Killing for God?
Factional Violence on the Transnational Stage

Jori Breslawski¹, and Brandon Ives¹

Abstract
Why are some factions fighting for greater national self-determination (SD) more violent than others? While previous explanations of violence in these disputes have focused on the number of factions, their internal structures, and power distributions among factions, we find many factions that do not follow the expectations of these theories. In this article, we center on religious ideology, its unique transnational character, and the opportunity it creates for political elites from competing factions within the same SD movement to mobilize support. We argue that “religious factions” have a greater incentive to use violence than other factions. Violence serves as a costly signal, and it can be used to demonstrate a faction’s religious credentials to transnational networks and contacts, as they compete with each other on the international stage for the same potential benefactors. We code original data on the religious ideology of factions. We find that an increasing number of religious factions is associated with increased religious faction use of violence. Furthermore, our findings point to a critical insight: it is not religious ideology, but competition between religious factions, that generates violence.

Keywords
self-determination, conflict, violence, religion, fragmentation

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While contention over self-determination (SD) is a key source of civil conflict, there is great variation in the degree to which factions within a movement employ violence. Existing research has associated movement fragmentation with a higher likelihood of violence (see Pearlman and Cunningham 2012). For instance, the Chechen SD movement in Russia is highly fragmented, and the movement’s factions frequently use violence. Yet we see a number of highly fragmented movements employing relatively small amounts of violence. For example, the Bodos in India (a fairly divided movement with eight factions; in 1999) use minimal violence against the state. Likewise, the Corsican SD movement is even more divided (with twelve factions; in 2002), yet individual factions utilize peaceful means to obtain their ends. Why do some SD movements have a large number of factions using peaceful methods? Why do other, similarly fragmented movements have fewer factions but engage in violent behavior against the state?

To further understand the tactics used by SD movements, factional identity merits attention. Identity contributes to the potential networks upon which faction competition for support takes place. This article examines a meaningful overlapping identity operating within SD movements: their religious ideology. We define factions as having a religious ideology when factions communicate aims or goals that are characterized by the prioritization of their religion over other religions. That is, religious factions advocate for increased benefits for members of their religion relative to other religions. While factions may be made up of members of a particular religious identity, our definition of religious factions focuses on factions that demonstrate commitment to the prioritization of their religion in the public sphere. This focus stems from the expectation that these are the factions that would most likely attract support from transnational religious actors looking to promote their religion in other countries (Walter 2017).

In line with previous scholars (e.g., Avalos 2005; Toft 2007), we argue that violence by religious actors is driven by competition. Our theory focuses on religion’s unique transnational character and the opportunity it creates for competing religious SD factions to mobilize external support. We focus on two areas of competition: intra- and intermovement. Factions with a religious ideology who compete with other religious factions for the same potential external religious support across SD movements experience “intermovement competition.” Religious factions who compete with other religious factions for the same potential external religious support within an SD movement experience “inramovement competition.” These realms of competition have implications for factions’ use of violence against the state.

SD factions are strategic actors, choosing from a wide array of strategies. In order to determine the means by which to achieve aims, actors predict which of these strategies will deliver the greatest chance of success (Cunningham 2014). Since violence is a costly strategy, we examine incentives for factions to employ violent methods. We argue that factions with a religious ideology have a greater incentive to use violence than nonreligious factions. The use of violence by religious factions delivers a greater chance of success of gaining support than the use of violence does
for nonreligious factions. This is due to the boundless nature of religion, which compared to other identities and ideologies often has a larger audience and potential network of support. Religious factions’ use of violence against the state is a method of political outbidding, directed at informal networks, domestic audiences, and international contacts. An increasing number of religious factions results in an increasing sense of inter- and intramovement competition for external support among coreligious factions. Critically, religious factions are not inherently more violent, but the level of competition increases the likelihood of religious faction use of violence against the state.

We find statistical and substantive support for our theory, demonstrating empirically that religious factions are more likely to use violence than nonreligious factions. Furthermore, we find that an increasing number of religious factions in an SD movement is positively associated with a higher likelihood of religious faction violence against the state.

This article contributes to our understanding on nonstate actors’ use of violence in two key ways. First, we contribute to the literature by examining the impact of fragmentation on violence. Recent research has challenged the unitary actor assumption of SD movements but has been largely devoted to studying and theorizing the impact of the number of factions, their organizational structures, and power distributions between them (see Pearlman 2009; Findley and Rudloff 2012; Cunningham, Bakke, and Seymour 2012; Bakke, Cunningham, and Seymour 2012). This recognition of SD movement diversity has resulted in theoretical and empirical understanding of movement and faction use of violence. Previous approaches, however, treat factions as interchangeable, without analyzing more substantive characteristics such as religious ideology. Treating factions as interchangeable ignores distinct types of competition between certain factions. Differences in competition generate different incentives for factions to use violence.

Second, this article sheds light on how faction prioritization of religious goals drives the use of violence, but not necessarily because of motivations proposed by previous literature. Our argument emphasizes how religion changes the strategic environment and incentivizes violence for material gains. Ignoring religion’s capacity to change the costs and benefits associated with violence from a purely strategic standpoint risks overemphasizing that religion alone inherently encourages violence. Our article builds on rational approaches to religious violence (e.g., Toft 2007) and examines religion, competition, and violence in the context of SD movements. Its focus on religion in SD movements further contributes to a growing literature that looks at religion in conjunction with other identity and ideological ties (e.g., Basedau et al. 2017; Issaacs 2017; Fox 2004).

**Previous Explanations of Violence against the State**

This article builds on two diverse literatures: first, the literature on fragmentation and civil conflict, and second, scholarship on the relationship between religion and
violence. Civil conflict scholars have begun to disaggregate actors and interests, with major implications for conflict dynamics (e.g., Kalyvas 2006; Cunningham 2006; Pearlman 2009). A leader deficit in a militant group, for instance, is more likely to increase violence against civilians (Abrahms and Potter 2015), and an increasing number of factions in an SD movement has significant implications for violence against coethnic civilians, coethnic factions, and the state (Cunningham, Bakke, and Seymour 2012). A consequence of this literature is an improved understanding of the second part of the “dual contest” and a focus on internal group dynamics beyond the “master cleavage” of the conflict. Yet, while studying fragmented movements, the civil conflict literature does not address another source of fragmentation: the extent to which constituent organizations adhere to a religious ideology.

A large literature contends that religion incites and fuels political violence (Fox 2002, 2004; Pearce 2005; Svensson 2007; Toft 2007; Asal and Rethemeyer 2008a, 2008b; Horowitz and Potter 2014). We focus on two strands of explanations for religion and violent behavior: religious ideology and religious competition. Religious ideology and characteristics specific to religious beliefs have been found to make followers more inclined toward violence (e.g., Juergensmeyer 2003). Relatedly, religious attitudes predict religious leaders’ support for faith-based violence (Basedau and Koos 2015). Among religious organizations, specific characteristics more likely to be associated with such organizations predict violence better (e.g., Asal, Schulzke, and Pate 2016), as does how a religious group views political authority (Philpott 2007). Religious conflicts often involve indivisible aims that hinder negotiation (Hassner 2009; Svensson 2007; Toft 2006). Turning to religious grievances, the relationship between religion and violence appears more complex. Basedau et al. (2017) find that religious grievances are not related to violence, and Fox (2002, 2004) finds that among ethnic minorities, religious grievances are only connected to violence in the context of demands for autonomy.

It is challenging, however, to disentangle the causal relationship between religious ideology and violence—and political competition more broadly (see Isaacs 2016). While much research provides evidence of the impact of religious ideology on violence, the difficulty with causal identification and lack of violence among some religious adherents indicate that religious ideology is unlikely to be the only contributing factor to violent behavior.

Political competition and “outbidding” serve as a second explanation for religion’s infusion in politics and violence (Bloom 2004, 2005; Toft 2013; Abrahms and Conrad 2017). Ethnic conflicts may develop religious undertones, for instance, when religious organizations compete for support form ethnic adherents (Isaacs 2017). Religious rhetoric is then used as a means to gain attention and supporters. Yet popular demands for religious politics are highest when religion occupies a weak societal position (Buckley 2016), which suggests that among religious societies, other outcomes, such as violence, may be the result of outbidding.
Importantly, religious competition does not take place solely at the domestic level. Religions are often global and involve substantial transnational mobilizing forces (Grzymala-Busse 2012; Smith 1996), and ethnoreligious conflicts attract more external support compared to other types of ethnic conflict (Fox 2004, 233). External religious supporters could provide another source of resources and generate competition and outbidding dynamics.

The civil war and religious violence literatures have tackled the question of why organizations use violence against the state. Insights from each, however, remain isolated. While making critical progress in moving beyond a unitary actor conceptualization, the fragmentation in civil war literature does not examine the consequences of varying religious ideology of different SD factions. By keeping the type of religious faction constant, the literature on fragmentation in civil war does not acknowledge how distinct approaches to religion may impact competition differently and generate different incentives for violence.

Studies on religion and violence have put forth different explanations for violence, including religious ideology and competition. We build on both approaches and examine how religious ideology is important—not for its inherent beliefs but for the competition for external resources it creates. Building on Toft’s argument of violent outbidding in competition for external supporters, we apply her logic to an important subject in the civil war literature: SD movements. In doing so, we highlight the importance of external support, which is higher in ethnoreligious conflicts (Fox 2004), and examine how religious fragmentation impacts competition for some actors and not others—with implications for violence against the state.

By combining insights from the civil war and the religious violence literatures, we develop a theoretical explanation for religious organization violence. Civil war scholars have demonstrated the importance of SD movements for civil war. These movements thus provide a critical context in which to explore the implications of religious ideology on violent outbidding. While SD movements are often disputes between competing nationalisms, religion can offer a secondary source of ideology. Ignoring the fragmentation of religious actors and religious outbidding mechanisms that occur within SD movements limits our understanding of SD faction use of violence.

**Faction Utilization of Violence: Religious Resources and Competition**

*Theoretical Background and Definitions*

SD politics are defined by the tension created by nonstate nations’ desire for self-rule and states’ desire to maintain territorial integrity (Cunningham 2014, 12). SD movements develop when groups challenge the current status quo of the state through nationalist claims, which may involve anything from civil and political rights, to greater autonomy, to complete independence. SD movements often consist of
multiple and diverse actors, known as factions, which following Cunningham (2014, 24), we define as an organized actor that claims to represent the interests of the larger movement and seeks to influence decision-making within that entity. Factions claim to represent the overarching, collective identity of the SD movement but have their own organizational structure and goals.

SD movements can be divided into factions along a number of cleavages, from strategic and/or ideological differences to leadership rivalries. The Chechen movement, for instance, is typically considered Muslim in its religious identity. Yet prominent leaders of the different Chechen factions vary in their approaches to religion and politics, with some raising religious issues and others leaving religion absent from their agenda. Aslan Maskhadov, former president and rebel leader, advocated for a secular state, while Shamil Basayev, commander of the Islamic International Peacekeeping Brigade, fought for a Caucasus Emirate that would function as an independent Islamic state.

While SD movements are usually conceived of as nationalist movements, other identities, such as religion, are at play. When religion is part of an SD movement’s repertoire, SD movements can leverage transnational religious networks in addition to mobilizing individuals on a basis of national identity. Building on the example above, the Chechen movement is a nationalist movement that draws upon language and national identity; however, there are significant undercurrents of religious identity. This creates an intersection of nationalist and religious identity and generates a new venue for competition between factions. Pursuing religious goals provides factions with a means to demonstrate the importance they place on religion and another means to generate international solidarity.

Our model examines the role of religious ideology in competing factions and its impact on violence against the state. There are four main layers to our argument. First, most factions want external support. Second, transnational religious ties make it more likely for external supporters to support coreligious factions. Third, this higher likelihood of support leads to an increased incentive for religious factions to gain visibility. Fourth, factions competing for the same support outbid one another using violence, a highly visible and costly signal.

The first two layers of our argument are a product of reasonable assumptions and prior scholarship. External support can significantly augment an organization’s capabilities, and most nonstate actors would benefit from it (Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham 2011). Religious ties, along with ethnic ties, have been found to predict external support (see Saideman 1997, 2001; Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham 2011). The third and fourth layers of our argument are part of the theoretical mechanism and explain how religious faction competition encourages the use of violence. While the challenges of studying violence hinder our ability to test directly the theoretical mechanism with large-N analysis, our theoretical logic and illustrative case provide indication of their presence. Our study tests the visible implications of the third and fourth layers of our argument, that is, the relationship between religious factions and the use of violence.
The Transnational Stage and Religious Faction Competition

Nonstate actors suffer a disadvantage compared to the state in terms of resources and organizational survival. Factions need resources for a wide array of reasons, from paying salaries to members, to carrying out operations, to providing services to constituents, and to purchasing weapons. External support provides a means for factions to carry out their preferred policy aims. While there may be oversight concerns, which we address later, many factions within SD movements desire external support.

Factions need resources, but who provides them with the necessary goods? Ethnic and/or religious ties increase the likelihood of groups receiving support (see Saideman 1997, 2001; Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham 2011). States are concerned about agency slack and the possibility that factions or groups will not carry out their preferred preferences. Likewise, factions are concerned that supporting states will use their support as a means of control. Religious ties can mitigate these concerns; religious identity can provide a strong screening device, and attenuate fears of agency loss (see Saideman 1997, 2001; Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham 2011). While many factions may be nominally religious, some factions have stated goals of advancing religious practices in the host state. External supporters who share these same values have greater assurance that their desired goals will be advanced if they choose to support factions with religious goals, compared to if they choose to support other factions. Likewise, perceived similarity of preferences reduces faction concerns that support will used to dominate and mold behavior.

While other identities, such as ethnicity, and ideologies, such as communism, could potentially play a similar role in setting parameters for competition between factions, we focus on religious ideology because of its prevalence in the world today. Compared to other identities and ideologies, religion arguably has the widest audience and largest support network and can offer substantial mobilizing resources (Grzymala-Busse 2012; Smith 1996). While in some Christian countries the importance of religion is declining, in other regions, such as the Middle East, South Asia, and South Eastern Asia, religion is increasing in relevance (Riaz 2010; van der Veer 2002). Our argument connecting religious ideology to violence functions when religion is a relevant factor in society and when the religious community is transnational.

While scholarship has demonstrated how transnational ethnic ties can, under certain conditions, encourage violence (e.g., Cederman, Gleditsch, and Buhaug 2013; Jenne 2007), we do not seek to compare religious factions to ethnic factions. SD movements are often based on an ethnic identity, and most SD factions are making political claims on behalf of an ethnic group. As such, our comparison is between SD factions that have a religious and ethnic identity and factions with just an ethnic identity. In doing so, we build on religion maintaining a more transnational characteristic and its potential for transnational supporters as well as Fox’s (2004) finding that ethnoreligious conflicts attract more support compared to other types of
ethnic conflicts. We recognize that other ideologies and identities, such as ethnicity, may have transnational characteristics that create potential external supporters (e.g., Saideman 1997, 2001) but focus on religion as a complimentary ideological tie that can motivate the use of violence.

As religious beliefs cross borders, religious issues often have a transnational appeal. Rebel groups that maintain clear transnational constituencies are more likely to receive external support (Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham 2011). Religious SD factions have both religious and ethnic ideologies to attract external support, which should generate more incentives to make themselves visible to external supporters compared to nonreligious factions. To gain visibility, religions factions can use violence against the state.

Compared to other forms of violence, the high-profile nature of violence against the state makes it a more visible signal to potential domestic and international supporters. Violence against the state demarcates the violent faction from ones less willing to use violence (Henne 2017; Tilly 2003) and signals greater commitment to the cause and military competence, potentially gaining the support of transnational actors who are uncertain about which faction is more likely to deliver on its promises (Kydd and Walter 2006). Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham (2011) highlight states’ desire to support groups who are likely to accomplish their objectives, with a main factor being rebel strength.5

Violence against the state demonstrates strength and attracts international attention. To regain its reign as the leading terrorist organization, Al-Qaeda sought to “outbid ISIS on its own field” and shattered their peace with the Yemeni government (Mironova 2014). The group brutally slit the throats of fourteen military personnel and posted the footage online, a la Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). To obtain external support, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine used violent tactics. After the Ma’a lot attack, Libya provided the faction with a US$1 million monthly stipend (Sayigh 1997), illustrating the ability of violence to attract international support.

If violence is so effective at obtaining support, why don’t all religious factions use violence? Factions in a struggle against the state are motivated to act in a way that increases their political relevance. Violence can be used instrumentally to demonstrate political relevance and impose costs on the state, increasing the likelihood of negotiation inclusion. Using violence, however, comes at a cost. Factions must decide whether the demonstration of violence is worth expending human and material resources. Direct violence against the state risks defeat and possible faction destruction. While attractive to certain international audiences, violence may simultaneously reduce support among others. In sum, there are real costs for factions employing violence as a tactic, and factions choose to use violence if the marginal benefits obtained from violent operations outweigh the costs.

Turning to the fourth step of our argument, we build on Snyder’s (2000) theory of nationalist outbidding6 and argue that religion’s global network results in transnational religious outbidding. Transnational religious outbidding describes the
increased amount of violence factions use against the state when competing for the same transnational religious supporters. Religious factions try to outbid one another to bolster their credentials with certain international audiences. Political leaders compete with and attempt to outdo rivals to gain the spotlight for potential support. Violence is used as a means to outbid visibly and demonstrate national credentials. Violent tactics demonstrate to audiences the hard-line position that the faction has taken and its ability to bend the will of the opposing side.

Religious factions have a transnational audience because religious overtures have the ability to appeal to supporters from outside the area of the conflict. Religious factions can draw upon ideas of religious solidarity and can legitimately appeal to outside support since followers of these faiths are not tethered to one particular place. Resources from coreligionists are limited, however, inducing competition between coreligious factions (Figure 1). We refer to two potential areas of competition among SD factions: intramovement and intermovement. Intramovement competition exists between religious factions within an SD movement. Noticeable in our conceptualization is that intramovement competition is not always present; it is dependent on the existence of more than one religious faction in an SD movement. When there is only one religious faction in an SD movement (a sole religious faction), there is unlikely to be any intramovement competition for the same religious external supporters.

Religious factions also experience intermovement competition. Since many religious factions around the globe invoke their religious ideology as grounds for external support, religious factions must vie to be the most attractive embodiment of their religion, inspiring supporters to choose their faction over other religious factions fighting for a similar cause. Importantly, due to the large number of SD movements present, there is usually always intermovement competition for religious factions.

Due to intra- and intermovement competition, we expect that religious factions are more likely to use violence against the state compared to nonreligious factions. As emphasized earlier, religion’s transnational character leads to potential support from coreligious entities outside the disputed polity. To gain supporters, religious factions try to increase their visibility through violence. Religious factions’ struggle for political relevance is thus projected to an international scale, as they pursue support from their religious brethren in other states. While both religious ideology and the number of factions play a role in our theory, we emphasize that it is the
number of competing religious factions driving the violence. Religious ideology plays a central role because it sets the parameters for which factions are competing against one another for external support—not the religious ideology itself. It is the number of factions fighting to outbid one another that drives violence against the state.

**Hypothesis 1:** Religious factions are more likely to use violence against the state relative to nonreligious factions.

Next, we focus specifically on the impact of intermovement competition. We predict that sole religious factions will be more likely to use violence than nonreligious factions. Sole religious factions face only intermovement competition, in comparison to religious factions operating in a multiple religious faction context. For example, the Tajik SD movement consisted of only one religious faction, Jamiyat al-Islam. While Jamiyat al-Islam did not have to compete for support against other religious factions in the Tajik SD movement, the religious faction did have to compete for support against Islamic factions in other SD movements. We argue that even factions that do not have internal movement competition have incentives to use visible and costly acts of violence to portray themselves as a worthy destination for funding and resources. In order to test whether intermovement competition plays a role in encouraging violence against the state, we limit analysis to sole religious factions and nonreligious factions.

**Hypothesis 2:** Sole religious factions are more likely to use violence against the state relative to nonreligious factions.

Finally, we return to our full sample and intramovement competition. We address variation in the number of religious factions in an SD movement. Some movements may have two religious factions and others five. While both situations result in intramovement competition, we believe the difference in the number of religious factions to be meaningful. Again, we expect that nonreligious factions will be the least likely to use violence. Since nonreligious factions do not compete with religious factions over the same funding sources, an increasing number of other religious factions in an SD movement does not impact nonreligious factions’ use of violence. Among religious factions, however, more religious factions in an SD movement increase intramovement competition. As the number of religious factions grows, competition among religious factions increase, generating a higher likelihood of violence. Competition exists at both the international and the domestic level. Table 1 outlines our expectations.

**Hypothesis 3:** We predict nonreligious factions to be the least likely to use violence against the state. However, as the amount of religious factions within an SD movement increases, the more likely any one individual religious faction is to utilize violence against the state.
Testing Transnational Religious Outbidding

The Sample

We use a random sample generated by Cunningham, Bakke, and Seymour (2012) as an alternative to analyzing the entire population of factions because of the difficulty of collecting fine-grained data on fragmentation within SD movements. The sample includes twenty-two ethnic groups seeking SD from 1960 to 2008, comprising 242 factions within the SD movements, and encompassing approximately 2,500 faction years. Not all factions included in the sample are violent, but all are part of SD movements that have engaged in some degree of militancy. The sample excludes SD movements with no history of violence to eliminate theoretically irrelevant cases. Factions in the sample range from political parties to rebel groups, but all claim to represent a movement seeking greater SD and make demands related to SD (Cunningham, Bakke, and Seymour 2012). A list of the random sample of SD movements can be found in the Online Appendix.

In the sample, all the religious factions are Muslim. Importantly, these factions are diverse geographically and span across Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. This characteristic of our sample is not surprising, however, because of the time period included in our analysis. Islam, more than other religions, is characterized by a transnational community (Hegghammer 2010; Toft 2007). In recent decades, Islam has become more salient in many parts of the world while Christianity has witnessed a decline in importance in many predominantly wealthy Christian nations. Thus, while other religions have the potential to play the same role as Islam, if religion does not maintain an ideological relevance in potentially supporting countries, transnational religious ties are likely to be less strong.

Method

We use multivariate logistic regression to examine the effect of the religiosity of factions and other religious factions on violence against the state. To examine the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faction Type and Environment</th>
<th>Expected Level of Violence</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-religious faction</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>No competition for religious funding sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sole religious faction in SD movement</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>Intermovement competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious faction among others in SD movement</td>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>Intra- and intermovement competition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: SD = self-determination.
values of the variables relevant to the theory, we employ the observed values for predicted probabilities approach (Hanmer and Kalkan 2013).

We use cubic splines to account for the likelihood of serial autocorrelation in the data, structuring the data as a binary time-series cross section (Beck, Katz, and Tucker 1998). This addresses the tendency for factions who use violence against the state one year to be more likely to use violence the following year. We follow Cunningham, Bakke, and Seymour (2012) and utilize time-series data and include a measure of the number of years since the faction engaged in violence against the state to address concerns of endogeneity, or that conflict could cause increased factionalization in an SD movement. Additionally, we include a direct test of reverse causality in the Online Appendix Table 19. That is, we test the effect of the level of violence against the state in a given SD movement on the likelihood of the emergence of a new religious faction. The results show that this relationship is not statistically significant. To account for the expectation of some degree of homogeneity within SD groups, we cluster the standard errors on the SD movement.

**Variables**

The dependent variable, violence against the state, is from Cunningham, Bakke, and Seymour (2012). It is coded 1 if the faction committed any violence (deadly or nondeadly) against the state at the national or local level during any given year and 0 otherwise.

We have two primary independent variables. The first independent variable tests Hypotheses 1 and 2 and is dichotomous; 1 indicates that a faction is religious while 0 signifies a nonreligious faction. We code a faction as religious if their rhetoric or actions indicate that the faction has ambitions for their religion to have special status, institutionally or socially. More specifically, factions are considered religious if factions do one or more of the following: discuss instituting religious laws, making their faith the official religion, or discriminate against other religions. This information was gathered using the database Factiva to search newspapers and press statements about the group, as well as press statements made by group leaders themselves. Other online resources, such as factions’ websites or academic articles about the faction, were also used. From factions’ websites, we leveraged manifestos and constitutions if available or proposed goals and self-description. From academic articles, we leveraged experts’ analysis of faction’s ideology.13 Factional religious ideology can vary over time, but it usually does not. If there was evidence that factions had religious goals, they were coded as having a religious ideology for their entire life span unless there was evidence of an obvious pivot away from a religious ideology. This would be characterized by statements that distance the organization from a previous stance that embodied a religious ideology. The Palestinian Liberation Organization is the only faction in our data set that does this. We code a faction as nonreligious in two cases: (1) if the faction itself has a religious
identity, yet does not have ambitions to make their religion the dominant one, or (2) if the faction claims an identity completely unrelated to religion.

The Berber factions in Algeria are illustrative of scenario 1. While advocating on behalf a population that is largely Sunni Muslim, their SD goals do not involve giving Islam a special place in politics or law. Thus, we code them all as non-religious. On the contrary, the Ittifak party advocates for a nationalist movement that revolves around Islam for Tatars in Russia. The party’s leader, Fauziya Bairamova, advocates for the complete Islamicization of individual, social, and political practices. He seeks to lead the Tatar movement in the direction of a polity that embodies the universal rules of Islam, following the Quran. Thus, we code this faction as religious.

Our second independent variable is used to test Hypothesis 3. This variable captures the interaction between the faction’s religious ideology and the degree of intramovement competition between religious factions. This variable is the number of other coreligious factions within one’s SD movement. In other words, this variable is an interactive indicator of (1) whether the faction is religious and (2) the number of other religious factions that exist in the same movement and in the same year. Thus, the variable takes a value of 0 if the faction is nonreligious or is the sole religious faction within its SD movement. The motivation behind classifying sole religious factions as 0 lies with the lack of intramovement competition they face. The variable takes a value of 1 if the faction is religious and exists alongside one other religious faction, a value of 2 if the faction is religious and exists alongside two other religious factions, and so on. The variable ranges from 0 to 4. The variable includes the number of religious factions in an SD movement minus 1. We code this variable in this manner because a religious faction does not compete against itself. This classification should address more adequately the competition that religious factions face. Table 2 provides descriptive statistics for the dependent variable, the main explanatory variables, and the control variables.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violence against the state</td>
<td>2,533</td>
<td>0.206</td>
<td>0.405</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other religious factions</td>
<td>2,533</td>
<td>0.171</td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious faction</td>
<td>2,533</td>
<td>0.107</td>
<td>0.309</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kin</td>
<td>2,533</td>
<td>0.869</td>
<td>0.338</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other factions (log)</td>
<td>2,533</td>
<td>1.746</td>
<td>0.816</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.046</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group concentration</td>
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<td>2.75</td>
<td>0.433</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>2,523</td>
<td>3.183</td>
<td>6.885</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political instability</td>
<td>2,504</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group size</td>
<td>2,511</td>
<td>12.626</td>
<td>11.743</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governing structure</td>
<td>2,533</td>
<td>0.294</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time since violence</td>
<td>2,533</td>
<td>6.786</td>
<td>8.602</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>45</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
We control for other explanations of violence at the faction, movement, and state level. At the faction level, we include the number of other factions (logged), which has been shown to be a contributing factor to the use of violence against the state as factions (see Cunningham, Bakke, and Seymour 2012). We include this first control variable to ensure we are not simply capturing interfactional competition in general, but competition between religious factions in particular as an explanatory factor of violence against the state.

At the movement level, we control for ethnic kin in other states to emphasize that violent outbidding between coreligious factions is distinguishable from coethnics factions. In other words, if the outbidding mechanism encompasses ethnic outbidding as well as religious outbidding, we will see factions that have ethnic kin—who potentially act as potential external supporters—use more violence against the state and each other than factions that do not have ethnic kin in other states. We generate a dummy variable from the Minorities at Risk (MAR) data for ethnic kin in other states with—does the movement have kin across an international border or not.

Larger groups may believe they have a higher chance of successfully using violent tactics. They may also be more divided on preferences and more susceptible to fragmentation. We use Cunningham, Bakke, and Seymour’s (2012) measure to control for a movement’s relative size. We also include their indicator of whether the movement has a local governing structure. Governing structures could assist in solving collective action problems with consequences for both fragmentation and the use of violence. To account for the relationship between geographic concentration and violence (see Toft 2003), we include an MAR variable with four values ranging from dispersed to concentrated.

At the state level, we control for level of democracy, measured with the Polity 2 score from Polity IV (Marshall, Jaggers, and Gurr 2012). Democratic states may offer more of an opportunity for the proliferation of factions and thus an increase in the probability of competing religious factions. At the same time, democracies present a means to make demands through conventional politics, thus decreasing the likelihood of violence. Additionally, we include a dichotomous state-level variable, instability, which has been repeatedly cited in the political opportunity structure literature as an explanatory factor of violence against the state (e.g., Fearon and Laitin 2003).14

**Results**

Table 3 presents the results of our first four models. Both models 1 and 2 show support for Hypothesis 1, returning positive coefficients that are statistically significant at conventional levels ($p < .001$). Factions that are religious are more likely to use violence against the state than nonreligious factions. Religious factions all experience intermovement competition, while many face intramovement competition as well. This results in a higher likelihood of violence against the state.
Models 3 and 4 offer tests of Hypothesis 2, which predicts that sole religious factions are more likely to use violence against the state than nonreligious factions. These models return positive coefficients, demonstrating a positive relationship between religious ideology and violence against the state. However, they do not reach conventional levels of statistical significance, with model 4 returning a $p$ value of .295. Religious factions in different regions represent different sets of incentives for external involvement. A religious faction in one SD movement may not need to worry about competing with a coreligious faction in another SD movement for the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>0.826***</td>
<td>0.653***</td>
<td>0.160</td>
<td>0.526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.316)</td>
<td>(0.187)</td>
<td>(0.514)</td>
<td>(0.502)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindred</td>
<td>-0.171</td>
<td>-0.280</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.183)</td>
<td>(0.177)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other factions</td>
<td>0.157</td>
<td>0.131</td>
<td>0.106</td>
<td>0.159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.168)</td>
<td>(0.207)</td>
<td>(0.180)</td>
<td>(0.226)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group concentration</td>
<td>0.421**</td>
<td>0.545**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.184)</td>
<td>(0.217)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polity score</td>
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<td>0.003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.015)</td>
<td>(0.016)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instability</td>
<td>-0.374</td>
<td>-0.581*</td>
<td>-0.396</td>
<td>-0.627*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.342)</td>
<td>(0.322)</td>
<td>(0.356)</td>
<td>(0.367)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group size</td>
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<td>0.013</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group governance</td>
<td>-0.204</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.232)</td>
<td>(0.273)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years since violence</td>
<td>-1.381***</td>
<td>-1.382***</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.129)</td>
<td>(0.157)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spine 1</td>
<td>-0.000***</td>
<td>-0.000***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spline 2</td>
<td>-0.029***</td>
<td>-0.028***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spline 3</td>
<td>0.010***</td>
<td>0.010***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.002)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
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<td>-0.980*</td>
<td>-1.645***</td>
<td>-1.298***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.408)</td>
<td>(0.502)</td>
<td>(0.436)</td>
<td>(0.605)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>2,504</td>
<td>2,466</td>
<td>2,255</td>
<td>2,220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

*Observations drop due to the fact that models 3 and 4 drop factions that experience intramovement competition. Models 3 and 4 only examine intermovement competition.

*p < .1.

**p < .05.

***p < .01.
same external support. Because different SD movements operate in different geopolitical areas, they represent different political opportunities for external actors. Thus, coreligious factions operating in different SD movements in different regions of the world may not feel a sense of competition or may not be aware of religious factions outside of their geographic region.

Table 4 presents the results of the models testing Hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 3 predicts that while nonreligious and sole religious factions engage in the least amount of violence against the state, an increasing number of religious factions in an SD movement increases the likelihood that religious factions will use violence. Both models show support for our expectations, with the main variable of interest,
other religious factions, returning positive coefficients for its effect on violence against the state. The results are statistically significant at the $p < .01$ level in both models. While nonreligious and sole religious factions are the least likely to use violence, as the number of religious factions increases, each religious faction is more likely to use violence against the state.

While these results appear to provide evidence for our theory, we further investigate the possibility of reverse causality, that is, whether violence causes religious factionalization. Isaacs (2016) argues that violence intensity encourages organization use of religious rhetoric. Our argument centers around an outbidding mechanism, so perhaps if a group of individuals felt threatened by the success of another faction, they may seek to create their own faction and adopt a religious ideology as a way to potentially receive transnational support.

We test this proposition directly. Our independent variable is the total amount of violence against the state used in an SD movement year. In other words, we total the number of factions in an SD movement in a given year that use violence against the state. Our dependent variable is the emergence of a new religious faction. We include all of the controls from our main models and also control for the number of religious factions currently in the movement. This is because we expect that in a market not already saturated with religious factions, a new religious faction may be more likely to emerge. But with an increasing number of religious factions, the new faction is not really gaining an outbidding advantage by adopting a religious ideology. The results provide suggest that the total level of violence does not have a significant impact on the emergence of new religious factions. The regression table may be found in the Online Appendix.

We further address concerns of endogenity by approximating an experimental design through the use of coarsened exact matching. This method preprocesses our data to reduce the imbalance of confounding factors across our “treatment”—religious ideology. Our results are robust across these models and may be found in the Online Appendix.

Turning to control variables, the indicator for ethnic kin in other states returns a negative coefficient in all of our models. The fact that ethnic kin in other states are not positively associated with factional violence against the state provides evidence that the outbidding mechanism is most salient for religious factions. As argued earlier, religion’s boundless character offers more opportunities for external support than does ethnic ties. However, we do not have a clear interpretation for negative relationship between ethnic kin and violence against the state. Notably, the coefficient is not statistically significant but nonetheless raises interesting questions.

The variable indicating the number of other factions in the SD movement is statistically insignificant in our models. The models also suggest that factions in SD movements with a higher degree of geographic concentration are more likely to use violence against the state. This finding aligns with our expectations of intramovement competition’s positive effect on violence. If coreligious factions are located geographically closer to one another, they may feel an increased sense of
competition for the same external supporters, resulting in a higher likelihood of violent outbidding. We also find that factions who committed violence against the state in recent years are more likely to use violence against the state. This is expected, because once a faction decides that it is in its best interest to use a violent strategy, they are likely to continue this strategy than to change tactics.

While the coefficients are in the expected direction for our primary independent variables, in order to interpret their substantive significance, we utilize the observed values for predicted probabilities approach (see Hanmer and Kalkan 2013). In calculating the predicted probabilities for Hypothesis 1, we find that nonreligious factions use violence against the state 20.1 percent of the time while religious factions use violence against the state at a rate of 26.7 percent of the time. The difference between the two is 6.6 percentage points, a substantive jump for a relatively low starting point (Figure 2).

Next, we examine the substantive significance of model 6 that tests Hypothesis 3. We are interested in comparing the impact on violence against the state when adding another religious faction to an SD movement. In order to demonstrate the increased likelihood of violence against the state, we first calculate the predicted probability of violence against the state for a faction that does not experience intramovement competition with coreligious factions (nonreligious and sole religious factions). We then calculate the likelihood of violence for a religious faction that experiences a high degree of intramovement competition with coreligious factions or four other religious factions (the maximum number that occurs in our data in a single year).18

The predicted probabilities illuminate the substantive significance of the results and show a 13 percentage-point change in the likelihood of violence against the state.

Figure 2. Predicted probabilities of violence against the state.
when four other religious factions are present. In the case that multiple religious factions are not present, the likelihood of violence against the state for all observations is 20.1 percent. In the case that multiple religious factions do exist (four in this example), the likelihood of violence against the state is 33.0 percent (Figure 3).

A Closer Look: The Muslim Moro

While our statistical analysis tests the broader relationship between religious factions and violence, it does not examine the inner layers of our theoretical argument. To address the inner workings of our theory, we provide a brief illustration of the logic of violence as a signal to obtain external support.

Located in the southern Philippines, the Muslim Moro maintain a religious and ethnic distinction from the rest of the mainly Catholic Philippines. In the 1950s, Catholic migrations to Muslim majority territories increased tensions, led to communal violent conflict, and shaped a Moro SD movement.

The conflict in the southern Philippines was ripe for external supporters. Foreign ideological and material resources, especially from Libya and Malaysia as well as from radical Muslim groups, created an arena of competition from coreligious actors.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) splintered from the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). The MILF’s founder, Hashim Salamat, differed from the MNLF leadership along political and ideological lines. While the MNLF maintained a connection to the importance of Islam, Salamat claimed that MNLF leadership was not pursuing truly Islamic goals along with the aim of Moro SD.
Originally labeling themselves the New MNLF, Salamat attempted to portray the new organization as a politically moderate version of its parent group. In the early 1980s, Salamat and the New MNLF initially pursued external support by expressing readiness to accept political autonomy as opposed to outright independence. This strategy failed to obtain external backers who were already supporting other Moro rebel groups. Like most nascent insurgent groups, the New MNLF need resources for oppositional activity. As a MILF official stated bluntly, “no organization like MILF can survive without external support” (Liow 2006, 8).

The New MNLF maintained an Islamic religious ideology and changed its name to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front to “underscore Islam as the rallying point of the Bangsamoro struggle” (Mastura 1985, 17). Needing international support, Salamat highlighted the ideology of the group to international Muslim audiences. Addressing the Organization of the Islamic Conference, he stated: “All Mujahideen under the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) adopt Islam as their way of life. Their ultimate objective in their Jihad is to make supreme the WORD of ALLAH and establish Islam in the Bangsamoro homeland” (emphases in the original; Mastura 1985 as cited in McKenna 1998, 208).

The MILF pursued external support but with limited initial success. The market of Moro factions was saturated, and most potential supporters already supporting the MNLF. Furthermore, the MNLF and Philippine government were members of the 1976 Tripoli Agreement, an agreement that defined autonomous administrative divisions for Muslims in the southern Philippines. As the name suggests, Muslim-majority external states, especially Libya, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, and Somalia, facilitated the agreement. The MNLF commanded Muslim external support.

Maintaining a religious ideology was insufficient to change the existing order of external support. The MILF needed to change the pattern, distinguish themselves to international Muslim audiences, and demonstrate why external Muslim supporters should transfer support to them. At the same time, in 1987, a new Islamic Moro organization emerged: The Islamic Party of the Philippines. The MILF now faced competition from its parent organization as well as from emerging religious organizations.

To demonstrate its credibility and bargaining power to both external Muslim supporters and the Philippines government, the MILF carried out a “Prayer Rally,” a massive three-day protest beginning on April 13, 1986. During the rally, MILF speakers called on the Philippine government to negotiate with the MILF and implement the Tripoli Agreement, “under the auspices of the Organization of the Islamic Conference” (McKenna 1998, 244).

Despite a large turnout (estimated to be between 50,000 and 100,000 people), the Prayer Rally failed to generate greater recognition from the Philippine government, let alone from international coreligious actors.

The MILF changed tactics. To demonstrate their capability, in 1987, the faction conducted violent attacks against government targets in Cotabato City and parts of


Central Mindano. MILF forces cut power lines, destroyed bridges, and attacked police and military sites. The fighting resulted in twenty-five deaths. The Philippine government—and the international community—were now aware of MILF strength.19

The violence worked and caught the eyes of the international community. Or at least, the eyes of Muslim countries looking to support Muslim groups. Around the 1990s, and possibly before, Libya and Malaysia began providing weapons and support to the MILF. Other funding sources include Saudi Arabia and Iran as well as individuals from those countries. The MILF also received funding from Al-Qaeda and Mohammad Jama Khalifa, the brother-in-law of Osama bin Laden.

Having demonstrated their ability to use violence and gain external supporters, MILF violence against the state declined. The introduction of a new Islamic faction, however, resulted in a subsequent spike in violence. Abu Sayyif Group (ASG) was formed in 1991 and displayed a visible Islamic ideology. External Muslim support followed. After the introduction of the ASG in the broader Moro SD movement, we see a major increase in MILF use of violence against the state. In 1992, one year after ASG’s introduction, violence again become an important tactic in MILF’s arsenal. Notably, nonreligious Moro factions, such as the New People’s Army, saw a decline in violence against the state after 1991.20

Using an Islamic ideology to demonstrate the factions’ emphasis on an Islamic ideology, the MILF competed with other Moro and Islamic-focused groups for support from Muslim countries. To distinguish the faction from its competitors, MILF leaders then used violence to demonstrate their commitment to that religious ideology. Attacks against the Philippine government were demonstrative of the faction’s capability to act militarily and indicated a worthiness of support compared to other Moro and Islamic factions.

**Conclusion and Policy Implications**

Previous scholarship (e.g., Pearlman 2009; Cunningham 2013) demonstrates that fragmentation along different dimensions causes an increase in civil violence. Various conceptions of movement cohesion have been developed; our understanding of faction use of violence, however, is limited because we have not yet focused on the role of religion in producing distinct competition between certain factions. We find that religion matters—the relationship between violence and fragmentation is not only a story of numbers, but of religious ideology.

In this article, we find strong support that a faction’s religious ideology has a major impact on the use of violence against the state. We produce two meaningful findings. First, religious factions are more likely to utilize violence against the state relative to nonreligious factions. Second, compared to nonreligious and sole religious factions, we find that an increasing number of religious factions increases the likelihood that religious factions will use violence against the state.
Our findings have important policy implications for understanding the risks of violence in conflicts involving SD movements. In line with previous scholarship on fragmentation, we argue that policy makers should focus on intramovement dynamics. Rather than examine the overall level of fragmentation in an SD movement, however, policy makers should be aware of the type of factions in an SD movement. As not all SD factions are competing for the same resources, policy should focus on the extent of competition between different types of factions.

Second, with religion playing an increasing role in how people interact and view the world, policy makers should take note of the complex ways in which religion drives violence. Viewing religion as inherently violent limits our understanding and our ability to resolve conflict. For instance, policy makers should be less concerned about SD movements that have only one or two religious factions compared to movements with three or four. This allows governments to focus resources on contexts that have a higher risk of violence.

Policy should create incentives for religious factions to merge into bigger blocks, reducing the number of religious factions. Alternatively, policies that reduce splintering among religious factions would also lessen religious fragmentation in SD movements and violence against the state. Policy makers should focus on limiting the internationalization of civil conflicts and limit a principle motivator for religion faction violence—external support from coreligious actors. Reducing this source of support limits the usefulness of religion faction violence against the state—even in SD movements with multiple religious factions. Finally, faction use of violence may put civilians at risk of retaliation from the state. It may be necessary to give special attention to wars that involve multiple religious factions in order to devise ways to protect civilians from the resulting blowback from the state.

The data analysis in this article leaves several questions unanswered and avenues for future research. First, state violence against individual factions should be accounted for, as we suspect that this has an effect on factions’ use of violence against the state. While this data only exist at the SD movement level currently, it would be a worthwhile endeavor to collect data at the factional level. Second, we would like to test the model with a larger sample of SD movements. Gathering data on religious ideology at the factional level is an intensive endeavor. The results, however, would be more meaningful when the significance of the relation between religious faction competition and violence against the state is derived from a larger sample of the population.

Authors’ Note
Authors are listed in alphabetical order, equal authorship applied.

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Supplementary material for this article is available online.

Notes
1. Bloom (2004) also proposes religious outbidding as a mechanism for religious groups use of violence but focuses on suicide bombings and emphasizes the domestic audience.
2. “The Chechens are a majority Sunni Muslim people” (BELIEF = 2; Minorities at Risk Data)
3. Scholars have asserted that individuals or groups have multiple identities. More specifically, each identity can take a different salience in distinctive political contexts, and certain identities may be mobilized through a visible raising of certain issues when they provide resources for a preferred outcome (Posner 2005).
4. Decades ago, it may have been more informative to look at the use of violent outbidding between communist factions. However, violent mobilization for external resources through the espousal of a socialist or communist identity is not nearly as prevalent now. Instead, religious ideology has taken center stage as the identity with the most involved transnational audience.
5. Salehyan, Gleditsch, and Cunningham (2011) posit that moderately strong rebel groups are the most likely to receive external support due to the tendency for the strongest rebels to forgo external support in favor of complete autonomy. However, we believe that in the case of religiously aligned patrons, factions would be unconcerned with lost autonomy, rendering the strongest religious factions the most likely to receive support.
6. Snyder’s argument posits that political elites will vie to outbid one another to bolster their nationalist credentials with domestic political audiences. Elites who win this argument establish themselves as the most credible defender of the ethnic group’s interests. Similarly, religious factions vie to outbid one another to bolster their religious credentials to an international audience, establishing themselves as the most credible defender of the religion.
7. See Horowitz 1985 for how political elites outbid each other in national contexts.
8. Some of this argument stems from logic surrounding International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO) competition. Increased number of principals can create promote inter-INGO competition (see Cooley and Ron 2002). Religious self-determination (SD) factions, in turn, operate as firms selling their product. A competitive supply and demand environment changes their incentives and promotes the use of violence.
9. We define sole religious factions as factions in an SD movement who are the only faction operating with a religious identity. In such situations, there may or may not be nonreligious factions in the SD movement.

10. It is important to recognize that SD movements are inherently nationalistic. Thus, one might argue that Synder’s model of nationalist outbidding operates in all SD movements, eliminating necessary variation. While this might be true, the transnational bidding argument adds variation to SD movements in terms of their possible supporters.

11. This logic follows from Cunningham, Bakke, and Seymour’s (2012) piece, in which they find an increasing number of factions has important implications for violence.

12. We run models that test our main hypothesis of two samples: one including factions residing in the Middle East and another including factions that reside outside the Middle East. Our results remain robust in each of these samples.

13. We did not run into any cases in which the group’s description of themselves directly conflicted with third parties, in regard to their religious ideology.

14. A state is considered unstable if it has witnessed at least a three-unit change in Polity 2 score over the course of a three-year period.

15. See King and Nielsen 2016; Iacus, King, and Porro 2012. We do not use this design as our main model because matching observations across the treatment drops observations that are not comparable to one another, maintaining seventy factions of the original 242 for the variable “religious ideology” and thirty-two for the variable “highly religiously factionalized.” We wish to maintain the maximum number of factions in the original models, and then use matching as a compliment to the main analysis to lessen concerns that endogeneity is an issue in our results.

16. Kindred is dropped in model 4 because there are no cases in which the faction is religious but doesn’t have kindred ties.

17. This finding is consistent with Cunningham, Bakke, and Seymour’s (2012) finding.

18. We did, however, run robustness checks that show the effect of moving from no other religious factions to two and three (other) religious factions.

19. While the Moro Islamic Liberation Front’s use of violence against the government was undertaken to force the government to engage in sincere negotiations, it had the effect of demonstrating to international audiences the faction’s military strength. If the government engaged sincerely in negotiations, the faction would receive meaningful concessions. If not, the faction receives external support, grows stronger, and bolsters its bargaining position to pressure the government in the future.

20. Trends in violence are taken from the Global Terrorism Database’s online feature.

References


