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International Military Interventions and Transnational Terrorist Backlash

RESEARCH NOTE

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Are states that engage in foreign military interventions vulnerable to subsequent transnational terrorist attacks? If so, do all types of foreign interventions stimulate terrorism? Using data on international military interventions for 125 to 182 countries during the period from 1970 to 2005, we demonstrate that states experience more terrorism after they engage in military interventions. In particular, politico-strategic use of military force abroad—for example, interference in another country's domestic disputes, territorial interventions, or interventions to affect local politics and policy—leads to increased subsequent transnational terrorist attacks for the intervener. In contrast, socioeconomic foreign military interventions, such as those geared toward providing humanitarian relief, protecting social groups, or securing economic interests, do not lead to an increase in transnational terrorist attacks against intervening states.

Anecdotal evidence points to a positive and significant relationship between foreign interventions and terrorist attacks against the intervening state. Numerous observers point to US military interventions in the Middle East as an important motivator for anti-American terrorism, including the 1993 attack against the World Trade Centers and the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks by Al Qaeda. Indeed, Osama Bin Laden cited the legacy of US military operations in Muslim countries as a justification for the use of terrorism against US targets (see Lawrence 2005, 17, 25). The 2004 and 2005 suicide bombings of public transport systems in Madrid and London were launched, according to the perpetrators, in retaliation against Spanish and British participation in the 2003 US-led invasion and occupation of Iraq. The December 2016 assassination of the Russian ambassador to Turkey was, the assailant proclaimed, in response to Russian air strikes against the Islamic State (ISIS) in Syria.[1] Most recently, on April 3, 2017, a suicide bomber—suspected to be a Chechen rebel who returned from Syria after having fought alongside the Islamic State—launched an attack on a St. Petersburg metro carriage that killed eleven people and wounded forty-five. Russian intelligence officials believe that this latest attack was "backlash" produced by Russian bombings of ISIS positions in Syria (Pinchuk 2017).

The concern that foreign military interventions trigger backlash in the form of increased risk of transnational terrorist attacks receives widespread attention in policy and nonacademic circles (see, for example, Norton-Taylor 2003; Durani 2014; Zakaria 2015). It has become even more pressing as the United States has increased aerial drone attacks in places like Pakistan and Yemen (see, for example, Abbas 2013; Cronin 2013, 44–47; Pilkington and MacAskill 2015). International military interventions and their attendant collateral damage, the argument goes, provoke strong feelings of resentment, both among the people experiencing the intervention and sympathetic observers. These resentments motivate direct and indirect support for nonstate militant organizations that "strike back" at the intervening country through terrorist attacks.

The 2006 US National Intelligence Estimate, prepared for then President George W. Bush, who was considering further foreign military interventions after its 2003 invasion and occupation of Iraq, describes just this dynamic. The report, summarizing the conclusion of several US national intelligence agencies, argued that the invasion of Iraq had produced a strong negative backlash against the United States in the wider Muslim World that caused radical Islamist terrorist organizations to more effectively operate and recruit new members worldwide (Office of the Director of National Intelligence 2006).

Some scholarly work provides indirect evidence for the backlash phenomenon (for recent studies, see Azam and Thelen 2010, 250–56; Choi and Piazza 2017, 284–91; Savun and Phillips 2009, 895–961). In this study, we delve further into the effects of international military interventions on subsequent transnational terrorist attacks suffered by the intervening country. We argue that not all military

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[1] After fatally shooting Andrei Karlov, the Russian ambassador to Turkey, the assailant, Mevlüt Mert Altıntaş, shouted, "God is Great! Do not forget Aleppo, do not forget Syria!" (Arango and Gladstone 2016).

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interventions prompt backlash from transnational terrorists. We maintain that the type of intervention affects the likelihood of subsequent attacks against the intervener. Guided by work conducted by Kisangani and Pickering (2007, 281–83), we differentiate military interventions motivated by and oriented around politico-strategic—"high politics"—from socioeconomic—"low politics"—objectives. We expect that politico-strategic use of military force increases subsequent transnational terrorist attacks, but that socioeconomic interventions do not.

In our study we produce results that are consistent with these theoretical predictions. Statistical analysis on international military interventions for 125 to 182 countries during the period from 1970 to 2005 provides evidence that international military interventions geared toward providing humanitarian relief, protecting social groups, or for economic motivations do not result in more transnational terrorism. However, interventions undertaken for political or strategic reasons result in higher levels of subsequent transnational terrorist attacks for the intervener. In the next sections we outline the relevant literature, present and test our theoretical argument, and then briefly conclude with the implications of the findings.

Literature Review

Our study fits within a wider quantitative literature on the effects of international interventions and foreign occupations on terrorist activity. A large body of work shows that terrorist activity increases in countries experiencing foreign military occupations or foreign military interventions (Asal 2006, 7–9; Azam and Thelen 2010, 250–56; Braithwaite 2015, 362–74; Choi and Piazza 2017, 284–91; Collard-Wexler, Pischedda, and Smith 2014, 639–50; LaFree, Dugan, and Korte 2009, 32–35; Pape 2003, 347–52; Pape and Feldman 2010, 329; Piazza 2008a 477–83; Santifort-Jordan and Sandler 2014, 991–94). These studies present a variety of theoretical arguments linking interventions and occupations to terrorism.

First, scholars argue that the experience of foreign military occupations or interventions foments a strong nationalist resentment against the intervening power among the citizens of the occupied or intervened-in country and beyond. This sentiment, in turn, is ripe for exploitation by militant groups that use terrorism. Nationalist rage in the occupied or intervened-in country gives license to militants to use terrorist tactics, particularly against the intervener's local military, economic, and political assets, as well as those who collaborate with foreign forces (see Asal 2006 3–4; Neumayer and Plümper 2011, 4–8).

These dynamics matter because terrorist tactics usually violate local norms (see Crenshaw 1981, 382). However, being on the receiving end of a foreign military intervention prompts the public to accept the legitimacy of using terrorism as a response. The nationalist backlash fueled by interventions and occupations also swells the pool of potential terrorist recruits (see Eland 2007, 7–12, 16–18). It also generates a larger network of supporters who, even if they do not themselves engage in terrorism, can provide militant organizations with financial and political support, as well as valuable intelligence. Moreover, nationalist sentiment reduces the willingness of the local population to cooperate with the intervener, thus making it easier for terrorists to mount attacks.

Second, some scholarship identifies other mechanisms linking foreign military interventions and occupations to the adoption of terrorism as a tactic by militants. Scholars note that interventions are undertaken by states with high capacities to project conventional military force internationally and are frequently stronger than nonstate militants they oppose. Therefore, interventions produce an environment of conventional power asymmetry between the intervener and nonstate opponents. Given that terrorism is a tactic of the conventionally weak (Crenshaw 1981, 387; Kydd and Walter 2006, 50), it would not be surprising to see an increase in terrorist attacks against interveners as militants turn to terrorism to compensate for their conventional weakness (see Condra et al. 2010, 7; Pettinger 2015, 2–3).[2]

Our study seeks to address two gaps within the literature on the impact of interventions on transnational terrorism. First, with the exceptions of Braithwaite (2015) who examines military "footprints" within a country, a concept akin to occupation—and Neumayer and Plümper (2011) who test the impact of provision of US military aid on terrorist attacks against Americans—existing studies neglect to test whether international military interventions trigger transnational terrorism backlash. They only measure the impact of interventions on terrorist attacks perpetrated by nationals of the country experiencing the intervention. In contrast, our study provides a direct test of the backlash concept by investigating the impact of a country's engagement in a military intervention overseas on its subsequent experience of terrorism. We also recognize that terrorist backlash may not only come from citizens of the country experiencing the intervention, but also may be perpetrated by citizens of other countries that are outraged and are sympathetic to the "victims" of such interventions.

Second, despite the fact that previous studies have advanced our scientific knowledge on use of military force and terrorism, they overlook the possibility that not all types of military interventions trigger terrorist backlash. We examine what types of interventions matter in provoking nationalist resentments against the intervention and, by extension, whether or not transnational terrorist backlash will likely occur. In the next section, we delve into how two different types of interventions lead to two opposing reactions from transnational terrorists.

Types of International Military Interventions and Backlash

We expect that international military interventions generally prompt transnational terrorist backlash for the intervening country, but that interventions motivated by the goal of enhancing the political, military, and strategic position of the intervener are particularly likely to provoke a transnational terrorist backlash. In contrast, we expect socioeconomic military interventions, typically launched to provide humanitarian and other types of assistance to the target country, produce little to no subsequent transnational terrorist attacks against the intervening country. We therefore categorize international military interventions into two essential types: those that are motivated by the goal of enhancing the political, military, and strategic position of the intervener and those that are motivated by the goal of providing humanitarian aid, rescue, or assistance. We rely upon a typology developed by Pickering and Kisangani (2009, 593–94) to identify these two categories and theorize their differing impacts on terrorist backlash. In their earlier study of diversionary military interventions, Kisangani and

[2] It is important to note, however, that more recent work has questioned whether weaker-armed nonstate actors actually opt to use terrorism more frequently than conventionally stronger-armed nonstate actors (see Fortna 2015).

Pickering (2007) argue that political leaders sometimes try to manage domestic challenges by sending troops overseas, but distinguish types of interventions between those motivated by the "benevolent use of force over low political issues" and "belligerent use of force over high politics issues." The former, termed *socioeconomic interventions* or SEIs, are benign uses of force that are less risky and costly. They are less likely to be responded to with counterforce or to prompt a widening of armed conflict. In contrast, *political-strategic interventions* or PSIs are uses of force that are launched by countries mostly to buttress national power and carry more substantial risks.

In explaining the effects of SEIs and PSIs, we conform to Pickering and Kisangani's (2009, 593–94) operationalization.[3] Politico-strategic interventions are those that are launched by states in order to protect their own military and diplomatic assets; to intervene on one side or another of a domestic political dispute in a country; to replace the political regime of a country; to attack rebels and other nonstate actors active within a country; to achieve strategic goals such as affecting stability, regional balances of power, or to further ideological objectives; or to acquire, retain, or demarcate territory. Socioeconomic interventions include interventions to avert humanitarian disasters, to protect social and ethnic groups that are under threat, and to protect economic systems and resources.

Though their main concern revolves around the root causes of diversionary wars between two sovereign states, Kisangani and Pickering (2007) actually foresee an impact of SEIs and PSIs that is parallel to our expectations about the type of the intervention and terrorist backlash. They argue that socioeconomic interventions are a less risky foreign policy decision for leaders than politico-strategic interventions because they are less likely to provoke military retaliation by the target state, or other states, and are less likely to escalate military tensions. Their recent study (Kisangani and Pickering 2017) that examines the effects of hostile international military interventions on the physical quality of life of people in the target country further buttresses our argument that politico-strategic interventions are more likely to produce transnational terrorist backlash.

There are several reasons why politico-strategic interventions are likely to prompt terrorist activity. As previously mentioned, PSIs are more likely to foment nationalist backlashes. As previously mentioned, PSIs are likely to be viewed as humiliating violations of national sovereignty among the residents of the affected country thereby increasing terrorist backlash (Asal 2006, 3–4; Neumayer and Plümper 2011, 4–8). PSIs where the intervener takes sides in a domestic political dispute, attempts to affect domestic politics, engages in regime change, acquires territory, or changes a country's borders are more intrusive to notions of legitimate self-governance by target states and thus are more likely to provoke strong local resentments. These resentments, in turn, can be exploited by terrorists who seek to strike back at the intervener.

Additionally, politico-strategic interventions are likely to affect physical and other conditions on the ground in the target country, enhancing popular grievances and thereby improving the strategic environment for terrorists who seek to recruit and mobilize populations in support of their goals. First, by weakening the target government or damaging infrastructure, PSIs may disrupt the provision of services upon which residents rely. This adversely impacts their quality of life, and subsequently may leave those affected more likely to tolerate or support extremist violence (see Ross 1993, 325–26), and may increase the pool of individuals for which opportunity costs of engaging in activities like terrorism are reduced (see Becker 1968). Though there is little evidence that poverty itself prompts individuals to join or support terrorist movements (see Krueger and Malečková 2003), some studies indicate that government provision of social welfare benefits reduces domestic and transnational terrorism in countries (see Burgoon 2006) by dampening grievances that fuel support for violent extremism. Second, PSIs may also increase the numbers of internally displaced persons and transnational refugees. Both internal displacement (Choi and Piazza 2016) and transnational refugee flows (Choi and Salehyan 2013) have been linked to higher rates of terrorist activity by increasing recruitment pools and by creating difficult to police spaces that facilitate terrorist operations. Third, PSIs may damage the rule of law in the target country, a phenomenon also linked to increased terrorism (see Choi 2010) by undermining government legitimacy and opening a political space for fringe, violent actors like terrorist movements. Fourth, belligerent military interventions frequently worsen the human rights environment of the target country and prompt government repression of dissidents (Peksen 2012). Repression and human rights violations have been found to be significant predictors of terrorist activity in countries (see Daxecker 2015; Avdan and Uzonyi 2017; Piazza 2017) as they reduce the willingness of affected communities to cooperate with counterterrorism officials while increasing sympathy for fringe, antisystem violent extremists and generally impair counterterrorism efforts (Hafner-Burton and Shapiro 2010; Walsh and Piazza 2010). Finally, hostile international military interventions may so seriously weaken the target government, increasing the chance of regime collapse. Given that failed and failing states are more likely to produce domestic and transnational terrorism (see Piazza 2008b),[4] this further links PSIs to terrorism.

We expect that unlike politico-strategic military interventions, socioeconomic interventions are unlikely to produce the kinds of adverse consequences leading to subsequent terrorist activity. Foreign military interventions launched to safeguard access to humanitarian aid, to stem or manage refugee flows or the movement of internally displaced people, to end repressive state behavior, to protect vulnerable and persecuted populations, and to prevent state collapse are unlikely to bring about an increase of terrorist activity. Interventions with humanitarian or social protective motivations mitigate the risk of terrorist backlash if they ameliorate human rights violations, repression and refugee, and internally displaced populations in the target country, given that as mentioned previously these conditions are strong predictors of terrorism. Moreover, given research by Berrebi and Ostwald (2011) linking terrorism with high-casualty natural disasters,

[3] Specifically, conforming to Pickering and Kisangani (2009, 593–94), we code as PSI's interventions to intervene in a domestic dispute ("domestic_dispute"), to affect domestic politics in the target country ("affect_policies"), to attack or pursue rebel forces ("pursuit_border"), to achieve strategic goals ("strategic"), to acquire, retain, delineate, or specify the sovereignty of established or disputed territory ("territorial"), and to protect military or diplomatic assets ("military/diplomatic"). We code as SEI's interventions to provide protection to social, religious, or ethnic groups ("social_protective"), to protect economic or resource interests ("economic"), or to provide humanitarian assistance ("humanitarian"). Details on these specific types of interventions can be found in the IMI data codebook online in https://www.k-state.edu/polsci/intervention/. Although some interventions can be categorized both as a PSI and SEI, they are very rare in the data, comprising around 3.9 percent of observations.

[4] For an important test and qualification of this assertion, see Coggins (2014).

humanitarian and social protective interventions launched to stabilize, secure, and assist countries in the wake of natural disasters may also reduce the risk of terrorism. Economic interventions, the third leg in Pickering and Kisangani's operationalization of SEIs, differ from the other two (humanitarian and social protective) in that they could in theory yield deleterious impacts on the population of the targeted country. For example, a country may engage in an economic intervention to secure access to natural resources abroad. In the process, such an intervention stands to generate economic grievances among the population in the target country. However, we do not expect this to yield more subsequent terrorism given that much of the empirical literature does not find direct economic deprivation to be predictive of terrorism or support for terrorism (see Gassebner and Luechinger 2011, 250–54 for a comprehensive analysis).[5]

The above discussion leads us to formulate three hypotheses as follows:

H1: *Countries launching international military interventions are likely to experience increased subsequent transnational terrorist attacks.*

H2: *Countries launching politico-strategic international military interventions are likely to experience increased subsequent transnational terrorist attacks.*

H3: *Countries launching socioeconomic international military interventions are not more likely to experience increased subsequent transnational terrorist attacks.*

Building a Statistical Model of Transnational Terrorist Backlash

To test the above three hypotheses, we evaluate the impact of international military interventions, and types of interventions, launched by states on the amount of transnational terrorist attacks they subsequently experience for the period 1970 to 2005.[6] Our unit of analysis is the country-year and our sample includes 125 to 182 countries depending on the model specification.[7]

To crosscheck the robustness of our findings, we use two terrorism datasets for the dependent variable that were collected separately and independently across countries and years. The first measure is derived from the decomposed transnational versus domestic terrorism data produced by Enders, Sandler, and Gaibulloev (2011), hereafter referred to as *ESG*. This indicator is a country-year annual count of all transnational terrorist attacks—meaning that they are perpetrated by nonnationals—sustained by a country. The second measure is garnered from the International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events dataset, hereafter referred to as *ITERATE*, a proprietary database collected by Mickolus et al. (2008). The ITERATE database collects data on transnational attacks both perpetrated by foreign nationals within the territory of the attacked country and against the citizens of the attacked country, located anywhere in the world. Using these two complementary but distinct dependent variables, we are able to execute a more comprehensive assessment of the impact of international military interventions on transnational terrorist backlash. Because our dependent variables are overdispersed count measures, we rely on negative binomial regression as our estimation method.[8] To ensure that the explanatory factors occurred before the outcome variable, we lag all independent variables by one year.[9]

Our main independent variables include all international military interventions launched by the state observed, international military interventions motivated by politico-strategic objectives, and international military interventions motivated by socioeconomic objectives. Because some individual military interventions undertaken by a country may be sporadic or limited in scope and intensity, which we would expect would have a more limited effect on subsequent terrorism, all three of these variables are operationalized as count measures.[10]

The data for these variables are derived from the International Military Interventions (IMI) database ("Merged IMI Data 1947–2005") collected by Pickering and Kisangani (2009) and Pearson and Baumann (1993).[11] An international military intervention is defined as "the movement of regular [government] troops or forces (airborne, seaborne, shelling, etc.) of one country inside another, in the context of some political issue or dispute" (Pearson and Baumann 1993, 1). To be included in the original IMI data, furthermore, the troop incursions must be intentional rather than inadvertent or unauthorized. We convert by hand the IMI database from an event to a cross-national, time-series format. Each observation is a tally of current interventions engaged in by a country per year.[12] This includes interventions that started in the year observed, interventions that started in a previous year but were still ongoing, and interventions that both started and terminated in the year. All interventions that terminated before 1968 or 1970, the temporal starting points for the terrorism data we use in the analysis, are excluded. However, interventions that began before this time and continued on to or past 1968 or 1970 are included. Finally, all unclear or "not ascertained" values for the

[5] As a check, we conduct additional tests where economic interventions are removed from the SEI category. These tests produce the same core findings as the main models and are presented and discussed in Appendix Table 1. Checking further, we also remove pursuit of rebels and protection of military and diplomatic personnel from the PSI category. These two specific PSI components are identified by Kisangani and Pickering as having the potential to overlap with benign interventions. The results of these checks also produce the same core findings and are reported in Appendix Table 1A.

[6] Our temporal range is limited to 1970 to 2005 due to data limitations for several of our variables.

[7] The number of countries included in the analyses varies across the estimations, as reported in the main result tables. This is due to missing data for some covariates, which produces list-wise deletion of observations, and estimation features such as the use of fixed effects, which drops time invariant observations. However, the core results are independent of the sample size across models.

[8] As a further robustness check, we also conduct zero-inflated negative binomial estimations. The results of these tests are discussed in Appendix Table 2. Although Poisson regression is often used for modeling count data, we do not use it for our analysis mainly due to the failure of accounting for the overdispersion of the terrorism data (for more detailed discussion on model choices, see Hilbe 2011).

[9] In this study, our causal identification strategy is to find out a one-way causal direction from interventions to transnational terrorist attacks. However, to test the robustness of the causal effect, we also test for reversed causality. The results of these tests are discussed in the next section.

[10] A count, rather than a simple dichotomous that truncates the intensity of intervention activity, measure of the occurrence of an intervention best captures the impact of the intervention behavior of a state. As a robustness check, however, we rerun all models using a dichotomized measure of interventions. This measure is coded as 1 for any observation in which a country engaged in one or more interventions. These tests reproduce the core results of the study and are presented in Appendix Table 3.

[11] Data and codebook available online in https://www.k-state.edu/polsci/intervention/.

[12] We confine this tally to interventions that are linked to a particular state in the IMI database. This means that participation in interventions by multinational organizations or alliances are excluded. We opt to exclude these because it is difficult to assign weight and responsibility to participating states in multinational intervention efforts. Our coding, however, does not exclude major interventions by coalitions, such as the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan or the 1991 and 2003 wars in or against Iraq. The IMI data does include individual country-intervener data for these sorts of interventions.

specific types of interventions—coded in the original data as "9s"—are coded as 0s. The intervention variable ranges from zero IMIs per country-year—the modal observation—to a maximum of twenty-two IMIs per country-year, the amount launched by South Africa in 1982.

We also include counts of PSIs and SEIs using, as stated previously, the convention established by Pickering and Kisangani (2009, 593–94). We operationalize PSIs by adding the counts of six types of IMIs motivated by political and strategic goals including interventions undertaken to take sides in a domestic dispute within a country, to affect the domestic policy or political regime of a country, to protect the interveners' military or diplomatic personnel, to counter hostile nonstate actors, to achieve strategic goals such as affecting regional power balances, and for territorial imperatives. The indicator for SEIs combines counts of interventions to protect or assist mistreated or imperiled social and ethnic groups within a target country, humanitarian interventions, including famine relief, and interventions to protect economic resources important to the intervener, its allies, and to other countries. The number of PSIs in our analysis ranges from zero to twenty times per country-year, while SEIs are between zero to nine per observation. Like the aggregate measure of interventions, the modal value for both indicators is zero. South Africa in 1982 engaged in the most politico-strategic interventions in the sample, while the United States engaged in the highest level of socioeconomic military interventions in 2004.

It is worth nothing that some military interventions were launched with multiple motivations and objectives and therefore do not neatly fit into a PSI and SEI dichotomization. For example, India's military intervention in Sri Lanka in 1987 can be considered to be a strategic intervention (PSI) as it was launched to bolster the Sri Lankan government, an ally with which India had signed a mutual security pact. It was an intervention to affect domestic politics (PSI) in that it aimed to bolster the Sri Lankan government's ability to project force internally. It was also a territorial intervention (PSI) because it attempted to drive the LTTE (Tamil Tigers) from its headquarters in Jaffna. It was also motivated by a desire on India's part to pursue Tamil insurgents and terrorists (PSI) who had engaged in violence and subversion in India. However, the intervention also aimed to provide humanitarian and social protective assistance (SEI) to both Tamil and Sinhalese civilians that were victimized by LTTE attacks. We classify such interventions as both PSIs and SEIs. In our analysis, therefore, PSIs and SEIs are not mutually exclusive.

Our estimations also include a set of commonly used control variables. These capture some basic features of the intervener. They include the intervener's political regime type, which we measure using the twenty-one-point Polity index, the intervener's level of economic development, indicated by its gross domestic product per capita in standardized billions of 1990 US dollars (USD), and its national population. We also include several controls that might affect a country's security and strategic behavior on the international stage in ways that are consequential for its exposure to terrorism. One of them is the intervener's degree of economic engagement with other countries, measured as its international trade as a percentage of gross domestic product. While some scholars reason that close trade relationships reduce a country's likelihood of experiencing terrorism (Li and Schaub 2004), we also expect that countries with higher levels of international trade could be more vulnerable to terrorism. International trade may, in theory, increase targeting opportunities for terrorists. We also include an ordinal measure of the intervener's current engagement in interstate wars, scaled for the intensity of the war. Countries engaged in interstate wars might stoke grievances abroad, making them a more likely target of transnational terrorism. We also consider that countries that are members of international security alliances and that have experienced international crises recently could be more frequently targeted by transnational terrorists. We therefore include dichotomous measures for both of these variables.

Exposure to transnational terrorism might be the product of "living in a bad neighborhood." If a country is bordered by other countries that are experiencing civil or interstate wars, it might have an increased chance of being targeted by transnational terrorists, either deliberately or inadvertently. We therefore include a count of the severity of civil and interstate violent conflicts in countries bordering the intervener. Finally, by adding a lagged term for the dependent variable on the right-hand side of the equation, we account for temporal dependence of the behavior of transnational terrorists against the intervening country.

Descriptive statistics for all indicators used in the study are produced in Table 1.

Empirical Results

The results of our analysis are summarized in Tables 2 and 3. The results provide support for all three of our hypotheses. In brief, we find that countries engaging in international military interventions subsequently experience more transnational terrorist backlash. Furthermore, we find that interventions motivated by politico-strategic objectives produce more transnational terrorism for the intervener. However, as hypothesized, we do not find engagement in so-called socioeconomic interventions to produce more subsequent terrorism. In fact, in some estimations, engagement in socioeconomic interventions significantly reduces the intervener's experience of transnational terrorism. We detail our findings below.

Table 2 summarizes the results of our analysis of all international military interventions on transnational terrorism.

Models 1 and 2 summarize baseline estimations including only the control variables. In these we find that four controls are consistent significant drivers of transnational terrorist attacks, regardless of how counts of transnational terrorism are measured. Countries engaged in international alliances, countries experiencing an international crisis in the past three years, countries bordering other countries experiencing inter- and intrastate conflicts, and countries that have previously experienced transnational terrorism are all more likely to experience transnational terrorist attacks. Models 3 and 4 regress transnational terrorism on the total counts of international military interventions, while controlling for the previous year's count of transnational terrorist attacks. In both models, countries engaging in IMIs are exposed to a higher risk of subsequent transnational terrorism. When the remaining controls are added to the estimations in Models 5 and 6, we produce the same core findings: IMIs positively predict transnational attacks. Finally, though we cluster our standard errors on the country in Models 1 through 6, country-level idiosyncrasies might still affect the results. Therefore, we reestimate the full models using country-fixed effects. These county-fixed-effects models, presented in estimations 7 and 8, yield the results that are similar to the previous ones. International military interventions increase transnational terrorism as measured by ITERATE, as indicated in Model 8. Yet, when we regress the ESG measure of transnational terrorism on IMIs in Model 7, the coefficient

Table 1. Descriptive statistics.

Variable	*Obs*	*Mean*	*St. Dev.*	*Min*	*Max*
Transnational terrorism (ESG)	7391	2.009	8.990	0	270
Transnational terrorism (ITERATE)	7098	1.818	6.578	0	181
International military interventions (IMI)	7098	0.640	2.033	0	22
Socioeconomic military interventions (IMI)	7098	0.125	0.508	0	9
Politico-strategic military interventions (IMI)	7098	0.515	1.710	0	20
Democracy (Polity Score)	6205	1.025	7.526	–10	10
Gross domestic product (USD billions 1990 dollars, Madison)	6418	1.954	8.309	0.0006	132.25
Population (millions, UN data)	6425	32.383	119.216	0.058	1324.35
Trade (x + m/GDP, quality of govt. database)	5772	77.150	47.504	0.308	460.47
International war severity (MEPV)	6479	0.110	0.673	0	9
Alliance dummy (Gibler and Sarkees)	7520	0.277	0.447	0	1
Crisis in past 3 years dummy (CIDCM)	6720	0.236	0.424	0	1
Conflict in border states (civil and int'l war severity, MEPV)	6069	3.591	5.356	0	34

Table 2. International military interventions and transnational terrorist attacks suffered by intervening country.

	[1] Transnational terrorism (ESG)	*[2] Transnational terrorism (ITERATE)*	*[3] Transnational terrorism (ESG)*	*[4] Transnational terrorism (ITERATE)*	*[5] Transnational terrorism (ESG)*	*[6] Transnational terrorism (ITERATE)*	*[7] Transnational terrorism (ESG)*	*[8] Transnational terrorism (ITERATE)*
Int'l military interventions$_{t-1}$			0.098***	0.106***	0.055**	0.074*	0.010	0.023*
			(0.020)	(0.028)	(0.019)	(0.030)	(0.012)	(0.011)
Democracy (Polity)$_{t-1}$	0.035***	0.020			0.030**	0.019	0.034***	0.010*
	(0.010)	(0.011)			(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.006)	(0.005)
GDP (USD bns)$_{t-1}$	0.004	0.004			–0.001	–0.001	–0.008**	–0.005
	(0.005)	(0.004)			(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Population (millions)$_{t-1}$	0.001*	0.001			0.001	0.001	0.000	–0.001**
	(0.001)	(0.001)			(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Trade as % of GDP$_{t-1}$	–0.006**	–0.003			–0.006***	–0.002	–0.004**	–0.007***
	(0.002)	(0.002)			(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)
International war$_{t-1}$	0.102	0.203			0.014	0.067	–0.054	–0.008
	(0.074)	(0.119)			(0.090)	(0.130)	(0.050)	(0.040)
Alliance$_{t-1}$	0.792***	0.832***			0.938***	0.864***	0.182	0.096
	(0.201)	(0.174)			(0.191)	(0.176)	(0.095)	(0.092)
Crisis past 3 years$_{t-1}$	0.453***	0.374***			0.406***	0.327**	0.271***	0.155**
	(0.111)	(0.108)			(0.102)	(0.112)	(0.062)	(0.057)
Conflict in border states$_{t-1}$	0.032**	0.033**			0.033**	0.030*	0.032***	0.033***
	(0.012)	(0.011)			(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.006)	(0.005)
Terrorist attacks$_{t-1}$	0.144***	0.151***	0.207***	0.218***	0.128***	0.143***	0.013***	0.024***
	(0.034)	(0.022)	(0.028)	(0.026)	(0.030)	(0.022)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Constant	–0.606**	–0.675**	–0.645***	–0.540***	–0.631**	–0.707***	–0.903***	–0.301**
	(0.226)	(0.209)	(0.121)	(0.118)	(0.211)	(0.209)	(0.120)	(0.116)
Obs.	4622	4483	6184	6738	4339	4341	3922	3835
Wald χ^2	276.43***	224.10***	96.16***	85.67***	351.19***	210.75***	306.40***	483.02***
Pseudo R^2	0.114	0.105	0.094	0.086	0.126	0.106		
Clusters (country)	150	151	178	182	150	151	133	125
Country fixed effects	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

Notes: (1) All models negative binomial regression estimations. (2) Standard errors in parentheses. (3) Statistical significance: ***$p \leq 0.000$, **$p \leq 0.01$, *$p \leq 0.05$.

on international military interventions turns out to be non-significant ($p = 0.395$), though its sign is still positive. These findings provide strong and mostly consistent support for our first hypothesis.

The results summarized in Table 3 produce support for next two hypotheses that PSIs produce more transnational terrorism, but SEIs do not.

In Table 3, we regress our two indicators of transnational terrorist attacks on counts of politico-strategic and socioeconomic interventions, both alone and together. We find across the models that politico-strategic interventions are likely to boost subsequent transnational attacks for the intervening country. However, socioeconomic interventions emerge as either not significant predictors (see Models 11 through 14 and 16) or as a significant negative predictor of transnational attacks (see Model 15). These results suggest that, ceteris paribus, countries that engage in international military interventions abroad experience more transnational terrorist attacks in the future. However, it is politico-strategic, rather than socioeconomic, interventions that drive this relationship.[13]

[13] To further check that the results are not driven by outliers, we reran models excluding the ten countries that engaged in the most international military

Table 3. Types of international military interventions and transnational terrorist attacks suffered by intervening country.

	[9] *Transnational terrorism (ESG)*	*[10]* *Transnational terrorism (ITERATE)*	*[11]* *Transnational terrorism (ESG)*	*[12]* *Transnational terrorism (ITERATE)*	*[13]* *Transnational terrorism (ESG)*	*[14]* *Transnational terrorism (ITERATE)*	*[15]* *Transnational terrorism (ESG)*	*[16]* *Transnational terrorism (ITERATE)*
Politico-strategic interventions$_{t-1}$	0.070**	0.093*			0.078**	0.097*	0.041**	0.038**
	(0.024)	(0.039)			(0.025)	(0.048)	(0.015)	(0.013)
Socioeconomic interventions$_{t-1}$			0.108	0.127	–0.047	–0.021	–0.123**	–0.039
			(0.090)	(0.080)	(0.075)	(0.097)	(0.045)	(0.036)
Democracy (Polity)$_{t-1}$	0.030**	0.019	0.031**	0.021	0.031**	0.019	0.033***	0.010*
	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.006)	(0.005)
GDP (USD bns)$_{t-1}$	–0.000	0.000	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	–0.005	–0.003
	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Population (millions)$_{t-1}$	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.000	–0.001**
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Trade as % of GDP$_{t-1}$	–0.006***	–0.002	–0.007***	–0.002	–0.006***	–0.002	–0.003**	–0.007***
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)
International war$_{t-1}$	0.009	0.079	0.069	0.149	0.010	0.085	–0.063	–0.016
	(0.093)	(0.144)	(0.076)	(0.095)	(0.095)	(0.131)	(0.051)	(0.041)
Alliance$_{t-1}$	0.941***	0.868***	0.919***	0.839***	0.941***	0.868***	0.198*	0.105
	(0.192)	(0.176)	(0.189)	(0.174)	(0.192)	(0.176)	(0.095)	(0.092)
Crisis past 3 years$_{t-1}$	0.410***	0.328**	0.417***	0.346**	0.414***	0.329**	0.277***	0.169**
	(0.101)	(0.112)	(0.103)	(0.111)	(0.102)	(0.112)	(0.061)	(0.057)
Conflict in border states$_{t-1}$	0.033**	0.029*	0.035**	0.032**	0.033**	0.029*	0.033***	0.033***
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.006)	(0.005)
Terrorist attacks$_{t-1}$	0.127***	0.143***	0.129***	0.146***	0.127***	0.143***	0.014***	0.025***
	(0.030)	(0.022)	(0.030)	(0.022)	(0.030)	(0.022)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Constant	–0.636**	–0.712***	–0.606**	–0.674**	–0.639**	–0.713***	–0.938***	–0.327**
	(0.211)	(0.210)	(0.208)	(0.207)	(0.210)	(0.210)	(0.121)	(0.117)
Obs.	4339	4341	4339	4341	4339	4341	3922	3835
Wald χ^2	349.34***	211.14***	370.95***	219.80***	359.19***	212.46***	319.86***	485.28***
Pseudo R^2	0.126	0.107	0.125	0.105	0.126	0.107		
Clusters (country)	150	151	150	151	150	151	133	125
Country fixed effects	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

Notes: (1) All models negative binomial regression estimations. (2) Standard errors in parentheses. (3) Politico-Strategic interventions = protection of military or diplomatic personnel, interference in domestic disputes, to affect policies, pursuit of rebels, strategic, and territorial interventions. (4) Socioeconomic interventions = humanitarian, social protection, and economic interventions. (5) Statistical significance: ***$p \leq 0.000$, **$p \leq 0.01$, *$p \leq 0.05$.

Substantive Effects

To determine the substantive impact of international military interventions on transnational terrorism, in Figures 1 and 2 we plot the number of subsequent transnational attacks a country is predicted to experience as counts of interventions increase. We use marginal effects simulations to calculate these and hold all other predictors in the estimations constant at their mean values.[14] When interpreting these results, it is critical to consider that transnational terrorist attacks are very rare events. Most states do not experience a single transnational terrorist event in a year—between 68.5 and 72.6 country-year observations in the data contain zero attacks—and of those that do experience terrorism, between 62.5 and 63.1 experience three or fewer attacks in a given year. At the same time, it is crucial to recall that, although transnational terrorist attacks are rare, they often have an outsized significant impact on a country's politics and policy.[15]

States that engage in interventions place themselves at a substantially higher risk of subsequent transnational terrorist attacks. Countries that refrain from engaging in any sort of intervention are predicted to experience less than one transnational attack in the typical year. Engaging in eleven interventions, the midpoint of the scale, boosts the expected number of subsequent attacks to between 1.5 (Figure 1) and 2 (Figure 2) attacks for the typical country in the typical year, while engaging in the maximum number of interventions—twenty-two—boosts transnational terrorism to between 2.6 and 4.9 subsequent attacks per year, a 336.7 to 513.6 percent increase. The effects are even more dramatic for countries engaging in PSIs. Countries involved in ten PSIs—the midpoint—are predicted to experience between 1.7 and 2.5 subsequent attacks per year while those engaging in the maximum of twenty PSIs are expected to

interventions in the data: the United States, Soviet Union/Russia, France, the United Kingdom, Israel, China, India, South Africa, Libya, and Vietnam. These models reproduce the core results of the study. Results available from authors.

[14] We also calculated the impact of a one-unit increase of the independent variable on the dependent variable. These results are displayed, with confidence intervals, in Appendix Figure 1.

[15] For example, in 2001 the United States experienced only four transnational terrorist attacks—the four hijackings perpetrated by Al Qaeda—which prompted US President Bush to launch the Global War on Terror. In 2004, Spain experienced only two (coordinated) transnational terrorist bombings against the Madrid Cercanias commuter rail system, perpetrated by suspected members of Al Qaeda in Iraq. These deadly attacks resulted in the defeat of the ruling Spanish Conservative government and prompted the removal of Spanish troops from Iraq.

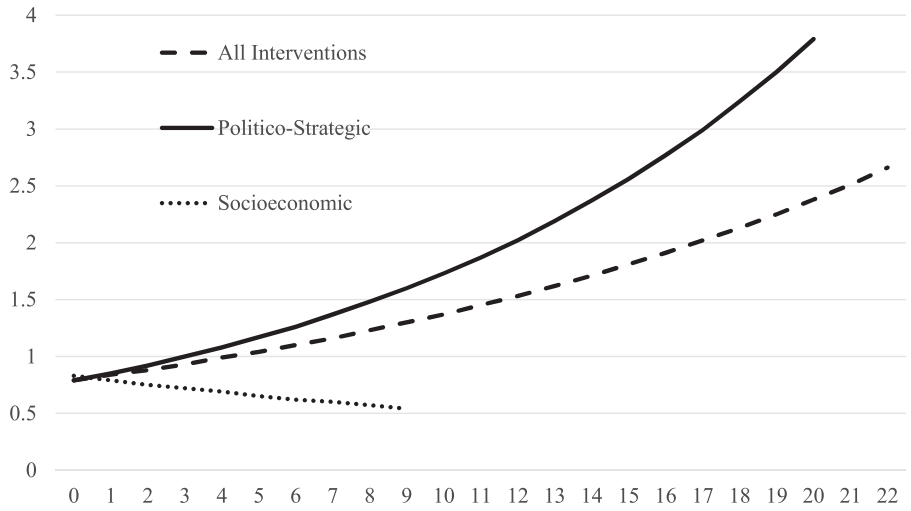

Figure 1. Predicted number of subsequent attacks (GTD) by type of intervention

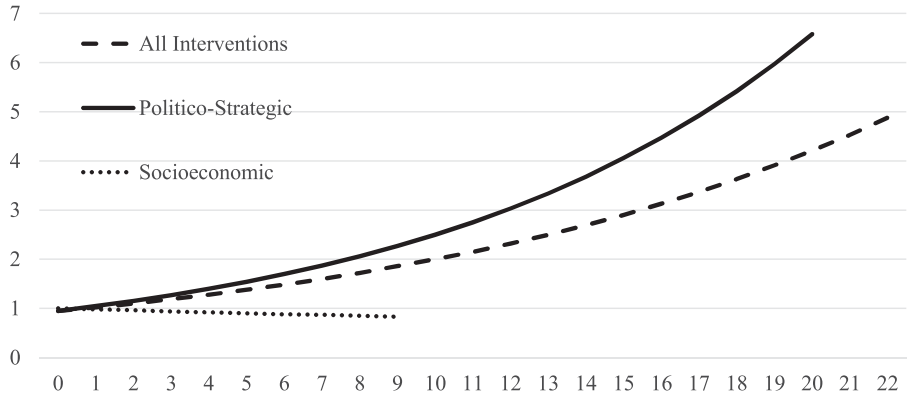

Figure 2. Predicted number of subsequent attacks (ITERATE) by type of intervention

experience 3.8 to 6.6 attacks, representing between a 479.7 and 692.6 percent increase. This would place such countries in the ninety-first to ninety-fourth percentile in the dataset in terms of yearly experience of transnational terrorism.

In contrast, countries engaging in socioeconomic interventions generally see a slight, though not always significant, decrease in the amount of subsequent transnational terrorism they experience. In Figure 1, the amount of terrorism a country experiences per year almost halves—from 0.83 to 0.54—as the number of SEIs engaged in increases. A more modest decline is observed in Figure 2: countries that engage in SEIs see a reduction in terrorism from 1.0 to 0.83 attacks per year.

Endogeneity

In this study, we have assumed a one-way causal direction from military interventions to terrorist backlash and therefore introduced the use of a one-year lagged term for all explanatory variables to help establish the causal time order. But there is a possibility that states may be motivated to launch an intervention in response to terrorist attacks—witness the American military intervention in Afghanistan in 2001 in response to Al Qaeda's attacks on September 11—thereby complicating the direction of the causal relationship. This raises the empirical question that international military interventions and transnational terrorist attacks might be endogenous.

To address endogeneity, we have performed three sets of tests. First, we conduct sets of Heckman selection models. These tests help to clarify the direction of the causal relationship by selecting, in the first stage, only those countries that had a history of transnational terrorism, lagged one more year behind the regressors in the models. In the second stage, we find that countries that engaged in both all and politico-strategic interventions still experienced more subsequent transnational terrorism. These results are summarized in Appendix Table A4. These tests reveal that, among countries that engage in interventions, specifically PSIs, as a result of previous experience of terrorism, transnational terrorist backlash is still more likely. Second, we run a two-stage least squares (2SLS) model instrumenting for international military interventions using primary energy consumption (Sovey and Green 2011). We theorize that countries that consume large amounts of energy have a higher capacity to engage in overseas military interventions while also being more likely to do so in order to protect access to vital energy resources. However, we expect primary energy consumption to be exogenous to experience of transnational terrorist attacks. Our theoretical expectation on this point is empirically confirmed by Wu-Hausman tests. We find that when instrumenting for energy consumption in

the first stage of the model, we reproduce the core findings of the analysis. IMIs and PSIs predict subsequent terrorism, but SEIs do not. The results of these tests are summarized in Appendix Tables A5 and A6. Third, we conduct sets of generalized method of moments (GMM) models (Arellano and Bond 1991), which treats IMIs and terrorist attacks as endogenous but all other regressors in the model as exogenous. These also reproduced the main findings of the study and are summarized in Appendix Table A7.

Conclusion

Our analysis finds that certain types of military interventions—those that are oriented toward politico-military motivations and objectives—levy a security cost on intervening countries by prompting more transnational terrorist attacks. On the most basic level, our findings demonstrate that the specific motives and objectives of military interventions matter. This may prove true in other areas of security affairs, including provision of foreign aid or interstate diplomacy, and future studies should look more closely at such relationships. Our findings provide strong support for the argument that some types of interventions, particularly those motivated by high politics, stoke nationalist enmity against the intervening country, resulting in a transnational terrorist backlash with implications beyond attacks against foreign occupying troops. Policymakers should consider this risk when contemplating politico-strategic interventions.

Supplementary Information

Supplementary information is available at https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/jpiazza and the *International Studies Quarterly* data archive.

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