Help Wanted?

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The Mixed Record of Foreign Fighters in Domestic Insurgencies

How do so-called transnational insurgents, or foreign fighters, shape domestic struggles? In particular, how do they shape the domestic insurgents' strength? Over the last few years, one of the major policy concerns about conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Pakistan, Russia's North Caucasus region, Somalia, and Syria has been that these states may both attract and breed transnational insurgents, threatening domestic, regional, and international security. In the United States, the Barack Obama administration has predicated its focus on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border precisely on this concern, as did France in its January 2013 intervention in Mali. In the civil war in Syria that began in 2011, both domestic rebels and Western powers have voiced uneasiness about the influence of radical Islamist foreign fighters. Yet despite these policy concerns, little scholarship has explored the ways in which transnational insurgents, once they arrive, influence domestic struggles.

The most basic assumption that existing scholarship makes about "outsiders" is that they strengthen the domestic insurgents. From the perspective of the international community, however, the worry about transnational insurgents is fourfold. First, transnational insurgents, who are nonstate actors voluntarily joining the rebels in an armed struggle outside their own home country, might prolong a civil war by introducing more actors to the theater and complicating attempts at ending the war through intervention or negotiations. In Syria, the presence of radical Islamist groups has made Western states wary of intervening to support the rebels and, reportedly, has created di-

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visions among the rebels that have proved an obstacle to negotiations.[1] Second, many of today's transnational insurgents are Islamists, and there is a worry in Washington and European capitals that these actors are transforming the struggles they are joining. With respect to northern Mali, where the Tuareg separatists in 2012 were joined by al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and other Islamist groups (although they later split ranks), policymakers in both France and the United States have expressed concern that a secular conflict has been transformed into a wider Islamist struggle in the region.[2] A similar misgiving motivated the United States' designation of Chechen insurgent leader Doku Umarov as a "global terrorist" in 2010.[3] Third, if transnational insurgents strengthen the rebels or prolong the war, they may contribute to turning the conflict-ridden state into a failed state or a safe haven and training ground for terrorists, as in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Somalia.[4] Fourth, Western governments worry that, by participating in wars abroad, transnational insurgents gain skills they can put to use back home. According to the view of Britain's MI5 on foreign fighters, "The skills, contacts and status acquired overseas can make these individuals a much greater threat when they return to the UK, even if they have not been tasked directly to carry out an attack on their return."[5]

Both the international community and states fighting insurgencies within their borders are also worried that transnational insurgents strengthen domestic insurgents by bringing along fighters, weapons, and know-how—as in Afghanistan and Iraq.[6] As Peter Bergen and Alec Reynolds note about Iraq in 2005, "The Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, another alumnus of the

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1. Michael R. Gordon and Ben Hubbard, "Qaeda-Linked Group Is Seen Complicating the Drive for Peace in Syria," *New York Times*, October 21, 2013.
2. See, for example, Scott Neuman, "Mali, Algeria Violence Stokes Fear of New Terrorist Haven," National Public Radio, January 17, 2013; and Cheikh Diouara, "French Battle Mali Islamists as Tuareg Problem Looms," Reuters, February 6, 2013.
3. U.S. Department of State Office for the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, "Designation of Caucasus Emirates Leader Doku Umarov," June 23, 2010, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2010/06/143579.htm.
4. Peter Bergen and Alec Reynolds, "Blowback Revisited: Today's Insurgents in Iraq Are Tomorrow's Terrorists," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 2 (November/December 2005), pp. 2–6; Brian Glyn Williams, "Talibanistan: History of a Transnational Terrorist Sanctuary," *Civil Wars*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (March 2008), pp. 40–59; and Stig Jarle Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group, 2005–2012* (London: Hurst, 2013).
5. MI5 Security Service, "Foreign Fighters," https://www.mi5.gov.uk/home/the-threats/terrorism/international-terrorism/international-terrorism-and-the-uk/foreign-fighters.html. See also "FBI Director Worried Americans Fighting in Syria Could Bring Tactics Home," Reuters, August 23, 2013.
6. David Rohde, "Foreign Fighters of Violent Bent Bolster Taliban," *New York Times*, October 19, 2007; and Brian Whitaker and Ewan MacAskill, "Report Attacks 'Myth' of Foreign Fighters," *Guardian*, September 25, 2013.

Afghan war, is perhaps the most effective insurgent commander in the field."[7] From the perspective of domestic insurgents, such added expertise and resources might well be welcome, but as the situation in Syria shows, the rebels might also be skeptical of the influence of foreign "helpers," to the point of causing divisions and violent confrontations among actors who are ostensibly fighting on the same side.[8] Indeed, it is not a given that transnational insurgents strengthen domestic insurgent movements.

In this study, I explore how transnational insurgents affect a domestic insurgent movement's strength, which is captured by its capacity to effectively muster coercive force, mobilize supporters, and organize cohesive collective action.[9] A movement unable to mobilize and control resources, unable to mobilize supporters, and unable to maintain organizational cohesion is a relatively weak movement. There are many reasons to care about whether transnational insurgents shape a movement's strength. A growing body of research on intrastate conflicts has shown that organizational cohesion (or lack thereof, as manifest in a fragmented movement) shapes violence in the struggle against the state, violence against civilians, and violence among factions within the movement or group.[10] Organizational cohesion and insurgent strength in general also affect war duration, mediation efforts, and negotiation initiatives and conflict outcomes.[11]

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7. Bergen and Reynolds, "Blowback Revisited," p. 4.

8. Ben Hubbard, "Fighting between Rebels Intensifies over a Strategic Town in Syria," *New York Times*, October 3, 2013.

9. David E. Cunningham, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Idean Salehyan, "It Takes Two: A Dyadic Analysis of Civil War Duration and Outcome," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 53, No. 4 (August 2009), pp. 570–597.

10. See, for example, Mia M. Bloom, "Palestinian Suicide Bombing: Public Support, Market Share, and Outbidding," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 119, No. 1 (Spring 2004), pp. 61–88; Paul D. Kenny, "Structural Integrity and Cohesion in Armed Organizations: Evidence from Protracted Conflicts in Ireland and Burma," *International Studies Review*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (December 2010), pp. 533–555; Adria Lawrence, "Triggering Nationalist Violence: Competition and Conflict in Uprisings against Colonial Rule," *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (Fall 2010), pp. 88–122; Hanne Fjelde and Desirée Nilsson, "Rebels against Rebels: Explaining Violence between Rebel Groups," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 56, No. 4 (August 2012), pp. 604–628; Kristin M. Bakke, Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, and Lee J.M. Seymour, "A Plague of Initials: Fragmentation, Cohesion, and Infighting in Civil Wars," *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (June 2012), pp. 265–283; Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, Kristin M. Bakke, and Lee J.M. Seymour, "Shirts Today, Skins Tomorrow: Dual Contests and the Effects of Fragmentation in Self-Determination Conflicts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (February 2012), pp. 67–93; and Michael Findley and Peter J. Rudloff, "Combatant Fragmentation and the Dynamics of Civil War," *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (October 2012), pp. 879–901.

11. See, for example, Wendy Pearlman, "Spoiling Inside and Out: Internal Political Contestation and the Middle East Peace Process," *International Security*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (Winter 2008/2009), pp. 79–109; Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, "It Takes Two"; Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, "Divide and Conquer or Divide and Concede: How Do States Respond to Internally Divided Separatists?" *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 105, No. 2 (May 2011), pp. 275–297; Govinda

Although transnational insurgents may strengthen a domestic insurgent movement by contributing resources, fighters, and know-how, they can also weaken the movement by introducing new ideas about what the struggle is about and how it should be fought. Indeed, the entry of new ideas can lead directly to movement divisions if the local resistance leaders withhold their support, as well as difficulty for the movement leaders in garnering public backing. Central to both mobilizing supporters and organizational cohesion is the local population in whose name the movement is fighting. Mobilizing supporters is harder and more costly if the local community does not voluntarily support the insurgents, and organizational cohesion may suffer if there are cleavages in the local population the movement claims to represent. Important here, I argue, is to consider how the influence of transnational insurgents comes to be accepted or resisted by the local population, in turn shaping the movement's strength. Key to fostering acceptance for foreign ideas is local resistance leaders' willingness and ability to graft or prune these ideas to resonate within the local context. If such resonance does not occur, the transnational insurgents' influence is likely to cause local resistance.

The article proceeds as follows. First, I define transnational insurgents and situate the study within existing research on transnationalism. Second, I develop the logic of my argument. Given the paucity of research on the domestic impact of transnational insurgents, I draw on scholarship on norm diffusion, social movements, and civil wars. Third, I turn to the study's research design, paying close attention to observable implications. In the fourth section, I examine the argument in the context of the Chechen wars, using process tracing. I conclude by considering implications for policy and theory.

Transnational Insurgents

In an article that spearheaded the transnationalism research agenda, Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane define transnational relations as the "contacts, coalitions, and interactions across state boundaries that are not controlled by the central foreign policy organs of governments."[12] Although the long-standing literature on transnationalism has been dominated by research on peaceful

Clayton, "Relative Rebel Strength and the Onset and Outcome of Civil War Mediation," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 50, No. 5 (September 2013), pp. 609–622; David E. Cunningham, "Who Should Be at the Table? Veto Players and Peace Processes in Civil War," *Penn State Journal of Law and International Affairs*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (April 2013), pp. 38–47; and Peter Krause, "The Structure of Success: How the Internal Distribution of Power Drives Armed Group Behavior and National Movement Effectiveness," *International Security*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (Winter 2013/2014), pp. 72–116.
12. Joseph S. Nye and Robert O. Keohane, "Transnational Relations and World Politics: An Introduction," *International Organization*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Summer 1971), p. 331.

activities, including the influence that financial institutions, epistemic communities, international organizations, and activist networks exert on domestic politics,[13] a growing body of research has investigated the cross-border, or transnational, dimensions of violent conflicts. Conflicts in one country may spill over to neighboring states; armed groups and opposition movements may receive money, ideas, weapons, or recruits from abroad; and neighboring states may serve as sanctuaries for rebel groups.[14] That is, the causes or catalysts of intrastate conflicts often rest outside the state. Among these outside influences are transnational insurgents.

Transnational insurgents can join a domestic conflict either as individuals or as part of a contingent. Documenting the whereabouts of transnational insurgents over time, David Malet defines transnational insurgents, or foreign fighters, as nonstate actors who for either ideational or material reasons choose to participate in an intrastate conflict outside their own home country, siding with the challenger to the state.[15] He shows that of 331 intrastate conflicts from

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13. See, for example, Peter M. Haas, "Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination," *International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Winter 1992), pp. 1–35; Matthew Evangelista, "The Paradox of State Strength: Transnational Relations, Domestic Structures, and Security Policy in Russia and the Soviet Union," *International Organization*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (Winter 1995), pp. 1–38; Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Bringing Transnational Relations Back In: Introduction," in Risse-Kappen, ed., *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In: Non-State Actors, Domestic Structures, and International Institutions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 3–36; Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998); Beth A. Simmons and Lisa L. Martin, "Theories and Empirical Studies of International Institutions," *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (Autumn 1998), pp. 729–757; Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Norms, Institutions, and National Identity in Contemporary Europe," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (March 1999), pp. 83–114; and Sidney Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
14. See, for example, Mark R. Beissinger, *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, *All International Politics Is Local: The Diffusion of Conflict, Integration, and Democratization* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002); Paul Collier et al., *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2003); Fiona B. Adamson, "Displacement, Diaspora Mobilization, and Transnational Cycles of Political Violence," in John Tirman, ed., *Maze of Fear: Migration and Security after 9/11* (New York: New Press, 2004), pp. 45–58; Terrence Lyons, "Diasporas and Homeland Conflict," in Miles Kahler and Barbara F. Walter, eds., *Territoriality and Conflict in an Era of Globalization* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 111–132; Idean Salehyan and Kristin Skrede Gleditsch, "Refugees and the Spread of Civil War," *International Organization*, Vol. 60, No. 2 (April 2006), pp. 335–366; Idean Salehyan, "Transnational Rebels: Neighboring States as Sanctuary for Rebel Groups," *World Politics*, Vol. 59, No. 2 (January 2007), pp. 217–242; Hazel Smith, "Diasporas in International Conflict," in Smith and Paul B. Stares, eds., *Diasporas in Conflict: Peace-Makers or Peace-Wreckers?* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2007); Lars-Erik Cederman et al., "Transborder Ethnic Kin and Civil War," *International Organization*, Vol. 67, No. 2 (April 2012), pp. 389–410; and Gin Lei Miller and Emily Hencken Ritter, "Emigrants and the Onset of Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (January 2014), pp. 51–64.
15. David Malet, "The Foreign Fighter Project," http://davidmalet.com/The_Foreign_Fighter _Project.php; David Malet, "Why Foreign Fighters? Historical Perspectives and Solutions," *Orbis*, Vol. 54, No. 1 (Winter 2010), pp. 97–114; and David Malet, *Foreign Fighters: Transnational Identity in Civic Conflicts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

1816 to 2005, transnational insurgents were present in at least 70. Since the Cold War, transnational insurgents have primarily been present in conflicts in Africa, the postcommunist states, Asia, and the Middle East, but historically, transnational insurgents have also participated in conflicts in the Americas (in Colombia and Mexico, for example) and Europe (Greece and Spain). While contemporary policy discussions emphasize Islamist militants, transnational insurgents can also have other ideological or ethnic attachments to the domestic struggle. In the Spanish civil war, for example, the International Brigades consisted of communist volunteers who joined the Republicans in their fight against Gen. Francisco Franco.

   Both the literature on peaceful transnational relations and the more recent literature on its violent counterpart suggest a number of conditions that enable transnational insurgents to join and influence domestic struggles. These include location in a neighborhood of conflict-ridden states,[16] centralization of state power—or the lack thereof,[17] the state's ability to control its territory and borders,[18] the transnational insurgents' (perceived) bonds to the domestic insurgency,[19] the balance of power between the state and the domestic insurgents, and the cohesiveness of the domestic insurgent movement.[20] Research has also begun exploring the origin, rise, and destination of foreign fighters,[21] but few insights exist into how transnational insurgents matter, once they have arrived. That is the focus in this study.

Transnational Insurgents' Effect on Domestic Insurgents' Strength

Perhaps the most basic assumption about transnational insurgents or other outsiders' impact on intrastate struggles is that they bring resources such as

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16. Gleditsch, *All International Politics Is Local*; and Salehyan, "Transnational Rebels."
17. Evangelista, "The Paradox of State Strength"; Risse-Kappen, "Bringing Transnational Relations Back In"; Keck and Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders*; and Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
18. Robert I. Rotberg, ed., *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004); and Paul Staniland, "Defeating Transnational Insurgencies: The Best Offense Is a Good Fence," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Winter 2005/2006), pp. 21–40.
19. Stephen M. Saideman, "Discrimination in International Relations: Analyzing External Support for Ethnic Groups," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (January 2002), pp. 27–50; and Malet, *Foreign Fighters*.
20. Paul Staniland and Sarah Zukerman, "The Effects of Foreign Fighters on Civil Wars: War-Fighting, Ideas, and Recruitment," Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2007.
21. Thomas Hegghammer, "Should I Stay or Should I Go? Explaining Variation in Western Jihadists' Choice between Domestic and Foreign Fighting," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 107, No. 1 (February 2013), pp. 1–15; and Thomas Hegghammer, "The Rise of Muslim Foreign Fighters: Islam and the Globalization of Jihad," *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (Winter 2010/11), pp. 53–94.

fighters, know-how, weapons, and (access to) finance. Indeed, this is often why domestic insurgents recruit outside help.[22] According to MI5, foreign fighters "can help terrorist groups to develop the ability to carry out attacks by linking up with extremist networks in the UK and providing information about potential targets. In addition to English language skills, which can help these groups with media outreach, some foreign fighters may also have other specialist skills (e.g., scientific, IT) that can be useful to overseas terrorist groups."[23] That is, transnational insurgents help what social movement scholars refer to as the domestic movement's "resource mobilization" process.[24] Although resources that improve a movement's ability to wage war are critical in their own right, resources also help a movement overcome the collective action problem by distributing selective incentives.[25] Thus outsiders who bring competence, capacity, connections, and cash presumably strengthen the domestic movement by boosting its coercive capacity, ability to mobilize supporters, and organizational cohesion.[26]

Yet resource mobilization is not the only process that matters for movement strength. Indeed, social movement scholars have long emphasized framing and repertoires of actions, including the introduction of new tactics, as key to successful collective action.[27] Outside actors can influence each of these processes—and, in Chechnya, transnational insurgents did.[28] My argument is

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22. Malet, *Foreign Fighters*. See also Miller and Ritter, "Emigrants and the Onset of Civil War." Although not writing specifically about transnational insurgents, Miller and Ritter argue that the more resources emigrants send back to their home state, the more likely the state is to experience a civil war, as the state leaders underestimate the domestic rebels' strength.

23. MI5 Security Service, "Foreign Fighters."

24. John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 82, No. 6 (May 1977), pp. 1212–1241; and J. Craig Jenkins, "Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements," *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 9 (1983), pp. 527–533.

25. Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965); Samuel L. Popkin, "Political Entrepreneurs and Peasant Movements in Vietnam," in Michael Taylor, ed., *Rationality and Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 9–61; and Mark I. Lichbach, "What Makes Rational Peasants Revolutionary? Dilemma, Paradox, and Irony in Peasant Collective Action," *World Politics*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (April 1994), pp. 383–418. Note, however, Jeremy Weinstein's argument that movements that have access to natural resources attract opportunistic members and are, as a consequence, more likely to be characterized by lack of control and command. See Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

26. These are all elements of movement strength. See Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan, "It Takes Two."

27. William A. Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest* (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey, 1975); Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1978); Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); and Tarrow, *Power in Movement*.

28. Kristin M. Bakke, "Copying and Learning from Outsiders? Assessing Diffusion from Transnational Insurgents in the Chechen Wars," in Jeffrey T. Checkel, ed., *Transnational Dynamics of Civil*

that by also considering transnational insurgents' effect on these processes of mobilization—framing and tactical innovation—it becomes clear that transnational insurgents do not necessarily boost domestic movements' strength. Indeed, conditional on whether framing and tactics introduced by transnational insurgents resonate with local norms, practices, and assessments about how to best fight the war, the outcome can be a backlash if the new ideas further divisions in the movement and alienate its potential supporters—both signs of movement weakness.

The entry of new ideas about what the war is about and how it should be fought can cause resistance and divisions within the movement itself—even outright defection—among factions for or against change. Although domestic resistance leaders are likely to welcome the added resources that come with the foreigners, they might resist their influence on framing and tactics for either ideational or instrumental reasons. They might simply not believe in the new ideas, but perhaps more important, if local resistance leaders assess that the new ideas and tactics are likely to cost them domestic support, rejection would be the strategic choice. Keeping in mind, however, that insurgent movements are often weaker than the states they are fighting, the temptation of the added resources the outsiders bring might mean that local resistance leaders are willing to go along with the new framing and tactics, trying to make the new ideas fit the local context, so as not to lose local support in the process.

Indeed, local acceptance for the new ideas is central to movement strength. To begin, it is much harder to mobilize support, which is a key aspect of movement strength, if the local community does not support the movement's goals.[29] It is also harder to maintain organizational cohesion, another aspect central to movement strength, if the society an armed movement represents is riven by cleavages—be those ideological, tribal, clan, or class based.[30]

War (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 31–62. See also Staniland and Zukerman, "The Effects of Foreign Fighters on Civil Wars."

29. The domestic insurgent leaders can rely on coercive support, but that is harder and more costly than voluntary support. See Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley, "Terror and Guerrilla Warfare in Latin America, 1956–1970," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April 1990), pp. 201–237.

30. See Paul Staniland, "Organizing Insurgency: Networks, Resources, and Rebellion in South Asia," *International Security*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (Summer 2012), pp. 142–177. Staniland argues that prewar social divisions (as opposed to overlapping social bases) are likely to give birth to fragmented insurgent organizations. On how heterogeneity may affect collective action, see Mayer N. Zald and John D. McCarthy, "Social Movement Industries: Competition and Cooperation among Movement Organizations," in Louis Kriesberg, ed., *Research in Social Movements, Conflict, and Change* (Greenwich, Conn.: JAI, 1980), pp. 1–20; and George Varughese and Elinor Ostrom, "The Contested Role of Heterogeneity in Collective Action: Some Evidence from Community Forestry in Nepal," *World Development*, Vol. 29, No. 5 (May 2001), pp. 747–765. On the relationship between so-

So although new ideas can directly cause or deepen existing divisions in a movement, they can also indirectly make it hard to maintain organizational cohesion if they cause resistance and divisions among the local population. Thus, to the degree that framing and tactics introduced by transnational insurgents engender local resistance, they can jeopardize the domestic insurgent movement's strength by alienating potential supporters and contributing to difficulty in maintaining organizational cohesion. It is, therefore, central to understand why and how the local population comes to accept or resist foreign ideas. Key here, I argue, is the degree to which local resistance leaders are able to make the new framing or tactics resonate with local frames and views on appropriate and effective tactics. I develop the logic with respect to framing and tactical innovation in turn.

FRAMING: RESONANCE AND RESISTANCE

Framing affects a social movement's ability to mobilize supporters and organize cohesive collective action by identifying what the movement is fighting for, how to promote change, and who it is fighting against—or, put differently, who is to blame. It is about defining us versus them, and constructing shared understandings of reality that inspire and legitimate collective action.[31] Whether the process of framing succeeds in fostering collective action depends on how a frame resonates with the population it seeks to mobilize.[32] For a frame to resonate, it needs to be internally consistent and empirically credible, as well salient to the target population, in the sense that it is relevant to and congruent with their beliefs, experiences, and culture.[33] The sociological literature on framing resonates with international relations scholarship on norm diffusion. In their study of transnational advocacy networks, for example, Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink argue that such networks are most likely

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cietal structure and organization of states, see Joel S. Migdal, *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

31. See, for example, David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, "Master Frames and Cycles of Protest," in Aldon D. Norris and Carol McClurg Mueller, eds., *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992); Robert D. Benford, "Frame Disputes within the Nuclear Disarmament Movement," *Social Forces*, Vol. 71, No. 3 (March 1993), pp. 677–701; Mayer N. Zald, "Culture, Ideology, and Strategic Framing," in McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, pp. 261–274; and Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly, eds., *Dynamics of Contention* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

32. Resonance is sometimes referred to as frame alignment or cultural match. See David A. Snow et al., "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (August 1986), pp. 464–481; Tarrow, *Power in Movement*; Checkel, "Norms, Institutions, and National Identity in Contemporary Europe"; and Donatella della Porta and Mario Diani, *Social Movements: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999).

33. Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment," *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 26 (2000), pp. 611–639.

to facilitate collective action (and, in turn, influence domestic policies) when the ideas they promote resonate with the belief systems and experiences of policymakers and people in their target state.[34] The point is, movement leaders constructing a frame that resonates widely with the local population are better positioned to mobilize supporters and organize cohesive collective action than movements guided by frames lacking in resonance.

As for transnational insurgents, once they have gained access, they can contribute to shifts in a domestic insurgent leaders' framing through either relational or mediated diffusion, engendering learning or emulation of new frames.[35] Relational diffusion is the transmission of information through personal networks and social bonds, such as fighting side by side, whereas mediated diffusion takes place when a third party, either a person or an institution, brings together previously unconnected actors. As for acceptance of outside actors' frame, processes of learning and emulation on the part of the domestic insurgent leaders can be either ideational or instrumental. Interrogating the motivation of local resistance leaders is not at the center of this study; suffice it to say, they may believe in the new frame if it is consistent with their own ideas, or they may adopt it if it is seen as effective at garnering public support or bringing in resources,[36] both of which aid collective action. If transnational insurgents bring much-needed resources, it is reasonable to expect that domestic insurgent leaders would look favorably upon these outsiders' framing.

Yet what about acceptance or resistance on the part of the local population, whose support matters for a movement's strength? Key here is resonance. Resonance does not automatically occur; someone needs to foster it. Social movement scholars highlight that the more credible the "frame articulators" are— the more knowledgeable they are and the higher their perceived status—the more likely they are to succeed in fostering resonance.[37] Added insights come from work on norm diffusion. Amitav Acharya argues that congruence with local norms is more likely to occur when local "norm-takers" voluntarily incorporate foreign ideas into local norms and traditions—a process of "local-

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34. Keck and Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders*, p. 204. See also Jeffrey W. Legro, "Which Norms Matter? Revisiting the 'Failure' of Internationalism," *International Organization*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Winter 1997), pp. 31–63; Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (Autumn 1998), pp. 887–917; and Checkel, "Norms, Institutions, and National Identity in Contemporary Europe."
35. Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism*; Staniland and Zukerman, "The Effects of Foreign Fighters on Civil Wars"; and Bakke, "Copying and Learning from Outsiders?"
36. See the international relations literature on diffusion, including Zachary Elkins and Beth Simmons, "On Waves, Clusters, and Diffusion: A Conceptual Framework," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 598 (2005), pp. 33–51.
37. Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements," p. 621.

ization."[38] Rather than replacing local norms, foreign norms are grafted or pruned to fit local beliefs and practices, thus creating resonance. In other words, new ideas are adapted to meet local beliefs and practices instead of being adopted wholesale. The result, Acharya argues, is that "diffusion strategies that accommodate local sensitivity are more likely to succeed than those that seek to supplant the latter."[39] The same is true of shifts in framing influenced by transnational insurgents. Indeed, combining insights from the social movement and norm diffusion literatures, I hypothesize that to the degree that local actors who are considered knowledgeable and important graft or prune a foreign framing to fit the local context, the more likely the frame is to resonate with the local population, and the more likely inhabitants are to accept it.

In the context of an insurgency, local actors seen as knowledgeable and important would be leaders in the resistance movement. If the frame articulated by transnational insurgents is consistent with these local leaders' beliefs or, more instrumentally, if it enhances their chances of winning the war (for example, by boosting their resources), they are likely to reconstruct the new, outsider-driven frame to fit the local framing of the struggle.[40] Such localization may imply that the local leaders amplify aspects of the new frame that are consistent with the domestic movement's original frame and attempt to make new aspects congruent with other local beliefs. If, in contrast, local resistance leaders are unable or unwilling to localize the outsider-driven frame, resonance is less likely to occur, with the result that a "frame dispute" emerges between the foreign and local framing of the struggle.[41] Such frame disputes—which can emerge around identification of both the problem and the solution in the struggle—are a source of intra-movement divisions in their own right and also weaken the movement's ability to mobilize supporters.

TACTICAL INNOVATION AND BACKLASH

Just as framing influences a movement's ability to mobilize supporters and foster organizational cohesion, so does its repertoire of actions—be they tactics such as strikes, nonviolent protests, or acts of violence.[42] In particular, tactical innovation, which refers to a movement's turn to new tactical forms, is impor-

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38. Amitav Acharya, "How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism," *International Organization*, Vol. 58, No. 2 (Spring 2004), pp. 239–275.
39. Ibid., p. 249.
40. On coercive mechanisms of norm diffusion, see Rodger A. Payne, "Persuasion, Frames, and Norm Construction," *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (March 2001), pp. 37–61.
41. Benford, "Frame Disputes within the Nuclear Disarmament Movement."
42. Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution*.

tant for encouraging collective action in the first place (and gaining concessions from the state).[43] A long-standing claim in the social movement literature maintains that movements that resort to noninstitutionalized or so-called radical tactics are more likely to be effective than movements that operate within the bounds of normal politics.[44] Yet, there is a fine balance between tactics that are threatening to a movement's adversary (and, thus, potentially effective) and nonthreatening to its supporters.[45] Indeed, to the degree that tactical innovation reflects the introduction of tactics that appear threatening or somehow too radical to a movement's local support base or causes disagreement within the movement about effective and appropriate means, such innovation can alienate supporters and detract from organizational cohesion.[46] Thus, theoretically, it is most interesting to explore what happens when transnational insurgents promote tactical innovation in a radical direction. Moreover, from a policy perspective, one of the major worries about transnational insurgents is that they radicalize the domestic movement's tactics toward means that are considered unacceptable by the international community, including the intentional targeting of civilians, hostage takings, extrajudicial killings, and degrading acts of violence. So although it is possible that transnational insurgents can shape tactical innovation in a nonradical direction, I focus on radicalization.[47]

As with framing, transnational insurgents can encourage a radicalization of tactics among the domestic insurgent leaders through learning or emulation. The motivation of the domestic resistance leaders can, again, be based on either ideational or instrumental reasons, most likely a mix. If radical tactics are considered morally acceptable and prove effective toward achieving the movement's goals, local leaders are likely to look favorably upon these tactics.[48] Similarly, if the tactics are considered successful at bringing in resources, domestic resistance leaders will likely embrace them, trying to "sell" the tactics to the local population by highlighting their fit with local practices or norms.

Tactical innovation toward more radical forms of action can backfire, how-

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43. Doug McAdam, "Tactical Innovation and the Pace of Insurgency," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 48, No. 6 (December 1983), p. 736.
44. Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest*; Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail* (New York: Vintage, 1979).
45. Doug McAdam, "The Framing Function of Movement Tactics," in McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, pp. 338–356.
46. Donatella della Porta, "Social Movements and the State: Thoughts on the Policing of Protest," in McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, p. 86.
47. There is no systematic research showing what kind of tactics transnational insurgents typically advocate, but evidence from cases such as Iraq suggests they use radical tactics, for instance, suicide bombings. See Malet, *Foreign Fighters*.
48. See Michael C. Horowitz, "Nonstate Actors and the Diffusion of Innovations: The Case of Suicide Terrorism," *International Organization*, Vol. 64, No. 1 (Winter 2010), p. 46.

ever, if it fails to resonate with local norms for appropriate behavior or assessments of effective methods, as such costing the movement domestic support. Movements are situated within larger societal contexts, including a "cultural stock of how to protest."[49] As with framing, acceptance of new tactics by the local population is more likely to take place if local resistance leaders can portray the new tactics as both effective and consistent with local practices and norms. In particular, for a tactic to be accepted by the local population, it helps that it be perceived as effective for addressing the movement's stated goal, and as an appropriate and proportionate response to the state's tactics. Indeed, if the use of radical tactics on the part of the insurgents hardens the state's position on the issue at stake or provokes it to resort to more repressive tactics, such as indiscriminate violence against civilians, the local population may not look favorably upon the tactics of the insurgents fighting their battle.[50] Thus, if local resistance leaders cannot foster resonance for radicalization of tactics, such tactical innovation is likely to adversely affect the movement's strength by alienating the local support base. To the degree that the local population does not welcome the introduction of radical tactics, it is easier for potential factions of the movement opposed to the new tactics to sustain such a stance, thus solidifying movement divisions.

In sum, scholars need to consider that a change in a domestic insurgent movement's framing or a change toward more radical tactics may cause local resistance, which adversely affects movement strength. Even if the leaders of the domestic movement accept the transnational insurgents' framing or tactics, the local population may resist the change, which reduces the movement's potential supporters and fosters social divisions that make it harder to maintain organizational cohesion. Acceptance is more likely to take place when local resistance leaders can foster resonance through a process of localization. The research task is twofold. The first task, which is the subject of a previous study,[51] is to examine whether shifts in framing and tactics have taken place, and establish whether such changes can be traced back to diffusion from transnational insurgents. The second task, which is the focus in this study, is to examine the processes through which shifts in the framing of goals and tactical innovation are accepted or resisted by the local population in whose name the movement is fighting.

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49. Zald, "Culture, Ideology, and Strategic Framing," p. 267.
50. See Jason Lyall, "Does Indiscriminate Violence Incite Insurgent Attacks? Evidence from Chechnya," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 53, No. 3 (June 2009), pp. 331–362.
51. Bakke, "Copying and Learning from Outsiders?"

Research Design

Analyzing the argument presented here requires a process-tracing approach.[52] I examine Chechnya's conflict with the Russian federal government over time. The conflict began with the Chechen declaration of independence in 1991, turned into a war in 1994, came to an end with a cease-fire in 1996, reignited in 1999 when Russian forces again entered the republic, and today has come to an uneasy stalemate, with violence dwindling since 2005. The case itself is of intrinsic importance, given that the conflict is yet to be resolved and has spread to the wider North Caucasus region[53]—and, reportedly, has fostered some insurgents fighting in Syria.[54] It has also been fairly well documented that both framing and tactics have changed over time,[55] which helps make it a researchable case—a nontrivial concern given the challenges inherent in conducting process tracing on violent and, thus, often data-scarce cases.[56] Moreover, although transnational insurgents cannot alone be credited for the observed changes, as local factors also play a role, they have proved critical,[57] allowing me to consider how they have influenced the domestic insurgent movement over time. The analysis covers the years after the entry of the transnational insurgents, focusing particularly on the interwar years (1997–99), when the influx of transnational insurgents was the greatest.

Key to the argument is the role of local resistance leaders. In the time period under study, the leaders of the movement were as follows: Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, who was one of the founders of the separatist movement in the early 1990s and briefly took over as leader after the movement's first elected leader, President Dzhokhar Dudayev, was killed in 1996; Aslan Maskhadov, who, after serving as a prominent field commander in the 1994–96 war, was

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52. Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2004).
53. John O'Loughlin and Frank D.W. Witmer, "The Localized Geographies of Violence in the North Caucasus of Russia, 1999–2007," *Annals: Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 101, No. 1 (2011), pp. 178–201.
54. Aaron Y. Zelin, Evan F. Kohlmann, and Laith al-Khouri, *Convoy of Martyrs in the Levant* (New York: Flashpoint Partners, June 2013), https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/opeds/Zelin20130601-FlashpointReport-v2.pdf.
55. See, for example, James Hughes, *Chechnya: From Nationalism to Jihad* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007); and Anne Speckhard and Khapta Ahkmedova, "The Making of a Martyr: Chechen Suicide Terrorism," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 29, No. 5 (May 2006), pp. 429–492.
56. That challenge should not stop scholars from doing such work; indeed, research on the transnational relations of violent conflict should focus more closely on processes. See Checkel, *Transnational Dynamics of Civil War*.
57. Bakke, "Copying and Learning from Outsiders?"

elected Chechnya's president in 1997; Abdul-Halim Sadulayev, the successor after Maskhadov was killed in 2005, who was himself killed after only a year in power;[58] Doku Umarov, since 2005 the leader of the movement's now-dominant Islamist branch; and Akhmed Zakayev, since 2007 the leader of the movement's nationalist branch. In addition, I consider Shamil Basayev, a larger-than-life hero from the first Chechen war (he led the operation to retake Grozny, the Chechen capital, from the Russian forces), who continued to be a dominant commander in the movement until he was killed by Russian security forces in 2006.

As regards framing, the Chechen struggle began as a nationalist struggle similar to those of other regions in the "parade of sovereignties" in Russia in the early 1990s. It remained so throughout the first war, focusing on independence for the Chechen republic. In the period between the first and second wars, Chechen leaders began to make references to the establishment of an Islamic state, which became more prevalent in the second war. In recent years, some figures in the Chechen resistance movement have framed the struggle in terms of nationalism and self-determination, while the dominant faction under Umarov has considered it part of a broader struggle for an Islamic emirate in the North Caucasus. As for tactical innovation, a new feature associated with the second Chechen war was large-scale terrorist attacks outside Chechnya's border. Such attacks were not absent from the first war, but they appeared more purposeful in the second war. Another infamous characteristic associated with the second war was a turn to suicide terrorism, which was absent from the first war. These trends suggest that the tactics of the Chechen resistance movement have changed over time, turning more radical in the sense that civilians increasingly have become targets of violence.

I have elsewhere analyzed the framing and tactics brought along by the transnational insurgents, and the process through which they influenced the Chechen insurgent leaders' framing and tactics (for example, by the establishment of training camps).[59] The task here is to assess how the outsiders' frames and tactics were (or were not) localized by the local leaders through grafting and pruning, and the consequences for local acceptance and resistance. There are four steps to the empirical analysis.

I discuss framing and tactical innovation in separate sections, beginning

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58. On March 18, 2014, Umarov was reported dead by a website sympathetic to him (Kavkaz Center). Russian authorities have on several previous occasions declared him dead, but this is not the first time his sympathizers have done so. See "Chechen Rebel Leader Doku Umarov 'Dead,'" BBC News, March 18, 2014.
59. Bakke, "Copying and Learning from Outsiders?"

with an overview of how each changed over time. Then, in each section, I assess the degree to which the outsiders' framing or new tactics resonated with the original framing of the struggle, prevailing beliefs relevant to the new framing, and views on appropriate and effective tactics. To do so, I use a three-point scale proposed by Jeffrey Checkel in a study on norm diffusion in Europe.[60] I can observe the degree to which (1) the new framing or new tactics are congruent with the original framing of the struggle, local beliefs, and views on tactics, (2) whether there are no obvious contradictions, and (3) whether there is no congruence at all.[61] The third step is to consider whether localization took place by examining what local resistance leaders say about the new framing and tactics. Do they graft or prune the new framing or arguments about new tactics to match the original framing of the struggle, local beliefs central to the struggle, and local views on appropriate and effective tactics? The fourth step is to examine the consequences. If local resistance leaders do engage in localization and these efforts succeed—in the sense that the new framing or tactics are made to match the local context—one may observe that the local population echoes some of the arguments made by the resistance leaders. One might also observe whether initially hesitant factions of the domestic movement, which might not have been fully convinced based on the new framing's content or tactics' appropriateness or effectiveness, embrace the new frame or new tactics in an attempt to co-opt something that seems to have local resonance. If, in contrast, local resistance leaders are unable or unwilling to localize the new framing or tactics—or elite-level disagreement is evident—one would observe the local opposition articulating resistance and a deepening of movement divisions.

In trying to overcome the challenges inherent in collecting process-tracing evidence from a conflict setting, I rely on a mix of sources to assess what movement leaders say and do and local reactions. These include academic and biographical articles and books; monitoring of local Chechen papers by the International Institute for Humanities and Political Studies, which is a unique and untapped resource; the publications of the Jamestown Foundation, an independent research institute with extensive coverage of the North Caucasus; reports from the Institute of War and Peace Reporting, including independent coverage by Chechen journalists; news searches via LexisNexis; the Islamist website Kavkaz Center and the separatist website Chechenpress; the documentary/propaganda film *The Life and Times of Khattab*, which con-

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60. Checkel, "Norms, Institutions, and National Identity in Contemporary Europe."
61. See Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements."

tains interviews and footage of the most important transnational insurgent in Chechnya;[62] and the British Channel 4 documentary *Chechnya: The Dirty War.*[63]

Transnational Insurgents in Chechnya

Most accounts suggest that the number of transnational insurgents in Chechnya was higher in the initial years of the second war than in the first war, reaching a peak in the interwar years (1997–99).[64] Although it is impossible to get precise data on the number of transnational insurgents at any given point—and the Russian authorities may have sought to inflate the numbers—it has been suggested that over the course of the two wars, 500 to 700 transnational insurgents, including members of the diaspora,[65] have fought in Chechnya.[66]

The first transnational insurgents entered Chechnya in February 1995, just a couple of months into the first war, as a contingent led by the fighter known as Emir Khattab.[67] Of Saudi Arabian or Jordanian origin, Khattab had previously fought in the civil wars in Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The foreign fighters in Chechnya have primarily been Arabs from the Middle East, though some have come from North Africa, Turkey, and possibly Pakistan, and others from Central Asia.[68]

These outsiders have contributed to the Chechen resistance movement's re-

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62. *The Life and Times of Khattab*, Waislamah News Network, 2002, https://www.youtube.com/watchv=hBt7J81FEJs. This is an Arabic-language production (with English subtitles) that uses interviews and footage of Khattab to portray him as a war hero.
63. *Chechnya: The Dirty War,* Channel 4, 2005, http://freedocumentaries.org/int.php?filmID =121.
64. Brian Glyn Williams, "Turkish Volunteers in Chechnya," *Terrorism Monitor*, April 6, 2005; Cerwyn Moore and Paul Tumelty, "Foreign Fighters and the Case of Chechnya: A Critical Assessment," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 31, No. 5 (May 2008), pp. 412–443; and Cerwyn Moore and Paul Tumelty, "Assessing the Unholy Alliances in Chechnya: From Communism and Nationalism to Islamism and Salafism," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (March 2009), pp. 73–94.
65. Besides those who have left as a result of the first and second Chechen wars, the Chechen diaspora consists of descendants of people who emigrated because of the Caucasian War of the nineteenth century and those who were deported during the Stalinist era. There are Chechen diaspora populations in, among other places, Central Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and the United States.
66. Cerwyn Moore, "The Radicalisation of the Chechen Separatist Movement—Myth or Reality?" *Prague Watchdog*, May 16, 2007.
67. Carlotta Gall and Thomas de Waal, *Chechnya: Calamity in the Caucasus* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), p. 308; Valery Tishkov, *Chechnya: Life in a War-Torn Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), p. 172; and Moshe Gammer, *The Lone Wolf and the Bear: Three Centuries of Chechen Defiance of Russian Rule* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006), pp. 214–215.
68. Paul Tumelty, "The Rise and Fall of Foreign Fighters in Chechnya," *Terrorism Monitor*, January 26, 2006.

source mobilization by bringing along recruits, weapons, combat expertise, and access to financial support, primarily from sources in the Middle East.[69] *The Life and Times of Khattab* features Khattab saying that after the first war, he was invited by the Chechen leadership to help train insurgents. In 1996 Khattab and his fighters established training camps in Serzhen'-Yurt, a village in the mountainous eastern part of the republic. Reportedly, hundreds of young men passed through these camps, many of whom went on to become fighters in the second war.[70] The question here is how local resistance leaders helped shape acceptance or resistance among the local population for the new framing and new tactics brought along by the foreigners.

From Nationalist to Islamist Framing

The Chechen resistance movement is today dominated by an Islamist framing of the struggle, where the Chechen plight is seen as part of a wider Muslim struggle. Yet the movement initially emerged as a nationalist struggle in the waning days of the Soviet Union.[71] In the fall of 1991, the nationalist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev came to power and declared the republic independent. The declaration was followed by years of unsuccessful negotiations with Moscow, and by the end of 1994 the first Chechen war had broken out.

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69. Julie Wilhelmsen, *When Separatists Become Islamists: The Case of Chechnya* (Kjeller, Norway: Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, 2004); Lorenzo Vidino, "How Chechnya Became a Breeding Ground for Terror," *Middle East Quarterly*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (Summer 2005), pp. 57–66; Robert Bruce Ware, "A Multitude of Evils: Mythology and Political Failure in Chechnya," in Richard Sakwa, ed., *Chechnya: From Past to Future* (London: Anthem, 2005), pp. 79–116; Hughes, *Chechnya*; Brian Glyn Williams, "Allah's Foot Soldiers: An Assessment of the Role of Foreign Fighters and Al-Qa'ida in the Chechen Insurgency," in Moshe Gammer, ed., *Ethno-Nationalism, Islam, and the State in the Caucasus: Post-Soviet Disorder* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 158–178; Moore and Tumelty, "Foreign Fighters and the Case of Chechnya"; Moore and Tumelty, "Assessing the Unholy Alliances in Chechnya"; and Ekaterina Sokirianskaia, "Governing Fragmented Societies: State-Building and Political Integration in Chechnya and Ingushetia (1991–2009)," Ph.D. dissertation, Central European University, Budapest, 2010.
70. Moore and Tumelty, "Assessing the Unholy Alliances in Chechnya," p. 85; and Sokirianskaia, "Governing Fragmented Societies," p. 212. Sokirianskaia's excellent ethnographic study includes interviews with Chechens who passed through these training camps, providing confidence about the camps' whereabouts and activities.
71. For a historical account that covers the Chechens' previous violent encounters with the Russian central government, see John B. Dunlop, *Russia Confronts Chechnya: Roots of a Separatist Conflict* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998). For analysis of the causes of the conflict, see also Valery Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame* (London: Sage, 1997); and Monica Duffy Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence: Identity, Interests, and the Indivisibility of Territory* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003). On Moscow's motivation for not wanting to let Chechnya go, see Matthew Evangelista, *The Chechen Wars: Will Russia Go the Way of the Soviet Union*? (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2002).

The nationalists mobilized the population around an image of a state that consistently had imposed suffering on them, emphasizing centuries of both political and economic discrimination.[72] Although not a particularly religious man, Dudayev was not opposed to Islam and used religion as a tool for mobilizing the Chechens. Since the eighteenth century, the majority of the Muslim population in Chechnya has belonged to the "mystical" branch of Sufism. In the early days of the separatist movement, the traditional Sufi dance known as *zikr* came to function as an independence dance in the central square of Grozny, the Chechen capital.[73] Nonetheless, Dudayev favored a secular state, arguing that the introduction of sharia law could have damaging consequences.[74] In the spring of 1995, Dudayev formed a commission to look into the establishment of sharia courts, but the legal system in the republic remained secular until after his death in 1996. Indeed, despite calls for an Islamic state in the early 1990s,[75] the initial quest for independence in Chechnya had little to do with religion, and was framed instead as a nationalist struggle for independence.

The message of independence resonated with many Chechens' view of the state. Soviet leader Joseph Stalin's deportation of nearly the entire Chechen population in February 1944 had become central to people's collective memory, part of a repeated history of repression.[76] In 2005 a Chechen man explained to me that the heart of the Chechen question is that with regular intervals, Russia has occupied Chechnya—the czarist forces, the Bolsheviks, Stalin, and now the current post-Soviet regime. His wife elaborated, noting that Moscow was never willing to let Chechnya try independence. Instead, she said, every fifty to sixty years, Moscow tried to crush the Chechens.[77] Although not every Chechen wanted outright independence in the early 1990s, many believed that Chechnya would be better off with more autonomy.

When Dudayev was killed in April 1996, his successor, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, called for the introduction of sharia criminal code based on a

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72. Tishkov, *Chechnya*; and Scott Radnitz, "Look Who's Talking! Islamic Discourse in the Chechen Wars," *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (2006), pp. 237–256.
73. Gall and de Waal, *Chechnya*, pp. 32–33.
74. Tishkov, *Chechnya*, p. 169.
75. Tracey C. German, *Russia's Chechen War* (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), p. 31; and Moore and Tumelty, "Assessing the Unholy Alliances in Chechnya," p. 83.
76. Brian Glyn Williams, "Commemorating 'The Deportation': The Role of Memorialization and Collective Memory in the 1994–96 Chechen War," *Memory and History*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 2000), pp. 101–134; Tishkov, *Chechnya*, p. 50–54; and Mara Ânova Ustinova, *The Chechen Conflict in the Eyes of Prominent Chechen Intellectuals: An Oral History Approach* (Moscow: Institute for Ethnology and Anthropology, Russian Academy of Sciences, 2004).
77. Personal communication, Moscow, June 11, 2005.

similar code in Sudan.[78] His justification for sharia law showed signs of both a nationalist and an Islamist frame. For instance, he argued that "[w]e are fighting to protect our independence and to defend the honor and dignity of the free people under the banner of Islam."[79] Yandarbiyev's three most serious contenders in the January 1997 presidential elections—Aslan Maskhadov, Shamil Basayev, and Movladi Udugov—all made reference to Islam, but to varying degrees.[80] Maskhadov, the field commander who had negotiated the 1996 peace accord with Moscow, advocated the most secular agenda yet viewed Chechnya's Islamic customs favorably.[81]

Since the outbreak of the second war in 1999, the struggle has moved from a secular and Chechen-centered vision to one in which Islamist (Salafi) goals have come to play a significant role. Although Dudayev, too, had embraced Islamic practices as a means to mobilize people, the shift in framing toward a jihadist struggle followed the entry of transnational insurgents. Important here was Khattab's personal relationship to the prominent field commander Shamil Basayev, who in the spring of 1998 allegedly appointed Khattab his foreign security adviser.[82] Khattab had never seen Chechnya as an isolated struggle but, as part of a wider Muslim struggle against oppression, and Basayev's framing came to reflect a similar outlook.[83]

The dominant branch of the Chechen resistance movement has gone beyond the aim of creating an independent Chechen state. President Maskhadov was killed in a Russian special forces operation in 2005, and both of his successors, Abdul-Halim Sadulayev, who was killed after only a year in power, and Doku Umarov, who since 2005 (has) led the Islamist branch, have framed the struggle in more Islamist terms. Whereas Sadulayev's framing of the struggle contained elements of both nationalism and Islamism,[84] Umarov's struggle has

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78. Bill Powell, "A Religious War?" *Newsweek*, October 14, 1996; and "Guard to Be Set Up in Chechnya to Supervise Implementation of Sharia Law," *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* (*ITAR-TASS*), October 17, 1996.
79. "Chechen Separatist Leader Yandarbiyev Thinks Peace Process Will Continue," *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* (*NTV*), October 23, 1996.
80. Radnitz, "Look Who's Talking!"
81. "Separatist Leader Maskhadov against Creation of Islamic State," *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* (*ITAR-TASS*), September 17, 1996; and "Separatist Commander Maskhadov Interviewed on Talks with Russia, Fundamentalism," *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* (*Tyden*), October 3, 1996.
82. "I Feel Secure When I Have Ammunition At Hand," *Moscow News*, April 16, 1998.
83. For an analysis of the processes through which this happened, see Bakke, "Copying and Learning from Outsiders?"
84. "Russia's Tactics Make Chechen War Spread across Caucasus—Rebel President," *BBC Monitoring* (*Chechenpress*), September 13, 2005. See also the Jamestown Foundation interview published in *Chechnya Weekly* after Sadulayev was killed. "Exclusive Interview with Former Chechen President Sadulaev," *Chechnya Weekly*, July 6, 2006.

been more clearly Islamist. In 2007 Umarov declared that the struggle in Chechnya was in the name of a unified and Islamic Caucasian emirate, not just self-determination for any one ethnic group.[85]

RESONANCE

The observed change in framing is about both identification of the problem and the proposed solution. Both the nationalist and the Islamist framing's diagnosis is that Chechnya as part of the Russian Federation is a problem, but the Islamist framing places this as part of a larger problem, the oppression of Muslims. The prognosis, which is about solving the problem, differs to the degree that the nationalist framing considers Chechen independence to be the solution, whereas the Islamist framing sees the establishment of a larger Islamic emirate as the solution. Clearly, in terms of assessing resonance,[86] there is not complete congruence between these frames, but neither can one claim there is no congruence at all.

In addition, a key point of contention between the external framing of the struggle and the local context concerns beliefs about how to practice Islam. Since the eighteenth century, the majority of the Muslim population in the North Caucasus has belonged to Sufism, in Chechnya particularly its Qadyriya and Naqshbandiya orders. Sufism, which is known as Islamic mysticism, includes the worship of saints, the ritual *zikr* dance (thought to help cleanse the participants of their unclean social environment), and the use of amulets. Chechen society has historically been a clan-based society characterized by traditional codes of conduct (including respect for ancestors, elders, and women), and Sufism became integrated into the local clan structure and practices.[87] Today, Sufism in Chechnya does not emphasize the creation of an Islamic state, but this was not always so. During Imam Shamil's uprising against the czarist Russian state in the 1800s, the Naqshbandiya order helped mobilize people in what is known locally as "the great *gazavat*"—the struggle for an Islamic state in the North Caucasus, based on sharia law.[88] Note, however, that Shamil's attempt at introducing sharia law led to a localized version

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85. Andrei Smirnov, "Will the Rebels Declare the 'Caucasian Emirate?'" *Chechnya Weekly*, November 1, 2007; Dokka Umaraov, "Declaration of the Caucasian Emirate," http://www.kavkazcenter .com/eng/content/2007/11/22/9107.shtml. See also "The Reflections of Mojahed, Part 1" (Grozny: Islamic Center for Strategic Research and Political Technologies, Kavkaz Center, February 14, 2007), www.kavkazcenter.com/eng/content/2007/02/14/7439.shtml.
86. See Checkel, "Norms, Institutions, and National Identity in Contemporary Europe."
87. Dunlop, *Russia Confronts Chechnya*, pp. 48–49, 148–149; and Gammer, *The Lone Wolf and the Bear*, pp. 142–147.
88. Gammer, *The Lone Wolf and the Bear*.

of sharia, adapted to Chechen customary law.[89] In the post-Soviet era, the dominant version of Sufism in the North Caucasus has moved away from a demand for an Islamic state toward a demand for re-Islamization within a secular framework.[90] This differs from the Salafi version of Islam introduced to the region in the 1990s.

The Salafi version of Islam, locally known as Wahhabism and brought to Chechnya with the transnational insurgents in the mid-1990s, considers Sufi practices as a deviation from pure Islam.[91] Wahhabis reject the mysticism of Sufism, oppose the worship of saints, see some of the Sufi practices as pagan, and look unfavorably upon Sufism's fit with Chechnya's clan structure, which they believe divides the religious community. Importantly, Salafi Islamists see jihad as an armed struggle aimed at spreading Islam and a core element of Islam, whereas the Sufis in the North Caucasus consider jihad to be about "the spiritual self-perfection of a Muslim,"[92] and not necessarily a struggle toward an Islamic state. Thus there is common ground between local beliefs and religious values inherent in the Islamist framing of the struggle, but there is disagreement about how to practice Islam.

LOCALIZATION: GRAFTING AND PRUNING

Early in his leadership tenure, Maskhadov, who was elected Chechen president in 1997, was opposed to the Islamist framing of the struggle—and the Islamist presence more generally. Yet other key figures in the Chechen resistance movement accepted the Islamist framing for a mix of ideational and instrumental reasons. Yandarbiyev, who served as Chechen president immediately after Dudayev's death, from 1995 to 1996, was known to already be favorably disposed toward the creation of an Islamic state, and Sadulayev, who led the resistance movement from 2005 to 2006, had in his university days sought out Islamic influences, suggesting ideational motivation.[93] At least in Yandarbiyev's case, there were also instrumental motives at work: "Islamic fundamentalism is not dangerous. It is partnership, international relations. You do not consider it a problem if Western investors tour Russia, do you? One

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89. Vakhit Akaev, "Religious-Political Conflict in the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria," in Lena Jonson and Murad Esenov, eds., *Political Islam and Conflicts in Russia and Central Asia* (Stockholm: Swedish Institute of International Affairs, 1999), http://www.ca-c.org/dataeng/05.akaev. shtml.
90. Galina M. Yemelianova, "Sufism and Politics in the North Caucasus," *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 29, No. 4 (2005), p. 670.
91. Tishkov, *Chechnya*, p. 173; and Gammer, *The Lone Wolf and the Bear*, p. 215.
92. Yemelianova, "Sufism and Politics in the North Caucasus," p. 677.
93. Laurent Vinatier, "Political vs. Military Power: Contrasting Sadulaev and Basaev's Roles," *Chechnya Weekly*, September 29, 2005.

cannot divide help into help from Wahhabis and help from others."[94] This comparison of Islamic fundamentalism to investors clearly suggests instrumental motives. As for Basayev, who was a key figure in the resistance movement from the first war until his death in 2006, it is difficult to assess whether his shift in framing, which emerged out of his close association with Khattab, happened for ideational or instrumental reasons. Scott Radnitz's analysis of Islamic discourse in the Chechen wars reveals that resistance leaders may have targeted their message toward their audience, suggesting a degree of instrumentalism.[95] Islamic rhetoric would be more prominent when speaking privately than in public forums that could reach a Western audience. Even Umarov, who since 2005 (has) headed the dominant Islamist branch of the movement, appears aware of the need to target his message toward his audience, again suggesting that one cannot rule out instrumental motives for a movement's choice of framing.[96] Indeed, the prevailing view is that the main motivation for the turn to an Islamist framing of the Chechen struggle was access to recruits and funding sources in the Middle East,[97] which would be key for the movement's resource mobilization. Regardless of local resistance leaders' motivation, the purpose here is to consider whether and how they engaged in localization efforts.

Consistent with Acharya's argument about how local elites prune or graft foreign norms to make them fit the local culture,[98] the Chechen resistance leaders who accepted the Islamist framing continued to refer to nationalist goals. For instance, in communicating with his supporters, Basayev paired his Islamist frame with rhetoric commonly associated with self-determination struggles.[99] He also took care to model his vision of an Islamic state on the nineteenth-century self-proclaimed Caucasian Imamate (1824–59), which covered the territory of present-day Chechnya, Ingushetia, and Dagestan and at its height was ruled by Imam Shamil. Shamil is the region's hero from the Caucasian War (1817–64) and belonged to the Naqshbandiya order of Sufism. By modeling his vision of an Islamic state on Shamil's Imamate, Basayev incorporated a key period and figure in the Chechens' collective memory of persistent struggle and repression into his own framing of the struggle. Similarly,

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94. Newspaper interview quoted in Sokirianskaia, "Governing Fragmented Societies," p. 215.
95. Radnitz, "Look Who's Talking!"
96. Andrei Smirnov, "Umarov Trying to Increase Financial Support from the Middle East," *Chechnya Weekly*, October 25, 2007.
97. See, for example, Wilhelmsen, *When Separatists Become Islamists*; Vidino, "How Chechnya Became a Breeding Ground for Terror"; and Tumelty, "The Rise and Fall of Foreign Fighters in Chechnya."
98. Acharya, "How Ideas Spread."
99. Radnitz, "Look Who's Talking!"

both Yandarbiyev and, later, Sadulayev made reference to the historical precedent of a holy war aimed at creating an Islamic state in the Caucasus,[100] thus grafting their message to resonate with the notion of a continued struggle against the central rulers. In a 2005 interview given to a Polish newspaper but posted on the separatist website Chechenpress, Sadulayev made the point that the present-day jihad in Chechnya is of the same kind as the historical *gazavat* in the region: "There are two types of Jihad or Gazavat in the Muslim religion: one of defence and one of attack. A Jihad of defence is one that defends the fatherland from the invasion of an external enemy and liberates the motherland from the occupiers, establishing true freedom on its soil. That sort of Jihad has its place in Chechnya. This is not concealed from anyone. . . . The war in Chechnya is a Jihad, then, and we are not hiding this. . . . We have never deviated from this path and we will never do so. The term 'war of defence' and 'Gazavat' ('Jihad') mean the same thing, and we do not conceal that the war in Chechnya is a Gazavat."[101]

Umarov's 2007 declaration of the Caucasus emirate also resonates with this historical precedent,[102] but Umarov has explicitly distanced himself from the nationalist branch of the movement, even claiming that it is little more than a Western puppet.[103] In fact, since Umarov's declaration of a Caucasus emirate in the fall of 2007, the Chechen resistance movement has been clearly divided between a nationalist branch, headed by the London-based Akhmed Zakayev, and an Islamist branch, headed by Umarov. Umarov has done less grafting and gone further in the Islamist direction than other leaders adopting the Islamist framing, declaring that anyone waging wars against Muslims is the enemy and expressing solidarity with "brothers" fighting in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, and Palestine.[104] In contrast, Yandarbiyev was careful to state that his model of an Islamic state was not a religious state along the lines of the Taliban in Afghanistan, but a Western European state based on Christian values, which is more consistent with secularism and Sufism than with Salafism.[105] Indeed, as noted above, even Imam Shamil's attempt at introducing sharia law in the nineteenth century had to adapt to Chechen customary law.[106]

In sum, the Chechen resistance leaders who accepted the Islamist framing

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100. Tishkov, *Chechnya*, p. 201.
101. "Russia's Tactics Make Chechen War Spread across Caucasus."
102. Andrei Smirnov, "The Caucasian Emirate: A Not So New Idea," *Chechnya Weekly*, November 8, 2007.
103. "Chechen Rebel Information Minister Defends Proclamation of Caucasus Emirate," *BBC Monitoring Trans Caucasus Unit* (*Kavkaz-Tsentr*), December 1, 2007.
104. Umarov, "Declaration of the Caucasian Emirate."
105. "Chechnya Wrestles with 'the Way of Allah,'" *Moscow Times*, November 16, 1996.
106. Akaev, "Religious-Political Conflict in the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria."

have, to varying degrees, grafted this new framing to match the local culture, historical precedents, or nationalist framing of the struggle, highlighting common ground. As I elaborate below, however, given that Maskhadov, as the elected leader of the movement, held on to a nationalist framing of the struggle while the powerful field commander Basayev adopted an Islamist framing, the 1997–99 period was characterized by an elite-level frame dispute. So how did the local population react?

ACCEPTANCE AND RESISTANCE
Segments of the population did accept the Islamist framing. To some, the religious message helped justify the losses of the war and provided a sense of stability. To others, the Islamists' appeal was fueled by Chechen poverty and the appeal of outsiders' access to financial patronage abroad, and to others again, the Islamists presented a simpler religious message than the republic's traditional Sufi brotherhoods.[107] A Chechen man explained his support for the "Arabs" in the following terms: "I liked those people. They said they had come to us to correct our religion. I was glad that they simplified prayers. . . . And the Chechens honor many saints; they also revere their elders, living and dead, and always stand up when any of the elders come near them. The Arabs said none of that follows from our religion. I liked what they said. I found it all convenient, because I am a busy man."[108] This quote articulates a wholesale acceptance of the Islamist framing, regardless of whether the message is grafted to fit with local culture and the nationalist frame. In contrast, the following quote references "the great *gazavat*," the term Chechens use to refer to Imam Shamil's struggle against czarist Russia, suggesting that local agents' grafting of the Islamist frame may have succeeded in establishing a link to a local precedent: "I liked it that the Arabs want to go on making war until they liberate the whole world from *giaours* [infidels]. Some of our people disagreed with that. But the Arabs said that the *ghazavat* [holy war] should go until all the Christians are converted. That is the great *ghazavat*."[109]

The presence of segments of the local population accepting the new frame made it difficult for the government under Maskhadov not to turn to Islam as well—especially as he was increasingly accused of being a Moscow sellout by his local opponents, the most powerful of whom was Basayev. Not a proponent of an Islamic state, Maskhadov held on to the nationalist framing of the

107. Yemelianova, "Sufism and Politics in the North Caucasus," p. 678; and Moore and Tumelty, "Foreign Fighters and the Case of Chechnya," p. 419.
108. Quoted in Tishkov, *Chechnya*, p. 173.
109. Ibid., p. 174.

struggle and even sought to expel all Wahhabis from Chechnya. The fact that he won the 1997 presidential elections suggests a popular rejection of the more Islamist agenda promoted by his opponents. Nevertheless, Maskhadov was gradually compelled to establish sharia courts across the republic,[110] and in February 1999 he implemented full sharia law.[111] As early as 1998, though, learning Arabic and the foundations of Islam, including sharia law, had been introduced in schools; adherence to Islamic rules was emphasized in the armed forces; and an Islamic university and Islamic centers for children had opened in Grozny.[112] Maskhadov's government also aimed to establish an Islamic code of conduct for schoolchildren, including a dress code and separation of girls and boys.[113] In a 1998 interview, Maskhadov justified the turn to Islamic principles based on their ability to create order: "The only thing we have is a belief in Allah. And this people can submit only to Allah's laws and build a state here. There is no other way."[114] Thus, Maskhadov turned toward Islamic practices to try to avoid a nationalist versus Islamist schism in the Chechen movement and keep support among segments of his constituents who looked favorably upon the assistance provided by the Wahhabis. It was an attempt at instrumentally co-opting the framing accepted by his local opponents, particularly Basayev, as that framing resonated with segments of the population.[115] Yet Maskhadov continued to frame the struggle in terms of self-determination, motivated by the Chechens' quest to defend themselves against the Russians.[116] Importantly, he opposed framing the struggle as a wider Islamist struggle in the North Caucasus. In other words, he tried to simultaneously please the Islamists by his policies and provide a frame resonant with the nationalists. Thus, in the interwar years (1997–99), not only was there a

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110. Vladimir Bobrovnikov, "Al-Azhar and Shari'a Courts in Twentieth-Century Caucasus," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (October 2001), pp. 1–24.

111. Timur Muzayev, "Chechenskaja Respublika Ichkerija" [The Chechen Republic of Ichkeria], report (Russia: Institute for Humanities and Political Studies [IGPI], February 1999), http://igpi.ru/monitoring/north_caucas.

112. Muzayev, "Chechenskaja Respublika Ichkerija," report (IGPI, January 1998); Muzayev, "Chechenskaja Respublika Ichkerija," report (IGPI, June 1998); Muzayev, "Chechenskaja Respublika Ichkerija," report (IGPI, November 1998); Muzayev, "Chechenskaja Respublika Ichkerija," report (IGPI, December 1998); and Muzayev, "Chechenskaja Respublika Ichkerija," report (IGPI, May 1999).

113. Sokirianskaia, "Governing Fragmented Societies," p. 222.

114. Quoted in Radnitz, "Look Who's Talking!" p. 246.

115. Maskhadov may have also incorporated Islamism into the struggle as a means to gain access to financial funds, as suggested by Moore and Tumelty, "Foreign Fighters and the Case of Chechnya." The Chechen economy was devastated at the end of the first war, and the Russian government never delivered the reconstruction funds it had promised.

116. Elise Giuliano, "Islamic Identity and Political Mobilization in Russia: Chechnya and Dagestan Compared," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (2005), pp. 195–220; and Radnitz, "Look Who's Talking!" p. 250.

frame dispute between Mashkadov and Basayev, but Maskhadov's practices and framing were not necessarily internally consistent.

As a result, the shift in framing toward an Islamist struggle was not accepted by all segments of the local population. Some Chechens found that "the Arabs" imposed on them a lifestyle and customs that were alien, such as women wearing veils and belonging in the home.[117] Nor did people necessarily associate the Islamist influence with "true" religion. The Chechen surgeon Khassan Baiev, who worked in Chechnya during the first war and early stages of the second war, describes his feelings about the field commander Arbi Barayev, who supported the Wahhabis and was responsible for a number of kidnappings in Chechnya, as follows: "Barayev claimed to be religious and during the war he grew a beard. However, nothing would convince me that a killer like him, who had caused so much suffering was a true Muslim. I viewed him and his followers as opportunistic thugs who exploited Islam for their own purpose, and that purpose was power and wealth. He was an insult to our faith."[118]

The same kind of resistance transferred to the Maskhadov government's attempt at co-opting the Islamist agenda. After the introduction of sharia law in February 1999, one of the founders of the Chechen nationalist movement argued, "If we want to create a nation-state, if we want to avoid degradation of the nation . . . we must refrain from attempting to implement in our lives and in our laws such rules and laws that do not correspond to the Chechen national traditions, values."[119] Another opponent to the introduction of sharia law in Chechnya, which was inspired by the Sudanese penal code, wrote a poem entitled "The African Laws," to demonstrate the non-Chechen characteristic of such laws.[120] Similarly, the move toward Islam in schools provoked local resistance, even claims that the danger to the Chechen language and culture was no longer Russian but Arabic.[121] A 1999 survey of Chechens in four districts demonstrates that only in one was the majority in favor of a sharia state.[122] Thus, while to the Islamists Maskhadov did not go far enough, to the nationalists, he went too far. The result was movement weakness: Maskhadov

117. Akaev, "Religious-Political Conflict in the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria"; and Muzayev, "Chechenskaja Respublika Ichkerija," report (IGPI, June 1998); Muzayev, "Chechenskaja Respublika Ichkerija," report (IGPI, July 1998); and Muzayev, "Chechenskaja Respublika Ichkerija," report (IGPI, October 1998).
118. Khassan Baiev, with Ruth Daniloff and Nicholas Daniloff, *The Oath: A Surgeon under Fire* (London: Simon and Schuster, 2003), p. 227.
119. Quoted in Muzayev, "Chechenskaja Respublika Ichkerija," report (IGPI, February 1999). Quote translated from Russian by author.
120. Quoted in Muzayev, "Chechenskaja Respublika Ichkerija," report (IGPI, April 1999).
121. Quoted in Muzayev, "Chechenskaja Respublika Ichkerija," report (IGPI, August 1998).
122. Quoted in Muzayev, "Chechenskaja Respublika Ichkerija," report (IGPI, March 1999).

was increasingly confronted by former field commanders, Islamist militants from Dagestan, segments of the local population, members of the Jordanian-Chechen diaspora, and foreign fighters.[123] According to one account, there were eighteen major armed forces and private armies in Chechnya in the spring and summer of 1998.[124] Indeed, Maskhadov's inability to control the different military (and political) factions within the republic, all acting in the name of the Chechen resistance movement, was key to the outbreak of the second war: Basayev and Khattab's attack into Dagestan in September 1999, unsanctioned by Maskhadov, gave Moscow added motive for reinvading Chechnya.

Although the Chechen movement, like many resistance movements, was always prone to fragmentation for a variety of reasons, including the relatively autonomous power given to the field commanders during the first war,[125] the entry of an Islamist framing of the struggle led to a clear split between a nationalist and Islamist branch of the insurgent movement. Indeed, even though the movement was fragmented, prior to Umarov's declaration of a Caucasus emirate in the fall of 2007, the movement operated with one official leader. Since then, both the nationalist London-based Akhmed Zakayev and Umarov have claimed to be its head—Zakayev with the title prime minster of the Ichkeria government in exile, and Umarov with the title emir of the Caucasus emirate.

The Islamists' framing also led to outright defections from the resistance movement and the emergence of a pro-Moscow camp, today in power in the republic. In 1999–2000, the Sufi establishment in Chechnya, led by Akhmad Kadyrov, turned against Maskhadov. Kadyrov had been a field commander under Dudayev in the first war, but he disapproved of the growing Wahhabi influence, as the following quote from 1998, when Kadyrov was still a Maskhadov ally, illustrates: "During the war in Chechnya, units of Wahhabi volunteers from Arab countries came to help us. These units were very well armed, so our Chechens willingly joined them. Many of them became adherents of that doctrine, and tried to teach it to us, saying that we were distorting Islam. . . . We tried to make peace with the 'Wahhabis'—we told them: 'Do

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123. Tishkov, *Chechnya*; Moore and Tumelty, "Foreign Fighters and the Case of Chechnya"; and Moore and Tumelty, "Assessing the Unholy Alliances in Chechnya."

124. Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr., "Weak States and Private Armies," in Mark R. Beissinger and Crawford Young, eds., *Beyond State Crisis: Postcolonial African and Eurasia in Comparative Perspective* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2002), pp. 129–160, 132–133.

125. Viatcheslav Avioutskii and Hayder Mili, "The Geopolitics of Separatism: Genesis of Chechen Field Commanders," *Central Asia and the Caucasus: Journal of Social and Political Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 20 (2003), pp. 7–13; Christoph Zürcher, *The Post-Soviet Wars: Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, and Nationhood in the Caucasus* (New York: New York University Press, 2007); and Sokirianskaia, "Governing Fragmented Societies."

what you like, but don't try to impose your convictions on us. Don't accuse us of heresy.' But unfortunately, nothing came of the dialogue."[126]

In May 2000, Russian President Vladimir Putin placed Chechnya under central control and appointed Kadyrov the administrative head of the republic, which meant that Maskhadov, despite being the elected president of the republic, was no longer recognized as its chief executive (i.e., he was only leader of the resistance movement). Kadyrov was killed four years later, but his son, Ramzan Kadyrov, who is today the pro-Moscow elected president in Chechnya, has since 2005 tried to use Sufism as a means to mobilize support for his pro-Moscow position.[127]

Thus, while the transnational insurgents who arrived in Chechnya may have strengthened the insurgent movement's resource mobilization effort in its fight against Moscow, they have also contributed to a split of the original movement into an Islamist branch and a nationalist branch, as well as defections to the Russian side (under Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov). Indeed, just as the Islamist framing in the 1990s received a mixed response from the local population, so, too, did Umarov's declaration of a Caucasus emirate in the fall of 2007.[128] The result is that the violent struggle in Chechnya is now characterized as much by Chechen-on-Chechen violence as it is by violence between Russians and Chechens.

Tactical Innovation: Radicalization

When Russian troops rolled into Grozny in the final days of 1994, the Chechens, who had inherited weapons from the Soviet army, were to some extent equipped to fight a conventional war. Soon, however, they had to retreat into the mountains and resort to guerrilla warfare, as air strikes gave the Russians the upper hand. Whereas the first war saw large-scale hostage attacks, notably the siege at a hospital in Budennovsk in June 1995 and the Kizlyar-Pervomayskoye hostage crisis in January 1996 (both in Dagestan), tactics explicitly aimed at civilians became more common in the interwar period and during the second war. Indeed, the second war was the scene of infamous large-scale attacks such as the Dubrovka/Nord-Ost theater siege in Moscow in October 2002, where more than 800 people were held hostage (129 killed,

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126. Quoted in Igor Rotar, "'Wahhabism' in the Former Soviet Union: A Real Threat, or Just an Excuse to Settle Accounts with the Opposition," *Prism* (Jamestown Foundation), August 7, 1998.
127. Liz Fuller and Aslan Doukaev, "Chechnya: Kadyrov Uses 'Folk Islam' for Political Gain," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, December 6, 2007.
128. "Chechens Weigh In on the 'Caucasus Emirate' Idea," *North Caucasus Analysis*, November 8, 2007.

mostly in the rescue operation), and the Beslan school siege in September 2004, where more than 1,100 people were held hostage, most of them children (334 killed, again many in the rescue operation). The Beslan hostage crisis was orchestrated by Basayev, who remained a commander in the Chechen insurgent movement until he was killed. Suicide bombings, which were absent from the first war and have never been part of the tradition of Chechen resistance, began in the summer of 2000 and peaked between 2003 and 2004.[129] Although the attacks were initially directed only at military targets, beginning in 2002, they also began to target civilians. In the last few years, suicide attacks have also been employed by citizens of other North Caucasus regions under the umbrella of Umarov's Islamist struggle, including the bombings of Moscow's metro in March 2010 and the December 2013 Volgograd bombings.[130]

Although it is harder to make a case for transnational insurgents driving a move toward radical tactics than it is to make the case for these outsiders driving shifts in framing—as radical tactics had been used in the early 1990s—there is evidence to suggest they brought such tactics to Chechnya via the training camps in Serzhen'-Yurt.[131] In particular, given that suicide terrorism was never part of the local repertoire of tactics, its introduction to the region after the influx of foreign fighters strongly suggests that this was an imported tactic. Yet, as Cerwyn Moore and Paul Tumelty point out, the decision to employ radical tactics ultimately rested with local resistance leaders.[132]

RESONANCE

In terms of assessing the match between local and external practices, one cannot claim there is complete congruence, as there was no use of suicide terror in the first war. This does not mean, however, that congruence was totally absent, as some of the Chechen insurgents, including Basayev, had already in the first war been willing to target civilians in hostage takings. Rather, while the transnational insurgents advocated tactics that were not used in the first war, such innovations did not wholly contradict local views on what was acceptable. Indeed, as regards hostage taking, there is a historical precedent in the region, going back to the North Caucasus people's resistance to Russian annexation in the 1700 and 1800s.[133] Traditional local norms, however, which dictate that

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129. Anne Nivat, "The Black Widows: Chechen Women Join the Fight for Independence—and Allah," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol. 28, No. 5 (May 2005), pp. 413–419; and Speckhard and Ahkmedova, "The Making of a Martyr."

130. Kathrin Hille, "Militant Group Claims Responsibility for Volgograd Attack," *Financial Times*, January 20, 2014.

131. Bakke, "Copying and Learning from Outsiders?"

132. Moore and Tumelty, "Foreign Fighters and the Case of Chechnya," pp. 426–427.

133. Thomas M. Barrett, "Lines of Uncertainty: The Frontiers of the North Caucasus," *Slavic Re-*

women and girls be respected and sheltered,[134] would prohibit the killing of women and children[135]—who were those targeted at School No. 1 in Beslan.

LOCALIZATION: GRAFTING AND PRUNING

Not all key figures in the Chechen resistance movement have embraced radical tactics. Maskhadov opposed the use of terrorist tactics, as did his immediate successor, Sadulayev. Indeed, although Sadulayev was more influenced by Wahhabism than Maskhadov and sought to broaden the struggle to encompass other regions of the North Caucasus, he was opposed to the use of terrorism and hostage takings. Such tactics, he argued, do not belong in Islam.[136] Similarly, after the Beslan school hostage crisis, in a statement posted on Chechenpress, Maskhadov called for Basayev to be put on trial for such "illegal acts."[137] These leaders' resistance to radical tactics seemed to be driven by a concern for the tactics' appropriateness—or lack thereof. Both Sadulayev and Maskhadov wanted the Chechen resistance movement to operate within the realm of international law, which was at least partly a result of instrumental considerations. Maskhadov clearly favored negotiations with Russia and a political solution to the war, and he wanted the Chechen resistance movement to "look good" in the West, as he would need Western support for a political solution. He was acutely aware that the use of terror played right into the hands of President Putin, backing his claim that the Chechen resistance movement was only a piece in the puzzle called international terrorism,[138] and hence not worthy of a seat at the negotiation table. The same is true of Zakayev, who in a statement on Chechenpress in March 2006 argued that "if the Chechen Resistance ignores the norms of international law, Chechens will be seen by many as merely bandits, robbers and murderers, something the Kremlin centre of international terrorism would want very much."[139]

Yet other key figures in the resistance movement have accepted the use of radical tactics, including Basayev and Umarov. Both the Dubrovka/Nord-Ost

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view, Vol. 54, No. 3 (Autumn 1995), p. 592; and Charles King, *The Ghost of Freedom: A History of the Caucasus* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 53–59.

134. Birgit B. Brauer, "Chechens and the Survival of Their Cultural Identity in Exile," *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (2002), pp. 387–400.

135. Yagil Henkin, "From Tactical Terrorism to Holy War: The Evolution of Chechen Terrorism, 1995–2004," *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 25, Nos. 1–2 (March/June 2006), pp. 193–203.

136. Paul Tumelty, "A Strategy for Independence," *North Caucasus Analysis*, August 3, 2005. See also "Russia's Tactics Make Chechen War Spread across Caucasus."

137. "Chechen Rebel Leader Pledges to Put Warlord Basayev On Trial," Agence France-Presse, September 24, 2004.

138. "Chechen Leader Rejects Bomb Blame," *BBC News*, December 28, 2002.

139. Available at http://www.chechenpress.co.uk/content/2008/03/16/islam_and_democracy.shtml.

theater siege and the Beslan school hostage crisis were, observers argue, used for fundraising. In both cases, the hostage takers created and released a video meant to attract funding from external sources in the Middle East by demonstrating their Islamist credentials.[140] Hence, the choice of tactics served instrumental considerations. The turn toward radical tactics, however, is also a result of such tactics being considered effective and appropriate in a fight against a much stronger adversary willing to target civilians. Indeed, the second war was characterized by a brutal campaign, including civilian targeting, on the part of the Russian forces[141]—an angle not lost on Chechen insurgents.

In a 2005 interview with the British Channel 4, Basayev reminded viewers that the civilians killed in the Beslan school hostage crisis died in the Russian rescue operation, yet justified the targeting of Russian civilians based on how these tactics were an appropriate response to tactics employed by the Russians: "We are planning Beslan-type operations in the future because we are forced to do so. Today our citizens are disappearing. Our girls disappear without a trace. They can take anyone. In order to stop this chaos we have to respond in the same way."[142]

Similarly, Umarov, who condemned the Beslan attack in 2005 and renounced the use of civilian targets in 2006,[143] has since 2008–09 condoned the targeting of Russian civilians as a response to the killing of Chechen civilians.[144] In a Kavkaz Center interview in February 2010, Umarov warned that the war would hit the Russian streets, alluding to the effectiveness of such tactics: "Blood will no longer be limited to our (Caucasus) cities and towns. The war is coming to their cities. If Russians think the war only happens on television, somewhere far away in the Caucasus where it can't reach them, inshaAllah (God willing), we plan to show them that the war will return to their homes."[145]

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140. Wilhelmsen, *When Separatists Become Islamists*, p. 45; Speckhard and Ahkmedova, "The Making of a Martyr," p. 11; and Mikhail Roshchin, "Caucasus Emirate: Virtual Myth or Reality?" *North Caucasus Analysis*, March 13, 2009.
141. See, for example, Anna Politkovskaya, *A Small Corner of Hell: Dispatches from Chechnya*, trans. Alexander Burry and Tatiana Tulchinsky (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); and Lyall, "Does Indiscriminate Violence Incite Insurgent Attacks?"
142. Shamil Basayev, "Interview of Shamil Basayev to Channel 4 News," transcript, February 4, 2005, http://www.kavkazcenter.com/eng/content/2005/02/04/3500.shtml.
143. "Babitsky Interviews Doku Umarov," *Chechnya Weekly*, July 20, 2005; and "Basayev Named Rebel Veep," *Chechnya Weekly*, June 29, 2006.
144. Cerwyn Moore, "Suicide Bombings Part of Tactical Shift by North Caucasus Rebels," *North Caucasus Analysis*, September 17, 2009; and Liz Fuller, "News Profile: Who Is Doku Umarov?" Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, April 1, 2010.
145. Dokka Abu Usman, "Interview of the Caucasus Emirate's Emir Dokka Abu Usman," transcript, February 17, 2010, http://kavkazcenter.com/eng/content/2010/02/17/11434.shtml. See also Dokka Abu Usman, "Emir Dokka Abu Usman: 'This Year Will Be Our Offensive Year,'" transcript, May 2009, http://www.kavkazcenter.com/eng/content/2009/05/17/10700.shtml.

In sum, just as there was a frame dispute between Maskhadov and Basayev in the 1997–99 period, these local leaders also had divergent views on the tactical innovation introduced by the transnational insurgents, with Basayev trying to justify the appropriateness of these tactics in light of local circumstances. This disagreement persisted until Maskhadov's death in 2005. Also Maskhadov's successor, Sadulayev, was opposed to Basayev's acceptance of radicalization of tactics, and the elite-level dispute over tactics has persisted even after Basayev's and Sadylayev's deaths, with Zakayev and Umarov taking different positions, and Umarov trying to create resonance through grafting and pruning efforts.

ACCEPTANCE AND RESISTANCE

Although it is unrealistic to expect a whole population to embrace tactics that target civilians, Basayev's and Umarov's justification of the use of radical tactics, portraying the tactics as appropriate given the Russian government's use of violence, helped the tactics resonate with segments of the population, as such enabling acceptance. Indeed, Anne Speckhard and Khapta Ahkmedova find that the primary individual motivation for suicide terrorists in Chechnya was trauma caused by experiences of violence at the hands of Russian forces, as well as a wish to seek revenge for the deaths of loved ones.[146] Their study is based on psychological autopsies of thirty-four suicide terrorist between 2000 and 2005—interviews with family members, neighbors, friends, teachers, and hostages. For twenty-seven of the thirty-four suicide terrorists studied, they find that the personal experience of trauma—either witnessing the brutal deaths of loved ones or experiences of torture—preceded joining a religious group or training camp. The Wahhabi ideology, they argue, became a "psychological first-aid to redress the trauma caused by the war."[147] Others have argued that the Russian forces' strategy of targeting Chechen civilians in so-called cleansing operations is to blame for the emergence of suicide terrorism in the second war.[148] Similarly, a Chechen rank-and-file rebel interviewed in the Channel 4 documentary *Chechnya: The Dirty War* expressed little sympathy for the victims in the Beslan school siege, pointing out that the deaths were caused by the Russian forces—and Chechens had long experience with Russian forces killing civilians. "The Russians killed in Beslan just as they kill in Chechnya," he said. "What is the difference between Chechnya and

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146. Speckhard and Ahkmedova, "The Making of a Martyr."

147. Ibid., p. 46.

148. John Reuter, *Chechnya's Suicide Bombers: Desperate, Devout, or Deceived*? (Washington, D.C.: Jamestown Foundation, 2004), http://www.jamestown.org/uploads/media/Chechen _Report_FULL_01.pdf; and Nivat, "The Black Widows."

Beslan?" A Chechen journalist reported in 2002 that local nongovernmental organizations estimate that 10 percent of the Chechen population supported the hard-line Islamists. Although support dropped in the interwar years, it increased with the outbreak of the second war, as the Wahhabis offered people the chance to seek revenge for the deaths of their loved ones.[149] Such reports suggest that tactical innovation in a radical direction, though influenced by transnational insurgents, cannot be understood in isolation from local conditions that made segments of the local population disposed to accept these tactics. In a related fashion, Monica Duffy Toft and Yuri Zhukov argue that Chechen villages that have recently experienced selective government violence are more prone to Islamist mobilization than villages not subject to such treatment.[150] Local experiences enabled an acceptance of more radical tactics—and the local insurgent leaders resorting to radical tactics knew how to graft their message accordingly.

Despite acceptance of more radical tactics among Chechens who have directly suffered and experienced losses in the wars, suicide terrorism has not been widely supported in Chechen society. For instance, there has been little or no community celebration of suicide terrorists as heroes.[151] Indeed, Speckhard and Ahkmedova find that the relatives of Chechen suicide bombers were hard-pressed to express outright support for these acts of family members or friends (although one can think of many reasons why they would be afraid to do so, such as government repression).[152] Rather, tactics such as terrorism and hostage taking have fostered local resistance to the influence of the Wahhabis, in part because the tactics have indirectly harmed Chechen civilians by delegitimizing the Chechen resistance movement and legitimizing and intensifying the counterinsurgency campaign directed at civilians under the umbrella "war

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149. Umalt Dudayev, "As the War Goes On, Fundamentalist Islamists in Chechnya Are Becoming Bolder and More Violent" (Washington, D.C.: Institute of War and Peace Reporting, December 19, 2002).

150. See Monica Duffy Toft and Yuri Zhukov, "Religious Violence in the Caucasus: Local Grievance or Global Jihad?" paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, February 17–20, 2010. Toft and Zhukov argue that Islamist violence in Chechnya does not simply mirror global jihadist campaigns; rather, it is contingent on government actions.

151. Nivat, "The Black Widows," p. 418.

152. Speckhard and Ahkmedova, "The Making of a Martyr." Although Chechen social codes advocate sheltering women, female suicide terrorists do not seem to have provoked a negative reaction from locals. Traditional norms dictate that when women travel to carry out a terror act, they do so with a chaperone, but community reactions to female suicide terrorism do not appear to differ from reactions to suicide terror in general. See Anne Speckhard and Khapta Ahkmedova, "Black Widows: The Chechen Female Suicide Terrorists," in Yoram Schweitzer, ed., *Female Suicide Bombers: Dying for Equality*? (Tel Aviv: Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University, 2006).

on terror"[153]—and in part because Chechen civilians, too, have been victims in suicide attacks and other attacks seen as influenced by the Wahhabis.[154] Politically, the Beslan school hostage crisis was followed by a period of increased centralization within the Russian Federation. Thus radical tactics have not been effective toward achieving the movement's goal—be it Chechen independence or a broader Caucasus emirate. In his memoir, Khassan Baiev, who fled to the United States after the second war broke out, writes about the Dubrovka theater siege: "Like many other people, I feared this terrible act of violence would trigger even worse reprisals against Chechens and play into the hands of President Putin, who is trying to convince the world that Chechens are all terrorists supported by al-Qaeda."[155]

Although most Chechens are appalled by the counterinsurgency campaign carried out by the Russian federal forces and pro-Moscow President Ramzan Kadyrov, which targets civilians in mop-op operations and indiscriminate shelling attacks, they do not necessarily consider radical tactics appropriate for the insurgents. In a statement to the Chechen journalist Ruslan Isayev in 2007, a young Chechen man likened Wahhabi-influenced Chechen guerrillas to bandits: "What are the guerrillas trying to prove? They're going to die, and the likelihood is that they will take others with them. They're real bandits now. . . . Don't they realize that they've lost? Perhaps all that Wahhabi doctrine has muddled their heads. If so, then it's better to destroy them than to let them go, as Wahhabism has never done the Chechens any good."[156] Despite the difficulty of making assessments about what share of the Chechen population thought one way or the other, the local population's support for Maskhadov, who until his death advocated the route of negotiation and insisted on avoiding civilian casualties, indicates that radical strategies were seen by many as unacceptable—for reasons related to either effectiveness or appropriateness.

In contrast to the new framing of the Chechen struggle, where many of the key figures in the nationalist movement grafted or pruned the outsiders' framing to fit the local context, tactical innovation in a radical direction was not adapted by all resistance leaders. Rather, it was outright rejected by key resistance leaders both on the nationalist (Maskhadov) and the Islamist sides (Sadulayev). Such a dispute over tactics at the elite level may explain why the change in framing seems to have garnered more support among the local population than did tactical innovation in a radical direction.

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153. Hughes, *Chechnya*; John Russell, *Chechnya: Russia's "War on Terror"* (London: Routledge, 2007); and Dmitry Shlapentokh, "The Rise of the Chechen Emirate?" *Middle East Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Summer 2008), pp. 49–56.
154. Speckhard and Ahkmedova, "The Making of a Martyr."
155. Baiev, *The Oath*, p. 340.
156. Ruslan Isayev, "Is the War in Chechnya Over?" *Prague Watchdog*, September 19, 2007.

Conclusion

The argument and evidence in this study point to the multifaceted influence that transnational insurgents have on domestic insurgent movements. Indeed, while transnational insurgents might boost a domestic insurgent movement's strength by bringing along fighters, weapons, know-how, and financial resources (which is typically why they are invited in the first place), they can also jeopardize a domestic movement's strength. Transnational insurgents may bring with them new ideas about the meaning of the struggle and how it should be fought—processes that social movement scholars refer to as framing and tactical innovation—but these ideas may or may not be welcomed by the local population. If the local population resists the foreign ideas, transnational insurgents can inadvertently hurt the domestic movement's strength by diminishing its ability to garner public support and maintain organizational cohesion—both of which are integral to an insurgent movement's strength. The bad news for domestic insurgent movements is that if transnational insurgents contribute to movement divisions, it is not a given that the added resources they bring will do much good for the movement's collective action.[157] Given the growing body of work pointing to how weak and fragmented insurgent movements are likely to encourage wartime violence, lengthen conflict duration, and complicate mediation and negotiation efforts, this is also bad news for states fighting insurgencies within their borders and for actors in the international community interested in conflict resolution.

The study is anchored in an empirical analysis of the Chechen wars, demonstrating how ideas and tactics brought along by foreign fighters have fueled movement divisions and a popular backlash, but such dynamics appear to be at work elsewhere, too. In the ongoing civil war in Syria, there is growing tension between the Islamist foreign fighters and the domestic rebels, whose original aim of overthrowing Bashar al-Assad's regime is not entirely congruent with that of the foreign jihadists, who are fighting for an Islamic caliphate across the Muslim world. Reports suggest that not only has the influx of jihadists led to outright clashes between foreign and local groups, but the influence of the jihadists, who have tried to impose strict Islamic codes and public executions, has alienated the local population. Even though the transnational insurgents' added resources were initially welcomed by the Syrian rebels, their influence has created a cleavage in a domestic movement already fraught with internal divisions.[158] Along the lines in this study, a fuller under-

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157. See Staniland, "Organizing Insurgency."
158. Ghaith Abdul-Ahad, "Syria: The Foreign Fighters Joining the War against Bashar al-Assad,"

standing of how Islamist fighters have influenced the Syrian struggle requires detailed analysis of how local resistance leaders have (or, seemingly, have not) tried to localize the foreigners' ideas. Indeed, from a policy perspective, an important implication of the study is that agency rests with local resistance leaders. To the degree that it is in the power of local resistance leaders to "sell" goals and tactics brought along by outsiders to the local population—and local support matters for the domestic movement's strength—international policymakers concerned about the role of foreign fighters should focus their efforts on alleviating both the wish and the need for such outside help among local resistance leaders.

Although a focus on transnational insurgents is, as argued here, embedded in the wider research program on transnational relations, scholars have only recently begun to analyze the role of such outsiders, focusing on the conditions under which they will enter a domestic struggle, as well as their motivation, origin, and destination. Indeed, although policy debates show concern about the various ways in which transnational insurgents can influence domestic struggles, little scholarship has focused on how outsiders shape the local insurgents—and whether they, indeed, strengthen them. Theoretically, the study advances research on the "violent" side of transnational relations, thus far dominated by large-n studies, by emphasizing causal mechanisms.[159] It does so by combining insights from literatures on norm diffusion, social movements, and civil wars. These insights yield two theoretical implications— beyond extending the scope of the literatures on norm diffusion and social movements to demonstrate their relevance also in nonpeaceful settings.

First, the combination of these literatures allows for a comprehensive approach to studying resonance, opening avenues for further research. Although the social movement literature long has emphasized the importance of resonance, there has been relatively little work on how it actually occurs in the diffusion process, and Acharya's work on the role of local elites helps drive research on resonance forward.[160] Indeed, there is a triadic relationship between foreign norm entrepreneurs, local norm-takers, and the local population. The theoretical discussion in this study emphasizes how foreign ideas about goals and tactics come to resonate among the locals depending on the localization effort of domestic insurgent leaders—their efforts at grafting and

Guardian, September 23, 2012; Ben Hubbard, "Extremists Take Syrian Town Near Turkey Border," *New York Times*, September 18, 2013; Liz Sly, "Foreign Extremists Dominate Syria Fight," *Washington Post*, October 1, 2013; and Catherine Philip and Nicholas Blanford, "Syrian Rebels Shun West and Side with al-Qaeda," *Times* (London), September 27, 2013.
159. Checkel, *Transnational Dynamics of Civil War.*
160. Acharya, "How Ideas Spread."

pruning new ideas and tactics to fit the local context. A fruitful avenue for further research would be to examine the possibility of a reciprocal relationship, probing whether, how, or under which conditions foreigner fighters adapt their framing and tactical innovation to the local context. In a related vein, further research might also examine whether it makes a difference how and how well the outsiders are integrated into the local context. In the case of transnational insurgents, how are they integrated into the domestic insurgent movement? Does it matter whether they enter the struggle as solo fighters, serve under the command of domestic insurgent leaders, have leadership positions, or form independent units—and, if so, how? These are questions that can further advance analyses of how foreign ideas and tactics come to resonate among the local population.

Second, the study has implications for research of civil wars. A growing body of work has pointed to the consequences of fragmented domestic insurgent movements—for conflict occurrence, violence, duration, and resolution—but scholars know less about the causes of fragmentation. The Chechen movement, like many insurgent movements, was fragmented before the transnational insurgents entered, but the movement's major split between the nationalist and Islamist branch—and Kadyrov's outright defection—cannot be understood in isolation from the transnational context. Indeed, although scholars' understanding of civil wars has benefited greatly from two separate trends in the research program in the last few years—a turn toward focusing on the transnational aspects of domestic struggles and a turn toward examining micro dynamics and intra-group relations—this study points to the importance of integrating these trends.