Trajectories of Governance:
A Framework for Analysis and Evidence from the North Caucasus

Sasha Klyachkina[1]

Abstract:
How is governance organized in the North Caucasus? Specifically, what are the alternatives to state authority and how do citizens encounter them alongside, or instead of, state administrators? Despite a growing recognition that the state is not the only provider of goods and order, conventional frameworks prioritize state or non-state authorities rather than systematically comparing authorities' interjections into citizens' lives. When scholars do incorporate hybrid governance arrangements, they often focus on a narrow range of governance domains, falling short in capturing the heterogeneous, at times Janus-faced ways in which citizens encounter state and ostensibly non-state authorities. By unpacking the relationships between state and ostensibly non-state authorities across domains, this paper presents an analytical framework for governance. Using original survey and interview data from three sub-national republics in the North Caucasus, I apply the framework to elucidate what communities are able to provide for themselves and where informal or state authorities interject, discerning between competing descriptions of local governance. I show that while state authorities relatively consistently regulate extraction and coercion, the republics exhibit significant variation in who provides infrastructure, regulates disputes, and manages spatial practices. Aggregating across dimensions, I argue that all three cases can be characterized as multi-layered governance arrangements, but Chechnya is best characterized as a case of centralized governance, Dagestan as polycentric governance, and Ingushetia as mediated governance.

[1] Postdoctoral Fellow, UW-Madison, Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia. Contact: klyachkina@wisc.edu. Draft prepared for Policy & Political Economy (PPE) Workshop at Center for Governance and Markets at the University of Pittsburgh. February 27th, 2020.

Scholars have advanced numerous theories explaining the costs and benefits of direct versus indirect rule.[2] The distinction captures the extent of autonomy state elites grant, ranging from direct rule by state bureaucrats to reliance on intermediaries who rule on the state's behalf.[3] However, bundled within the concepts are a diversity of authorities and institutional arrangements, resulting in conceptual confusion. This paper extends existing literature to develop a framework for analyzing what communities are able to achieve on their own and in which domains state and non-state authorities interject.[4] Bridging literature on decentralization, non-state governance, and state-building, it pushes beyond dichotomous characterizations of state-society relations to conceptualize and empirically assess governance from the perspective of citizens. By applying the framework to three neighboring republics in the North Caucasus, it reveals heretofore overlooked variation and contradictions in how citizens encounter authorities, despite similarities in the republics' formal institutions, socioeconomic characteristics, geographic terrain, and historical governance trajectories.

Scholarship on indirect rule commonly equates it with decentralization, focusing on the spatial or territorial dimension of governance.[5] In the post-colonial context, this identifies the "power of territorially-delimited entities within the internationally recognized boundaries of existing states to exercise public policy functions independently of other sources of authority in this state, but subject to its overall legal order."[6] Scholars break decentralization down further, differentiating between administrative, political, and fiscal policies.[7]

[2] Hechter 2000; Boone 2003; Ziblatt et al 2011; Soifer 2015; Bakke 2015
[3] Naseemullah and Staniland 2014
[4] Several scholars, most notably Boone (2003) and Murtazashvili (2016), analyze governance by incorporating different units of analysis and state and non-state authorities. I build on the logic underpinning their theoretical approaches.
[5] Falletti 2010; Ziblatt et al 2011
[6] Wolff 2013: 5
[7] Treisman 2007; Falleti 2010

Mapping decentralization provides important insight about who governs over which domains *within the state,*[8] but examining the state alone is insufficient to explain governance. An estimated 36% of the world's population live under traditional political institutions - "institutions whose legitimacy is based in part on their association with customary modes of governing a community."[9] As a result, there is a growing recognition that the state is not the only provider of security, welfare goods, or social order, particularly in territories of "limited statehood"[10] and armed conflict.[11] Who governs is not just important for accurate description but impacts prospects for peace,[12] as well as state capacity, equity of access to social welfare, and experiences of citizenship.[13] Yet, with several notable exceptions,[14] typologies of indirect rule do not differentiate as to whether authority is devolved to state or non-state actors.

Instead, existing typologies offer powerful frameworks to map *either* the relationships between state and non-state actors,[15] or the vertical balance of power between central and local state actors.[16] Moreover, in applying the frameworks scholars commonly focus on specific governance domains, overlooking contradictions that are evident when governance is conceptualized and assessed multidimensionally.[17] Providing important and detailed insights into questions of extraction, coercion, property rights, and welfare provision, such accounts fall short of capturing the heterogeneous, and at times Janus-faced, logics through which citizens

[8] Beyond its importance for understanding the intergovernmental distribution of responsibilities and resources, accurately capturing decentralization is necessary to understand political accountability, goods provision (Seabright 1996) collective action (Enikolopov and Zhuravskaya 2003) and secessionist demands (Siroky et al 2013; Siroky 2015; Bakke 2015).

[9] Baldwin and Holzinger 2019: 6.

[10] Menkhaus 2007; Raeymaekers et al. 2008; Themner and Utas 2016

[11] Arjona et al 2015; Lessing 2018

[12] Mustasilta 2019

[13] Cammett and MacLean 2014

[14] Boone 2003 explicitly addresses both dimensions at the local level. I build on her conceptualization but, as expanded upon later in the paper, argue for the need to deconstruct state/nonstate dichotomies.

[15] Cammett and MacLean 2014; Tajima 2014; Post et al 2017; Mustasilita 2018

[16] Treisman 2007; Falletti 2010

[17] Tilly 1975; Mann 1984; Soifer 2008

encounter state and ostensibly non-state authorities in their daily interactions across domains. Ignoring these contradictions risks mislabeling and, in turn, misunderstanding governance.

Bridging research on non-state governance with scholarship that conceptualizes the state multidimensionally and spatially, this paper analyzes governance in three neighboring subnational republics in the North Caucasus – Chechnya, Dagestan, and Ingushetia – to make two contributions. First, the paper offers an analytical framework that elucidates governance. Moving beyond dichotomous characterizations of state-society relations, the framework asks: who governs, and how? Privileging citizens' perspective, the approach forgoes assumptions about which actors are relevant to investigate the question empirically, allowing for a systematic comparison of the relative weight of state and ostensibly non-state authorities on citizens' lives.

Second, the paper applies the framework to offer a descriptive account of governance in the North Caucasus, supported with original survey and interview data collected in each republic over nine months of immersive fieldwork. In focusing on description, I follow Gerring who argued that "in those circumstances where knowledge of a topic is minimal, description must proceed independently of causal propositions."[18] Until recently, the security situation and distrust of research goals made it prohibitively challenging to conduct representative surveys in Chechnya and Ingushetia[19] and the region more broadly was described as an information vacuum.[20] The empirical data in this paper begins to fill this gap relying on data from interviews with local scholars, journalists, teachers, librarians, and informal authorities, among others, and survey evidence gathered by recruiting, training, and overseeing local survey enumerators in partnership with local supervisors. Improving substantive knowledge of the region uncovers new

[18] Gerring 2012: 733
[19] Haikin 2003, Siroky et al 2013, and Lazarev 2018 are notable exceptions.
[20] Siroky and Dzutsev 2012

puzzles and opens the door for new lines of inquiry such as: what explains both variation and continuities in governance trajectories? To what extent did the armed conflicts in the post-Soviet period reshape governance? The analytical framework I propose deepens our knowledge of the cases at hand while advancing scholarly approaches to governance from citizens' perspective.

I. The North Caucasus in the Literature

In applying the framework to describe governance in the North Caucasus, the paper reveals overlooked variation in the sub-national relationships between state and ostensibly non-state authorities and challenges existing characterizations of state-society relations. While informal relationships structure governance in Russia more broadly,[21] scholars commonly point out that in the North Caucasus the state is "merely one reference point for societal integration among others"[22] like religious leaders and elders. To establish control over the peripheral republics, central state elites rule by "empowering [local actors] to control the territory and govern on behalf of this state" and regulate society "via a semi-formalised political institution of ethnic quotas and resulting patronage."[23] This suggests governance in the region is organized indirectly, delegating authority to a range of local and informal actors. Often characterizations extend to claims that informality makes the region particularly difficult to govern and a site of "stubborn resistance."[24]

Indeed, dating back to the early 1800s, informal authorities helped allocate scarce resources and regulate social order in the North Caucasus. Through the mid-1920s, elected village assemblies, under the guide of elders and Muslim clerics, convened meetings at the

[21] Ledeneva (2013: 4) characterizes Russia a *sistema* that penetrates formal state institutions but also serves "to control resources and to mobilise cadres."
[22] Perovic 2018: 13
[23] Koehler et al 2016: 385
[24] Ibid: 325.

mosque on Fridays to discuss community matters. During Imam Shamil's rule (1840-1856), local naibs exercised executive and military power. They collected taxes, implemented decisions of shari'a courts, monitored compliance with Shamil's orders, and regulated internal conflicts.[25] However, beginning with the Caucasian Wars (1818-1864), the Russian Empire, and then the Soviet State, sought to disrupt and co-opt informal authority hierarchies. Through administrative-territorial realignments, collectivization, deportations, targeted killing of intellectuals and clerics, and repurposing of religious spaces, state policies sought to "make society legible"[26] and, increasingly, to subjugate it. While restructuring society was not a linear process, communities found themselves increasingly unable to escape state encroachments and "militant atheism."[27] After decades of Soviet rule, the strength of informal authorities, their relationships to the state, and capacity to influence governance cannot be assumed.

Further, nearly immediately after Soviet collapse, armed conflicts broke out across the republics, uprooting existing governance arrangements. By the early 2000s, elites in Moscow sought to recentralize by "buying off provincial officials and deploying the state's substantial repressive apparatus to sweep up suspected subversives," redeploying historically entrenched strategies.[28] As a result, formal policies dictated fiscal and political centralization. After repeated shocks over the last several decades and challenges conducting systematic research in the region, the organization of governance in the region is uncertain. Moreover, while Moscow often adopts a unitary approach to the region[29] and "conditions of the 'power vertical' and sub-national

[25] Gammer 1994: 306. Also see Bobrovnikov (2002), Sokirianskaia (2009), and Perovic (2018) for detailed accounts of state and informal governance before and during Soviet rule.
[26] Scott 1998
[27] Smolkin 2018
[28] King and Menon 2010: 22
[29] Evidenced, for example, by Moscow's 2010 "Strategy for the Socioeconomic Development of the North Caucasus Federal District Until 2025"

authoritarianism,"[30] as well as socioeconomic and historical similarities constrain the extent of variation between republics, the question requires empirical study.

Looking beyond one-dimensional tropes and normative assessments of governance, scholars recently turned their attention to understanding the organization and practices of governance in the region. Yet, important descriptive questions remain unanswered. First, while some scholars claim that the non-state actors maintain power in contemporary governance arrangements,[31] others suggest that they no longer lay claim to their historic authority.[32] Second, a parallel question exists regarding which level of government holds authority. Though Article 131–1 of the Russian Constitution assures local governance, Moscow's increased centralization efforts raise questions about how local governance operates in practice.[33] Given that descriptive and causal findings are likely to change based on which unit of analysis is selected,[34] understanding the level at which governance operates is imperative to understanding both it and its impact. Finally, research on land tenure[35] and dispute resolution[36] institutions in the North Caucasus has begun to problematize uniform characterizations of state-society relations. The studies demonstrate that rather than a hegemonic state which has saturated public space or a strong society mobilizing resistance, heterogeneous logics of governance operate in the region. Local actors, state and non-state, are neither fully subjugated to Moscow nor local strongmen.

Yet, because the studies focus on single domains of governance and systematic empirical data to-date is limited, we lack a comprehensive analysis of governance. By explicitly and systematically mapping governance across actors and domains, this this article elucidates the

30 Gel'man and Ryzhenkov 2011: 451
31 Souleimanov and Aliyev 2015; Lazarev 2018
32 Sokiriansakaia 2005
33 Gel'man and Ryzhenkov 2011
34 Soifer 2019
35 Koehler et al 2017
36 Lazarev 2019

organization of governance in the North Caucasus. In the next section, I present the analytical framework, making explicit the underlying dynamics of governance and clarifying concepts grouped within indirect and decentralized governance.

II. Analytical Framework: Who Governs and How?

Under the current international order, an increasing number of states possess juridical statehood but exhibit significant variation in their empirical capacities and who governs within their borders.[37] Noting that states fail to meet the criteria of a Weberian "monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory" is, therefore, insufficient to understand whether and how citizens receive welfare goods, resolve disputes, and regulate social order. Doing so requires analyzing the capacities, limitations, and mechanisms of non-state governance as well. The continued influence of non-state authorities sparked an extensive research agenda on non-state and hybrid governance over the last decade.[38] Most studies focus on areas of "limited statehood" where "state institutions...are neither strong nor functioning"[39] or territories are fractured by armed conflict.[40] These accounts demonstrate that non-state actors "are not stopgap measures or substitutes in the absence of a strong state, but rather arenas of authority and sites of politics in and of themselves."[41]

However, the burgeoning research program rarely compares the role of authorities comprehensively, most commonly focusing either on a narrow set of actors *or* governance domains. The literature on non-state governance traditionally focused on the roles of *unarmed*

[37] Jackson and Rosberg 1982
[38] Menkhaus 2007; Raeymaekers et al. 2008; Hagmann and Péclard 2010; Mampilly 2011; Cammett and MacLean 2014; Arjona 2016; Murtazashvili 2016; Post et al 2017; Kasfir et al 2018
[39] Themner and Utas 2016: 261
[40] Staniland 2012; Arjona et al 2015; Kasfir et al 2017
[41] Lust 2018: 333

non-state actors, producing invaluable insight into the roles of customary authorities,[42] religious figures,[43] business leaders,[44] and communities and family networks.[45] More recently, conflict and post-conflict scholars brought attention to the role of *armed* non-state actors, like rebels, warlords, and criminals in governance.[46] This work demonstrates the broad range of non-state actors governing alongside and beyond the state but raises additional questions about the relationships between them and the conditions under which different actors become relevant. Other studies incorporate a range of authorities, but most commonly focus on a single dimension of governance. These accounts provide powerful insights into extraction and economic regulation,[47] security,[48] welfare,[49] and dispute resolution,[50] demonstrating the ability of non-state actors to both inhibit and foster development and democracy. Moreover, focusing on a single authority or single dimension of governance provides a depth and detail that is impossible to attain when zooming out.

However, while governance is sometimes characterized by high economies of scale, such that the authorities regulating one domain also govern broadly,[51] the state-building and rebel governance literatures have recently challenged this assumption,[52] suggesting a systematic comparison of different domains and logics of governance is necessary to understand it broadly.

[42] Lund 2003; Fanthorpe 2005; Baldwin 2015; Comaroff and Comaroff 2018; Mustasilta 2019
[43] Nagata 2006; Jones Luong 2017; Lazarev 2018
[44] Raeymaekers et al 2008; Sweet 2017
[45] Singerman 1995; Collins 2004; Schatz 2004; Tsai 2007
[46] Reno 1998; Marten 2012; Mukhopadhyay 2014; Driscoll 2015; Arjona et al 2015; Arjona 2016; Themner and Utas 2016; Kasfir et al 2017; Duran-Martinez 2018; Lessing 2018
[47] Walraet 2008; van Den Boogaard et al 2018; Lust and Rakner 2018; Cheng 2018
[48] Avant 2005; Raeymakers et al 2008
[49] Cammett 2014; Cammett and MacLean 2014; Post et al. 2017
[50] Mamdani 1996; Staradubrovskaya and Sokolov 2013; Kazenin 2014, 2017; Varshaver and Kruglova 2015; Lake 2017; Lazarev 2018
[51] Alesina and Spolaore 2003
[52] Soifer 2008; Centeno et al 2013; Arjona 2016; Murtazashvili 2016; Morgan and Orloff 2017; Heathershaw and Schatz 2018

Adopting a multimethod approach that combines systematic quantitative survey data with qualitative interviews, I build on this research, particularly drawing inspiration from several studies[53] and edited volumes,[54] to provide a more comprehensive picture of governance that captures the interactions between actors across domains. Such an approach centers citizens' perspective by capturing the range of actors with whom citizens interact and the alternatives available to them as they seek to fill their needs.

2.1 Who Governs?

The first step in assessing governance is mapping the relevant actors and the relationships between them. This step removes presumptions about who governs or, at a minimum, forces the researcher to justify their selection. Making this question explicit and including the range of relevant actors pushes from questions of whether an actor governs to assessing their relative contribution to governance. For example, our understanding of a community in which the state does not regulate security would change if we also learned that informal community organizations do control security; we would understand it differently still if we learned that the ostensibly informal organizations are state proxies. We can only learn this if we work to observe and inquire who is responsible for security, a descriptive inference that can be challenging to make given actors' strategic attempts to manipulate information about their behaviors.[55]

To characterize actors, I situate them on two dimensions: their degree of embeddedness and formality. The level of *embeddedness* captures how connected an actor is to the local

[53] Lund 2006; Menkhaus 2007; Arjona 2016; Murtazashvili 2016

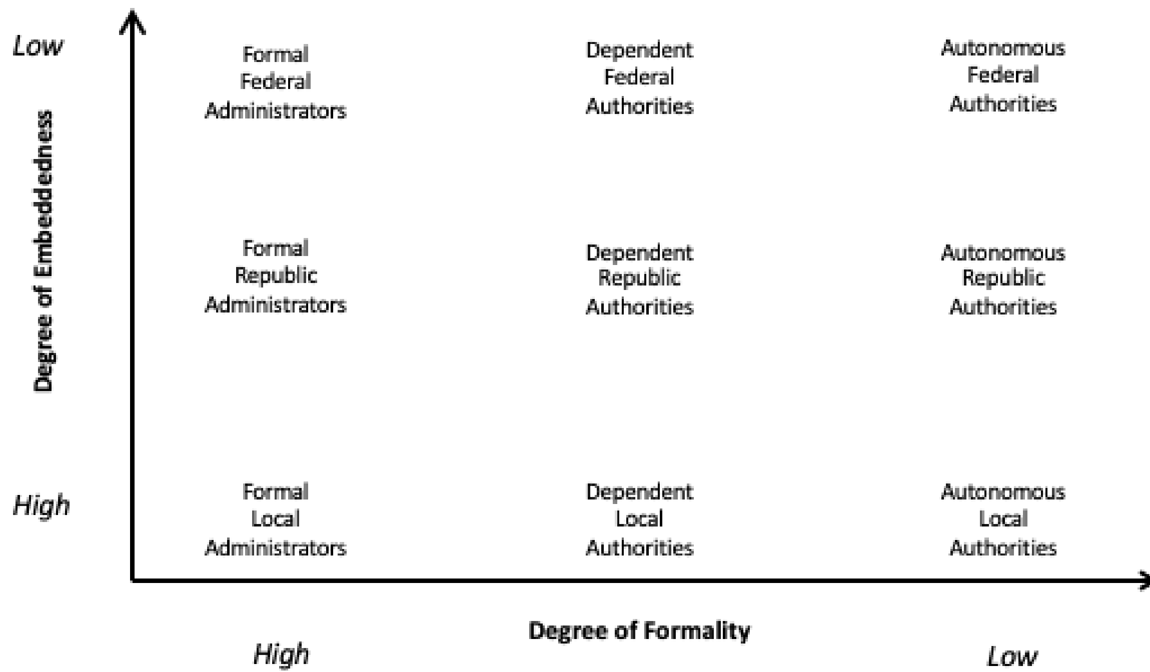
[54] Bellagamba and Klute 2008; Raeymakers et al 2008; and Hagmann and Peclard 2011. The edited volumes are notable exceptions that offer a comprehensive framework for studying governance. However, since the empirical chapters each tackle a different case with a different focus, the reader cannot compare how the different dimensions of governance or actors interact.

[55] See Brass (1997) on challenges of attributing responsibility for violence. While violent settings create unique challenges for identifying who is responsible for specific behaviors, these challenges extend to low-information, authoritarian, and post-conflict contexts.

community, focusing on where they are situated in the vertical hierarchy of authorities. Actors who are embedded in the community can be expected to operate with different knowledge, resources, and constraints than those who are not.[56] The level of *formality*, on the other hand, captures the degree to which an actor's authority depends on state institutions or a power-basis outside the state. Instead of assuming a dichotomous separation between state and non-state actors, I separate non-state authorities into *autonomous* and *dependent* categories. When the state institutionally regulates or co-opts nonstate authorities, I classify them as dependent.[57] Empirically this is clearest when authorities receive their appointment or salary from the state and enact state policies. If, on the other hand, authorities are not accountable to the state, I classify them as autonomous. Rather than capturing hybrid governance as commonly conceptualized, where independent state and nonstate actors co-produce governance, this variation in formality highlights the possibility that the actors themselves may not be autonomous, separating cases where ostensibly non-state actors work on the state's behalf. Mapping where actors fall on these two dimensions minimizes misattribution for governance and helps contextualize who should be considered a state actor and who should not. I situate actors in Figure 1 below. As discussed later, not all of these actors may be relevant in every case.

[56] Moody and White 2003

[57] Elischer (2019) further breaks down five strategies states use to manage Salafi religious communities that can be more broadly applied to state management of ostensibly non-state actors.



2.2 Domains of Governance

While the two dimensions above helps understand the relevant actors, which authorities matter and their roles may vary across domains of governance. A multidimensional conceptualization and measurement scheme allows for more accurate description and increases the analytical power of explanations.[58] Looking across domains of governance also helps understand whether governance practices enhance or undermine each other, multiplying control over civilians or creating spaces for agency. In addition to two commonly studied dimensions, extraction and coercion, I incorporate dispute resolution, goods provision, and spatial practices, to capture both the material and the more performative aspects of governance.

Provision of basic goods, such as infrastructure, education, and healthcare, is a commonly

[58] Soifer 2015: 16.

studied dimension of state-citizen relations, with dramatic variation in actors involved.[59] Social contract models of state-building treat goods provision as necessary for civilians to forgo part of their autonomy,[60] assuming that legitimacy flows from goods provision with actors competing to achieve legitimacy among civilians. Models that do not equate goods provision with legitimacy nevertheless suggest that it can, at a minimum, create dependency among the population and displace rivals.[61] Thus, provision of goods and services is a key to understanding how and whether individuals meet their needs and the relationship between authorities and citizens.

Whereas goods provision captures the distributive dimension of governance, authorities may also be concerned with creating a regulatory framework to reduce their level of uncertainty.[62] Examining dispute resolution institutions provides insight into this framework and the mechanisms through which authorities seek to establish control and compliance, both within their ranks and over the population. This is telling of the extent and type of intervention authorities seek into society, delineating the boundaries of the public and private spheres. [63] Dispute resolution institutions are equally important for citizens, helping deter conflict and regulate it when it erupts.[64] As Charrad (2001: 5), summarizes law "does not determine what people do, but it restricts their choices." Understanding to whom citizens turn in order to resolve disputes and who has final judgment over decision-making, especially in a context of multiple legal orders, reveals who has the authority to make rules and regulate behavior.[65]

My third dimension focuses on regulation of spatial practices, examining whether and

[59] Post et al 2017
[60] Hechter 2000; Bakke et al 2014
[61] Albertus et al 2018
[62] Cheng 2018; Lake 2018
[63] Shapiro 1981; Hussin 2008
[64] Arjona 2016
[65] Helfand 2015

how authorities achieve the "political, physical and symbolic dominance of space."[66] Drawing on Asef Bayat's "street politics,"[67] this forefronts whether and how authorities try to regulate public spaces and citizens' behavior within them. Though scholars most commonly describe *state* control over spaces and symbolic displays,[68] research on rebel governance demonstrates that non-state actors similarly deploy symbols, rituals, and rhetorical strategies to "reduce probability of resistance that coercion can engender, boost legitimacy and fosters civilian collaboration."[69] Moreover, non-state unarmed actors, like religious and customary authorities, may contest and lobby for regulation of public spaces, attire, and behavior, seeking to delineate a different set of boundaries between the public and private realm than the state.

In the post-Soviet space, this commonly manifests itself as a competition between Soviet, secular, and religious symbols and representations.[70] Just as the Bolsheviks sought the destruction of religious spaces and symbols,[71] authorities in the post-Soviet period have worked to reclaim control over public spaces and behaviors, though to varying degrees and success. Such contestations are more broadly observable in debates over confederate statues and flags in the US, Islamic State control over monuments and dress in Syria, and memorials in post-genocide Rwanda. Examining the extent to which authorities invest in dominating spatial politics situates this domain as central, not epiphenomenal, to governance.

I incorporate these three domains alongside conventionally studied coercion and extraction. After all, "states are not only the product and realm of bureaucrats, policies, and

[66] Heathershaw and Schatz 2017
[67] Bayat 2013
[68] Wedeen 1999; Heathershaw and Schatz 2017; Centeno and Ferrero 2013. I adopt a more narrow focus than many of these works by focusing on the physical manifestations of authorities' regulations rather than culture or all of the ways in which authorities seek to establish legitimacy.
[69] Mampilly 2011.
[70] Matveeva 2009
[71] Smolkin 2018

institutions, but also of imageries, symbols and discourse."[72] The focus on coercion and extraction dates to classical accounts of state-building in Europe.[73] Extraction specifically has come to be treated as the ultimate, and often sole, measure of state[74] and increasingly non-state,[75] governance. As Margaret Levi argued, "whatever the rulers ends, revenue is necessary to attain them" (1988: 2). Given the centrality of coercion and extraction to understanding how citizens encounter authorities and how those authorities exercise power, I do not suggest ignoring them. Instead, I propose a framework that broadens the scope of beyond them, transferring assumptions of who governs and how into empirical questions. In addition to highlighting points of convergence and contradiction, these dimensions represent the various arenas where actors may seek compliance and the indirect ways in which they may practice coercion that manifest outside the use of physical force. As several recent studies point out, even in cases where violence is foundational to order, authorities utilize a broader range of practices and institutions to illicit control, but these have received less attention.[76]

III. Case Selection and Research Methods

Proceeding from this multidimensional approach to governance, I leverage original interview and survey data to map how citizens experience governance across three republics in Russia's North Caucasus - Chechnya, Dagestan, and Ingushetia. Analyzing sub-national governance in the post-Soviet space examines a context of a historically a strong state, where citizens had "experienced Leviathan."[77] Yet, as mentioned previously, the extent to which Soviet rule displaced nonstate capacities and informal institutions is unresolved.

[72] Hagmann and Peclard 2011: 4
[73] Tilly 1985; Olson 2000
[74] Fearon and Laitin 2003; Thies 2005; Slater 2010
[75] Lust and Rakner 2018
[76] Albertus et al 2018; Lewis et al 2018
[77] Heathersaw and Schatz 2017: 12

Examining the configuration of governance in the post-Soviet North Caucasus offers a chance to study cases least likely to exhibit variation in governance according to conventional accounts. The three republics share a range of structural and historic similarities: an institutional legacy of the Soviet Union, and Russia specifically; a shared history of customary rule and Islamic influence[78] that empowered religious authorities; similar methods of formal administration and legal status within the Russian Federation; comparable mountainous terrain on Russia's periphery; similarities in socioeconomic conditions with high levels of poverty and unemployment and a heavy reliance on federal subsidies; and state-formation under the same global order, shaped by simultaneous international developments. In fact, Chechnya and Ingushetia were a single administrative unit until 1992 when Ingushetia split off and became its own republic within the Russian Federation, making these two cases particularly similar.

To examine governance, I gathered multi-method data over repeated fieldwork trips totaling nine months between 2014 and 2018. While mostly living with local residents and observing their experiences of governance, I conducted 91 interviews across Chechnya, 71 interviews across Dagestan, and 32 interviews across Ingushetia. Through semi-structured interviews, my interlocuters and I discussed the types of problems that arose in their community, how, if, and by whom they were solved, and how this has changed across time. I asked about community meetings, who organizes them, who participates, what types of topics are discussed, and when, if ever, issues escalate to involve actors beyond the community. Letting my interviewees guide the conversation, I interjected to ask follow-up questions, seeking to understand the conditions under which individuals encountered different authorities.[79] At times

[78] Predominantly the Shaafi school of Sunni Islam though it was introduced earliest in Dagestan
[79] A part of the larger project focused on the armed conflicts in the 1990s. I do not delve into that data here but it likely impacted my overall conversations. Since I organized the interviews across time periods, I mostly asked if

that I assumed the lead, I asked specific questions about community infrastructure, disputes, and regulation of public behavior and spaces. I also took notes about the communities I visited, marking monuments, dress, and the condition of infrastructure and public spaces.

During my final trip, I recruited and trained teams of local survey enumerators in each republic to conduct a household survey. Conducting interviews prior to starting the survey helped determine which questions would be too sensitive, which dimensions to ask about, and how to phrase questions in a way that captured the underlying concept, improving measurement validity.[80] For example, interviews helped create dispute resolution vignettes that reflected actual conflicts individuals encounter. Additionally, having an established network helped implement the survey since many enumerators only felt comfortable working within their districts.

The survey used a multistage stratified sampling protocol to obtain a diverse republic-level sample targeted to match Census demographics. The first stratum divided each republics' registered settlements, excluding depopulated mountainous settlements, according to terrain and population, with the addition of ethnic heterogeneity in Dagestan. Next, within settlements, the number of respondents selected was proportional to the population census[81] and used gender and age quotas to mirror the population distribution above the age of 18. In Chechnya, the survey included 1148 respondents from four of the five main cities and forty-nine villages from thirteen of the fourteen districts in the republic. In Dagestan the survey included 1333 respondents in the eight major cities as well as 29 villages in twenty of the forty-one districts in the republic. In Ingushetia, the survey had 611 respondents from the five main cities and eight villages from

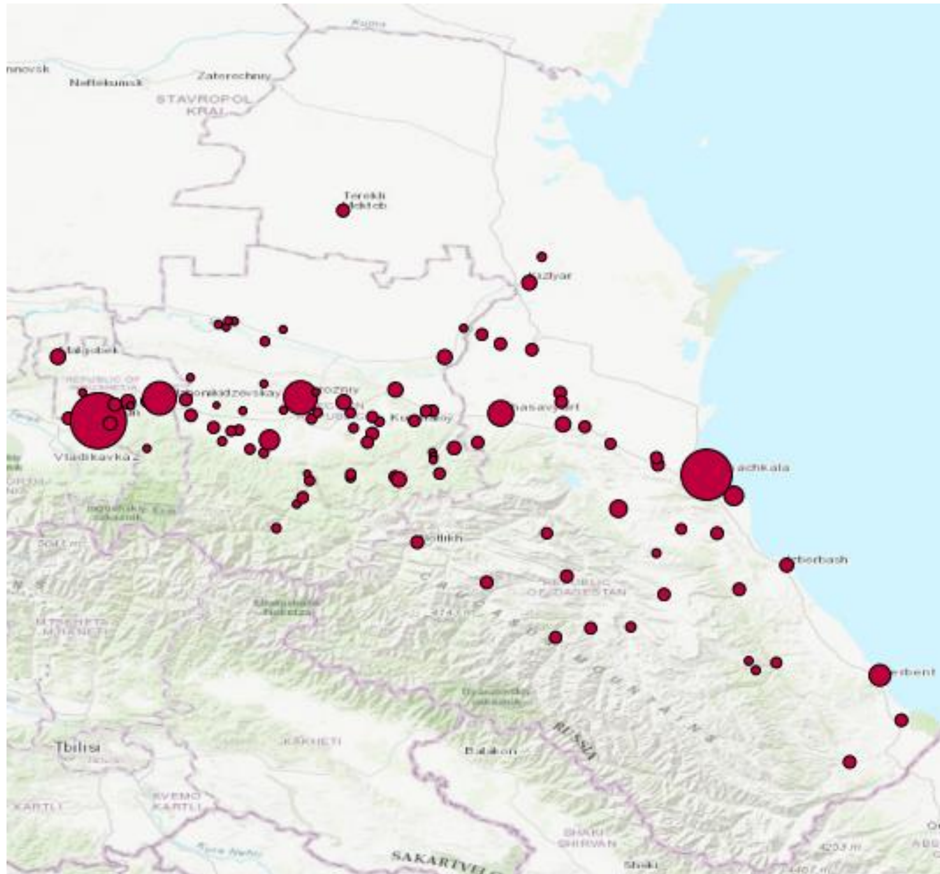
there was violence in the community during that time period, and asked follow-up questions if the interviewee seemed comfortable discussing it. This part of the interviewee was always the least structured.

[80] Morton and Williams 2010: 265; Seawright 2016: 53

[81] With the exception of Dagestan where the census is widely known to overestimate the rural population. After working with local economists and academics, I oversampled urban areas such that roughly half of the sample would be urban.

three of the republic’s four districts. The sampling is displayed below with locations proportional to the number of respondents.

Figure 2: Survey Sampling



Survey questions covered governance, community and authority characteristics, armed conflict, individual participation, and demographics. The survey allows for systematic collection of a breadth of information about citizens’ interactions with numerous authorities. Interviews, on the other hand, allowed for deeper conversations that better grasp citizens’ experiences and interpretations of governance. Pairing interviews and survey data also helps compare information given to myself – an outsider – with that gathered by local residents. I expect this data is more rigorous than that generated by the state, which fails to capture insights on non-state actors and is

riddled with inaccuracies due to skewed incentives and limited bureaucratic capacities.[82] A potential concern, nevertheless, is that residents' descriptions of governance are impacted by governance itself. For example, an actors' coercive capacity may push respondents to answer in line with the actors' preferred narratives. While this cannot be fully discounted, immersion and interview data are particularly well-suited to capturing sensitive matters.[83] I aim to further address it by paying attention to mismatches between survey data and interviews.

IV. From Concept to Measurement: Governance in the North Caucasus

How does governance look in Chechnya, Dagestan, and Ingushetia? This section applies the analytical framework outlined above to answer this question. First, it outlines the relevant actors, describing them with attention to their embeddedness and formality. Second, it lays out who governs across each of the aforementioned dimensions in each republic. Finally, I aggregate this information to describe the overall governance configuration in each republic.

4.1 Actors

Interviews and open-ended survey responses identify village, republic, and federal administrators as the main the formal authorities in each republic, listed from highest to lowest degree of embeddedness. Local police, court officers, and federal security services were also mentioned, though citizens generally encounter them less frequently, particularly in rural areas. Beyond formal actors within the state, responses also highlighted the importance of religious authorities, elders, business elites, and informal community networks. I address each in turn and a table in the appendix summarizes the authorities in each republic.

Each republic has a formally recognized Spiritual Board of Muslims (SBM), which has historically had a mutually beneficial relationship with state elites. Unlike other regional SBMs

[82] Herrera and Kapur 2007
[83] Fuiji 2010

in Russia, those in the North Caucasus, however, are not under control of central authorities, making the highest relevant level of analysis the republic.[84] However, while in Chechnya, religious authorities are dependent on state elites—unlikely to receive their position without state approval—the relationship is more variable in Ingushetia and Dagestan. In Chechnya, the Mufti, the republic representative of the SBM, holds the title of Advisor to the Head of Chechen Republic and *qadis,* heads of shari'a courts, describe their work as executing orders of Chechnya's President. A local scholar summarized the relationship: "Imams retain their authority and people continue to go to them to solve problems – family disputes, even settling blood feuds. But they have also become representatives of the state, enacting its rules and decisions."[85] A previous administrator of mountain village, where we may expect less state penetration, similarly stated that village religious authorities are "appointed and paid"[86] by the state.

In Dagestan and Ingushetia, on the other hand, dependent and autonomous religious authorities work openly. In addition to conflicts between religious authorities, both Dagestan and Ingushetia had direct confrontations between state officials and the Muftiat, with Muftiat-backed parties challenging state officials in elections in 2016. Additionally, in both of the republics, autonomous mosques and imams operate outside the SBM hierarchy. Autonomous imams include highly popular clerics who attract thousands at their services such as Khamzat Chumakov and Isa Tsechoev. Attempted state and SBM interventions have triggered widespread backlash and protests. Thus, while in Chechnya, most religious authorities are dependent on the state, in Ingushetia and Dagestan these relationships are situation-specific and fluctuating;

[84] As a result, federal dependent and autonomous authorities are not relevant in these cases. There is a uniting organization at the level of the North Caucasus but it has minimal involvement and Dagestan's SBM officially withdrew its membership in 2017.
[85] Interview 87 2018 Chechnya
[86] Interview 63 2018 Chechnya

despite state attempts at control, a significant portion of religious authorities operate autonomously.

A parallel dynamic exists with elders. Despite each republics' creation of formal councils of elders between 2010 and 2012, elders' authority and autonomy varies. In Chechnya, the daughter of a well-respected elder described how her arrest symbolized that the authority of elders has been overtaken by the authority of young men with guns.[87] There are rare accounts of public autonomous acts, such as several elders from Kurchaloy testifying against the arrest of human rights leader Oyub Titiyev in 2018, but more often elders are mobilized to carry out state decrees. In Dagestan, elders rarely hold authority in villages and, as a local ethnographer described, have minimal impact on decision-making. Finally, in Ingushetia, elders have the greatest relevance and autonomy, evident in a group of elders creation of a parallel, independent council when state officials created the Council of Elders.

Beyond religious and customary authorities - the most prominent non-state actors - business elites and informal networks also play a role in governance. There are numerous autonomous business elites in Dagestan, such as Suleyman Kerimov and the Magomedov brothers, and to a lesser degree the Gutseriyev brothers in Ingushetia. In Chechnya, accounts consistently describe state representatives coercing Chechen businessmen, both within and beyond the republic, to contribute money to the state-run "humanitarian fund" and for specific state projects; less common but also prevalent is state seizure of businesses. This suggests that in Chechnya business elites are more dependent on the state.

Finally, informal networks such as community and kinship organizations participate in governance. Some of these, like djamaats in Dagestan, are territorially limited and often include

[87] Interview 81 2018, Chechnya

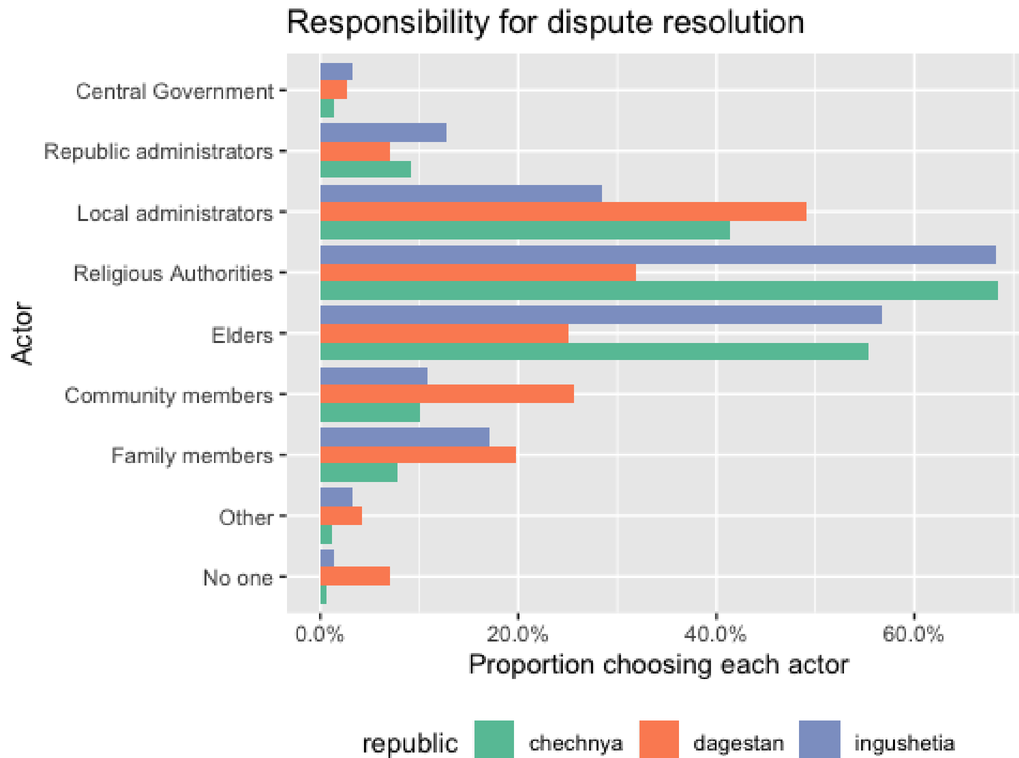
representatives of several kinship structures; others like teips or tuhums are based on extended family relations and, thus, more likely to be dispersed throughout the republic. Members of these diffuse networks come together at funerals and weddings or when larger conflicts arise. Given their diffuse nature and large size, while these networks may align with the state or opposition, they do not fall neatly into one camp.

4.2 Dimensions

How do citizens encounter the actors described? Which authorities regulate which domains of governance? I leverage interviews and survey evidence to describe each dimension. For the survey questions, enumerators asked the question in an open-ended format and let respondents name multiple actors, allowing for the possibility that goods are co-produced or regulated by multiple actors. Respondents were also allowed to say "no one" to allow for the possibility that certain domains are not regulated. Therefore, survey answers represent the percentage of respondents that named each actor as *one of* the authorities involved in the particular domain in their community. Tables with exact figures are included in the Appendix.

4.2a Dispute Resolution

The survey assessed dispute resolution in several ways. First, respondents were asked directly who is in charge of dispute resolution in their community.



In Chechnya and Ingushetia, religious authorities, elders, and to a lesser extent, local administrators are the primary regulators of disputes. Religious authorities and elders rely on social sanctions for enforcement and both increasingly resolve conflicts according to local interpretations of shari'a. However, given that in Chechnya elders and religious authorities are dependent on the state, serving as its indirect representatives, the state has the largest control over dispute resolution in Chechnya and the least in Ingushetia. As a young Chechen bureaucrat summarized, "the state resolves its problems through alims and elders," gathering community members or families after Friday prayer for bigger disputes.[88] Though interlocuters in both republics emphasized that they try to resolve disputes without state involvement, state control over ostensibly non-state authorities in Chechnya has made it challenging to avoid state intrusion. In Dagestan, on the other hand, local administrators are the dominant actors in dispute

[88] Interview 60 2018, Chechnya

resolution, but the domain is highly fragmented. A typical description of dispute resolution from interviews echoes the fragmentation: "the council of elders – we turn to for land questions, but if not through them then through administrators. But the imam also becomes involved quickly."[89] Similar to interviews, newspapers recount disputes, particularly land disputes, lasting for decades unless they directly threaten the state. This finding suggests that in Dagestan, though more actors are involved, none are particularly effective.

Next, respondents were provided seven vignettes with disputes that ranged from a custody battle to a land dispute between villages to see if the role of authorities varied as conflicts became overtly political. Quotidian land conflicts, such as disputes between neighbors, are the only conflicts consistently regulated by state authorities across the republics. A local lawyer explained this is likely because land conflicts rely on formal documents that only the state can provide. Across all of the other conflicts, individuals in Dagestan were more likely to name state actors, while those in Chechnya were most likely to say the local imam and those in Ingushetia were more likely to select relatives. In the vignette that described a hypothetical conflict between villagers and the head of the village administration, respondents in all the republics selected state administrators as their first choice. However, in Ingushetia 20.5% of respondents said they would also seek help from an imam or elder, nearly twice the percent in Dagestan or Chechnya, suggesting that citizens in Ingushetia have a larger range of alternatives, including non-state actors, for dispute resolution.

These results suggest that while all the republics have shifted away from state control over dispute resolution since Soviet collapse, their paths have diverged. Chechen and Ingush residents are less likely to directly encounter state authorities as arbiters of disputes than those in

[89] Interview 70 2017, Dagestan

Dagestan. However, control over ostensibly non-state authorities in Chechnya has expanded state purview over this domain, limiting citizens' options. In Ingushetia, on the other hand, respondents encounter a range of mostly non-state actors, who rely on kinship networks and social sanctions to enact decisions. Despite increased fragmentation over the last decade, teips have maintained their authority here more than in Chechnya, creating a stronger basis for enforcement but also sustaining patriarchal control over dispute resolution. When I asked a group of female teachers in their early 20s about their access to channels of dispute resolution, they responded that women's problems are resolved within the family and home, a comment consistently echoed across interviews.[90] Finally, in Dagestan local state administrators have the strongest role in dispute resolution; however, the domain is highly fragmented and there remain villages where the state has not penetrated. A resident of a mountain village that recently moved to the capital summarized the situation in her village:

> The community has always been very close-knit and has operated through reliance on local leaders to solve issues. The state has never been a serious contender for authority in comparison. It doesn't matter what the courts say or what state officials say. People will always listen to the informal authority.[91]

Despite greater state penetration compared to the other republics, dispute resolution is not only fragmented across actors but across territory.

4.2b Goods provision

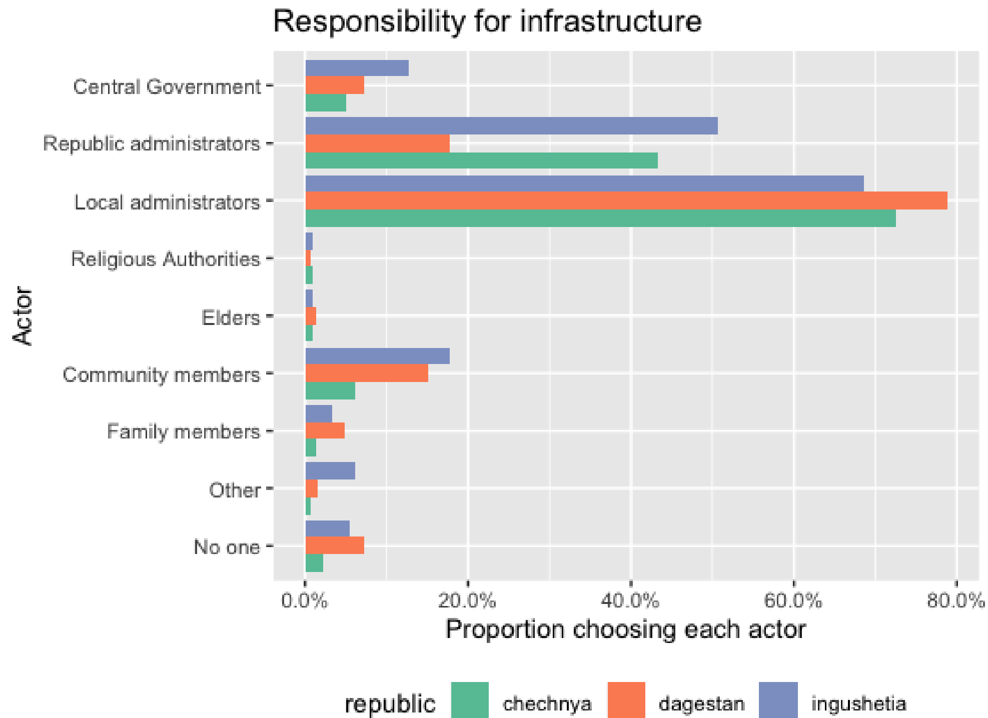
Out of the three governance domains under consideration, goods provision is the most likely to be controlled by the state given the legacy of the Soviet system, which crowded out informal authorities' access to material resources. Here, I focus on infrastructure specifically, since it is easier for a community or non-state authorities to pave a road rather than maintain an

[90] Group interview 2018, Ingushetia
[91] Interview 37 2018, Dagestan.

entire healthcare system. If we do not see non-state involvement at this lower bar, it is unlikely to be present in more capital-intensive goods.[92] When individuals describe their community, they most commonly discuss the roads, school, healthcare facility, police station, mosque, and sports complex. I focused on roads, mosques, and schools to capture variation in the type and scale of the infrastructure. I also asked a general question about who in the community resolves problems related to infrastructure.

Examining the general question, respondents in each republic primarily indicated that state authorities, specifically local administrators, control infrastructure. Republic administrators are also prominent in Chechnya and Ingushetia, and communities are more likely to self-organize are in Dagestan and Ingushetia, echoing interviews. While residents in Chechnya may feel pressure to highlight the state's role in goods provision, the results generally match my interviews. Survey enumerators similarly commented that these questions should not be particularly sensitive in Chechnya given that republic elites have been relatively effective at rebuilding infrastructure, something of which the state constantly reminds residents.

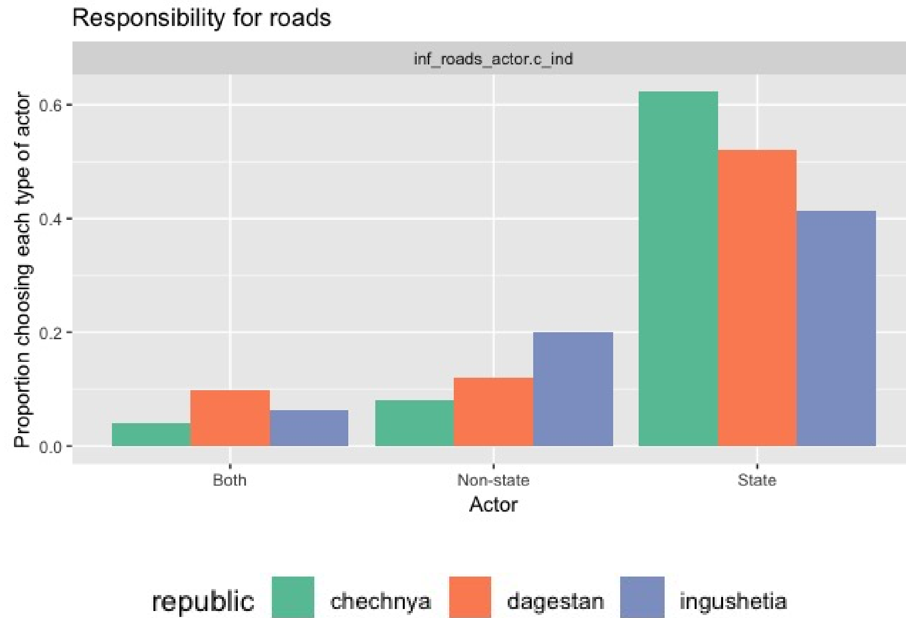
[92] Murtazashvili 2016: 16-17



Several points emerge in examining specific goods. Given the lack of a role for religious authorities and elders, I aggregate the actors to state, non-state, and both. There are significant differences between goods, though not according to the fixed costs. Instead, differences not only reflect actors' material resources but attempts at state control and citizen expectations of actors' responsibilities.

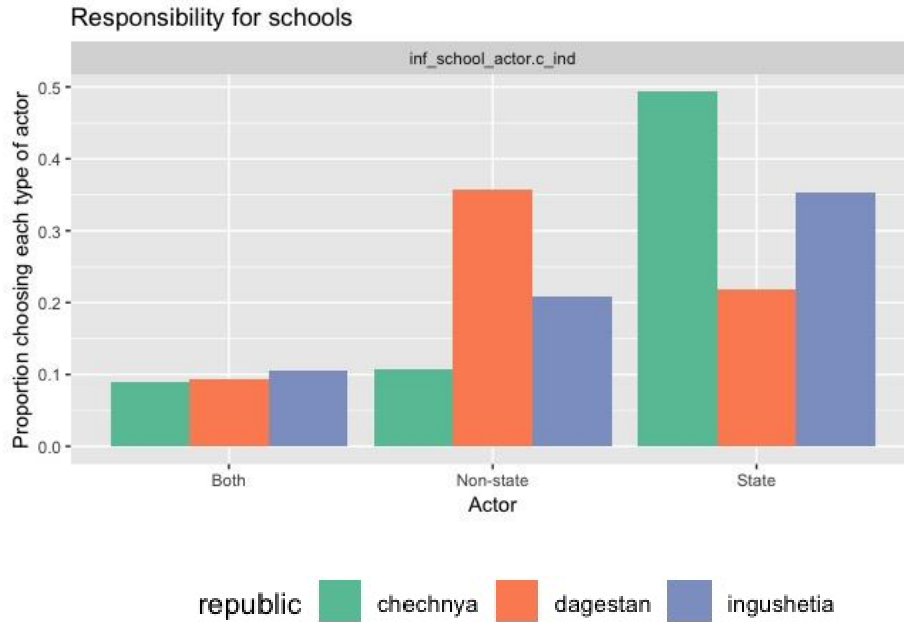
Examining roads shows that respondents mainly identify the local government as responsible for roads' construction and upkeep across republics, similar to the general question. However, unpacking the roles of other authorities shows that in Chechnya, republic officials are significantly more involved, whereas non-state actors - specifically community organizations and businessmen - hold a slightly larger role in Dagestan and Ingushetia. As a respondent in Dagestan's capital summarized, "all the city roads are paved on paper but the money allocated

often ends up in administrators' pockets,"[93] causing gaps in provision. As a result, in both Dagestan and Ingushetia, community members more commonly self-organize funds for roads.



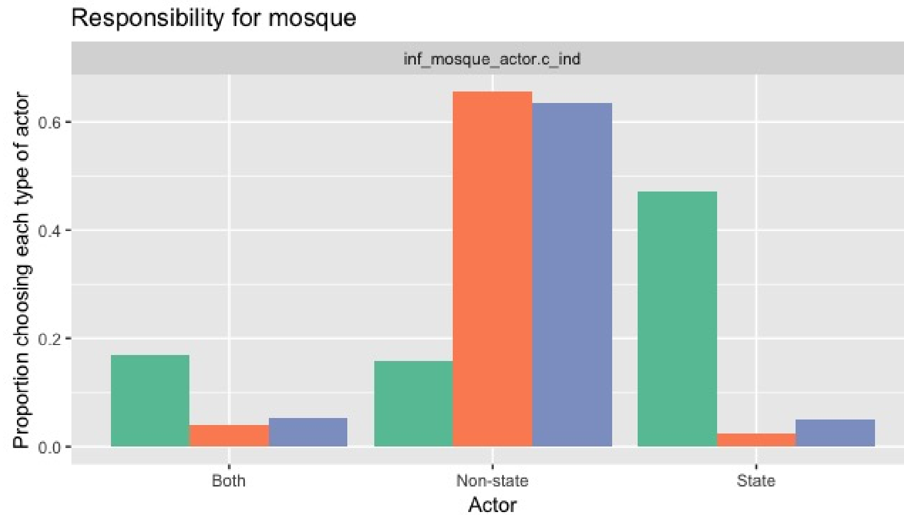
With schools, we see a bigger difference between the republics; importantly, the question did not specify the type of school and responses likely included religious schools like madrassas. In Chechnya, state actors, both local and republic, are dominant in school construction and maintenance. In Dagestan, however, communities play a significantly larger role in school infrastructure and Ingushetia represents an in-between case with nearly equal involvement of communities and local government officials, and a strong presence of republic elites. However, even in these cases, non-state involvement is limited. As one respondent pointed out, "people don't want to invest in what the government should provide"[94] meaning that in many communities, necessary construction and upkeep does not occur.

[93] Interview 22 2017, Dagestan
[94] Interview 2 2016, Ingushetia



Finally, I examine mosques, of interest as infrastructure but also for their symbolic significance, falling at the intersection of this and the spatial dimension of governance. Upon Soviet collapse, one of residents' first priorities was the collection of funds for mosque construction. An elderly resident of Dagestan summarized: "when communities started building mosques and gained the chance to take hajj people did not hold back. They sold their cows, gave away everything just to build the community mosque."[95] This persists in Ingushetia and Dagestan with significantly greater involvement of non-state actors in construction and upkeep of mosques than other infrastructure, as evident in the plot below.

95 Interview 2 2016, Dagestan



In Chechnya, on the other hand, the state invests funds in mosque construction as a legitimation strategy to demonstrate the regime's religious authority. In comparison to Chechnya, where republic leaders construct mosques as state spaces, in Dagestan and Ingushetia community members, religious authorities, and businessmen are the most prevalent actors with almost no state involvement. However, though the construction of a school and mosque may be similarly large undertakings, we see that non-state actors more readily contribute to the latter.

Despite other non-state authorities and community members playing significant roles in aspects of goods provision, the results suggest that the state largely continues regulate goods provision but there are differences between the republics if we look deeper. First, communities self-organize to solve their infrastructure problems at a higher rate in Dagestan and Ingushetia. Second, in Chechnya, only 5.1% of respondents selected both a state and non-state actor as in charge of infrastructure in their community in the general question, compared to 12.8% in Dagestan and 16.5% in Ingushetia, pointing to greater co-production of goods in the latter two republics, particularly in Ingushetia. Third, the significantly lower selection of republic authorities in Dagestan is notable, highlighting, as with the other governance domains, infrastructure remains more locally organized in the republic. Finally, unlike in the Sahel or

Middle East, religious and customary authorities raise funds for mosques but remain minor actors in public goods provision more broadly.

4.2c Spatial Practices

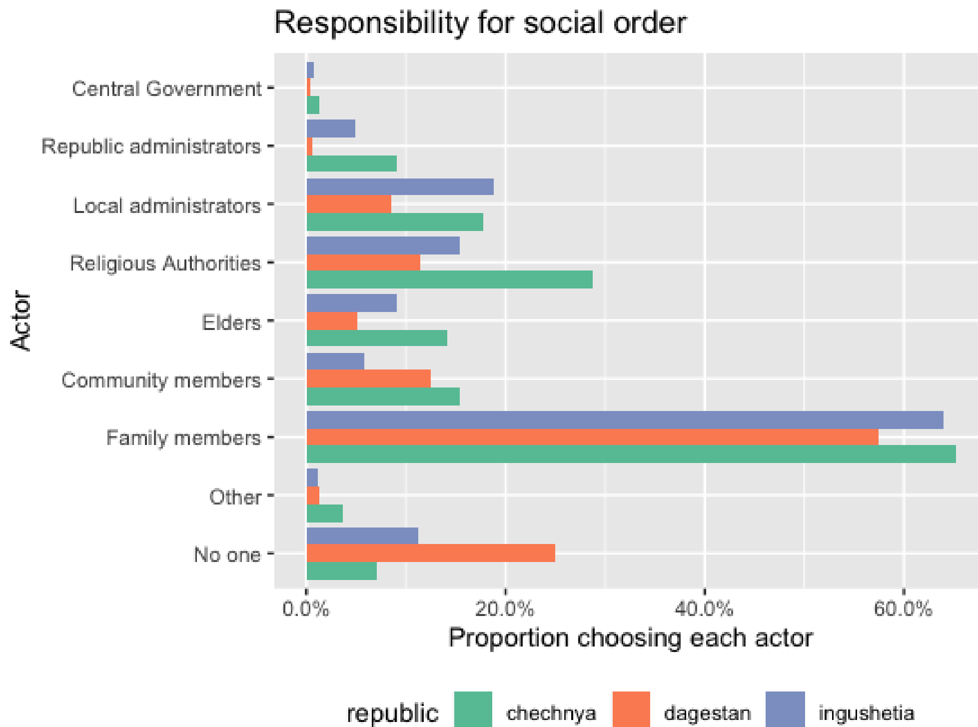
The difference between spatial governance practices in the three republics is evident as soon as one arrives in their territory. Chechnya is overcome with portraits of the Chechen President, Ramzan Kadyrov, and his father, Akhmad Kadyrov; additionally, the main street in nearly every village in the republic is named Kadyrov. Moreover, several streets are also named in honor of Russian generals, and the main boulevard is named after President Putin such that the state seems omnipresent. As one young teacher pointed out, there is an emphasis on publicly demonstrating stability.[96] Nevertheless, similar to state reliance on imams to regulate disputes and construction of mosques as state spaces to legitimate their rule, state elites deploy, and sometimes invent, traditions and religious practices to regulate dress, beard-length, and social interactions, further shrinking the private sphere.

State regulations of spatial practices in Chechnya contrasts with the degree of interjection by state elites in Dagestan and Ingushetia. State retrenchment from this sphere in the latter two republics allows for a proliferation of symbols, discourses, and social orders. In Dagestan, groups lobby to have streets named after their heroes, resulting in representation of different religious leaders like Akushinsky, ethnic leaders like Gabiev, and Soviet-era veterans like Zhukov, all within the capital. Religious authorities have also petitioned against monuments of people for their violation of Islamic practices; this resulted in the cancellation of a planned monument to Imam Shamil in Gimry, for example. Dress and behavioral norms across the republic are equally versatile. In several villages, residents recounted women being fired from

[96] Interview 12 2014, Chechnya

government jobs for wearing hijabs whereas in other villages women were consistently covered. Republic elites' lack of interference means that the spaces are more commonly regulated locally.[97] In Ingushetia, republic elites similarly make minimal attempts to create a cohesive set of spatial practices but interviews and observations suggest that there is a more consistent set of norms regulated by kinship networks. This is physically evident in street names, which are commonly named after the local teip and in gender norms. Residents repeatedly stated that while the home is under women's control what happens beyond its confines is regulated by men, particularly the head of the family. This results in rigid control over women's behavior. To systematically examine state penetration of spatial practices vis-à-vis other groups, I turn to the survey data.

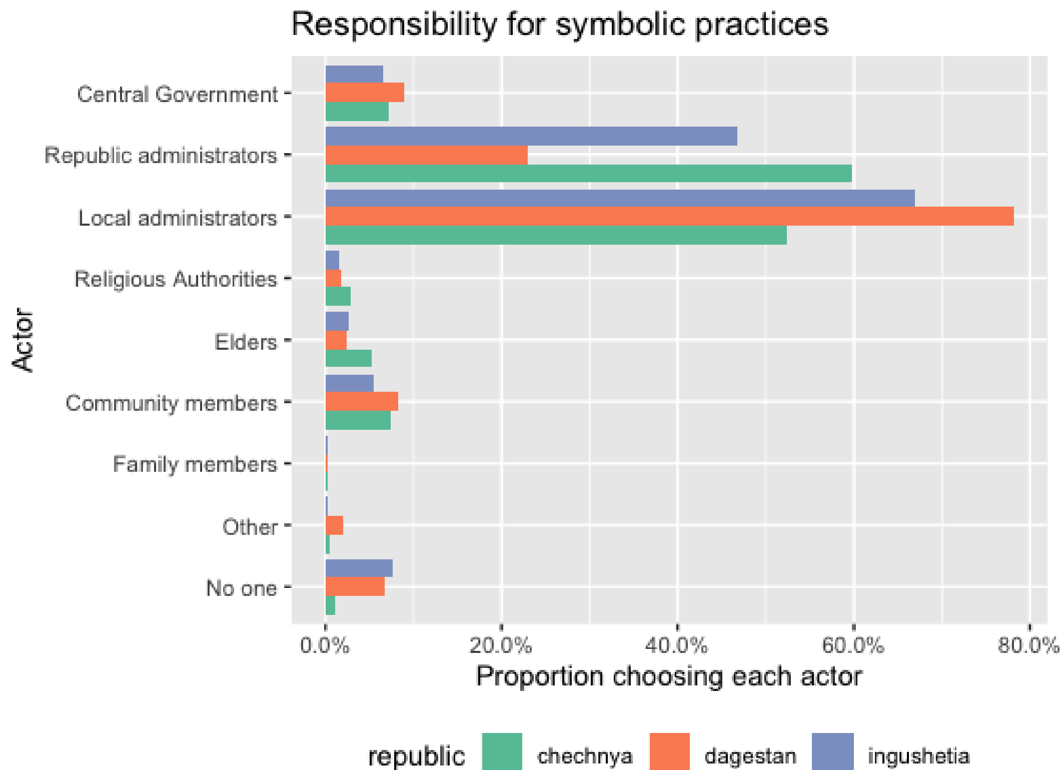
First, the survey asked who makes decisions about dress and social interactions.



[97] One of my female survey enumerators was shocked when she went to the neighboring village and realized it was not considered acceptable to wear pants there, something she regularly did in her village just down the road.

These are primarily family affairs, with family members having a large say in younger members, particularly younger women's dress and interactions. In Chechnya and Ingushetia, behavior also elicits state and religious regulation. Interviews suggest the survey responses underestimate the level of state involvement in Chechnya, since the state enforces a strict dress and behavioral code, at times publicly supporting familial punishment of "immoral" behavior, though also outlawing other practices like bridal kidnapping. In Dagestan, on the other hand, a larger portion of respondents said no one regulates this domain, highlighting that there is relatively greater individual freedom over these decisions in the republic.

The survey also asked respondents who determines street names and public monuments to see if there is variation between regulation of behaviors, evident in the previous question, and physical spaces.



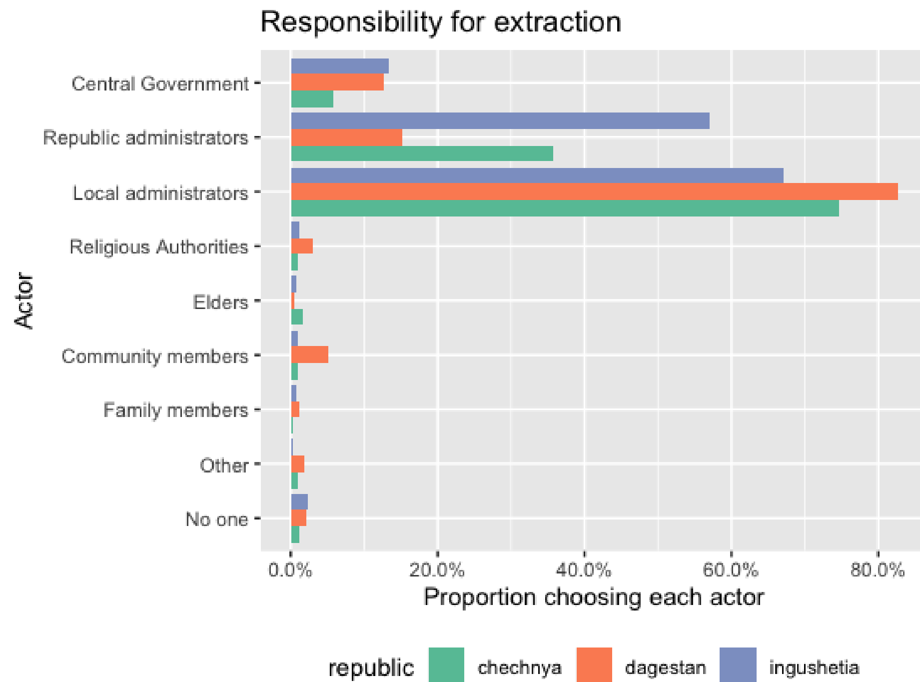
State elites regulate this domain in all the cases. As in other domains, *republic* state elites are more heavily involved in Chechnya while authority remains localized in Dagestan, with

Ingushetia falling in between the two republics, matching observations and interviews. While existing literature assumes that authoritarian leaders "aim to centralise and homogenise spatial politics,"[98] the evidence shows there is significant variation in state interjections into spatial practices.

How do the dynamics above connect to the conventionally studied dimensions of coercion and extraction? Though state authorities dominate both across the republic, reminiscent of the Soviet period, there is variation at the margins.

4.2d Extraction

I examine extraction in two ways. First, similar to the other dimensions, I asked in the survey who was responsible for organizing the collection of taxes and fees in their community. I included "fees" in the question to try to capture payments to non-state actors like zakat and informal payments to state officials.



[98] Lewis et al 2018: 10

Though state officials consistently regulate extraction, republic elites were selected as responsible for extraction by 56.96% of respondents in Ingushetia, 35.81% in Chechnya, and only 15.23% in Dagestan. We also see community members playing a small role in Dagestan, selected by 5.03% of respondents. Given that the answers here suggest non-state authorities play almost no role in extraction, contradicting interviews, this question seems to better compare state actors than the role of informal authorities.

To cross-check extraction and informal contributions, the survey also asked individuals roughly what percentage of their household income they spent on (1) community projects, (2) religious collections and donations like zakat, (3) traditions like weddings and funerals, and (4) taxes. The means are in the table below.

Table 1: State and Non-State Extraction

	Chechnya	**Dagestan**	**Ingushetia**
Community projects (roads, school)	4.60	3.98	4.54
Traditions (wedding, funerals)	16.33	23.39	17.62
Religion (zakaat, mosque construction)	16.02	13.31	17.56
Taxes / Government Fees	20.83	11.95	18.87

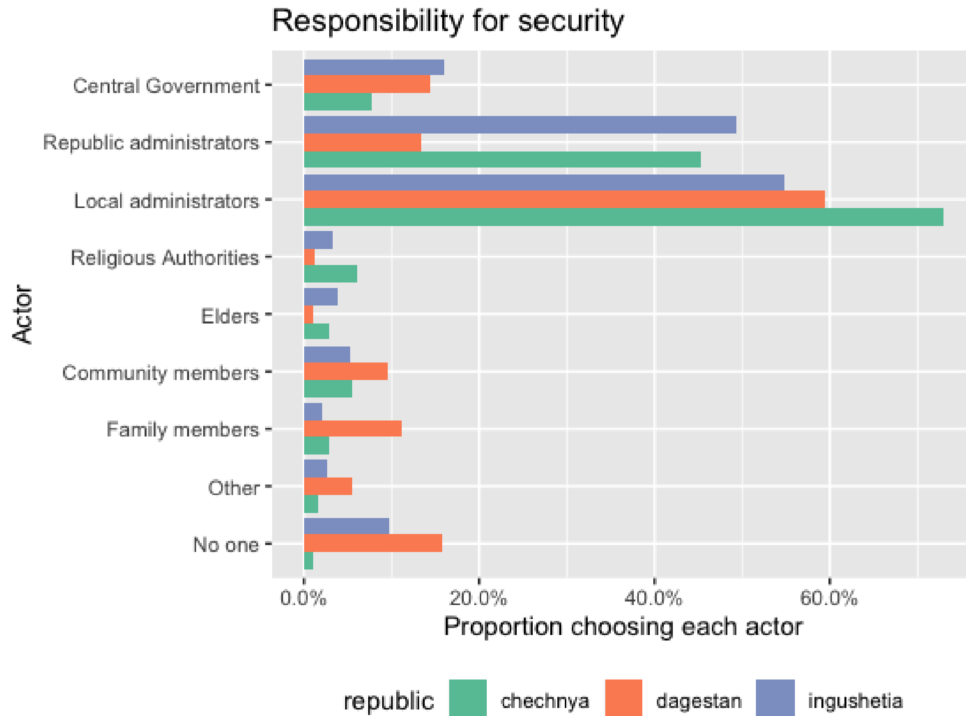
The largest difference appears between Dagestan and Chechnya in taxes and government fees. This closely reflects elite statements and interviews that Dagestan continues to face significant hurdles to overcoming tax evasion by business owners who, often having paid bribes to open and run their business, do not want to also pay taxes (Chernovik 20 November 2017). State agents in Chechnya do not face such difficulties since noncompliance results in the confiscation of the business; instead, individuals pay formal taxes as well as an informal tax into

the Kadyrov Fund.[99] Given that all the economic indicators of Ingushetia are lower than the other republics, it is surprising to see individuals spending a higher percent of their income on taxes. Yet, it shows the state has slightly stronger economic penetration and compliance in Ingushetia than in Dagestan. Simultaneously, Dagestan shows higher rates of non-state extraction, particularly evident in contributions to traditional ceremonies, whereas religious actors exhibit higher rates of extraction in Ingushetia and Chechnya. This complicates the picture of state control of extraction, suggesting it is highest in Chechnya and lowest in Dagestan.

4.2e Coercion

Studying coercion in the region is problematic, since asking in-depth questions about security services will quickly bring the researcher and her contacts under scrutiny. I aimed to minimize the sensitivity of the question by asking who regulates security in the community within the battery of questions about other governance functions. There were no follow-up questions about the quality and nature of security provision in the survey. The answers, below, show that while state elites dominate, there is variation. Particularly stark is Dagestan, where a significant percentage of respondents chose non-state actors, evident in the 9.60% selecting community members, 11.25% selecting family members, and 15.90% selecting no one. Residents identify both greater non-state regulation of security and disorder in the republic. In Chechnya and Ingushetia, on the other hand, significantly more respondents named republic authorities, suggesting it is more centrally organized than in Dagestan.

[99] Interview 51 August 2018, Chechnya



Indeed, driving through Dagestan, one encounters only a handful of security checkpoints, such as upon entering Levashinsky District, which leads to the mountain districts, in Khasavuyrt, which borders Chechnya, and in several locations throughout the capital Makhachkala. Several villages I visited also had their own "informal security force," typically composed of young men that monitor the villages' visitors. This differs from Chechnya where security personnel were on every other corner during my first trip in 2014 and remain omnipresent, regularly stopping cars to conduct searches and document checks. Even in what is often equated with the minimal measure of statehood, the republics exhibit significant differences.

V. Aggregating Across Dimensions of Governance

Assessing dispute resolution, goods provision, and spatial practices, alongside extraction and coercion, demonstrates the importance of unpacking governance across its dimensions. The shift reveals divergent governance trajectories and uneven state penetration across the republics. Central state elites' priority is that these republics remain compliant. Although coercion and

patronage are central to Moscow's governance arrangement for the North Caucasus, this paper demonstrates that civilians are governed through a broad range of practices and actors. This is not to deny the prevalence of coercion in civilians lives, evident in the armed actors, block posts, arbitrary detentions, and human rights violations in the region. Indeed, political violence and authoritarianism have been the focus of much scholarship.[100] Rather, it is to show that this narrow focus misses the wider array of strategies state and ostensibly non-state authorities deploy to gain control and how citizens interact with the authorities.[101] A governance framework reveals that each of the republics constitutes a different form of multi-layered governance.[102] Specifically, I categorize Dagestan as a case of polycentric governance, Chechnya as a case of centralized governance, and Ingushetia as mediated governance.

Polycentric governance connotes a system with multiple independent centers of decision-making.[103] In the case of Dagestan, while local administrators are the most prominent, religious authorities, business elites, and community organizations are also prevalent, particularly in their contributions to goods provision. While decentralized would also be a fitting term, it is typically used to describe tiers of government without incorporating relations between formal and informal authorities. Therefore, polycentric better captures that, even at the local village level in Dagestan, numerous authorities govern civilians. As elsewhere, in the case of Dagestan, the lack of coordination amongst actors has resulted in gaps in accountability and limited the effectiveness of governance.[104]

[100] Lyall 2010; Toft and Zhukov 2015; Souleimanov 2015
[101] This echoes Lewis et. al. (2018) who map different practices of authoritarian conflict management.
[102] Kasfir et al. 2017
[103] Ostrom 2005; Murtazashvili 2016
[104] Lieberman 2011

Residents in Dagestan most commonly encounter local administrators as representatives of the state but the organization of governance is fragmented across domains. Residents more commonly identified local administrators as the regulators of dispute resolution compared to other republics, but also more commonly stated that no one regulates a given dimension, even coercion, which state actors are expected to monopolize in an authoritarian context. While interviews suggest individuals support having autonomy over spatial practices, allowing for a proliferation of symbols and social orders, the absence and inefficiency of the state leaves citizens with many unfulfilled demands, particularly in goods provision. Respondents often highlighted that the state in Dagestan is felt more through its absence - through what it fails to deliver - than its presence. This is evident in citizens' survey responses when they were asked in an open-ended question how government impacts their lives: 17.8 % said that it does not impact their lives or that its presence is not felt. The top positive comments related to provision of education and pensions. The responses suggest that, despite stronger direct state control of dispute resolution and fewer constraints in spatial practices, these factors are less at the forefront of respondents' minds than the lack of goods provision.

With gaps in state goods provision, infrastructure quality is often determined by the ability of the community to serve as a substitute. Interviews suggest this occurs most commonly if an individual from the village prospers or receives a government position and then uses funds to provide for the village, legally or not. For example, in one village where I conducted interviews, people fondly remembered an administrator from the 1990s that would illegally funnel finances to the village and was the reason they had a paved road and sports complex. Though the individual is infamous for his criminal dealings, his economic support earned villagers' respect, while further underscoring the failure of the state. The role of informal

community networks is also echoed in the survey responses regarding how the djamaat, or community, affects people's lives, with one of the most common responses being "offers financial help" and "economic support." With high rates of poverty, and minimal coordination amongst actors across the republic, however, polycentric governance has not proved effective. The lack of a coordinated political order that bridges across the republic has allowed authorities to shirk their responsibilities, conflicts to persist unaddressed, and neighboring villages to drastically differ in their governance arrangements.

Chechnya, at the other end of the spectrum, is a case of centralized governance, where authority is consolidated with republic elites. Compared to Dagestan, the center of governance has both shifted vertically and, given the dependent position of informal authorities, horizontally toward the state. Residents encounter the state not only in extraction and coercion, but across domains, even in previously autonomous spaces like mosques, which republic elites now help construct and then fill with loyal imams. Thus, the state is experienced both directly through bureaucrats and indirectly through ostensibly autonomous actors that have become extensions of the state.

Control over dispute resolution and spatial practices is predicated on the compliance of religious authorities and elders. This has created a nesting doll arrangement where republic elites rely on Moscow for economic resources to provide goods, but on informal authorities' obedience to prevent and resolve conflicts, layers of rule, each of which is necessary for the arrangement to continue. Though residents in the republic identify the highest rates of state regulation of coercion and state extraction, this suggests that while governance is centralized, state authorities are not omnipotent as often depicted. A breakdown of either of these linkages could shift the existing order.

Finally, governance in Ingushetia is organized through a mediated model in "which the government relies on partnership (or at least coexistence) with a diverse range of local intermediaries and rival sources of authority."[105] In Ingushetia, more so than in the other two republics, dense kinship networks continue to play a key role in regulating residents' lives, assisting economically and with dispute resolution. In their open-ended survey responses, individuals listed a variety of situations where teips become relevant, ranging from resolving blood feuds to helping in financially strenuous times. Business elites also help provide for economic needs of their communities individually and through organizations like the Fund Tesham, which provides food assistance and other supplies to low income families.

Moreover, residents do not simply view the tight horizontal linkages in a positive light, with respondents also mentioning that their teip prevented them from marrying who they wanted, limited individuality, and regulated dress and religious expression. The role of the state is equally mixed, with respondents mentioning provision of pensions and education but also that the state is a threat to safety and a hindrance to doing business. More than in the other republics, informal actors have a role as a check on state authorities in political decision-making, evident in the number of respondents that said they would seek help from an elder or imam in a conflict with the village head. Unlike Dagestan, where state presence leaves much wanting, in Ingushetia state agents actively bargain and negotiate with informal authorities to govern, sometimes delegating responsibility to elders, imams, or kinship networks, sometimes co-producing governance. However, as the mass arrests after peaceful protests in the fall of 2018 demonstrate, informal authorities and ties, though more powerful than in the other republics, are not always sufficient to constrain state administrators.

[105] Menkhaus 2007: 78.

VI. Conclusion

This study presented a disaggregated, citizen-oriented framework for studying governance and utilized it to analyze governance trajectories in Dagestan, Chechnya, and Ingushetia. Though the republics started with relatively similar governance arrangements at Soviet collapse, they emerged from the 1990s with divergent governance trajectories. Though most existing literature on the region highlights the illiberal nature of rule or focuses on armed conflict and counterinsurgency, this article demonstrates that the local meanings of governance are not adequately captured by violence. By accounting for actors' embeddedness and formality, the framework presented in this article seeks to more comprehensively capture how residents encounter and interact with state and ostensibly non-state actors than accounts focusing on single actors or dimensions of governance. Using original survey and interview data to analyze goods provision, dispute resolution, and spatial practices alongside extraction and coercion, I classify governance in Dagestan as polycentric, in Chechnya as centralized, and in Ingushetia as mediated.

A multidimensional conceptualization of governance also reveals that residents may encounter authorities in a contradictory and uneven manner. In Ingushetia residents experience non-state actors as primary sources of dispute resolution and regulation of spatial practices whereas state administrators dominate goods provision. Actors are not interchangeable and the ability to govern in one domain may not translate to governance more broadly. Turning to Chechnya, taking the survey evidence at face value suggests that governance is organized similarly to Ingushetia; however, considering state control over ostensibly non-state actors in the republic means that citizens' options for governance have narrowed across domains. In Dagestan, on the other hand, despite state control over dispute resolution, the proliferation of

authorities with lack of coordination among them has resulted localized but fragmented governance across domains.

Identifying these differences opens new lines of inquiry. First, the analysis raises questions about the causes of both continuities and divergence in governance between the republics. Why have state administrators regained relative control over extraction and security but exhibit greater variation in goods provision, dispute resolution, and spatial practices? What explains the variation in the capacity of non-state actors and communities to organize governance? To what extent did the armed conflicts that occurred in the 1990s reshape these processes? Moreover, rather than asking if citizens desire more or less state intervention, the data opens the door for a more nuanced examination of citizens' expectations and the manners in which the social contract has been negotiated through state retrenchment and reassertion. With a dynamic governance framework, future scholars are better equipped to uncover the causal processes undergirding governance trajectories and citizen demands.

Appendix

Table 2: Authorities Organized on basis of Formality[106]

	Chechnya	Dagestan	Ingushetia
Formal Organizations	• Village, republic, and federal administrators • Religious authorities (Muftiat)	• Village, republic, and federal administrators	• Village, republic, and federal administrators
Dependent Organizations	• Religious authorities (imams, qadis) • Council of elders • Business elites	• Religious authorities (Muftiat, imams, qadis) • Council of elders	• Religious authorities (Muftiat, imams, qadis) • Council of elders
Autonomous Organizations	• Teips (extended kinship networks) • Community councils	• Tukhum (extended kinship networks) • Djamaat (community council) • Religious authorities (imams, qadis) • Elders • Business elites	• Teips (extended kinship networks) • Community councils • Religious authorities (imams, qadis) • Elders • Business elites

Tables for Dimensions of Governance

The top five authorities and all those that received more than 5% in one of the republics are included in the tables.

Public Goods 1: Who in your community is primarily responsible for goods like infrastructure?

	Dagestan	Chechnya	Ingushetia
Community members	15.2%	6.2%	17.8%
Local Government	78.8%	72.6%	68.6%
Republic Government	17.6%	43.2%	50.7%
Central Government	7.3%	5.0%	12.8%
No one	7.2%	2.2%	5.4%

106 The same actor is listed in multiple places when it is split among multiple camps.

Public Goods 2: Responsibility for roads

	Dagestan	Chechnya	Ingushetia
Community members	21.90%	8.34%	18.18%
Local Government	66.61%	46.34%	46.32%
Republic Government	11.40%	33.56%	20.35%
Central Government	6.06%	1.60%	2.60%
Businessmen	6.79%	1.53%	14.50%

Public Goods 3: Responsibility for schools

	Dagestan	Chechnya	Ingushetia
Community members	56.43%	17.97%	39.44%
Local Government	35.31%	47.27%	40.14%
Republic Government	8.57%	20.36%	27.15%
Central Government	2.65%	1.11%	4.41%
Businessmen	2.55%	0.42%	3.02%

Public Goods 4: Responsibility for mosques

	Dagestan	Chechnya	Ingushetia
Community members	66.06%	20.95%	45.72%
Religious Authorities	35.97%	11.93%	17.54%
Local Government	8.39%	40.46%	10.86%
Republic Government	0.58%	31.26%	2.92%
Charitable organizations/ humanitarian funds	16.20%	4.17%	12.73%
Businessmen	31.44%	3.24%	38.83%

Dispute Resolution: Responsibility for dispute resolution:

	Dagestan	Chechnya	Ingushetia
Family members	19.38%	7.58%	17.24%
Community members	24.82%	10.05%	10.89%
Elders	24.46%	54.43%	56.75%
Religious Authorities	31.69%	68.74%	68.29%
Local administrators	49.86%	41.65%	28.29%
Republic administrators	7.01%	8.94%	12.85%
No one	6.87%	0.60%	3.25%

Spatial Practices 1: Responsibility for social order (dress, social interactions)

	Dagestan	Chechnya	Ingushetia
Family members	56.65%	65.33%	63.90%
Community members	12.59%	15.67%	5.85%
Elders	5.22%	14.14%	8.94%
Religious Authorities	11.30%	28.20%	15.61%
Local administrators	9.51%	17.12%	18.70%
Republic administrators	0.64%	9.11%	5.04%
No one	24.32%	7.07%	11.38%

Spatial Practices 2: Responsibility for monuments and street names

	Dagestan	Chechnya	Ingushetia
Community members	8.33%	7.32%	5.40%
Elders	2.32%	5.31%	2.62%
Local administrators	78.09%	52.53%	66.94%
Republic administrators	23.03%	59.67%	46.81%
Central government	8.93%	7.14%	6.55%
No one	6.75%	1.21%	7.53%

Extraction: Responsibility for collecting taxes and fees

	Dagestan	Chechnya	Ingushetia
Community members	5.0%	1.0%	5.40%
Local administrators	82.6%	74.6%	67.1%
Republic administrators	15.2%	35.8%	57.0%
Central government	12.6%	5.8%	13.4%
No one	2.0%	1.2%	2.3%

Coercion: Responsibility for regulating security

	Dagestan	Chechnya	Ingushetia
Community members	9.6%	5.6%	5.2%
Family members	11.2%	3.0%	2.1%
Religious authorities	1.3%	6.1%	3.3%
Local administrators	59.5%	72.9%	54.8%
Republic administrators	13.4%	45.2%	49.3%
Central government	14.4%	7.8%	16.0%
No one	15.9%	1.1%	9.7%

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