entrepreneurs exert influence.

These thoughts are pertinent for understanding how *central* foreign International Conflict Entrepreneurs (ICE) are inherently reliant on *peripheral* local support to execute remote warfare. If a foreign interventionist ICE does not have alliances with LCEs, it will not be able to exert crucial influence in the local cleavages of the conflict. Therefore, intervening ICEs conceptually coincide with elites, which makes the alliance theory especially applicable for understanding how ICEs gain *access* to foreign conflicts. Studying the dynamics of Sino-Sudanese interactions through the analytical lens of the alliance theory creates an understanding of how China gained *access* through remote warfare. Yet, the alliance theory lacks the analytical depth to grasp the (*structural*) economic and political dimensions of remote warfare. Since the alliance theory in isolation does not provide compelling reasons for ICEs to intervene in a certain way, it is supplemented by Keen's theoretical approach.

### THE FUNCTIONS OF CONFLICT

The debate about the political economy of conflict develops around the endeavour to understand the reasons for different actors to involve themselves in warfare. In this regard, scholars claim that wars are fought to satisfy greed and grievances of conflict entrepreneurs (Berdal et. al. 2000; Collier 1999). Yet, in their debate about utility maximisation, scholars treat conflicts as if they were of a purely materialistic nature, disregarding the severity and consequences of violence (Ballentine et. al. 2003: 19, 225; Cramer 2002). In contrast, Keen's (2008) idea of economic functions of war is one approach originating from political economy that complements the alliance theory. Keen manages to bridge constructivism and political economy by creating an approach that combines the idea of conflict production with political economy. His conception of resource wars explains that *individual* conflict entrepreneurs take efforts to involve themselves in costly wars to profit from *access* to *structural* local resources or prevent opposing forces from gaining *access* (Keen 2012: 31, 198). These foreign resources would potentially be unobtainable for

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<sup>6</sup> In a given social construct<sup>2</sup>, the structure defines the architectural conditions that individuals are creating, while being mutually exposed to (e.g. territorial, political, economic, social circumstances that define the social construct).

the intervening forces in peaceful times, but conflicts can leverage unique opportunities in situations where official laws are widely abandoned, and actions or events are difficult to trace (Ibid.). According to Keen (2008), ICEs strategically intervene in conflict to create *stability*<sup>7</sup> or *instability*. Hence, warfare *functions* to *access* foreign resources, as it can be instrumentalised for securing economic, security and political interests (Ibid). Keen (2008) identifies three types of functions (pp. 17-24). First, conflict entrepreneurs which engage in these types of wars aim for *local and international (intermediate) functions* in order to achieve *gains* like *economic gains*, improving own safety and *security* or some *psychological* and social *benefits*. These *gains* become particularly achievable through the *destabilising* nature of conflicts and would not be achievable in peace times. Second, these actors attempt to find ways for *limiting their own exposure to risks (violence)* in order to minimise the *risks* which can result from the *destabilising* involvement in a conflict. Third, they will strive to *weaken the political opposition*, by possibly luring it into encounters with the rivalling forces (expose them to *instability*) or reinforcing existing cleavages to assure that the opposition cannot *access* the *gains*. Through analysing which functions a certain type of intervention has, it can be concluded *why* an ICE chose a particular strategy for *accessing* a foreign conflict. Therefore, the idea of war as an opportunity that *functions* through strategic *stabilisation* or *destabilisation* for achieving *access* to *gains*, can be used to investigate *why* China has specifically chosen a certain intervention strategy in the case of the Sudans.

### BRIDGING THEORIES

There are three reasons why the thoughts of Kalyvas and Keen are suitable to construct the analytical frame for the study of China's remote warfare. First, these theories constitute a way to study the *how* and *why* of the use of remote warfare. While Kalyvas contributes more to the thought about *how* different actors connect and influence each other to gain *access* to conflicts, Keen rather provides clear *functions* that explain *why* different actors choose certain strategies. Second, these theories are epistemologically placed between the traditions of (individualist) constructivism and (positivist) rationalism as they draw from both notions of conflict production and the rationality of actors (Kalyvas 2006: 12-14; Keen 2008: 50). This means that both theories are based on the ideas of socially constructed reality and rational actors, while they critique the pure social creation of conflict as well as the strict notion of utility maximisation. This allows the study of remote warfare as a contemporary phenomenon, which combines instrumentality and rationality. Finally, both theories are ontologically agency-centred<sup>8</sup> and complement each other by aiming at providing guidelines to navigate through the complexity of conflicts. Together Kalyvas' alliance theory and Keen's theory about the functions of war provide a suitable analytical framework to approach the liquid nature of remote warfare. For the study of empirical phenomena with abstract theoretical thoughts, it is necessary to develop the conceptual considerations into a theoretical framework that is operational for analysing empirical evidence. Subsequently, the following section develops a theoretical framework for the study of the Chinese remote intervention in the Sudans on the grounds of the theories of Kalyvas and Keen, (visualised in Figure 1).

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<sup>7</sup> Stability relates to the stability of the social structure and the absence of conflict. Instability refers to instability of the social structure and the presence of conflict. The 'levels' of stability are assumed to be able to increase and decrease.

<sup>8</sup> Agency-centred social theories approach reality with the assumption, that individuals have the capability (agency) to alter their structural conditions. This does not mean that structures do not influence individuals, but it merely sets the analytical lens on the agency of the individual.

## THE HYBRID THOUGHT OF THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY OF ALLIANCES

	<b>Center</b>	<b>Connection ↔</b>	<b>Periphery</b>
<b>Individual</b>	International Actor (ICE & opposing ICEs)	Interactions ↔ (If Dynamics entail Coordination=Alliances)	Local Actor (LCEs)
<b>Connection ↓</b> <i>(Agency-centred)</i>	Master Cleavage ↓ (between opposing ICEs)	Intervention ↘ (Access depends on Alliances; Functions: (de)stabilisation)	Local Cleavage ↓ (between LCEs)
<b>Structural</b>	International Structure (International Conflict, Reputational Gains/ Losses)	Structural spillover ↔ (Risk of losing reputation Risk of opposition accessing)	Local Structure (Local Conflict, Local Gains, Local Security)

Figure 1. Visualisation of Theoretical Framework. Based on Kalyvas 2006 & Keen 2008; Own creation.

Figure 1 shows how ICEs and LCEs are connected through interactions that, if coordinated, allow the intervention of the ICE into the local conflict. If an intervention successfully allows access, then the ICE may (de)stabilise the local conflict to achieve local and international *gains*. Yet, interfering with local cleavages entails local *risks* that can affect, either the local security of the ICE in the conflict or its international reputation. Moreover, the intervention runs the international risk of the *opposition* gaining access to the conflict, thus disadvantaging the intervening ICE in the master cleavage of the international conflict. As a result of the ICE seeking access to local and international gains while running local and international risks, the intervention strategy has to serve the three functions: *achieving local and international gains*, *avoiding (local) risks*, and *weakening the opposition* (avoiding international risks).

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### 3.2. DEVELOPING AN OPERATIONAL THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Connecting the theories of Kalyvas and Keen allows studying the functions of the dynamics of interactions which enable access to a conflict. Yet, to navigate through the complexity and dynamics of conflict, both theories require sufficient contextualisation. Therefore, the first part of the analytical framework reflects on the context of the conflict and establishes the ICE's reasons for involving itself in conflict, the risks it encounters while intervening in local cleavages and which opposition it faces in the master cleavage. Combining Kalyvas' and Keen's theories, the second part of the framework determines the dynamics of interactions and establishes the intervention strategy to examine *how* an ICE gains access to local conflict theatres. Then, on the grounds of the hybrid conceptual considerations, the third part of the framework elaborates the functions of the interaction dynamics to determine *why* an ICE chose the remote strategy that was identified. Additionally, this section develops a set of operational sub-questions during the explanation of the framework, which accordingly structures the subsequent analysis of the case of China's intervention in the Sudans.

#### ESTABLISHING REPRESENTATIVE CONTEXTUAL REALITIES

Before being able to navigate through the complexity of conflict for understanding an intervention, it is crucial to construct a 'road map' for orientation. On the grounds of their intricacy, it is never possible to

grasp the entirety of aspects to a conflict. Thus, in the following, the closest representation of reality<sup>9</sup> possible is adumbrated to establish relevant contexts as navigation points.

### 1. What are the contexts of the ICE's (China's) intervention in the local conflict (Sudans)?

According to Kalyvas (2006), these roadmaps are assembled by generalising and determining essential characteristics to forge representative contextual realities (Ibid: 48-51). *Central* international contexts can be determined by drawing on different macro-level studies about “the realm of elites, ideologies, and grand politics, where research in history, historical sociology, military strategy, area studies, comparative politics, and international relations is primarily located” (Kalyvas 2006: 10). Moreover, “the province of anthropological and microhistorical studies, literature, and novels – which opens up the black box of intracommunity dynamics and individual behaviour” (Kalyvas 2006: 11) provides the basis for establishing *peripheral* local contexts. By reviewing such studies, it is possible to find sufficient evidence about the local and international realities for establishing the contexts of an intervention.

Keen's theory holds that the intervention strategy of an ICE has three *functions*: *achieving gains*, *avoiding risks* and *weakening the opposition*. Yet, without first establishing what *local and international gains* an ICE seeks in its intervention, what *peripheral risks* it faces by intervening and who it *centrally opposes*, it is not possible to comprehend *how* its intervention strategy works. Consequently, these three contextual aspects need to be understood beforehand. Including Kalyvas' thoughts, realities of a conflict can only be identified within the connections between local realities and international realities. Therefore, an ICE's local- and international *gains* as well as its *risks* and *opposition* need to be connected to the master and relevant local cleavages. As mentioned before, the realities can be grasped by reviewing literature.

In the first step, the ICE's desired *local and international gains* are established. For this, it is initially important to briefly identify the context of the *individual* ICE itself, through elaborating on its own local composition and ascertain its *structural* position in the international system. Establishing an ICE's context enables an informed elaboration about its conduct which is necessary for determining relevant contexts of its intervention. Then the local and international *gains* the ICE seeks can be determined by connecting the composition and position of the (*central*) ICE to the availabilities of the (*peripheral*) foreign conflict theatre. These desired gains are broadly split into three types: *local economic gains*, *improving security and psychological gains*. Without first identifying the desired *gains*, it is not possible to understand which *risks* an ICE might run by seeking access to them, or which *opposition* might be weakened if the gains are acquired.

#### 1.1. What are the gains that the ICE (China) seeks in the local conflict (Sudans)?

Second, by analysing which risks arise while an ICE seeks access to the local and international *gains*, it is possible to determine what *risks* the ICE seeks to *limit its exposure* to. Initially, it is necessary to review studies about local realities for detecting relevant local cleavages. Then it can be assessed how local cleavages put the ICE's access to its local and international gains at *risk*.

#### 1.2. What are possible risks that the ICE (China) runs by interfering with the local cleavages?

Finally, by understanding which other ICE would be *weakened* by the intervening ICE's access to its *gains*, allows determining the *opposition*. In order to do so, it is necessary to review studies about international

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<sup>9</sup> Representation of reality means the capturing (snapshot) of a given social construct (individuals and structures) at a given point in time. Representations of realities mean a quantity of these 'snapshots' over one or many given time periods. Contexts are representations of realities that have relevance for a specific case.

realities and detect the master cleavage. This permits to analyse which *opposing* ICE would be disadvantaged if the intervening ICE gets access to its desired *gains*. By identifying the *opposition*, it is possible to complete the contextual *road map* for understanding international and local realities.

### 1.3. What is the opposition that the ICE (China) faces in the master cleavage?

Answering the three previous sub-questions identifies the ICE's international- and local- *gains*, *risks* in local cleavages and *opposition* in the master cleavage, which together establish the context of an intervention. By considering these contexts it is possible to select meaningful interactions for determining the intervention strategy and understand *how* the ICE intervenes. Additionally, by connecting the detected strategy back to the contexts enables to first elaborate how the strategy *functions*. This provides answers to comprehend *why* the ICE chose to intervene in a specific way. After the context was established, the second part of the framework proceeds to analyse the dynamics of interaction between the intervening ICE and LCEs to establish the intervention strategy.

## ANALYSING DYNAMICS OF INTERACTION: ESTABLISHING STRATEGY

Kalyvas (2006) asserts that alliances are crucial for gaining *access* to foreign conflict theatres. Alliances are coordinated interactions, or interactions that entail coordination between conflict entrepreneurs (Ibid: 14; 383). Interactions are ontologically researchable because they constitute different forms of communication between two entities which can be empirically observed. Hence reports from direct witnesses of communication between ICEs and/or LCEs can provide documented evidence of their interactions. Interactions are indicators for understanding conflict because they are the manifestation of the *connection* between the (*central*) ICE and the (*peripheral*) LCEs. By putting observed individual instances of interaction in connection to each other, as well as an overarching (*realities*) context, over given time periods, it is possible to assess their underlying *dynamics*. These dynamics of interactions only enable an ICE to *access* a foreign conflict theatre, if they allow them to steer the dynamics through coordination with local LCEs. Thus, ICEs need to forge intervention (*access*) strategies to build alliances with LCEs for facilitating coordination. Translated to the hybrid thought of Kalyvas and Keen: intervention strategies are strategic interaction dynamics that *function* for the coordination of actions to control stability or instability in a foreign conflict. These strategies, in turn, empower the ICE to gain *access* to (*de*)stabilise a conflict in order to *achieve gains*, *limit risks* and *weaken the opposition*. Therefore, by understanding how the dynamics of interaction between an ICE and LCEs enables coordination and (*de*)stabilisation, suffices to determine the intervention strategy and learn *how* an ICE intervened in a local conflict.

### 2. How did the ICE (China) gain access to the resources in the conflict (Sudans)?

First, points of interaction between the ICE and LCEs need to be detected and organised. Then it is possible to assess how interactions change in relation to each other and to the overarching context, over a given time period, in order to determine their dynamics.

#### 2.1. What are the dynamics of the ICE and LCE's (Sino-Sudanese) interactions?

If these dynamics of interaction enable the coordination of actions, they facilitate *access* and allow an intervention. Moreover, if the dynamics *stabilise* or *destabilise* the situation, they can be used to obtain *gains* in conflicts. This means by analysing how the dynamics between ICE and LCE's allowed coordination and (*de*)stabilisation, it can be understood how the ICE gained access and determine the intervention strategy.

#### 2.2. How do the interaction dynamics allow coordination and (*de*)stabilisation?



Answering the previous two sub-questions allows to conclude the ICE's intervention strategy and understand *how* the ICE gained access to the local conflict. First, the context chapter establishes representations of the international and local realities and then, the strategy chapter detects the dynamics of the interactions as the connections between these realities. Analysing these dynamics between mutually defining realities and interactions creates an understanding of an intervention in all its complexity. Thus, it is possible to determine the functions of the ICE's remote intervention strategy and learn more about *why* the ICE chose to intervene through its strategy.

### THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF INTERVENTIONS: DETERMINING FUNCTIONS OF A STRATEGY

According to the theories, dynamics of interactions always have specific functions in resource wars. This means that the dynamics of interactions between an ICE and LCEs have three purposes: *local and international functions*, *limiting risks*, and *weakening the opposition*. Assessing how the dynamics of interaction helped an ICE to achieve the reasons for being involved in a conflict, enables determining the functions of an intervention. If the functions of an intervention are determined it is possible to understand *why* an ICE chose the intervention strategy that is defined in sub-question 2.

#### 3. *Why did the ICE (China) intervene in the conflict (Sudans) through its intervention strategy?*

To determine why an ICE intervened through a specific strategy, it must be investigated how the ICE's intervention strategy *functions* for achieving *gains*, avoiding *risks* and weakening *opposition* that were identified in the context chapter.

First, by elaborating how the intervention strategy served to attain the local and international *gains* it is possible to determine its *local and international functions*.

##### 3.1. *How does the ICE's (China's) remote strategy achieve the local and international functions?*

Second, elaborating how the intervention strategy *limited* an ICE's *exposure to the risks*, provides further insights into the *risk-reducing functions* of the strategy.

##### 3.2. *How does the ICE's (China's) remote strategy limit its exposure to risks?*

Third, investigating how the strategy *weakens the opposition*, allows determining the *opposition-weakening functions* of the strategy.

##### 3.3. *How does ICE's (China's) remote strategy weaken the opposition?*

Discovering the *functions* of an ICE's intervention strategy answers the three previous sub-questions. This creates an understanding of *why* the ICE chose this particular strategy to *access* the conflict for *achieving gains*, *avoiding risks* and *weakening the opposition*.

### RESEARCH QUESTION: CHINA'S INTERVENTION IN THE CONFLICTS OF THE SUDANS

The analytical framework enables to study China's intervention in the Sudans, by treating China as (*central*) ICE, Sudanese conflict entrepreneurs as (*peripheral*) LCEs and the Sudanese conflicts as the local conflicts. The established analytical frame is the basis for the research question:

*RQ. What dynamics of interaction allowed the People's Republic of China to secure access to local resources through remote warfare in Sudan and South Sudan between 2005 and 2018 and what are the functions of China's remote intervention strategy?*

Through answering the different sub-questions, it is possible to assess *how* and *why* China intervened through a particular strategy in the Sudans and answer the research question. The scientific study of social phenomena like interventions requires a thorough ‘dialogue’ between ideas and evidence, in order to construct a reliable representation of social reality (Ragin & Amoroso 2011: 57). For developing data into reliable evidence, they must be purposefully and systematically selected on the grounds of theory (Ibid: 16-18). These attributes can be guaranteed through the utilisation of scientific methods and the drafting of a thorough research design which complement the hybrid analytical framework (Ibid: 24). Therefore, the following chapter introduces the research design and method for this study.

## 4. METHOD

### 4.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

The analytical framework clearly identifies what type of evidence the answering of each sub-question requires. First, a thorough literature study about different international and local contexts is required for providing the necessary context and answer the sub-question 1 (Kalyvas 2006: 10). After that, a systematic tracing to find relevant evidence about Sino-Sudanese interactions is needed to study their dynamics and answer sub-question 2. Finally, the findings about Sino-Sudanese interactions need to be connected to the findings of the context chapter to elucidate sub-question 3.

For the analysis of the dynamics of interactions between China and Sudanese conflict entrepreneurs over time, this study strategically investigated empirically-based reports and conducted an interview to trace relevant evidence. The study was designed to be a qualitative study, which focuses on a variety of aspects in a single case. This design increases the probability of finding traces of Sino-Sudanese interactions and provides a suitable ground for studying complex phenomena that are concerned with context specificity.

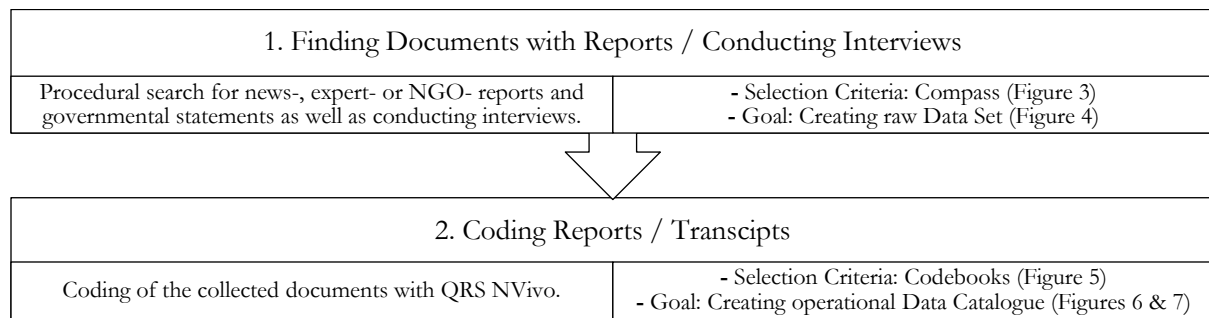


Figure 2. Data collection. Source: Own creation.

To find relevant evidence about Sino-Sudanese interactions, first pertinent documents were scouted, and interviews conducted to create a comprehensive data set. This data set contains sources with reports about individual Sino-Sudanese interactions (Figure 2: Step 1). Through coding, individual interactions were extracted from the documents and systematically organised to facilitate the detection of the underlying dynamics of interactions (Figure 2: Step 2). To carry this out, the qualitative data analysis tool NVivo was utilised because it proves to be especially advantageous for analysing large amounts of qualitative data (Altheide and Schneider 2013: 11, 95).

The data collection was conducted in line with the process-tracing method which constitutes an investigative approach that aims at diagnostically extracting empirical data, purposefully and selectively (Beach & Pedersen 2013: 2-5; 123-125; Collier 2011: 824; Checkel 2006: 363; George and Bennett 2005: 206;

Venesson 2008: 224, 235). This method relies upon a large variety of data sources including historical memoirs, expert surveys, interview transcripts, press accounts, documents and other relevant sources (Checkel 2006: 363; George and Bennett 2005: 6). To aid the data collection, the Qualitative Document Analysis technique of Altheide and Schneider was used, because it provides an operational way for purposefully acquiring data from a multitude of empirical and online-sources. It works through a hybrid form of document analysis and participant observation by engaging with or “observing” the topic through an in-depth search of relevant documents (Altheide & Schneider 2013: 10-14). Process tracing and Qualitative Document Analysis are especially beneficial for the study of remote interventions because they help to capture phenomena in settings that are characterised by poor availability of data, security concerns and fluid processes (Altheide & Schneider 2013: 28, 29; Lyall 2015: 2, 3). Moreover, process tracing facilitates the bridging between rational choice theories and social constructivism, whereby it helps to bring Keen’s positivist and Kalyvas’ interpretist aspects of the research puzzle together (Checkel 2006: 366; Vennesson 2008: 231, 232). These methods further resonate with the theoretical framework because they allow to diagnostically extract evidence of Sino-Sudanese interactions over various time periods and hence study their dynamics. Finally, working with a large variety of sources increases the chance to find evidence of Sino-Sudanese interactions and enhances reliability by lowering the selection bias (Beach & Pedersen 2013: 124). In line with these key methods, different sources on China’s influences in Sudan were sampled selectively and procedurally to find evidence about Sino-Sudanese interactions.

## 4.2. DATA COLLECTION

### FINDING DOCUMENTS AND CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS

Through a thorough triangulation and an assessment of the validity of reports as well as the use of strict selection criteria, well-founded evidence about the Chinese remote intervention in the Sudans was generated (Lund 2014: 226, 227, 231).

<b>Compass 1. Relevance</b>	<b>Compass 2. Reliability</b>
<div data-bbox="214 1255 769 1335" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">Source must contain/provide evidence about Sino-Sudanese interactions.</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactions that facilitate coordination/(de)stabilisation</li> <li>• Applicable in case the source concerns interactions of Chinese surrogates</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="214 1444 769 1524" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">Be of relevance for the research and su-questions.</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide insights into Sino-Sudanese alliances and the functions of Chinese intervention</li> <li>• Either concern Sino-Sudanese cooperation</li> <li>• Or Chinese remote warfare</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="214 1633 769 1713" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">Concern instances in the time frame from 2005-2018.</div>	<div data-bbox="826 1255 1382 1335" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">Claims must be based on Empirical Observations.</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on evidence in form of: witnesses reports, visual evidence, primary documentation of events</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="826 1465 1382 1545" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">Must be provided by a trustworthy Publisher/Interviewee.</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publisher should either be impartial in the conflict</li> <li>• Or involved in the conflict and treated in light of the bias</li> </ul>

Figure 3. Compass with source selection criteria. Source: Own creation.

The systematic use of strict selection criteria assures that the data contains reliable and relevant evidence. Therefore, the documents and interviews were selected according to specific criteria regarding their relevance and reliability, as portrayed in the compass (Figure 3). These criteria were created inductively on the

grounds of the theoretical frame, the methods and the research question. Yet, to assure further reliability, the insights gained are triangulated and the empirical Chapters 5, 6 & 7 discuss their reliability case-by-case. As a result of the data collection, 104 different documents from 38 publishers were determined on the grounds of the selection criteria in the compass<sup>10</sup>. Moreover, Dr Daniel Large as a leading expert on the Sudans and their relations with China has been interviewed to solidify the findings<sup>11</sup>.

By organising the collected documents according to their type, it is possible to provide an idea which evidences the later analysis is based on. Here ‘type’ refers to the kind of report. The type categories were developed deductively on the grounds of the documents that were found<sup>12</sup>.

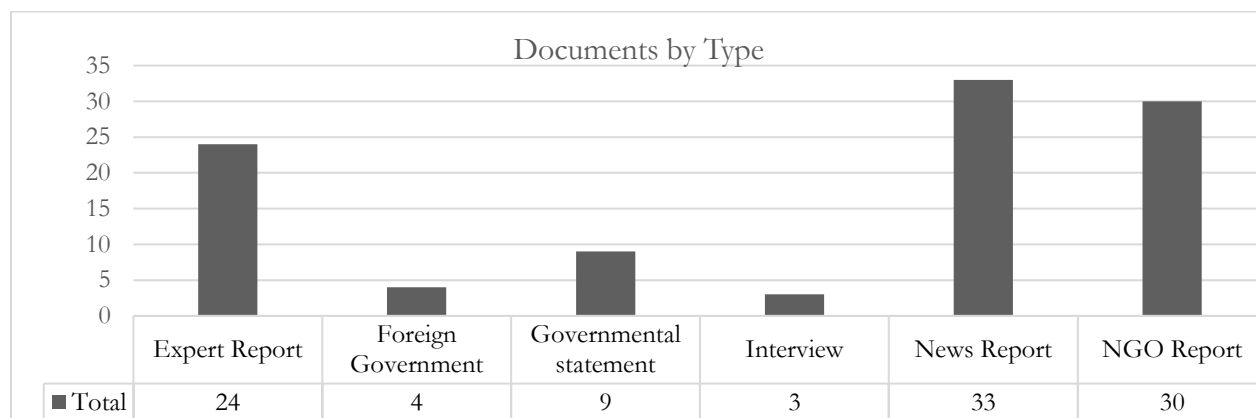


Figure 4. Documents in the dataset displayed by type. Source: Own creation.

Figure 4 portrays the reports that are included in the dataset according to their type. This shows that the dataset is mainly comprised of NGO-, news- and expert reports. These types of reports are usually most trustworthy as they contain direct evidence from local witnesses or visual material to back their claims. In contrast to this, the governments of China, Sudan and South Sudan publish an abundance of documents in which they simply claim their mutual friendship and willingness for cooperation without any deeper informative value. In case a document did not provide additional information about the situation, it was not added to the catalogue. As most governmental statements have been repetitive, there are only very few of these included in the dataset. However, to gain substantial insights from the raw data of the dataset, the reports that the documents contain need to be organised.

#### CODING DOCUMENTS AND TRANSCRIPTS

The documents collected in the data set were scanned for reports of Sino-Sudanese interactions. According to the specifications of two codebooks<sup>13</sup> with consistent and comprehensible categories, the reports were systematically organised to create an operational data catalogue. In the codebooks, a coded unit broadly represents an instance of a Sino-Sudanese interaction, e.g. an event, statement or agreement. The data catalogue, thus, contains an operationalised assortment of evidence which serves as the basis for the case study.

<sup>10</sup> Please find the bibliography of documents under the reference section 9.2 ‘Reports and Empirical Sources’.

<sup>11</sup> More information about the work and expertise of Dr. Large see Appendix 1.

<sup>12</sup> An explanation of the different document categories is provided in Appendix 3.

<sup>13</sup> A detailed explanation of the codes in the codebooks is provided in Appendix 3.

Codebook 1. Cooperation	Codebook 2. Remote Warfare
<div data-bbox="212 247 789 296" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Economic Cooperation</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chinese National Companies</li> <li>• Development Aid</li> <li>• Infrastructure Construction</li> <li>• Oil Production</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="212 426 789 474" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Military Cooperation</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attacks on Oil Production</li> <li>• Peacekeeping</li> <li>• Mediation and Negotiation</li> <li>• Responding to Attacks on Oil Production</li> <li>• Security of Chinese Investments</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="212 636 789 684" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Political Cooperation</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foreign Policy</li> <li>• Forum Cooperation</li> <li>• United Nations</li> </ul>	<div data-bbox="833 258 1414 321" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Human Surrogate Forces</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governmental Surrogates</li> <li>• Local Militias</li> <li>• Private Security Contractors</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="833 422 1414 485" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Military Training</div> <div data-bbox="833 495 1414 558" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Providing the Means for Conducting Warfare</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aerial Vehicles</li> <li>• Constructing Weapon Manufactories</li> <li>• Providing Arms to Opposition Forces</li> <li>• Small Arms and Light Weapons</li> <li>• War Machinery</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="833 720 1414 783" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Technological Surrogates &amp; UAVs</div>

Figure 5. Codebooks. Source: Own creation.

The first codebook contains codes that concern the different aspects of Sino-Sudanese political, economic and military cooperation (Figure 5). These codes were created deductively on the grounds of the reports and were adjusted according to the findings. Organising the reports with regard to different types of (*coordination*) cooperation aims specifically at answering sub-question 2, as well as parts of sub-question 3 and could potentially also yield insights for sub-question 1.

The second codebook organises the Sino-Sudanese interactions regarding different aspects of (*de*)*stabilisation* remote warfare. Codes in the second codebook were created inductively on the grounds of the literature on remote warfare and, if needed, deductively split into subcategories. These codes also especially address sub-question 2 but potentially provide further insights for answering sub-question 3. In the following, the data catalogue is visualised to provide an overview of the organised data. Through this visualisation of data, it is possible to highlight the most important aspects of the findings. It is important to mention that the following charts are based entirely on the reports that were extracted according to the criteria and can therefore only provide an illustrative picture of the reality behind Chinese interactions with actors in the Sudans. Nevertheless, it allows a broad impression of the story that the data tell.

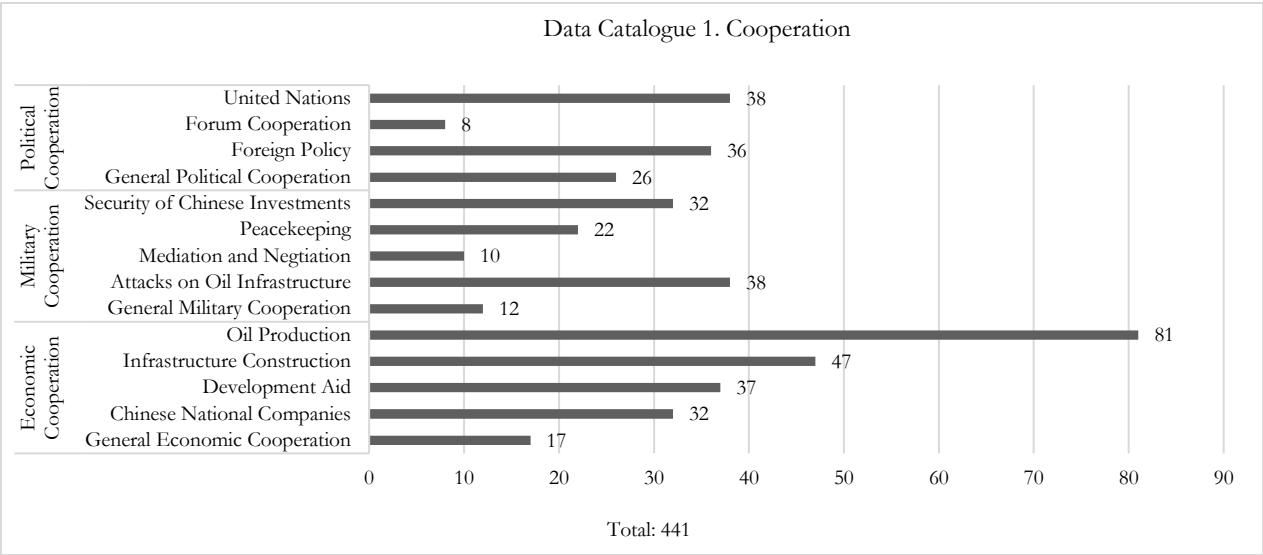


Figure 6. Overview of the data catalogue created with Codebook 1. Source: Own creation.

Figure 6 showcases the number of interactions detected under the different codes of the codebook for Sino-Sudanese (*coordination*) cooperation. This codebook consists of 441 units or reports of interactions that were extracted from the dataset. First, the reported interactions show that China and Sudanese actors cooperate politically, militarily and economically. Especially many interactions were reported concerning oil production and infrastructure development, which already shows that the Chinese actors put a particular focus economic cooperation. In the political area, China cooperates both multilaterally and bilaterally with Sudanese actors. Military cooperation is less frequently reported and mostly regards the security of Chinese investments in connection with attacks on Chinese oil infrastructure in the Sudans. These insights are not particularly new and confirm the focus areas of other scholars that have been engaged in research about China’s influences in the Sudans (Alden & Barber 2018: 3; Large 2007; Large 2009; Patey 2017).

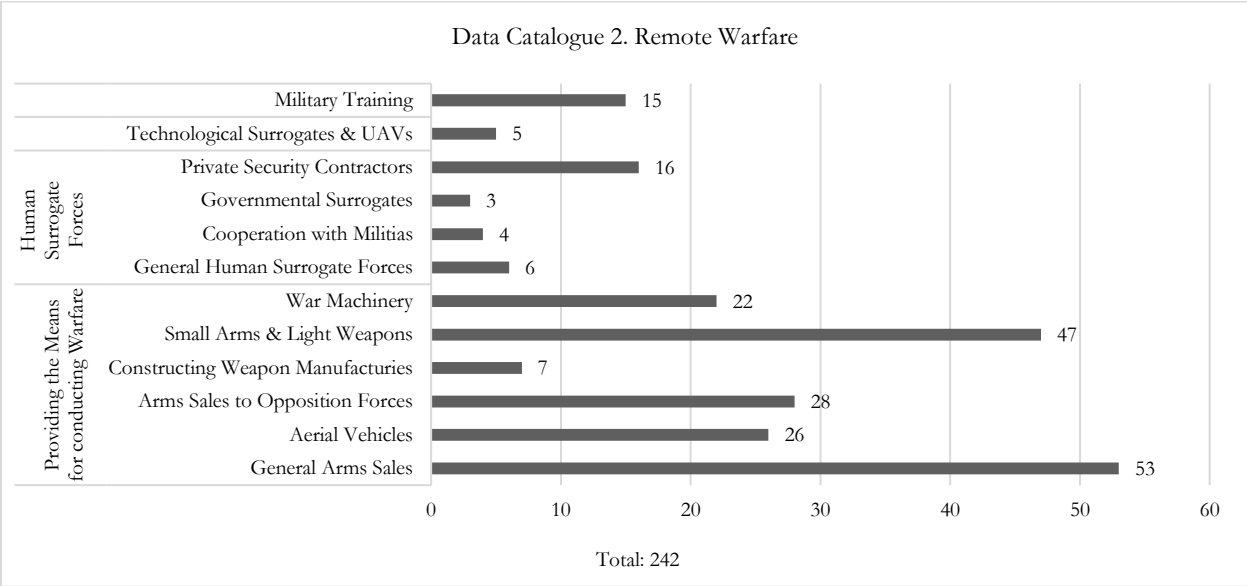


Figure 7. Overview of the data catalogue created with Codebook 2. Source: Own creation.

The second codebook is centred around the concept of remote warfare and contains reports of Sino-Sudanese interactions that are related to *(de)stabilisation*. Figure 7 shows that, in the given case, there is a significant imbalance in the number of reports about the different aspects of remote warfare. There is an abundance of reports about arms sales, including the provision of heavy war machinery and aerial vehicles. The employment of Sudanese governmental and non-governmental surrogates by China was also reported frequently. Contrary to this, the reports about technological surrogates and military training are scarce. The scarcity or absence of reports about interactions concerning a specific aspect of remote warfare does not mean that this aspect is not present in the Chinese intervention strategy. However, on the grounds of the available data in the data catalogue, it is not possible to make inferences about the employment of an aspect that was not reported.

### ADDRESSING THE BOUNDARIES

Before engaging in the analysis, it is necessary to address four central limitations of the collected data. First, because of the selective sampling, possible lack of documentation, or restrictions to access, the data catalogue does not cover the entirety of available data. Hence, the data catalogue only provides a representative picture of social reality and the findings must be treated accordingly. This means, that conclusions based on the grounds of the available data depend on their reliability. This thesis guarantees that evidence about the representations of reality is as accurate as possible by triangulating sources and using a thorough methodology. Second, the gathered data is based on empirical reports, which might be biased and, thus, only selectively provide empirical evidence. Hence, this case's reliability depends on the reflection on the quality of evidence. Third, the collection of data itself is prone to a selection bias. Nevertheless, the impartiality of source selection is addressed by including documents from a considerable variety of sources as well as providing transparent selection and coding criteria. Fourth, process tracing is a single case focussed and investigatory approach, which means that generalisation can be difficult (Bennett & Checkel 2015: 13). However, generalisation is no objective of this study. Oppositely, this research project seeks to study remote warfare in the specific context of a case for adding a missing perspective to the existing research. In other words, this study aims at learning about different aspects of the given phenomenon and not at the establishment of a generally applicable practice. Moreover, through connecting the case with other academic works, its relevance for the debate was established.

Consequently, despite the previously mentioned boundaries, it is possible to draw meaningful conclusions for research- and sub-questions on the grounds of the evidence. After the quality of gathered data has been described, the following three Chapters apply the analytical framework to the case of Chinese remote warfare in the Sudans and procedurally answer the sub-questions.

## 5. THE CONTEXT OF CHINA'S INTERVENTION IN THE SUDANS

To interpret the findings in a thorough and informed way, first, it is necessary to establish the *peripheral* and *central* context of an intervention. Moreover, establishing contextual realities provides the basis for understanding the dynamics of an intervention.

1. *What are the contexts of China's intervention in the Sudans?*
  - 1.1. *What are the gains that China seeks in the Sudans?*
  - 1.2. *What are possible risks that China runs by interfering with the Local Cleavages?*
  - 1.3. *What is the opposition that China faces in the Master Cleavage?*

Therefore, Section 5.1 determines the international and local *gains* that China seeks access to with its intervention in the Sudans with the help of relevant literature. Then, Section 5.2 detects relevant Sudanese local cleavages in micro-level studies and elaborates which *risks* arise through these cleavages for China. Finally, Section 5.3 establishes the master cleavage on the grounds of macro-level studies to identify China's *opposition*.

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## 5.1. INTERNATIONAL & LOCAL GAINS IN CHINA'S INTERVENTION

### IDENTIFYING THE INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT ENTREPRENEUR: CHINA

In the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Communist Party of China (CPoC) manifested its ruling position in the PRC's unitary party system (Meidan 2016: 3-5). The functionaries of the CPoC centrally govern the entire state apparatus, including the Chinese SOEs which constitutes an unprecedented accumulation of political control (Ibid). As the party oversees nearly every aspect of the political, economic and social life of the country, China, more than any other state, can be seen as a unitary actor in its domestic and foreign policy.

The Dengist reforms in the early 1990s opened the Chinese market to the world economy and sparked the process that has been coined "the rise of China" (Wright 2011: 182-188). The PRC's economic growth gained traction, its domestic economy quickly developed and subsequently China extended its international outreach. This meant a significant 'rise' in China's soft power capabilities, economic leverage and military capacity (King 2013; Paradise 2009; Waldron 2005). Moreover, China increased its influence in its neighbouring states and its greater periphery, including parts of Africa and Europe (Alden & Alves 2017; Swaine 2014: 3-5).

### CHINA'S DOMESTIC NEEDS & SUDANESE AVAILABILITIES: IDENTIFYING LOCAL GAINS

China significantly increased its involvement in Africa when the PRC's local oil reserves did not suffice for their vastly growing economy and they first became a net oil importer in 1993 (Taylor 2006: 943). African states are extremely lucrative partners for energy cooperation because their domestic natural resources usually vastly exceed their own demand (Alden 2005: 148; Besada & O'Bright 2017). In contrast to the democratisation projects of Africa's former colonisers from the West, China's economically-centred non-interference approach presented a welcome alternative for many African governments (Taylor 1998: 447- 451). In 1996, China, together with its SOEs Sinopec and the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), started heavy investments in Sudan's oil market. Chinese SOEs constructed the major oil pipeline to Port Sudan, bought the majority of different oil production blocks in Western Upper Nile and Unity State, while gaining 40 per cent of the shares of Sudan's Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company (Engdahl 2007; Natsios 2012: 62; Patey 2007: 1005, 1009; Sidahmed 2013: 105). Later in 2001, Chinese SOEs expanded their oil production blocks on the border of Darfur and Kordofan (Large 2007: 59). Between 1997 and 2007, China was able to increase its share of total lending to Sudan from 17 per cent to 73 per cent (Natsios 2012: 62; Sidahmed 2013: 110). Moreover, China established good relations with the Government of Sudan (GoS) in Khartoum, by providing loans, and diplomatic aid (Large 2007: 59 Patey 2007: 1010; Reeves 2006; Reeves 2007a). From 2001 to 2004, China was Sudan's largest trading partner and imported around 80 per cent of Sudan's average total of crude petroleum (Large 2007:58). On the ground of these developments, leading researchers in the area of Sino-Sudanese relations agree that since 1996, the major gains that China seeks in the Sudans are oil resources (Alden 2006: 148; Besada & O'Bright 2017; Patey



2007; Shambaugh 2013: 130-135; Taylor 2006). These findings conceptually coincide with the thought of resource wars, as they are mainly fought to achieve resources as *local economic gains* (Keen 2008:17).

### CHINA'S INTERNATIONAL NEEDS & SUDAN'S AVAILABILITIES: INTERNATIONAL GAINS

China as ICE operated from the (*central*) international level and thus despite the (*peripheral*) local gains it also seeks to attain (*central*) international gains out of its intervention in the (*peripheral*) Sudans. Considering China's rising international outreach, another key interest of China is upholding its international reputation (Alden & Alves 2017; Shambaugh 2013: 173-176). This became especially important after the 18<sup>th</sup> Central Committee of the CPoC under Xi Jinping took office in November 2012. In 2013, Xi announced his plans to launch the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which was the starting point for a new foreign policy doctrine (Xi 2013). The BRI entails massive investments in international transportation and trading infrastructure, which aim at strengthening Chinese international influence (Fallon 2015). Through the BRI, China seeks to establish secure trade routes from foreign economies to its mainland, which substantially increased the importance of security. China can only assure to be a reliable investor and trading partner if its international investments are secure. Thus, after 2013 the international *gains* for China's intervention included *improving security* and (*psychological*) *reputational gains*.

These previously identified international and local *gains* are not exclusively driving China's intervention in the Sudans. However, considering the necessity of generalisation for establishing contexts, they have been identified as the most relevant for understanding China's intervention. The next section identifies relevant Sudanese cleavages<sup>14</sup> and elaborates which risks these local cleavages pose for the gains that China seeks in the Sudans.

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## 5.2. RELEVANT LOCAL CLEAVAGES & CHINA'S RISKS

### LOCAL CLEAVAGES POST-CPA

The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) formally settled the civil war between the Northern GoS and the Southern Sudanese People Liberation Movement/ Army<sup>15</sup> (SPLM/A) in 2005. Under the Government of National Unity (GNU), the regime of Omar al-Bashir ruled over the North and the SPLM/A's Salva Kiir took office of the Southern presidency (Berry 2015: 34). Comprehensive measures for wealth and power-sharing as well as concessions to share oil revenues were supposed to ensure that both sides have political influence in the development of the country (UNMIS 2005). Nevertheless, the tensions between the North and the South remained and the post-CPA period was characterised by the subtle dwelling of civil war. Wide areas of the country and especially the border areas between North and South experienced ongoing fighting (Ibid: 322-328; UN 2005; Young 2007). Thus, the most relevant local cleavages to note in this period are the North/South cleavage as well as the cleavage between the GNU and different rebel groups. However, these cleavages intensified significantly when South Sudan gained independence.

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<sup>14</sup> Please find an overview of the most relevant events in Sudan and South Sudan between 2005 and 2018 in Appendix 2.

<sup>15</sup> The SPLA refers to the militia, which later becomes the political party: SPLM. For the sake of clarity, this group will be forth on referred to as SPLM/A.

## LOCAL CLEAVAGES POST-INDEPENDENCE

When the South gained independence in 2011, the GNU dissolved and SPLM/A's Salva Kiir took office as the first president of the independent Government of the Republic of South Sudan (GRSS). Despite an array of different agreements and international efforts to smoothen the relation between Sudan and South Sudan, the conflicts continued to boil in both countries (El-Battahani 2013). Reasons for this were mainly the increased politicization of ethnocultural differences, but also economic insecurity and severe poverty haunting different regions of the Sudans (Sørbø & Ahmed 2013: 9-14). Furthermore, different rebel groups were active in Northern Sudan and resisted heavily against the GoS, including the Southern-backed SPLA-North<sup>16</sup>. Next to these issues, the young Southern government faced severe issues with ensuring stability, as it longed to secure its newly erected state and the resources under its control<sup>17</sup>. Moreover, the oil-rich borderlands have become a battlefield in between the two states, additionally involving different rebel groups which spread violence and instability. Hence, after the split of the GNU, the North-South cleavage was intensely manifested and severe instability of the oil-rich border regions between the Sudans witnessed the rise and fall of several rebellions<sup>18</sup>. Eventually, these tensions caused the breakout of the Southern civil war at the end of 2013, which shifted local cleavages once more.

## LOCAL CLEAVAGES OF THE SOUTH SUDANESE CIVIL WAR

In December 2013, the South Sudanese civil war between the GRSS and the SPLM/A In Opposition (SPLA-IO) broke out. The leader of the SPLA-IO, Riek Machar, formerly held the office as vice president of the GRSS and lost faith in the reign of president Salva Kiir (Johnson 2016: 167). This was partly because of strong cleavages within the SPLM/A and the severe problems in governance that the former guerrilla group faced (Rolandsen 2015). Another central reason for the outbreak of the civil war was rather of ethno-sectarian nature. The ethnic tensions between the Dinka, represented by Kiir and the Nuer, represented by Machar, escalated as the Nuer felt vastly disadvantaged<sup>19</sup> (Johnson 2016: 164, 168, 181-186). Still, also other groups, as well as different factors such as severe famine and external interests, equally take part in keeping the Southern civil war alive until today (DeVries & Schomerus 2017). The freshly manifested local cleavage between the Southern government and the Southern rebel forces founded the southern civil war and thus presents the most influential cleavage in this period. As a result of the previous elaborations, it is possible to conclude that the local cleavages in the Sudans shift significantly when South Sudan gained independence in 2011 and again when the South Sudanese civil war broke out in 2014.

## SHIFTING LOCAL CLEAVAGES- IDENTIFYING LOCAL RISKS OF CHINA'S INTERVENTION

When it comes to ensuring the security of energy, every developed country's economy is critically dependent on a steady supply of petroleum (Yergin 2006). This is especially true for the PRC because, in China's unitary party system, the CPoC bases its ruling legitimacy on its performance of ensuring economic development, national unity and social stability (Zhu 2011). Hence, without a steady supply of oil to ensure China's economic development, the CPoC would run the risk to lose its ruling legitimacy. As a result of the

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<sup>16</sup> For an overview about the Northern rebel groups see: Craze 2013; Young 2015. For the connection between the SPLM/A and the SPLA-North see: Berman & Racovita 2015: 22; SAS 2012: 5; Young 2015: 15.

<sup>17</sup> Insightful case studies about the post-independence conflicts of South Sudan can be found here: Craze 2013; Johnson 2016; Komey 2013.

<sup>18</sup> For in-depth analyses of the problems in the border regions see: Ahmed 2013; Craze 2013; Komey 2013.

<sup>19</sup> The Dinka constitute the most populous ethnic group in South Sudan, the second being the Nuer.

rise of China and its rapidly growing economy, the PRC's local oil resources do not suffice its own demand and, thus, it depends on a stable flow of oil imports (Fallon 2015). As oil is a critical resource for China's domestic economy, the loss of access to local oil reserves is the greatest risk that its intervention in Sudan could pose (Patey 2007; Large 2007). China would be deprived of its *access* to Sudanese oil if either the Sudanese were to cut their cooperation or if the oil production infrastructure were significantly barred from working through a lack of *security*. Moreover, if China could not ensure *security* for their general foreign *investments*, their partner states would lose trust and deny the PRC access to their countries. This, in turn, would mean damages to China's international *reputation* which became especially significant for China after the initiation of the BRI in 2013. Consequently, the local cleavages also entail risks for China at the international level as China runs the risk of *political unpopularity* on the grounds of its involvement in the Sudans.

The intervention strategy of an ICE seeks to function for countering the *risks* that an intervention entails. As determined before, the local cleavages shift three times. Each alteration in local cleavages redefines which set of LCEs can provide *access* or *security* for the conflict regions. The identification of Sino-Sudanese dynamics, thus, needs to be organised according to the shifting cleavages. Consequently, the dynamics must be detected with regard to the three conflict periods between the signing of the CPA in 2005, Southern independence in 2011 and the outbreak of the South Sudanese civil war in between 2013 and 2014.

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### 5.3. THE MASTER CLEAVAGE & CHINA'S OPPOSITION

#### CONFLICTING IDEOLOGIES: A CLEAVAGE BETWEEN CHINA & THE OPPOSITIONAL WEST

The rise of China increasingly threatens the position of Western states and particularly the influence of the USA in the global liberal order. This is due to their vastly conflicting ideologies as well as their rivalry for economic and political superiority (Ikenberry 2008; Mearsheimer 2010; Schweller & Pu 2011; Tammen & Kugler 2006). Western states follow the ideology of liberal peace which is based on the principles of democracy, international solidarity and human rights (Ignatieff 2009: 2-26). This clashes especially with the historically-oriented Communist, Confucian and Legalist ideologies of the CPoC (Callahan 2012: 37; Wright 2011; 212-214; Zhang 2013). According to the West, human rights are supposed to be unnegotiable and their abuses punishable, while China rather relies on its own principles of mutual benefit and non-intervention for guiding its foreign policy (Alden & Alves 2008: 47, Cox & Drury 2006; Eisenman 2015; Shambaugh 2013: 174).

In terms of military capabilities, China still does not match the overwhelming position of the US (Mearsheimer 2010: 384; Saunders 2006; Waldron 2005). However, in recent years, China increased its competences in economic outreach and matches the US and Western capabilities to extract resources in certain areas (Mearsheimer 2010; Shambaugh 2013: 109-113, 124; Tammen & Kugler 2006; Zhao 2011). In this context, particularly the African continent has become a theatre for these economic giants to rival for access to local energy resources, which is coined as the scramble for African resources (Lee 2016; Wengraf 2018: 151-169). Nevertheless, Western states have an exceptionally hard time cooperating economically with human rights-abusing autocratic regimes in Africa because liberal ideologies oblige them to sanction such violations (Cox & Drury 2006). In contrast to this, China's idea of non-interference with local affairs allows it to not just cooperate with autocratic African states, but also to completely disregard foreign human rights abuses (Bader 2015).

## MASTER CLEAVAGE IN SUDAN: THE SCRAMBLE FOR AFRICA

The US oil giant Chevron dominated the Sudanese oil market until it pulled out in 1996, as grave human rights abuses upset Western investors and initiated US sanctioning (Natsios 2012: 62; Sidahmed 2013: 104). Since the Western absence allowed China to establish solid connections to the GoS, China’s access to local Sudanese oil resources was secure in the years before 2005. Yet, the situation changed at the end of the Sudanese civil war between the Northern GoS and the Southern SPLM/A in 2004. In the war between the Christian South and the Muslim North, Western states and the US gave support to push for the signing of the CPA and China found that tides were tipping increasingly (Baltrop 2011: 50-62; Sørnbø & Ahmed 2013: 15-18). The South profited in particular from the CPA because it enabled the SPLM/A to gain control over half of Sudan's oil production. However, at that time China had no established connection to the SPLM/A and their leaders. Consequently, post-CPA it was necessary to form alliances with the SPLM/A to gain access to Southern oil reserves (ICG 2012: 12-15). As a result, the competition between China and the West to obtain control over the Sudanese oil market, gained new traction. If Western states were to gain substantial access to the Sudanese oil market, it would curtail China’s former access to the Sudans. Thus, the signing of the CPA constitutes a suitable starting point for the case study. Furthermore, within the Sino-Western master cleavage around the scramble for African resources the Western states, particularly the US, together with their oil firms, can be identified as China’s *opposition* in the intervention.

### CONSTRUCTING ROAD MAPS

	<b>Center</b>	<b>Connection ↔</b>	<b>Periphery</b>
<b>Individual</b>	China & Opposing West	Sino-Sudanese Interactions ↔ Coordination & (De)stabilising in Dynamics: Chapter 6	GNU; GoS; GRSS/SPLM/A; Rebel Groups; Militia
<b>Connection ↓</b> <i>(Agency-centred)</i>	Scramble for African Resources ↓ (between China & West)	China’s Strategy ↘ Access/How: Chapter 6 Functions/Why: Chapter 7	Governments vs. Rebels ↓ North vs. South Dinka(Kiir) vs. Nuer(Machar)
<b>Structural</b>	International Resource ‘Assets’ Intern. Society (reputation) BRI: Intern. Trade Routes	Structural spillover ↔ (Risk of losing reputation Risk of West accessing)	Sudanese Conflicts Oil Resources & Local Routes Security of (Oil) Investments

Figure 8. Visualisation of Contexts in the Framework. Based on Kalyvas 2006 & Keen 2008; Own creation.

#### 1. *What are the contexts of China’s intervention in the Sudans?*

In the beginning, China intervened to achieve local economic *gains*. Thereby it ran the *risk* of losing access to resources, due to local causes or due to the *opposing* Western states gaining access. Starting in 2013, China additionally strove to improve the security of its transportation infrastructure, which constituted a further local *gain*. Thus, from then on it *risked* putting the safety of non-oil related investments in danger. Henceforth, its international reputation was much more at *risk* through its involvement in the local cleavages. By answering sub-questions 1.1, 1.2 & 1.3 sufficient contexts for the analysis of the dynamics of interaction and the functions of China’s intervention has been provided. The next chapter, therefore, analyses the dynamics of the interaction of the Chinese intervention in the Sudans to understand how China has gained access to the conflict.

## 6. CHINA'S REMOTE INTERVENTION STRATEGY

After the context of China's intervention was established, it is now possible to start analysing its remote strategy and ask *how* China has gained access to the Sudans.

2. *How did China gain access to the resources in the Sudans?*

2.1. *What are the dynamics of Sino-Sudanese interactions?*

2.2. *How do the interaction dynamics allow coordination and (de)stabilisation?*

The analytical framework holds, that for analysing interaction dynamics, interactions have to be put in relation to each other considering the aspect of time. Therefore, Sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 procedurally analyse the Chinese interventions in the Sudans between the years 2005 and 2018 to identify *what* Sino-Sudanese dynamics of interactions are present. Section 6.4 then analyses the patterns of interactions to assess *how* the dynamics enabled coordination and (de)stabilisation. After the dynamics of all three conflict periods have been analysed, it is possible to establish the Chinese intervention strategy and answer *how* China gained access to the resources in the Sudans.

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### 6.1. THE POST-CPA PERIOD 2005-2010

#### DYNAMICS OF OIL FIELD PROTECTION

In the post-CPA period, China officially sought to promote the development and the peace processes of Sudan through its continuous calls for stability (Holslag 2007; McDoom 2007). However, the actual impact of China's influences on the stability of Sudan was ambiguous. First and foremost, China focussed on interacting or supporting the Northern regime of Bashir in the GNU, whereas it was only slowly starting to strengthen bonds with the SPLM/A<sup>20</sup>. Yet, through the CPA, the SPLM/A gained control over large parts of the crude oil resources. Thus, China faced the need to invest in establishing allegiances with the former rebels. There is evidence that before independence China increased interaction with high-level commanders from the SPLM/A and Chinese ammunition was later used by SPLM/A forces<sup>21</sup>. According to the CPA, the security of oil fields was supposed to be assured by a unit of Northern and Southern military forces called Joint Installation Units (HRF 2008c: 16; UNMIS 2005). Nevertheless, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) of the Northern regime together with a Northern oil police were still mainly in charge of securing Chinese oil infrastructure (Ibid). SPLM/A officials have acknowledged their weak position with respect to the oil-fields but kept their forces close enough to secure them in case conflict were to break out<sup>22</sup>. This means that access to the oil fields had to be primarily negotiated with the North and, thus, China had to interact with them foremost. In this context, China provided large amounts of weapons for the Northern regime which enabled it to fight rebellions and secure the oil sites<sup>23</sup>. The security of Chinese oil infrastructure was also

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<sup>20</sup> A few SPLM/A delegations to China and corresponding meetings of Chinese officials in Sudan were recorded between 2005 and 2007 (SAS 2007: 7). Daniel Large confirmed that SPLM/A interacted with China.

<sup>21</sup> „Chinese manufactured 12.7×108 mm cartridges, produced in 2009, were observed in possession of the SPLM/A (‘Tang-Ginye’) on 23 April 2011” (SAS 2012: 3). Thousands of rounds of newly purchased Chinese 7.62 and 12.7 mm ammunition were found in 2011 (SAS 2012).

<sup>22</sup> According to UN and other sources a total of 55m\$ accounting for 90 per cent of Khartoum's arms entered Sudan from China from 2004 to 2008 (HRF 2008a; HRF 2008c; Reeves 2006; Young 2007: 32).

<sup>23</sup> Based on the United Nations Comtrade Data, China has sold 24m\$ of arms and ammunition to Khartoum in 2005 and has until 2004 been GoS biggest provider of SLAW (Amnesty International 2007: 7; BBC 2007a; Sudan Tribune 2007b) For more evidence of China's arms trade with the GoS see: Amnesty International 2006: 21; Chang 2008; HRF 2008b;

partly in the hands of militias, which constituted a conveniently mobile protection force for the usually remotely situated oil fields<sup>24</sup>. Consequently, although vast areas experienced heavy conflicts, the protection of oil infrastructure was guaranteed through China's surrogates.

### DYNAMICS OF SUPPLY

In the post-CPA period, much of the war-making capacity of the Sudanese LCEs was fostered by China. The findings show that China provided weaponry and war machinery to the Bashir regime including armoured vehicles and tanks<sup>25</sup>. These weapons had a considerable destabilising effect on the region as they bypassed the official UN arms embargo and consequently entailed destabilising effects on the conflicts in Sudan<sup>26</sup>. Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) have been passed on to militias like the Janjaweed, which were directly allied to the Northern regime<sup>27</sup>. Furthermore, Chinese experts developed the Sudanese armies' capabilities in aerial warfare and supplied Chinese fighting jets and helicopters with respective trainer units (Campbell et al. 2012: 20; Saferworld 2011: 51; Suleiman 2009; The Wall Street Journal 2007)<sup>28</sup>. The increase in Chinese military training to the SAF after 2005 was a general trend and also comprised military officers and ground troops<sup>29</sup>.

Another striking aspect of the interactions between the GNU and China is the construction of infrastructure. Chinese SOEs built the majority of transportation and energy infrastructure<sup>30</sup>. Moreover, Chinese engineers were responsible for building several weapon factories (Campbell 2012; HRF 2008b; HRF 2008c: 15).

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HRF 2008c: 13; Lewis 2009: 23; Reeves 2006; Reeves 2007b; Saferworld 2011: 51. The GoS possessed a variety of different cannons and calibres from China in 2008 as weapon specialist Andrei Chang has proven (Chang 2008). These arms have especially been allocated to the oil regions in the Eastern and Western Upper Nile Province (Reeves 2007b).

<sup>24</sup> For a well-researched and comprehensive overview of the post-CPA oil-field protection by militias see: Young 2007: 17, 31-36. Moreover, militias that formerly fought in the North-South war like the South Sudan Defence Forces were guarding oil fields (HRF 2008c: 16; Reeves 2007a).

<sup>25</sup> The PRC provided 222 military trucks made by the Chinese company Dong Feng to the GoS in 2005 (Amnesty International 2006:21; Reeves 2006; HRF 2008b). Moreover, GoS received late model battle-tanks, armoured personnel carriers, heavy military trucks and artillery systems (HRF 2008c: 13; Reeves 2007b; Saferworld 2011: 51). These included for example Chinese Type 85II main battle tanks and 23 ZSL92 (Type 92) documented in the possession of the SAF in 2007 (Lewis 2009: 23). Andrei Chang showed that also the new generation of Chinese T96 and upgraded T59D battle tanks as well as T92 wheeled infantry fighting vehicles are in possession of the GoS (Chang 2008).

<sup>26</sup> Satellite images and eyewitnesses reported the violation of the arms embargo through China (Asia News 2008; Sudan Tribune 2008).

<sup>27</sup> Reports show witness, and photographic evidence that Chinese weapons were passed on to Chadian militias operating in Darfur, the Janjaweed and United Front for Democratic Change (Amnesty International 2006: 12, 13; Amnesty International 2007: 24; HRF 2008a The Wall Street Journal 2007).

<sup>28</sup> \$57 million worth of parts and aircraft equipment and \$2 million worth of parts of helicopters and aeroplanes provided by China, in 2005. (Amnesty International 2007: 7). In 2005 China provided trainers for their K-8S jets and delivered 6 K-8 military training/ attack aircraft in 2007 (Amnesty International 2007: 7; HRF 2008b; Lewis 2009: 23). Moreover, Chinese J-6 fighters and a number of J-7M were in the possession of the SAF (Chang 2008). 12 Chinese FC1 Fighter aircraft were ordered in 2008 (Chang 2008; HRF 2008c).

<sup>29</sup> China provided military training to high ranking officers and ground troops of the SAF since 2005 observers report (Campbell 2012; HRF 2008c: 3; SAS 2007).

<sup>30</sup> CNPC Sinohydro China Gezhoua Group built the majority of energy infrastructure (Chinese ministry of Foreign Affairs 2013b CNPC 2009; Campbell 2012: 23; Engdahl 2007; Holslag 2007; HRF 2008c: 7; Saferworld 2012). China Railway Engineering Group, CNPC, Sinohydro and other SOES built roads and railways (Campbell 2012: 24; CNPC 2009; HRF 2008c: 7; Jacobs & Gettleman 2012; McDoom 2007; Reeves 2006; Reeves 2007a Reeves 2007b).

Finally, the oil revenue that the Northern regime received, was to a part directly traded into arms. There is evidence that profits were primarily used to foster the military capacity of the SAF<sup>31</sup>. Therefore, the Sudanese oil revenue also played an equivocal part in the Sino-Sudanese interactions, because it bridged economic and military cooperation between China and the Sudans.

The reports have shown that the dynamics of Sino-Sudanese interactions in the post-CPA period are characterised through a comprehensive provision of the means for conducting warfare alongside the employment of surrogates. China engaged in an ambiguous process that stabilised the security of the oil infrastructure but destabilised other parts of the country through their military support. The following section will elaborate on how these dynamics changed in the period after Southern independence.

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## 6.2. SOUTH SUDANESE INDEPENDENCE 2011-2013

### ARMING OPPOSITIONAL CONFLICT ENTREPRENEURS

After South Sudan gained independence in 2011, China was dealing with two official governments that both controlled their own share of oil resources, which subsequently changed the dynamics of Sino-Sudanese interactions severely. Considering the chaos that Southern independence sparked, it is especially significant that China heavily armed the Southern GRSS after it had profoundly armed the opposing Northern GoS in the previous years. The Chinese national arms company ‘China North Industries Corporation’ (NORINCO) started supplying arms and war machinery to the GRSS directly after its separation<sup>32</sup>. In the post-independence period, China was the major supplier of arms to the young southern regime<sup>33</sup>. Especially noteworthy is the extensive trade in SALW<sup>34</sup>. Yet, during this period, China has still kept its former support for the GoS steady<sup>35</sup>. It moreover facilitated the GoS’ capacity to increase its military presence in the

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<sup>31</sup> Sudan’s finance minister stated that more than 70 per cent of Sudans oil revenue went to the SAF and its allied militias (HRF 2008c: 7). For further evidence that the oil profit served military means see: Reeves 2007a; SAS 2007: 4; Suleiman 2007.

<sup>32</sup> The first weapon contract between NORINCO and GRSS was signed in 2011, the second in 2013 (Craze et. al. 2016). In 2014, a \$38 million, multi-year arms contract between the GRSS and NORINCO was made public by diplomats (ICG 2017: 20; Vasselier 2016). Data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute indicates that China was the largest supplier to South Sudan in 2014 (Ferrie 2016; Dörrie 2015). According to the UN Panel of experts NORINCO sold more than 20 million \$ to the SPLM/A before they halted their arms sales in the end of 2014 (SCMP 2015; Tiezzi 2015).

<sup>33</sup> The most significant quantity of military hardware delivered to South Sudan since independence was imported from China (Craze et. al. 2016: 120; Dörrie 2015; Ferrie 2016). China provided 72 per cent [686,574\$] of the GRSS’ SALW (Campell et al. 2012: 20; Saferworld 2011).

<sup>34</sup> The Small Arms Survey found compelling evidence that the 2011 contract between NORINGO and the GRSS included, amongst others, 1200 HJ-73D-type anti-tank missiles and more than three million rounds of 7.62 × 39 mm ammunition (Craze et. al. 2016: 120). NORINCO sent more than 1,000 tonnes of weapons and munitions worth millions of dollars to the SPLM/A in 2014 (Amnesty International 2014). It included rocket systems, thousands of automatic rifles and grenade launchers, 20,000 grenades, hundreds of pistols and machine guns, and several million rounds of ammunition (Amnesty International 2014; Craze et. al. 2016: 121). Moreover, the UN Panel of experts confirmed that 100 HJ-73D anti-tank guided missile-launchers (plus 1,200 missiles), 9,574 automatic rifles with 2 million rounds of ammunition, 2,394 grenade launchers, and 40,000 type-69 high-explosive anti-tank rockets were supplied by NORINCO (Tiezzi 2015). In 2015 the SPLM/A come into the possession of the Chinese QW-2 Vanguard sur-face-to-air missile launcher, which were reportedly newly manufactured (Dörrie 2015; Smallwood 2015).

<sup>35</sup> The Human Security Baseline Assessment (HSBA) provided compelling empirical and photographic evidence that the PRC kept the weapon trade with Sudan up after Southern independence (Gramizi & Tubiana 2013: 36-38; LeBrun & Leff 2014: 225; SAS 2014).

Southern border region by constructing transportation infrastructure<sup>36</sup>. In the border regions of South Kordofan, the Northern regime then fought against the Southern-backed SPLM-North which was partly equipped with Chinese weapons<sup>37</sup>. Thus, the instability that Sudan experienced before Southern independence remained and the reports have shown that the different warring sides were supplied with Chinese weaponry.

### CHANGING INTERACTIONS - CHANGING DYNAMICS

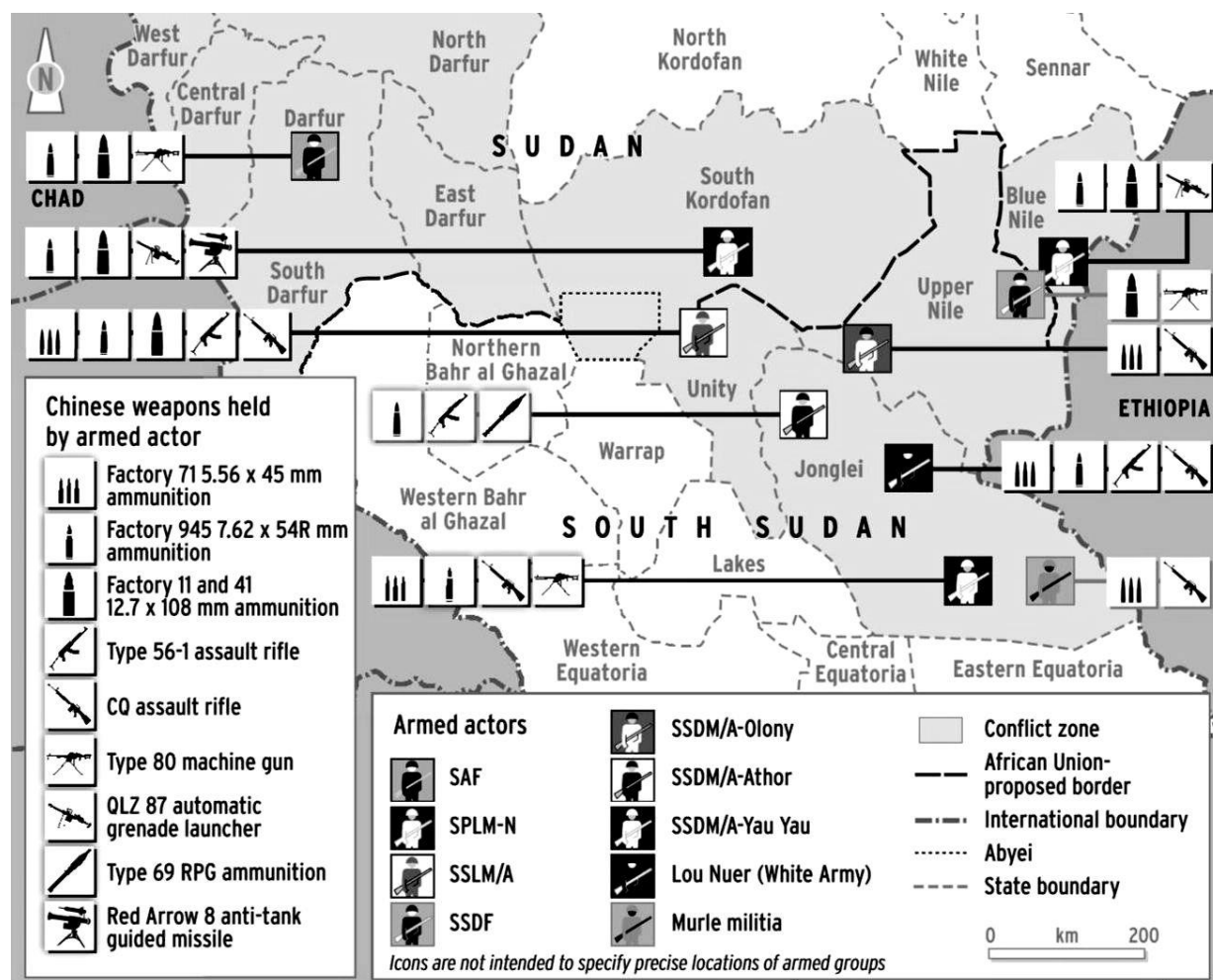


Figure 9. Chinese weapons in Sudan and South Sudan, 2011-2013. Source: LeBrun & Leff 2014: 228.

However, the post-independence term was a transition period for the dynamics of interaction between China and Sudanese conflict entrepreneurs. This was the case because China severely underestimated the Southern realities and experienced a backdrop on its former arms-providing policy. Post-independence, the state of affairs changed quickly in the South and the border regions. Different rebel groups and governmental allies shifted their loyalties and areas of operation without China being able to maintain allegiances on every

<sup>36</sup> Sinohydro built roads that were witnessed to facilitate SAF insurgency in South Kordofan (Jacobs & Gettleman 2012).

<sup>37</sup> Especially the border regions around South Kordofan were affected by Southern-Northern clashes that involved Chinese ammunition (Gramizi & Tubiana 2013: 42; SAS 2013: 6; Yan 2014). The international crisis group established, on the grounds of witness reports, that China supplied weapons to Khartoum which were used in conflict regions in Southern Kordofan, Blue Nile, Darfur, and Abyei (ICG 2012: 15).



side<sup>38</sup>. There have been various violent encounters at the oil plants and a shutdown of Southern oil production in January 2012 which diminished China's ability to extract oil in this period<sup>39</sup>. As new rebelling militias took hold in different areas of the Sudans, cleavages shifted and consequently, the dynamics of Sino-Sudanese interactions changed. Henceforth, Chinese equipment was found with different opposing militias. For example, a separatist group called the South Sudan Liberation Movement that operated in South Sudan until 2013, reportedly fought with Chinese-made arms<sup>40</sup>. Also, the South Sudan Democratic Movement was in possession of Chinese ammunition which is similar to the kind provided to the Northern regime<sup>40</sup>.

Figure 9 further illustrates the opaque and messy nature of the situation concerning the use of Chinese weapons by militias in the borderlands<sup>41</sup>. Tracing Chinese weapons with non-state actors was extremely problematic. For example, the production tags of the Chinese weapons in the possession of the SPLA-North were removed and records of their trading routes eliminated. Thus, making it difficult to clearly track how weapons ended up with the combatants<sup>42</sup>. Nevertheless, despite China's increasing cooperation with several actors of various sides in the Sudans, it was not able to entirely ensure the security of oil infrastructure. Consequently, there have been incidents of attacks on and abductions of Chinese oil workers<sup>43</sup>. This shows that the instability of the Sudanese borderlands and South Sudan has resulted in a precarious environment in which the endurance of alliances was not guaranteed.

In the post-independence period, the Sino-Sudanese interactions show various changes in dynamics. While in the beginning, China increasingly supported and employed governmental surrogates, it later also relied on oppositional militias within the Sudanese conflicts. Moreover, as instability spread in the border regions, an increase in hostile actions against Chinese oil infrastructure and workers was observed. Subsequently, the shift in the dynamics of Sino-Sudanese interaction gains traction and spikes as the South Sudanese civil war erupts.

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### 6.3. THE SOUTH SUDANESE CIVIL WAR 2014-2018

#### CONFRONTING CHALLENGES

In the Southern civil war, China interacted with different state and non-state actors on both sides over various political and economic channels (Large 2016). In Northern Sudan, China's endeavours remained more or less unchanged as the GoS established itself as the primary channel for access to oil in the North<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>38</sup> Interview with Daniel Large.

<sup>39</sup> South Sudan experienced an oil shutdown in January 2012 as the North refused to further provide its oil transportation infrastructure (Aljazeera 2013b; ICG 2012: 30-31; James 2015: 25; Large 2016: 36, 40). Daniel Large confirmed that also violent shutdowns of oil plants become frequent after South Sudans independence.

<sup>40</sup> The Chinese origin of weapons in possession of these militias were proven through on-site analyses of the HSBA (Craze et. al. 2016; LeBrun & Leff 2014: 226-228; SAS 2012: 5, 8; SAS 2013: 6).

<sup>41</sup> HSBA is an on-site expert investigatory institution that gathers empirical evidence through interviewing witnesses, analysing photographic material and investigating conflict sites since 2005. This map is based on their research (LeBrun & Leff 2014; SAS 2007: 12; SAS 2013:16).

<sup>42</sup> For photographic evidence of this phenomenon see: Gramizzi & Tubiana 2013.

<sup>43</sup> There were several incidents recorded in 2012 where Chinese oil workers were attacked or kidnapped in the Sudans (BBC 2012; Hook 2012; Jacobs & Gettleman 2012; Saferworld 2013: 4).

<sup>44</sup> The Sudanese Ambassador in China stated that the cooperation was weaker than before Southern secession, but after that remained unchanged (Smith 2018). The data catalogue does not include reports that would state the contrary.

For example, China still supplied fighter aircrafts to the GoS and fostered its ability to conduct airstrikes<sup>45</sup>. Also, other types of war machinery and SALW for ground forces were provided<sup>46</sup>. Contrary to that, the outbreak of the civil war in the South and the ongoing fighting in the border regions constituted much more of a threat to Chinese interests. The allegiances and position of combatants were increasingly chaotic, as former members of the GRSS started to fight against their previous allies<sup>47</sup>. For China, this constituted a challenge because the access to Southern oil regions could only be guaranteed through the right alliances.

### SHIFTING CLEAVAGES - SHIFTING ALLIANCES

While China primarily and officially interacted with the GRSS, it interacted more discreetly and diversified with the SPLM-IO (Large 2016: 43). Before the conflict broke out, China and the GRSS were steadily increasing their cooperation and China vastly increased its investment in the South's oil industry<sup>48</sup>. China, henceforth, remained the primary consumer of South Sudanese oil and thus it is not surprising that the GRSS pledged to provide security for Chinese oil workers and equipment<sup>49</sup>. Yet, the reports show that the Sino-Sudanese dynamics of interaction changed drastically in the course of the first year of civil war. On the eve of the outbreak of the conflict, NORINCO still supplied increasing amounts of weapons and ammunition to the GRSS, despite its financially weak position<sup>50</sup>. This led the SPLM-IO to believe that China sided with the Southern government<sup>51</sup>. Consequently, the PRC lost access to the oil fields in the areas of the opposition and 400 Chinese oil workers had to be evacuated (ICG 2017: 7; Vasselier 2016). As a result, China had to re-establish trust with the rebellion, to regain access to the oil fields under control of the SPLM-IO. Rebel leader Riek Machar fostered strong connections to China in his years in the GRSS<sup>52</sup>. Thus, it does not come as a surprise that Chinese officials were able to reinstate interactions with the South Sudanese opposition in the course of the civil war<sup>53</sup>. The reports also show that the SPLM-IO fought partly

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<sup>45</sup> In 2017, China's Guizhou Aircraft Industries Corporation unveiled the first FTC-2000 fighter trainer aircraft for Sudan's Chinese made JL-9 jet trainer (Chuanren 2017).

<sup>46</sup> Until 2014 the HSBA found a large variety of Chinese equipment in the Sudans, including assault rifles, general-purpose and heavy machine guns, RPG-7-pattern rocket launchers, automatic grenade launchers, antitank missiles, various types of rockets, and small-calibre ammunition in field inspections (LeBrun & Leff 2014; SAS 2014: 20). Armament research found that in 2014 Sudan possessed the Chinese QLZ87 Automatic Grenade Launcher (Yan 2014; Gramizzi & Tubiana 2013).

<sup>47</sup> Interview with Daniel Large.

<sup>48</sup> China started its \$ 2 billion investment in the infrastructure in South Sudan and devoted further measures to improve the bilateral relations (Fleischner 2015: 15; ICG 2014: 16-17; Lumara 2018). Further proof of that was the Chinese effort to organise the South Sudan-China Development Cooperation Forum in Juba, which took place shortly before the outbreak of the war (Hang 2014a).

<sup>49</sup> The GRSS officially promised to secure Chinese oil investments and provide security for oil workers and equipment (Hang 2014a).

<sup>50</sup> NORINCO sold GRSS ammunition, machinery and SALW over \$38 million dollar in 2014 (Amnesty International 2014; Craze et. al. 2016: 121- 124; Dörrie 2015; ICG 2017: 20; SCMP 2015).

<sup>51</sup> The SPLM-IO was initially outraged by the Chinese military support for the SPLM/A (Large 2016: 41; Vasselier 2016).

<sup>52</sup> Interview with Daniel Large.

<sup>53</sup> Witnesses and SPLM-IO representatives reported that China provided financial and other support to the opposition for the protection of oil infrastructure (ICG 2017: 12).

with Chinese weapons<sup>54</sup>. There are claims that the GoS was directly supplying the SPLM-IO with Chinese weapons to ensure that the Chinese oil investments stayed protected by them<sup>55</sup>. Nevertheless, direct interactions between China and the SPLM-IO were extremely scarce and delicate because stronger cooperation would have upset the GRSS. In this regard, the Sino-SPLM-IO alliance was strictly limited to ensuring the security of Chinese oil investments<sup>56</sup>. Yet, as the Southern rebels were extremely uncoordinated, they prove to be incapable of providing guarantees for secure oil production<sup>57</sup>. It became apparent that security cooperation and the provision of arms would, in the case of the South Sudanese rebels, not be able to secure Chinese interests. Therefore, in contrast to earlier periods, China was increasingly engaged in negotiation and initiated mediation talks between the warring sides<sup>58</sup>.

#### NEWLY EMERGING INTERACTIONS - NEW DYNAMICS

As of 2014, the attacks on Chinese oil plants became more frequent, the alliances with Southern allies increasingly fragile and the safety of Chinese workers were no longer guaranteed<sup>59</sup>. Neither the GRSS nor Southern militias were able to guarantee security for Chinese oil investments as instability spread. In response to the increasing insecurity, NORINCO stopped the arms deals to South Sudan in September 2014<sup>60</sup>. This marked a turning point in the dynamics of Sino-Sudanese interactions, as China henceforth diminished its destabilising security cooperation with the Sudanese actors and engaged more in mediation (Chun & Kemple-Hardy 2015; ICG 2017: 9; Lumara 2018). Reports have shown that despite the official trade stop, Chinese weapons have found their way to South Sudan. For example, armaments and specific amphibious war machinery are proven to have entered the rural areas of the oil-rich Unity State<sup>61</sup>. Nevertheless, it can be asserted that the Chinese considerably rolled back in this regard. In turn, China

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<sup>54</sup> Armament research, using weapon tracing methodologies, established that the SPLA-IO received air-dropped weapons from China through Sudan (CAR 2015; Ferrie 2016).

<sup>55</sup> Interviews with experts and SPLM-IO representatives suggested that this was the intention of the GoS for supplying Chinese weapons to the SPLM-IO (Fleischner 2015: 20). Further interviews that confirm this can be found here: ICG 2015: 10.

<sup>56</sup> This was driven by the need to try to protect its oil investments (ICG 2017: 12; Large 2016: 43). Riek Machar assured China the protection of the oil fields shortly before the war broke out in 2014 and attempted to ensure the security of oil fields in the Upper Nile region in turn for receiving oil revenue (Hang 2014a; ICG 2015: 10; ICG 2017: 12, 13 Vasselier 2016). Daniel Large confirmed that the oil field protection was often in the hands of militias or rebel groups because of the quickly changing allegiances between warring parties.

<sup>57</sup> For example, troops of Johnson Olony, a rebel leader of the SPLM-IO, have marched on the oil fields against the orders of Machar (ICG 2017).

<sup>58</sup> For records of Chinese negotiations see: Chun & Kemple-Hardy 2015: 4; ICG 2017: 9; Young 2015: 39.

<sup>59</sup> CNPC and the SPLM/A evacuated many employees on company airplanes. Other Chinese citizens fled via self-organised caravans. Although unlikely to have specifically been targeted, Chinese retail shops and restaurants were looted or burnt down. (Bodetti 2019; Hang 2014a; ICG 2017: 9; Vasselier 2016).

<sup>60</sup> Chinese officials claimed they halted the arms shipments to the GOSS in September 2014 (Fleischner 2015: 26; Tiezzi 2015).

<sup>61</sup> After the official weapon-halt, the GRSS imported portable air defence systems and amphibious vehicles from China to use in the oil-rich regions Upper Nile and Unity State (Craze et. al. 2016: 121; Dörrie 2015; Smallwood 2015; Sudan Tribune 2015; Sudan Tribune 2016; Tiezzi 2015; Young 2015: 29).

increasingly focussed on employing PSMC to secure their oil investments<sup>62</sup>. These security firms have also been found to instruct and supervise local military and rebel forces for securing China's oil infrastructure<sup>63</sup>.

In the civil war period, the dynamics of the Sino-Sudanese interactions have taken another turn. Entirely new dynamics emerged as China shifted its intervention strategy away from being centred on providing weapons toward the increasing employment of PSMC. The three previous sections determined the dynamics of interactions which characterised the Chinese intervention in the Sudans between 2005 and 2018. The analysis of reports in the data catalogue found that the dynamics of the Sino-Sudanese interactions constantly changed in the course of the three periods, while also retaining a few strong characteristics. The following section analyses these changing dynamics more closely to understand *how* the dynamics allowed China to coordinate with Sudanese conflict entrepreneurs and influence stability.

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#### 6.4. CHINA'S INTERVENTION STRATEGY IN THE SUDANS

The dynamics of Sino-Sudanese interactions substantially changed between 2005 and 2018. By examining how the *dynamics* allowed the *coordination* of actions with regard to the *stability* within the Sudans, it is possible to determine China's remote intervention *strategy*.

##### EQUIPPING GOVERNMENTAL SURROGATES-CREATING CAPABILITIES

The reports of the data catalogue mainly show that China provided the military, political, financial and logistical means for different warring parties to engage in conflict and foster instability. This allows China to coordinate the actions of Sudanese LCEs by equipping them to fight for China's interests. Most of all, China shipped a large variety of weapons to the GoS and constituted one of the main suppliers of arms to the regime from 2005 to 2014<sup>64</sup>. The provision of not just weapons, but also more advanced war machineries assured that the GoS remained superior in fighting its own local opposition while also securing Chinese oil investments. Additionally, the investigation also revealed that China has financed the GoS armament by providing a constant flow of oil revenues, some of which were directly traded in weapons. Hence, China's interactions with the GoS allowed it to coordinate actions to foster instability as the Northern regime was equipped for fighting on the behalf of their benefactor. Yet, the reports have shown that China goes even further than merely providing weapons as it helped to construct weapon manufacturing plants. These allowed the GoS to produce heavy and light machine guns, rocket launchers, mortars, antitank weapons, and ammunition<sup>65</sup>. Providing this type of expertise was significant as it made the GoS increasing self-sufficient in their acquiring of arms (Reeves 2007a). For example, when international embargos stopped imports of

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<sup>62</sup> In 2016 DeWe Security Services operated in the Sudans having 352 Chinese and 3000 local staffs as well as two 'security camps' to secure oil fields of CNPC and the construction sites of the China Road and Bridge Corporation (Clover 2017; Legarda 2018). Also, the Chinese VSS Security Group is reportedly working in South Sudan to protect oil workers from PetroChina (Legarda & Nouwens 2018).

<sup>63</sup> For example, DeWe's Chinese staff was reported to lead teams of armed locals during fighting in Juba (Clover 2017).

<sup>64</sup> China was responsible for 58 per cent of overall weapons sales to Sudan between 2001 and 2012 (LeBrun & Leff 2014; SAS 2014). China expended their arms trade to GoS from 2008 and resumed it in 2010 (Saferworld 2011). Until 2014 they were still supplying weapons to the GoS (ICG 2012; Ferrie 2016).

<sup>65</sup> A technical review of the Sudanese weapon manufacture found that the produced arms derive from Chinese designs and that they use Chinese expertise from China to produce and maintain their stock (LeBrun & Leff: 232). Chinese companies reportedly assisted in setting up three weapon manufacturing complexes near Khartoum located at Kalakla, Chojeri, and Bageer (Campbell 2012; HRF 2008b; HRF 2008c: 15). Chinese engineers were witnessed to supervise these facilities' work (HRF 2008b; HRF 2008c: 15).

arms to Sudan after 2008, this could widely be compensated by domestic production<sup>66</sup>. This is an especially interesting dynamic as China diminishes its capability to leverage its access through providing arms, but in turn, achieves a stronger allegiance with the better equipped GoS. Moreover, from then on, their interactions are more difficult to trace, because Chinese-like weapons are now manufactured directly in Sudan and do not need to be shipped any longer.

The investigation further found that through the SOE NORINCO, China has equally become one of the biggest suppliers of arms for South Sudan after independence. As a result, the data about Sino-Sudanese interactions has shown that China substantially equipped both rivaling governments with armaments. Therefore, China did not only strengthen governmental allies but mostly controlled destabilisation through the fuelling of the conflict by providing oppositional sides with the capabilities to keep the conflicts alive. Consequently, China was gaining access to Sudan and South Sudan by coordinating with both principal sides of the most crucial local cleavage running in-between North and South.

### PAVING THE WAY

Remote warfare also comprises the provision of transportation, energy and intelligence infrastructure that is necessary for allies to conduct warfare (Biegon and Watts 2017: 2). Thus, also interaction dynamics that do not initially appear relevant for accessing conflicts can still play a crucial part in an ICE's capability to (de)stabilise a conflict theatre. In this context, several SOEs of China were substantially involved in the financing and realising of crucial infrastructure projects in Sudan. CNPC, Sinohydro and the China Gezhouba group have built the majority of Sudans energy infrastructure<sup>67</sup>. Moreover, Chinese SOEs constructed crucial transportation infrastructures like railway lines, ports and all-weather roads in Sudan<sup>68</sup>. Likewise, Chinese SOEs erected hydropower dams and the vast majority of oil -extraction, -production and -transportation infrastructure in South Sudan<sup>69</sup>. Chinese SOEs also built roads in South Sudan, like the transportation system in Juba including the extension of the airport<sup>70</sup>. The construction of these types of infrastructure is always twofold as energy or transportation infrastructure can be used to fuel development (or *stability*) and conflict (or *instability*) equally. However, the findings show that the Chinese-built infrastructure in Sudan and South Sudan was also used to facilitate the war-making capacities of the warring parties<sup>71</sup>. For example, the Northern regime used Chinese-built roads to transport Chinese Weishi long-range rockets for multiple rocket systems to South Kordofan<sup>72</sup>. The construction of roads enabled the

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<sup>66</sup> The Sudanese congress, China and major arms suppliers claim that Sudans arms imports are increasingly being replaced by its own domestic production (Lewis 2009: 33).

<sup>67</sup> CNPC built the majority of oil infrastructure, Sinohydro and others built two hydroelectric dams and the China Gezhouba Group constructed energy lines (CNPC 2009; Campbell 2012: 23; Holslag 2007; HRF 2008c: 7; Saferworld 2012).

<sup>68</sup> China Railway Engineering Group started to build the railway link from Khartoum to Port Sudan (Campbell 2012: 24; HRF 2008c: 7; McDoom 2007; Reeves 2007b). Several roads were built by CNPC and Sinohydro (CNPC 2009; Reeves 2006; Reeves 2007a; Jacobs & Gettleman 2012).

<sup>69</sup> Oil pipelines and energy infrastructure was built by China (Aljazeera 2013b; Chinese ministry of Foreign Affairs 2013b; Engdahl 2007). Sinohydro built the Yambio water supply and Juba hydropower plant (Hang 2014a; ICG 2012: 11).

<sup>70</sup> Chun & Kemple-Hardy 2015: 3; Hang 2014a; Lumara 2018; Saferworld 2012: 7.

<sup>71</sup> Roads were reported to be used for transporting war machinery (Jacobs & Gettleman 2012; Reeves 2006; Reeves 2007a). Energy infrastructure was stated to be utilised to gain revenue for war making (HRF 2008c: 7; Reeves 2007a; SAS 2007: 4; Suleiman 2007).

<sup>72</sup> A Khartoum-based military observer witnessed the move to South Kordofan in June 2011. The weapons were later identified in Kordofan by the Small Arms Survey (Gramizzi & Tubiana 2013: 36-38).

provided heavy war machinery to move to rural areas of the civil war and enhanced the mobility of the SAF. Additionally, it ensured better access to the secluded oil regions. Hence, through providing constructive development aid, China facilitated coordination and controlled the stability and instability of different Sudanese areas by increasing the LCEs' ability to reach outskirts conflict theatres.

### MILITARY TRAINING

The data catalogue also demonstrated that China resorted to different surrogate forces for conducting ground warfare in Sudan and South Sudan. The utility of training and advising military actors for coordinating the actions of an ICE and LCEs is a controversial topic (Biddle et. al. 2018). Nevertheless, in the context of remote warfare, military training is crucial for enabling allied LCEs to employ provided technology and improve the effectiveness of surrogates in protecting interventionist interests. Reports of Chinese military training for the SPLM/A are scarce. Yet, some sources establish that SPLM/A commanders have visited China for training and some local forces received technical support<sup>73</sup>. In contrast to this, China engaged in strong military cooperation with the GoS from the start of the investigation period in 2005<sup>74</sup>. In this context, high ranking officers and ground troops of the SAF received various forms of military training both in Sudan and China. This shows further how China coordinates with LCEs in the conflict by providing them crucial expertise for conducting warfare. Through this coordination, China gained access to the Sudanese conflict theatre and was able to remotely conduct ground warfare (*destabilisation*) from *below*.

### NON-GOVERNMENTAL SURROGATES - ALTERING THE CONFLICT SITUATION ON THE GROUND

Chinese weapons were also found with different rebel and militia groups in the Sudans. Allegiance-switching rebel groups and militias in various regions of North and South Sudan used Chinese arms to fight against Northern and Southern government forces<sup>75</sup>. As the registration of most of the Chinese weaponry in the Sudans was removed, it is difficult to determine in how far China directly supplied the weapons to Sudanese militias and rebel groups. Mostly, these weapons have been reported to be allocated by the GoS or the GRSS to the respective parties. Nevertheless, this means that by allying with the GoS and the GRSS, China also gained the ability to coordinate further conflict entrepreneurs and foster increased destabilisation. It could be argued that China had no intend to allocate their weapons to militia forces. Yet, after first UN reports of Chinese weapons in the possession of Darfurian rebels already appeared early in 2005, it was apparent that Chinese weapons were allocated further (Holslag 2007; Reeves2006; Reeves 2007b; SAS

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<sup>73</sup> Witnesses stated that the SPLM/A received technical support from China and that SPLM/A soldiers had visited China for exercises (Campbell 2012; Xianhua 2008).

<sup>74</sup> Different Chinese officials announced that the military cooperation between the PRC and Sudan was enhanced after the CPA (HRF 2008b; McDoom 2007; Saferworld 2013; Yeh 2007).

<sup>75</sup> Khartoum-backed Chadian and other rebel groups in Darfur employed Chinese grenade launchers, SALW and military trucks made by Dong Feng (Andersson 2008; Lewis 2009; Saferworld 2011: 51; Yan 2014). The People's Liberation Movement-North, operating in Sudan and South Sudan used Chinese made grenade launchers and cluster bombs (Gramizzi & Tubiana 2013: 42; LeBrun& Leff 2014; SAS 2013: 6; Yan 2014). South Sudanese rebel groups received Chinese 2.7 x 108 mm ammunition and rifles from Khartoum in 2011 (CAR 2015). The SPLA-IO has also been found to use Chinese ammunitions and land cruises manufactured in 2011 (Craze et.al 2016: 117). Evidence from the SAS showed that also other militias like the South Sudan Liberation Movement and the South Sudan Defence Forces employed Chinese made arms (SAS 2013: 6).

2007)<sup>76</sup>. As China has still not halted their supply or changed their behaviour, knowing that arms were allocated to the respective parties, it can be asserted that this was at least tolerated by the CPoC.

The UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) and in South Sudan (UNMISS) were controversial, as the Chinese peacekeeping forces pursued stabilising actions that do not coincide with the tasks of peacekeeping. For example, Chinese military engineers from the UNMISS have reportedly built roads for Sudanese LCEs<sup>77</sup>. Yet, UN missions are usually strongly tied to their mandate and closely monitored, thus it is difficult to establish that the PRC was able to coordinate their UN peacekeeping forces in the Sudans. As the evidence about Sino-Sudanese dynamics through the UN peacekeeping missions is only scarce, it is not possible to make definite conclusions about its relevance to China's intervention strategy.

### ATTACHING WINGS

In the context of U.S. American remote warfare, the use of UAVs constitutes a central aspect for remote interventions (Chapa 2017; Gusterson 2016: 21-25). In contrast to that, the data catalogue shows only a few signs of dynamics that include UAVs. With the exception of the UN peacekeeping mission, there is no report about the direct deployment of UAVs by China in the Sudans<sup>78</sup>. There are sources claiming China has been providing UAVs to the GoS, but it is difficult to determine their validity<sup>79</sup>. Moreover, it cannot be proven in how far China participated in the operation of drones that it allegedly provided. Reason for the scarcity of evidence about the use of UAVs could be the general difficulty to trace the exact operator of remotely piloted vehicles (Gusterson 2016: 45). However, there is compelling evidence that China uses a different kind of remotely piloted aircraft. China delivered a variety of aviation trainers and combat aircraft to the Northern regime which strengthens their ability for aerial combat. China not only provided these vehicles but also trained SAF pilots on their combat aircraft and helicopter gunships<sup>80</sup>. Moreover, airstrips belonging to the Chinese oil development consortia, are reported to be used by SAF's military aircraft<sup>81</sup>. These dynamics allow China to coordinate the local SAF's military pilots employing them as surrogates for (*destabilising*) aerial warfare. Therefore, by coordinating the actions of Sudanese LCEs, China was able to conduct remote warfare *from above*.

Consequently, on the one hand, China facilitated its access to the Sudanese conflict theatre *from below* through a mixture of employing surrogates and providing the means for warfare to different conflict entrepreneurs in the Sudans. On the other hand, China provided training and technology for accessing the conflict theatre *from above*.

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<sup>76</sup> China also attempted to block UN reports (BBC 2010).

<sup>77</sup> Daniel Large stated that a Chinese engineering battalion build roads in Jubek for local governors. See also: Hang 2014a.

<sup>78</sup> The troops that the PRC contributed to the UNMISS were reportedly accompanied by Chinese drones (Smith 2014).

<sup>79</sup> Zhou Chenming, a representative of the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation has stated that the Chinese CH-4 model drone has "recorded outstanding performance in anti-terrorist attacks in [...] Sudan" (Chan 2017). These aerial surrogates were reported to be employed for military actions in the Darfur region (Dörrie 2014).

<sup>80</sup> The BBC established, on the grounds of witness reports, that China was training fighter pilots who fly Chinese A5 Fantan fighter jets in Darfur from Nyala airport in 2007 and 2008 (Andersson 2008; BBC 2007a; Reeves 2007b). China's J-15 naval pilots provided training for the JL-9 carrier-training version (Chuanren 2017).

<sup>81</sup> This was established by a witness report from Eric Reeves (Reeves 2006).

## CHINA'S REMOTE WARFARE STRATEGY IN THE SUDANS

It is not entirely possible to conclude in how far the entirety of Sino-Sudanese interactions are coordinated on the grounds of a larger Chinese plan. Hence, not every Sino-Sudanese interaction does necessarily need to be part of a tight Chinese foreign policy doctrine. In the case of the Sudans, much of the Sino-Sudanese interactions have to be interpreted in the light of China's learning experiences or experiments for finding suitable ways of conducting foreign policy in Africa (Patey 2017). Thus, the efforts of China are at least of a reactionary nature. Additionally, the investigation has shown that China gradually adjusted to the circumstances of the Sudanese conflict and adapted their strategy accordingly. Especially under Xi Jinping, the PRC increasingly attains to international strategies and plans its actions thoroughly (Ferdinand 2016). China's successes in dealing with tremendously chaotic and conflict-ridden investment environments like the Sudans testify that the Chinese efforts are strategically coordinated and well planned.

### 2. *How did China gain access to the resources in the Sudans?*

The analysis of the Sino-Sudanese interaction dynamics has shown that China adapts its remote strategy to the shift in local realities for assuring uninterrupted access to control stability in the Sudans. In the post-CPA period, China employed governmental surrogates with an especially comprehensive provision of ammunition and structural aid for warfare from *above* and *below*. In the post-independence period, the former surrogates of China were increasingly self-sufficient and the PRC started to extensively support several sides of the conflict with weapons. After the outbreak of the civil war, China reduced its employment of local surrogates and instead utilises PSMC. Considering the radical turns in strategy, the question arises *why* China has used these different remote intervention tactics and procedurally changed their overall approach. Therefore, Chapter 7 proceeds by elaborating the functions of China's remote intervention strategy.

## 7. THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CHINA'S STRATEGY

The analysis of the Sino-Sudanese interaction dynamics unveiled that China has strategically involved itself in the conflicts of Sudan and South Sudan. Moreover, the analysis has shown that despite China's strategy consisting of known remote warfare tactics, it still carries its own signature. The following chapter analyses how the Chinese strategy functions for achieving its gains, avoiding risks and weakening the opposition to answer *why* China uses its particular remote warfare strategy.

### 3. *Why did China intervene in the Sudans through its intervention strategy?*

#### 3.1. *How does China's remote strategy achieve the local and international functions?*

#### 3.2. *How does China's remote strategy limit its exposure to risks?*

#### 3.3. *How does China's remote strategy weaken the opposition?*

First, Section 7.1 discusses the *local and international functions* of the Chinese remote intervention strategy in the Sudans. After that, Section 7.2 elaborates how the Chinese remote intervention *limits its exposure to risks*. Then, Section 7.3 assesses how China's strategy in the Sudans *weakens the opposition*. Lastly, section 7.4 concludes the findings about the three functions in relation to China's remote intervention to answer sub-question 3.

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### 7.1. LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL FUNCTIONS

Chapter 5 has shown that China is mainly motivated to intervene in the Sudans by its endeavour to secure its local access to oil resources. Yet, also China's international reputation is on the line. Thus, the following



section elaborates the *local and international functions* of China's strategy by investigating how the Sino-Sudanese dynamics allowed China to access its gains over the time of the three investigation periods.

### CHANGING DYNAMICS - ADJUSTING STRATEGY

In the post-CPA period, the SAF together with the oil-police was still largely responsible for the security of Northern oil sites<sup>82</sup>. Thus, China still heavily relied on the Northern regime to remotely intervene, because it served the local function of securing its access to Sudanese oil production. However, in the post-independence period, the local situation changed, because Southern oil production was henceforth in the hands of the SPLM/A. Even though the GRSS strove to provide security for oil extraction sites in the South, it was reported that the young government was far less successful in providing protection<sup>83</sup>. This meant that the Chinese approach of mainly interacting with governments did no longer sufficiently serve its function to achieve local economic gains. As the dynamics changed, China's remote strategy did not allow it to control stability and instability in the Sudans and thus had to be adjusted. The shortcomings of Southern investment security and the inability of the GoS to control local militias in the border regions led China to increasingly rely on different non- state actors in the Sudans for military actions. In the North, Bashir-backed militias were part of the security solution for the Chinese oil plants<sup>84</sup>. In the South, China later also relied on the oppositional SPLM-IO for the protection of selected areas<sup>85</sup>. Yet, this approach also did not suffice for long, because the instability that China's cooperation with local militias caused, increased the probability of violent shutdowns of oil plants and attacks on Chinese workers. The unpredictability and inability of control in the oil regions were new for China and hence it was forced to find new ways of dealing with the erupting insecurity in South Sudan. The quickly shifting local conflicts and the resulting lack of allegiances demonstrated that the destabilising approach China was driving in the post-CPA and post-independence periods could no longer be maintained. Consequently, post-independence was a transition period, in which China was unsuccessfully trying to find new solutions to its former approach.

### CHANGING GAINS - ADAPTING FUNCTIONS

Before the South Sudanese civil war broke out, the new CPoC leadership under Xi initiated the BRI which fundamentally transformed Chinese foreign policy and respectively influenced the way in which it proceeded to remotely intervene in the Sudans henceforth. The newly established plans for the BRI brought a new incentive for China, to ensure the safety of the PRC's international trade routes. This means that in the transition from the second to the third period, China's interests shifted in a way, that not only the oil infrastructure but also the wider transportation infrastructure became important for Chinese foreign policy. Additionally, since the Chinese interactions with local militias in the Sudans caused destabilisation, their underlying dynamics did not further serve the function to secure its access to oil production. Consequently,

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<sup>82</sup> SAF and Southern forces protected oil fields after CPA, but technically the SAF was mostly in charge with a 3000 employees strong oil police backed by the GoS (HRF 2008c: 3, 16).

<sup>83</sup> SPLM/A leaders committed themselves to protect Chinese oil investments after independence (ICG 2012:6; Sudan Tribune 2010).

<sup>84</sup> Human Rights First reported how Northern backed militias oversaw securing Chinese oil investments after the CPA (HRF 2008c: 16).

<sup>85</sup> Riek Machar assured China the protection of the oil fields shortly before the war broke out and attempted to ensure the security of oil fields in the Upper Nile region in turn for receiving oil revenue (Hang 2014a; ICG 2015: 10; ICG 2017: 12, 13 Vasselier 2016). Daniel Large confirmed that the oil field protection was often in the hands of militias or rebel groups as a result of the quickly changing allegiances between warring parties.

as China's desired gains changed, it had to adapt its strategy in the third period to assure the strategy's functionality. The remote intervention strategy of China in the civil war featured an externalisation of the oil field protection to PSMC. PSMC are more reliable than LCEs because they are mostly external actors who are less involved in the conflict. This means that their main objective is providing security according to the interests of the intervening state and they are less likely to involve themselves in fights against local actors on their own account (Krieg 2018: 6-8). Therefore, it is expected that PSMC will not switch allegiances that easily and that they will foster stability instead. In other words, PSMC constituted a more functional way to secure access to Sudanese oil production while strengthening the security of China's investments without damaging its international reputation.

#### ADJUSTING STRATEGY TO FUNCTION FOR ACHIEVING GAINS IN CHANGING DYNAMICS

It is possible to deduce from Sino-Sudanese dynamics that China's intervention strategy in the first period had the main function of attaining local economic gains. This means that China chose to employ surrogates and provide the means of warfare to Sudanese conflict entrepreneurs because they allowed access to- and security for the local oil production of the Sudans. In the second period, the security of China's oil sites could not be sufficiently ensured and thus the function of security became more important for its strategy. Therefore, China coordinated more with militias and oppositional forces for improving stability while still upholding the need to secure access to oil. China changed its strategy again in the third period, as their former strategy did not function for ensuring the security of investments as well as for the newly emerging gain of protecting its international reputation. Since 2013 China's remote intervention strategy needed to serve all three kinds of local and international functions: achieving local economic gains, improving security and reputational gains. Hence, China forth stopped its destabilising arming of LCE and instead employed PSMC. That way, it achieved its access to oil production without destabilising the country while also diminishing the reputationally costly connections to LCEs.

In the first two periods, China adjusted its remote intervention strategy whenever the Sino-Sudanese interaction dynamics did not fulfil their *functions of securing* oil investments. Whereas in the third period, the desired *gains* of China in the Sudans included fostering *stability* as well as raising its reputation and thus it adapted its strategy to *function* accordingly. Achieving *gains* through controlling stability in conflicts always comes with certain *risks*.

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### 7.2. LIMITING THE EXPOSURE TO RISKS

According to the logic of resource wars, ICEs try to avoid risks by finding *functional* strategies to tackle *risks* of interventions (Keen 2008: 18, 19). Therefore, this section elaborates on how the Chinese intervention strategy has limited China's *risks* of its intervention in the Sudans, to understand how the remote strategy *limits* Chinese *exposure to risks*.

#### REDUCING LOCAL RISKS WHILE SECURING OIL INVESTMENTS

The case study has shown that China utilised different remote warfare strategies and employed different kinds of surrogates in the three periods. China avoided the deployment of the PLA for securing its investments in the Sudans through the coordination of local actors and PSMC. Thereby, China reduced its own exposure to risks while still pursuing its objectives, as their surrogate forces had the main contact with the instability in the Sudans. This limited the local risks for China because combatants in the conflict would rather deal with surrogates than with the PLA. Remote warfare tactics, in general, are specially designed for the endeavour to minimise an ICE's footprint in the conflict (Day 2002: 2-7; Krieg 2016; Mumford

2013; Smith 2009). Thus, this trait is determined to be the first risk-reducing function of China's strategy throughout the three periods.

### REDUCING THE RISK OF LOSING ACCESS WITHOUT RAISING INVESTMENT RISKS

Through remote warfare, China facilitated the security of its oil-related and not oil-related investments while acquiring energy resources. Utilising remote interventions to secure access to oil is not a trait that is limited to China. Western states, for example, used special operations to secure their newly acquired access to oil fields in foreign conflicts (Krieg 2018:10). However, the dynamics of Sino-Sudanese interactions show that China especially employed surrogates for the protection of its oil investments. LCE surrogates are knowledgeable about the local terrain and usually more mobile than large armies. Additionally, Chinese arms were nearly exclusively found in oil-rich regions<sup>86</sup>. This demonstrates how China also strategically armed its local surrogates to secure its oil investments. Therefore, in the first two periods, employing LCEs as surrogates constituted a functional way to ensure the security of China's investments which consequently minimised local security risks.

The arming of local surrogates had ambiguous effects. While Chinese arms strengthened the surrogate's ability to protect Chinese oil investments, it also increased their capacity to conduct warfare with other local combatants. As local forces tend to have weak allegiances on the grounds of their changing interests, arming them can have destabilising or 'security-risking' effects. Weak allegiances entail the possibility for an ICE to lose the ability to coordinate LCEs. This, in turn, deprives the LCE of its control over the local instability it caused, which puts oil production at risk rather than protecting it. Consequently, the employment of LCE as surrogates started to create risks rather than gains and, thus, China's destabilising strategy lost its functionality. Moreover, in the third period, the BRI increased the importance of stability to secure China's non-oil related investments. Subsequently, China adapted its strategy in order to function for avoiding security risks. China halted arms trades to the Sudans in late 2014 and got engaged much more in serious negotiations to assure stability<sup>87</sup>. Henceforth, it also increasingly employed PSMC because, in contrast to LCEs, they are less involved in local cleavages. In the case at hand, for example, the employees of DeWe were found to be mostly ex-PLA officers, which are subsequently very likely to be strongly attached to China<sup>88</sup>. This means PSMCs function better to ensure security because they have stronger allegiances and their employment does not directly finance the local war-making capacities in the Sudans. Therefore, China's remote warfare strategy increasingly employed more functional PSMCs instead of LCEs for the security of its international investments.

### REDUCING THE RISK OF LOSING REPUTATION

Remote warfare helped China to intervene in the Sudans without apparently contradicting its non-intervention principle. Deployment of the PLA would not only be costly in real terms but would also entail a reputational cost of losing trust from other international allies that believe in China's non-intervention principle. This means that China did not only seek to diminish its exposure to local risks and secure its investments

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<sup>86</sup> Chinese arms were especially found in the oil-rich regions: Unity State, South Kordofan, Upper Nile and Blue Nile (Craze et. al. 2016: 115-118; LeBrun & Leff 2014: 226-228; SAS 2012: 5, 8; SAS 2013).

<sup>87</sup> Interview with Daniel Large. See also: ICG 2017: 12, 13.

<sup>88</sup> The chief operating officer of RWR Advisory Group, a risk consultancy, has confirmed that the line between the PLA and DeWe is often blurry. He states: "Though private, few doubt the groups are solidly under the control of China's national security bureaucracy. They represent a parallel security strategy" (Clover 2017).

in the Sudans but additionally strove to avoid being associated with its intervention. In the course of the three periods, China increasingly focussed on finding remote intervention tactics which prevent the exposure of its intervention. For this, China nearly exclusively relied on human surrogates and avoided the use of robotic surrogates like UAVs. Krieg points out that the employment of human surrogate forces especially favours avoiding responsibilities (2016). In contrast to this, the debate around technological warfare is particularly heated (Boyle 2013; Chapa 2017: 261-264; Der Derian 2003; Lee 2013; Zehfuss 2011). Conducting technological warfare is still extraordinary and, thus, increasingly revealing. Therefore, the direct deployment of UAVs by the PLA would have been exposing and through this, China would have risked an extensive loss of reputation. As a result, it is likely that China refrained from the employment of such means in controversial conflict regions.

China's rising intention to avoid losses of reputation shows in its gradual shift away from directly allying with local militia to the employment of PSMC. LCEs are often heavily involved in the conflict and their conduct is heavily forged through the injustices of war (Biddle et. al. 2018). Thus, alliances or the mere association with them constitute reputational risks through their pre-condemnation. PSMC, in contrast, are external actors that usually have no ideological connection to the conflict's underlying local cleavages and can act more impartial than local actors. As PSMCs are internationally less notorious than LCEs, their employment started to be functional when China was proclaiming its reliability to advertise the BRI. Taking previous elaborations into account, PSMCs function for securing local and international gains, while avoiding not just local risks but also the international risks of losing reputation. The shift away from LCEs to PSMCs, thus, illustrates that China procedurally improved its strategy to be increasingly functional for meeting its enhancing desired gains and the constantly growing risks that come with it.

Another striking observation is the Chinese use of 'transfer proxies' to reach surrogates. In the first period, for example, China avoided direct contact to militias for employing them as surrogates and instead used the GoS as additional proxy in-between<sup>89</sup>. Yet, it was Chinese weapons that found their way to the militias. The same pattern was observed in the third period when the GoS airdropped Chinese weapons to the SPLM-IO. China had successfully passed the accountability to the GoS by using them as proxy in-between. Another example of these 'double proxies' is the employment of local forces by PSMCs like DeWe (Clover 2017). These double proxies ensure that alliances are kept while the connections between the allies are blurred and the reputational risks for the ICE avoided. This is especially noteworthy, considering China's non-intervention policy. Through double proxies, Chinese influences can be blurred entirely in any foreign region. In case China provides finances or cooperates in any way with foreign actors, these can subsequently employ further surrogates on the behalf of China and thus entirely take the Chinese interference out of the picture.

In conclusion, it can be asserted that China's remote strategy had the function to reduce the *risks* of losing access to the oil resources in the Sudans while still assuring the *security* of its oil investments. Moreover, the strategy allowed China to minimise the *risks* of losing international reputation. This was mainly achieved by shifting the focus of attention to surrogate forces which diminished the probability of China being associated with the causes of its involvement.

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<sup>89</sup> GoS distributed Chinese weapons to allied militias like Janjaweed (HRF 2008c: 16; LeBrun & Leff 2014: 225; Reeves 2006; Wall Street Journal 2007). GoS distributed Chinese weapons to the SPLM-IO (CAR 2015; ICG 2015:10; ICG 2017:13).

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### 7.3. WEAKENING THE OPPOSITION

The scramble for African resources and the possibility of losing *access* to petroleum to *opposing* Western investors pressured China to defend its standing in the Sudans. This section elaborates how China *weakened* the Western states through its remote intervention by analysing what the Sino-Sudanese interaction dynamics entailed for the *opposition*.

#### RISKY INVESTMENTS

Policymakers and scholars claim that China had good reasons to foster the stability of the Sudans because it made substantial investments in the countries (Fleischner 2015: 26; Johnson 2016: 277; 278). The biggest ambiguity of Chinese influences in the Sudans, however, is that they persistently call for stability albeit their weapons constantly fuelling conflict and causing destabilisation. Chinese investors remained continuously interested to place substantial investments, despite the ongoing conflicts in the Sudans and their inherent security risks (Hang 2014a; Bodetti 2019). In this context, when managers of Chinese SOEs were asked why they continued operating in the Sudans, they stated that “high-risk environments can generate high profits” (Saferworld 2012: 7). One reason for this enthusiasm may have been that China had its investments protected by governmental forces and other local militias, meaning that it was much less at risk in the destabilised Sudans. Nevertheless, this still wouldn’t explain why China has, at first, kept a steady flow of arms to oil-unrelated areas like Darfur and increased especially the capabilities of conflict-generating LCEs like the genocidal Bashir regime<sup>90</sup>.

#### CREATING INSTABILITY

The contradiction of China’s destabilising approach is especially visible in the post-CPA and post-independence periods. China knowingly armed opposing forces and also cooperated with actors that promoted extreme violence like the Janjaweed. As both of these endeavours fuel violence, instability is the obvious consequence of the Chinese remote intervention strategy. According to the thought of functionality of war, strategic destabilisation in conflict can be beneficial for gaining access to resources (Keen 2008). Hence, the security cooperation with actors that aim at destabilisation in the Sudans appears to be calculated. It could be argued that China sold arms to the GoS, its allied militia and also oppositional forces because weapon trade is a profitable business. However, China's efforts to coordinate the building of weapon facilities show, that it did not act in commercial interest but aimed to maintain the GoS’ domestic military supremacy by increasing its self-sufficiency. Thus, it is very likely that the instability that Chinese weapons caused in the Sudans was to a certain extent intended by China.

#### DRIVING OUT OPPOSITIONAL INVESTORS

The Chinese weapons have considerably destabilised some regions of the Sudans and especially influenced the misery in the area of Darfur (Andersson 2008; Reeves 2010; Suleiman 2009; The Guardian 2010). Considering that Darfur was, at that time, no significant oil production area, it is curious why Chinese weapons were especially found there. Destabilising oil unrelated areas does not function for accessing local gains and only raises additional risks. The answer to this ambiguous behaviour lies in the ideological difference between China and the Western states. While Western states are ideologically and morally obliged

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<sup>90</sup> President Bashir of the GoS was pledged guilty by the International Criminal Court on the grounds of genocide in the Darfur area (ICG 2009).

to sanction human rights abuses, China actively disregards them on the grounds of its non-intervention policy. Connecting this crucial part of the master cleavage to China's destabilising strategy, a striking function emerges. Western investors cut most interactions with the GoS due to the conflicts and the atrocities that happened in areas like Darfur and South Kordofan (Gadkarim 2012; Patey 2008; Patey 2017). Similarly, Southern instability and human rights abuses have equally created an unattractive investment environment which prevented Western investors from even trying to establish access to the Southern oil production (De Waal 2014: 359; Pedersen & Bazilian 2014: 165). Hence, human rights abuses and instability of non-oil related areas had a profitable effect for China's goal to secure access to the oil resources, as they functioned to keep Western investors out of the Sudans. Consequently, China's remote strategy had the function to destabilise the country by employing human rights abusing actors as surrogates. This functioned to *weaken* the position of *opposing* oil investors while securing Chinese access to oil resources. Causing controlled instability in the Sudans constituted a security risk to Chinese workers, but China had its investment protected by surrogate forces. As a consequence, in 2018, China received 95 per cent of the South Sudanese crude petroleum exports, which made up 99.2 per cent of its entire exports (Simoes & Hidalgo 2019). Therefore, it can be concluded that the Chinese remote intervention strategy was functional for protecting their access to the Sudanese oil resources by weakening Western opportunities in the Sudans.

#### THE DILEMMA OF UNDOING INSTABILITY

As the BRI started to gain traction, the stability of Sudan and the non-oil related investments became important. The destabilising effects of the Chinese strategy in the first two periods no longer reduced all risks and, thus, lost its functionality. Yet, by fostering stability, China would also diminish human rights abuses and contradict its previous strategy to *weaken the opposing* Western investors through destabilisation. Therefore, the Chinese strategy in the third period poses a dilemma. If the intervention strategy of an ICE does not function for *weakening the opposition* in a resource war, there are two possibilities. Either the strategy *weakens the opposition* in a different way, or the *opposition* is no longer relevant. In the case of the third intervention strategy of China, it comes down to a combination of both.

#### STRATEGICALLY TETHERING THE SUDANESE OIL PRODUCTION TO CHINA

First, China made itself increasingly irreplaceable as a provider of financial means, as it succeeded to become the main investor in the Sudanese oil market. In the case of the Sudans, oil is still the major source of income and whoever is able to provide access to resources had the opportunity to profit from the revenue (De Waal 2014: 165; Pedersen & Bazilian 2014: 165, 168). In case a LCE gained control over oil fields, it was increasingly forced to cooperate with China to turn the crude oil into revenue. In turn, the lack of alternatives to oil revenue constituted powerful leverage for China in the Sudanese conflicts. For example, SPLA-IO sources claimed that if an ally of China damaged oil facilities, China would threaten not to repair it and, thus, leave it worthless (Fleischner 2015: 18). Hence, while local actors were fighting for control over the oil fields, China could be sure that its role as the main customer was increasingly secured. Therefore, it could be argued that China had partly won the resource war after the second period because its standing was extremely manifested in the Sudans. However, this would not answer why China still employed remote warfare in the third period. At this point, it is significant to consider the striking increase in

Chinese investments in Sudan after 2013<sup>91</sup>, as well as its rising efforts to negotiate and mediate between combatants.

### OFFENSIVE INVESTMENTS

Making increasing ‘offensive’ investments in a country for gaining access to resources can also be a way of ensuring that no other country has the opportunity to get hold in the domestic market. In a way, China already utilised this ‘investing for weakening opposition strategy’ in the first two periods as well. Yet, these efforts were spatially confined to the Sudanese oil sector. As the security of transportation and non-oil related infrastructure became more important with the BRI, China adjusted its strategy in the third period to function accordingly. While it had previously strategically destabilised parts of the Sudans, it then ‘offensively invested’ into the stability of the entirety of the Sudanese territories. As beforementioned autocratic African governments usually have an aversion to cooperate with Western states (Bader 2015; Sidahmed 2013: 104). Through the substantial financial support from China, the Sudans were even less prone to accept Western investments. Moreover, as China was already an established, trusted and close partner, with substantive oil infrastructure in the Sudans, it was less likely that LCEs would seek for alternative investors. Therefore, China has henceforth ‘offensively invested’ to weaken the possibility of opposing western investors to challenge the Chinese standing in the Sudanese oil market.

The elaboration of this section has shown, that in the first two periods the remote strategy of China had the function to *weaken the opposition* by destabilising the Sudans. This functioned well and consequently, China has ensured that local actors would keep their allegiances due to a lack of alternatives. In the third period, China controlled the vast majority of the Sudanese oil markets and its remote strategy subsequently *weakened the opposition* by providing substantial ‘offensive’ investments because these avoided the risks of destabilisation.

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## 7.4. THE FUNCTIONS OF CHINA’S REMOTE INTERVENTION

The previous sections have shown that China’s remote intervention strategies in the Sudans served various *gain-achieving*, *risk-avoiding* and *opposition-weakening functions*. First, during the post-CPA period, China’s strategy functioned through protecting its oil investments with surrogates while destabilising the country to keep Western investors out. During the post-independence period, the strategy was functional to make the transition between the first and the third strategy. Therefore, China increasingly employed oppositional local surrogates for *securing* oil infrastructure and destabilised further to prevent Western investments while fortifying the Chinese standing in the Sudans. During the Southern civil war, China refocussed on fostering stability to avoid damaging its reputation and further on weakened Western opportunities in the Sudans through offensive investments. To this end, China employed PSMC which have the function to diminish its risks of reputational loss and foster local stability. Throughout all three periods, China operated partly through in-between proxies for disassociating itself with the intervention and reducing the risks of reputational loss.

### *3. Why did China intervene in the Sudans through its intervention strategy?*

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<sup>91</sup> In 2013, China launched several investment initiatives in a “economic cooperation package” for the development of the Sudans, that was considered much larger than the PRCs efforts before (Aljazeera 2013b; Chun & Kemple-Hardy 2015: 3; Hang 2014b; ICG 2012: 10; Pedersen & Bazilian 2014: 169-172; Saferworld 2013: 3; Sidahmed 2013: 115, 116; SMC 2018).

China's remote intervention strategy served the local and international *function* to allow *access* to the Sudanese crude oil resources by supporting human right abuses to obstruct *opposing* Western investors. Additionally, China's strategy was employed because it functioned to diminish China's *risks* of losing *access*, *securing* oil investments and uphold international *reputation*. The aspect of reputation is significant. Reason for this is the success of the Chinese remote warfare strategies to facilitate that China is increasingly less associated with events in the Sudans despite its continuous crucial involvement. Hence, it is difficult to hold China accountable for the consequences of its remote intervention. However, normative questions of responsibility and accountability go beyond the scope of this investigation.

## 8. CONCLUSION

The study of remote warfare changes the way in which foreign interventions in conflicts are understood. Yet, normative studies lead the debate, despite considerable lacks in the understanding of the functions of remote interventions. Furthermore, contemporary studies about remote warfare are nearly exclusively focussed on Western states and thus the literature lacks an understanding of non-Western approaches. Recently the debate refocussed on studying remote warfare as a phenomenon that is characterised by its liquidity in time and space. This thesis has taken up these endeavours and studied the functioning as well as the functions of a Chinese approach to remote warfare through a purposefully designed analytical framework. By connecting thoughts from the alliance theory to the political economy of conflict, a framework was developed that allowed studying how and why a state uses remote interventions for gaining access to foreign conflict theatres. With the help of this framework, the Chinese remote intervention in Sudan and South Sudan has been analysed to understand:

*What dynamics of interaction allowed the People's Republic of China to secure access to local resources through remote warfare in Sudan and South Sudan between 2005 and 2018 and what are the functions of China's remote intervention strategy?*

### FINDINGS

To answer this question, different empirical reports about Sino-Sudanese interactions between 2005 and 2018 were investigated, literature was reviewed, and an interview was conducted. Through the study of the dynamics of the reported interactions, it was possible to determine how the strategies of China evolved in three different conflict periods. The shifting dynamics demonstrated that China's remote intervention strategy was not a stiff doctrine but developed according to changes in the local context and Chinese interests. First, China's strategy functioned for strategically destabilising the Sudans, while securing China's access to the local oil resources. However, the support for different oppositional sides started to also destabilise the oil regions which forced China to revise their strategy. From then on, China was increasingly eager to minimize its footprint on the Sudans while starting to invest in the stability of the countries. This shows that China is not only utilising comprehensive remote strategies but also gradually improving their effectiveness.

### CONTRIBUTION

The Chinese remote intervention strategy features some interesting patterns to consider for the contemporary study of warfare. In light of the political economy of conflict, China strategically fostered conflict in some areas and offensively invested in others to protect its standing in the Sudanese oil market against Western investors. Strategically utilising destabilisation and stabilisation of foreign conflicts to weaken an



opposition is nothing new per-se. However, the combination of creating a hostile environment around resources while simultaneously securing the resource extraction sites constitutes a distinguished pattern which provides a new element to consider for the study of resource wars. Furthermore, China strategically turned the Western human rights doctrine against Western states by provoking them to sanction the Sudans. This constitutes an audacious but novel aspect by showing how ideologies can be instrumentalised against opponents.

In light of the debate around the functions of remote warfare, insights were gained from China's endeavour not to damage its international reputation. For example, China has strategically blurred its influences by using different double proxies to cooperate with surrogates without being associated with them. This provides a new aspect for the study of remote warfare because it shows that remote interventions can be used strategically to obscure the influences of an intervening conflict entrepreneur to avoid accountability. Moreover, the function of 'disguising' intervention might be the reason that Chinese remote warfare has not yet been acknowledged by the current debates.

The constant progression of China's approach in connection with its ability to adjust its strategy according to its needs shows that China constantly improves its ability to conduct remote warfare. This illustrates, on the one hand, how adaptable remote interventions are and on the other hand, how quickly these strategies can develop further. Thus, the liquidity of remote warfare also encompasses the way that remote strategies themselves change, which provides a brief glimpse onto the ability of remote interventions to rapidly adapt and evolve. Finally, through an analysis of Chinese interactions with Sudanese actors, this study has added a piece of insight to Chinese remote warfare and thereby demonstrated that the combined thoughts of alliances in and functions of conflict can help understand the dynamics of remote interventions. By this, the case study established that the study of non-Western approaches to remote warfare can help to understand how remote interventions function.

## REFLECTION

While the chosen approach was relatively successful in generating evidence for understanding the general patterns of warfare, it fell short on providing more in-depth insights about distinctive instances and individual connections between interactions. Therefore, and on the ground of the limitations of the data catalogue, most possibly not all instances of Chinese remote interventions have been detected. Moreover, this study identified the functions of Chinese remote warfare in the specific context of the Sudans, which does not provide sufficient grounds to assume that these strategies are employed elsewhere. Considering that only a single case in a specific time period was under investigation, it is very likely that China has already developed much further in its endeavour to find suitable ways to protect its investments abroad. Hence, it is essential to continue the study of China's approach to remote warfare in different conflict settings, time periods and regarding new discoveries about contemporary warfare. Further research in the areas of non-Western remote warfare has the potential to increase the understanding of foreign remote interventions and their influence on contemporary conflicts.

At last, this thesis has shown the validity of President Xi's claim, that the Chinese policy of non-intervention excludes security measures in foreign territories. Considering the Chinese remote interventions in the Sudans, the foreign policy of China has, nowadays, rather evolved to a principle of non-*direct* intervention. Now, further studies of distinguished cases and empirical material are needed to illuminate if and how China remotely intervenes elsewhere in the world.

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## 10. APPENDICES

### 10.1. APPENDIX 1. INTERVIEW

Interview	
<b>Dr Large</b>	Dr Daniel Large has been interviewed on the 31.05.2019 via Skype in Cologne.
	<p>Dr Large has been research director of the Africa-Asia Centre, Royal African Society at the School of Oriental and African Studies, an associate with the South African Institute of International Affairs, a visiting researcher at the Danish Institute of International Studies and a visiting lecturer at the Centre Européen de Recherches Internationales et Stratégiques, Brussels.</p> <p>Momentarily, Dr Large works as an associate professor of the School of Public Policy and the Doctoral School of Political Science, Public Policy, and International Relations of the Central European University in Hungary. An overview of his publications can be found here: <a href="http://publications.ceu.hu/biblio/author/7810">http://publications.ceu.hu/biblio/author/7810</a>.</p> <p>Moreover, he was the project director of the Rift Valley institute's digital Sudan Open Archive (<a href="http://www.sudanarchive.net">www.sudanarchive.net</a>) which constitutes the most substantial full-text database of historical and contemporary books and documents about the history of the Sudans.</p> <p>On the grounds of his comprehensive academic and empirical research in and about the Sudans with particular focus on China's developmental- and security relations to the countries, he is an expert about the relations and interactions of China with different actors in Sudan and South Sudan.</p>

### 10.2. APPENDIX 2. TIMELINE OF EVENTS IN THE SUDANS 2005-2018

#### CHRONOLOGY OF RELEVANT EVENTS IN THE SUDANS 2005-2013.

<b>2005</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On January 9, the Sudanese government and the SPLM/A sign the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, ending 22 years of civil war in Sudan. The agreement incorporates several previously negotiated accords.</li> <li>• On March 24, the UN votes to send 10,700 peacekeepers to South Sudan to facilitate the redeployment of government troops to the North.</li> <li>• On August 1, John Garang leader of the SPLM/A dies in a helicopter crash. Salva Kiir succeeds to the South Sudan presidency and to the vice presidency of the Government of National Unity.</li> </ul>
<b>2008</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On January 1, the UN takes over peacekeeping in Darfur from African Union troops.</li> </ul>
<b>2009</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On March 4, al-Bashir is indicted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes in Darfur.</li> </ul>
<b>2010</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In national elections held April 11–15, al-Bashir is re-elected president of Sudan with 68.24 per cent of the vote, and Salva Kiir is elected president of South Sudan with 92.99 per cent of the vote.</li> </ul>

2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January 9–15 Independence referendum: Of more than 3.8 million South Sudanese votes, 98.8 per cent vote in a referendum to secede from the North.</li> <li>• May 19–21, armed clashes between armed forces of the North and the South begin in Abyei as the Sudan Army moves to occupy the region.</li> <li>• On June 5, fighting breaks out in South Kordofan as Khartoum seeks to stamp out discontent among the Nuba, who sided with the South during the civil war.</li> <li>• On July 9, South Sudan is officially declared independent of Sudan and is admitted to the UN on July 14.</li> <li>• September, fighting begins in Blue Nile State when Khartoum sends its army to consolidate control of the region and to drive out the Northern branch of the SPLM.</li> </ul>
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January, South Sudan announces shutdown of its oil production in a dispute with Sudan over oil transit fees.</li> <li>• In April fighting breaks out in Abyei between Northern and Southern armed forces.</li> <li>• September, Sudan and South Sudan sign an agreement covering oil-transit fees and demarcation of their common border, but it excludes the status of Abyei, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile.</li> </ul>
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• April, South Sudan resumes pumping oil for export through Northern pipelines.</li> <li>• December, fighting breaks out between Dinka and Nuer soldiers in Juba after President Salva Kiir charges Vice President Riek Machar with attempting a coup; beginning of civil war in South Sudan.</li> </ul>
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January - A ceasefire is signed but broken several times over subsequent weeks, and further talks in February fail to end the violence that displaces more than a million people by April.</li> <li>• April - UN says pro-Machar forces sack the oil town of Bentiu, killing hundreds of civilians.</li> <li>• December - The chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court halts investigations into war crimes in Darfur for lack of support from the UN Security Council.</li> </ul>
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• April - President Bashir is re-elected for another five-year term. He wins nearly 95 per cent of the vote in a poll marked by low turnout and boycotted by most opposition parties.</li> </ul>
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• December, A UN commission on human rights says a process of ethnic cleansing is underway in several parts of the country, a claim that President Salva Kiir denies.</li> </ul>
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• February, A famine is declared in parts of South Sudan in what the UN describes as a man-made catastrophe caused by civil war and economic collapse.</li> <li>• May, President Kiir declares unilateral ceasefire, launches national dialogue.</li> <li>• August, the number of refugees fleeing violence in South Sudan to Uganda passes the one million mark, according to the UN</li> <li>• October - US announces partial lifting of sanctions on Sudan.</li> </ul>
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January – Sudan: Protests against bread price rises after the government removed subsidies.</li> <li>• August - President Kiir signs power-sharing agreement with Riek Machar and other opposition groups in a bid to end the civil war. The deal will see Machar return to government as one of five vice-presidents.</li> </ul>

Chronology based on: BBC 2018a; BBC 2018b; Berry 2015, own illustration.

### 10.3. APPENDIX 3. CATEGORIES AND CODES

<b>Explanation of Categories: Type of Document</b>	
Documents organised by type are visualised in Figure 4. These categories concern 103 documents that were collected in the dataset. These documents were organised to give an impression which documents were used for the study of Sino-Sudanese interactions. Categories have been established inductively on grounds of the different types of documents that were selected.	
<b>Expert Report</b>	Expert Reports are documents written by one or a group of individuals that have specific knowledge and/or experiences about Sino-Sudanese interactions. On the grounds of their specific relation or exposure to empirical observations of Sino-Sudanese interaction, they are considered experts. These experts are not associated with a particular organisation that itself produced documentations about empirical observations that regard Sino-Sudanese interactions. If a document in the dataset has been written by one or many experts, it has been categorised as an Expert Report.
<b>Foreign Government</b>	Foreign Governmental Statements are documents that were issued by foreign governments that concern Sino-Sudanese interactions. Foreign governments are governments of countries other than the People's Republic of China, the Republic of the Sudan or the Republic of South Sudan.
<b>Governmental Statement</b>	Governmental Statements are documents that were issued by the governments of the People's Republic of China, the Republic of the Sudan or the Republic of South Sudan about their interactions with each other or other actors in the Sudans.
<b>Interview</b>	Interviews are documents that contain transcripts of interviews with one or a group of individuals that have specific knowledge and/or experiences about Sino-Sudanese interactions. On the grounds of their specific relation or exposure to empirical observations about Sino-Sudanese interaction, they are considered experts. These may include published transcripts of interviews that were not conducted by the author but were and referenced accordingly.
<b>News Report</b>	News Reports are documents published by a news editorial that has specific knowledge and/or experiences about Sino-Sudanese interactions. The staff of the news-editorial is in possession of documentation about empirical observations of Sino-Sudanese interaction and published a report about the incidents.
<b>NGO Report</b>	NGO Reports are documents published by a non-governmental organisation (NGO) that has specific knowledge and/or experiences about Sino-Sudanese interactions. The staff of the NGO is in possession of documentation about empirical observations of Sino-Sudanese interaction and published a report about the incidents.

<b>Explanation of Coding Categories: Codebook 1. Cooperation</b>	
The codes in codebook 1. have been created deductively on the grounds of the content of the data material.	
<b>Economic Cooperation</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that concern the planning or execution of economic relations in the broader sense. These include patterns and/ or consequences of interactions and transactions between Chinese or Sudanese actors regarding trade, investment and transaction. In case a text concerns one of the subordinate coding categories below, the texts have been coded there.
<b>Chinese National Companies</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that include the involvement of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) from China.
<b>Development Aid</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that involve developmental cooperation between China and Sudan or China and South Sudan. This concerns exclusively the financial aid given from the Chinese government, and/or SOE for the economic, environmental, social or political development of Sudan or South Sudan.



<b>Infrastructure Construction</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that involve the infrastructure between China and Sudan or China and South Sudan. This concerns the construction, erection, finance or planning by the Chinese government, and/or SOE of infrastructure in Sudan or South Sudan. In case this regards infrastructure that has been constructed for the direct or sole purpose to transport, refine, extract or produce commodities related to oil, it has been coded under oil production.
<b>Oil Production</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that involve the trade or production with oil resources between China and Sudan or China and South Sudan. Oil production and trade broadly concerns interactions that include trade in crude oil or refined petroleum and all other oil-related commodities, the construction of oil infrastructure or oil transportation infrastructure, the training or provision of oil extraction and refining technology as well as any oil extraction, production, refining or transportation-related activities.
<b>Military Cooperation</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that concern the planning or execution of military relations in the broader sense. These include patterns and/ or consequences of interactions that have aimed at coordinating actions between Chinese and Sudanese armed forces. In case a text concerns one of the subordinate coding categories below, the texts have been coded there.
<b>Attacks on Oil Production</b>	All texts that pertain to extraordinary and relevant events featuring Sino-Sudanese interactions that regard attacks on oil production in the Sudans. These events always involve at least one non-governmental actor from the Sudans as well as the Chinese government or staff of Chinese SOEs and include attacks, abductions, declarations, negotiations, meetings, and other eventual occasions that concern the production and trade of oil. Oil production and trade include trade in crude oil or refined petroleum and all other oil-related commodities, the construction of oil infrastructure or oil transportation infrastructure, the training or provision of oil extraction and refining technology as well as any oil extraction, production, refining or transportation-related activities.
<b>Peacekeeping</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions regarding the peacekeeping missions UNMIS and UNMISS.
<b>Mediation &amp; Negotiation</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions in which China mediates or negotiates between two or more actors in Sudan and/or South Sudan. Mediation and negotiation include all actions that aim at resolving disputes through communication and without the use of violence.
<b>Security of Chinese Investments</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions involving the security of Chinese foreign investments in Sudan or South Sudan. Chinese investments include all types of investments into domestic capital of the Sudans by the government of the PRC and/or one or several Chinese SOEs. Capital in this sense means assets that increase the performance and/or size of the economy/ies of Sudan and/or South Sudan.
<b>Political Cooperation</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that concern the planning or execution of political cooperation in the broader sense. These include patterns and/ or consequences of interactions that have aimed at coordinating foreign or domestic policy or other types of political actions between Chinese and Sudanese actors. In case concerns the coordination of military or economic policies and/or actions it has been coded under the regarding coding categories. Moreover, in case a text concerns one of the subordinate coding categories below, the texts have been coded there.
<b>Foreign Policy</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that concern the planning or execution of political foreign policy between the governments of the PRC and Sudan or the PRC and South Sudan. These include patterns and/ or consequences of interactions that have aimed at coordinating foreign policy or other types of political actions between the Chinese and the individual Sudanese governments.
<b>Forum Cooperation</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that concern the planning or execution of forum cooperation. Forum cooperation is a specific institutional mechanism of China that facilitates the cooperation of the country with an individual or a number of foreign governments and /or foreign companies (Alden & Alves 2017). A most relevant example is the Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) which presents the central institution for Sino-African relations and its subsequent sub-forums.

<b>United Nations</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that take place in or concern the institutional framework of the United Nations (UN). These include interactions have reference the UN security council, the UN general assembly, UN rapporteurs, or other UN institutions. Moreover, this excludes interactions that concern UN peacekeeping missions.
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**Explanation of Coding Categories: Codebook 2. Remote Warfare**

The codes in codebook 2. have been created inductively on the grounds of the literature. The codes are based on the debate about the different tactics, mechanisms as well as functions of remote warfare of the following works:

Adelman & Kieran 2018; Biddle et. al. 2018; Biegon & Watts 2017; Demmers & Gould 2018; Geiß & Lahmann 2017; Hughes 2012; Knowles & Watson 2017; Krieg 2016; Krieg 2018; Krieg & Rickli 2018; Mumford 2013; Richards 2018; Ross 2016; Sullivan et. al. 2018; Thaler et.al 2016; Waldman 2018.

In case the codes accumulated an exceeding number of textual units, sub-codes have been created deductively to facilitate the analysis.

<b>Military Training</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that resemble patterns of military training have been assigned to this category. Military training broadly concerns all direct provision of expertise of one or many Sudanese actors to conduct warfare by the PRC. This includes training and advising in the use of weapons, small arms, ammunition, war machinery and other military technology or strategy.
<b>Providing the Means for Conducting Warfare</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that that aim at providing the means for conducting warfare to any Sudanese actors have been assigned to this category. This includes all activities that are aimed at directly fostering the ability of one or many Sudanese actors to conduct warfare by the PRC, except the provision of expertise or autonomous combat technology. Included interactions concern the provision of armaments and necessary infrastructure, resources or commodities that aim at being directly employed in warfare. Providing of armaments broadly concerns all trade in weapons, small arms, ammunition, war machinery and other military technology. In case a text concerns one of the subordinate coding categories below, the texts have been coded there.
<b>Aerial Vehicles</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that that concern the provision of parts and/ or fully functioning aerial vehicles for conducting warfare to Sudanese governments have been assigned to this category. Aerial vehicles concern all mechanic aerial vehicles that are equipped or have the direct purpose to serve for combat purposes. These exclude unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).
<b>Constructing Weapon Manufactories</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that that aim at constructing infrastructure which has the purpose to increase the capacity of Sudanese actors to produce armaments have been assigned to this category. Armaments broadly concern all weapons, small arms, ammunition, war machinery and other military technology.
<b>Small Arms and Light Weapons</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that that aim at providing small arms and light weapons to Sudanese governments have been assigned to this category. This includes all weapons, small arms, and ammunition, that can be carried and directly employed by a single operator.
<b>Providing Arms to Non- State Actors</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that that aim at providing armaments to Sudanese non-governmental actors have been assigned to this category. This includes the provision of all weapons, small arms, ammunition, war machinery and other military technology.
<b>War Machinery</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that that aim at providing the provision of parts and/ or fully functioning war machinery to Sudanese governments have been assigned to this category. War machinery concerns all mechanic ground vehicles that are equipped or have the direct purpose to serve for combat purposes. These exclude unmanned and autonomous vehicles.
<b>Human Surrogate Forces</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that plan or execute the employment of human surrogates for military or security-related actions in the Sudans have been assigned to this category. Interactions for the planning and execution of human surrogates broadly concern all

	interactions that organise the coordination of non-PLA armed forces in the Sudans. In case a text concerns one of the subordinate coding categories below, the texts have been coded there.
<b>Governmental Surrogates</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that plan or execute the employment of governmental surrogates for military or security-related actions in the Sudans have been assigned to this category. Interactions for the planning and execution of governmental surrogates broadly concern all interactions that organise the coordination of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAD) and the Sudan's People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in the Sudans.
<b>Local Militias</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that plan or execute the employment of local militias for military or security-related actions in the Sudans have been assigned to this category. Local militias involve all military forces that have been developed by the civil population and do not have any <u>official</u> ties to any government in the Sudans.
<b>Private Security Contractors</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that plan or execute the employment of private security contractors for military or security-related actions in the Sudans have been assigned to this category. Private Security Contractors involve all private enterprises that provide armed combat or security services in the Sudans.
<b>Technological Surrogates &amp; UAVs</b>	All texts that pertain to Sino-Sudanese interactions that that concern the employment of technological surrogates for conducting warfare in the Sudans or the provision of parts and/ or fully functioning technological surrogates to Sudanese governments have been assigned to this category. Technological Surrogates concern all mechanic autonomous weaponry, unmanned combat vehicles or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) that are equipped or have the direct purpose to serve for combat purposes.