IS LEGIBLE SPACE PEACEFUL SPACE?

BUREAUCRATIC ORDER AND CIVIL WAR ONSET

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By

Christopher E. White, B.A.

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Thesis Advisor: Matthew Fleming, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

Armed conflict in the post-Cold War world has taken place overwhelmingly at the intra-state level. The precipitous decline in instances of war between states has led some scholars to posit a prolonged era of international peace. This internalization of conflict has resulted in a new interest in counterinsurgency and state-building operations, in both academic and policy circles, as states seek to consolidate sovereign control over their territory and population. The rise of an intellectual soldier class in the United States, led by David Petraeus, John Nagl and others, is emblematic of this trend. This paper examines the causes of civil war, the dominant form of armed conflict since 1990 and the ultimate proof of unrealized state sovereignty. Controlling for traditional explanatory variables for civil war, such as economic prosperity, regime type, ethnic fractionalization and access to state power, it evaluates the causal effects of legibility on civil war onset. I conceive of legibility in a manner similar to James C. Scott in his seminal work, Seeing like a State. Scott asserts that modern state have sought above all to create order out of apparent chaos by imposing centralized, bureaucratic order on dynamic, peripheral space. He argues that these efforts are doomed to fail because the center is unable to capture social complexity on the periphery. Using binomial logit and ordinary least squares regressions, this paper demonstrates that legibility, while imperfect, may mitigate the threat of civil war.
The counsel and patience of Ryan Greer, Amy O’Connor and, especially, Dr. Matthew Fleming were indispensible to the completion of this work.

Many thanks,

Chris
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INTRODUCTION

“Any large social process or event will inevitably be far more complex than the schemata we can devise, prospectively or retrospectively, to map it.”

-James C. Scott

In *Seeing like a State*, James C. Scott introduces the concept of legibility. Intimating that, “the state has always seemed to be the enemy of ‘people who move around,’” he argues that the modern state has sought above all to create order out of apparent chaos by imposing central, bureaucratic controls on dynamic, peripheral space. Imposing bureaucratic order allows the state to better execute its primary functions, which Scott identifies as the extraction of tax revenue, the conscription of soldiers and the dispensation of social services. He portrays rationalist movements as disparate as the standardization of language, the design of cities, the creation of transportation networks, the advancement of scientific forestry and even the imposition of last names as attempts by the state to monitor, record and control land and its inhabitants. He writes, “Certain forms of knowledge and control require a narrowing of vision. The great advantage of such tunnel vision is that it brings into sharp focus certain limited aspects of a far more complex and unwieldy social reality.”

But in Scott’s analysis, the periphery is not chaotic but governed by complex social norms. These order it in a manner understood and adhered to by local actors but imperceptible to state bureaucrats. The periphery is no Panopticon. It is opaque to the state, which is unable to adequately capture its social complexity. Something is lost when this heterogeneous space is translated into bureaucratic schematics. Further, local customs, particular and adaptable are amendable to micro-adjustments in a way that codified laws are not.

In the following analysis, I ask whether imperfect bureaucratic order serves the interest of peace. Complete understanding of the periphery by the state may not be necessary to prevent violence and war. The pursuit of legibility and bureaucratic order may be justified by its ability
to prevent conflict. I attempt below to situate James Scott within the academic literature on civil war. Running binomial logit and ordinary least squares regressions on international panel data for 155 countries between 1990-2005, I attempt to determine whether legibility has independent casual effects on the onset of civil war and lasting peace.

**THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS**

“To define is to mark the clear ‘out-line’ which can differentiate one thing from its proximity. In this sense, the construction of a national identity is also, and always, a spatial operation.”

-Thongchai Winichakul

“The rich variety of theorizing about the nature and functions of the state suggests the danger of assuming or seeking a single accepted or monolithic theory of the state in any particular society.”

-Kenneth Dyson

“The boundary of the state (or political system) never marks a real exterior.”

-Timothy Mitchell

In asking whether legibility serves the interests of peace, this paper adopts the Hobbesian frame as its point of departure. Hobbes begins with the inadequacy of human reason and ends with the necessity of a Leviathan. Truth, justice, “the good,” and other utopian conceptions are fantasies that cannot be attained through rationality, an exercise of constant searching. This exercise is appropriate only for deducing simple cause and effect relationships. For Hobbes, there is no Truth but only my truth and your truth; no Justice but only my justice and your justice. In other words, men pursue plural interests rather than universal values. A sovereign becomes necessary to mediate between competing interests and prevent a society from descending into the chaos and violence of the state of nature, which is always close at hand. Thus, for Hobbes, civil war results from the breakdown of the political order or, in modern language, the absence of the state. The realist school of international relations, in which the state is the fundamental, irreducible unit of the international system, derives from this framework.
Many scholars have complicated this paradigm and its foundational premise of an autonomous, unitary state. Two broad critiques emerge. First, states are unitary and autonomous but they are interested actors rather than neutral arbiters. They often pursue their own interests, irrespective of the public good. Through the use of violence, oppression and discrimination, they are capable of producing chaos as much as order. In Robert Bates analysis, for example, states emerge as the primary instigators of civil war on the African continent. Second, following the work of Johannes Althusius, states are porous, disaggregate and plural. They are inhabited by various individuals and institutions with contradictory goals. Examples abound. Hamza Alavi points out the propensity of Pakistani military officers for dealing with foreign officials without the knowledge their own heads of state. Vivienne Shue argues that Deng Xiaopeng’s ostensibly decentralizing reforms in China actually had the effect of increasing the authority of the central state over the countryside. The state gave up direct administration, at which it had never succeeded, and exercised control through commercial enterprises. Timothy Mitchell details the manner in which the Arabian American Oil Company captured the state and transformed its private business dealings into public interests. Perhaps the best example of plurality at the level of the state is offered by the Federalist Papers and the origin of the American republic, in which power was designed to eminate from the localities to the central state.

In a sense, James Scott is a Hobbesian. To argue that states have common interests and that they behave in certain common ways in pursuit of these interests assumes a high level of autonomy. The very title of the work, Seeing like a State, implies commonality and irreducibility typical of realist analyses. But Scott is no realist. He diverges from Hobbes in his assessment of the interests and behaviors that unite states. States are not neutral arbiters but bureaucratic
organizers. Scott is indebted to Foucault for his broad conception of state power, which contains social, discursive and institutional elements in addition to traditional, top-down hierarchies. The specific power he identifies and ascribes to the state is that of organization. The state has unique ability to simplify, measure, standardize, map and impose bureaucratic order on otherwise complex and fluid environments. This is the nature of legibility. But the opacity of centralized vision necessitates that state actions will often provoke rather than suppress chaos and violence. Unlike Bates, however, Scott does not assign malicious intent to states. They are sources of instability and violence to the extent that they idealistic pursuit of legible societies are incommensurately with the myopia inherent to bureaucratic reasoning.

Given his assumption of autonomy, it is logical that Scott is interested in particular kinds of states: authoritarian regimes imbued with high-modernist ideology. He defines the latter as a “supreme self-confidence in continued linear progress, the development of scientific and technical knowledge, the expansion of production, the rational design of the social order, the growing satisfaction of human needs and, not least, increasing control over nature (including human nature)” 11 He contends that the drive for legibility is strongest in these states, sometimes extending to extremes of social engineering projects. Authoritarian power combined with utopian vision is a recipe for humanitarian disaster of which Mao’s Great Leap Forward is one example. Again, the motivating impulse is not exploitation, oppression or discrimination; it is idealism. Disaster results not from malice, but the tremendous gap between goals and capabilities. The social complexity of the periphery can never be captured and made legible by myopic, centralized bureaucracy.

This paper is not concerned with center-directed social engineering programs, but the implications for legibility with regard to civil war onset. It asks whether legibility can
adequately serve more pragmatic state goals, namely the realization of sovereignty through the limitation of organized, political violence within territorial boundaries. Contra Hobbes and, to a lesser extent, Scott, it does not assume state autonomy. Rather, following Nettl, Mitchell, Rudolph and Rudolph, Dyson and others, it conceives of variable “state-ness.”

Adnan Naseemullah defines a frontier as the distance between Westphalian and Weberian sovereignty. Modern states are entrenched in a system governed by the former, in which they are the autonomous, irreducible units of the international system. But the reality is more complex and for many states, Weberian sovereignty, conceived as a monopoly on the use of force within a legally demarcated territory, has remained elusive. Below, legibility will be treated as a conceptual variable and an organizational impulse that states indulge in order to realize Weberian sovereignty.

This paper attempts to situate James Scott within the macro, quantitative literature on civil war, the clearest evidence of unrealized Weberian sovereignty. For Scott, bureaucracies are ultimately myopic and the legibility they impose illusory. But though they may not be able to fully grasp and accommodate the social complexity of the periphery, bureaucracies may be capable of attaining more pragmatic goals, namely the prevention of civil war. Perhaps this outcome is more likely and legibility more efficacious when the hubris spawned by Scott’s two conditions, authoritarian government and high-modernist ideology, is absent. Does legibility have causal effects on the outbreak of civil wars, independent of more established explanatory variables, notably economic deprivation and ethnic fractionalization? Will state legibility schemes decrease the likelihood of ethnic rebellion or is the infiltration likely to provoke an armed response from peripheral populations? In short, is legible space peaceful space?
LITERATURE REVIEW

I attempt to answer these questions by situating Scott’s legibility theory within the quantitative, international relations literature on civil war. The recent scholarly debate on the causes of civil war has overwhelmingly centered on the question, “Does ethnicity matter?” This is not surprising, given the predominance of ethnonationalist conflicts during the 20th century. Andreas Wimmer, Lars-Erik Cederman and Brian Min write, “Wars fought in the name of national liberation or ethnic autonomy comprise only one fifth of the wars between the Congress of Vienna (1814) and the Treaty of Versailles (1919). From Versailles to 2001, however, the share of ethnonationalist wars rose to 45 percent, and since the Cold War ended it has reached 75 percent.”\textsuperscript{14} This fact has led to a growing body of academic literature that attempting to evaluate the possible causal affects of ethnicity on the onset of civil wars and the existence of sustained peace. Scholars can be roughly divided into two camps: those who argue that ethnicity has no independent explanatory impact and those who argue that ethnic diversity is a significant predictor of the onset of civil war. Because the relevant frame of reference is intra rather than inter-state, the dominant liberal and realist international relations paradigms are often inadequate for explaining civil war onset.

The more entrenched viewpoint is that ethnic diversity is a poor predictor of civil war onset and has little independent causal force. Collier and Hoeffler are perhaps the most influential proponents of this view. They argue that ethnicity and ethnic fractionalization has no independent causal impact. Relying on utility theory, they argue that civil wars occur when one segment of the population determines that the benefits of war outweigh the costs. They apply cost-benefit analysis, assuming the rationality of minority actors. In their analysis, access of minority groups to the natural resources of the state is crucial in predicting war onset and
duration. Fearon and Laitin (2003) build on this claim to make a more nuanced point. They argue that civil wars are most likely to occur under conditions that favor insurgency. These conditions are weak central governments, governments that have recently lost the support of a foreign patron and rebels with knowledge of local terrain and the support of a foreign government. To measure ethnic diversity, Fearon introduced his Ethnic Fractionalization Index in 2003.

A second group of scholars argue that ethnicity does matter. Sambanis (2001), for example, identifies two types of civil wars: those caused by lack of economic opportunity and those caused by political grievance, of which ethnic identity is often an essential component. If either or both of these conditions are met, civil war is most likely to occur in “bad neighborhoods,” populated by non-democratic states and states at war. Vanhanen (1999) puts forth a socio-cultural, evolutionary theory of why ethnicity matters. Identifying an evolved tendency toward ethnic nepotism in all societies, he argues that interest conflicts are likely to be channeled through ethnic lines in ethnically fractionalized societies.

Cederman, Wimmer and Min build upon the work of Sambanis and Vanhanen and argue that while ethnic diversity itself is not a significant predictor of civil war onset, rebellion, infighting and secession are more likely in states that exclude large segments of the population from executive power. They find that exclusion often takes place along ethnic lines, making ethnic diversity indirectly impactful on civil war onset. Roessler, in a regional study on Africa, contends that rulers employ political exclusion strategically in order to consolidate their hold on power. In effect, they substitute the risk of civil war for the risk of a coup by excluding potential rivals, especially former rulers, who pose a threat to their power. Exclusion tends to occur along ethnic lines, but as for Cederman et. al., ethnic diversity itself is not causal.
In sum, much of the academic literature on civil war begins by asking the question, “Does ethnicity matter?” Scholars that claim it does not move on to identify other potential causal mechanisms, such as rational cost-benefit analysis, regime type and spillover from wars taking place in neighboring states.

DATA

To test the effect of legibility on civil war, I utilize the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) dataset, published in 2009 by Cederman, Wimmer and Min. Cederman et al compiled the EPR data in an attempt to resolve perceived deficiencies in the other large, conflict datasets, notably the Correlates of War and Minorities at Risk. They complicate the existing academic discourse, driven largely by these datasets, by treating the state not as a homogenous body but as an amalgam of various ethnic groups. The EPR dataset is useful for this analysis because for Cederman et al the state is not a Hobbesian neutral arbiter as other scholars, especially Fearon and Laitin, have assumed. Thus, the EPR is rooted in the disaggregated theories espoused by Mitchell, Dyson, Alavi, Shue and others and outlined above. More specific to the dataset is the contention that states often favor co-ethnics in the dispensation of resources, exacerbating ethnic tensions. But Cederman et al argue that ethnic nepotism exists not because of innate kinship ties (see Vanhanen) but because modern states rely overwhelmingly on ethno-nationalist claims to authority. Ethnic favoritism is a necessary consequence of a plea to nationalist legitimacy.

This drives a competition between politically relevant ethnic groups for access to state power. Cederman et al, with the assistance of over 100 experts on ethnic politics, created the EPR dataset in order to test the extent to which this access to or exclusion from the state apparatus impacts civil war onsets. Their chief contributions to existing data are the coding of politically relevant ethnic groups and access to power. For the latter, they focus exclusively on
executive power, including the presidency, cabinet and senior positions within the administration, including the army.

I the following analysis, I employ two EPR measures of access to state power: percent excluded population and percent discriminated population. I also control for regime instability by employing the EPR dummy variable measuring it. Adopting a macro-quantitative approach, I eschew some of the dataset’s more arcane coding of power arrangements. I supplement the new EPR variables measures with some of the more traditional variables from the literature, including GPD per capita, population, ethnic fractionalization and regime type. Finally, I employ a number of proxy variables in an effort to capture the concept of legibility. I supplement the oft-utilized percent of mountainous terrain with a measure of percent of forested terrain, which may equally serve as an obstacle to legibility. Other legibility proxies are internet users per 100 inhabitants and post offices per capita (See Table 1).

A Note on Fearon’s Ethnic Fractionalization Index

Fearon’s Ethnic Fractionalization Index is so pervasive in the literature and so frequently commented upon that it warrants further consideration here. The Index has met substantial criticism, especially from constructivist scholars who argue that ethnic identity is too fluid and unpredictable to be measured quantitatively, especially when it is measured only once (in 1999) and interpolated to subsequent years.

The recent work of Rogers Brubaker is emblematic of this criticism. In Ethnicity without Groups, he binds a series of essays together under the rubric of a single goal: “To develop ways of analyzing ethnicity without invoking bounded groups.” With philosophical foundations in the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Foucault’s “Governmetal,” Brubaker conceives of disaggregated identity and contends that the idiom of bounded groups is “a relational, processual
and dynamic analytical language.” This framework, seeking to obscure group boundaries by emphasizing the fluid elements of identity, which can be manipulated by elites and institutions, is common among constructivist scholars.

Brubaker criticizes the social science literature on identity for being excessively reliant on what he terms “groupism,” or the supposition that bounded groups are appropriate, fundamental units of social science analysis. He writes of the mistaken tendency to “treat ethnic groups, nations and races as substantial entities to which agency and interest can be attributed.”

“Groupism” yields facile characterizations of conflicts such as those between Palestinians and Israelis or Shiites and Sunnis. It is not clear that these are in any sense autonomous bodies capable of conceiving of and acting on agendas. The reification of groups privileges elite politics over individual choices, social networks and institutional norms. It obscures the dynamic nature of identity.

Brubaker’s broad argument is that “ethnicity ‘works.’ Bounded groups are one modality of ethnicity (and of social organization more generally). But they are only one. “‘Groupness’ is a variable, not a constant. It varies not only across putative groups, but within them. It may wax and wane over time.” His frame is thus the traditional constructivist critique of “hard” identities, evident especially in quantitative literature that utilizes independent variables such as “ethnic fractionalization” that purport to capture autonomous ethnic identities, often measuring their impact on conflict.

Constructivist criticisms of quantitative approaches to identity, like that of Brubaker, are often justified. The Ethnic Fractionalization Index is flawed and its ability to adequately measure linguistic and ethnic diversity should not be exaggerated. That said, the Index marks the only substantial effort to quantify the ethnic divisions that many scholars view as
instrumental to civil war onset. To run a model without some measure of this division would be to invite substantial omitted variable bias. Like Cederman et al, I retain the Ethnic Fractionalization Index in my model.
Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

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<th>Variable</th>
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<th>Std. Dev.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Years since last war</td>
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<td>20.08</td>
<td>20.03</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ln(% Mountainous terrain)*</td>
<td>lnmtnest</td>
<td>2343</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td>ln(% Forested terrain)**</td>
<td>lforest</td>
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<td>1.52</td>
<td>-5.04</td>
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<td>ln(# Post offices/population)***</td>
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<td>1.27</td>
<td>-8.71</td>
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<td>3.56</td>
<td>-12.56</td>
<td>4.40</td>
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<td>14.08</td>
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<td>Imperial past (% years under colonial rule)*</td>
<td>pimppast</td>
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<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<td>Ethnic fractionalization*</td>
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<td>0.28</td>
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<td>4.40</td>
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<td>% Discriminated population*</td>
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<td>0.50</td>
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*Ethnic Power Relations Dataset
**World Bank Economic Indicators
***Universal Postal Union
**Table 2**

*Overview of Expected Effects*

<table>
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<th>VARIABLE</th>
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<th>SIGN (npeaceyears)</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>lmtnest</em></td>
<td>Logged, estimated percent of mountainous terrain</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Cederman, Wimmer and Min (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>lforest</em></td>
<td>Logged, estimated percent of forested terrain</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>World Bank Development Indicators (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>li_postpop</em></td>
<td>Number of post offices/population (from Cederman, Wimmer and Min)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Universal Postal Union Database</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>li_internet</em></td>
<td>Internet users per 100 inhabitants</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>World Bank Development Indicators (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>gdpcapl</em></td>
<td>GDP per capita, lagged one year</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Cederman, Wimmer and Min (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>lpopl</em></td>
<td>Logged population, lagged one year</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Cederman, Wimmer and Min (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>pimppast</em></td>
<td>% Years under colonial rule</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Cederman, Wimmer and Min (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ethfrac</em></td>
<td>Ethnic Fractionalization Index</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Fearon (2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>lnexclpop</em></td>
<td>Logged excluded population</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Cederman, Wimmer and Min (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>discpop</em></td>
<td>Percent discriminated population</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Cederman, Wimmer and Min (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>regchg3</em></td>
<td>Dummy variable measuring regime stability</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Cederman, Wimmer and Min (2010)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>democl</em></td>
<td>Dummy variable coded “1” if democratic regime type; else “0”</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Cederman, Wimmer and Min (2010)</td>
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<td><strong>Dependent</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>newonset</em></td>
<td>Dummy variable coded “1” if war starts in current year; else “0”</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
<td>Cederman, Wimmer and Min (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>npeaceyears</em></td>
<td>Years since last war</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Cederman, Wimmer and Min (2010)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
METHODS

I use this data to run regressions on two dependent variables: a dummy variable signifying new civil war onset and a continuous variable measuring years since last civil war. I use a binomial logit model to predict new civil war onset and an ordinary least squares model to predict years since last civil war. The first is an attempt to determine the causes of civil war. The second is an attempt to identify predictors of lasting peace. In order to control for the unobservable characteristics that impact the dependent variables over time, I employ a random effects transformation. In making this transformation, I assume that the fixed effects are uncorrelated with the independent variables. For the binomial logit model on new war onset, I report both the marginal effects and the marginal effects with the random effects transformation. Similarly, for the ordinary least squares model on years since last conflict, I report both coefficients and the coefficients with the random effects transformation. The results of these regressions are shown in the tables below.

REGRESSION #1

\[
\text{newonset} = \beta_1(\text{gdpcap}) + \beta_2(\text{lpop}) + \beta_3(\text{pimppast}) + \beta_4(\text{ethfrac}) + \\
\beta_5(\lnexclpop) + \beta_6(\text{discpop}) + \beta_7(\text{regchg3}) + \beta_8(\text{democl}) + \beta_9(\text{lmtnest}) + \\
\beta_{10}(\text{lforest}) + \beta_{11}(\text{li_postpop}) + \beta_{12}(\text{li_internet})
\]

I utilize a binomial logit regression with a dependent variable measuring civil war onset \((\text{newonset})\) and key independent variables of interest signifying legibility. Legibility being an elusive concept, I use proxy variables. I employ internet users per 100 inhabitants \((\text{li_internet})\) and post offices per capita \((\text{li_postpop})\) in an attempt to quantify legibility and measure its impact on civil war onset. Estimated percent of mountainous terrain \((\text{lmtnest})\), a common
variable from the quantitative literature on civil war onset, is also of interest. In this analysis, it is construed as an obstacle to legibility. Mountainous terrain may confound the state’s ability to penetrate the periphery and impose bureaucratic order. I supplement percent of mountainous terrain with estimated percent of forested terrain (\(l_{\text{forest}}\)). This variable is not found in the literature, but forest can be a barrier to state penetration on par with mountains. In sum, \(l_{\text{internet}}\) and \(l_{\text{postpop}}\) are proxy variables signifying legibility while \(l_{\text{mtnest}}\) and \(l_{\text{forest}}\) are confounding factors, roughly approximating what Fearon and Laitin might call *conditions that favor insurgency*.

REGRESSION #2

\[
\begin{align*}
n_{\text{peaceyears}} &= \beta_1(gdpcapl) + \beta_2(l_{\text{popl}}) + \beta_3(pimppast) + \beta_4(ethfrac) + \\
&\quad \beta_5(lnexclpop) + \beta_6(discpop) + \beta_7(regchg3) + \beta_8(democl) + \beta_9(l_{\text{mtnest}}) + \\
&\quad \beta_{10}(l_{\text{forest}}) + \beta_{11}(l_{\text{postpop}}) + \beta_{12}(l_{\text{internet}})
\end{align*}
\]

I supplement the logit model with an Ordinary Least Squares measuring the number of years since the last civil war. I retain the same independent variables of interest and control variables. This regression attempts to capture the factors that contribute to sustained peace.

RESULTS

REGRESSION #1

The binomial logit regression on civil war onset indicates that both legibility variables, post offices per capita and internet users per 100 inhabitants are statistically significant predictors of civil war onset. The results indicate that legibility, in the form of these two proxy variables, diminishes the threat of civil war. When controlling for unobservable characteristics in the panel
data through a random effects transformation, however, the significance of post offices per capita disappears. There is no statistically significant relationship between the confounders of legibility, mountainous and forested terrain, and civil war onset. The only other significant predictor of civil war onset is population size, which retains its significance in the random effects model.

REGRESSION #2
The ordinary least squares regression on years since last civil war is more robust and reveals more significance among the body of independent variables. Both legibility proxies and both legibility confounding variables have statistically significant relationships to the dependent variable. The former have a highly statistically significant, positive effect on years since last civil war. On the other hand, the percent of mountainous terrain has a highly statistically significant negative effect on years since last civil war. The percent of forested terrain has a marginally significant negative impact on years since last civil war. In other words, legible space is more likely than illegible space to experience sustained peace. Controlling for random effects, however, reveals that these relationships may be overstated. While the effect of internet users per 100 inhabitants remains positive and highly statistically significant, the other three measures of legibility do not. Regarding control variables, imperial past and ethnic fractionalization are highly statistically significant in both models. Population and excluded population were significant in the original regression, but this significance disappeared when controlling for fixed effects. By contrast, GDP and regime instability became highly statistically significant, positive predictors of years since last civil war when controlling for random effects. This suggests that the original regression may be biased against these variables.
Table 3  
Regression Results (Logistic Function)  
Dependent Variable = New Civil War Onset  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanatory Variable</th>
<th>dy/dx</th>
<th>dy/dx (RE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lmtnest</td>
<td>0.0024</td>
<td>0.1627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0024)</td>
<td>(0.1526)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iforest</td>
<td>-0.0028</td>
<td>-0.1518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0023)</td>
<td>(0.1396)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>li_postpop</td>
<td>-0.0063*</td>
<td>-0.3402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0037)</td>
<td>(0.2279)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>li_internet</td>
<td>-0.0019**</td>
<td>-0.1094**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0009)</td>
<td>(0.0536)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gdpcap</td>
<td>-0.0006</td>
<td>-0.0409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0011)</td>
<td>(0.0731)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lpopl</td>
<td>0.0051**</td>
<td>0.3061*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0025)</td>
<td>(0.1574)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pimpppast</td>
<td>-0.0068</td>
<td>-0.4580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0136)</td>
<td>(0.8430)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethfrac</td>
<td>0.0112</td>
<td>0.6480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0126)</td>
<td>(0.8073)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lnexclpop</td>
<td>0.0007</td>
<td>0.0357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0009)</td>
<td>(0.0542)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discpop</td>
<td>-0.0021</td>
<td>0.1023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0204)</td>
<td>(1.2920)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regchg3</td>
<td>-0.0005</td>
<td>-0.0811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0068)</td>
<td>(0.4181)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>democl</td>
<td>-0.0056</td>
<td>-0.3117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0078)</td>
<td>(0.4702)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regional Dummies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>western</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lamerica</td>
<td>0.0064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0161)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eeuurope</td>
<td>0.0376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0310)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ssafrica</td>
<td>0.0025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0107)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nafrme</td>
<td>0.0046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0154)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observations 1570 1864  
prob > chi2 0.0031 0.0653

Marginal effects are reported with standard errors in parenthesis. *, ** indicate statistical significance at 90% and 95%, respectively.
Table 4
Regression Results (OLS)
Dependent Variable = Years since last war

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanatory Variable</th>
<th>Coeff.</th>
<th>Coeff. (RE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>intercept</td>
<td>63.75</td>
<td>48.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lmtnest</td>
<td>-0.8242***</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iforest</td>
<td>0.5417*</td>
<td>-0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>li_postpop</td>
<td>4.723***</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>li_internet</td>
<td>1.021***</td>
<td>0.53***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gdpcap</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.87***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lpopl</td>
<td>-0.9009***</td>
<td>-0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pimppast</td>
<td>-21.40***</td>
<td>-19.89***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethfrac</td>
<td>-21.62***</td>
<td>-18.47***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lnexclpop</td>
<td>-0.3646***</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discpop</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>11.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regchg3</td>
<td>-1.17</td>
<td>-1.29***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>democl</td>
<td>-3.593***</td>
<td>-0.82</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Regional Dummies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>western</th>
<th>omitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lamerica</td>
<td>-7.772***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eeeurope</td>
<td>-8.663***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ssafrica</td>
<td>5.818***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nafrme</td>
<td>-7.253***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observations 1864 1864
prob > chi2 N/A 0
R-squared 0.4598 N/A

Coefficients are reported with standard errors in parenthesis. *, **, *** indicate statistical significance at 90%, 95% and 99% respectively.
POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The relative robustness of the above results suggests important implications of legibility for United States national security policy. The U.S. faces few legitimate threats to its territorial integrity and civil war is not a serious consideration. Further, it confronts no legitimate challenges to its global hegemony, at least in the short term. Its concern, rather, is for the global peripheries and areas of unrealized sovereignty (Naseemullah would say “frontier”). According to Sebastian Gorka and David Kilcullen, “The government [of the U.S.] has targeted ungoverned areas which can be exploited by terrorist or insurgent groups.”19 In a similar vein, citing the War on Terror and increasing frequency of “nation-building” operations since 1945, David Ucko writes that “stability operations appear to be a growth business.”20 The above results suggest that illegible space is more susceptible to civil war, the ultimate indication of unrealized sovereignty. In turn, the violent, disorderly environments that result are likely incubators of terrorism, one of the greatest threats facing the U.S. according to the 2010 National Security Strategy.

Legibility is an important concept in determining the best approach to contain this threat. Moreover, it may offer alternatives for a military establishment that has traditionally “prioritized the destruction of military targets far above the different means of creating and consolidating a new political order.”21 My findings suggest that the pursuit of legibility may be an important means of ameliorating the threat of civil war. The measurement, standardization and bureaucratization that it entails may offer a proscription for U.S. policy toward the ungoverned areas of other states.

This section will begin by presenting two arguments concerning the ability of hegemonic actors like the U.S. to shape external environments. The theoretical assumption, from above, is that states are porous and plural rather than autonomous and unitary. “State-ness,” is variable
and there is often a gap between Westphalian and Weberian sovereignty. The first argument is that identity norms are malleable, constructed in global space and susceptible to manipulation by powerful states. Following Foucault and Scott, I adopt a broad conception of state power and argue that hegemonic states have considerable ability to shape identities abroad. The second argument is that terrorists, insurgents and other threats to sovereignty should be combated not with exceptional tactics but within normal, legal frameworks. Together with the quantitative results presented above, these arguments offer a broad proscription for U.S. national security establishment in its confrontation with peripheral terrorism and insurgency. More specifically, the United States should assist other states in the pursuit of legibility as a means of mitigating the risks of civil war and realizing sovereignty. In turn, terrorist threats are unlikely to emerge from peaceful areas of sovereign control. At the very least, the notion that legible space is peaceful space offers a framework within which policymakers can better understand peripheral threats.

I. Identity Norms are Instruments of Hegemonic Control

Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein write, “The security environments in which states are embedded are in important part cultural and institutional rather than just material.” In the following pages I accept this argument as given. The most ardent realists, Mearsheimer, for example, may eschew normative considerations but most, such as Gaddis concede that they may be significant to state behavior in certain instances. My concern is not with the causal power of structure versus process but the extent to which norms, specifically identity, can be imposed by external actors. To what extent can hegemonic powers impose identities on less powerful states? What is the role of institutions in this process? Are identities infinitely malleable or are there concrete limits? I will attempt to answer these questions by comparing Wendt’s assertion that
“Anarchy is what states make of it,” to Prasenjit Duara’s claim, “Nations are constructed in global space.”

The former claim is stronger. Wendt relieves anarchy of its causal powers, privileges learning over structure and invests states with the ability to shape identities. But the power struggle persists within his normative model. Presumably, state ability to construct identities will vary with relative strength in the international system. The United States, with its material tools, economic clout and preeminence in international institutions will be better able to create and shape identities than other, less powerful states. Duara’s claim, unlike Wendt’s, addresses a specific type of identity, nationalism. It is weaker in that there is no agent performing the constructivist action. It suggests a more dynamic environment in which collective identities shift in response to myriad stimuli, both state and non-state. Duara writes that the state system “has to be grasped in its relation to capitalism and imperialism, to constitutive ideas of history and cognitive globalization and to the historical and cultural mediation of regional dynamics.” Nation-states are not monolithic bodies but global templates on which a number of identities interact. Duara’s analysis conforms to the genealogical constructivist approach outlined by Price and Tannenwald, who write, “Norms are constituted through social and discursive practices and how these discourses normalize or delegitimize forms of behavior.” Duara’s genealogical border dissolution is contingent and accommodating of chance. Wendt’s claim, by contrast, implies a more active and causal role for states.

But to what extent is making something of anarchy uniquely the purview of powerful states? A clearer answer to this question emerges from Ikenberry and Kupchan’s analysis of socialization in international relations. They offer normative persuasion (or “cooperation through legitimate domination,”) in addition to external inducement and internal reconstruction
as instruments of socialization. Legitimate domination, by linking material incentives to substantive beliefs, furnishes hegemonic actors with considerable normative authority. Ikenberry and Kupchan might say that *anarchy is what the world’s most powerful states make of it*. They write, “The socialization of elites into the hegemonic order leads to a consolidation of hegemonic power; rule based on might is enhanced by rule based on right.” International relations are still governed by self-help and power politics, but norms are hegemonic instruments of control. Further, in the domestic sphere, “Socialization only occurs when normative change takes place within the elite community.”

Suisheng Zhao’s analysis of modern Chinese nationalism to a certain extent supports these conclusions. He writes, “Nationalist consciousness in China was triggered by external stimulus.” The impetus for Chinese collective identity came from outside China and the Chinese state was a mere reactionary. Zhao writes, “The war with Japan was a cataclysm that created the social conditions conducive to mass mobilization.” Further, “In response to the collapse of Communism in Europe in the late 1980s and the 1990s, the Chinese communist state repositioned itself as the defender of China’s national interests.” The Japanese invasion drove it toward notions of state sovereignty and it joined the Westphalian system as a means of consolidating its control. It reacted to the fall of communism by adopting a hegemonic norm, that of nationalism, to legitimize its rule. In Zhao’s Chinese state, external actors initiate change and provide the ideas that inform it. Chinese elites are reactive conduits for western concepts of sovereignty and nationalism.

So a comprehensive hegemonic dominance emerges from Zhao’s analysis. Nationalism does not grow out of an internal dialogue of its merit and applicability to the Chinese context. It is internalized by elites and appropriated to resolve a crisis: the humiliation resulting from the
infiltration of foreign powers. External actors not only initiated this crisis, as we have seen, but helped shape the manner in which the Chinese understood it. Social Darwinian logic gave the defeats ideological context and exacerbated the resultant humiliation. For Zhao, the most powerful states *make something of anarchy* by installing the structure of state sovereignty and providing normative justification in the form of nationalism. But there is a caveat here to the extent that hegemonic norms have their own causal effects independent of the states that may attempt to harness and use them. As evinced by the first quote above, describing a “floodtide of nationalism,” if norms are autonomous, they care not perfectly malleable for instrumental use by powerful states. The formation of particular identities takes on an air of inevitability.

Peter Hays-Gries, in his treatment of Chinese nationalism, complicates the ideational primacy of hegemonic norms and domestic elites that pervades Ikenberry and Kupchan and, to some extent, Zhao. His analysis, similar to that of Duara, emphasizes the dynamism of collective identity and the interpretive functions of local actors, who are more than just reactive. Gries warns of the danger of “trivialize[ing] the roles that the Chinese people and their emotions play in Chinese nationalism.” Nationalism is not externally created and imposed and elite disseminated, but the evolving product of a power struggle between external actors, elites and masses within a complex social framework. The dynamism of Gries’ model is evident throughout his text in his prolific use of dialectic. Reason and passion, power and pride, perception and reality, romanticism and pragmatism, victim and hero, good and evil, external and internal and elitism and populism all contribute to the formulation and evolution of Chinese nationalism. Gries and Duara attribute less constructivist authority to powerful states than Ikenberry and Kupchan.
Collective identities in Gries are accessible to masses as well as elites and may be molded and shaped by both. Gries writes, “By evoking the people, events and symbols of China’s early modern encounter with the West, Chinese continually return to this unresolved trauma [the “Century of Humiliation”], hoping to master it.”

The subject performing the action is the Chinese, not nationalism, the global hegemon, China or the Chinese state. Popular conceptions of identity are more relevant for Gries than Zhao, Kupchan or Ikenberry, for whom external and elite norms are dominant. Gries writes, “The CCP is losing its control over nationalist discourse,” and “Western analysts have too frequently dismissed popular nationalists as puppets in the hands of Communist elites.”

As indicated by the host of dialectics, Chinese nationalism is constructed from many sources. Further, hegemonic attempts to shape external collective identities may be frustrated by cultural barriers. Gries writes, “Japan’s proximity to China, the racial and cultural similarities the Japanese share with the Chinese and Japan’s extensive interactions with China in the modern period justify its designation as ‘China’s Occident.’”

The reasoning here and the use of the term, “Occident” recalls the analysis of Edward Said, to whom Gries is indebted. The implication is that distance precludes understanding and so any appropriation of Western norms is necessarily a creative enterprise.

For other scholars, however, hegemonic states fail to shape collective identities not because of the interpretive function of local actors or cultural barriers but because norms form their own causal structures. An extreme example of this would be a genetic aversion to certain ideas and behaviors. Price and Tannenwald find the notion that all people are programmed from birth unconvincing. A more plausible claim is advanced by Gökhan Bacik in his analysis of sovereignty and nationalism in the Arab Middle East. His identities share the sense of inevitability implied by Zhao, but it is not clear that norms have any instrumental potential.
Political power for Bacik lies not with norms themselves (Zhao), the hegemonic states that espouse them (Ikenberry and Kupchan) or the local actors who interpret them (Gries) but with structures. He writes, “Complex social and political structures have their own causal transformation, which is more complex than political projects or intentions.” 41 Any attempt to introduce an idea will be frustrated by complex structures that lie beyond the agent’s understanding and will shape the idea in unpredictable ways. Tribal codes and modern bureaucracies may equally disrupt ideological flow. Bacik writes, “The Western sovereignty criterion is inapplicable in the colonially created Arab states.” 42 The interpretive function in his text is thus played by structures rather than agents.

Bacik views colonialism not as the introduction of western norms into the Middle Eastern context, but the export of western structures and a resultant clash with local structures. He writes, “Hybridization is the inevitable product of the colonial presence in other cultures,” according to which “both interacting entities are ripped away from their own identities to give way to another, hybrid one.” 43 Hybridization is inevitable and universal in all post-colonial environments. It is not a synthesis of norms, in the Gries vein, but a destruction of them. The image of ripping away is instructive. It implies a divorce of outcome from intent, as articulated above, but also ascribes the creative act to impersonal forces. The historian, Quentin Skinner’s analysis of anachronism and critique of linear tracing of norms is relevant here. He chastises his colleagues, writing, “As the historian duly sets out in quest of the idea he has characterized, he is very readily led to speak as if the fully developed form of the doctrine was always in some sense immanent in history.” 44 In other words, norms act differently in different contexts. Bacik’s hybrid outcomes, by contrast, are the quasi-mathematical results of structural equations and thus in theory predictable. Continuing with this theme, Bacik writes, “…Hybrid” is the opposite of
‘authentic.’ Authentic thought constitutes a revolt against both modernity and tradition. Hybridity claims the impossibility of authenticity in a colonized/modernized society.” The important normative battles have all been fought and their outcomes are entrenched in social and political structures. Norms and the agents who espouse them are no longer relevant. While, as stated above, Duara accommodates contingency and chance in his model of identity formation, Bacik valorizes them.

Bacik’s analysis is provocative, but his conclusions advance structuralism to an unwarranted extreme. State sovereignty and nationalist identity that he describes are normative themselves in that there were originally conceived and instituted by human agents. In Skinner’s analysis, for example, norms cannot be traced across various contexts precisely because human agents transform and use them to according to their particular needs. States as well as individual actors have a role to play in normative change, in which structures are not necessarily casual. Referring back to Ikenberry and Kupchan’s theory of legitimate domination, powerful states, with their substantial material advantages over less-powerful states, international institutions and other collective, international actors, enjoy tremendous advantages in the instrumental use of norms. Given a desire on the part of the hegemon to “recast the international order in a way that is more compatible with its interests” and a certain receptivity among local elites, successful socialization is likely.46 In the context of this paper, this translates to a hegemonic ability to shape collective identities.

Wendt demonstrates that powerful states have, at a broad level, succeeded in this endeavor. He writes, “Sovereignty is an institution and so it exists only in virtue of certain intersubjective understandings and expectations; there is no sovereignty without an other. These understandings and expectations not only constitute a particular kind of state--the ‘sovereign’
state—but also constitute a particular kind of community, since identities are relational.\(^{47}\) In other words, the Westphalian system itself to some degree rests on a particular conception of identity. Since it was established by a concert of great powers in 1648, the system itself provides evidence of the identity-shaping capabilities of powerful states. Wendt acknowledges that, “Once constituted, any social system confronts each of its members as an objective social fact that reinforces certain behaviors and encourages others,”\(^{48}\) but also recognizes the possibility of further normative change. He refers to state sovereignty and resultant anarchy as “an ongoing accomplishment of practice,”\(^{49}\) implying that it would cease to exist without shared norms and the consent of member states. Bacik’s valorization of structure is thus overly simplistic. But not all acceptances of the norm are equal. Powerful states have far greater ability to spawn normative change. The fact that the status quo was the source of their power in the first place makes this extremely unlikely.

I conclude by accepting Prasenjit Duara’s contention that “Nations are constructed in global space” and assert that powerful states are the primary constructors. In other words, expanding on the Wendtian claim, \textit{anarchy is what the most powerful states make of it.} Collective identity may be endogenous to practice, but it is largely the practices of the hegemon that are causal. This is especially clear at the broadest levels of identity such as nationalism and the normative aspects of state sovereignty. The chance and contingency highlighted to various degrees by Zhao and Price and Tannenwald are more applicable to narrower identities. The same is true of the dynamic, creative model presented by Gries and suggested by Duara. While popular identity formations are relevant, they are likely to be subsumed within the broader norm created and exported by the hegemon.
II. Indoctrination to the Norm over Declaration of an Exception

The preceding section addressed the ability of global hegemons to shape identities. This section asks, broadly, what are the implications of legibility for continuing US confrontations with terror and insurgency? It will attempt to answer this question within the theoretical framework established by Carl Schmitt in his *Theory of the Partisan*, one of the 20th century’s foremost analyses of irregular, peripheral threats to sovereignty.

Georg Simmel’s characterization of a border as “a sociological fact that takes a geographic form,”⁵⁰ is chronologically imprecise. Often territorial borders are drawn prior to the evolution of internal coherence and common identity. The partisans and global terrorists represented by Schmitt thrive in this environment. Occupying an ideological and sometimes territorial periphery, these groups erode the state’s monopoly on force and prevent it from fully realizing its sovereignty. But in this struggle the state holds most of the cards. Its considerable economic, organizational and normative capacities make it uniquely capable of taming the periphery. It will fail to do so only to the extent that it consents to a battle on peripheral terms.

Westphalia established a system in which sovereign states, invested with a monopoly on force within a demarcated territory and the unique authority to project military power abroad. The former is a fiction that threatens the legitimacy conferred by the latter. The mere delineation of boundaries does not eliminate the cultural, ethnic, linguistic and ideological plurality that predated Westphalia and mapping a territory within a state does not guarantee state sovereignty over it. Westphalian sovereignty remains incompletely realized. Ideological and cultural coherence have not in all cases followed from territorial demarcation and peripheral populations continue to challenge state claims to a monopoly on the use of force. Some of the more prominent contemporary examples include Kashmir, Tibet, Kurdistan and Montreal. At best,
these challenges tend toward political fragmentation in the form of secessionist movements that may even be peaceful. At worst, they result in irredentist violence and threaten the very basis of the international system.

Carl Schmitt might term these challengers *partisans* to the extent that they utilize some form of armed insurrection. The case of Montreal, for example, would be excluded. Partisans are irregular, mobile, politically engaged fighters who are fundamentally tied to the soil on and for which they fight. The fourth criterion suggests an endogenous challenge. Schmitt’s partisans do not threaten the Westphalian model or the concept of state sovereignty. Though they spur fragmentation, they actually reinforce the system by demanding the establishment and recognition of new states, today commonly on the basis of a unique nationalist identity. In other words, partisan political aims are implicit endorsements of state sovereignty. Schmitt contrasts his partisans with “globally aggressive revolutionary activists,” which are not essentially tied to the soil. By denying the legitimacy of the state, the revolutionary frees himself from the domestic and international law it generates. Schmitt admires the Geneva Conventions to the extent that they, “give the enemy not only humanity, but even justice in the sense of recognition” and “remain based on the foundation of classical international law and its tradition.” “Globally aggressive revolutionary activists” are unbound by such niceties.

Al Qaeda and other contemporary terror networks fit readily into this framework. Global terrorists destroy the distinctions between state and society, combatants and civilians, war and peace and, most importantly for Schmitt, friend and enemy. Eliminating these distinctions accomplishes two tasks. First, it creates and environment of confusion in which no one is safe. Schmitt writes, “In this general sense of insecurity and danger, the area’s entire population is at great risk.” Targeting civilians subverts the state’s ability to provide order, its primary
justification. At a certain level of chaos, a demand will arise for a systematic alternative to state sovereignty. Second, eliminating distinctions creates a new battle space. The peripheral power of the global terrorist is in this sense far greater than the central state, which can only react to the creative chaos. Like Schmitt’s partisan, the terrorist “forces his enemy into another space. In other words, he displaces the space of the regular, conventional theaters of war into a darker dimension—a dimension of the abyss.”55 Possibly with this in mind, Tolstoy characterized the illiterate Russian peasant as stronger and more intelligent than Napoleon.56

But states need not follow terrorists into the abyss. The Westphalian system erects considerable obstacles to partisanship and terror. The most significant of these is economic. In her study of the reform era in China, Vivienne Shue argues that Deng Xiaoping harnessed capitalist reforms to advance statist internal control. She writes, “The market and capitalism are sometimes too glibly equated with the protection of the individual against the state.”57 By opening the economic units that were parcellized and isolated under Mao and facilitating specialization and commodification, Deng’s reforms paradoxically consolidated power at the center. Similarly, Rudolph and Rudolph write, “States create nations and economies more than nations and economies create states.”58 Only the state has the resources and institutional capacity to provide an environment ripe for economic development. This is not to say that every state, even China, will be able to maintain permanent control of the market once it is unleashed.

Rather, the point is that the economy will not function in the absence of domestic order, which the state has unparalleled ability to provide. Order entails not only a secure society but, as Scott argues, a legible one. He writes that central governments consolidate authority through seemingly banal standardization mechanisms.59 As previously discussed, these include things like interstate highway systems, the electrical grid, the census and even conventional surnames.
States create legible societies because they are easily controlled. Schmitt expressed an opposite concern, arguing, “Any enhancement of human technology produces new horizons and unforeseeable changes in traditional spatial structures.”60 He saw technology as an asset to the partisan. But capital disparities between the center and periphery suggest that advances in this area are probably more likely to be conscripted into the service of the state. Scott argued that legibility eroded individual liberty. Perhaps this is true. But it also tends to promote economic development, limiting a major cause of disaffection among potentially peripheral populations that form the recruitment base of global terrorists. Legibility thus erodes peripheral power.

There are also normative aspects to economic and organizational power. I will focus here on the former. The identity forming tendencies of public transit systems, statewide curricula, federal holidays and the Pledge of Allegiance are likely significant but beyond the scope of this paper. Michael Mousseau writes that the market is more than simply a framework for economic transactions. The environment of mutual obligations it creates conditions certain behaviors. Mousseau states, “A contract imposes an equitable relationship on the parties. The implications of this are profound: The norm of cooperating with strangers on the basis of legal equality is the logical prerequisite for respecting the rule of common law.”61 He subsequently takes the normative power of the market to the extreme, but the notion that it promotes universalism and equity is compelling. The state is central to this narrative. If the market shapes norms, the state’s role as enforcer of contracts grants it considerable control over the process. Mousseau’s analysis confirms Rudolph and Rudolph’s statement that “States create nations and economies more than nations and economies create states.” Economic, organizational and normative powers enable considerable state penetration of the periphery.
But more than simply vulnerable to state penetration, the periphery is beholden to it. Schmitt writes, “The armed partisan remains dependent on cooperation with a regular organization.” He offers historical examples ranging from the alliance of Ché Guevara and Fidel Castro to the dissolution of the partisan war against Napoleon once the Prussian king withdrew his edict supporting it. The reason for this dependence is in part material and technological. Schmitt writes that the partisan “is dependent on the constant help of a community that is in a technical-industrial position to provide him with the newest weapons and machines.” For reasons discussed above, the state is the “community” best equipped to fulfill this role. Schmitt continues, “If several interested third parties become involved concurrently, then the partisan has space for his own politics.” Osama bin Laden is a different type of peripheral actor, but it is notable that he originally sought the shelter and endorsement of a state to advance his political goals.

A need for legitimacy was a likely motivation. As Schmitt writes, “The partisan needs legitimation if he is to be included in the political sphere and not simply to sink into the criminal realm.” Further, he must be “legitimated by the regular, and this means two possibilities are open to him: recognition by an existing regular power or achievement of a new regularity through his own power.” While this may be a plausible for a partisan fighter, it is virtual impossibility for a global terrorist, Schmitt’s “globally aggressive revolutionary activist.” Terrorist means are antithetical to the nature of the state, which cannot tolerate disorder and confusion within its borders. It will marshal all of its economic, organizational and normative resources against it. The data supports this conclusion. Max Abrahms’ finding that “the 28 groups of greatest significance to U.S. counterterrorism policy have achieved their 42 policy objectives less than ten percent of the time” leads him to conclude that terrorism simply does
not work. “The poor success rate is inherent to the tactic itself,”68 because the powerful status quo actor has no incentive (and no ability) to recognize its peripheral opponent.

So how should the state confront the periphery? In other work, Schmitt has distinguished the state as the only unit legitimately authorized to declare an exception. The state is subordinate to the law under normal conditions, but is empowered to decide when conditions cease to be normal. Clearly, this is tremendously liberating. In the aftermath of the September 11th terrorist attacks, Pierre Hassner channeled Schmitt, writing, “Of course, terrorists pose a special problem. Necessity may dictate executing them summarily in times of war. Necessity may also, in an emergency, lead to the selective disregard for legal guarantees in order to prevent an imminent crime or catastrophe.”69 This translates to a recommendation that the United States fight al Qaeda on al Qaeda’s terms. Hassner cautions only that the exception should never become a doctrinal norm, “which should than be branded as anti-American.”70 This is precisely the wrong approach, there should be no exception and to declare one in the first place is to invite this popular brand.

We need not follow the peripheral terrorist into his abyss. In a recent article, a more deliberate Hassner recognizes this. He writes, “The Iraq fiasco with its mistaken or false justifications....its accompanying atrocities and its ultimate demonstration of what Hegel called the ‘impotence of victory’ has displayed the limited and sometimes counterproductive effects of military power for all to see.”71 Under his previous comments, the false justifications and even the accompanying atrocities could be justified with a plea to the exception. But as he recognizes here, this battle transcends the ability to project force. I have omitted from my analysis the military resources of the state, emphasizing the economic, organizational and normative, for precisely this reason. Military power is an over-utilized and often counterproductive means of
combating global terrorist threats. State legitimacy and power are such that it need not consent to a fight on violent and chaotic peripheral terms.

In light of relative peripheral weakness, Jessica Stern’s seemingly simplistic policy recommendations are prudent and preferable to Schmitt’s reification of the state. Evaluating Saudi terrorist reintegration programs, she articulates a domestic and normative-based anti-terrorism policy.\(^72\) Placing a premium on diplomacy, she recommends indirect U.S. assistance to foreign governments as they attempt to tame their own peripheral populations. She relies on the fact that states share an interest in order and the consolidation of the Westphalian model that grants them so much power. In short, the onus is on states operating at the domestic level to fully realize their sovereignty. International security will flow from domestic coherence. The proper response to peripheral chaos is not declaration of an exception but indoctrination to the Westphalian norm. Under this approach, the global terrorist becomes irrelevant.

In sum, the U.S. as a hegemonic actor has tremendous ability to effect the global threat environment. The first argument highlights its normative power and ability to shape global identities. The second champions state normalcy over terrorist and insurgent exceptionalism. As a means of bureaucratic ordering, legibility pervades both of these arguments. As terrorist and insurgent threats are likely to derive from chaotic, peripheral space, the U.S. should use its considerable power to aid other states in realizing sovereignty and making frontier areas legible.

**CONCLUSION**

The above analysis is a tentative first step toward a robust quantitative analysis of an elusive, theoretical concept. It presents evidence that James C. Scott’s legibility, in addition to being theoretically compelling, has causal impact on sustained peace. The implication is that the
bureaucratic impulse to measure, categorize and schematize should be indulged, not for the realization of utopian vision but for the sustainment of peace. It is recognized that the key independent variables of interest utilized above approximate but to not comprehensively capture the legibility concept. Future research should focus on improving on these and locating more precise proxy variables. These efforts should concentrate on the more normative aspects of legibility, including the state ability to collect information. They will likely require the compilation of new data, as existing data is largely inadequate to the task. While the analysis has limitations, it suggests a statistically significant casual relationship between legibility and sustained peace. These findings warrant further investigation and more comprehensive treatment. The notion that legible space is peaceful space offers a framework within which policymakers can better understand peripheral threats.
ENDNOTES

2 Ibid, 1.
3 Ibid, 11.
10 Mitchell, 85.
11 Scott, 89.
16 Brubaker, 3.
17 Ibid, 8.
18 Ibid, 3-4.
21 Ibid, 1.
26 Ibid, 16.
27 Price and Tannenwald, 124.
29 Ibid, 286.
30 Ibid, 293.
32 Ibid, 106.
33 Ibid, 20.
34 Ibid, 12.
36 Ibid, 51.
37 Ibid, 133.
38 Ibid, 134.
39 Ibid, 36.
40 Price and Tannenwald, 123.
42 Ibid, 2
43 Ibid, 33.
45 Bacik, 33.
46 Ikenberry and Kupchan, 292.
48 Ibid, 413.
49 Ibid, 414.
52 Ibid, 30.
53 Ibid, 30.
55 Ibid, 69.
56 Ibid, 12.
59 Scott, 2.
60 Schmitt, 68.
62 Schmitt, 17.
63 Ibid, 75.
64 Ibid, 75.
65 Ibid, 82.
66 Ibid, 75.
68 Ibid, 43-44.
70 Hassner, 32.
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