'Dizziness *from Success'? Has the 'Russian Security' Leadership Been a 'Victim' of Its Battlefield Success Due its Overwhelming Force and Ability to Disrupt Insurgent Military/Political Networks in the Caucasian Conflicts?*

Illicit Networks Conference

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Declaratory & Action Policy

"Russia does not negotiate with terrorists."

Vladimir Putin, 2004

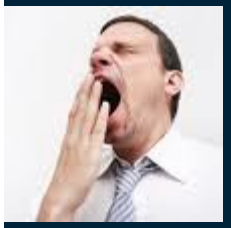
Then-Russian Federation President, Prime Minister, former KGB officer & Graduate, Leningrad State University, Law Faculty, 1975.

Should the Russian state authorities treat the conflict in Chechnya and the other subdivisions in the Northern Caucasus as primarily a law enforcement "matter" or a conflict best addressed using military tools (while not losing sight of the importance winning the batter for the hearts of minds of the local population?

Momentum & Tipping Points

- Malcolm Gladwell and others): The Law of the Few (Connectors, Mavens & Salesmen), the 'Stickiness' Factor [*cohesion*], and the Power of Context.
- Contexts Considered: (i) *conflict between* the metropolitan state and region, and (ii) *conflict within* (a) the Russian elite and (b) the 'insurgency' – both managing relationships with their stakeholders and potential supporters.
- Groups, Networks, & Dynamics: Some problems associated with economic and other modelling – the 'but for' and additional variable problem (as seen in regression analysis).

Yes, I know I am the Last Presenter !



- A Chechen Narrative:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mh1s8XGxrGc

- A Russian Narrative:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUBJ4fjYnhU

- The “News” From Moscow:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWZ_EOVjGEk

Law No. 35-FZ "On Countering Terrorism," March 2006.

"Fundamentals" of Russian Policy

(i) Objectives: – protecting human rights, interests & liberties of the people while preserving lawfulness (including against persons engaged in standard criminal activity);

(ii) Approach: use of broad range of legal, political & other tools with leading role played by "law enforcement" and "military" personnel; and

(iii) Methods: enhance defensive capability & intelligence; disrupt/pre-empt terrorists, with no political concessions to terrorists (cooperating with foreign governments when possible).

Russian Military Doctrine

- In the 1980s, Soviet military doctrine, as developed by the late Chief of the General Staff Nikolai Ogarkov, was informed by a desire to take apply to military affairs the tools provided by the "scientific-technical" revolution, especially with respect to C3I, which served as a "force multiplier."

- In February 2010, President Dmitrii Medvedev announced Russia's new military doctrine which recognizes the difficulty of resolving regional conflicts (including within the 'near-abroad'). It acknowledges that "despite the lowering of the probability of unleashing large-scale warfare against the Russian Federation," internal and external threats have increased.

Jason Lyall's Findings

American Political Science Review (Feb 2010)

Chechenization "seemed" to work:

(i) "nearly a 40% average decrease in the number of insurgent attacks following-Chechen only sweeps [against insurgents and civilians] compared with similar Russian only (sic) operations,"

(ii) less likely to trigger retaliation by insurgents than when Russian-only sweeps occur, and

(iii) joint Russian-Chechen sweeps have little noticeable impact (no 'transferability').

- ОДНОКО [HOWEVER] . . . .

Dynamic Network Analysis Theory

Vos Fellman (in 'The Complexity of Terrorist Networks' and Modeling Terrorist Networks – Complex Systems at Mid-Range) contends that:

- by isolating and removing terrorist "nodes," their networks can be destroyed;

- social network analysis could be helpful to the Russian authorities (and 'allies) in combating the insurgency, but can they map & respond to the actual dynamics within the relevant groups (vice merely identifying the 'people to kill')?

Certain Critical Concepts (1 of 2)

- Nodes with high centrality are potential network failure points and thus seeking to disrupt terrorist networks need to be carefully mapped and monitored.
- The more compartmentalized the network, "the fewer nodes of centrality need to be removed" to implode the network.
- A strong cohesive group "has a status beyond any individual group member."
- Structural cohesion is "the minimum number of actors who, if removed from a group. would disconnect the group, leading to hierarchical nested groups, where highly cohesive groups are embedded within less cohesive groups. Thus cohesions is an emergent property of the relational pattern that holds a group together."

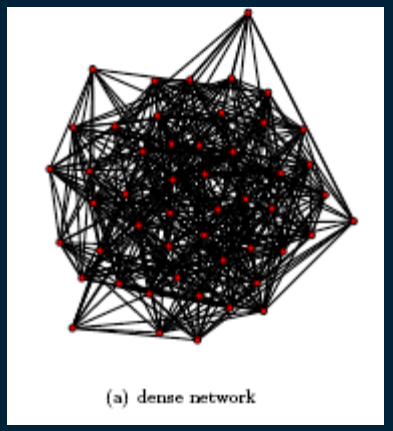
Other Critical Concepts (2 of 2)

- As dynamic group development proceeds, . . . a "weak form of structural cohesion [usually] emerges as collections of unrelated individuals . . . connecting [along] a single path [form] new relationships."
- Groups formed around a single leader are vulnerable since *"increasing relational [volume one person] does not necessarily promote cohesiveness.'* Nevertheless, groups having all-in-one relational structures" (e.g. terrorist organizations), may survive if 'extraordinary efforts'' are used to maintain 'weak relational structures.'

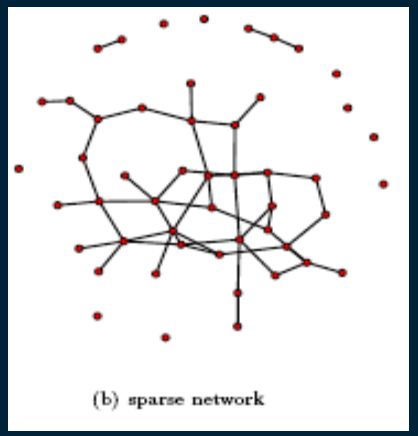
-Spoke-and-hub configured structures thrive on the lack of knowledge that each particular node has about the [whole group] so that the loss of any one individual does not put the groups' objectives at risk.

- It does no good to counter a group with strong cohesion by removing its charismatic leader.

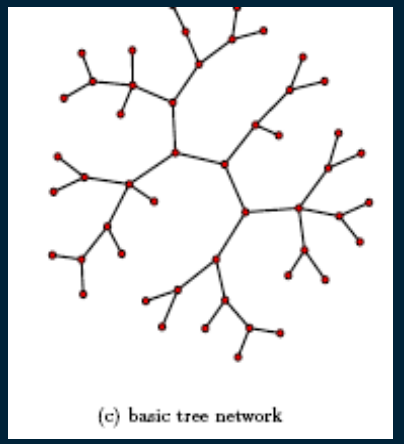
Illustrations of Network Analysis



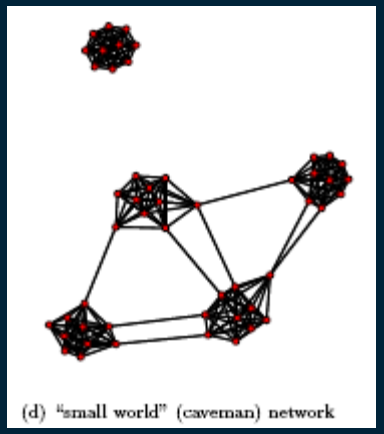
(a) dense network



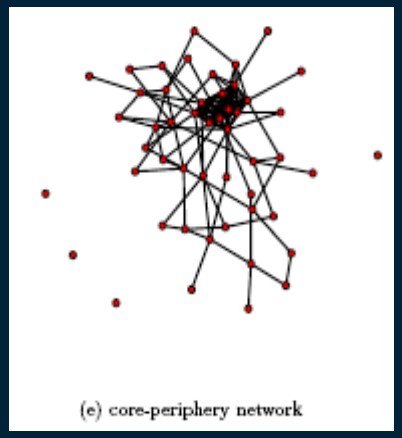
(b) sparse network



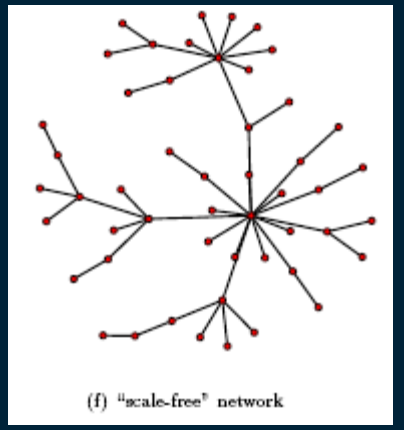
(c) basic tree network



(d) "small world" (caveman) network



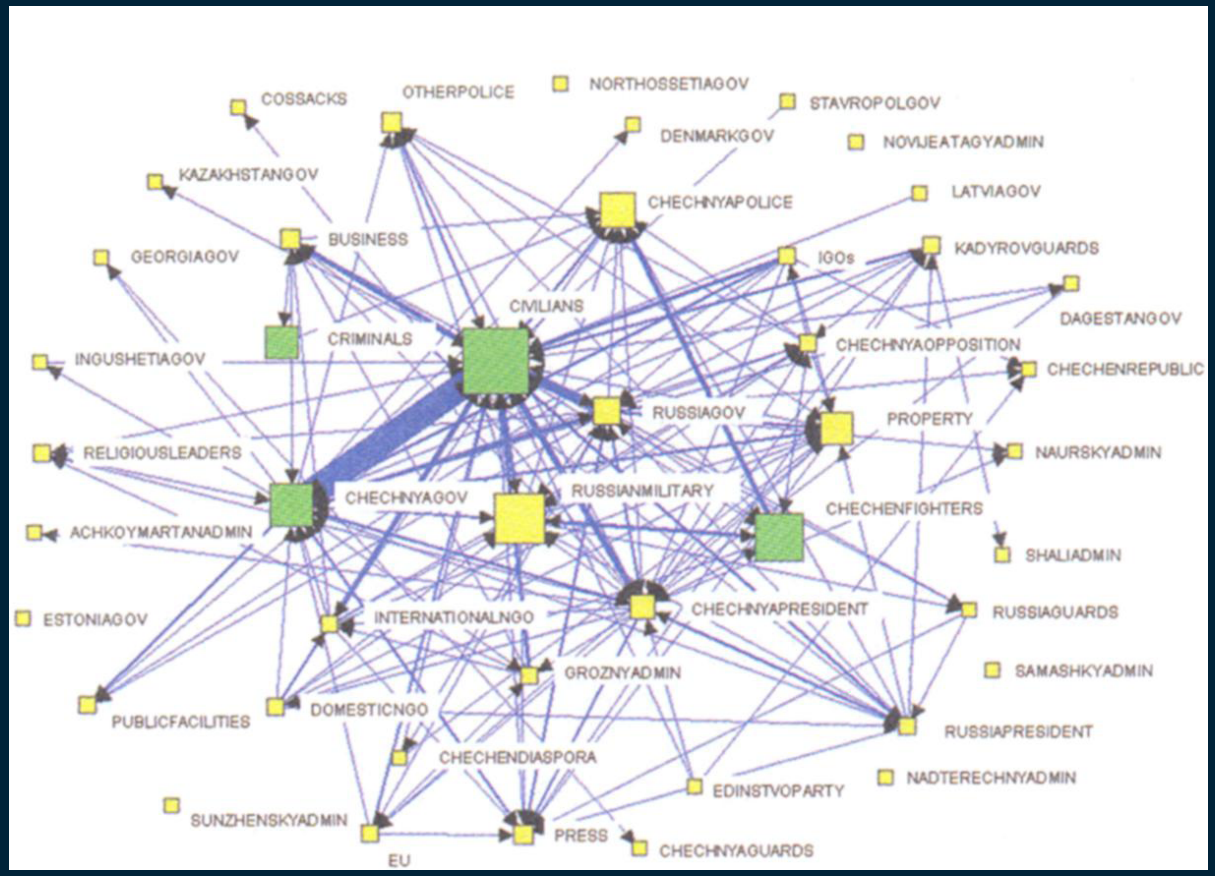
(e) core-periphery network



(f) "scale-free" network

Note that each figure has 50 nodes.

Sample Networking Data



Too Much [Meaningless] Data?

TABLE 1
Centrality and Power for the Chechnya Actors' Network Analysis

Actors	*Degree*	*OutDegree*	*InDegree*	*Betweenness*	*Power*	*DegreePos*	*DegreeNeg*
ACHKOYMARTANADMIN	9.302	0	9.302	0	0	2.326	6.977
BUSINESS	158.14	100	93.023	0.885	7.167	95.349	69.767
CHECHENDIASPORA	11.628	6.977	4.651	0	3	11.628	0
CHECHENFIGHTERS	1,155.814	720.93	1,037.209	6.285	38.75	130.233	1,127.907
CHECHENREPUBLIC	16.279	0	16.279	0	0	9.302	6.977
CHECHNYAGOV	962.791	760.465	511.628	15.704	10.548	625.581	397.674
CHECHNYAGUARDS	4.651	2.326	2.326	0.131	1	2.326	2.326
CHECHNYAOPPOSITION	104.651	69.767	62.791	0.911	6	32.558	79.07
CHECHNYAPOLICE	713.953	623.256	381.395	2.149	29.778	111.628	676.744
CHECHNYAPRESIDENT	346.512	325.581	127.907	6.368	140	239.535	118.605
CIVILIANS	1,830.233	355.814	1,823.256	24.879	4.5	993.023	932.558
COSSACKS	2.326	0	2.326	0	0	2.326	0
CRIMINALS	674.419	674.419	95.349	5.408	96.667	4.651	672.093
DAGESTANGOV	23.256	20.93	4.651	0	9	6.977	16.279
DENMARKGOV	4.651	4.651	2.326	0	2	2.326	4.651
DOMESTICNGO	74.419	55.814	25.581	0.215	6	46.512	30.233
EDINSTVOPARTY	23.256	13.953	13.953	0.179	6	13.953	13.953
ESTONIAGOV	2.326	2.326	0	0	1	0	2.326
EU	76.744	58.14	23.256	0.102	12.5	60.465	18.605
GEORGIAGOV	6.977	4.651	2.326	1.883	2	4.651	2.326
GROZNYADMIN	74.419	53.488	46.512	0.357	23	48.837	41.86
IGOs	90.698	86.047	11.628	0.11	37	79.07	16.279
INGUSHETIAGOV	11.628	6.977	4.651	0	3	6.977	4.651
INTERNATIONALNGO	118.605	95.349	25.581	0.22	41	86.047	34.884
KADYROVGUARDS	127.907	116.279	41.86	1.251	50	44.186	86.047
KAZAKHSTANGOV	4.651	4.651	2.326	0	2	2.326	2.326

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(continued)

What are the Russians Doing?

- Russian policy & systems analysts are credited with using dynamic network analysis in many contexts, but it is not clear to what degree and what success it has been applied with respect to combating the insurgency in the North Caucasus.
- The issue is currently being examined as part of the present project. Methodologically it is difficult to determine whether any absence of data on this information on this subject is because work in this particular area is 'classified', not being performed, or merely not something that is written about for various reasons.

Various Underlying Themes

- What explains the Islamization (Radicalization) of the Secular Insurgency/ Independence Movement (1994-Present).
- De-Russification – driving out the "Russians" is not the ultimate objective for "separatists" who would have to govern the new state (unlike *Jihadists)*; not typical "de-colonization" situation.

Ethic Russian population declines as conflict continues (considerable migration out of conflict zone by all groups). Violence causes high level of casualties and destruction. RF Government-funded rebuilding efforts yield mixed (but largely disappointing) results, pervasive corruption in Russia and Chechnya hinders effort.

What Should be the Key Question?

- Has Russia's "success" in "winning" the 2nd Chechen conflict (if it can be deemed to have an end) produce a situation in the Northern Caucasus where no credible leaders or elite groups remain suitable to forge a "lasting peace"?

- Preliminary Conclusion: A combination of overwhelming force and tactical effectiveness in fighting (without winning the "hearts & minds" of the local population) has resulted in a protracted struggle led by radical, Jihadist elements from which the Russian government is not willing to extract itself. The Russians can surgically eliminate key opposition figures, but is stuck in a game of "wack a mole."

Policy Implications

- One might follow "group" formation or individuals' affinities to and draw networks but data are murky and categorization efforts are fraught with methodology problems.
- It is possible to use network analysis for real-time operational purpose, but there probably is too much information over time for to generate information having major intelligence or analytical value that is independent of information obtain through other tools.

"Decapitation" of other side's leading figures may lead to the splintering of existing/formation of new groups, which may not further one's policy objectives, efficacy of which may be studied by outputs & be more valuable.

Some Final Things to Ponder

- A Russian army colonel convicted of murdering a Chechen teenage girl was gunned down in a contract-style killing in downtown Moscow on Moscow June 10, 2011. Yuri Budanov was sentenced to 10 years in jail for kidnapping and strangling to death 18-year-old Heda Kungayeva in 2000, during a war between Islamist Chechen separatists and the federal government. His 2009 release on parole sparked protests in Chechnya, but was cheered by Russian ultranationalists and neo-Nazis.
- The United States placed North Caucasian militant Doku Umarov on both the State Department's Terrorist and FBI's 10 Most Wanted Lists. He is sought in connection with numerous crimes, including bombings in the Moscow Subway (2010) and Domodedovo Airport (2011). In May 2011, U.S. authorities offered a reward of $5 million for information that will lead to apprehension of Umarov.