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Mentor: John Miller

There is much literature on rivalries among nation-states that focus on classifying and identifying rivals, but very little on how they occur and under what circumstances do nations come to view themselves as rivals. I want to understand how rivalries among nations and other organizations form and endure. To accomplish this, I plan on modeling a system of interacting agents using ideas from self-organized criticality. In such models small conflicts can happen periodically between any given dyad of nation-states with the potential of escalation into enduring rivalries that may draw other nations into the conflict. The circumstances under which that occurs will be examined.