Configuring Legitimacy: A Framework for the Study of Legitimation in Armed Conflict

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Abstract

Legitimacy is a central concern for defining and developing public policy in response to covert and illegal networks. However, while scholarship on violent conflict has identified legitimacy as a critical concern for the success and resilience of both violent insurgencies and the governments fighting them, the relevance of this insight for policy development suffers from two critical limitations. First, the effects of legitimation vary widely from case to case, resulting in a broad consensus that legitimacy is a purely local phenomenon, and limiting the generalizability of insights gained from any given case. Second, conceptualizations of legitimacy are widely inconsistent within the literature on violent conflict, and are often too abstract to be effectively applied in the context of policy analysis. In this research we address these two critical problems in the study of legitimacy by developing a framework for evaluating variations in the effects of legitimation as the product of different configurations of sources, forms, and bases for the legitimation of actors involved in conflict. We demonstrate the utility of our framework through in-depth analyses of legitimacy and resilience for two violent non-state actors: the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Turkey, and Jemaah Islamia, which operates in Indonesia.

Introduction

Scholarship on illegal and covert networks ("dark networks") has shown that legitimacy is critical to the success and resilience of the network over time (Bakker, Raab and Milward 2012; Goldstone 2008; Lomperis 1996; Manwaring and Fishel 1992; McFate and Jackson 2006; Nachbar 2012; Pham 2011). Bakker and colleagues (2012) specifically identify the legitimacy of dark networks as a central concern for defining and developing public policy in response to violent conflict and go so far as to state that legitimacy constitutes the stakes of the insurgency game. If the population comes to view the insurgents as more legitimate than the government, the insurgents will gain more recruits, be threatened with fewer informers, and find that the population will be willing to assist their struggle in many tangible and intangible ways. Recent research published by the RAND Corporation on sources of success in counterinsurgency further highlight the importance of legitimacy (Paul, Clark and Grill 2010). Legitimation (the process by which legitimacy is conferred) facilitates material and social support (Wimmer, Cederman and Min 2009; Razi 1987), introduces otherwise inaccessible opportunities and valuable structural supports (e.g., Hagen and Rymond-Richmond 2008), and increases members' commitment and willingness to engage in risky behaviors (Bakker, Raab and Milward 2012). At the same time, legitimacy is a fluid concept. Some sources of a dark network's legitimacy are reliable while others evaporate when the context changes. Understanding the sources of dark network legitimacy and the process by which it is conferred is critical information for policy makers who are looking to understand or disrupt dark networks.

In spite of legitimacy being recognized as critical to the success and resilience dark networks, the relevance of this insight for policy development suffers from two critical limitations. First, the concepts of legitimacy that are applied in research on dark networks are

often too abstract to be useful in a policy analytic sense. As opposed to philosophers, social scientists and policy analysts do not rely on universalistic, normative frameworks for determining legitimacy. Rather, they rely on descriptive approaches for which legitimacy can be broadly defined as the perception or assumption that something is desirable, proper or appropriate within the bounds of a system of norms, beliefs, or definitions (see Suchman 1995). This approach has the most tangible implications for policy research because it is the best indicator of the benefits associated with legitimacy. However, it offers no indication of how the source of legitimation, the bases of legitimation, or the form that legitimation takes might vary, and subsequently alter the effects of legitimation from one case to the next.

The second major limitation is that the effects of legitimacy vary widely from case to case. As Roy (2004: 175) writes, legitimacy "is what the people believe it is." Bakker and colleagues note that "What is legitimate is to a large extent in the eye of the beholder, and not fixed to any external standard." As such, there is a broad consensus that legitimacy is a highly localized phenomenon, which in turn limits the generalizability of insights gained from any given case.

In this research we develop a novel framework for the analysis of legitimation in an effort to address these limitations to the study of legitimacy. Our framework builds from the assertion that variations in the effects of legitimation are the result of variations in the legitimation process. By looking for patterns across similar processes of legitimation, we believe that policy analytic research can generalize beyond the case-by-case variation so widely observed.

We demonstrate the utility of our framework through in-depth analyses of legitimation and its effects for two violent non-state actors: the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Turkey, and Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) in Indonesia. We show that consistencies in the effects of legitimation

4

are a function of similar configurations of sources, forms, and bases, as opposed to similarities between the local contexts of specific cases. Further, we show that different configurations of sources, forms, and bases of legitimation have different effects.

Background

Research on legitimacy is "marked by dissension" (Stryker 1994: 848). Multiple definitions and frameworks have emerged in an effort to better bridge the divide between generalizability and specificity so as to make better sense of this critical construct. However, while debates over legitimacy typically focus on how legitimacy should be defined, the main discrepancies between competing perspectives center on the processes of legitimation. Definitions of legitimacy, which generally cohere around a basic set of core assumptions, typically differ in how they prioritize sources, forms and bases of legitimation.

For example, research in international relations often focuses attention on states legitimating one another as when the United States recognized Israel (as the de facto government) immediately after the Provisional Government of Israel proclaimed the new State of Israel at midnight on May 14, 1948 or when legitimation occurs by international governmental organizations (e.g., Hafner-Burton and Tustsui 2005) like the United Nations which admitted South Sudan on July 14, 2011 as the 193rd member of the U.N. Within these frameworks, legitimacy is gained through involvement in international accords and treaties, and legitimation given through recognition and mutual involvement. This passive form of legitimation has important benefits for states, facilitating political and economic relations with other nations. From another perspective, a broad body of research in sociology and comparative politics focuses on legitimation by constituents and the processes through which governments come to power (e.g., Gilley 2009; Beetham 1991). Legitimacy in the form of democratic election has

been widely observed as providing greater stability and support within the local population. While the variability in legitimation found in these different frameworks is well known, it complicates policy analyses that seek to understand how the legitimacy of a specific actor or entity will affect outcomes because each framework elucidates different processes and effects.

Frameworks for legitimacy are further complicated in research on dark networks, as legitimacy is typically contested by multiple parties. Bakker and colleagues' (2012) preliminary theory of dark network clarifies that the label "dark network" does not imply a value judgment, but is instead a classification for entities that are illegal in the area they operate within, and must remain covert. By circumventing value judgments inherent in evaluations of legitimacy, the dark network perspective accounts for the fact that some actors will typically view a dark network as legitimate, while others will not. However, as a consequence, legitimation of a dark network by any source has a high potential for engendering controversy, if not conflict.

This was pointedly illustrated in December, 2012 when the United States announced that it would formally recognize the Syrian coalition opposing the regime of President Bashar al-Assad's as the legitimate representatives of Syria (Landler and Gordon 2012). This recognition by the United States fueled US tensions with Russia and China, who supported Assad (Borger 2013). Because of the broad policy implications of third parties entering such controversies, the motivation for legitimation becomes another critical source of variability shaping the effects of legitimacy. In the Syrian conflict, Russia had an interest in the survival of the Assad regime. Russia maintained a major naval base in the country, and had extensive economic interests, with arms deals and investment in Syrian infrastructure and energy exceeding $20 billion, US (Treisman 2013). However, the US has claimed to support the revolutionaries on moral grounds.

These diverse sources, forms, and bases of legitimation go a long way in explaining the variability across definitions and observed effects of legitimacy. Yet, as mentioned above, different frameworks for legitimacy have found consistencies in the effects of certain sources and forms of legitimation (e.g., democratic elections foster stability and security and recognition in international treaties fosters trade cooperation between countries).

 Building on these insights, our approach to the analysis of legitimation focuses on configurations of sources, forms and bases of legitimation to identify points of consistency across cases, and accounts for the probability that multiple conjunctions will be present for any dark network. In the sections that follow, we identify broad categories of sources, forms and bases in dark networks to provide a preliminary framework for our configurational approach.

Sources of Legitimacy

Analyses of legitimacy in dark networks typically focus on legitimation by particular actors, assessing how legitimacy either benefited the group, or how illegitimacy caused them damage. While the specific actors engaged in legitimation naturally vary from case to case, four broad categories of legitimating actors are dominant in this literature: constituents, states, non-state organizations, and international governmental organizations.

Constituents—actors and populations the dark network claims to represent—are by far the most widely addressed source of legitimation in this literature. In his analysis of counterinsurgency efforts in Afghanistan, Roy (2004) focuses on legitimacy among local constituents as being the critical source of competition. Similarly, Bakker and colleagues (2012) highlight the loss of legitimacy among constituents as being central to the failure of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil (LTTE) in Sri Lanka. They note that the LTTE failed to negotiate in good faith with the Sri Lankan government, undermining their claim to represent the Tamil

people. Because of this loss of legitimacy, the LTTE lost many of its best fighters and pursued a campaign of forced recruitment, which further damaged their legitimacy. From groups claiming religious motives to political movements, legitimation by a group's constituents is critical to the longevity and capacity of the dark network (see Roth and Sever 2007).

Legitimation by states is second only to legitimation by constituents in its prevalence as a source in the literature on conflict and terrorism. While state sponsored terrorism has declined substantially in the last two decades, the provision of resources for terrorist groups continues and affords considerable revenue and stability to these illegal and covert groups (Hutchinson and O'Malley 2007). Further, legitimation of rebel groups by powerful states can mean the difference between success and decimation. Returning to the example of Syria, in 2012 when Turkey signaled its support of the Syrian rebels, they allowed rebels and refugees being able to move across the Turkish border and gain meaningful protection from the Turkish state.

Non-state organizations include all collective actors that are not associated with states. These range from legal NGOs like Doctors Without Borders to what some call MANGOS or malevolent nongovernmental organizations like al Qaeda. The reason for classifying these actors together is that, other than not being dark networks, that are illegal and covert, the influence of these groups has relatively similar degrees of variation. They lack the power of states to establish laws that might protect the group, but they can have tremendous social and financial reach that extends across borders (Roth and Sever 2007). Connections among these non-state organizations have been shown to be one of the most highly predictive factors for a range of capabilities (e.g., Breiger, et al. 2011; Felbab-Brown 2010). Literature that directly addresses issues of legitimation by non-state groups is limited. However, research has shown extensive benefits afforded by positive relations with multiple other groups and the extent to which these

networks of activity influence the success of entities classified as dark networks. For example, dark networks entities that are well connected to other organizations generally have greater capability and reach for bringing in resources, especially through illicit economies such as the drug trade (see Asal, Milward and Schoon Forthcoming). As such, we include non-state organizations as a key potential source of legitimation.

Finally, international governmental organizations are also an important source of legitimation. This is well illustrated by Bakker and colleague's analysis of the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa. This analysis details how the ANC gained international legitimacy by signing the Geneva Conventions of War and agreeing to uphold other United Nations sanctioned treaties, even though they were a dark network according to the laws of Apartheid South Africa. They argue that this source of legitimacy was critical to their survival, as it helped them raise support and resources from supporter and NGOs abroad (Bakker, et al. 2012).

Bases of Legitimation

Just as the different sources of legitimacy affect the dynamics of legitimation, so do differences in the basis on which criteria for evaluation are established. While typically overlooked in literatures on conflict, terrorism, and dark networks, organizational research has demonstrated that the bases of legitimation play a critical role in determining its effect. Here we focus on moral versus pragmatic bases for legitimation.

In his research on organizational legitimacy, Suchman (1995) identifies three main bases of legitimation: pragmatic, moral and cognitive. We focus only on the first two, which are observable in the study of dark networks. According to Suchman, pragmatic legitimacy is based on a rational, self-interested calculation. Often, pragmatic legitimacy is rooted in some form of

exchange, such as the exchange of resources for action, and legitimacy is predicated on the degree to which that exchange is expected to be of value. In some cases, "constituents support the organization not necessarily because they believe that it provides specific favorable exchanges, but rather because they see it as being responsive to their larger interests" (Suchman 1995: 578).

Moral legitimacy, on the other hand, is based on a set of moral standards regarding what is "right". Suchman argues that moral legitimacy typically takes one of four conceptually important forms: the evaluation of the ends or consequences, evaluations of the means by which those ends are reached, evaluations of the categories and structures, and evaluations of those leaders and representatives of the organization in question. Nelson Mandela is his years in captivity on Robben Island provided a compelling moral witness against Apartheid.

Forms of Legitimation

While legitimacy is rooted in perceptions and beliefs, it is observed through the way that it affects interactions and social relationships. Just as the belief that someone is the leader of a group means little if the believer refuses to follow the leader, legitimation without some form of demonstration is substantively meaningless. Because observable behavior is so critical to understanding and analyzing legitimacy, variations in the form that legitimation takes would seem to be critical to understanding variation in the effects of legitimation.

Again focusing on broad categories rather than specific actions, we differentiate between active or material forms of legitimation versus passive or tacit forms of legitimation. Active/material legitimation is signaled by the direct support of the source of legitimacy. During the 2011 civil war in Libya NATO's support of the Libyan rebels legitimated their cause, and

was directly accompanied by military support and intervention. This active engagement was instrumental in bringing down the regime of Muammar al-Gaddafi.

Conversely, passive/tacit support comes without material aid. When the United States signaled its support for the Syrian rebels in 2012, it was slow to follow with money or weapons. While this passive/tacit legitimation by the United States helped bolster the rebel's cause, it did little to advance their efforts as the United States specifically avoided providing resources that would turn the tide of the conflict. Additionally, we follow Byman (2005) in classifying tacit support, which is characterized by a lack of action against the group akin to "turning a blind eye", together with passive support, as when a government chooses to not inquire too deeply about the end user of weapons that are being smuggled through their territory.

A Configurational Approach to Legitimation in Dark Networks

The configurational approach is an approach within organizational theory that encourages examining organizations holistically (Greenwood and Miller 2010; Meyer, Tsui, and Hinings 1993; Raab, Mannak, and Cambré 2013). In order to deal with the increasing complexity of organizations and the environment in which they operate, scholars are often forced to pick and choose aspects of them to study. Isolating variables, however, may be problematic because the variables under examination are often tightly coupled with variables that are not being studied. As a result, these studies produce an incomplete and often flawed view of how organizational structure affects behavior. Configurational scholars suggest addressing the increasing complexity of organizations and their environment by looking at groups, or configurations of variables that occur more frequently together.

We argue that the configurational approach is particularly well-suited for the study of legitimation because the variables that affect whether a group is legitimated are likely to be

tightly coupled. Studying just one variable and its effect on legitimation produces only a partial explanation, an explanation that appears to change when applied to a different context. We suggest that breaking legitimation down its constituent parts may result in configurations that are more generalizable.

Our approach builds on the observation that there are, in fact, consistencies within sources of legitimation (Gilley 2009). We argue that consistencies in the effects of legitimation are a function of similar configurations of sources, forms, and bases, as opposed to similarities between the local contexts of specific cases. Further, we argue that different configurations of sources, forms, and bases of legitimation have different effects. For example, legitimation by an external state in the form of material support provided for pragmatic reasons should have a different effect than legitimation by an international governmental organization in the form of verbal support by an for moral reasons.

While these broad categories of sources, bases and forms of legitimation do not represent an exhaustive list of all possibilities, they offer a groundwork for examining the utility of a configurational approach to the analysis of legitimation. Across these categories, there are 16 possible configurations of legitimation. To demonstrate the utility of our framework, we analyze three specific configurations across two cases: JI and the PKK. We show that by focusing on configurations of legitimation, we leverage the primary point of consistency in legitimacy research. Further, we show that by identifying multiple conjunctions within individual cases facilitates principled comparisons of effects, thereby minimizing post hoc value-judgments and guesswork.

Methods

Case Selection

The PKK and JI were selected for study using what Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007: 37) call theoretical sampling, where cases were chosen in an effort to illuminate and extend "relationships and logic among constructs." For our purposes, we selected cases with the goal of representing the full typological spectrum for the sources, forms and bases of legitimation. While we acknowledge that there are meaningful risks associated with selecting cases on the dependent variable, we follow George and Bennet's (2005: 83) assertion that cases should be selected based on their relevance to the research objective.

Construction of case histories

Data for these cases was drawn from an array of sources, with an effort made to account for multiple perspectives. This allowed us to triangulate our data and obtain robust and reliable information. As Bakker et al. (2012) note, covert and/or illegal organizations can be difficult to study directly. This results in a much greater need for this sort of data triangulation. Each case relied on primary and secondary sources to varying degrees. However, in addition to the primary and secondary sources, we also consulted with intelligence and subject matter experts on our case material.

Data for both cases was drawn from a combination of primary documents and secondary sources. Data collection began by analyzing an array of secondary sources, with particular attention paid to integrating multiple perspectives. These materials were used to construct an initial narrative framework of the groups that accounted for their history and their activity over time. Based on this initial data collection, primary documents were then engaged to validate and cross-reference accounts of specific events, figures (e.g., membership) and activities, with particular attention paid to areas where divergences had been identified in the secondary material.

Jemaah Islamyiah (JI) has been recognized by the United States State Department as a terrorist group since 2002 ("Foreign Terrorist Organizations" 2012). It is responsible for several terrorist attacks in Southeast Asia, the most deadly of which was the 2002 bombing of several nightclubs in Bali that killed over 200 people (Vaughn et al. 2009, 3). Although it has cells in Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines ("The 9/11 Commission Report" 2004, 58), JI planned and prepared most of its significant attacks in Indonesia, where the unstable political climate following the fall of President Suharto allowed JI to operate with relative autonomy (Abuza 2003, 141).

The vision of group's founders, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'aysir, was to establish a pan-Islamic state in Southeast Asia and was markedly anti-Christian in nature. This vision shifted to include global jihad against the West, a shift that is due in part to the relationships several JI leaders established with high-level al Qaeda members at a training camp in Afghanistan ("Jemaah Islamiyah in South East Asia: Damaged but Still Dangerous" 2003, 84).

The history of JI is long and complex. For the purposes of this paper, we focus on the time period of 1985 through 2002, the years during which the group formally emerged and began perpetrating terrorist attacks. Importantly, it was during these years that JI received legitimation from a diverse set of actors, legitimation that led to a growth in group members and an uptick in the number of terrorist attacks committed.

The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) is a radical socialist organization founded in 1978 with the goal securing an independent Kurdistan through the use of violent tactics against the Turkish State—an approach that had been discussed but un-initiated by other pro-Kurdish groups in the 1970s (Marcus 2007). Since the initiation of its armed movement in 1984, the conflict

between the PKK and the Turkish government has resulted in more than 30,000 casualties (Rodoplu, Arnold and Ersoy 2004), which is more than the combined casualties of all conflicts[1] engaged by the Turkish Republic since the war of independence in 1923. As a result, the PKK has been the central focus of Turkish military and security forces for nearly 30 years, and has been a point of tension and negotiation affecting Turkey's international relations throughout Europe (Marcus 2007) and the Middle East (Olson 2004).

From 1978-1984 the PKK's activities consisted of attacking other Kurdish groups and organizations within Turkey in an effort to gain dominance within a broader movement for Kurdish separatism. Since 1984, the PKK focused the majority of their attacks on military groups and government offices, however they have also attacked Kurdish villages that were thought to support the Turkish government (Zehni 2008: 22). They have engaged in violent recruitment tactics, they have had an active involvement in the illegal drug economy throughout Europe, and they have also established association with legitimate political parties in Turkey (Marcus 2007). Since the end of 2012, the Turkish government has been engaged in negotiations with the PKK in an effort to end the conflict.

Like JI, the PKK has a long and complex history. For the purposes of this research, we focus specifically on the period from 1980 when the group began to formally train guerilla fighters to 1999 when their leader and founder, Abdullah Öcalan was captured by the Turkish military. These years represent the period of greatest activity for the PKK, during which they gained legitimation from multiple sources. Further, by focusing on a limited period of the group's activity, we are better able to assess the effects of legitimation as they have played out over time.

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[1] Turkish Military forces have engaged in the invasion of Cyprus, the Korean War, the Persian Gulf War, the NATO bombing of Kosovo, the coalition invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, and military incursions in Iraq since the 1990s. .

Analysis of Three Configurations of Legitimation
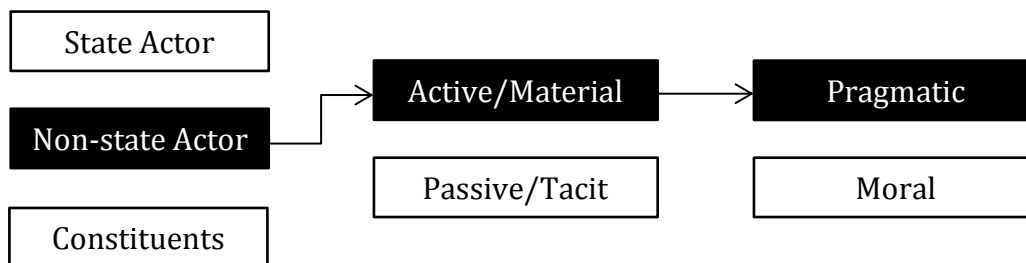
Non-state actor + active/material + pragmatic

Figure 1: Non-state actor + active/material + pragmatic

JI

The most vital source of resources and support for JI during the time period in question came from a non-state actor, al Qaeda (aQ), and was in the form of active/material support provided for pragmatic reasons. That aQ contributed financial assistance and bomb-making expertise to JI is well documented ("The 9/11 Commission Report" 2004, 151). In fact, two of the largest scale attacks attributed to JI, the JW Marriott bombing in 2003 and the Bali II bombing in 2005, were funded by al Qaeda and carried out by JI members (R. Gunaratna, pers. comm., March 22, 2013). Furthermore, top aQ members instructed JI leaders in religion and combat skills in a camp in Afghanistan ("Jemaah Islamiyah in South East Asia: Damaged but Still Dangerous" 2003, 2).

Though there was a moral component to aQ's support of JI, it was largely pragmatic in nature. Al Qaeda viewed the Southeast Asian countries as "countries of convenience," where factors like loose visa requirements and easy access to illegal arms made it easy for the terrorist organization to operate with relative autonomy (Abuza 2002, 428–9). This environment made the Southeast Asian countries particularly attractive to al Qaeda leaders, who had begun

searching for locations outside of Afghanistan to establish training camps for would-be jihadists ("The Jemaah Islamiyah Arrests and the Threat of Terrorism" 2003, 4).

Support of JI from aQ is significant because it affected the trajectory of JI. Namely, JI went from being a locally/regionally focused group that did not rely primarily on violence to achieve its goals to one that was more globally focused and relied heavily on terrorist attacks. Key JI members, whose initial goals were local and regional in nature, were introduced to the wider world of global jihad through their contact with aQ. JI's choice of attack targets reflects this influence, shifting to Western targets after aQ began supporting them ("Jemaah Islamiyah in South East Asia: Damaged but Still Dangerous" 2003).

PKK

The importance of material support from non-state actors is also evident in the PKK. During the 1980s the PKK gained critical resources from the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), a subset of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). The DFLP trained PKK members in guerilla warfare at their camp in Syria's Bekaa Valley. As Marcus (2007) notes, this was not uncommon as the DFLP had also trained Nicaraguan Sandinistas, Iranian leftists, Greek communists, and others who shared similar ideological goals. While in these camps, the PKK rebels not only received training, but small living stipends. This support advanced the military capacity of the PKK, laying a foundation for the start of their campaign against Turkish military outposts.

The DFLP's support was in part driven by the desire to support a group with shared ideology, but based on interviews with one DFLP leader, Marcus asserts that the support was largely pragmatic.

> "Giving shelter to other leftist revolutionaries allowed the DFLP to promote the
> image of an important, international revolutionary movement, one to be reckoned

with both by its allies and other members of the [PLO]. And it helped them pad their numbers at a time of rising tension with Israel." (Marcus 2007: 55)

In spite of the shared communist ideology and the benefits to the DFLP, the arrangement between the PKK and the DFLP entailed no assumption that the latter was invested in the particular objectives of the Kurdish group. As such, the support from the DFLP was effectively lost when they abandoned their Bekaa Valley training camp after Israeli attacks. The DFLP did not denounce the PKK, nor did they ever work against them. Rather they simply did not incorporate and continue protecting them past the point where it served their needs.

Constituents + active/material + moral
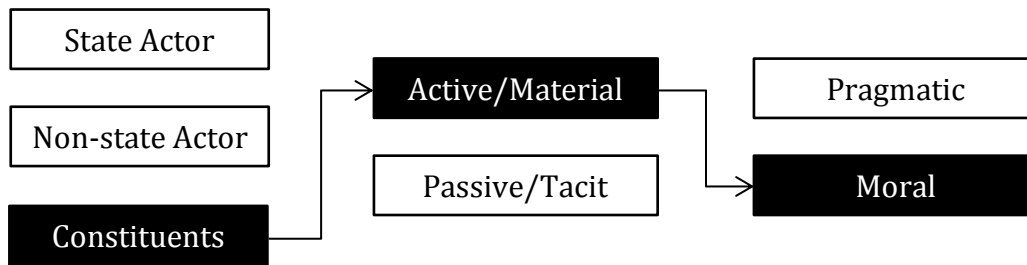
Figure 2: Constituents + active/material + moral

Although JI's operations spanned several countries in Southeast Asia, Indonesians comprised arguably the most important set of JI's constituents because their country was JI's home base during the time period in question (Abuza 2003, 140). This group of supporters provided active/material support to the group for moral reasons. JI was able to recruit many Indonesian constituents to join the organization, an active/material form of support. In particular, JI used the conflicts in the Indonesian provinces of Ambon and Poso, which pitted Muslims against Christians, to radicalize and recruit a new group of JI members (Gordon and Lindo 2011, 6).

JI leadership intentionally sought the granting of legitimacy by Indonesian constituents from a moral base. In order to pursue its goal of an Islamic state, JI leadership recognized the

importance of gaining the support of the Indonesian population. To do this, the majority of the group focused their attention on local oppressors of the population, like the police and Christians in the domestic conflicts in Ambon and Poso ("Indonesian Jihadism: Small Groups, Big Plans" 2011, i).

Indonesians' active/material support of JI made the group increase in size. Despite some dissatisfaction with JI's tactics, constituents still flocked to the group because of its defense of Islam in the Ambon and Poso conflicts.

PKK

Active/material support from Kurdish Turks has long been the basis of the PKK's success, and much of their support is rooted in moral issues surrounding the longstanding conflicts over Kurdish rights in Turkey. Formed in response to the failed political efforts of the Kurdish separatist movements of the 1970s the PKK's agenda to establish a separate Kurdish state was much more radical than that of other separatist groups. Support for the more militant methods of the PKK burgeoned when the Turkish military embarked on a program of forced relocation of Kurdish villages and widespread imprisonment of Kurds in the 1980s (see İnsan Haklarını İnceleme Komisyonu 2013).

During the early 1990s, the relocated Kurds provided active/material support to the PKK in the form of increased manpower. The group's membership expanded from a couple thousand to an estimated 17,000 members, a significant portion of which consisted of the relocated Kurds (Özcan 2007). Since its earliest activity, this base of deeply invested constituents has been the backbone of the PKK. They have provided their base of material support and manpower that has allowed the group to sustain activity in spite of progressive intervention efforts by the Turkish state.

State actor + passive/tacit + pragmatic
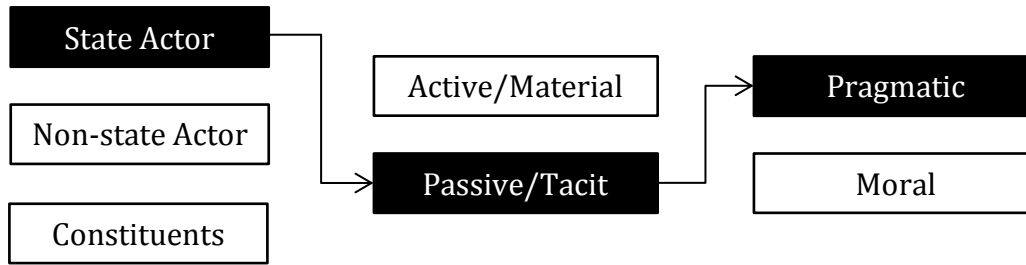
Figure 3: State actor + passive/tacit + pragmatic

JI

After the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998, Indonesia became more tolerant of radical groups that had been suppressed by the controlling leader for over thirty years (Gordon and Lindo 2011, 6). During this period of time, the Indonesian government's support of JI is best classified as passive/tacit support conferred for pragmatic reasons. This type of support is noteworthy for its lack of action, rather than its action. Specifically, the Megawati government provided passive/tacit support for JI by not pursuing the group. Despite increasing international pressure, it allowed JI's main leaders to live openly in Indonesia. In fact, some officials even refused to acknowledge JI's existence ("Backgrounder: Jemaah Islamiyah (a.k.a. Jemaah Islamiah)" 2009).

The reason for the Indonesian government's support of JI stemmed from a pragmatic base. Prior to the Bali bombings in 2002, it was in the best interests of the Megawati government not to pursue or prosecute JI, meaning that the legitimacy granted to JI by the Megawati government stems from a pragmatic base. The government did not want to be portrayed as caving into demands from the post-9/11 American government to crack down on the group ("Backgrounder: Jemaah Islamiyah (a.k.a. Jemaah Islamiah)" 2009). In addition, given

the overwhelming Muslim majority in Indonesian, Megawati's government was wary of backlash that pursuing JI might create (Fealy and Borgu 2005, 5), especially given its instable political support base (Witt 2002).

The Indonesian government's passive support of JI waned after JI's bombing of hotels and nightclubs in Bali. These attacks prompted public sentiment both at home and regionally to turn against JI. Only when the government felt that the tide was turning against JI did it begin to actively pursue bringing JI members to justice (Fealy and Borgu 2005, 5).

PKK

The PKK's persistence and military activity has represented a major political, economic and military disruption to the Turkish state. As such, the PKK was encouraged (if not directly supported) by regimes that sought to undermine the stability of the Turkish state. The most consistent and valuable source of passive state support for the PKK was Syria. What began as Syria's allowance of PKK operatives to enter and move freely in Syria when they first began training at the DFLP training camps in the Bekaa Valley expanded in 1985. Following the DFLP's departure from their training camps, Syria allowed the PKK to remain in the camps and take control of them (Marcus 2007: 99). In Syria, the PKK found a safe haven, a back-base where they could prepare and launch attacks, both of which allowed their relatively small force to inflict disproportionate damage on Turkish targets.

Syria's passive support of the PKK stemmed from a pragmatic base and, therefore, was not stable. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Syria used support of the group as leverage in its own relations with Turkey. In return for concessions by Turkey on key issues for Syria, Damascus agreed to limit the movement of the PKK within its boundaries, although as Marcus writes, "it is unclear how long this stayed in effect." (Marcus 2007: 99). It was not until 1998

that Syria fully withdrew support from the PKK, but before that time their support was highly

volatile. Again quoting Marcus:

> "In 1991, he reportedly was detained briefly after meetings he held with Iraqi
> Kurdish representatives; in 1992 Syria shuttered the PKK's military training
> facility in the Bekaa, and in 1997 Öcalan apparently was told to close down the
> houses he used in the Bekaa's Bar Elias town for meetings." (Marcus 2007: 269)

While the tacit support from Syria provided necessary resources to the PKK at multiple stages in

their activity, the support varied based on both Syria's and the PKK's relationships with others.

Discussion

The legitimation configurations discussed above are only three of a vast number of

possible configurations. Our cases demonstrate, however, that common configurations are

observable across different contexts, and the effects within these configurations are highly

similar. This strongly supports the assertion that the effects of legitimation may be less context-

specific than previously thought. Below, we examine the differential effects of the configurations

discussed above on two important group characteristics: growth and stability.

Stability

Less Stable   More Stable

State actor +	Non-state actor +	Constituents +
Passive/Tacit +	Active/Material +	Active/Material +
Pragmatic	Pragmatic	Moral

Figure 4. Least to most stable configurations of legitimation

First, the stability, or resilience, of insurgent and terrorist groups is of great

interest to policy makers. Understanding how certain configurations of legitimation foster

stability or introduce instability may suggest ways to disrupt the group's existence (Bakker,

Raab, and Milward 2012). Based on the case studies, and the configurations that emerged from

them, we propose an ordering of configurations of legitimation from least stable to most stable. Figure 4 depicts this ordering.

At one extreme is the state actor + passive/tacit + pragmatic configuration. When passive/tacit support stems from a pragmatic base, as was the case for state actors in all three case studies, the support tends to be ephemeral, given only for the duration during which it benefits the state. The behavior of state actors is often tied to political needs, which are inherently subject to change. Moreover, the passive nature of the support means that it is more easily altered because the source's official stance does not need to be changed. For example, the Indonesian government's unwillingness to pursue and prosecute JI members is attributed to its need to bolster its lagging popular support before the 2004 elections among Indonesians. However, the government reversed course and began openly pursuing JI members when public support of JI waned following the Bali II attacks in 2005 (Gordon and Lindo 2011). A similar trend is visible with Syria's support of the PKK, in which Syria's willingness to provide a safe haven for the PKK lasted only as long as this passive support was politically advantageous to Syria (Marcus 2007).

At the other extreme is the most stable configuration: constituents + active/material + moral support. In both the JI and the PKK case studies, many constituents joined the ranks of the group because of some issue that resonated with them on a moral level. In the case of the PKK, Turkish Kurds faced discrimination, systematic economic inequality, and decades of political repression of Kurdish identity through the outlaw of Kurdish language, Kurdish names for children, the abolition of the Caliphate, and omission of Kurdish town names from maps and history books (Olson 1989) . These underlying issues coupled with direct repression and forced relocation by the Turkish state (see Insan Haklarini Inceleme Komisyonu 2013) prompted these

constituents to commit to the PKK's cause on a deeper and more long-lasting level. Similarly, Indonesians who lived in the provinces of Ambon and Poso were able to identify with JI's jihad much more easily because the enemy was in their own backyard and affected their lives directly ("Indonesian Jihadism: Small Groups, Big Plans" 2011).

Finally, the non-state actor + active/material + pragmatic configuration occupies the middle-ground on the stability scale. When a source of support provides active support of a group, this commitment tends to be harder to change because the source has overtly committed to the cause. However, when the reasoning behind this support stems mainly from a pragmatic base, then the source will withdraw its support when it stops being advantageous. The result of these off-setting effects is that this configuration produces support that is somewhat stable. The DFLP's support of the PKK, which came in the form of the training of PKK members at their camps, best exemplifies this effect. Initially, the DFLP benefitted from the relationship with the PKK because it enhanced their image as an important group (Marcus 2007). However, when the DFLP closed their training camp following Israeli attacks, they largely abandoned the PKK. Significantly, however, the DFLP did not actively turn against the PKK either. In other words, this configuration does not result in a stable form of legitimation; however, the support associated with this configuration does not turn to active opposition either.

We suggest that identifying configurations of legitimation that provide less stable support to insurgencies or terrorist groups can have implications for policy. First, where possible, counterterrorism policy should seek to disrupt the support of sources that stem from a pragmatic base, namely state actors and non-state actors. Changing the incentives facing these sources may lead to a withdrawl of support for the group in question, thereby undermining the stability of the

dark network. Moreover, we suggest that state actors will be the most susceptible to this effort

because their support tends to be passive and thus, easier to change.

Growth

The configurations also produced a trend with regards to the growth of the groups. When

a source of legitimation enables a group to grow in membership and presence, that source is of

more concern to policymakers than sources that maintain a group's development. Identifying

which configurations of legitimation lead to the growth of the group as compared to its

maintenance could therefore be of great benefit to policymakers. Similar to stability, we propose

an ordering of configurations of legitimation from maintenance to growth. Figure X depicts this
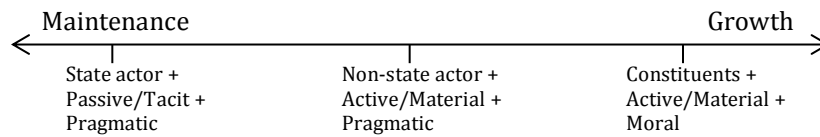
ordering.

Maintenance		Growth
State actor + Passive/Tacit + Pragmatic	Non-state actor + Active/Material + Pragmatic	Constituents + Active/Material + Moral

Figure 5. Least to most stable configurations of legitimation

The configuration that leads to the least growth is state actor + passive/tacit + pragmatic

support. We suggest this is because passive/tacit support is often a veiled form of support that is

characterized more by what is not done than what is done. Syria, for example, allowed the PKK

to run training camps in their country with relative autonomy, but it did not actively support the

group way (Marcus 2007). This type of support might have allowed the group to grow, but it did

not contribute to its growth. Because the Syrian government's lack of action did not diminish

the size and capabilities of PKK either, though, we argue that its support is best characterized as

maintaining the group's size, capabilities, and presence. Similarly, Indonesia's lack of pursuit of

JI within its borders had a similar effect on the terrorist group's growth ("Indonesian Backgrounder: How the Jemaah Islamiyah Terrorist Network Operates" 2002).

The case studies suggest that growth of the insurgent or terrorist group is best achieved when legitimation comes from the configuration, constituents + active/material + moral support. The reasoning behind this conclusion is relatively straightforward, so we do not dwell on it here. For both the PKK and JI, constituents provided active/material support by joining their ranks, which by definition means the groups grew in membership.

More interestingly, though, is why we propose that the third configuration, non-state actors + active/material + pragmatic support produces less growth than the constituent configuration. Namely, we suggest that the difference lies in the base of support. In all of our case studies, constituents joined for moral reasons, which, as we argued above, made their support more stable and long-lasting. On the other hand, for the non-state actors whose support stemmed from a pragmatic base, support was withdrawn when providing that legitimation was no longer advantageous to the non-state actor. Al Qaeda's financial assistance to JI contributed to the group's growth because it enabled them to plan more terrorist attacks in southeast Asia ("The 9/11 Commission Report" 2004). This growth in presence could easily have been stemmed if al Qaeda stopped their flow of funds to JI. Likewise, the training of the PKK by the DFLP led to growth in the PKK's capacities, but this growth came to an end when the DFLP withdrew their support. As such, while this configuration can lead to substantial growth, it is often short-lived based on the interests of the non-state organization.

For policy makers looking to curtail the growth of insurgent and terrorist groups, it is helpful to identify which sources of support lead to a group's growth. In particular, counterterrorism policy may be advised to spend more time on "hearts and minds" campaigns in

the populations in which these groups operate in order slow the number of constituents who are recruited, thereby curtailing the growth. However, direct intervention may be more effective when addressing non-state organizations as this might offset any gains to be had by legitimating a group and more immediately curtail growth.

Conclusion

This application of the configurational approach to the analysis of legitimation supports our assertion that by turning attention directly to processes of legitimation, policy analysis may be able to glean insights about legitimacy that transcend individual cases and specific contexts. Further, it provides a way to systematically account for variation in the effects of legitimacy, thereby facilitating the development of more effective policies for dark network intervention. In understanding political processes and dark networks, legitimacy is treated as both a cause and an effect. Our approach eschews this tautology by focusing specifically on the processes that produce legitimacy, and then examining the tangible effects.

While we have proposed orderings of how certain configurations that we've assessed affect the stability and growth of dark networks, further research is needed to assess how combinations of configurations operate in tandem and mutually affect one another. While it seems reasonable to expect that state actors providing material support for pragmatic reasons might have the capacity to amplify the growth caused by constituents providing material support for moral reasons, this is an empirical question that requires further investigation. Further, we expect that further elaboration of the categories for sources, forms and bases may provide fruitful new insights.

What we offer here is an apparatus for analysis with a preliminary framework for the study of legitimation in dark networks. We believe that this approach can be leveraged in many productive ways, and provides a robust empirical groundwork for a new approach to the analysis of legitimacy in public policy. The benefits of the configurational approach to the analysis of legitimation is that it can be customized for application to other areas of study, while offering a generalizable approach that reveals systematic patterns in a construct that has long eluded systematic measurement.

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