THE RADICALIZATION IN CHECHNYA
FROM NATIONALIST INSURGENCY TO ISLAMIC TERRORISM

ALİ ALP ALANYALI

KOÇ UNIVERSITY

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ALİ ALP ALANYALI

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This is to certify that I have examined this copy of a master's thesis by

Ali Alp Alanyalı

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examining committee have been made.

Committee Members:

_____

Asst. Prof. Reşat Bayer

_____

Prof. Ziya Öniş

_____

Asst. Prof. İbrahim Mazlum

Date: _____

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for any award or any other degree or diploma in any university or other institution. It is affirmed by the candidate that, to the best of his knowledge, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Signed Ali Alp Alanyalı

ABSTRACT

RADICALIZATION IN CHECHNYA
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ALİ ALP ALANYALI

This study examines the process of radicalization in Chechnya. This process is not monolithic; it had begun as a nationalist insurgency including social movements for independence, but it eventually evolved into Islamic radicalism and terrorism. Thus, the aim of this study is to find the reason(s) behind the occurrence of this specific or religious form of radicalism in Chechnya. First, the causes and methods of three main forms of social reaction, which relatively from the least violent to the most are social movements, ethnic conflicts and terrorism, are analyzed for a better understanding of the actual situation in Chechnya. Then, the socio-economic situation of Chechnya, Russian policies creating the understanding of us vs. them, the change of leadership in Chechnya and the coming and deployment of the Mujahideen are analyzed in depth to show how the last factor has the main responsibility for the occurrence of Islamic radicalism and terrorism. The six main indicators that support and strengthen this argument are the number of organizations created, the number of fighters deployed, the amount of foreign funding, the decreasing sympathy of the West, the changes in laws and the regime and the number of civilian casualties. Consequently, the impact of international Islamic radicalism and terrorism transformed the local issue into a regional one and this study can be helpful for understanding the causes of and creating the preventive methods for the conflict.

Keywords: Radicalization, Islamic terrorism, social reaction, socio-economic situation, Russian policies, change of leadership, Mujahideen.

ÖZET

ÇEÇENİSTAN'DA RADİKALLEŞME
MİLLİYETÇİ AYAKLANMADAN İSLAMCI TERÖRE

ALİ ALP ALANYALI

Bu çalışma Çeçenistan'daki radikalleşme sürecini incelemektedir. Bu süreç yekpare değildir; bağımsızlık için toplumsal hareketleri içeren milliyetçi bir ayaklanma olarak başlamıştır, fakat zamanla İslamcı radikalizm ve terörizme dönüşmüştür. Dolayısıyla, bu çalışmanın amacı bu kendine has veya dini radikalizm çeşidinin Çeçenistan'da ortaya çıkmasının ardındaki neden(ler)i bulmaktır. İlk olarak, Çeçenistan'daki güncel durumun daha iyi anlaşılması için üç ana sosyal tepki çeşidinin, bunlar göreceli olarak en az şiddet içerenden en çoğa toplumsal hareketler, etnik çatışmalar ve terörizmdir, nedenleri ve yöntemleri incelenmiştir. Sonra, Çeçenistan'daki sosyo-ekonomik durum, Rusların bize karşı onlar anlayışını yaratan politikaları, Çeçenistan'daki liderlik değişimi ve Mücahitlerin gelmeleri ve konuşlanmaları, bu son etkenin İslami radikalizm ve terörizmin ortaya çıkmasının ana sorumlusu olduğunu göstermek amacıyla derinlemesine incelenmiştir. Bu argümanı destekleyen ve güçlendiren altı ana gösterge kurulan örgüt sayısı, konuşlandırılan savaşçı sayısı, yabancı finansman miktarı, Batı'nın azalan sempatisi, kanunlarda ve rejimdeki değişiklikler ve sivil kayıpların sayısıdır. Sonuç olarak, uluslararası İslamcı radikalizm ve terörizmin etkisi yerel meseleyi bölgesel bir hale dönüştürmüştür ve bu çalışma çatışmanın nedenlerini ve çatışmayı önleyici yöntemleri anlamak için yardımcı olabilecektir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Radikalleşme, İslamcı terör, sosyal tepki, sosyo-ekonomik durum, Rus politikaları, liderlik değişimi, Mücahitler.

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PREFACE

I would like to express my gratitude to Assistant Professor Reşat Bayer and Professor Ziya Öniş from Koç University and Assistant Professor İbrahim Mazlum from Marmara University for their assistance and contribution in the writing and completion process of this thesis.

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ÖNSÖZ

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I. INTRODUCTION

After the Cold War had ended; a lot of conflicts have occurred. The common characteristic of these conflicts is being intra-state type; they are ethnically or religiously motivated and in some instances, acts of terrorism are also included in these conflicts.

Chechnya, particularly between 1990 and 2000, is one of the best examples of the new types of conflicts occurred after the Cold War had ended. It is an intra-state type of conflict, issues of both ethnicity (especially in 1990s) and religion (speciafically in 2000s) is included and correspondingly the conduct of war is evolved from guerilla warfare to terrorism. Thus, the conflict in Chechnya is radicalized gradually in 1990s and reaches Islamic radicalism and more violently Islamic terrorism in 2000s. In other words, the Chechen conflict is not actually a new conflict but an old one with new type of warfare, strategies and actors. When the case is Chechnya, radicalism has gained particularly an Islamic attitude. The distinction between radicalism in general and Islamic radicalism in particular is important at this point to show my research question and dependent variable more explicitly. Radicalism and Islamic radicalism are different from each other. Actually, radicalism is a general term. It encompasses various kinds of political, social or religious forms of extremism. On the other hand, Islamic radicalism is a particular kind of radicalism. It can be defined as doing acts of extremism in the name of Islam or using Islam as a means to achieve other kinds of objectives such as power, wealth or prestige. For example, Sayyid Qutb, who was one of the prominent members of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in 1950s and 1960s, justifies the use of violence not simply in terms of the Quran or the memory of the prophet but also in terms of individual freedom and consciousness (Leezenberg 2007, 108). Thus, Chechnya is a good case (like Afghanistan in 1990s), where Islamic radicalism is apparently occurred. Hence, in this thesis, I will seek the answer to the question “what is/are the reason(s) of Islamic radicalism or

Islamic terrorism?" not of radicalism in general sense. Thus, the dependent variable of my research is the occurrence of Islamic radicalism or Islamic terrorism in Chechnya against the Russian state, which Chechens see as an occupier force.

There are several arguments in the literature that tell the reasons of radicalism in Chechnya. However, neither or very few of them give serious attention to the distinction between radicalism and Islamic radicalism. Hence, most of them argue about reasons which explain radicalism in general in Chechnya. However, my argument for this thesis is that although these reasons, which are economic backwardness, Russian thoughts and policies and the change of the leadership in Chechnya, are present and lead to radicalism in Chechnya; specifically the existence of the Arab Mujahideen causes the Islamic type of radicalism in Chechnya. In other words, the above three reasons can also be seen in other cases and even they may cause violence; they cannot specifically explain why people adhere to "Islamic" form of radicalism. In short, my argument indicates that more than any other reason, the existence of the Mujahideen in Chechnya specifies this radicalism as an Islamic one. Thus, in my thesis, I will examine all these reasons in detail to show how they bring Chechnya radicalism; but also I will give specific attention to the existence of the Arab Mujahideen, because I believe that the support of them, whether physically or implicitly, causes the occurrence of Islamic radicalism in Chechnya and adds a new dimension to the conflict by bringing Islamic terrorism to the region.

The Chechen case is not the first one that radical Islamists or specifically the Arab Mujahideen give each kind of support and become effective. They were seen for example in Afghanistan, Palestine or Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nevertheless, it can be one of the most important cases after the Cold War that the impact of radical Islamists or the Arab Mujahideen can be witnessed so explicitly; because lots of Arab and foreign fighters came Chechnya, which has a Muslim majority but which is not actually an Arabic country. Thus,

the cultural, ideational and ideological effects of these Arab fighters can be seen more easily in Chechnya. The first stronghold or the first center of radical Islam was Afghanistan. This is because of the struggle of radical Islamists and Mujahideen against Soviet occupation in the late 1970s and the creation of the al-Qaeda in the late 1980s. Moreover, the situation in Chechnya has evolved in such a way that radical Islamists and the Arab Mujahideen have become very effective so that some scholars call this situation as the "Afghanisation of Chechnya"; a new stronghold for international Islamic terrorism (Brownfeld 2003, 141-142). Other than this important point, there are some peculiarities of the Chechen case that can explain why I choose Chechnya for my thesis. After the Soviet Union had ended, ethnic and regional conflicts have surfaced. Many of these conflicts, like Tatarstan, have remained in a "frozen state of no peace no war and many of the potential ones have been in an uneasy equilibrium managed by institutional accommodations, elite cooptation or disenfranchisement and exclusivist policies" (Hughes 2001, 11). However, the conflict in Chechnya has erupted into radicalism and violence. "Due to its destructive level and sustained nature, the conflict in Chechnya is the most protracted and violent of all the post-Soviet conflicts within the former Soviet space and it is the only violent secessionist conflict occurred within the Russian Federation" (Hughes 2001, 11). Thus, the costs, both human and economic, are incalculable. Moreover, "Chechnya is the only case where Russia has persistently deployed its military power to resist decolonization and it is the only case where secessionists have challenged the sovereignty of the Russian Federation by the use of military force" (Hughes 2001, 11). Thus, all these points show how the conflict in Chechnya is so peculiar, violent and radicalized and urge me to examine the reason(s) behind this violence and radicalization, which I believe are caused by the existence of the Arab Mujahideen and radical Islamists from all over the world.

Scholars who examine radicalism in Chechnya commonly point out three important and interacting reasons. These are broadly economic backwardness (Cornell, Matveeva)

Russian thoughts and policies (Hughes, Lapidus) and the change of the leadership in Chechnya (Yevsyukova, Hughes). According to them these three reasons are jointly sufficient for the occurrence of radicalism in Chechnya. Thus, the most of the alternative explanations give attention to these three reasons simultaneously; but they only differ about which of these three has more explanatory power in their hypotheses. However, as I indicated before, very few of these alternative explanations (Brownfeld, Al-Shishani) pay attention to the difference between radicalism in general and Islamic radicalism in particular; and take the existence of the Arab Mujahideen or radical Islamists in Chechnya into consideration as a reason for Islamic radicalism. Thus, I think this is a lack of information in the academic literature about the reasons, especially the external reasons, of Islamic radicalism in Chechnya. Thus, I will try to explain the occurrence of Islamic radicalism and terrorism by giving special attention to the external factors; the existence of the Arab Mujahideen and foreign fighters in Chechnya. In this research my dependent variable is apparent, which is the occurrence of Islamic radicalism or Islamic terrorism in Chechnya. I will start with analyzing the other three variables, which are also taken into consideration by other scholars, in order to show how they lead radicalism in Chechnya and create some kind of causality for Islamic radicalism. However, according to me, these three reasons are not sufficient for the occurrence of Islamic radicalism; hence the real answer or the main independent variable for my question is the existence of the Arab Mujahideen in Chechnya. In short, the physical and implicit existence of the Mujahideen (independent variable) has caused Islamic radicalism and terrorism (dependent variable) in Chechnya.

I will examine several indicators, including qualitative, quantitative and binary ones in order to test my argument. I will start by analyzing the Islamic groups (both extremist-nationalist and foreign based) formed in Chechnya with an ideology of Islamic extremism or radicalism. I will examine structures and numbers of these religiously motivated ones to show

how they differ from mainstream traditional nationalist or secessionist guerilla organizations. Then, I will give some approximate numbers of the Mujahideen coming to Chechnya. These Mujahideen, or Islamic fighters with radical ideals, are composed mostly of Arabs of the Middle East; but also people from the Central and South Asia, Africa, Europe and even Australia is included among their ranks. The support for Chechnya does not only include the physical existence of the Mujahideen; hence I will also examine the financial contributions especially of the Arabs to the Chechen cause. I will present some confident information acquired from newspapers, articles or the speeches of government officials about the financial routes, both legal and illegal, between Chechens and Arabs, about the amount of this funding and also about the types of support such as weapons, ammunition and supplies. The impact of the Mujahideen is not only about fighting against Russians. Their presence in Chechnya and impact upon like-minded people composed mostly of the young compel government officials to declare Islam as the state religion, bring sharia as the main law and some other regulations such as the ban on alcohol sales (Walker 1998, 1). A more qualitative indicator is the decreasing sympathy of the West, especially of the USA and the EU and in return an increasing sympathy of not only the Arabs, but also radical Islamists all over the world. This change of situation has been clearly witnessed especially after the September 11 events, which were condemned as terrorist acts by the USA and other Western nations. Thus, as a natural result, the sympathy and support of the West was decreased sharply towards Chechnya, which has been seen from that date as a shelter for radical Islamists and Islamic terrorists. My last indicator will be about the casualties; whether soldiers of civilians are targeted or whether people are died and wounded as a result of traditional warfare or terrorist acts like suicide bombings. I will give some approximate numbers about the dead and wounded people. Moreover, the most important point here is that, contrary to the most of expectations, the number of people, whether combatant or non-combatant, killed or wounded

as a result of especially terrorist acts was lowered day by day. However, when the intentions, perpetrators and types of these attacks are analyzed, again the impact of radical Islamists or Islamic terrorist can be seen apparently. These attacks were mostly organized by a collaboration of Arabian fighters and local Islamic Chechen leaders. Their slogans and demands revealed their intentions evidently. Furthermore, the most used method in these attacks was suicide bombing which is so popular among the Middle East during the battles between the state and anti-government forces. Thus, ending a foreign occupation that oppresses the local community is viewed as a possible legitimate purpose, that the act of self-sacrifice could contribute toward that greater end (Pape and Feldman 2010, 196, 200). Thus, the increase in the intensity and the number of these factors, especially in the interwar period (1996-1999), which is considered a transition time from nationalist insurgency to Islamic terrorism, can test my argument.

I will begin my thesis by specifying the different arguments and hypotheses in the literature about radicalization in Chechnya. I will show what they have in common and how they differ from each other. Moreover, I will also try to indicate their strengths and weaknesses and after these put forward my own argument. In the second chapter, I will give some theoretical information about the question of "why do people rebel?" or "why do they become radicalized?" To answer these questions I will use theories from ethnic conflicts, terrorism and social movements literatures. This chapter is important in terms of seeing whether some of these theoretical reasons that cause ethnic conflicts, terrorism or social movements can also be seen practically in the case of Chechnya. In the third chapter, I will answer my research question of "what are the reasons of Islamic radicalism in Chechnya?" In this chapter I will also analyze some other factors, such as economic backwardness, Russian thoughts and policies and the change of the leadership in Chechnya, which are important in terms of bringing radicalism and providing some sort of causality for radical Islam. After

then, I will in depth examine my main independent variable, the existence of the Arab Mujahideen, for the occurrence of Islamic radicalism. I will measure my argument with using quantitative, qualitative and binary indicators and try to reach some conclusion for my hypothesis. In the last chapter, I will compare and contrast the case of Chechnya with other cases throughout the world, on which the Mujahideen, radical Islamists or Islamic terrorists have some impact. I chose my cases from every region that these radical Islamists provide some physical or implicit support. These regions include Asia, the Middle East, Africa and even Europe. Thus, this chapter provides insights about the strengths and weaknesses of these radical foreign fighters in terms of their impact in different regions. Moreover, this will give the chance for predicting the future of Chechnya whether radical Islam will be suppressed and faded away or it will become the new stronghold for international Islamic terrorism.

I believe that this thesis will be useful or at least attract the attention about the rising radical Islam and Islamic terrorism in Chechnya in particular and in the North Caucasus in general. The seriousness of this issue have to be grasped more seriously because of the importance of the geostrategic location of the region. The region is not only important with illegal drugs or weapons trafficking, it is also very important in terms of the future of energy security. Thus, with writing this thesis, I expect to tell the details of the rising Islamic radicalism in the region and make people to notice the future potential threats to the world security and peace.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

After the Cold War had ended, a brutal war has occurred between Russians and Chechens. However, the war in Chechnya is not a monolithic process. Actually, in terms of its nature, it is divided into two very different phases. Although Chechens were motivated by the identity differences in both wars, the emphasis that was given to a particular side of their identity created the ideological shift in the course of the war. Thus, the First Chechen War (1994-1996) was conducted as an ethnic based struggle under a secular and nationalist leadership; while in the Second Chechen War (1999-2000), Islamic faith under a religiously motivated leadership was the primary focus (Yalowitz and Cornell 2004, 107). This transition in Chechnya from a territorial national movement to a Jihadist struggle with universal or deterritorialized ideas was "a direct product of the experience and practice of violence in the first war" (Hughes 2007, 94-97). During the first war, Chechens had conducted much more a traditional type of warfare but there was a great asymmetrical power between Russians and Chechens. Moreover, Russian war crimes against Chechens blowed up historical enmities between them due to religious and cultural factors. Thus, these created an authority gap, from which the Arab Mujahideen and foreign fighters have taken the advantage of. The ideological change accompanied the strategic change. In other words, belligerents conducted guerilla warfare in the First Chechen War, while terrorism was the main strategy of Chechens in the Second Chechen War. In the first war, Russian forces were exposed to guerilla warfare in which nearly all Chechen civilians were seeen as enemy. However, with the second war, the use of hostage-takings, suicide bombings and other terrorist acts to force Russians were heightened (Lapidus 1998, 21-22).

The radicalization in Chechnya is not a recent phenomenon. It has emerged immediately after the Cold War had ended and gradually increased. Scholars, have different

explanations about the reasons of the radicalization in Chechnya. For example, Pénélope Larzilliére (2007) mostly examines the quantitative aspects of radicalization; she argues that the poor economic conditions of the republic is the main reason. According to William Thompson (2011), for example, mainly the harsh Russian thoughts and policies are effective in the process of radicalization. On the other hand, Emil Souleimanov (2005) argues that the role of leaders, especially on the Chechen side, is the main reason for radicalization. Nonetheless, the most of them share the belief that the same or at least similar reasons were effective in this process; because they generally tend not to differ the process ideological and strategical. As a result, they see the process as long lasting war having successive phases of battle. These reasons include socio-economic conditions of Chechnya, Russian thought and policies against the republic and the transition of leadership in Chechnya. These three factors are considered simultaneously in the majority of theories; but what differs them is the explanatory power that each scholar attaches one or more of these reasons. Indeed, these factors are important in the emergence and the continuation of the radicalization in Chechnya. Even, these factors have contributed to the conflict for making it "the most protracted and violent of all the post-Soviet insurgencies" (Hughes 2001, 11, 40). Thus, I also start my argument by accepting the importance of these factors in the radicalization process of Chechnya. In other words, my argument is not against the causal effect of these reasons; but rather I argue that there is a part that these theories are still mostly missing. Although, the radicalism in Chechnya has a specific characteristic, a religious form of radicalism (Islamic radicalism), these theories do not differentiate the causes in general and in particular. Thus, I argue that despite the reasons for radicalism in general also contribute to Islamic radicalism, the root cause for Islamic radicalism is different. According to my opinion, the existence of radical Islamists and the Arab Mujahideen and their cooperation with local radicals and extremists is the main reason behind the emergence of Islamic radicalism.

In order to understand the missing point of the majority of theories, their arguments about the reasons for the radicalization in Chechnya should be analyzed. To start with, socio-economic factors in Chechnya have a great impact on the radicalization of the Chechen people. Economic life in Chechnya was in a terrible situation (Thompson 2011, 6). The republic's infrastructure and industry were collapsed because of the Russian bombardment. Moreover, as Russian expertise fled, the economic situation got worse. The shattered economy left between 80 and 90 percent of the working population jobless. Poverty was too high; even the legitimate sources of income could not reach the poverty threshold (Wood 2004, 24). Social provisions were collapsed and education became virtually unavailable . The health services became the lowest level and as a result the rate of infant mortality was incredibly high (Wood 2004, 24). Thus, in this socially collapsed and economically isolated republic, crime was flourished (Larzilliére 2007, 1). Thus, according to some theories, the radicalization was very normal in such minimal socio-economic facilities that Chechnya had (Souleimanov 2005, 53).

In addition to the socio-economic factors, Russian thoughts, policies and strategies against Chechnya contributed the radicalization of the process. The Chechen society was already traumatized by the brutal events of the First Chechen War. Thus, they became impoverished and fearful of the foreign Russian enemy. In addition to these, the Russian perception of the Chechen people became radicalized and this only increased the 'us vs. them' mentality which has historically presented in Chechnya. Thus, during the first war, there was a dual radicalization at both sides (Thompson 2011, 7). With the start of the second war, both the radicalization and Russian army operations were intensified as a reult of the newly elected Putin government's strict policies. Moreover, with the intensified dual radicalization, the second war witnessed by far more extensive bombings, village sweeps, the establishment of filtration camps and activities like ransom-taking (Larzilliére 2007, 1-2). After these severe

violations of human rights by Russian military forces, the European Parliament and the international community tried to force Russia by political and economic means to stop this brutal war. However, Russia found the European Parliament Resolution inappropriate for dialogue; and so did not notice any of the EU calls, "refused to cooperate with the OSCE, blocked humanitarian aid and even stepped up military operations in defiance of the EU calls for a ceasefire" (Yevsyukova 1995). All these severe thoughts and policies of the Russian side made the Chechen conflict more radicalized.

Leadership also had a great impact in the radicalization of the conflict. Although the more moderate candidate, Maskhadov, won the election (in January 1997, under the aegis of the OSCE, democratic free parliamentary and presidential elections held in Chechnya) in the interwar period; the radical, more Islamist and terrorism inclined candidate and the hero of the first war, Basayev, attracted significant support from the young population. Maskhadov was incapable of exercising control over young extremists and was unable to achieve the monopoly of the legitimate use of force in the republic. Thus, the ineffectiveness of the elected Chechen leadership which combined with instability and the charismatic leadership of Basayev led to further radicalization of the conflict. "In the Chechen mindset, a war against an external aggressor, Russia, was almost automatically associated with a war for territory, freedom, national honor, identity and religion" (Thompson 2011, 8-9). So these "radical Chechen leaders and warlords, by using Islam, created narratives of national identity to mobilize the civilian population in the struggle against Russia" (Thompson 2011, 8-9). These narratives historicized the conflict but also continued the process of radicalization. Most of them included references to anti-colonial and religious wars of the past; because there was a "yearning to the golden age of Shamil's Imamate, the only time in history when Chechnya existed as a legitimate, uncolonized and non-Russian state" (Souleimanov 2005, 53). Thus, only by using of this religious language in the name of Islamic jihad and exploiting the

experience of radicalization and violence stemmed from the first war, Chechen leaders mobilized the forces necessary to struggle against Russians. As a result, "combining Islam with nationalism as an effective instrument of social mobilization became a part of the official style and was probably the only tool legitimizing the building of the Chechen statehood at that time" (Souleimanov 2005, 53).

The impact of these three factors in the radicalization process of Chechen conflict is indisputable. However, I argue that the existence of these factors is not sufficient for explaining the onset and maintenance of Islamic form of radicalism in Chechnya. Thus, my argument is that besides these factors, a fourth factor, the existence of radical Islamists and the Arab Mujahideen, shortly as Wahhabis, in Chechnya, must be incorporated in to the theory. Nonetheless, there are also some studies argue on the contrary my argument that the existence of foreign factors is not that much influential for radicalization. To start with, one study argues that the "Wahhabi influence on the Chechen society was limited" and "attempts at introducing strict Islamic customs in the interwar period failed" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 30). According to it, two factors were against to the impact of radical Islamic preachers and militants. Firstly, "most Chechens disliked Wahhabis. In some countries, Wahhabi missionaries became popular because they provided valuable social services that the weak state failed; but in Chechnya they showed limited ability to perform such social services and in the eyes of Chechens they were associated not with good deeds but with criminal acts" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 31). Secondly, "although there was a revival of Islam in Chechnya during the war, the majority of Chechens were Sufis and had little in common with the type of fundamentalist Islam preached by Wahhabis" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 31). The more qualitative parts (such as changes in laws) of the existence of Wahhabis are examined in such studies. In some other studies, quantitative (such as number of fighters or funding amounts) parts are also analyzed. According to Roland Dannreuther, for example, "the dynamics of the Chechen war

provided a propitious ground for foreign forces to contribute to the radicalization within Russia" (Dannreuther 2010, 114). However, he also argues that "it is important not to give too much weight to these external influences, because of the frequently exaggerated estimates of the number of foreign Mujahideen fighting in Chechnya. Most of the assistance received from the Muslim world in the 1990s was driven by humanitarian and apolitical considerations, seeking to contribute to the revitalization of the Muslim community within Russia; not by considerations of waging war and terrorism against it" (Dannreuther 2010, 114). Such studies argue that the number of volunteers remained very limited in relation to the entire Chechen resistance movement by implying that "they were no more than 1-2 percent of pro-independence forces" (Larzilliére 2007, 5). These studies also argue that "the level of funding from abroad for Islamists has been greatly exaggerated" (Wood 2004, 26-27).

Overall, most of the other studies in the literature either do not pay enough attention to the existence of foreign forces in Chechnya or do not accept the existence of them as an influential factor for radicalization. However, I argue that the existence of them is very important not only for radicalization in general but also for bringing the Islamic radicalization in the region. I argue in this way, because while socio-economic factors, thoughts and policies or leadership change create causal explanations for radicalism in general; they cannot clearly and definitely explain why religious radicalization, especially in the form of Islamic terrorism, occurred in Chechnya (Thompson 2011, 10). Moreover, as indicated before, Islam was used as a means for mobilization and struggle; but what I seek is the answer of how the most violent form of radical Islam, Islamic terror, was flourished in the region. Thus, according to my view, without examining the existence of radical Islamists, the Arab Mujahideen or Wahhabis, radical Islam and Islamic terror in Chechnya cannot be clearly understood. Thus, there are also a small number of studies that support my argument. These studies show the major role played by foreign forces, that "they brought with them their brand of radical Islam

and tried to exert their own ideology on the Chechen community and politics" (Al-Shishani 2006, 2). As a result, "the impact of these newcomers has in many places transformed the Chechen life" (Brownfeld 2003, 141). However, these studies also have some missing points. First of all, even though they accept the importance of external or transnational factors, not all of them, like Hegghammer (2010/11), try to explain how they change or what they bring to the local conflict. These studies only try to tell the importance of the transnational Islamic fighters phenomenon, explain especially their ideological motivations and submit soultions in order to cope with these actors. Secondly, although others try to explain their impacts, they focus either on quantitative (like the number of fighters or the amount of funding) or qualitative (ideological/political, sociological and judicial transformations) aspects. Studies of Wilhelmsen (2004) or Karim (2013) are examples of the former and Al-Shishani (2006) or Walker (1998) are examples of the latter. Thus, in my thesis I am trying to combine various studies and their perceptions about the radicalization in Chechnya. I will try to explain the occurrence of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism by giving specific attention to the external factors, the Arab Mujahideen and foreign fighters, and measure their impacts by a combination of both quantitative and qualitative aspects.

There is no strict consensus among the scholars about the reasons of radicalization in Chechnya. Thus, a division emerges in the explanations for the insurgency. For example, Gordon Hahn argues that "the Caucasus Emirate maintains close ties to Al Qaeda and the international Islamist network, with the internet serving as the key mechanism of communication" (O'Loughlin et al. 2011, 7). He also believes that "Western commentators ignores the global jihadization of the Chechen/Caucasus mujahideen" and so contrasts his position with that of Gerber and Mendelson, who "deemphasizes the import and impact of Islamism in favor of other explanations, primarily the poor state of the local economy" (O'Loughlin et al. 2011, 7). In other words, most of the studies share common or similar

points; but very limited number of them take the existence of the Mujahideen in Chechnya into consideration as an important factor for radicalization. Even some of them argue that their influence is very limited to make a radical difference. However, as a counter argument, I will put forward that their existence in Chechnya is a necessity for bringing Islamic radicalization in Chechnya; otherwise, the insurgency would not continue until today (Bakke 2014, 187). Thus, I will show the importance of them by giving examples of both qualitative (such as changes in laws) and quantitative (such as number of fighters or funding amounts) measures.

III. WHY DO PEOPLE BECOME RADICALIZED?

Most of the time, instead of remaining unresponsive, people react against negative conditions, which are stemmed from other people, the state or the lack of primary resources. These reactions may vary from peaceful protests at the one end and acts of terrorism at the other, due to their perceptions of others and of the world. Thus, the purpose of this theoretical chapter is to seek the answer of the question "why people rebel?" or "why are people radicalized?" in order to understand the situation in Caucasus and particularly in Chechnya.

There is no common understanding about radicalization. Scholars have different answers about it according to their areas of investigation. Some scholars like Sidney Tarrow examine social movements, others like Monica Duffy Toft examine ethnic conflicts and ethnic violence and some others like Martha Crenshaw examine terrorism. Thus, these areas of investigation can be categorized under three broad headings as social movements, ethnic conflicts and terrorism, in a sense from the least violent to the most. The most violent is terrorism because it includes the intentional killing of people and the least violent are social movements because most of the time they are seen as a social right, including only democratic protests and not any violence. Moreover, sometimes social movements, ethnic conflicts and terrorism can happen at the same time; so for each of these areas scholars specify different but also somehow overlapping reasons for reaction, radicalization or rebellion, which respectively can be seen as from the most static one to the most dynamic.

I will start with representing what scholars say about social movements, from both historical and modern understandings. Then I will examine the most common reasons of ethnic conflicts, which are seen in most parts of the today's world, from Caucasus to the Middle East, from Central America to Southeast Asia. Lastly, I will examine the most violent

one, terrorism, by considering both the material and psychological incentives for it. These classifications are important for my thesis; because the Chechen conflict is holding, especially in its gradual phases, different parts of these social reaction mechanisms. Immediately after the Soviet Union had collapsed, social movements for independence were seen in the beginning. Later, ethnic and territorial claims, which were tried to be justified by historical arguments, were arised about the land they live. At the end, indiscriminate violence against all (both combatants and non-combatants and both Russians and pro-Russian Chechens), which was justified by the arguments of radical Islam and Islamic jihad and created by the means of terrorism, has dominated the region.

A. Social Movements

Social movements are the most non-violent forms of reaction (Della Porta and Diani 1999, 1). It is a right in most democratic societies. Thus, by this way, people express their complaints and discontent about the negative conditions in the society.

"Social movements are mainly informal networks based on common beliefs and solidarity, which mobilize about conflictual issues through the frequent recurrence of various forms of protests" (Della Porta and Diani 1999, 16). Thus, there are four main elements of social movements. These are; "(a) *informal interaction networks* between a plurality of individuals groups and organizations, (b) *shared beliefs and solidarity* that interacting collectivities require to form collective identities and a sense of belonging, (c) *collective action focusing on conflicts*, which means to promote or oppose social change at either the systematic or non-systematic level, and (d) *use of protest* as a kind of non-violent collective action and as a pattern of political behaviour" (Della Porta and Diani 1999, 14-15).

Theories about reasons of social movements can be traced back to early Marxist theories of socialism. Thus, first I will explain these earliest or classical theories and their interactions with each other. Then I will mention the new or contemporary theories and try to show their similarities with their classical counterparts. Moreover, this part about social movements is important in order to compare social movements with other forms of reaction, ethnic conflicts and terrorism. This comparison is necessary to understand why some reactions stay in a non-violent manner but others erupt into violence. By this way, overlapping and peculiar reasons between these various forms of reaction can be examined and so similarities and differences can be more precisely understood. As a result, overlapping factors of classical and contemporary theories of social movements can be helpful to understand the various reasons of the Chechen conflict, such as socio-economic conditions, mobilization and leadership and culture, which are examined by most of the theories.

a. Earliest Theories

Earliest theories of social movements can be traced back to the socialist tradition founded by Marx and Engels. In other words, according to this Marxist tradition, social movements can be analyzed as working-class movements. Thus, according to Marx, the reason of class movements or social movements was *class conflict* or *capitalism* itself. According to his theory, a class in-itself had to transform to a class for-itself in order to realize the class revolution to topple the capitalist regime (Tarrow 1994, 11). In short, the main building blocks of his theory were social structures, such as capitalism and class.

Lenin was another representative of the socialist tradition. He accepted the theory of Marx; but according to him there was a blank in Marx's theory that must be filled. He asked the question "who mobilizes the people?" and his answer was "*the party*" (Tarrow 1994, 12). Thus, according to him a "vanguard party would act as a self-appointed guardian for the

workers' real interests" (Tarrow 1994, 12). Thus, the main building block of his theory were not social structures, but instead the organization or the party.

The last contribution to the socialist tradition was from Antonio Gramsci. He accepted the importance of the party; but according to him it would not be sufficient to raise the revolution. In order to reach this goal a working-class culture must be created. By this way, workers' own consciousness or shortly *class consciousness* would be developed. Thus, in addition to the party, a cadre of *organic intellectuals* had to come within the working-class itself and help the creation of this class consciousness (Tarrow 1994, 12-13). Thus, in short Gramsci's main focus was the cultural dimension of the movement.

b. Contemporary Theories

From 1950s to 1990s, some new or contemporary theories of social movements were developed mainly in Europe and the United States. The first theory was developed in 1950s and 1960s in the United States and it was called as the *Grievances and Collective Behaviour Theory*. It was developed as a politically connected view of social movements by the non-Marxist sociologists William Kornhauser (1959) and Ted Gurr (1971). It analyzes the social structures in society. Similarly to Marx, according to whom class conflict would create a revolution, this theory argues some kinds of grievance create social movements. However, unlike Marx, there are no predetermined stages or there is no fixed social subject, such as class, in this theory. Shortly, grievances create social movements. These grievances involve individual deprivation, social dysfunction, feelings of aggression or frustrated expectations. All these may automatically turn into collective action. Thus, according to this theory, social movements emerge as more spontaneous forms of expression outside of the normal institutions of society and hence, there is no or very low connection to politics.

Another theory, developed in 1960s and 1970s in the United States, was *Rational Choice and Resource Mobilization*. The most influential proponent of this theory was the American economist Mancur Olson (1965). Sociologists John McCarthy and Mayer Zald (1973) were also among the proponents of the rational choice theory. Although, this theory accepts the necessity of grievances for social movements, it argues that they do not automatically produce contention. Thus, it adopts a rational choice framework, in which individuals are not isolated but rational actors. The theory looks at the availability, mobilization and management of resources, which can be material, such as time, money and labor, or non-material, such as faith, friendship, moral obligations and authority. Thus, the mobilization of resources is for pursuing the collective good of all members. At this point, social movement organizations and leadership are important in order to mobilize resources and to strengthen the bonds between members.

In 1980s and 1990s, a new theory was developed in Europe. It was called as the *New Social Movements*. The roots of this theory can be found in Edward Thompson (1966), Clifford Geertz (1973) and Erving Goffman (1974). In 1980s, it was enhanced by Bert Klanderman (1988) and William Gamson (1988). This theory points the impacts of structural transformations from old politics to new politics. In old politics, values are material, issues mainly involve economy, military and security, political parties and centralized working-class are the main organizations and the old classes, such as the working-class and bourgeoisie are the main actors. However, in new politics, values are postmaterial such as freedoms and identities, issues involve environment, civil rights, feminism and peace, the new organizations take sub-institutional and extra-parliamentary forms, and the new middle class, the youth and higher educated people are among the new actors. In short, the main characteristics of new social movements are being decentralized, participatory, less hierarchical, more fragmented, more open and inclusive, non-ideological and issue-based. It is critical of instrumental

modernity and progress and rather supports postmoderrnity. It indicates the importance of social transformations rather than economic ones. Thus, cultural dimension of social movements are introduced. Framing of collective action, or in other words ways of interpretation and giving meaning, is much more important in new social movements. Thus, rather than *how* the collective action occurs, that resource mobilization tries to explain; *why* it occurs as a result of cultural and social frames is the main question of new social movements (Della Porta and Diani 1999, 2).

There is a rough analogy between each socialist theory and contemporary theories. Marx focused on the grievances and cleavages of the capitalist society, which are later analyzed by the grievances theory. Importance of mobilization, organization and leadership remind Lenin's vanguard party. Lastly, Gramsci's understanding of consciousness had similar tenets with framing and collective identity formation, which are seen in new social movements. However, neither of them specify the political conditions, in which they could mobilize for their own interests (Tarrow 1994, 13). This problem of political opportunities and constraints led to the birth of a new theory.

The *Political Process Approach* or the *Political Opportunity Structures* has started to develop from 1960s in the United States. It analyzes social movements through national political structures. The main dimensions of political opportunity structures are on the one hand opportunities and constraints to challengers and on the other hand facilitation and repression by authorities. Thus, in other words, political opportunity structures analyze resources external to social movements. By incorporating the main elements of other theories, such as frames or mobilizing structures, into political opportunity structures, some scholars also try to create a synthesis for a better understanding of the creation and the maintenance of social movements (Tarrow 1994, 19-25).

Resource mobilization is not the only thing that determines a movement's strength. Social movement studies have also emphasized framing and repertoires of actions, such as new tactics, as very important for successful collective action. According to Kristin Bakke, "outside actors can influence each of these processes. Outsiders who bring competence, capacity, connections and cash frequently strengthen the domestic movement by boosting its coercive capacity, ability to mobilize supporters and organizational cohesion" (Bakke 2014, 156). She continues "these outsiders have contributed to the Chechen resistance movement's resource mobilization by bringing along recruits, weapons, combat expertise and access to financial support, primarily from sources in the Middle East" (Bakke 2014, 166-167).

The social movements literature, with its classical and contemporary theories, is helpful to understand the reasons of radicalism in Chechnya but alone it is not sufficient. There are other dimensions of the conflicts like ethnicity, lucrative gas and oil pipelines, asymmetrical power and ideas of Islamic jihad. Thus, in order to embrace all these dimensions I have to examine other literatures such as ethnic conflicts and terrorism and try to show the convergence points of these literatures.

B. Ethnic Conflicts

Especially since the Cold War had ended, clashes between ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural groups has increased and intensified. Even in some places these ethnic conflicts has erupted into ethnic violence, such as Caucasus, the Middle East or Africa. Just as there are different theories of social movements, there are different but interrelated theories of the onset of ethnic conflicts. Some of these theories give more attention to material concepts, such as resources or leaders and others view non-material concepts, like identity, discrimination or repression as more significant.

a. Primordialist Theories

According to these theories, the reasons of conflicts lay in immutable identity differences. Strength and intensity of ethnic identities, which reserve peculiar cultural, linguistic and religious characteristics, lead to conflict. Moreover, feelings of dislike, hostility and resentment or ancient group hatreds increase the duration and the intensity of the conflict (Toft 2001, 1).

According to Collier and Hoeffler, there are two main motivations for rebellion: *greed* and *grievance*. Moreover, they distinguish three different types of grievances. These are; *inter-group hatred*, *political exclusion* and *vengeance*. Inter-ethnic or inter-religious hatreds are the most common reason for internal conflicts (Collier and Hoeffler 2000, 11-12). Thus, what Collier and Hoeffler call as inter-group hatred is the point that primordialist approaches emphasize.

These theories specifically examine the *intractable conflicts*, which are seen especially in Balkans, in the Caucasus or in the Middle East after the Cold War had ended. An intractable conflict is "a process (not just a single violent episode) of competitive relationships that extend over a period of time, and involves hostile perceptions and occasional military actions" (Bercovitch 2003). There are several characteristics of intractable conflicts. These are:

a. "In terms of *actors*, intractable conflicts involve states or other actors with a long sense of historical grievance, and a strong desire to redress or avenge these.
b. In terms of *duration*, intractable conflicts take place over a long period of time.
c. In terms of *issues*, intractable conflicts involve intangible issues such as identity, sovereignty, or values and beliefs.
d. In terms of *relationships*, intractable conflicts involve polarized perceptions of hostility and enmity, and behavior that is violent and destructive.

e. In terms of *geopolitics*, intractable conflicts usually take place where buffer states exist between major power blocks or civilizations.
f. In terms of *management*, intractable conflicts resist many conflict management efforts and have a history of failed peacemaking efforts" (Bercovitch 2003).

The intractability of the Chechen conflict became more complicated by the Russian counterinsurgency campaign *Chechenization*. "The first pillar of this strategy was the devolution of political power to approved Chechen officials who supported the Russia's efforts to keep Chechnya within the federations legal frontiers. The second pillar of Chechenization was the creation of Chechen-only combat formations to conduct sweep operations. Thus, the conflict evolved from an open Russian-Chechen war of secession to a muted, but still deadly, intra-Chechen struggle" (Lyall 2010, 3). In other words, "the current phase of the war cannot be truly characterized as Chechen nationalism against Russian tyranny in an intractable war spanning centuries. Instead, now Chechens mostly confronted fellow Chechens as a result of the rise of, and Kadyrov's continued reliance on, these Chechen-only militia" (Lyall 2010, 18).

Ethnic factors and ancient hatred arguments are some of the reasons that make conflicts much more intractable. In Chechnya, these factors have already existed since the nineteenth century and these arguments has initially created a war of secession based on a nationalistic manner. However, the creation of pro-Russian political and military forces and the infidel understanding of jihadist Islam, which includes not only non-Muslims but also collaborator Muslims, made the conflict more polarized and radicalized.

b. Discrimination and Repression Theories

According to these theories, discrimination and repression caused by state policies lead to the outbreak of conflicts. “Linguistic, religious, cultural, economic and political discrimination or repression incite groups to rebel against state authorities and resort to violence” (Toft 2001, 1-2).

The other two types of grievances, political exclusion and vengeance, that Collier and Hoeffler describe, are relevant at this point. “If a majority uses its voting power to disadvantage a minority or if the poor are marginalized from the political process, political exclusion is seen” (Collier and Hoeffler 2000, 12). Moreover, “the desire to revenge the atrocities that were committed during a previous conflict is another motive for the current rebellious movements” (Collier and Hoeffler 2000, 13).

In Chechya, Stalinism started hard repressions especially in the 1930s. These repressions included the massive resettlement of farmers and forced collectivization of agriculture. However, the most brutal form of Stalinist repression was seen in the Second World War. They alleged that “the populations of the Chechen-Ingush Republic were collaborating with Nazis (although there were no Nazis were present in Chechnya at that moment), they abolished the republic in February 1944 and forcibly deported half-a-million inhabitants” (Lapidus 1998, 8). During the deportation, one-third of the population died; the survivors were resettled in Central Asia. Thus, Chechens became one of the *punished peoples* and this has created a collective trauma in the mindsets of future generations. Thus, this is the most important discriminative and repressive policy that contributed to the development of an antagonistic attitude against Russians in the coming decades (Lapidus 1998, 9).

c. Group Competition Theories

According to these theories, conflicts occur as a result of struggle among groups for material benefits. Competition for economic gains or scarce resources leads to conflict among various groups, because everybody cannot evenly share these economic gains or reach these scarce resources (Toft 2001, 2).

The greed model of Collier and Hoeffler is much more about material interests and rational choices. According to the greed model, "the conflict is a distinctive type of organized crime, generates its income from extortion. The belligerents menace legitimate economic activities and exact a tribute" (Collier and Hoeffler 2000, 3-4). Thus, as the grievance model and the previous two ethnic violence theories, there is also a rough analogy between greed model and group competition theories.

In Chechnya, geostrategic factors play an important role in the radicalization process of the conflict. The possibility of exploiting the rich energy resources and major transportation routes enhances the importance of Chechnya for both Russian and Chechen elites (Lapidus 1998, 10). Thus, Chechnya is strategically and economically very important. It is situated in Russia's eastern part to the Caucasus and it comprises the main oil pipeline from Baku to Novorossisk through Grozny. Grozny was one of the major centers of petrochemical industry in the Soviet Union. Moreover, lucrative but largely illicit oil trade attracts attention not only in Chechnya but also in Russia (Hughes 2001, 24). Thus, "the strategic location of Chechnya on Russia's main transshipment pipeline for billions of tones of extractable reserves brings the conflict an economic and material dimension, which elites of both sides try to exploit either by legal or illegal measures" (Hughes 2001, 24).

d. Theories Stress the Role of Elites

According to these theories, "elites create and provoke conflicts in order to gain, maintain or increase their power" (Toft 2001, 2-3). Thus, elites create conflicts for their own utility. The political struggle between elites to reach power can be both seen within societies and between societies.

Political elites are either extremist-radical or moderate-gradualist. By creating conflicts and by appealing violence, especially extremist leaders try to hold their powers and to compel moderate leaders to make alliances with them. Moreover, even moderate leaders can also appeal violence with the same reasons as gaining and maintaining political power. Consequently, the use of violence by both extremist and moderate leaders blurs the distinction between them.

In the case of Chechnya, the formal Maskhadov government pursued much softliner and local/nationalist policies. On the other hand, radical and extremist warlords, such as Basayev, embraced much hardliner and jihadist policies. There was a great cooperation between local hardliners and foreign fighters; so there was a considerable influx of foreign support in terms weapons and money. Thus, Maskhadov government was incapable of exercising control over the young extremist population. As a result, the ineffectiveness of the elected Chechen leadership combined with instability and the charismatic leadership of Basayev led to further radicalization of the conflict. (Yalowitz and Cornell 2004, 107). Thus, the exploitation of the experiences of former violence against Chechens and the emphasis on the notion of Islamic jihad by the leaders like Basayev, brought the conflict to another dimension.

e. Theories Derived from International Explanations of War

These are *security dilemma* theories. They focus on "fear as the central driving force for ethnic conflicts" (Toft 2001, 2). For instance, Barry Posen applies the realist concept of security dilemma to the violent ethnic conflicts which were seen in Eurasia after the Cold War had ended. According to him, the collapse of the imperial regimes in Eurasia, especially Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, is the main reason behind the emerging problem of anarchy. For their own security, the groups within the state compete for power and this competition leads to security dilemma (Posen 1993, 27-28).

Conventionally, realists give more attention to inter-state wars; but after the Cold War had ended, they understand the reality of increasing intra-state wars. According to them, if the authority of the sovereign state collapses, internal wars mainly happen because of the same reasons of wars between states. When the state loses the legitimate authority to rule, the dichotomy between domestic order and international disorder disappears. The resulting anarchy inside the state is similar to the anarchy among them. Different groups inside the state struggle for power in order to gain a sense of security. When different ethnic, religious and cultural groups find themselves responsible for their own security, a kind of security dilemma is seen inside the state. It is natural to expect that security will be their first priority and they will seek the means to perpetuate their own existence (Baylis 2008, 94).

Just as in the case of states, one group's attempt to enhance its security creates uncertainty in the minds of rival groups, which in turn seek to augment their own power. Revolving spiral of distrust and uncertainty lead to intense security competition and military conflict among various newly independent groups who were earlier subject to the sovereign authority of the state. Thus, internal anarchy can only be eliminated by creating a central government. However, unlike liberal solutions to civil and ethnic wars such as power-sharing

agreements and the creation of multiethnic states, realists advocate separation or partition; because ethnically homogenous states are much more stable and less dependent on outside military occupation (Baylis 2008, 94).

f. Theories Stress the Role of External Support

If governments are incompetent, lacking in resources and devoid of political will, insurgent organizations must obtain outside assistance to be successful. Insurgents are compelled to obtain material assets to challenge the government and to make their movement successful. If insurgents have substantial popular support, external support is necessary, if they do not it is even more crucial. "Facing a long struggle against government forces with superior arsenals, insurgents must have the assistance of sympathetic countries, other insurgent movements, private institutions in other states and international organizations in order to increase their political and military capabilities" (O'Neill, 2005, 139).

Insurgent movements seem to have the greatest opportunity for gaining external support than any other time in history because of the combination of international and technological factors. Taking the advantage of the opportunities depends on their foreign organizational capability. Nowadays, insurgent movements have representatives in foreign countries whose main purpose is to obtain support from private and governmental sources. In general terms, acquiring external support involves political lobbying and negotiations about what will be provided, how and under what terms. Thus, well-organized insurgencies are in a better position to acquire external support than poorly organized ones (O'Neill, 2005, 142).

C. Terrorism

The most violent and complex form of reaction, that people give against negative conditions, is terrorism. It is very hard to create a generic meaning for terrorism. Scholars define terrorism differently. Terrorism, though being very ambiguous, can be defined as the "use of violence by sub-state groups to inspire fear by attacking civilians or symbolic targets, for purposes such as drawing widespread attention to a grievance, provoking a severe response or wearing down the opponent's moral resolve, in order to realize political change" (Baylis 2008, 374). In short, terrorism is "the threat or use of physical coercion, primarily against noncombatants, especially civilians, to create fear in order to achieve various political objectives" (O'Neill 2005, 33).

Terrorist acts or terrorists themselves can be easily involved in social movements or ethnic conflicts. Terrorism often overlaps with other forms of insurgencies in many of the contemporary conflicts (Wilkinson 2011, 49). However, especially in terms of their nature, they significantly differ from each other. This means they include different types of actors, goals, strategies and tactics. Thus, two important points that differ terrorism are it always include violence and this violence always targeted unarmed civilians. Nonetheless, social movements, ethnic conflicts and terrorism have the same or similar causes in some situations. For instance, when the same group use guerrilla tactics or terrorism for the same cause during an internal conflict, creates a convergence between these different types of reactions.

Grievances, identities, resources, leadership and even political structures are the main reasons for the onset of social movements and ethnic conflicts. These are also effective as reasons or as an explanation also for terrorism. Thus, the same or similar theories that explain social movements and ethnic conflicts are also valid for terrorism. Terrorism as a response to a political or social injustice is one of the conventional explanations about the root causes of

it. This argument continues as if there are no political or social injustices, there will be no terrorism. In other words, this argument indicates that if political actors within a state enhance democracy and the rule of law, these reduce the acts of terrorism; because in democracies there are channels for political participation, there are free and fair elections and voting and forming parties are much easier (Wilkinson 2011, 75-76). From this explanation, it can be easily understood that grievances or repression or discrimination are seen as the main causes of the onset of terrorism.

Other arguments about the causes of terrorism include the *strategic model* and its two duelling but closely interrelated submodels, the *classical model* and the *natural systems model*. The strategic model indicates that terrorists are rational actors who attack civilians for political ends. It assumes three main factors that first, "terrorists are motivated by relatively stable and consistent political goals, which are encoded in the political platform of the terrorist organization"; second, "terrorism is a calculated course of action and efficacy is the primary standard by which terrorism is compared with other methods of achieving political goals" and the last, "the decision to use terrorism is based on the logic of consequences, in other words, its political effectiveness relative to alternative options" (Abrahms 2008, 80-81). Thus, the strategic model emphasizes the rationality of terrorists, who analyze costs and benefits and choose the best option for them. The classical model or the classical organization model and the natural systems models are based on the ideas of terrorists are rational actors and participation to an organization is a rational act. What differs them is while the former one argues that "participation to an organization is for achieving the organization's stated goals"; the latter one argues "individuals participate in terrorist organizations not to achieve their political platforms, but to develop strong effective ties or solidarity with fellow terrorists" (Abrahms 2008, 95-96). Thus, from these approaches, the importance of other

causes or factors, such as rationality, resources, mobilization, organization and leadership, can be also seen for the onset of terrorism.

In recent years, a particular type of terrorism has been rising. It is mass-casualty terrorism, especially in the form suicide bombings. Especially, since the September 11 attacks, much attention has focused on this (Neumann 2009, 117). The aim of the suicide bomber is to kill others, generally innocent civilians, and the number of people killed is important for the success of the suicide attack (Neumann 2009, 117-119). Thus, suicide terrorism can be defined as "the most aggressive form of terrorism, pursuing coercion even at the expense of losing support among the terrorists' own community. What distinguishes a suicide terrorist is that the attacker does not expect to survive a mission and often employs a method of attack that requires the attacker's death in order to succeed" (Pape 2003, 3). In principle, "suicide terrorists could be used for demonstrative purposes or could be limited to targeted assassinations; but in practice, suicide terrorists often seek simply to kill the largest number of people" (Pape 2003, 3). There is also a relationship between religious fundamentalism, especially the Islamic one, and suicide terrorist attacks. It is argued that foreign occupation is one of the the root causes of the phenomenon. What motivated groups with vastly different ideologies to cooperate in a campaign of suicide terrorism is the belief that suicide attacks are a legitimate means of self-defense against foreign occupation and hence religious martyrdom is not an end in itself but a means for a different end. Self-martyr operations tie the act to the advancement of the local community. An individual has a purpose on earth and should end that purpose for another legitimate aim. Ending a foreign occupation that oppresses the local community is viewed as a possible legitimate purpose, but only if the self-sacrifice would in fact contribute toward that end (Pape and Feldman 2010, 196, 200).

The increase in suicide attacks show that, besides the classical explanations emphasizing grievances, poverty or repression, psychological and personal factors have also

to be analyzed to understanding the causes of terrorism better (Crenshaw 2000, 407-409). Some studies, like Post (1990), Pearlstein (1991) and Silke (1998), argue that personality disorders such as narcissism and paranoia are the main motivations for terrorists. They imply that terrorist psychology is different than that of the general population. Some other studies, like Steinhoff (1996), Neuberger and Valentini (1996), which analyze especially women terrorists attach these personality problems to traumatic events that damage their self-esteem and effect them emotionally. These problems are mostly stemmed from childhood maladjustment which cause the lack of feelings of belonging and approval. As a result they become more spiteful, jealous, menacing and aggressive. According to a group of other studies, like Braungart (1992) and Ross (1994), terrorism is primarily a group activity. It is not a result of psychological or personal problems, instead group solidarity and shared ideological commitment are much important. A similar group of studies, like Della Porta (1992), also argue that external factors presented by the environment are important. In other words, individual commitment to terrorist organizations is motivated by a sense of belonging, the need of self-respect and the support of the peer group.

This theoretical chapter about the reasons of various social reactions which are social movements, ethnic conflicts and terrorism will be useful in order to understand the radicalization process in Chechnya. If the recent history of Chechnya is analyzed, it can be seen that there is gradual transition from the non-violent to the most violent form of reaction. In other words, the struggle for independence after the the Cold War had ended started with social protests. The First Chechen War started in 1994 was a good example of ethnic conflicts and after the start of the Second Chechen War in 1999 terrorist movements were heightened in Chechnya. Thus, when I examine the reasons of radicalization in Chechnya, I will benefit from all these theories to show how actual events correspond to them; because the radicalization process in Chechnya is neither sudden nor monolithic.

IV. WHY DO PEOPLE BECOME RADICALIZED IN CHECHNYA?

As I have explained in the previous chapter, there are different but occasionally overlapping reasons for the radicalization of the people. As a result, different methods of social reaction emerge, such as non-violent social movements or violent acts of terrorism. All these reasons and methods can also be easily seen in the Chechen conflict. Grievances, identities, resources, leadership and political structures has been effecting the peoples of the region since the first days of the conflict. Thus, radicalization in Chechnya was heightened to a point that, the conflict has become one of the most intractable ones not only in the Caucasus but also in the world (Hughes 2001, 11).

The radicalization in Chechnya can be seen as a gradual process. As the other peoples in the separating Soviet Union, Chechens also claimed independence. Non-violent social movements with nationalist aspirations were seen; but Russians declined them bitterly because of especially economical and strategic reasons (Yevsyukova 1995). Then, in 1994, a war, an ethnic based struggle, erupted between Russians and Chechens, which was primarily based on historical enmities and economic resources. However, despite the Chechen victory in 1996 (the continuation of Chechnya's de facto independence), Russians did not abandon their claims in the region and the relative peace was broken again. This time, the nature of the war was totally changed both ideologically and strategically. The second war started in 1999, embraced terror tactics and resorted to indiscriminate violence in place of guerilla warfare and Islam became the basis of motivation rather than nationalism.

In order to understand the radicalization in Chechnya, scholars give attention to some important points that made people to react. These points are bad socio-economic conditions in

the republic, Russian policies creating the understanding of *us vs. them* and the change of leadership from the more moderate Maskhadov to the radical Basayev. However, the radicalization in Chechnya has an important feature, that it is an Islamic type of radicalism in the name of *jihad*. Thus, although these other reasons are important in the occurrence of radicalization in Chechnya, they cannot explain this religious, specifically Islamic, form of radicalization. Thus, my argument is that the existence of the Arab Mujahideen or radical Islamists in Chechnya is responsible for the Islamic type of radicalism in the region. In other words, in this part, I will explain how the existence of these radical Islamists in Chechnya has much more explanatory power than any other reason in the occurrence of the *Islamic radicalism* in Chechnya.

A. Socio-Economic Conditions

In academic circles there is a great tendency to describe Chechnya as the new Afghanistan. This is not entirely wrong, because the socio-economic and political conditions of Chechnya are so similar to that of Afghanistan. Thus the concept *Afghanisation of Chechnya* best summarizes the actual conditions in Chechnya.

According to Svante Cornell (2005), "the dire picture of Afghanistan can be applied to Chechnya in many ways. In terms of the human toll of the war, a similar share (one tenth) of Chechnya's population has been killed (over one hundred thousand people). As in Afghanistan, over half of the Chechen population has been affected by death, injury, or displacement. Likewise, the extreme brutality of the Russian military's campaign has destroyed the foundation of society in Chechnya. People are being killed, maimed, abducted, tortured and raped at will by the forces that were supposed to uphold law and order; no one is safe at any time in Chechnya" (Cornell, 2005, 54-55). "The basis for a functioning economy

has also been destroyed. Infrastructure has been obliterated. In the countryside, agriculture has been laid waste. Moreover, there is a general absence of livestock and seeds; because livestock has either been *collateral damage* of fighting or deliberately killed by Russian forces. The oil economy that once existed has been mostly physically eliminated" (Cornell, 2005, 55). "A generation of Chechens is growing up either in destroyed villages in Chechnya under the constant threat of brutal Russian *mopping-up* operations or in refugee camps in neighboring Ingushetia. This generation, much like the Afghans in refugee camps in Pakistan, has no conceivable hope of a normal life. A recent study by the World Health Organization concluded that 86 per cent of the Chechen population studied suffered from physical or emotional distress and 31 per cent from post-traumatic stress syndrome" (Cornell, 2005, 55-56).

According to Peter Brownfeld (2003), "the proximity of the Caucasus to Afghanistan and the anarchy in Chechnya make it likely that displaced terror training camps and cells have already relocated in Chechnya. The Caucasus, and in particular Chechnya, is becoming a base for international terrorism. Chechnya holds the same position in the Islamic world as Afghanistan did several years ago in 1980s. Thus, it partially replaced Afghanistan as a centre for terrorist training. The initial wave of terrorists who are now coming to Europe in early 2000s trained in Chechnya" (Brownfeld 2003, 141). Moreover, "there is a prevailing view in the security community that the center of gravity, the new Afghanistan of terrorists, is Chechnya, and not just Chechnya itself, but the surrounding republics. Moscow interprets these developments not as an indication that its war is backfiring, but as further justification for the campaign in Chechnya so all these produce a spiral of violence" (Brownfeld 2003, 142).

"Economic life in Chechnya was at low ebb. Much of the republic's infrastructure and industry had been pulverized by Russian bombardment, while the reconstruction funds

allocated by Moscow were routinely embezzled before reaching their destination; in 1997 Yeltsin sent $130m to the Chechen National Bank, only $20m ever arrived because of illegal businesses" (Wood 2004, 24). "Out of 44 industrial concerns operating in 1994, only 17 were running in 1999; production in the latter year stood at 5–8 per cent of the pre-war level" (Wood 2004, 24). "In 1998, unemployment stood at 80 per cent, while it was estimated that legitimate sources of income could only reach a third of the the poverty threshold" (Wood 2004, 24). "In these circumstances, barter, woodcutting and metal salvaging became important means of subsistence. But, above all, crime flourished, most notably kidnapping and small-scale pirate oil-processing operations (in 1999 there were an estimated 800 mini-refineries run by armed factions siphoning off oil from pipelines. Grozny's arms market also engaged a roaring trade). Moreover, markets, in general, were full of cheap goods and agricultural products because of smuggling. Social provision collapsed, education was almost non-existent, access to health services was minimal and infant mortality was estimated to be one tenth" (Wood 2004, 24).

"Religion, as everywhere in the North Caucasus became more noticeable in public life since the late 1990s" (Matveeva 2007, 4). "The number of mosques increased. The growth of religiosity in Chechnya affected the position of women in the same way as in other North Caucasian republics, where the abolition of female quotas led to a reduction of their presence in public agencies and in high-level jobs in business enterprises. Conservative practices at home gained momentum and more girls married between the ages of sixteen and eighteen" (Matveeva 2007, 4). According to the 2002 census, the number of Chechens was 1,080,000. However, in 2003, the number of Chechens dropped to 416,000. The number of Chechens displaced by the fighting since the start of the second war in 1999 was 371,000. Moreover, before the wars, the number of Russians in Chechnya was 293,770. However, in 2003, the

number of them dropped to 17,000. Thus, about 300,000 Chechens have died and over 250,000 Russians were killed or out migrated from the republic (Wilhelmsen 2004, 5).

Bad socio-economic conditions are a major reason for the radicalization in Chechnya. People with limited opportunities to work, to have education or health services can easily be radicalized and resort to violence. Thus, socio-economic condition of Chechnya, combined with its historical and geostrategical importance makes the conflict much more intractable in the post-Soviet space. However, bad socio-economic conditions is not specific to Chechnya and it can be seen each part of the world; even in the developed countries. Thus, for instance, radicalization because of socio-economic conditions can be seen in a Catholic country, but people will not adhere themselves specifically to Islamic jihad. Such conditions can also be seen in Muslim countries, in which violence is not used as a means such as Tatarstan. Thus, there must be another reason to explain not the radicalization in general but the occurrence of the Islamic type of radicalism in Chechnya.

B. Russian Policies

The "structural legacy of Soviet nationality policy, with its contradiction between the principle of ethnoterritorial federalism and the actual repression of national aspirations is an important factor in the emergence of a Chechen national movement. Soviet policy had created a hierarchy of ethnoterritorial units, from the union republics down to autonomous regions and districts that were endowed with a corresponding hierarchy of rights" (Lapidus 1998, 9). However, unintentionally, "the existence of these national units fostered the development of national elites and cultures while constraining their economic and political expression" (Lapidus 1998, 9).

In order to explain the radicalization of the conflict in Chechnya, the structural and political constraints on ethnic nationalism in the Russian Federation have to be referenced. The most important constraints are demographic and geographic. "Russia has a great ethnic diversity, with more than a hundred ethno-linguistic groups. It also has a demography characterized by a high level of ethnic Russian homogeneity, which has been spreaded and shaped by a long history of settler colonialism, ethnic assimilation and Russification" (Hughes 2001, 16). Thus, "not only simply numerical superiority, but also its dispersion and settlement over time make ethnic Russian homogeneity a powerful constraint on ethnic separatism" (Hughes 2001, 17). However, "Chechnya exhibits characteristics that make it the most extreme case for ethnic conflict potential in the Russian Federation. This exceptionalism stems from the demography and geography of Chechnya. It has one of the largest absolute majorities of the titular ethnic group" (Hughes 2001, 18). The total population, which is over one million, is composed of 715,000 Chechens, 270,000 Russians and 25,000 Ingush in the late 1990s. "The secession potential inherent in this demographic profile is compounded by Chechnya's geography. It is situated on the new international frontier of the Russian Federation bordering Georgia, which is demarcated by the remote and poorly accessible Caucasus mountains. This is an immense advantage for Chechnya to assert independence from Russia" (Hughes 2001, 18).

The "harsh repressions were started especially in the 1930s and associated with Stalinism. These repressions, including the forced collectivization of agriculture and the massive resettlement of kulaks (farmers), added to the legacy of bitterness" (Lapidus 1998, 8). But Stalinist repression took particularly brutal form during the Second World War. "Alleging that the populations of the Chechen-Ingush Republic were collaborating with Nazis (although no German forces had in fact reached the region), the republic was abolished in February 1944 and its inhabitants (roughly half-a-million people) were rounded up and forcibly

deported" (Lapidus 1998, 8). Over one-third of the population died during the brutal process; the survivors were resettled in Kazakhstan, in Central Asia. As a result, Chechens became one of the *punished peoples* and the collective trauma stemmed from this discriminatory deportation became a turning point in the development of an antagonistic nationalism against Russians in the coming decades (Lapidus 1998, 8-9).

"Geostrategic factors also play an important role in raising the stakes in the conflict over Chechnya. The possibilities for exploiting the rich energy resources and major transportation routes through the region, enhance the importance of Chechnya for both Russian and Chechen elites" (Lapidus 1998, 10). Thus, Chechnya is strategically and economically very important for Russia. Its territory is "situated in Russia's eastern gateway to the Caucasus and comprises the main oil pipeline from Baku to Novorossisk through Grozny, which itself was one of the Soviet Union's major centers of petrochemical industry" Hughes 2001, 24). There is not a struggle over oil in Chechnya, because it has not significant extractable oil reserves; but it is sufficient for a lucrative and largely illicit oil trade with Russia. Thus, "the most important political economy factor is Chechnya's strategic location on Russia's main transshipment pipeline for billions of tones of extractable reserves in the Caspian basin" (Hughes 2001, 24). Russia wants to stay as a key player in the Caspian oil business, so it must control Chechnya or at least peacefully coexist with it; otherwise it risks losing its position as a key strategic actor in the Caucasus. "An independent Chechnya could pose a threat to Russian economic interests in the Caspian; particularly if it is ruled by an uncooperative leader, it will not become a client of Moscow" (Hughes 2001, 24).

In the radicalization of the conflict between Chechnya and Russia, the political struggle of elites within Russia has also played a great role. For the Russian Federation, a "sudden and traumatic loss of empire provoked exaggerated, even obsessive, fears of the possible disintegration of Russia itself and contributed over time to a shift within the Russian

political elite from liberal democratic orientations to increasingly statist and neoimperial ones" (Lapidus 1998, 13). The growing "controversy over Russia's federal structure, fuelled by fears of further disintegration and combined with changes in the composition and policy orientation of Russia's political elite, made issues of center-periphery relations highly contentious" (Lapidus 1998, 13). As the new Russian state struggled to create novel constitutional and federal institutions, "efforts to halt the centrifugal tendencies, which had been unleashed during perestroika, became a key priority in Moscow and a major source of conflict in center-periphery relations" (Lapidus 1998, 13). Thus, the "escalation of conflict between Moscow and Grozny was the product of this greater problem: a poorly institutionalized policymaking process which was exacerbated by intra-elite struggles and conflicts between the executive and legislative branches, distorted policy debate and complicated the resolution of a whole range of issues" (Lapidus 1998, 13).

Sectional interests in the "Russian *fuel-energy complex* (TEK), who have been challenged by Western entrepreneurs, exert a strong influence on the ruling elites and form one pillar of the *Party of War* in Russia, which has pushed for the ousting of separatist leaders by military means and the reinstalling of a puppet regime under compliant leaders" (Hughes 2001, 25). This puppet regime was created informally in 2000 and formally in 2003. Another key sectional interest which forms "the second pillar of the party of war is the military-security elites" (Hughes 2001, 25). There are two convincing arguments, which indicate elements in the military hierarchy favored intervention. One is that, "there was a systematic corruption in the general staff, which was largely based on the illicit sale of armaments, not only to Chechnya, but also by using Chechnya as a transshipment point to other post-Soviet conflict zones, such as Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabakh, in the Caucasus" (Hughes 2001, 25). The other one is that, "because of the fiscal austerity of the economic liberals, which threatened the military with reforms and significant budget cuts during the

spring of 1994, the military commanders shifted in support of intervention in Chechnya to cover the traces of their corrupt activities, avert reform and pursue budget maximization through a short successful war" (Hughes 2001, 25).

The convergence of opinion and interests among business and military-security elites (the so-called *War Party*) on "the need for the intervention in Chechnya created a powerful dynamic in favor of conflict within Russian high politics. Thus, the question of Chechnya's secession became a useful expedient that was intrumentalized in the political infighting within the Russian elite over the post-Soviet transition" (Hughes 2001, 26). Within the political and military elites a major debate arose over how to manage Chechen secessionism. Some became interventionist, others stood as non-interventionist. Even interventionists took different elite positions and were categorized into liberal and nationalist camps. These positions on intervention cross-cut the democratic-authoritarian spectrum in Russian politics. Interventionists argued that "Chechen independence movement would threaten the integrity of the Russian Federation, so it had to be repressed; because if it was left unmanaged it would have a domino effect on other recalcitrant states" (Hughes 2001, 26). The liberal stream believed that "it was crucial for Russia to develop as a normal democratic constitutional polity and civic federation" (Hughes 2001, 26). The nationalist stream believed that "it was critical for the reassertation of Russian national prestige and to bolster Russia's role as the hegemonic power in the Caucasus and Caspian region" (Hughes 2001, 26). Non-interventionists argued that "it was morally wrong to use coercion against Chechnya's exercise of its right to self-determination" (Hughes 2001, 26).

There were four main episodes that underpinned the process of elite struggle within Russia: "first, the politics of dual power between 1991 and 1993; second, Yeltsin's reactive nationalism against the nationalist-communist Duma in 1994; third, Yeltsin's presidential re-election campaign in 1996 and fourth, Putin's presidential ambitions from late 1999" (Hughes

2001, 25). Beginning in late 1991, “the issue of Chechnya was quickly instrumentalized in the emerging power struggle in Moscow, so an uneasy situation of dual power developed between Yeltsin’s presidential administration and the Russian parliament led by Khasbulatov who was an ethnic Chechen” (Hughes 2001, 26). The “surge in support for communists and nationalists in the December 1993 Duma elections forced Yeltsin to take a much more hardline nationalist stance from early 1994” (Hughes 2001, 27). The presidential electoral cycle in Russia eventually turned the policy on Chechnya from coercion to political accommodation. The approach of “the presidential election of June 1996 concentrated the minds of the Yeltsin administration on finding an alternative solution to the bankrupt coercion strategy, because Russia’s military forces were bogged down in an unwinnable war of attrition” (Hughes 2001, 28). In late 1999, “the resumption of war with Chechnya was instrumentalized as the means to boost Putin’s popularity in advance of a presidential campaign” (Hughes 2001, 29).

“Insurgent leaders, like the President of the separatist Chechen Republic Aslan Maskhadov, openly sought to expand the conflict geographically. By this way, all the peoples of the Northern Caucasus sought their independence” (Markedonov 2010, 3). But, his ideas were mainly based on territorial and nationalistic claims similar to self-determination ideas; not on jihadist views using terrorism to expand Islam. “Preventing this expansion has been a central component of Russia's military mission, as articulated by then the Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in 1999” (Markedonov 2010, 3). According to Putin, “the first phase would be a cordon sanitaire and the second would be the total annihilation of the terrorists” (Markedonov 2010, 3). Thus, as elites in Chechnya (like Basayev) became more radical, extremist and terrorism inclined, Russian policies became stricter and harsher. A spiral of radicalization was created. According to some scholars, like Sergey Markedonov, the “spread of militant Islam across the North Caucasus is explained by Russia’s policy of extreme centralization during Putin’s first presidential term (2000–2004). Naturally, he gained his

giant popularity due to his brutal rhetoric and practical approaches" (Markedonov 2010, 3). Moreover, as "conflict launched with the overt aim of preventing the spread of destabilization from Chechnya into neighboring areas of the North Caucasus, the Second Chechen War has in some ways produced the opposite of its intended result. Prior to 1999, Russian military strategy in the region focused on isolating the separatist Chechen government, which had enjoyed de facto independence from Moscow since 1996" (Zhukov 2012, 147). "The cordon sanitaire was breached in early August 1999, when roughly 1,500 armed Chechens, Avars, Dargins and Arab foreign fighters led by the field commanders such as Shamil Basayev and Ibn al-Khattab, crossed the border into the neighboring autonomous republic of Dagestan, occupied several Salafi villages and quickly proclaimed an independent Islamic Republic of Dagestan" (Zhukov 2012, 148).

"Putin's policy in Chechnya has replicated many of the features of Yeltsin's: an initial pretext of dealing with lawlessness; an attempt to install a pro-Moscow puppet regime (this time headed by Ahmad Kadyrov) and, of course, the presumption that the result would be a small victorious war" (Wood 2001, 157). But where "Yeltsin's blundering and brutal intervention was at least in part motivated by a concern to preserve Russia's territorial integrity, Putin's was driven by a need to manipulate the fears and prejudices of the electorate, by calculation and cynicism and by the Russian military's burning desire to reverse the humiliations of the previous war" (Wood 2001, 157). A last point is that, "in the first war the Chechen forces were united under a single command, while in the second war they remained dispersed under the influence of field commanders that seldom coordinated their efforts and were often at odds with each other"; because local radical leaders, Arab leaders and other foreign leaders all used Islam and jihad as a means but they had also different goals (Cornell 2003, 174). The efforts of the "Russian secret services that have successfully split the Chechen resistance" have also contributed to this lack of coordination between insurgent

leaders (Cornell 2003, 174). “Discord in their ranks may also be one of the major reasons why a counter-offensive, similar to the one in August 1996, has not occurred” (Cornell 2003, 174).

Just as socio-economic conditions, Russian policies of state discrimination and repression (from which Chechens were traumatized a lot during the Second World War) creating the understanding of us vs. them, are also effective in the process of radicalization in Chechnya. This historical factor made Chechens much more radicalized and antagonistic than other peoples against Russians in the post-Soviet space. However, again, such kind of policies are not specific to Chechnya; in other words, some harsh policies of the state can be seen in any part of the world. Thus, these policies can trigger radicalization but cannot specifically explain why the Islamic type of radicalism occurred in Chechnya. Moreover, again Tatarstan has also witnessed such policies but the conflict did not erupt into violence Thus, there must be another reason other than socio-economic conditions or Russian policies in order to explain this religious radicalism in Chechnya.

C. The Change of Leadership

The problems of policymaking in Moscow were compounded by political weakness and intra-elite conflict in Chechnya as well. “Limited institutional development, leadership experience and economic resources inhibited the ability of Chechnya to function effectively as a state, while regional cleavages and competition among rival clans drove elite politics” (Lapidus 1998, 15). Thus, the conflict in Chechnya was driven by an intra-elite competition for power. “As a consequence of Soviet modernization policies, an urbanized and secularized stratum emerged to dominate the Chechen elite by the late Soviet era. This upwardly mobile stratum felt constrained by the ethnic privileging of Russians and other Slavs in the republic. The demand for national self-determination occurred in Chechnya as a drive by the ethnic Chechen section of the Soviet nomenklatura in the republic to redistribute power in their favor

and assert their ethnic hegemony" (Hughes 2001, 22). Moreover, "the moderate/gradualist nomenklatura leaders were pressured by nationalist radicals to accelerate the drive for independence" (Hughes 2001, 23).

Identity differences and past atrocities are impossible to change. Thus, they are permanent since the first days of the conflict. Moreover, the notions of humiliation and respect played a significant role in the conflict especially for Chechens. Thus, the national character of these people had to be considered; because they have been fighting for their independence for centuries. In short, independence is the vital issue for Chechens. This was also the most important reason why Dudayev (the first President of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria) wanted to negotiate only with high Russian officials, such as the prime minister, and did not agree to negotiate with the Chechen opposition. Thus, "although Russia was ready to grant Chechnya more economic and political power by signing a treaty similar to Russia-Tatarstan one, Chechen leaders held a very rigid position for their independence and did not want to compromise" (Yevsyukova 1995). As a result, a deep polarization existed between the Russian government and the Dudayev's regime from the beginning of the conflict. The immutable identity differences and the idea for independence are combined with hatred against discriminatory and repressive policies of the Soviet state. All these had affected the development of an antagonistic nationalism against Russians.

Primordialist factors manipulate mythic elements of relations between Russians and Chechens to emphasize a recurrent theme of *historical enmity* as an essentialist pre-determined factor for conflict. "Chechens exaggerate and mythologize the enduring *pre-modern* nature and *highlander* clan bonds for the organization of the contemporary Chechen society. They emphasize their *antiquity* as an ethnie, their *highlander camaraderie*, their *epic and warlike* spirit and their *noble military tradition*" (Hughes 2001, 18-21). This argument has three strains:

First, “the conflict is seen as one between the colonizer and the colonized and it is particularly rooted in the conflictual pattern of Russian colonization of the Caucasus in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These wars were long and bitterly fought and forged a historical mythology on both sides that has contemporary resonance” (Hughes 2001, 18-21). Thus, “an underlying legacy of antagonistic group histories dating from the Russian conquest of the Caucasus and the particular stubborn resistance to Russian imperial expansion is one of the main motives of sharp tensions between Chechens and Russians” (Lapidus 1998, 8).

Second, “the conflict is seen as a social conflict, where the pre-modern traditional clans (teips), based on extended ethnic kin networks of Chechens, were countered by the modernizing Russian state” (Hughes 2001, 18). Thus, “there is an emphasis on the mythical ethnogenesis of Chechens as a group of highland clan community, with a society based on a pastoral economy that was supplemented by brigandry against the plains peoples (who were increasingly Russian in the nineteenth century) on precarious trade routes over the Caucasus mountains” (Hughes 2001, 18). It was a society where “custom law (adat) prevailed and where blood feuds and hostage taking were the norms” (Hughes 2001, 18). Moreover, the “brigandage is usually interpreted as an innate expression of the martial spirit of Chechens, which found its full expression in the resistance to the Russian colonial expansion in the nineteenth century” (Hughes 2001, 18). On the other hand, “Russians, with the idea of modernization, built towns, roads, railways, schools and industry to complement the extensive plains farming of Russian settlers whose inward migration accelerated in the late nineteenth century” (Hughes 2001, 19).

Third, “the conflict is viewed as a fundamental *clash of civilizations*, in which the Caucasus is a crude fissure line between the Islamic and the Orthodox Christian worlds. Reference is frequently made to the mysticism of Sufi brotherhoods that were embedded in the Chechen society during the social turmoil of colonization and resistance in the middle of

the nineteenth century" (Hughes 2001, 19). Thus, "periodic uprisings against Russia in the nineteenth century were often led by Islamic imams, who declared a *holy war* against Russian infidels" (Hughes 2001, 19). As a result, "the yearning to the golden age of Shamil's Imamate (an Islamic state), shows the historical importance of Islam for Chechens; because during that time and it was the only time in history that Chechnya existed as a legitimate, uncolonized and non-Russian state" (Souleimanov 2005, 53).

When the leaders of the Chechen movement (especially when radical, extremist leaders like Basayev gained more power and made cooperation with the Arab Mujahideen) accepted the concept of *jihad* (Holy War) against Russia during the interwar period, it became a turning point for the conflict. Many "Chechen field commanders started to oppose to the peace process and refused to participate in its implementation. This led to a further deterioration in the relations between the Russian and Chechen governments" (Hughes 2001, 35).

The formal government under Maskhadov (the third President of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria) pursued much softliner and local/nationalist policies similar to self-determination claims. On the other hand, warlords, such as Basayev, embraced much hardliner and jihadist policies. "Warlordism works and endures as a system because it brings profit to powerful people who keep the population under their control by satisfying their needs. This system endures mostly in three situations" (Marten 2006/07, 72). First, "if economic interest groups that are most aggrieved by the warlord system have not the opportunity to be empowered to rise up against it"; second, "if the state cannot build reliable infrastructure that furthers both transportation and communication" and third, "if the illiteracy rate is too high" (Marten 2006/07, 73). Moreover, because of the alliance with these local hardliners and the Arab Mujahideen, there was a considerable support especially from the Middle East in terms of fighters, weapons and money. Thus, Maskhadov was incapable of

exercising control over the young extremist population, which was mostly uneducated and unemployed. As a result, this ineffectiveness of the elected Chechen leadership combined with instability and the charismatic leadership of Basayev led to further radicalization of the conflict. Although, in the later years of the conflict, the local hardliners were killed by the Russian military forces, the religious trend has helped to regionalize the conflict and brought much more radical-minded fighters to Chechnya from the other parts of the Islamic world, who have challenged less radical Chechen groups (Yalowitz and Cornell 2004, 107).

The war in Chechnya is not a monolithic process. Actually, in terms of its nature, it is divided into two very different phases. Although Chechens were motivated by the identity differences in both wars, the emphasis that was given to a particular side of their identity created an ideological shift during the war. Thus, the First Chechen War (1994-1996) was conducted as an ethnic based struggle under a secular and nationalist leadership; while in the Second Chechen War (1999-2000), Islamic faith under a religiously motivated leadership was the primary focus (Yalowitz and Cornell 2004, 107). The ideological change accompanied the strategic change. In other words, belligerents conducted guerilla warfare in the First Chechen War, while terrorism was the main strategy of Chechens in the Second Chechen War (Lapidus 1998, 21-22). This shift in the nature of the war is one from nationalist insurgency to Islamic terrorism. Long-established, secular, nationalist groups under the leadership of Aslan Maskhadov were either transformed or replaced by religiously motivated rival groups under the leadership of Shamil Basayev (Neumann 2009, 24).

When radical leaders gain the power and manipulate the masses, especially youth, for the causes they believe, it may also create radicalization among the population. Despite the existence of a formal government under Aslan Maskhadov, radical warlord Shamil Basayev had more power among the population. He and his followers tried to spread radical Islam not only in Chechnya but also in neighbouring territories. Thus, it can be thought that the relative

shift of power from a more nationalistic leader to a radical Islamist one may be the main reason of Islamic radicalism in Chechnya. Although, Basayev and other like-minded leaders have been present as early as the beginning of the first war and their presence alone was not enough to gain such a power and mobilize the masses at that time. Thus, my answer is that, not because Basayev gained power among the population and then radical Islamists poured into the republic, but because the arrival of the Mujahideen to Chechnya helped the local radical leaders, such as Basayev, to gain more power among the population and made these leaders to participate their own cause of holy jihad.

D. The Existence of the Mujahideen

The most important reason for the Islamic radicalization in Chechnya is the existence of the Arab Mujahideen. "The involvement of transnational religious actors in the form of foreign Muslim fighters assisting the local rebels help to globalize the idea of jihad in the Muslim world. The foreign Muslim fighters involvement has increased significantly in so many internal armed conflicts in the Muslim world after the 1980s" (Hegghammer 2010/11, 56-58). "The spread of the Salafi-Jihadi ideology propagated by the oil rich countries such as Saudi Arabia is the main factor encouraging Muslims to fight in other countries in the name of religion. These Saudi Islamists are mainly followers of populist pan-Islamism which encourages all Muslims to defend the lands where there are Muslims populations; because according to to them every land where Muslims live is the homeland of the entirety of the Muslim people" (Hegghammer 2010/11, 58-60). Thus, the case in Chechnya is one of the outcomes of the global jihad. The "global jihad implies the globalization of the Islamic struggle, which is aimed against the so-called global conspiracy against Islam, both as a religion and a culture. Previously, the emphasis was put on revolutions within specific Muslim countries seeking to overthrow their societies and regimes. However, in the 1980s the

focus changed. Now, the emphasis is put on opening new arenas for the jihad outside Muslim countries" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 27). Thus, "it is seen a direct struggle against the United States, Israel, and, at times, European states. In this global struggle, violent concepts such as *jihad* are perceived as a religious duty. Moreover, jihadist movement is defined as the *Salafi worldview*, which is totally cleansed from any other doctrine or belief" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 28).

The protagonists of such struggle are the present day Islamic militants or *jihadis* (holy warriors), such as Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in Palestine and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. They are also frequently called as *salafis* (pious forbearers). They are "zealous groups seeking to reestablish an ancient political system; so they believe that political rule should be based on the Koran and Sunnah-Hadith (traditions and sayings of the prophet Muhammed) as codified in the sharia (Islamic law)" (O'Neill 2005, 21). Although the exact details of the structures and functions of the new system are not spelled out, most jihadis emulate what they consider the purest form of Islamic rule as practiced by Muhammad and his first three successors (caliphs), Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman. They further believe that "rulers who do not apply sharia must be overthrown and that only Muslims should exercise political and military responsibilities" (O'Neill 2005, 22). Thus, "combining Islam with nationalism, as an effective instrument of social mobilization, became a part of the official style and it was probably the only tool legitimizing the building of Chechen statehood", which was achieved after the coming of the Arab Mujahideen (Souleimanov 2005, 53). Hence, "there was an obvious emulation to the *golden age* of Shamil's Imamate, which was the only time in history when Chechnya existed as a legitimate, uncolonized and non-Russian state" (Souleimanov 2005, 53).

"Arab volunteers who follow the Salafi-Jihadi philosophy have played a great role in the dynamics of the Russo-Chechen conflict since they started pouring into Chechnya in

February 1995" (Al-Shishani 2006, 10). Thus, "they became the major force from 1997 to 2000, after the First Chechen War had ended due to the intense propaganda campaign organized by Arab jihadi leaders" (Al-Shishani 2006, 17). "Through allying with powerful forces in Chechnya, Salafi-Jihadis tried to exert their ideology (Islamic statehood based on sharia and international Islamic jihad) on the Chechen community and politics. This, in turn, prompted the second Russian invasion of Chechnya when Chechen hardliners invaded Dagestan to support the villages that proclaimed the establishment of an Islamic state in 1999" (Al-Shishani 2006, 2). Thus, radical Islamists were active on all fronts: they were confronting *apostate* rulers in the Middle East; they were participating in insurgencies in places like Bosnia, Chechnya and Kashmir and they were plotting to "attack Western targets abroad, beginning with the first attack on the World Trade Center in February 1993" (Neumann 2009, 113-114).

In order to analyze the impact of the Arab Mujahideen (both material and ideational), some points must be given special attention. One of them is the Islamic groups that were operating in Chechnya. Before 1995, there were no or very few jihadis in Chechnya and there was no militant Islamic organization before this date due to the lack of enough personnel and funds . The first militant organization has been the *Arab Mujahideen in Chechnya* which was founded in 1995 by Fathi al-Jordani during the First Chechen War. Although Arab volunteers have always constituted its core, there were also a large number of non-Arab (mostly Turkish) volunteers. It had a size of 500-700 militants (Wilhelmsen 2004, 34-40). All other militant Islamic organizations (both local and foreign-based) were established in the interwar period or after the Second Chechen War, because the Arab Mujahideen (fighters, weapons and money) was not a major force before that date. The *Special Purpose Islamic Regiment (SPIR)* was established in 1996 by the warlord Arbi Barayev in 1996. It was "one of the main hostage-taking, kidnapping, and oil-smuggling groups operating in Chechnya during the interwar

period" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 34-40). After the Second Chechen War, it was headed by Movsar Barayev, the nephew of Arbi Barayev, who was killed in 2001. The organization had never had more than 100 fighters, but received external assistance from foreign fighters. "Since February 2003, the Special Purpose Islamic Regiment has been on the US list of terrorist organizations" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 34-40). The *Islamic International Peacekeeping Brigade (IIPB)* was an international unit of the Islamist Mujahideen founded by Ibn al-Khattab in 1998. After the death of Khattab, Shamil Basayev became the leader of it. The organization was composed of between 400 to 1,500 militants. Most of them were Dagestanis, but there were also other foreign fighters such as Arabs and Turks (Wilhelmsen 2004, 34-40). *Riyad-us Saliheen* was a small martyr (shadid) force composed of Islamic suicide attackers. It was founded in 1999 as a special battalion to carry out acts of sabotage. The founder and the leader of the organization was Basayev. After several years of inactivity, it was revived in 2009. It was a small organization, generally composed of 20 to 50 members. In February 2003, the organization has been on the US and also the UN lists of terrorist organizations (Wilhelmsen 2004, 34-40). The *Caucasian Front* was established as an "Islamic structural unit of the unrecognized Chechen Republic of Ichkeria's armed forces by the decree of the separatist president Abdul-Halim Sadulayev in 2005" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 34-40). Basayev was the first commander of it. After the death of Basayev in 2006, it was led by Dokka Umarov, who later became the first Emir of the Caucasus Emirate founded in 2007. The "organization united various jamaat groups across the North Caucasus to fight against the Russian rule not only in Chechnya but also in the rest of the Russian Caucasus" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 34-40).

Other than the number of militant Islamic organizations that were created in the interwar period and after the Second Chechen War, another indicator can be the number of the Arab Mujahideen who were deployed in the region in these periods. "In the interwar period,

an estimated number of warriors between 1,600 and 2000 from Dagestan, from other regions in the North Caucasus and even from central Asia came and trained in militant camps" (Al-Shishani 2006, 10). There were many other ethnic groups as well. Moreover, "Salafi-Jihadis started a recruitment campaign in the broader Islamic world. Prior to the eruption of the second war in 1999, the intense propaganda campaign by Khattab and other Jihadi sites on the Internet resulted with a huge wave of Saudi and Arab fighters who headed to participate in the war in Chechnya" (Al-Shishani 2006, 10). Many of "these foreign fighters were veterans of the former wars such as the Soviet-Afghan War. They also made a significant financial contribution to the separatists' cause because of their access to the immense wealth of Salafist charities like Al Haramein" (Al-Shishani 2006, 10). Thus, they became an invaluable source of funds for the Chechen resistance, which had few resources of its own. "The number of Arab fighters in Chechnya increased substantially in that period. Around 45% of the Arab fighters who were in Chechnya had entered the republic in the period between the two wars or slightly before the start of the second war" (Al-Shishani 2006, 10). It is a "high percentage,

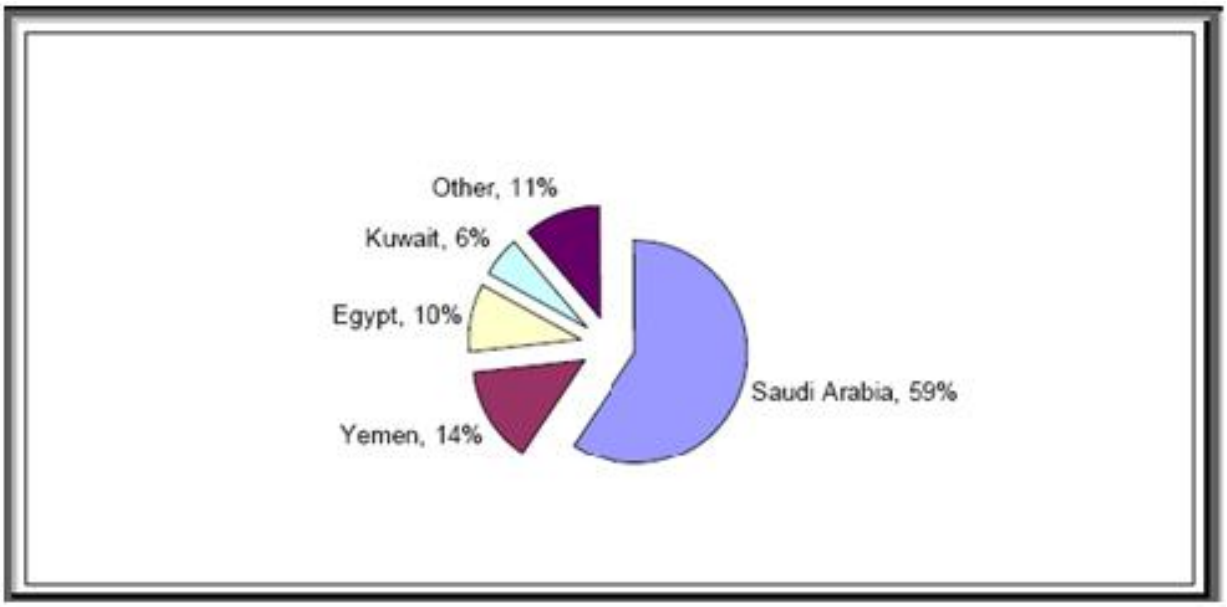

Figure 1: The Arab Fighters in Chechnya in 2006 (Al-Shishani 2006, 17).

when it is compared with the percentage of Arab fighters entered during the first war", which was around 29.5% (Al-Shishani 2006, 10). This demonstrates "the increased importance Salafi-Jihadism found in Chechnya during the interwar period" (Al-Shishani 2006, 10).

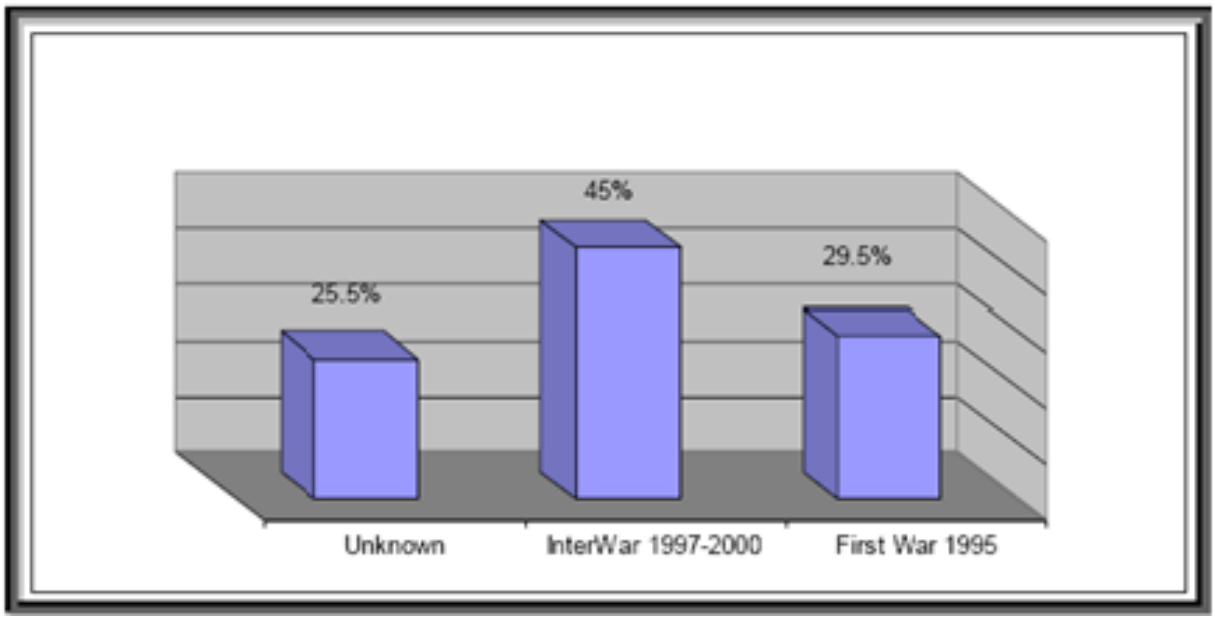

Figure 2: Percentage of Arab Fighters According to the Date of their Entrance of Chechnya (Al-Shishani 2006, 17).

"With the outbreak of the new war in 1999, fresh recruits from abroad also arrived to fight Russians. They came from a range of countries" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 36-39). For example, Algerian militants, Palestinian refugees from Lebanon, several Kuwaiti al-Qaeda suspects, some of the prisoners held at Guantanamo Bay from Kuwait, Sudan and Australia and jihadi fighters from Bosnia came and fought Russians. Thus, there was also an influx of jihadi fighters from 1999 onwards. The number of these fighters was probably between 1,500 and 3,000 in the early 2000s (Wilhelmsen 2004, 36-39). Although, the number of foreign fighters is too small (maximum a few thousands) to make a major impact on the fighting, what is important is that the "continuation of the alliance between Chechen warlords (such as Shamil Basayev) and foreign jihadi fighters (most importantly Ibn al-Khattab from Saudi Arabia) in command roles" since the interwar period and also these "foreign fighters have

acquired positions in the top stratum of the Chechen resistance" because of their financial power and capability to reach more fighters (Karim 2013, 73). Thus, "civil wars with religious divides is more likely to transform into religious civil wars if there is transnational religious actor involvement which seeks religious goals in local civil wars" and in the case of Chechnya an argument relating to "the role of transnational religious actors who spread Salafi-Jihadi ideology in the civil war can explain the transformation of ethnic civil war into religious civil war" (Karim 2013, 73). As shown in the Chechen case, "in the first war the foreign fighters were welcomed by the Chechens but they never controlled the course of the war, their influence remained limited and their presence was considered minimal" (Karim 2013, 74). However after the first war had ended, their presence increased significantly in all areas. In other words, despite their small number, the Arab Mujahideen created a radical shift in the nature of the war from local nationalism to radical Islam, by bringing to the region terrorism tactics and indiscriminate violnece, such as suicide bombings that is commonly used in the Middle East.

Another indicator can be the funding or the financial resources of the Chechen militants. Sources of funding for the Chechen rebels changed over timea and the dynamics of violence also changed in parallel to that. In general, there were five sources of funding throughout the Chechen resistance. These were the profits from the shadow economy of the dying Soviet system, profits (even higher than the former one) from oil extraction and oil reexport, highly notorious ransom payments for hostages, donations by the Chechen diaspora in Russia and by the ethnic Chechen mafia through racketeering and lastly donations by foreign Islamic sponsors. This last source of funding, coming from various Islamic sources including both Muslim charities and foreign Mujahideen, started to flow considerably after the first war. Thus, the Chechen rebels became attracted to a considerable share of the global funding for jihad (Zürcher 2007, 102-106). In terms of funding, "the first war was nearly

"purely Chechen", that the resistance movement was financed primarily by the Chechen population inside Russia" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 41-43). In addition, "the Chechen diasporas in Jordan, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates were a key source of money and provided help for wounded fighters. Weapons were bought from the Russian troops or taken from former bases left over from Soviet times in countries such as Azerbaijan and Georgia" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 41-43). A key factor, which restrained the influence of foreign Islamist actors and the increasingly radical warlords during the first war, was "Dudayev's control over nearly all sources of funding. This control forced the warlords to keep in line with Dudayev's nationalist agenda. After Dudayev's death, many warlords acquired independent sources of income, such as organized crime, cattle rustling, and hostage taking" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 41-43). Thus, the lack of authority combined with the divided leadership has created a permissive ground for the expansion of Islamic radicalism in the coming years. There also emerged the "possibility of funding from foreign Islamic sources, and the acting President Yandarbiyev had also took the advantage of it" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 41-43). A few "Islamic charities were established in the North Caucasus already in the early 1990s, such as the Saudi-based Islamic Relief Organization, which was set up in the region during the first war" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 41-43). This was a semi-official organization that channeled aid to fellow Muslims in war-torn countries. It was funded largely by mosques and rich individuals for whom supporting the jihad was a religious duty. "This organization reportedly funded some Chechen fighters early in the first war" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 41-43). However, the jihad funding from NGOs and charities in the Gulf States did not actually start until the arrival of Khattab in 1995. Khattab utilized "various sources, but the Muslim Brotherhood has been the primary one. Of the many organizations that joined under the umbrella of the Muslim Brotherhood, Al Haramain has played a special role in Chechnya" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 41-43). With headquarters in Riyadh, it was "originally established to support the jihad movement in Afghanistan and to spread

Wahhabism. It has supported fighters in Chechnya through Khattab in the first war and helped to finance the establishment of Sharia courts and religious education in the interwar period" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 41-43). It was also a "primary source of funding for Khattab's training camps in the interwar period. Chechen radicals' alliance with Khattab directed the flow of foreign money into their projects" in this period (Wilhelmsen 2004, 41-43). "According to a senior State Department official in Washington DC, radical Muslims have funnelled around $100 million to Chechnya since 1997" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 41-43). "According to Russian Security Service officials, the sum was much higher" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 41-43). Whatever the truth was, it was clear that this money did not go to Maskhadov, nor did it help to build up a state structure in Chechnya. Although "some money went into building mosques and Sharia courts, the considerable extent of money went to radical warlords and politicians, facilitating the build-up of their organizations and military structures" (Walker 1998, 1). Thus, the success of radical Islam amongst the Chechen warlords in the interwar period was due to the financial support, along with fighters and weapons, from abroad; because the Chechen resistance had few resources of its own. Thus, they had to accept the rhetoric of the Arab Mujahideen (international Islamic jihad) in order to reach these valuable resources to continue their struggle. In other words, the financial support both increased the Islamist rhetoric among the Chechen warlords and strengthened these actors as compared to the moderate Chechen president.

With the outbreak of the second war in Chechnya, funding from abroad has increased. "Al Haramain opened an office in Azerbaijan in 1999, and created the fund *Foundation for Chechnya* to support Chechen guerrillas. Fighters in Chechnya reportedly received $1 million from this fund in 1999. According to the Russian Security Services, this money was channeled through Arab emissaries who collaborated with different Chechen warlords, primarily Basayev, but also allegedly with Maskhadov's staff" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 41-45).

Russian sources claim that Saudi charitable funds dispatched large sums. Allegedly, money also came from the Kuwaiti and Yemeni organizations. Also various charities in Turkey, Egypt, Morocco, Central Asia, the USA and many European countries have contributed to the struggle. "1999 was also the year when, according to Russian intelligence officials and American officials, Osama bin Laden sent a substantial amount of money to equip Chechen rebels. Russian security services have estimated that funding to fighters in Chechnya, largely from countries in the Gulf, amounted to $6 million a month in 2000. Russian analysts have argued that between $10 million and $200 million a year have reached Chechnya from foreign Islamic groups" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 41-45). If the UN datas from 2009 and 2011 are analyzed it can be easily understood how big this amount is. The GDP per capita counting in PPP (purchasing power parity) of Chechnya amd Ingushetia are the lowest two of all the eighty regions of the Russian Federation. They have respectively 5,023 and 3,494 $, whereas the richest region, the Tyumen Oblast has 57,175 $. (UN National Human Development Report for the Russian Federation, 2011). AlThus, "since the war in Iraq, despite some funds have reportedly been redirected to forces opposing the US-led coalition in Iraq, Russian Security Services still say that between $500,000 and $1 million a month still reaches Chechnya" (Wilhelmsen 2004, 41-45).

A fourth indicator is the decreasing sympathy of the West towards Chechnya and increasing support for Russia. As it was discussed, starting from 1995, Arabs have increasingly supported Chechens in terms of personnel and funding. However, on the other side, Western governments, especially the USA, accused the "independence movement as terrorism since the attacks of September 11, 2001 because of the presence of the Arab fighters in Chechnya, most of whom had direct and indirtect relations with Afghanistan and Al Qaeda" (Al-Shishani 2006, 15). Moreover, the US and the UN declared some militant Chechen organizations as terrorist organizations in 2003 (Al-Shishani 2006, 15). Russia also

struggled to gain international support, especially from the West, which was willing to accept any war against radical Islam. First, "it isolated the moderate national movement represented by the President Aslan Maskhadov" " (Al-Shishani 2006, 16). Then, "the flow of funds has also diminished since the US and Russian intelligence began jointly to curb terrorist financing after the September 11 attacks" (Al-Shishani 2006, 16). For example, "Al Haramain's office in Azerbaijan was closed down in 2001" (Al-Shishani 2006, 16). Thus, in the end Russia took the support of international community aginst Chechens and radical Islamists.

Another indicator is the changes in the regime or the laws. Islam in Chechnya experienced both a revival and a transformation. In 1997, the "Chechen government announced a ban on alcohol sales and introduced Islamic law (sharia) and established sharia courts in the republic" (Walker 1998, 1). There were also "two public executions of people convicted under sharia law in the capital Grozny and one of them was televised" (Walker 1998, 1). These show the acceptance of the rhetoric of the Arab Mujahideen in order to reach the valuable external resources they can provide. Moreover, although the Chechen President Maskhadov did not want to turn Chechnya into an Islamic republic, because of the strict resistance from Islamic circles and also from other Islamic militant warlords such as Basayev, he, again in 1997, announced that he would "transform the republic formally into an Islamic state" which would be renamed as *The Islamic Republic of Ichkeria*, supported the preparation of an Islamic constitution while nullifying the present one and the disqualification of the parliament (Walker 1998, 1). Thus, the "Chechen government was the only government in the former Soviet space that officially embraced Islam as a state religion" (Walker 1998, 1).

The last indicator is the number of civilian casualties as a result of Islamic militancy and whether the intentional targeting of civilians was an essential part of Chechen strategy. In the first war, the total dead were about 46,500. 11,500 of them were combatants and over 35,000 were civilians or noncombatants (Hughes 2007, 149). The estimates for the second

war were much less reliable. “According to the respected Moscow-based human rights foundation Memorial, between 5,000 and 10,000 civilians have died and with the lowest estimates between 2,000 and 2,800 civilians have been abducted and disappeared” (Hughes 2007, 149-150). The “total number of civil inhabitants of Chechnya that were killed during the two wars was between 150,000 and 300,000” (Hughes 2007, 150). Moreover, “in the period from 1995 to November 2005, there were 3,033 registered cases of civilians that were being injured by landmines and unexploded shells in Chechnya, of whom 692 people were killed” (Hughes 2007, 150). If “the period from July 1993 to September 2004 was analyzed, it can be observed that 1,544 civilians have died and 3,463 have injured as a result of terrorist attacks” (Hughes 2007, 150).

The number of civilian casualties decreased in the second war, compared to the first one. Moreover, during that time, the number civilian casualties, as a result of a terrorist incident, became the lowest. However, the intentions of the perpetrators have to be analyzed in order to see the impact of radical Islam. The methods used by Chechen militants, especially in the second war and its aftermath, include mass killing and violence against civilians in the name of Islamic jihad, such as the “bombings of apartment buildings in Moscow and other Russian cities in September 1999, which killed over 300 civilians and maimed many others”; “the seizure of a theater in Moscow in the middle of a performance and the resulting counter-attack in October 2002, in which all the hostage takers and 129 hostages were killed by an inept gas attack on the theater by Russian authorities”; and the “seizure of a school in Beslan on the first day of the new school year in 2004, in which hundreds of children, parents and teachers were taken as hostages and more than 300 hostages died” (many of them were children) (Perry 2007, 858-859). If the factor or factors behind the civilian targeting are analyzed, it can be observed that “from June 2000 to June 2004, most of the attacks (23 of a total of 36) and the most casualties (361 killed and 1518 injured as a total of 498 killed and

1923 injured) involved suicide bombings, which Russians term as *suicide-shadid* and Chechens term as *shaded* (religious martyr) attacks" (Hughes 2007, 151). Other than numbers, the important point is that there is a relationship between religious fundamentalism (especially the Islamic one) and suicide terrorist attacks. What motivated groups with vastly different socioeconomic backgrounds to cooperate in a campaign of suicide terrorism is the belief that suicide attacks are a legitimate means of self-defense against foreign occupation (as in the Middle East or Chechnya) or against corrupted regimes such as the one in the US. Thus, religious martyrdom is not an end in itself, but as a means for another end. An individual has a purpose on earth and should end that purpose for another legitimate aim. Ending a foreign occupation that oppresses the local community is viewed as a possible legitimate purpose, but only if the self-sacrifice would in fact contributes toward that end (Pape and Feldman 2010, 196-200). For instance, in a speech in 2009, Dokka Umarov claimed that "those people who are living today in the territory of Russia are responsible for Russia's soldiers, leadership, and the wars against Islam" and he explicitly called to kill them by using suicide attacks (Shapiro, 2009). Thus, it can be said that Chechens embraced the tactics of Arabs to use against Russians, who are deemed as colonizers or occupiers in the eyes of Chechens.

The analysis of incidents of terrorism especially after 1995 until today can show us the ideological and strategical transformation in the course of the Chechen resistance. First of all, the most of terrorist attacks occurred between 1995 and 2001, including the interwar period and the second war. However, the most deadliest attacks happened in 2002 and 2004, in which over 150 and 300 civilians died respectively as a result of hostage taking (Global Terrorism Database (GTD)). Secondly, tactical changes in terms of attack and weapon type also became determinant in this period. Most of the attacks occurred as bombings and explosions (over 50%); relatively coventional armed assaults stayed in the background. As parallel to that attackers mostly used bombs and explosives, rather than firearms (GTD).

Among these explosives, the most preferred ones were belt bombs (over 50%) and car bombs (roughly 45%) (Chicago Project on Security & Terrorism (CPOST)). These shows the the importance of suicide bombings, which was mostly used in the Middle East and brought to the region by foreign Mujahideen.

Defining terrorism is a hard thing. Tactics, methods or weapons used by perpetators can be helpful to define it. Nonetheless, each definition of terrorism has to have one characteristic; intentional killing of civilians by sub-state groups. Thus, characteristics of attackers and targets have to be analyzed. In terms of attackers by gender, male perpetrators took a part in most of the (over 70%). However, female participation also cannot be denied. Over 45% of attacks, female perpetrators took part. In terms of occupation and education, most of attackers were unskilled and uneducated people (up to 80%). However, there were also very few professionals who had completed their post-secondary education (CPOST). These data shows somehow the characteristics of modern terrorism, in terms of women participation or, albeit being very few, the inclusion of well educated people. Other than attackers, the characteristics of targets are also highly relevant. Most of the targets (up to 80%) were consisted of security forces, political figures and public properties such as educational institutions or transportation facilities (GTD). These figures show that roughly 20% of the targets were civilians. However, civilian deaths doubled, when compared to the attack rate against them, and reached approximately 45% threshold. Thus, lethality rates by target (death toll per attack) shows explicitly how big the civilian casualties are. The lethality rate of civilians are about 21%, which doubles the rate of political figures (9%) and quadruples the rate of security forces (5.5%) (CPOST). These data shows the basic and essential qualities of terrorism that sub-state groups were the perpetrators, civilians were intentionally targeted and perpetrators tried to spread fear to and decrease the morale of the society by killing political figures and civilians.

Socio-economic conditions, Russian thoughts and policies and the change of leadership are are jointly sufficient for the occurrence of radicalism in Chechnya. However the existence of them cannot explain specifically the Islamic type of radicalism. Especially the first two can be found in non-Muslim countries; hence there cannot be a direct causal relationship between them and the occurrence of radical Islam. The change of leadership from a relatively more nationalistic leader to a religiously motivated radical one can be seen as the main reason of radical Islam; but the causality is in the other way. Thus, radical Islamists did not come to the republic because of the increasing power and popularity of Basayev; on the contrary, as a result of the arrival of the Mujahideen, Basayev gained more power to realize his and his followers' radical ambitions in Chechnya and in neighbouring countries. Basayev was already a known leader before the arrival of radical Islamists. If the occurrence of radical Islam had been a direct result of his deeds, the acts of Islamic radicalism and terrorism would have been seen before the arrival of the Mujahideen. However, in the first half of the 1990s, there were not so much resources in terms of human, weapons and money in order to start an Islamic campaign by the local extremist warlords. The local hardliners reached them only after the pouring of Arabs in to the republic. Thus, the arrival of these Arabs created the material and ideational setting in the name of holy jihad, from which the local warlords, such as Basayev, benefited to gain more power and popularity to realize their ambitions.

Bad socio-economic conditions especially the lack of possiblity of education and employment, Russians discriminative and repressive violence (both historical and contemporary) against Chechens and the thoughts, deeds and charisma of local radical or hardliner leaders created a space that can be easily exploited by the external Arab Mujahideen. Thus, their fighters, weapons and money poured into the republic and all these transformed the rhetoric from local nationalism to international Islamic jihad, which embraced the acts of terrorism such as suicide bombings.

V. CHECHNYA AND TATARSTAN

The radicalization in Chechnya has a great impact not only on the future of the republic, but also on the peace, order and stability of the region. The reason behind the existence of such a situation is the specific feature of the radicalization in Chechnya. As I already mentioned, the radicalization in Chechnya takes the form of radical Islam or Islamic terrorism. When the ideas of radical Islam and the so-called holy jihad combine with the problems of weak states (lack of authority and leadership, divided elites, poor socio-economic conditions) and opportunities of the globalization (reaching transportation, communication and information much faster, easier and cheaper), local effects of radicals can easily reach regional and international dimensions. Thus, the situation of Chechnya is a great example of such a relationship.

The collapse of the Soviet regime and the resultant security dilemma had different results for different states. In the initial years after the collapse, nationalist agitation was great. Many states outside Soviet Russia declared their independence. On the other hand, as the new federal Russia had put its relations with its sub-divisions on the right track, nationalist repercussions were diminished and most of the constituent republics agreed to be a part of the new federation in a peaceful way. However, there were also some states within Russia that tried to gain their independence similar to the other newly independent states of the Soviet Union. Chechnya and Tatarstan were the only two republics that, by taking the advantage of the collapse of the regime, tried to gain their independence and sovereignty. Nonetheless, the fates of these two republics were very different. Tatarstan declared its sovereignty in 1990; but with a special treaty in 1994, it became a part of the Russian Federation (Toft 2001, 26-27). On the other hand, Chechen struggle of independence started in late 1990, led to two

bloody wars with Russians and eventually became a center for radical Islam and international Islamic terrorism.

The comparison of Chechnya and Tatarstan will help us to understand why the independence movements of these two republics ended up with different results and what the main reason that caused this difference was. To start with, the comparison of these two republics is a great example of most similar systems designs. In most similar systems designs, the selected cases are very similar in terms of their independent variables, but the dependent variable differs. In other words, although there are similar reasons or similar settings in both cases, the outcomes are totally different. Thus, despite the similarities between Chechnya and Tatarstan, the former one witnessed wars, acts of terrorism and many deaths; while the latter witnessed a relatively peaceful integration to the new federation.

I have already said that while the independent variables are same or constant through the whole process in most similar systems designs; the dependent variable is different. Thus, in order to create this difference between the cases, at least one independent variable must be different. According to my opinion, the main difference in terms of independent variables between Chechnya and Tatarstan stemmed from the occurrence of radical Islam or Islamic terrorism in Chechnya; while there was not any religiously motivated radical movements in Tatarstan (the process in Chechnya was not monolithic while it was much monolithic in Tatarstan). Thus, again it can be said that the main reason behind the occurrence of Islamic radicalism or terrorism, which differs Chechnya from Tatarstan, is the existence of the Mujahideen and radical Islamists in Chechnya. The arrival of them to Chechnya created a huge difference between these two republics. I have explained the impact of them or tried to answer the question of "how" they effected the Chechen society and brought radical Islam to the region in the previous chapter. Now, I will try to explain "why" these radicals chose

Chechnya, not Tatarstan or any other place, to wage war against whom they considered as infidels. Thus, although there are many similarities between Chechnya and Tatarstan, these radical Islamists exploited the very important advantages that only Chechnya have in order to spread the ideas of holy jihad.

In terms of identity, culture, economy, geography and population, Chechens and Tatars have similar characteristic with each other. This stems partly from the same religion, Islam, they have and partly from the rule of the same empire, the Russian Empire, since the early modern era. For a more detailed analysis of the opportunities that Chechnya provided over Tatarstan, two great and essential dimensions must be analyzed. The first one is identity and culture dimension and the second is geostrategic and demographic dimension. Although two republics have some common elements in terms of these dimensions, I will explain how the opportunities of Chechnya appeal radical Islamists and Mujahideen from all over the world.

In terms of identity and culture, the first and foremost thing is that Islam is very important and the majority of the population is Muslim in both regions. Moreover, both countries have been under the rule of Russians for centuries. Thus, all political, judicial and administrative acts have been decided by the Russian officials for the Russian interests. However two important features of Chechens have made them a much more challenging opponent against Russians. The first is that, besides Islam, "Chechens give very much attention to their pre-modern nature and highlander clan bonds. They emphasize their antiquity as an ethnie, their epic and warlike spirit and their noble military tradition" (Hughes 2001, 18-21). Thus, they did not want to escape the battle or accept surrender. Hence, giving up their independence and sovereignty (although these are de facto) without any fights or by signing treaties is a dishonorable behaviour for them. For instance, in an interview in 1996, Yandarbiyev argued that "We are fighting to protect our independence and to defend the

honor and dignity of the free people under the banner of Islam. Our jihad is first of all a jihad to defend the territory, honor and dignity of the Chechen people" (Bakke 2013, 44). This situation appeals many radical-minded Islamists to come and fight alongside local Chechens. The second feature is about the recent history of Chechens. The forced deportation of Chechens to Central Asia in 1944, by alleging that they had collaborated with Nazis, resulted with the death of hundreds of thousands of people during the process. Thus, Chechens became one of the punished peoples of the war and this created a collective trauma in the minds of all Chechens, which in the later decades evolved into an antagonistic nationalism against Russians (Lapidus 1998, 8-9). Identity differences and past atrocities are permanent and impossible to change. When the notions of respect and humiliation combine with the national character and history of Chechens, gaining full independence and sovereignty becomes a vital issue for them (Yevsyukova 1995). Thus, besides appealing warlike identities of Chechens, radical Islamists sought to benefit from the rigid position of them for independence, stemming from historical discriminations and repressions; all of which were not present in Tatarstan.

In terms of geostrategy and demography, Chechnya and Tatarstan has also similarities. Geographically (in terms of surface area), the two republics are similar to each other. Only Chechnya is slightly smaller than Tatarstan. Similarly, both republics do not have large populations; only a few millions. Again, Chechnya is smaller in than Tatarstan. Probably the least similar part is economies or economic conditions of these two. Because of the war, the economy of Chechnya was devastated. "Much of the republic's infrastructure and industry was pulverized by the Russian bombardment" (Wood 2004, 24). On the other hand, Tatarstan is one of the most economically developed parts of Russia. The republic is highly industrialized and hence industrial production is very high. Nonetheless, both republics are still very important because of an underground resource, oil. Although Tatarstan's main source of wealth is oil, there is not significant extractable oil reserves in Chechnya; but

Grozny, the capital of Chechnya, comprises one of the main oil pipelines of Russia and it is one of the major centers of petrochemical industry in the federation (Hughes 2001, 24).

Similar to identity and cultural advantages, Chechnya has geostrategic and demographic advantages over Tatarstan. First of all, Chechnya is not an inland like Tatarstan and is "situated on the new international frontier of Russia, which is demarcated by the remote and poorly accessible Caucasus Mountains" (Hughes 2001, 16-18). This is a great natural advantage to fight against a strong opponent like Russia. The geographic situation appeals radical Islamists because the great mountain range prevents the easy access of Russian soldiers to the republic and provides a safe haven for combatants (Toft 2003, 48). Moreover, if it is required, these combatants can easily cross the border and escape to the neighbouring states, which have also problematic relations with Russia. Secondly, despite the small size of the population of Chechnya, the settlement pattern of Chechens creates a great advantage. "While Tatars are dispersed across Russia and therefore have neither capabilities nor the legitimacy for the full independence; Chechen concentrated majority settlement pattern makes the idea of full independent and sovereign Chechen statehood feasible and legitimate" (Toft 2003, 48, 69). Thus, this compact structure of the Chechen nation is also appealing for radical Islamists. Thus, instead of establishing loose bonds and trying to fight over a larger territory (like Tatarstan), they prefer tight bonds with local fighters and seek to fight over a smaller territory (Yalowitz and Cornell 2004, 111-112). Lastly, in contrast to Tatarstan, Chechnya is located in much geostrategically important place. It is a coincidence point of Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East. It is close to energy routes and it is also a base for illegal trade of oil, drugs and weapons from Afghanistan to inwards of Europe (Yalowitz and Cornell 2004,111-112). Thus, the location of Chechnya is also appealing to radical Islamists, because of being in the center of the world's one of the most conflictual zones, it is both a transportation spot and a illegal trade center, from which some of these

radicals can also gain a lot of money in order to finance their military campaign against Russia or to fulfil their personal ambitions. Thus, as a result, there is much "more violence in highly mountainous Chechnya and forested areas; whereas areas with high Russian populations or communities with the lack of concentrated majority settlement pattern see less violence" (John O'Loughlin and Frank D. W. Witmer 2011, 178, 195-197).

The pouring of the Arab Mujahideen and other foreign radical Islamists as early as in the beginning of the first war, in order to benefit the advantages only Chechnya has, has created the huge difference between the two republics. Thus, by providing military, financial and ideational support, the arrival and the deployment of the Mujahideen in Chechnya has created the difference between the dependent variables of each independence movements. By gaining each kind of external support, Chechnya, has become a place for war and terrorism; on the other hand, the lack of such an external factor (or the scarce numbers of foreign fighters, weapons and money channelled to the Islamic jihadist cause) has caused the peaceful integration of Tatarstan to the Russian Federation.

VI. CONCLUSION

The conflict in Chechnya should not only be the concern of Russia; but when the dimensions of the conflict are thought, it should be the concern of the whole Caucasus region or even of the whole world. The reason why the Chechen conflict is so much important is the specific characteristic it has. Radicalization can be seen in any country or in any part of the world; but radicalization in Chechnya has taken the specific from of Islamic radicalism and Islamic terrorism, which, in this age of globalization, has effects not only on local but also on international and global levels.

In order to understand the impact of radical Islam and Islamic terrorism on Chechnya and on the Caucasus, the reason(s) of the occurrence of this peculiar type of radicalism must be analyzed. Thus, in this thesis, I have tried to answer this question. First of all, I examine the literature about the reasons of radicalism in Chechnya. The first and foremost thing is that, most of the literature does not make a distinction between the reasons of radicalism in general and the Islamic type of radicalism in particular. Nonetheless, I had to analyze all reasons to understand whether or not a reason causes both radicalism and Islamic type of radicalism. Thus, most scholars of the literature group the reasons of radicalism in three, broad and interacting headings. These are bad socio-economic conditions of Chechnya, Russian thoughts and policies about Chechnya which creates the understanding of us vs. them and the change of leadership from relatively nationalist Maskhadov to religiously motivated radical Basayev. Moreover, again, most scholars do not give any attention to foreign factors or think that the impact of them has been very limited. However, my argument is that, although these three reasons are jointly sufficient for the occurrence of radicalism in Chechnya, the main reason behind this Islamic form of radicalism is different. Thus, the impact of foreign factors,

in other words the existence of the Mujahideen, is the main reason of radical Islam in Chechnya.

For a better understanding of the situation in Chechnya, first I have theoretically examined the reasons of why people radicalize. People give different reactions to unfavored conditions. Some prefer to remain unresponsive, some participate in non-violent forms of reaction such as social movements and some others resort to violence and acts of terrorism. Roughly, it can be said that, from the most non-violent to the most violent form of reaction is social movements, ethnic conflicts and terrorism respectively. Thus, the extent of violence is measured by whether innocents and civilians are killed intentionally or not. Then, I have theoretically categorized the reasons of each three kinds of reaction. Both the classical and the contemporary social movements literature find the reasons in socialist tradition. Thus, grievances, mobilization and organization, framing and political opportunities are given special attention in social movements literature. I have also analyzed the main reasons of ethnic conflicts. Primordialism, state discrimination and repression, group competition, elite manipulation, internal anarchy and external support are the six main reasons of ethnic conflicts and ethnic violence. Lastly, I have examined the reasons of why people resort to acts of terrorism. Grievances, identities, resources, leadership and political structures can be reasons of terrorism as well as that of social movements and ethnic conflicts. Rational calculations and psychological factors are also important for people to resort acts of terrorism. Thus, all these theoretical categorizations about the reasons of each kinds of radicalization and reaction help to identify the extremely complex process of radicalization in Chechnya.

The radicalization in Chechnya is not a monolithic process. In this process, leaders changed, the nature of war changed and the strategy of war changed. A more radical and religiously motivated leader gained more power and popularity than a more nationalistic one. The second war was based much more on the Islamic faith and holy jihad than the first one,

which was mostly an ethnic based struggle. Guerilla tactics of the first war were mostly replaced by the acts of violence and terrorism, including a lot of suicide attacks. Thus, roughly, the process of radicalization in Chechnya can be divided into three different time periods. The first was between the collapse of the Soviet Union and the beginning of the first war (1990-1994); the second was the First Chechen War (1994-1996) itself and the last one is the Second Chechen War (1999-2000). These periods were marked respectively by social movements for the full independence and sovereignty of the republic, ethnic conflicts between Chechens and Russians and various indiscriminate acts of terrorism against Russians. Thus, at this point I ask the question of why all these transformations occurred or in other words, why the radicalization in Chechnya gained a specific Islamic type. Therefore, the existence of the Mujahideen in Chechnya have to be given special attention to understand the reason behind the occurrence of radical Islam and Islamic terrorism in the region.

Economy of Chechnya was in a very bad situation. Infrastructure was devastated, unemployment was very high, literacy rates were very low. Crime flourished, diseases increased and as a result the number of population was decreased. Other than this socio-economic situation, Russian thoughts and policies created a polarization both within Chechnya and between Chechnya and Russia. Some supported staying in the federation; while others wanted full independence and sovereignty for the republic. Severe violations of human rights, especially during the first war, by the Russian side escalated radicalization and the already composed understanding of us vs. them in Chechnya. Moreover, the leader of the Chechen government, Aslan Maskhadov, was incapable of exercising control over radicals and was unable to achieve stability in the republic. In such a situation, the radical and charismatic Shamil Basayev attracted significant support from the youth and mobilized other radicals and extremists under his command. All these factors were effective in the onset and the continuation of radicalization in Chechnya. However, neither of these cannot explain the

occurrence of the particular Islamic type of radicalism in Chechnya. Thus, the arrival and the deployment of radical Islamists and the Mujahideen in Chechnya caused radicalization to take the form of the Islamic one. The Mujahideen formed organizations among the population to attract more supporters. They provided military support in terms of man power, weapons and artillery. They helped to finance the war against Russia either by direct money transfers or by illegal trade of oil, drugs and weapons. They were also influential in the relations of Chechnya with other countries. While, Russia and most of the Western countries labelled them as terrorists, many countries in the Middle East continued their support. The effects of the Mujahideen were also realized in terms of the regime and laws of the republic. Sharia became the main law and Islam became the state religion. Lastly, by using mass-casualty terrorism, especially suicide bombings, they tried to win the psychological war against Russia and gain an advantage in that asymmetric war. Thus, the existence of the Mujahideen in Chechnya inclined most of local radicals and extremists to turn Islam as their main identity, participate holy jihad and even use acts of terrorism against so-called infidels. In other words, the existence of them is the main reason behind the Islamic type of radicalism and Islamic terrorism in Chechnya.

In the last part of my thesis, I have compared Chechnya and Tatarstan in order to show why the former one witnessed wars and terrorism, but the later integrated the new federation peacefully. The difference again stems from the existence of the Mujahideen in Chechnya. In the lack of both willingness on the side of Tatars and material and ideational external support, Tatars were unable to have capabilities to wage a war against Russians. Moreover, it should also be noticed that, although the two republics have so many things similar in terms of identity, culture, economy, geography and population; some very important advantages of Chechnya appeal radical Islamists from all over the world to come and fight in that republic. These advantages include the warlike spirit of Chechens, the collective trauma stemming from

the 1944 deportation, the great mountain range as a safe haven, the settlement pattern of Chechens and the very important geostrategic location of Chechnya. Thus, when Chechnya is compared to Tatarstan, the importance of the existence of the Mujahideen and the dimensions of the problem of radical Islam and international Islamic terrorism not only for Russia but also for the entire Caucasus can easily be understood.

The main reason behind choosing the topic of radical Islam and Islamic terrorism in this thesis is the dimensions of the problem. This problem is not a local issue anymore; in such a complex and interdependent world, it has regional, international and even global repercussions. The absence of peace, order and stability in the Caucasus has effects not only on the regional countries, but also on countries in Central Asia, the Middle East and Europe. The combination of international terrorism with illegal trade of oil, drugs and weapons may cause future conflicts in such an ethnically, linguistically and religiously mixed region. Moreover, the proximity to the energy routes makes the problem much more complex. Thus, in order to contain radical Islam and international Islamic terrorism, the reason behind the problem must be analyzed carefully.

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