

State-Building as Lawfare

State-Building as Lawfare explores the use of state and non-state legal systems by both politicians and ordinary people in postwar Chechnya. The book addresses two interrelated puzzles: why do local rulers tolerate and even promote non-state legal systems at the expense of state law, and why do some members of repressed ethnic minorities choose to resolve their everyday disputes using state legal systems instead of non-state alternatives? The book documents how the rulers of Chechnya promote and reinvent customary law and Sharia in order to borrow legitimacy from tradition and religion, increase autonomy from the metropole, and accommodate communal authorities and former rebels. At the same time, the book shows how prolonged armed conflict disrupted the traditional social hierarchies and pushed some Chechen women to use state law, spurring state formation from below.

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(continued after index)

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*Custom, Sharia, and State Law in Postwar
Chechnya*

EGOR LAZAREV

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To Satsita Israilova

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Contents

<i>List of Figures and Tables</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
Introduction	I
PART I THEORY AND ETHNOGRAPHY	
1 State-Building as Lawfare: The View from Above and from Below	23
2 The Field: Ethnography of Legal Pluralism in Postwar Chechnya	59
PART II LAWFARE AND POLITICAL ORDER	
3 The Chechen Way: Lawfare under Imperial and Soviet Rule	99
4 “There Are No Camels in Chechnya!” Lawfare during the Independence Period	119
5 “We Will Use Every Resource!” Jurisdictional Politics in Postwar Chechnya	142
PART III LAWFARE AND SOCIAL ORDER	
6 Laws in Conflict? Hybrid Legal Order in Contemporary Chechnya	175
7 “People Need Law”: Demand for Social Order after Conflict	209

viii	<i>Contents</i>	
8	Chechen Women Go to Court: War and Women’s Lawfare	238
	Conclusion	273
	<i>References</i>	291
	<i>Index</i>	311

Figures and Tables

Figures		
0.1	Map of the region	<i>page</i> xv
6.1	Preferences for alternative legal systems in the most common disputes	196
6.2	Aggregated preferences for alternative legal systems in the most common disputes	197
6.3	Factors of legal preferences	200
6.4	Map of political topography of Chechnya	205
7.1	Relationship between individual-level victimization and legal preferences	216
7.2	Map of victimization among sampled communities	220
7.3	Relationship between community victimization and legal preferences	221
7.4	Relationship between community victimization during the First and the Second Chechen Wars and legal preferences	221
7.5	Relationship between community victimization and the number of cases heard annually in the Justice-of-the-Peace Courts	222
7.6	Map of case study locations	224
7.7	Aggregated preferences for alternative legal systems in Chechnya and Ingushetia	233
7.8	Differences in the aggregated preferences for state law between citizens and state officials in Chechnya and Ingushetia	234

x

List of Figures and Tables

8.1	Gender differences in preferences for alternative legal systems	248
8.2	Gender differences in preferences for state law in family and non-family disputes	249
8.3	Factors of legal preferences among women	250
8.4	Relationship between community victimization, gender, and preferences for state law	252
8.5	Predicting female plaintiff in hearings on civil disputes in the Justice-of-the-Peace Courts	254
8.6	Gender gaps in support for state law in Chechnya and Ingushetia	256

Tables

6.1	Vignettes of the most common disputes	page 193
6.2	Average number of court cases across social cleavages	206

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xiii

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xv

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FIGURE 0.1 Map of the region