Political Legitimacy and Values

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Introduction

The US Army Counterinsurgency manual touts the importance of legitimacy yet it provides a limited explanation of what legitimacy is and where it comes from. This paper attempts to provide an explanation of what political legitimacy is, where it comes from, and the types of legitimacy that form the ideological basis of most state political systems. It does this with a particular interest in democracy since promoting democracy can be considered a valid national security interest.

When we examine the source and nature of legitimacy we find values are a key *internal* motivator in determining what kind of social and political systems societies prefer. I emphasize internal because it is a distinction that is often overlooked in political science. Further, by deconstructing legitimacy into its component parts including values[1] we begin to see political systems in another light. If values, as an internal motivator, do directly influence ideas on political legitimacy then it becomes possible to examine political structures as they are not as political philosophers think they should be. We can classify political legitimacy in relation to the values that are at their core.   When looked at in this perspective the result is two contrasting categories. The first is a rights-based category that is associated with democracy. The second is a duty-based category commonly associated with traditional tribal, ethnic, or religious systems and socialist based ideological governments. Separating political ideologies along these lines is nothing new. However, looking at them as the product of societal values may provide opportunities to reconsider and refine ideas on the conditions necessary for democratization.

If political legitimacy is the key to countering an insurgency and if it is based on values, then many of the methods described in the Counterinsurgency manual are useless. Lines of effort centered on good governance or providing services to the public will have little influence on whether the population sees the government as legitimate. Nor will simply offering a new system change their value structures. If accurate it may be wise to consider less ambitious goals when conducting counterinsurgency operations.

Political Legitimacy and Values

The first step will be to define our problem. The idea of legitimacy crosses several disciplines. It is studied in law, psychology, and public relations in addition to sociology and political science.[2] Political legitimacy is a subset of the general concept of organizational legitimacy that crosses each of these specialties as well as others.[3] Legitimacy can also refer to both individuals and institutions[4]. No single universal definition of political legitimacy exists.[5] In order to clarify the ideas necessary to establish a connection between values and political ideology I will use a broad and well-known definition offered by

Rodney Barker in *Political Legitimacy and the State* and then dissect it in order to clarify its aspects. According to Barker political legitimacy is *precisely the belief in the rightfulness of a state, in its authority to issue commands, so that those commands are obeyed not simply out of fear or self-interest, but because they are believed in some sense to have moral authority, because the subjects believe they ought to be obeyed*.[6] As used here legitimacy is an attribute of the organization. It does not apply to an individual or to a procedure. It is a noun, "the belief", that is that is held by a social group that belongs to a specific type of societal organization, "the state". This definition will be broken into five major components that will allow us to make the connection between legitimacy and values. First, legitimacy is a belief. Second, it applies to the appropriateness of the government to issue orders and decrees. It is right to govern.[7] Third, political legitimacy is an attribute of a political entity. But it can be associated with different levels, from the individual leader to the government as viewed by other states. In this case we are talking about political legitimacy at the systems level defined further below. The fourth part of the definition is found in what legitimacy is not. Legitimacy stands in contrast to other means used to gain compliance such as "fear or self-interest", what I define as coercion. *Coercion* is the use of any means other than legitimacy to gain compliance to an order. The influence of coercion can be based in either an offer of reward or a threat of punishment. In either case there is some external reason for compliance that overcomes a person's beliefs about what they ought to do. Coercion is the antithesis of legitimacy. The fifth and final element of political legitimacy is its nature as its "ought to be obeyed" quality. It is a feeling akin to morality. I will further clarify each of these elements in order to identify potential connections with value.

A Belief

Max Weber is probably most often associated with political legitimacy and it is his idea that "legitimacy is equivalent to 'legitimitätsglaube' (a belief in legitimacy)[8]" It is worth noting that in this sense it is a subjective feeling that is not objective or rational.[9] It is something that wells up from inside. Lipset argued that a government must be able to "engender and maintain the *belief* that the existing political institutions are the most appropriate ones for the society" (emphasis added).[10] Others have argued that legitimacy is not the belief itself but instead it is the result of the belief:

> "A given power relationship is not legitimate because people believe in its legitimacy, but because it can be *justified in terms of* their beliefs. … When we seek to assess the legitimacy of a regime, a political system, or some other power relation, one thing we are doing is assessing how far it can be justified in terms of people's beliefs, how far it conforms to their values and standard, how far it satisfies the normative expectations they have of it." (emphasis in original)[11]

According to this argument legitimacy is the outcome of a comparison between the public's values and normative expectations against the expressed values and actions of the political system. It is probably accurate to say that legitimacy is not the belief itself. Legitimacy is an attribute conferred by the belief. In either case, it is what the people believe that will decide whether a political system is legitimate or illegitimate. Legitimacy is merely an attribute whose true source lies elsewhere.

In the Right to Govern

It is a right that is recognized by the governed population[12]. This recognized right is the basis of what Max Weber termed authority[13]. A person acting with authority is followed because his or her authority is recognized as legitimate. The follower's actions are based on an internally derived justification[14]. No other explanation or coercion is required to gain compliance with the leader's directions.

By the State

Here the 'State' was used to mean the political entity that exists within a specific territory. It is important to clarify that there are different levels of political entity from the individual level up to the international level and political legitimacy can attach at any of three distinct levels; the leader, the system of government (or system level), and the state.

The first is the leader level. This is the lowest level and represents the legitimacy attached to individuals holding political positions. The next higher level is the group's ideology or the *system*. This is the legitimacy "of the type of government; such as democracy, totalitarianism and authoritarianism. In operational terms, regime refers to the principles, institutions, and procedures that constitute the political system.[15]" The two are not the same. There can be a crisis of legitimacy with the leadership, as in the case of President Nixon in 1973, but it does not necessarily mean that the system will collapse. Historically governmental leaders change but systems live on. However, if the system is replaced the leadership is likely to replaced with it. It is also possible for the current leadership to shepherd the state though a change of systems as in the collapse of the Soviet Union, but it is rare that systems change willingly or without violence. It is important to remember that the first two levels are separate and distinct. The third level, state legitimacy, is external to the political body. It is the perception of other governments or states as to whether or not the regime holding sway within the territory is, in fact, the legitimate government. Legitimacy at the third level does not affect the internal workings of the government but affects whether other states are willing to recognize the government and regime and to therefore work with them. There are different ways to legitimize a political entity like fairness of process in making decisions commonly known as procedural legitimacy but these attach primarily to a specific government or government unit (like the courts or the congress)[16], less so at the system level.

Without coercion, because it is what 'ought' to be done. Legitimacy is obeyed because doing so is seen as the proper thing to do. Legitimacy is an internal value that is linked to personal feelings of obligation and responsibility to others. In these ways, it is similar to the moral values that are also an internal motivational guide to behavior. The influence of moral value upon behavior is like the influence of legitimacy in that both are internalized values that are take on by individuals as a personal responsibility – i.e., to obey legitimate authorities and to act in was consistent with personal moral values.[17]

Legitimacy is an internal motivator and what distinguishes it most clearly from coercion. Coercion must overcome a person's internal moral motivation.[18] The internal/external distinction between legitimacy and coercion is sometimes lost in discussions of political entities but the real-world implications of the distinction cannot be overstated. Using coercion to maintain control over a population inherently involves a decision based on a rational self-interest. This can be bribery in the form of specific services, privileges, or payments over and above what would normally be expected from a commensurate government or it can be coercion based on threats of force, martial law, or secret police tied to extreme punishment. In exchange for the benefits or to avoid the punishments people obey. But this type of coercion is expensive. Ultimately, the cost of maintaining control via coercion can be overwhelming. There is no additional transactional cost to legitimacy. That is not to say that you do not have to provide for your citizens; you just do not have to go to extremes to maintain your government.

In summation, political legitimacy is a belief in political entity's right to govern that exists independent of any threat or benefit derived from the entity. This definition should not be construed to mean that the political entity does not have the right to use coercion. As used here the right to govern includes the right to use coercion including violence. And while the offer or grant of specific benefits or the use or threat of use of violence may influence the population's opinion on whether or not a government is legitimate it is not the source of the government's legitimacy. So if coercion is not the source of political legitimacy,

what is?

Political Legitimacy: Its Source

Political legitimacy is derived from three sources: the population's norms, its laws, and the population's consent.[19] Norms are the social rules that describe and prescribe appropriate behavior and establish expectations about how others will act[20]. By doing so norms reduce uncertainty and allow for coordination among the various members of a society. Norms can be either descriptive, in that they describe appropriate behavior in a specific situation, or prescriptive, in that they establish informal standards of conduct.[21]

Violation of prescriptive norms can lead to social rejection or even retaliation by other members of the society against the violator. Prescriptive norms establish how people ought to behave in a specific situation; the preferred way to do things that result in a desired end state. But norms do not "cause" behavior. They are not intrinsically motivational.[22] They serve as a reference system for people to be able to gauge the expected results of their activity. Norms provide a way to manage unpredictability by setting down the rules that people will follow in a given social situation. Everyone knows what to expect and can plan their actions accordingly to ensure the expected result. Norms can be role specific. In the case of political legitimacy, the norms expected of a leader can prescribe what behaviors are acceptable as well as what types of directives and laws are likely to be accepted. Norms are also the source of laws. When a social norm is considered so important that society demands sanctions for its violation, the norm is turned into a law.

Another source of legitimacy is societies' laws. Legitimacy is gained through adherence to the law that is accepted by the population. This can be tricky. There are a number of different sources of law. There is law based on religious beliefs, natural law that is considered the basis of human rights, and positive or rational law. This can make determining which type of law a population accepts difficult, but doing so is critical to isolating which type of legitimacy a population will find acceptable. Since norms are the source of laws looking to the important social norms may help.

A third source of legitimacy is consent of the people. In many ways consent represents a direct link to legitimacy. People consent to the rule of a leader. Without this consent the leader must use coercion to maintain power. The consent of the people involves an implicit duty to obey the government; to recognize its right to rule. Rights, by their nature, involved an agreement of what is owed by one person to another. A single person living on a desert island has no need for rights since he has no one to enforce them on. They distinguish what is due to each person based on their situation and there place in the structure of society. In almost all systems the ruler has the right to use violence to enforce the laws of the community. In most systems the people have the right to expect certain goods, services, and protections. This unwritten agreement forms the basis of consent. Yet even consent is not self-contained. A person chooses to provide or offer consent based on something else. Legitimate consent is the result of a decisional process that compares whether the actions of the rulers comport with what the person believes the ruler should be doing: how a ruler should behave. Using coercion to gain compliance is not consent.

All three sources of legitimacy lack a specific characteristic; none of them are internal motivators. Legitimacy is an internal motivator[23]. Norms, laws, and consent are not internal motivators because they depend on a comparison of external factors against an internal benchmark. That internal benchmark is the reason for initiating actions to obey or disobey. Since legitimacy is based on internal motivation we must look elsewhere for the source of that internal benchmark. When we examine the three sources of legitimacy we find that each has a common thread: a foundation upon which each rests. That foundation is the values of the people. A shared value system is the basis of the law. For the law to be willingly obeyed

it must conform to the fundamental values of the society. Norms amount to activities that are in concert with, or even represent, society's values. "Norms also may be internalized when individuals come to value the behavior specified by a norm for its own sake: that is, they follow social norms because they want to. When seen in this way, the concept of internalized norms is consistent with the term 'values' as used by others."[24] A government must adhere to the values and norms of the society if it expects to have the population consent to their rule. Values are motivational.[25] The key to understanding what system of government a population will accept as legitimate is to understand a society's values.

Values and Weber ideas on Legitimacy

The connection between values and political legitimacy has been noted before. Some commentators argued values are the only way to have a self-regulatory system – one that does not require a constant injection of coercion.[26] In reviewing Weber's writings on legitimacy Rodney Barker identified the connection.[27] Weber is known for his three ideal types of legitimate authority associated with political entities.[28] In what he thought was a possible fourth type of political legitimacy, Weber described "the belief in the absolute validity of the order as the expression of ultimate values of an ethical, aesthetic, or of any other type.[29]" Barker termed this the legitimacy of substantive policy and values; where the government created policies that matched the values of the people. Barker thought the reason substantive values and policy were not described as a fourth type was because it extended beyond the political field:

It "is one of the most powerful justifications of obedience, when people believe [in] the regime which they support … One explanation for what appears to initially to be an inconsistency … might be that thought the authority of substantive policies or values is a powerful form of legitimacy, it is not a species of political or state legitimacy, for in instances where it can be observed, the state is incidental, the mere bearer or medium for the expression or pursuit of goals or values which have origin elsewhere.[30]" Because of this the state could not claim to control this form of legitimacy. The state could only borrow the legitimacy provided by the value or ideal.

Barker's comments highlight another concept: that legitimacy is a broad term that has to be narrowed appropriately in order to examine how it applies to political systems. The societal morals and values are the larger set of overarching societal legitimacy of which political legitimacy is only a subset that applies to a specific part of the society. This is part of the reason that the idea of legitimacy is found in so many social sciences.

Values

Before a closer look at what potential correlations may exist between values and legitimacy we must define values. Milton Rokeach established a basic definition: "A *value* is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence."(emphasis in original)[31] Inherent in the definition is the recognition that values were more than just mere beliefs; they were *enduring* beliefs.[32] While beliefs and attitudes are subject to change via persuasion values are not easily surrendered. Also unlike a simple belief they are not altered by the situation. They are trans-situational[33]. For example, if you value your personal autonomy there is perhaps no situation where you will willingly give it up. In fact you may be willing to fight and die to protect your autonomy. Values are a belief about a desirable end state or mode of behavior. "Values delimit the parameters for behaviors considered acceptable (or just)…"[34] In this way they orient people to the world in which they live. They are motivational. Values provide a preferred mode of conduct. In a given situation values provide the impotence for how to act as well as the motivation to act.[35] Because they offer a preferred mode of conduct or outcome they are hierarchical, with certain values being more important to us than others.[36]

Discussion – Values relationship to Legitimacy

Values provide the basis for norms, laws, and consent. Norms describe how one should act in society[37]. Norms are the desired method of activity. Common values provide the basis for how people will react. If you want to obtain an apple from a vendor who has a number of shoppers waiting or his attention then you can wait in line to purchase it or you can jump to the front of the line and buy it. Social norms would dictate that the preferred method is to enter the queue and wait your turn. If you jump in front of everyone else you are violating the social norm and most likely will raise the ire of the other customers and potentially not to get waited on by the vendor. Of course you could also steal the apple. If you are seen by others stealing the apple you have violated another social norm and will probably be shunned and not trusted. In this case, the norm is so important to society that they have turned it into a law and you may end up paying more for the apple than had you simply purchased it. In the case of stealing the apple the source of the norm and the law was a value for individual's rights to their own property. Norms represent, and laws enforce, the desired method or "specific mode of conduct" for obtaining an apple at a busy shop. They represent the operationalization of a given value.

As mentioned earlier consent is the result of a decisional process. That decision can be based on rational self-interest or emotional desire. It can be based on considering all those factors outside of personal desires, weighed with cold calculating rationality, or it can be based on internal feelings on the matter. In other words, the decision could be based on external forces or internal motivations. Here a direct corollary can be drawn to the distinction between coercion and legitimacy. When external factors come to bear, the gain of bribery or avoiding the detriments of punishment, then the decision is based on external forces. When a person chooses to offer consent because they believe it is the right thing to do, it is internal motivation that is driving the decision. Compliance can be the result of internal or external factors. Only internally motivated compliance is consent. Only internally motivated compliance can be associated with legitimacy.

Discussion - The Connections between Legitimacy and Values

Legitimacy it is the result of internal motivation. What is the source of the motivation? Norms and laws, although related, cannot be the source since they are not motivational. Values, however, are motivational. [38] Values cause people to act based on their relationship to needs. Values represent the operationalization of needs.[39] In the case of political legitimacy consent represents the "desired end state" that has its ultimate source in the values of the people. It is here that the connection between legitimacy and values becomes clear. Values and legitimacy have common features. Both are beliefs held by the people. Both have the moral "oughtness" characteristic. While it is unlikely that values constitute the entire "belief" Weber was referring to, it is probable that values constitute a significant component.

Other Methods of Legitimatizing a Political Entity

Before moving on to a general discussion it is important to look at another way a political entity can be legitimized - through its procedures. The procedures governments use to make decisions has long been recognized as a legitimizing force.[40] However procedure may not outweigh values. In a study conducted on procedural and institutional values a group of individuals were asked their opinions on legalizing physician-assisted suicide (PAS) prior to a U.S. Supreme Court ruling.[41] Pre-decisional moral beliefs predicted post decisional attitudes about the fairness of process and its general legitimacy.

"Taken together, a perceived obligation and duty to obey legitimate authorities does not lead people to check their moral and religious beliefs at the door. Instead, people use their moral and religious beliefs as one way to judge whether to comply with and accept authorities' decisions. People also used their moral beliefs – but not their religious beliefs – as a litmus test of legitimacy of the Supreme Court."[42]

Moral values were used as the benchmark for determining whether a procedure and its outcome were legitimate as well as whether the institution itself is legitimate.

Legitimacy is Not Simply Public Relations

Max Weber created a problem for many people when he defined legitimacy as a belief. While a belief is an internal motivator a beliefs can be transitory. One can believe in one thing one moment and another thing the next. Beliefs are subject to change based on the influence of others. A powerful speaker or a well-crafted public relations campaign can change what people believe about a topic. This creates the false impression that all a government has to do to be legitimate is to convince its people to believe that it is legitimate. As David Beetham put it in *The Legitimation of Power* when describing the problem created by defining legitimacy as a simple belief: "[t]aken to their logical conclusion, such definitions would imply that the reason for the collapse of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe in 1989 lay in a deficiency of public relations, rather than anything actually wrong with the system of rule itself."[43] While this statement may just be an *ad absurdum* argument for the proposition the idea that legitimacy can be created is alive and well. It is the foundation of America's nation building and democratization efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.[44] Beliefs can be changed easily. Beliefs vary with the situation. Values are beliefs but they are enduring beliefs. They can remain engrained in a culture for centuries[45]. Values are a component of belief that forms the basis of Weber's "legitimitätsglaube". Barker recognized this when he identified values as a fourth form of Weberian legitimacy.

Value Systems

 "A *value system* is an enduring organization of beliefs concerning preferable modes of conduct or end-states of existence along a continuum of relative importance."[46] A value system is a ranking of values in order of importance. To be able to rank a series of values along a continuum of relative importance, or some hierarchical structure, you must have a list of values to work with. Schwartz and Bilsky have provided that list. Through numerous cross-cultural studies they have demonstrated that there are ten basic universal human values[47]: 1) Hedonism – self-centered sensual gratification; 2) Power – status and prestige, control of people and resources; 3) Achievement – competitive personal success; 4) Stimulation – encourage risk taking and adventure; 5) Self-Direction – autonomous thought and action; 6) Universalism – tolerance and concern for the welfare of all others; 7) Benevolence – preserve and enhance the welfare of those whom one is in frequent personal contact; 8) Conformity – self-restraint and subordination of one's own inclinations to the expectations of others; 9) Tradition – traditional and religious activities; and 10) Security – stability, safety, and harmony of society, relationships, and self.[48] To create value systems individuals and groups of individuals arrange these values in rank order of relative importance.[49] Value systems act as "principles and rules to help one choose between alternatives, resolve conflicts, and make decisions."[50] Although these values are individually distinguishable certain values have a complementary nature. For example Hedonism and Self-Direction are both centered on the desires of the individual above those of others where Conformity and Tradition tend to place the group over the individual[51]. Individuals and groups will tend to place certain complementary values at the top of their value system with all other values in a relatively lower status. It allows them to solve ethical dilemmas. So while these ten values are universal, individuals, groups, and even societies will place greater import on certain values over other values.[52] As one set of values becomes more important others, by default, must become less so.[53] That ranking will help determine what key values a society expects its institutions to uphold[54].

Research on Group Values and Political Preference

Researchers from different disciplines have been looking at different value systems and their relation to

political ideologies. Geert Hofstede, a social psychologist studying cross-cultural differences in the workplace, was one of the first researchers in recent times to popularize the idea of discernible cultural value systems at the national level. Hofstede used data collected through questionnaires answered by employees of IBM from 40 different countries in the late 1960's and again in the early 1970's.[55] Hofstede's research advocates five bi-polar value dimensions.[56] While he was not studying the relationship between different cultures and political preference he did notice a correlation between certain value dimensions and a culture's preference for a specific governmental ideology. Building off his work on individual values Shalom Schwartz, another social psychologist, has identified nine collective values that can be arranged into a circular fashion with values that opposing values across the center of the circle from each other.[57] Coming at the problem from a different direction Ronal Inglehart, a political scientist, also noticed a correlation between a group's political leanings and their values. And while each of these researchers attacked the problem from a somewhat different angel, all noticed that a particular value dimensions seems to have the most direct influence on how people perceive political legitimacy. And while each of the three researchers use difference names for their dimensions a common theme becomes apparent when looking at what values influence system level political ideologies. That theme is the connection between values that idealize the group at the expense of the individual and values that champion the individual over the group.

Hofstede's Individualism vs. Collectivism (I-C) Dimension

Hofstede's analysis of the data from the IBM studies revealed four cross-cultural dimensions that he dubbed Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Masculinity, and Individualism-Collectivism (I-C).[58] Hofstede saw these as values that had been programmed into the individual primarily at a young age.[59] People were programmed with both individual and cultural values. Each represented a continuum of preference. For example, in the case of the I-C dimension, a person could be more individualistic (and therefore less collectivist) or more collectivist (and hence less individualist), or be somewhere in the middle. Individualism represented a single cultural value that had either a positive or negative connotation. These dimensions were associated with different norms, language, behavior, and politics and ideas.[60] According to Hofstede's I-C dimension, in a collectivist society identity was the basis of their social system which emphasized belonging to and identifying with the group. Members of collectivist cultures believe that people are born into groups (their in-group) and that group protects them in exchange for their loyalty; they have a "we" consciousness; members of the in-group are treated differently than non-members (the out-group); private life is dictated by the group; and breaking social norms leads to shame and loss of face for both the individual and the group.[61] In the workplace collectivists do not encourage occupational mobility; in-group employees will pursue in-group interests particularly in hiring decisions and treatment of customers; and maintaining relationships is more important than accomplishing tasks.[62] In the area of politics collectivists opinions were predetermined by the group; collective interests prevail over individual interests; laws and rights differ according to in-group/out-group status; patriotism is the ideal; and ideologies of equality prevail over ideologies of individual freedom.[63] In Hofstede's individualistic cultures in norms and families there is an "I" consciousness; identity is an individual matter, often the more individualistic the better; the same values and standards should apply to everyone (no in-group/out-group distinction); and violations of social norms leads to individual guilt and loss of self-respect and are not group shame.[64] In the workplace individualists society's occupational mobility is higher; the individual pursues their own interests, treats other employees based on their skills and abilities, and makes hiring decisions based on each prospects individual resume.[65] In the realm of politics individualist societies tend to believe that everyone has a right to their own opinion and privacy; friends are chosen individually; and ideologies of individual freedoms prevail when in conflict with ideologies of equality, and autonomy is the ideal.[66] Hofstede related the "I" consciousness to political

systems that championed human rights and individual freedoms.[67]

Inglehart's Dimensions

As I mentioned in the introduction Roland Inglehart identified a connection between changing values and changing political ideologies. His first work was based on changes in European values in the period after WWII.[68] In his work *The Silent Revolution in Europe: Intergenerational change in Post-Industrial Societies* Inglehart noted that younger people tended not to have values centered on material wealth. They were more interested in personal experience and individual rights then they were with ensuring that they had food and shelter. Inglehart dubbed the values that the younger generation had adopted as "postmaterialistic" values.[69]

Inglehart continued to work on the idea that shifting values would result in shifting political ideologies with both the European Value Survey and the World Value Survey collecting data and publishing[70]. With more research he refined his postmaterialistic values into two value, bi-polar dimensions. The first of these two bi-polar values is Traditional versus Secular-Rational value.[71] Traditional values center on the importance of religion in life, nationalism, deference to authority and respect for parents and other authority figures. Secular-Rational Values are the polar opposite and represent secular beliefs and individual ideals. The second dimension is Survival versus Self-Expression values.[72] Survival values emphasize economic and physical security and tends to distrust members of any outgroup. It is intolerant of any social change and distrusts homosexuals and foreigners. Self–Expression values idealized autonomy and are tolerant of homosexuals, foreigners, and any other traditional outgroup. Using these criteria and data from the World Value Survey Inglehart, along with Christian Welzel were able to produce two-dimensional maps of world cultures by country.[73] Groupings based on religious history, English speaking nations, economic wealth, level of industrialization, and other factors could all be easily recognized using one or both of these dimensions.

In 2005 Welzel and Inglehart published *Modernization, Culture Change, and Democratization: The Human Development Sequence* which returned to the question of values and political preference[74]. The basic thesis was that there is a general sequence that all societies pass through as they industrialize and their economic wealth grows becoming more disbursed amongst the population. Once this occurs the values of the generations that experience this economic growth and stability begin to change. They begin to idealize self-expression values. With this shift comes a push for effective democracy, the only form of government capable giving them a real voice in political decisions and thereby satisfying the motivational drives associate with these values. It is a three-step process: first economic expansion, then a shift in values, followed by a demand for freedom and democracy. Welzel and Inglehart posited that during the process of economic growth people's values shifted initially from Traditional to Secular-Rational. This fueled further economic growth and social complexity along with an eventual expansion of suffrage but it was not enough to create the conditions for a full democracy. It would not be until the second stage where Survival values that supported group needs over individual desires gave way to Self-Expression values that were founded in autonomy that the population finally demanded the last stage in the process. Only then would they demand their civil rights and ultimately liberal democracy.

Schwartz's Dimensions

Another researcher to find a connection between values and political preference was Shalom Schwartz. Most well known for his Theory of Universal Human Values and the Schwartz Value Survey he has recently expanded his research into collective value systems.[75] Schwartz had identified ten universal values. Applying these to political development he noticed a connection between certain values and democratization.[76] Schwartz continued his work on values by examining collective value sets and

systems. He identified seven collective values that are cross-cultural.[77] These seven could be organized into three continuums; Autonomy versus Embeddedness, Egalitarianism versus Hierarchy, and Harmony versus Mastery. The two dimensions that had the strongest connection with political preference particularly where it came to democratization were Autonomy and Egalitarianism.[78]

The Autonomy/Embeddedness dimension is similar to Hofstede's IC dimension and overlaps with Inglehart's Secular-Rational values.[79] In cultures that are autonomous people express "their own preferences, feelings, ideas, and abilities, and find meaning in their own uniqueness."[80] In contrast in countries which emphasis Embeddedness "[m]eaning in life comes largely through social relationships, through identifying with the group, participating in its shared way of life, and striving towards its shared goals."[81] Schwartz's Egalitarianism/Hierarchy dimension is similar to Hofsteade's Power Distance dimension.[82] People in Egalitarian cultures seek to "recognize one another as moral equals" where Hierarchical cultures accept inequity and an unequal distribution of power and property as desirable and "ascribe roles to insure responsible, productive behavior."[83] Schwartz's Egalitarianism/Hierarchy dimension also overlaps with Inglehart's secular/rational values but to a much lesser amount.[84] It appears that Inglehart's values are a combination of the both Hofstede's and Schwartz's dimensions.

In his analysis of the connection between his cultural values and political preferences Scwhartz also noted a connection between Autonomy/Embeddedness and Egalitarianism/Hierarchy and political preference. Using Freedom House statistics he noted a high correlation between a country's civil liberties and autonomy and egalitarianism.[85] This is to be expected. But what Schwartz also found was a causal relationship between socioeconomic development, values, and democratization.[86] Using a different value set Scwhartz was able to confirm Welzel and Inglehart's proposition that socioeconomic development led to a change in values that resulted in a greater likelihood of democratization.[87] It also helped disproved the idea that democratic institutions created values that supported liberal values. "The current analysis further demonstrates that the prior level of democracy has no impact on cultural values, once development is controlled."[88] Socioeconomic development has an effect on values but the existence of democratic institutions does not.[89] Simply overlying a democratic government over a society that valued Hierarchy and Embeddedness would not lead to a change in values towards ones that better supported democratic institutions.

Discussion - Value Systems and Political Legitimacy

The works of the three researchers identify a connection between value systems and political systems. Broadly speaking, from a political perspective, there are two types of value systems: individual and communal. In communal value systems a common identity is the most important thing. They have a "we" consciousness; private life was the dictated by the organization; friends are determined by social status; opinions are predetermined by what is best for the group and there is a clear difference between how members of the group (the in-group) and people outside of the in-group are treated. In individualistic cultures there is an "I" consciousness; identity is an individual matter, often the more individualistic the better; emphasis is on individual achievement; everyone has a right to their own opinion and privacy; friends are chosen individually; and all people are treated the same.[90]

These value systems can be associated with democratic or non-democratic governments. [91] Societies with individualistic value systems prefer democratic governance systems. In fact democracies are built on the idea that the government gains its power to rule directly from the individuals who make up the citizenry.[92] The rights of each person are to be upheld over collective rights. This idea is reversed in societies with communal value systems. The individual's desires are subordinate to the community's needs. Common identity, based on ethnic or tribal affiliation, religion, or nationalistic ideology are central to these societies. Personal identity within the group defines that person's privileges from, and obligations

to, the group. These societies tend toward non-democratic systems.

Defining Political Ideologies

The democratic/non-democratic distinction does not always fit with reality. In modern times democracy is most closely related with the right to vote and the election of governments. However, while this idea is well entrenched an elected government may not adhere to what many people assume are democratic principles. Sometimes, even where elections are not skewed by limits on parties or candidates people can and do vote for candidates and political parties that have restrictive agendas.[93] Hamas, a decidedly undemocratic organization, famously won the elections in Gaza and the West Bank much to the disillusionment of the west[94]. Uhuru Kenyatta, who won the recent Kenyan presidential election, is apparently no champion of individual freedoms and is wanted by the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity.[95] What we learn from these situations is that there are two different flavors of democracy. There is the process democracy that is "nothing more than an agreement among the citizens that the majority vote will carry the issue or that one branch of government will not reach too far into the functions of another branch."[96] In contrast to the process democracy are principle democracies which are associated with liberal democracies.[97] These are based on "the ideas that the individual is of major importance in the society, that each individual is basically equal to all other individuals, and that each has certain inalienable rights such as life and liberty."[98] Electoral results are likely to reflect the fact that people do not value individualistic ideals. If we use the term "democratic" to identify only political systems based on voting it will lead to including many more governments in that category than actually support liberal ideals.[99] Therefore the terms "democratic" and "non-democratic" are not particularly useful in defining ideologies. This reality is reflected in the multiple systems used to measure democracy. [100] In their place I will broadly categorize political ideologies as either *rights-based* for those systems that are funded on individualistic values, or *duty-based* for those systems that are built on communal values. Rights based ideologies are those that believe that the individual is the source, or *locus of legitimacy*. Individuals have rights that they conditionally grant to the government. Individuals in duty-based societies owe an obligation to the group. That group can be ethnic, religious, or state ideologically based. Duties-based ideologies see the group as the true source of political legitimacy.

Discussion - Political Legitimacy Continuum

To gain legitimacy "[o]rganizations seek to establish congruence between the social values associated or implied by their activities and the norms of acceptable behavior in the larger social system of which they are a part."[101] The internal motivation starts with a category of human needs that are then related to a group of individual values. Depending on the values a majority of the community find most important a collective value system is created. These collective value systems form the basis of the norms, laws and consent that are the source of the societies preferred political legitimacy category. If we start with value systems a legitimacy continuum can be created that moves from communal legitimacy value based legitimacy to individualistic value based legitimacy. Communal value based legitimacy tend toward communitarian political ideologies where individualistic value based legitimacy prefer liberal ideologies. These ideologies support different government structures. Communitarian ideologies form the foundation of monarchies, theocracies, and socialist systems. Liberal ideologies support democratic systems. The correlation is displayed in the figure that follows.

Individual Needs and Values				
Need Category	Security	Relatedness	Self-Esteem	Self-Fulfillment
Individual Values	*Achievement Power*	*Security Conformity Tradition*	*Hedonism Stimulation Self-Direction*	*Universalism Benevolence*
Collective Values				
Schwartz **Inglehart/Welzel**	Embeddedness Traditional/Survival		Autonomy Secular-Rational/Self-Expression	
Hofstede et al	Collectivism		Individualism	
Political Components				
Legitimacy Category	Communal		Individualistic	
Ideology	Duties-Based		Rights-Based	
Government	Monarchy, Theocracy, Socialist		Social Democratic, Liberal Democratic	

The two legitimacy categories require additional definition. Both these legitimacies attach at the systems level. *Communal legitimacy* can be defined as all political legitimacies where the source of legitimacy is duty owed to the greater good of a discrete, identifiable group. This group is usually a tribe, ethnic, or other historical or ideologically based group. It is legitimacy that place importance on the social or cultural group first. Communal legitimacy is closely related to the popular idea of communitarianism. The next most important factor is where the individual fits into that social or cultural group. Individualistic legitimacy takes an alternative view. It places the individual first and while the individual's place in the group is still important forms a social standpoint it is not (theoretically) important from a political one. *Individualistic legitimacy* can be defined as all forms of political legitimacy that sees the source of political legitimacy as the individual. It is usually associated with European social contract theory and assumes that all forms of political legitimacy begin with the individual.[102]

Communal legitimacy can be correlated with Weber's traditional legitimacy. The political systems are similar. Weber's traditional legitimacy is associated with monarchies and theocracies. It is harder to make a similar correlation between the legal-rational and individualistic legitimacies. The bureaucratic organizations described by Weber can be found in almost any large political system. Weber's legitimacies are idealized types. Communal and individualistic legitimacy categories are based on real world systems and founded in human nature. They are therefore less distinct and often both categories can be found in different segments of the same society or even in the same government. It is also possible to find a mixture of both ideals in a political system (i.e. social democracy) but because of the hierarchical nature of value systems, one value type will generally trump the other in a dispute over what is more important, the individual or the group[103].

General Discussion

This paper lays the initial foundation identifying how values affect political preference. It established a different way of looking at political legitimacy. There are real world consequences to aligning societal values with political legitimacy, particularly in the realm of democratization and exporting democracy. If political legitimacy is a mere belief then a population can be convinced to be democratized by installing democratic institutions combined with a public relations campaign. If it was this easy then the experiments conducted in Iraq and Afghanistan should have resulted in liberal democracies. That has not been the case. If, on the other hand, legitimacy is founded in the values of the people and those values cannot be changed overnight then what we are seeing, particularly in Afghanistan, makes much more sense. The population's values based tribal affiliations and duties owed to the group do not comport with democracy and cannot be easily changed. The consequences of political legitimacy being tied to the population's values means that changing systems of government is not as simple as changing the regime in power and holding elections. The entire value system must change. That takes much more time and may not be accomplished by external forces. It also offers an explanation for why people sometimes vote for dictators. If the dictator is espousing a philosophy built on identity then he may be seen as more in line with the population's values. Liberal candidates championing equity amongst the various groups and rights may not be able to find an audience. These values may be important, just not as important as those associated with group identity. Until the values change, true democracy is unlikely to take hold.

Conclusion

This paper has proposed an alternative way of looking at political legitimacy. It offers a mechanism not based in a political philosophy built to rationalize a system that has come into existence. Rationality offers only part of the solution and none of the motivation. This paper offers a way of looking at political legitimacy and political systems built on human nature. It starts with human values. Building on these values it explains the connection between values and the three sources of political legitimacy; norms, laws, and consent. At the system level, this means that political systems are aligned with the values of the population. It means that the proper way to delineate political legitimacy is in accordance with the population's values. Research on values and political legitimacy has established a connection between individualistic and communal values and political legitimacy. Based on this distinction I create two general categories, or locus, of legitimacy; duties-based and rights-based legitimacies. This different way of looking at legitimacy offers an alternative to the idea that political legitimacy is more malleable than it truly is.

It also offers the practitioner some food for thought. If political legitimacy is the key to countering an insurgency and it is based on values, then determining the values of the target population must be one of the first things considered. Further, the methods described in the Counterinsurgency manual to convince the public that the government is legitimate are useless. Lines of effort centered on good governance or providing services to the public will have little influence on whether the population sees the government as legitimate. They may be what any government is expected to provide, but it will more important to ensure that the services provided granted in accordance with local values. Who should get them first? What types of services should be provided? Nor will simply offering a new system change their value structures. Values are not easily changed and may take generation before any significant change occurs. If the ideas in this paper are accurate it may be wise to consider less ambitious goals when conducting counterinsurgency operations.

End Notes

[1] This paper can only explore the first part of this idea: the connection between legitimacy and values. If we deconstruct values then we find needs at their core. This connection, and its ramification for democratization, must be left to another paper.

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[60] *Ibid.* pp. 89-134

[61] *Ibid.* Table 4.2, p. 113

[62] *Ibid.* Table 4.4, p. 124

[63] *Ibid.* Table 4.5, p. 130

[64] *Ibid.* Table 4.2, p. 113

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[66] Ibid. Table 4.5, p. 130

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