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CONTENTS

"Documents, Please": Advances in Social Protection and Birth Certification in the Developing World — *Wendy Hunter* and *Robert Brill* — 191

Appropriation and Subversion: Precommunist Literacy, Communist Party Saturation, and Postcommunist Democratic Outcomes — *Tomila V. Lankina*, *Alexander Libman*, and *Anastassia Obydenkova* — 229

Civilian Victimization and the Politics of Information in the Kurdish Conflict in Turkey — *Ceren Belge* — 275

Preventing Civil War: How the Potential for International Intervention Can Deter Conflict Onset — *David E. Cunningham* — 307

Honor and War: Southern US Presidents and the Effects of Concern for Reputation — *Allan Dafoe* and *Devin Caughey* — 341

The Contributors — ii

Abstracts — iv

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ABSTRACTS

"Documents, Please"

advances in social protection and birth certification in the developing world

By WENDY HUNTER and ROBERT BRILL

A birth certificate is essential to exercising citizenship, yet vast numbers of poor people in developing countries have no official record of their existence. Few academic studies analyze the conditions under which governments come to document and certify births routinely, and those that do leave much to be explained, including why nontotalitarian governments at low to middle levels of economic development come to prioritize birth registration. This article draws attention to the impetus that welfare-building initiatives give to identity documentation. The empirical focus is on contemporary Latin America, where extensions in institutionalized social protection since the 1990s have increased the demand for and supply of birth registration, raising the life chances of the poor and building state infrastructure in the process. The authors' argument promises to have broader applicability as welfare states form in other developing regions.

Appropriation and Subversion

precommunist literacy, communist party saturation, and postcommunist democratic outcomes

By TOMILA V. LANKINA, ALEXANDER LIBMAN, and ANASTASSIA OBYDENKOVA

Twenty-five years after the collapse of communism in Europe, few scholars disagree that the past continues to shape the democratic trajectories of postcommunist states. Precommunist education has featured prominently in this literature's bundle of "good" legacies because it ostensibly helped foster resistance to communism. The authors propose a different causal mechanism—appropriation and subversion—that challenges the linearity of the above assumptions by analyzing the effects of precommunist literacy on patterns of Communist Party recruitment in Russia's regions. Rather than regarding precommunist education as a source of latent resistance to communism, the authors highlight the Leninist regime's successful appropriation of the more literate strata of the precommunist orders, in the process subverting the past democratic edge of the hitherto comparatively more developed areas. The linear regression analysis of author-assembled statistics from the first Russian imperial census of 1897 supports prior research: precommunist literacy has a strong positive association with postcommunist democratic outcomes. Nevertheless, in pursuing causal mediation analysis, the authors find, in addition, that the above effect is mediated by Communist Party saturation in Russia's regions. Party functionaries were likely to be drawn from areas that had been comparatively more literate in tsarist times, and party saturation in turn had a dampening effect on the otherwise positive effects of precommunist education on postcommunist democracy.

Civilian Victimization and the Politics of Information in the Kurdish Conflict in Turkey

By CEREN BELGE

During the 1990s, thousands of Kurdish settlements in Eastern Turkey were forcibly evacuated, resulting in the displacement of more than one million Kurdish villagers. This article examines why some villages survived while the populations of others were forcibly displaced. It also addresses the broader question of why particular groups of civilians become more vulnerable to coercion in the course of armed conflict, and how their vulnerability is shaped by the extent and quality of information that states possess about population groups, particularly minorities deemed dangerous to the regime. The author argues that state practices to categorize the identity of minority groups and to collect information about their behavior and allegiances are integral to the dynamics of violence. Such practices make certain categories of citizens more vulnerable to victimization and often introduce biases into the information gathered. Focusing

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on Turkey's population census, elections, and the use of informants embedded in communities, the author examines information-gathering practices from the national to the local level. The author uses original data on displacement, Kurdish insurgent violence, and election results, as well as interviews with displaced persons and progovernment militia members, to challenge the view that civilian victimization in counterinsurgency wars stems primarily from states' inability to distinguish civilians from insurgents.

Preventing Civil War

how the potential for international intervention can deter conflict onset

By DAVID E. CUNNINGHAM

Civil wars occur in some countries at some times and not in other countries at other times. This article examines how the potential for large-scale external intervention can prevent civil wars. The author argues that intervention by external states in civil war can be so overwhelming that it reduces one side's probability of victory to essentially zero. When dissidents expect this type of intervention on the side of government, they anticipate no chance of achieving success through violence and do not initiate civil wars. When governments anticipate this type of intervention on their behalf, they feel protected from internal threat and are less constrained in their dealings with their populations. This repression increases grievances, leading dissidents to engage in strategies of dissent other than civil war. The author tests three implications of this argument—that states in more hierarchical relationships will experience civil war at lower rates, be more repressive, and experience other forms of dissent at higher rates—and finds strong support for it.

Honor and War

southern us presidents and the effects of concern for reputation

By ALLAN DAFOE and DEVIN CAUGHEY

Reputation has long been considered central to international relations, but unobservability, strategic selection, and endogeneity have handicapped quantitative research. A rare source of haphazard variation in the cultural origins of leaders—the fact that one-third of US presidents were raised in the American South, a well-studied example of a culture of honor—provides an opportunity to identify the effects of heightened concern for reputation for resolve. A formal theory that yields several testable predictions while accounting for unobserved selection into disputes is offered. The theory is illustrated through a comparison of presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson and systematically tested using matching, permutation inference, and the nonparametric combination of tests. Interstate conflicts under Southern presidents are shown to be twice as likely to involve uses of force, last on average twice as long, and are three times more likely to end in victory for the United States than disputes under non-Southern presidents. Other characteristics of Southern presidencies do not seem able to account for this pattern of results. The results provide evidence that concern for reputation is an important cause of interstate conflict behavior.

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