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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

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In Search of Post-Soviet Operational Art:
A Case Study in Russian Military Operations in the North Caucasus Since 1991

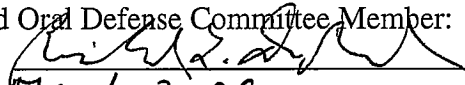
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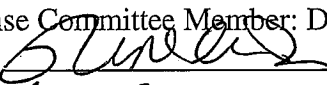
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Executive Summary

Title: In Search of Post-Soviet Operational Art: A Case Study in Russian Military Operations in the North Caucasus Since 1991

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Thesis Statement: The formative post-Soviet Russian military experiences at the operational level were the wars with Chechnya from 1994-1996 and 1999-2000. Strategic and tactical transformations that took place between the two wars have shaped Russian operational art in the post-Soviet era. In fighting a counterinsurgency, Russia will seek to fight a conventional war against its opponent.

Discussion: With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian state and military struggled to maintain its identity and dominance in the region. Movement toward independence by separatist regions threatened Russian internal stability and security. As a result, the Russian military and security ministries were employed to quell the Islamist separatist movement taking place on its southern border and to regain political control of Chechnya. The complete military failure in the first of two Chechen wars led to major strategic and operational changes in the interwar period.

Conclusion: Evidence from the two wars suggests there is a post-Soviet form of operational art; however, it is not uniquely post-Soviet. Rather, it is a continuation of the czarist tradition that began to emerge in the early 20th century and was shaped in the framework of Soviet military academia. In the end, taking in to consideration the improvements in joint warfighting, command and control, intelligence, force protection, fires, maneuver and logistics, Russia will fight to its strengths using conventional warfare to fight a counterinsurgency.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This paper explores Russian operational art in the decade following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The case studies will be drawn from Russia's wars against Chechen rebels in the North Caucasus. Using the First Russo-Chechen War (Chechnya I) as the baseline for this study, the chapters that follow will highlight lessons learned from Chechnya I and how the Russian military applied them to the Second Russo-Chechen War (Chechnya II). Using the historical backdrop of the development of czarist and Soviet operational thinking (see Appendix A), this paper seeks to identify themes in Russian operational thinking in this third major socio-political epoch for the Russian state.

This paper will draw out generalizations about post-Soviet operational art in the broader context of the development of Russian operational art, beginning in czarist Russia, proceeding through the Soviet era and culminating on the post-Cold War, post-Soviet battlefield in the Caucasus. This paper will identify common themes in Russian operational art that have transcended decades of political and economic transformation and draw out new trends in Russian operational art that have emerged in the technologically advancing, nonlinear battle space. While much is written on both the history and development of Russian operational art and the two Russo-Chechen wars, this paper provides a unique approach to analyzing the impact of the first wars in which Russia was engaged in the post-Soviet era. As a framework for my analysis of the Russian campaigns against Chechnya, I will utilize the six warfighting functions as prescribed by Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1-2, *Campaigning*.¹

Chapter 2: First Russo-Chechen War, 1994-1996

The Soviet Union collapsed in the wake of the August 1991 coup against Mikhail Gorbachev. The Russian coup against the Supreme Soviet provided a brief period of time during which there was not sufficient control over the Russian military to respond to activity by

Chechen nationalists. Three days after the coup began the newly declared "republic's" parliament issued a declaration of independence from Russia.²

Russian leadership in Moscow feared destabilization of Chechnya and, more generally, Russia if former Soviet Air Force General Dzhokhar Dudayev remained in power.³ A series of failed negotiations between Chechen leadership and Moscow resulted in a complete reversal in late November 1991 on the issue of using force in Chechnya.⁴ Russia would move forward with a full-scale invasion of Chechnya.⁵

The assault in to Chechnya would be conducted as a joint and interministry operation, utilizing MOD forces from the Russian Army and Air Force with Ministry of Interior forces included in the military operation. According to the initial plan, the Russian campaign in Chechnya was to proceed in one major operation consisting of four phases. Phase I, the organization phase to be headed by General Grachev, was to begin immediately and last one week until 6 December 1994. During Phase I, three task forces or Army Groups, Northern, Eastern and Western, would be created from the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Ministry of Interior (MVD) forces, with additional units from the Federal Counterintelligence Service (FSK), Border Guards and specialist from other ministries.⁶

Phase II would last from 7-9 December during which time the task forces would converge on Grozny along three axes of advance. The objective established for the task force during this phase was to establish two rings of encirclement around Grozny; the outer ring would extend to the province borders and the inner ring would encircle the city. The Russian Air Force was to achieve air superiority during Phase II in order to eliminate a threat from the already weak Chechen Air Force and prevent the movement by air of any weapons, equipment or fighters in to Grozny or the surrounding area. From 10-13 December, the period allowed for Phase III, FSK would link up with MOD and MVD forces in the vicinity of the Sunzha River for

movement to key objectives within the city of Grozny. Phase IV would begin on approximately 14 December and continue for up to ten days. During Phase IV the three task forces would stabilize the situation in the city and would turn over responsibility to a follow on force from the MVD, one separate from the MVD units involved in the initial invasion, which would establish a presence in the city to maintain peace and order.

There was little if any planning done for the use of air assets to directly support ground operations. Air superiority would be the main objective of the Army Air and Air Force elements involved in the fight. Even once hostilities began, there was little planning or communication taking place among air units of the Army, Air Force or MVD or between ground units and available supporting air units. Per the limited planning, each service or ministry would have air corridors and separate missions. There were no expectations by the Russians of any measured resistance on the ground in Grozny. Air superiority established in early December, it was believed, would allow Russian ground forces to close on Grozny without impediment.

Russian leadership believed that the show of force in the republic's capital would be enough to crush the Dadayev regime and reestablish Russian control of Chechnya. As a result of this assumption, no following on planning was conducted for post-Phase IV operations.⁷ The campaign plan only included one operation, with one operational objective – the “seizure” of Grozny. Ultimately, the Russian attempt to reestablish control over the breakaway republic would turn in to a series of battles for Chechen urban strongholds, with the eventual withdrawal Russian troops from Chechnya in starting in late June 1996.

Air operations began on 1 December 1994 and eliminated the air-to-air and air-to-ground threats. However, the ground campaign against Chechnya did not begin until 11 December, four days late, according to Grachev's plan. The three task forces proceeded along their axes of advance in to Chechnya and were slowed by protestors and the first days of winter snowfall.⁸

Between first contact with protestors on 11 December and their arrival at the encirclement positions on 26 December, all three task forces, the preponderance involving the eastern and western task forces, were consistently engaged in firing on civilians. Further, the successful and targeted air attacks against militarily significant targets of the previous days deteriorated into ten days of indiscriminant gravity bombing.

While some viable targets were eliminated, hospitals, orphanages and other buildings of no military value accounted for the majority of targets hit.⁹ The casualty rate among the civilian population and the collateral damage from gravity bombing enraged the Chechen population, increasing Dadayev's ability to recruit from the broader population and united Dadayev and anti-Dadayev forces against a now common Russian enemy.¹⁰

The second phase which was allocated 2 days by the plan, ultimately took two weeks to carry out. Because of the unanticipated delays, Russian troops were not in place for the assault on Grozny until 26 December, 15 days late, thus forfeiting surprise. Further, the double encirclement of the city never happened, allowing the strengthening Chechen opposition an LOC in and out of the city.

The Russians, having lost the element of surprise, hastily put together a plan for what they now knew would be a difficult assault on Grozny.¹¹ According to the new plan, ground forces would advance on the city along four axes, two from the east and two from the west.¹² The significant changes to the plan were done very quickly and were not disseminated among the operational leadership.¹³ There were no rehearsals within or among the task forces for what was a very difficult simultaneous attack.

The *coup de main* against Grozny began on 31 December. Moving under the cover of a heavy artillery bombardment, much of which found Russian rather than Chechen targets, three Russian task forces in four groups advanced to their slaughter. Russian ground forces advanced

on the city and were met by the front edge of a flexible defense in depth that was meant to delay and harass. Moving along narrow urban corridors, Russian conscripts with little large-unit tactical combat training and no urban warfare training were attacked at will by small units of Chechen fighters using basic but effective guerrilla warfare tactics. Chechen snipers attacked APCs with success. Grenades and Molotov bombs were thrown from atop buildings to slow the columns moving down city streets that had been further channelized by obstacles set up to block side street escapes. Only one of the task forces made it to its objective, but all four groups were annihilated in the 31 December attack.¹⁴

While the Chechens had only a small number of anti-aircraft weapons, it was the overcast weather that prevented the Army air and Air Force from supporting the ground attack. Rotary wing assets were used to support the group forces up to 30 December, but once the ground advance into the city began the helicopters were no longer used.¹⁵ Fixed wing assets were grounded by poor weather conditions. Designed for close air support, the Su-25 "Rook" (NATO "Frogfoot") was the only aerial platform to directly support of the attack on Grozny.¹⁶ Ultimately, because of impediments caused by service-specific air mobility corridors, Russian air played no measurable role in support of the ground assault on Grozny.

The 31 December assault ended with the retreat of Russian forces to the outskirts of Grozny on 1 January 1995. A cycle began for the ground forces in which they would assault the city, extract casualties, regroup and attempt another assault.¹⁷ It took until 26 January for the forces that operated from opposing sides of the city to unite in the middle and capture the Presidential Palace. Fighting continued in the city throughout February, but by the end of March Grozny was secured. Chechens moved from city to city and this process was repeated until May 1995, when the urban areas were controlled by the Russian forces.

Two more minor battles would take place for Grozny. The second battle in March of 1996 resulted in a Chechen defeat. In April, however, Dadayev satellite telephone call was tracked by the A-50 AWACs and he was killed in a subsequent missile strike increasing the resolve of the Chechen separatists.¹⁸ The third battle in August 1996 resulted in the successful recapture of Grozny by Chechen forces, thus forcing the Russian to the negotiating table. The Khasavyurt Agreement ended the battle for Grozny and the First Russo-Chechen War.

In the end, Russia lost 18 percent of its armored vehicle force during the campaign and 6,000 Russian soldiers and 3,000 Chechen separatists were dead. Civilian losses were estimated at 80,000 killed and 240,000 wounded. The Russians would not make this mistake again. They returned in 1999 with very different results.

The Russian failure in Chechnya I resulted from overconfidence, poor training, a lack of planning, inadequate intelligence preparations of the battlefield, a lack of coordination among ground and air elements and poor command and control of the *ad hoc* ground units assembled for the assault. Though Grozny eventually fell to Russian forces, the attempt to wrest control from Chechen forces took months rather than days, was eventually lost and exposed to the world a weakened Russian security apparatus. Operationally, the campaign in Chechnya was a failure.

Chapter 3: Second Russo-Chechen War, 1999-2000

Politically, the Second Russo-Chechen War, 1999-2000 (Chechnya II) was a continuation of unfinished Russian political and security objectives in the North Caucasus republic.¹⁹ Since 1996, Russia had, because of few other options at the time, allowed Chechnya some political breathing room. Over the course of the three intervening years, tensions over the rise of Islamism in Chechnya specifically and the North Caucasus more generally, struck a chord with the Russian public. For the government in Moscow, an increase in lawlessness in Chechnya including hostage taking, vehicle theft and the illegal tapping of a pipeline through the region

created a legal pretext for intervention. Ultimately, suspected Chechen bombings of Russian apartment buildings created the perfect context for a second incursion into Chechnya.²⁰

Militarily, the Second Russo-Chechen war was a continuation of the overall operational-strategic overhaul of the Russian military taking place in the wake of its embarrassing performance in Chechnya I. The military establishment felt that it had been hindered and betrayed by the politicians. The military had not admitted defeat by Chechen separatists and had begun planning a follow on campaign almost as soon as the first war ended.²¹

During the interwar years, 1996-1999, the Russian General Staff was focused on making major improvements to the military and its ability to operate in a changing conflict environment with other government ministries. Five major areas of concern were addressed that would have a significant impact on improvements in operational successes in the second war. The five areas included command and control, manning and mobilization, information in war, application of advanced technology across the warfighting functions, and transformation of the regional military districts from purely administrative to operational commands.²²

By mid-1999, the Ministry of Interior was involved in a low-intensity conflict with Chechen "gangsters." The MVD closed the border between Chechnya and Russia and conducted patrols and attacks with helicopter gunships. MVD reports suggest a series of border post attacks by Chechen separatists, which would push the MVD closer to a full scale invasion of the republic.²³ Chechnya II really began in Dagestan with the MVD and FSK as the lead ministries fighting an internal counterinsurgency. It became clear, however, once the MVD and FSK had pushed the Chechen rebels from Dagestan that a second military-led offensive would be necessary in Chechnya.

The planning, as suggested above, for Chechnya II began well before the decision was made to conduct a full scale military offensive. The Second Russo-Chechen War would be

conducted in three major stages. Unlike Chechnya I, the planning for the second invasion was more deliberate, taking in to account the realities of the operational environment in Chechnya and applying lessons learned from the first war.²⁴ The first stage was to be preceded by a significant aerial operation specifically targeted at terrorist centers of gravity, critical capabilities and critical vulnerabilities. This was a departure from Chechnya I during which artillery and aerial bombardment were conducted en masse against the entire city of Grozny.

Stage I was envisioned as a *cordon sanitaire* around the Chechen Republic by advancing to the Terek River just North of Grozny and by shutting down the borders between Chechnya and North Ossetia, Dagestan and Georgia.²⁵ The invasion would be built around five operational groupings of forces, Eastern, Western, Northern, Southern and Grozny groupings. Stage I, Phase I included the movement to the Terek River and isolation of the Chechen Republic. Stage I, Phase II was an attempt to win hearts and minds by transferring political authority to the local population once guerillas had been flushed south of the Terek.²⁶ Subcomponents of Stage I included "employment of electronic warfare systems to jam electronic mass media and civilian command and control systems; the creation of strong points and defensive installations to defend overpasses, roads and other major highways; and the deployment and use of long-range weapons to suppress or destroy the enemy's long-range weapons, reconnaissance systems and military command and control centers."²⁷

Stage II was directed at isolating and disrupting groups of terrorists operating south of the Terek River, while avoiding getting bogged down in urban guerilla warfare. This stage was planned to take approximately two months and began on 16 October 1999. The desired endstate was to disrupt Chechen guerilla groups from conducting organized operations against Russian forces and to establish strong points to control Chechen territory rather than attack enemy formations in cities. The use of conventional fire from strong points, rather than seeking out

enemy forces for direct engagement was the main approach during Stage II. Additionally, a security area was to be established in the main area of control north of the Terek River and Grozny was to be secured.²⁸

The third stage was planned in November 1999 as a result of approximately 5,000 terrorists escaping to the Chechen mountains.²⁹ Stage III called for the complete destruction of all terrorist groups operating in Chechnya along with their bases of operation and support.³⁰ Annihilation of terrorist operating in the foothills and mountains south of Grozny was the planned focus of Stage three, which began on 6 December and was to last officially until the end of February. After complete annihilation of the terrorist groups operating in Chechnya, political order was to be restored and Russian territorial integrity preserved.

Three main objectives were to result from routing the separatists. First, the structure of the local government was to be reestablished and begin functioning normally. Second, basic needs such as water and electricity were to be restored and people were to be put to work to restore the local economy. Finally, the conditions were to be created to allow displaced peoples to return home, children to return to school and social life to commence. Kinetic operations would continue as required, but as Stage III passed, the focus was to shift to rebuilding Chechen society in the absence of terrorist control.³¹

The shaping phase of the second invasion of Chechnya was carried out in September 1999. Air operations were conducted in conjunction with the MVD and FSK ground operations in Dagestan and shifted conceptually to support the initial stage of the Chechnya campaign. In reality, the air operations taking place in September 1999, which supported two semi-autonomous operations, was a singular effort to intercept and destroy groups of rebels moving from Dagestan into Chechnya. As part of these air operations, the enemy's strategic and tactical systems were targeted. The telephone and electrical infrastructure, along with rebel bases,

bridges, roads, water reservoirs and the airport in Grozny were all attacked as part of the air operations.

The invasion began in late September and lasted until mid-October. Russian MOD and MVD forces began moving south across the open plains toward the Chechen border supported by aviation assets providing close air support.³² Approximately 93,000 personnel, primarily from the MOD, made up the two pronged attack toward the Terek River, a Corps-sized element in the lead with 20,000 troops in reserve. Joint Forces Groupings North and East led the land-air *blitzkrieg* along two axis of advance, toward Kauskaya and Salkovskaya and Kiziyar, respectively, and by mid-October had secured Chechen territory north of the Terek.³³

Stage II, began on 16 October and consisted of conventional fires to disrupt organization of Chechen forces and airstrikes throughout the territory in advance of ground maneuver elements. Strong points were established throughout Chechnya in order to avoid taking cities by force. This allowed the local population to remain in place and the Russian army to avoid urban combat except for the intended target of Grozny. Unlike in Chechnya I, Russian planners identified the guerilla forces, not the city of Grozny as a center of gravity. The attack of Grozny, therefore, proceeded much differently than in the first war.

A three pronged attack of Grozny was launched by the Western and Eastern groupings. The methodology, unlike the sprint to the city center in Chechnya I, was founded on a non-contact mentality. The city was first blockaded followed by conventional fires, long-range artillery and close air support of ground troops' advance on the city.³⁴ The initial advance on Grozny was met by strong resistance. After a brief tactical pause and a leaflet drop warning civilians in Grozny, around 21 October, the city was subjected to "targeted" rocket, artillery and airstrikes.³⁵ The bombardment and slow-go three pronged advance on Grozny lasted until mid-January when Russian forces finally made their way into the city center. This stage of the

operation came to a close, with Putin devastated in the lengthy delay in taking the city and securing Chechen territory, as rebels broke out of the city and headed for the mountains.

Stage III, which called for the complete destruction of terrorists operating in Chechnya began as a result of the guerilla escape from Grozny. Russian military commanders declared the city secure in mid-February, which allowed the Emergency Ministry to establish food centers and bring in journalists to witness the Russian effort to relieve the suffering the republic. Military attention shifted to fighting the rebels in mountains south of Grozny. With the Southern group acting as an anvil, the Eastern and Western groups drove south into the Vedeno and Argun gorges in an attempt to encircle and annihilate Chechen forces. By the end of February, Russian forces had secured the two gorges, the primary operating bases of the Chechen rebels, and announced that the five month operation was a success. By dragging the campaign in to the winter months, Russian air assets were able to easily track rebel movements against the backdrop of snow and target them for execution.

Despite senior military leader and presidential announcements that military operations had ended in a Russian success, Russian losses continued after February 2000. Russia continues to fight a limited counterinsurgency in the Republic, though direct Russian rule was established by the middle of 2000, with the passing of a Chechen constitution and establishment of a government in Grozny. It is clear from the methodological and planned approach taken by Russia in Chechnya II that lessons learned from Chechnya I were applied in the later conflict. Russian success can be attributed to changes made in the inter-war years at the tactical and strategic level and changes in their approach to warfighting at the operational level.

Chapter 4: Analysis and Conclusions

In this final chapter, this paper evaluates changes in Russian operational art as evidenced by a comparison of Chechnya I and II. Russian success in major operations during Chechnya II

is a direct result of lessons learned and applied from Chechnya I, its first major post-Soviet joint campaign. The irregular conflict environment coupled with Russia's "loss of empire" with the collapse of the Soviet Union created the perfect storm for its loss in Chechnya I. As history has shown, Russia, like the Red Army before it and the tsarist Army even earlier, adapted to the current threat environment to prove itself a major military power.

First Russo-Chechen War, 1994-1996

Command and Control

Despite an existing command and control structure in the Northern Caucasus Military District, General Grachev initially appointed himself operational commander of the campaign. His command was followed by a revolving door of leadership over the course the war. As many as nine command changes took place. Operational command during the war was directly overseen by the Minister of Defense and as many as one hundred general-level officers were operationally commanding a force that never exceeded 50,000 men including officers of all rank. The number of generals on the battlefield complicated an already poor command situation; strategic planners were directing the operational and tactical employment of troops.

Despite Soviet successes in liberating 1,200 cities from German forces in WWII, none of the urban combat knowledge survived or was employed in the assault on Grozny. This can be explained by both poor leadership at the highest levels of the Russian military and political establishment and the inability for ground commanders to link tactical and operational achievements to virtually nonexistent strategic goals.

Russian forces were trained at the operational level for linear combat on an open battle field. There was no expectation and thus no preparation for fighting an urban war against guerilla tactics. Uncoordinated fire fights by individual units became increasingly effective over the war as the Russian military adapted lessons learned on the battlefield. However, the

complete lack of coordination between small fighting units meant that increasing tactical success could not be tied together to achieve operational goals, which probably did not exist in the first place, and certainly could not be tied to a strategic objective.

Ad hoc units were hastily established from across the MOD, MVD, FSK and other government ministries. Because of the planned timeline of the invasion of Chechnya, these newly formed units were not given an opportunity to conduct operational or tactical rehearsals prior to departing for the North Caucasus. As a result, there was a complete lack of unit cohesion among the fighting men and poor integration of command and control at the leadership level. Communications systems were either not used, unable to cross-communicate among MOD, MVD and FSK or were denigrated by the limited Chechen electronic warfare capability. Commanders were blind to what elements were fighting on their flanks which led to small, independent fights.

Intelligence

The Russian state inherited an effective intelligence apparatus from the Soviet Union, but the operational timeline established by the Minister Defense prevented its effective employment. Little was done over the course of the war to make rectify this shortfall. Assumptions made by General Grachev based on inaccurate intelligence received from anti-Dadayeve leaders set the Chechen campaign on a fatal trajectory. Strategic assumptions about the strength of his own force and about the weakness of his enemy, led the entire military apparatus to forgo an extensive planning process. The two week time frame established by Grachev further limited the effective intelligence preparation of the battlespace. Grachev never questioned his assumptions which meant that the Russian military was unprepared for the fight that they never expected in the first place.

There was virtually no cultural intelligence gathered on Chechnya or the city of Grozny. Had the military known that the center of Grozny was heavily populated by ethnic Russians, it may have forgone the heavy artillery and aerial bombardment of the city, preventing mass casualty rates among the civilian population and the increased support of Dadayev's rebellion. Further, the Russian population, knowing intimately their Chechen neighbors, could have served as an excellent source of human-intelligence. Cultural preparation of the battlespace may have been able to identify the pockets of resistance that the initial invasion force would have met as they entered Chechnya.

A complete lack of adequate maps and satellite imagery of the North Caucasus also contributed to the failure of the campaign. Pre-invasion planning was done from maps with a scale of at best 1:100,000.³⁶ A lack of maps or appropriately scaled maps impacted planning at both the operational and tactical level. Tactical planners were unable to effectively plan missions and could not coordinate with adjacently operating units. This further complicated an already troubled command and control architecture. Despite the negligence in intelligence, little was done over the course of the war to correct the problem. This due in large part to budget shortfalls that had led to the shutdown of satellite programs at the end of the Cold War.³⁷

Logistics

Poor intelligence and unquestioned assumptions led military logisticians to believe that they would be supporting a two week, unopposed maneuver to the objective followed by very limited fighting. This logistics assumption coupled with the compressed timeline for preparation meant that only minimal theater logistics preparations were undertaken. Composite logistics units were created from across Russia to support the campaign. While the Chechen forces were able to live off the urban terrain and resupply along relatively short LOCs to the south of Grozny, Russian forces relied on long haul of supplies over very stretched LOCs to the north. One

advantage to the Russians was that Chechnya was part of the Soviet-era rail and road system, allowing rapid movement of logistical support over the long LOCs. In addition to expecting a very short maneuver period and limited fighting, Army logistics would be tasked with supporting the composite units, meaning Army logistics had to account for MVD and FSK requirements. This was not taken in to account in the logistics planning and resulted.

The logistics support was set up to supply a conventional battle against a large opposing force. The requirements of urban combat were significantly different. High demand items for urban combat were not accounted for. Ammunition and equipment maintenance requirements increase drastically in urban combat. This far exceeded the Russian Army's logistic capability.³⁸ It became increasingly difficult to distribute food to forces fighting within the urban environment and resupply of high demand items such as hand grenades, flamethrowers, tear gas, ladders and grappling hooks and nightvision equipment. These items were quickly expended and unable to be rapidly replaced on the frontlines. High casualty rates among urban fighters further stressed the logistics system. Simply put, Russian Army logistics was ill prepared to support a major urban campaign. Though a large composite logistics force was able to be assembled, it was inadequately configured for a winter campaign in an urban environment.

Maneuver

The Russian military relied on Soviet doctrine that allowed two options for urban terrain. If a city was occupied by a defending force it was to be bypassed; if the city was open, it could be taken from the march with a show of force.³⁹ Assumptions about the defense of Grozny suggested to Grachev that it could be taken from the march with a show of force consisting of 20,000 troops. Intelligence preparation of the battlespace would have told Grachev and the operational commanders that they needed a force consisting of about 120,000 troops that was trained and equipped for urban warfare.⁴⁰ Reliance on Soviet era doctrine in the absence of

specialized maneuver units trained for urban warfare proved fatal in Grozny. The sole preparation for troops headed in to Grozny consisted of “an instructional pamphlet on urban combat prepared by the Main Combat Training Directorate.”⁴¹ No unit was specifically organized, trained or equipped for the guerilla tactics in urban warfare that they were about to face. As such, operational commanders did not have a maneuver element sufficient for the task.

Maneuver was also restricted by logistics complications and inadequate preparation of battlespace which led to disruption of the ground forces movement into Chechnya. Movement to Grozny was disrupted by protestors and fleeing civilians. No preparation was made for the restricted movement due to civilian opposition. In fact, assumptions were such that no restrictions on maneuver in Chechnya were expected. As described above, high demand items were in short supply and had difficulty reaching the front line. Fighting units became ineffective to move throughout the city because they lacked the proper ammunition and supplies.

Complications with command and control further restricted maneuver in the open terrain north of Grozny and within the urban terrain. The lack of maps and the shortfall in communications systems meant that units operated independently, maneuvering sometimes at odds with adjacent units.

Fires

The indiscriminate use of artillery and aerial bombardment, the Russian inability to coordinate air and artillery support of ground forces and a lack of intelligence to support targeting were the primary shortfalls of fires. The shortfalls with command and control meant a near absence of coordinated fires in support of maneuvering ground forces. Fratricide was also a major problem for commanders fighting in the urban terrain. As the fighting progressed in to January, the indiscriminate use of gravity bombs and massed artillery fire on the civilian population increased the animosity toward the Russian forces and increased Dadayev's support

base. The city center of Grozny, which had been populated by a majority of ethnic Russians, was devastated by the lack of targeting.

Force Protection

Force protection issues are almost too many to count. Russian doctrine relied mainly on overwhelming fire power as the primary approach to force protection.⁴² Poor intelligence and counterintelligence meant that hundreds of Russian soldiers were killed when their deaths could have been avoided. Fratricide was rampant between adjacent units that were unable to communicate; artillery and aerial bombardment found more Russian civilian and military targets than enemy forces and preventable illness due to poor logistics support led to high casualty rates.

Second Russo-Chechen War, 1999-2000

Command and Control

Command and control saw the most marked improvements across the warfighting functions in the interwar period. The most significant improvements that had the greatest positive impact on Russian operational art in Chechnya II were the decrease in senior political and General Staff-level control of military operations coupled with the restructuring of the North Military Caucasus District (NCMD) from an administrative to operational command. Top political decision makers allowed theater and operational commanders the latitude to make independent decisions, a marked difference from the previous war and a new approach to thinking about allowing operational art by commanders on the ground.

The restructuring of the previously MOD administrative focused NCMD to an “operational-strategic command” further enforced the latitude granted to commanders ground and improved coordination among the various ministries operating in the Chechen theater.⁴³ The NCMD, as the operational-strategic command, controlled all armed forces operating within its boundaries, with delegated authority to subordinate “groupings” which maintained similar

control over its subordinate armed forces.⁴⁴ A significant improvement over command and control structure of Chechnya I, the restructuring gave subordinate units a much clearer understanding of which unit was its' "higher" and allowed greater coordination in the application of inter-ministry capabilities. In Chechnya II, Subordinate commands, or groupings as per the Russian description, were in direct command of a mix of governmental elements to include "ground forces, airborne and naval infantry troops, the air force, internal troops, border guards, FAPSI (government communications troops), Federal Security Service, Emergencies Ministry, and so on."⁴⁵ Additionally, task-tailored joint units were created around standing permanent readiness units to form the five operational groupings.⁴⁶ To prepare for Chechnya II, at the operational level, the staffs of various ministries conducted command-staff exercises and large-scale exercises were conducted for ground forces that were based on a Chechnya-like scenario.⁴⁷

Improvements in communications systems, the more prevalent use of electronic warfare against Chechen systems and the greater dissemination of radios improved communications across the board. Russian commanders ensured information security through the use of encryption devices unavailable, either because of equipment or training shortfalls, in Chechnya I. Additionally, radios and other communication equipment was pushed out to almost every soldier, allowing increased tactical control down the chain of command and improved information feedback up the chain of command.⁴⁸

Intelligence

From its complete lack of strategic, operational and tactical preparation of the battlespace in Chechnya I, Russia learned and applied lessons about the intrinsic requirement for intelligence in military operations. A lack of knowledge related to the socio-cultural and physical terrain of Chechnya proved disastrous in the first invasion. Intelligence was a main focus prior to and during Chechnya II.

Russian forces were much better prepared for the second invasion of Chechnya. Open-source data was “mined” for information on the region and cities. Painstaking studies of urban areas were conducted, including analysis of public utilities, sewage lines, heating lines, streets and buildings. Avenues of approach for both friendly and enemy forces were assessed.⁴⁹ Intelligence provided to all levels of command to the tactical level, was much more accurate, accurate maps were produced prior to the invasion allowing for better planning and coordination.

During operations scout sniper companies served as spotter for artillery, provided targeting information, provided intelligence on enemy locations, gave topographic information and acted as an advanced warning asset to maneuver units to warn of potential hazards, both physical and enemy, in the avenues of approach. Additionally, composite units from across the various ministries were established to act as basic reconnaissance units. This was intended to create better intelligence gathering and sharing across the ministries and to break down the unique strategic cultures of those organizations.⁵⁰ Finally, aerial platforms were employed as an essential component of intelligence gathering. Russian AN-30 Clanks conducted photographic intelligence, A-50 Mainstays (AWACS) and II-20 Coots were used to gather electronic and signals intelligence, while Fencer-Es, Frogfoots, and Foxbat-Ds were used in aerial reconnaissance.⁵¹

Logistics

The large number of personnel fielded in Chechnya II required a significantly larger amount of logistics support than in Chechnya I. As in Chechnya I, logistics throughput was accomplished mainly with rail. In the interwar period, a new main rail line to Dagestan was built to support military operations in the North Caucasus Military District. Bridging assets and rail repair units were the focus of attention in the preparation for Chechnya II. A major improvement over Chechnya I was the amount of time the logistics planners were allowed in preparation for

the operation. Additionally, the “go-slow” attitude in the approach to Grozny allowed the logistics train to keep up with maneuver units. Supply lines held up well into the spring of 2000, it was becoming apparent that logistics could not continue to support the intensity of fighting for much longer. The MOD was required to dip in to emergency reserves to continue supplying the armed forces involved in the operation, thus depleting long term Russian military readiness.⁵² Despite the clear intentions of MVD and MOD to eventually move to retake Chechnya, very few logistics upgrades were undertaken between 1996 and 1999 outside of the addition of the rail line.

Maneuver

Two general improvements, each supported by joint training and exercises, were made to Russian armed force maneuver capabilities leading in to Chechnya II. First, there was a significant shift in the mindset related to operational and tactical maneuver. In Chechnya II, a “go-slow” mentality, coupled with zonal control and maneuver-by-fire, all supported by aerial and human intelligence increased successes achieved, particularly in the push to the Terek River and further south to Grozny. Secondly, in addition to being the cream of the Russian armed forces, troops were reorganized for Chechnya II into truly joint and/or specialized groupings. With MOD as the lead operational commander, subordinate units were able to better coordinate with their zone of control.⁵³

Fires

Aerial and ground based fires saw some of the most marked improvements in the interwar years. On the air side, command and control of all air assets operating in the Chechen campaign was centralized and focused on a common mission. In addition, there was a significant shift in mindset from purely ground attack to air attack followed by ground attack with support from air. The bombing campaign lasted weeks, rather than hours as was the case in

Chechnya I. Coordination between maneuver units and air support was significantly improved, which allowed for greater success in prosecuting ground targets with air strikes. Finally, the addition of fuel-air and vacuum explosives had a significant psychological impact on rebels who were often untouchable by conventional high-explosive munitions while taking cover in underground facilities or in caves.

Artillery on the other hand saw command and control decentralized and depoliticized. In both instances, fire support to ground forces improved significantly. Rather than control at the highest headquarters, battalions were supported by artillery groups, with Motorized Rifle Companies receiving support from a mortar or artillery battery. With artillery organic at lower echelons of command, maneuver was directly supported by ground based fires making efficient use of time-sensitive aerial and human targeting. This allowed greater standoff for ground forces as they closed with the enemy forces or allowed prosecution of fleeing enemy targets. Improvements in ground based and aerial fires reduced significantly the number of Russian casualties, increased efficiency in the employment of the often limited or logistically restricted platforms and played a significant significantly positive role on Russian morale while devastating that of the enemy.

Force Protection

From control of information to rest and recovery periods, troops were better cared for and casualties greatly reduced. Force protection measures were significantly improved in Chechnya II. At the forefront of force protection was the introduction of the maneuver concept of remote contact. The use of artillery and air fires in conjunction with maneuver forces kept Chechen guerillas outside of the AK-47's effective range. Increased communications capabilities also allowed for better coordination between adjacent units, thus reducing friendly fire incidents. The creation of the security zone north of the Terek River created a quasi-linear battlespace, allowing

logistics buildup, force massing and retrograde of forces to take place within a more secure space than was the case in Chechnya I. Further, scout snipers and reconnaissance units were used to provided operational and tactical indications and warnings for advancing units.

The Russian MOD recognized the psychological impacts of urban and guerilla warfare as identified in Chechnya I. Two major improvements increased morale and psychological wellbeing of Russian forces in Chechnya II. First, Russia used a media campaign to highlight operational success to win the strategic campaign domestically. Increased public support, in spite of post-war evidence of crimes, indiscriminant killing of civilians and use of banned weapons systems, shows that Russian strategic information campaign allowed operations to continue as planned. Maintaining public support at home increased troop morale, a significant problem in Chechnya I. Secondly, the Russian mindset on units and individuals changed drastically. A “save the people” mentality emerged in the interwar period. Russian units and individuals were rotated in and out of the fighting to allow for a decompression period. Combat stress was acknowledged as a reality of the complex type of combat taking place in Chechnya and the rest and rehabilitation periods during the campaign were intended to reduce troop losses to combat fatigue.⁵⁴

Chechnya I and II Impact on Russian Operational Art

This paper has attempted to trace Russian operational thinking and practice from the emergence of theoretical exploration of the operational level of war in linear, traditional conflict as influenced by the Elder Moltke to high-technological warfare against non-state combatants that all modern nation-states now face. Russia trained for and fought a conventional war in Chechnya between September 1999 and March 2000. The transfer of authority to a Chechen government meant the end of military operations and the beginning of an internal security

struggle for Russian internal security forces. What we see is a Russian military that continues to fight conventional, linear warfare operationally, despite the non-linear nature of guerilla warfare.

Nonetheless, Russian operational art has shown unique resilience and recuperative abilities in the face of dire economic and political circumstances. Reaching back to the late tsarist era, one can find characteristics of operational art that are uniquely Russian. The transformation of Russian operational art from then to now has been one of adaptation and application of intellectual thought coupled with more recently applied lessons learned. Russia faced, to state it rather mildly, tough economic and political circumstances in 1991. Its wars with Chechnya showed the Russian bear learning and adapting, though not without difficulty at times, to modern, nonlinear warfare. It appears, however, after final analysis, that the Russian bear will attempt to force a square peg into a round hole when it comes to non-linear warfare. That is to say, in Chechnya II, the Russian armed forces trained for and conducted a conventional, linear campaign against an irregular guerilla force.

Appendix 1: Development of Russian Operational Art

The history of Russian operational art can be traced to an intellectual wellspring in the imperial Army at the end of the 19th century. The intellectual debate about the “operatic” sphere of warfare that took place within the General Staff Academy following the Russo-Japanese War laid the foundation for Soviet intellectual exploration of the conceptual space between strategy and tactics. At the end of the 19th century, militaries, like the rest of global society, were undergoing a period of innovation in technology, economics and politics. The American Civil War, Russo-Japanese War and other “modernizing” military conflicts began to highlight the changing nature of warfare. Tracing its history to the Prussian military intellectual, Helmuth von Moltke, operational art emerged in lock step with the technological innovations of the era.

Fashioned by Prussian Field Marshall Helmuth von Moltke, the idea that a conceptually independent sphere of warfare occupied the space between strategy and tactics began to emerge in Germany in the 1870s. In an age of rapidly advancing technological innovation, Moltke identified that future wars would be fought differently than was the case during the set-piece battles that characterized his experience in the field. Moltke identified, correctly so, that future wars would be lengthy and total, characterized by increased lethality due to technological advances, more strategically mobile by employment of rail, and that command and control would be extended over great distances by the use of the telegraph. While his imperial counterparts did not fully grasp Moltke’s contribution to the operational level of war in the latter part of the 19th century, Russian operational thought did begin to take shape in the early years of the 20th century. Though the Russian Army did not invent the concept of Operational Art, it certainly contributed a great deal to its development as an area of intellectual exploration separate from the previous strategy-tactics dichotomy.

Russian operational art, while founded in the traditional thinking of the imperial military intellectuals, would take a unique path to modern warfare by way of the Bolshevik revolution. Russian operational art developed in an ideologically charged environment where military intellectualism existed with the specter of Bolshevik and Soviet thought. Russian operational art would transform in response to changing global realities, but operational concepts such as mass, army-groups, fronts, maneuver in operational depth, and a focus on offensive operations remain themes that link current Russian operational art to its imperial and Soviet legacy.

The development of Soviet operational art began in the imperial Russian General Staff Academy prior to the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905. Then chief of the General Staff Academy, Genrikh Antonovich Leer began to philosophically separate “strategy in the narrow sense” or “tactics in the theater of military activities” from strategy and tactics of warfare.⁵⁵ Despite the shortcomings in terminology, Leer began the discourse on the sphere of military activities that were on a higher conceptual level than geographically restricted military tactics carried out by independent armies, but were also lower on the continuum than the political strategy directed from the highest levels of political-military apparatus. Leer’s major contribution to Russian operational thought was the idea of combining independent armies operating in the theater of war into larger groups of armies operating toward a common military endstate. This notion of “army-group” or “front” would become a central tenet in the Soviet Army and would be a major common thread linking Russian imperial thought to modern Soviet operational doctrine.⁵⁶

From the time of Leer’s major theoretical contributions until the early years of the Bolshevik’s Red Army, a series of General Staff and Military-Engineering faculty contributed to the intellectual development of Russian operational art. Aleksandr Neznamov contributed significantly to the terminological separation of operational thought from strategy and tactics.

The emerging three-way division of military activity was conceptually strengthened by Nikolai Mikhnevich who began refining the types of operations that would be supported by the "front." Another intellectual, Andrei Elchaninov, made a significant contribution to the command and control criteria by suggesting a new level of command, the front command, that would occupy the space between commander in chief at the strategic levels and the armies in the field acting at the yet terminologically vague operational level.

Russian operational art took a hit during the World War I when operational considerations were abandoned as maneuver forces became bogged down in trench stalemates; Russian military practitioners abandoned operational concepts for purely tactical resolutions.⁵⁷ The Bolshevik overthrow of the imperial establishment before the end of the Great War, however, would change the course of Russian operational art. The rapidity of mobilization experienced in WWI changed the intellectual debate around the concepts of mass, maneuver and combined arms. The depth and breadth of the battlespace had also expanded during WWI and mechanization of infantry increased deep maneuverability of forces.

Drawing from the realities of the Great War, early Soviet military intellectuals, often alongside former imperial Academy members, developed the concepts of the deep operations and mechanization of the newly formed Red Army. The impending Civil War forced the rapid creation and mobilization of a Red Army. The intellectual and practical military capital resided in former czarist officers. As such, the new Red Army was dominated in both the field and schoolhouse by former imperial officers. The influence of imperial officers was immutable because of "the former career officers' virtual monopoly of the (Red) army's most important administrative, command, and staff positions, which could only be filled with those with the requisite skills."⁵⁸ Their influence was coupled with younger officers driven by ideological

Bolshevism. From this marriage emerged Soviet operational art that would be applied on the battlefield during World War II.

Throughout the 1920s, the Red Army went through a period of debate over how to tailor the new military machine to meet the needs of a workers' state. Marxist-Leninist ideology suggests that along with the political-economic revolution would come a revolution in the military system. The Red Army set out to establish a unified military doctrine informed by Marxist-Leninist ideological considerations to provide junior proletarian officers. The development of Soviet operational art was driven by Lenin's ideological departure from Clausewitz which suggested war had a social essence that was founded in class relations.⁵⁹ War, Lenin presented, "is the continuation not only of foreign, but also domestic politics of states, conditioned by the social system and class interests."⁶⁰ This theme reemerges in the First Russo-Chechen War, 1994-1996 when the Russian Army is employed against its own citizens. Revolutionary fervor also created an environment after 1917 for military scientific exploration into operational nature of warfare and the creation of Soviet operational art.

Four major issues were debated throughout the Soviet 1920s. First was the consideration of length of future wars. Second, was whether the Red Army should pursue an offensive or defensive military? The third issue stemmed from the realities of WWI and whether future wars would be positional such as the trench wars of WWI or maneuverable because of the influence of industrialization on militaries. Finally, the Red Army struggled with whether to build an army around traditional infantry or the mechanized infantry emerging from industrialization.

From the debates of the 1920s emerged a series of ideologically influenced decisions on the future of Soviet operational warfare. The intellectuals writing in the early years of the Red Army's recreation of the Academy of the General Staff all agreed that future wars would be lengthy and total. There was far less consensus on the other areas of debate, however, the Red

Army reached conclusions by the close of the 1920s. Given the aggressive nature of Marxist-Leninist ideology, it is not surprising that the Red Army adopted an offensive spirit in the operational preparations.

The decision to pursue the offensive versus defensive spirit was closely linked to strategy of destruction which was the soul of revolutionary class warfare.⁶¹ Maneuver was seen as essential to the future of warfare because of the rapidly advancement of mechanization of infantry. However, the Red Army met with a compromise suggesting that positional warfare, such as that experienced in WWI, is a distinct possibility, but that maneuver would ultimately assert itself to ensure a more rapid victory. Finally, there was a strong tendency among the Soviet leadership toward a large citizen army with the entirety of the population oriented toward the war machine, in effect the concept of a "nation in arms."⁶² The Red Army also saw a large citizen army as counter to the current in the West that tended toward a smaller more mobile mechanized force. A compromise was reached in which the ideological considerations were met by maintaining a large army; military necessities were addressed by allowing the military to move forward on mechanization of the force in order to counter the movement in the West.⁶³

From the 1930s came the idea of a single battle concept that massed air, artillery, shock forces, and maneuver elements on the operational depth of the enemy. This combined arms approach, supported by mechanized infantry and improvements in air and artillery formed the operational backbone of the Soviet Army as it entered WWII. Deep operations and the single battle concept were supported by the concept that decisive engagements were no longer feasible in modern warfare. The counter this, the Red Army developed the theory of consecutive operations, which consisted of "an unbroken series of local decision [which] would create culminate in decisive results, following a prolonged effort. This...was a formula for conducting a series of operations in which each would succeed a previous one and would, in turn, create

conditions for launching the next one, according to a larger strategic plan.”⁶⁴ At the heart of consecutive operations were commanders carrying out operational art to link operational-tactical decisions to the commander in chief’s strategic guidance. Thus emerged a solidified Soviet Operational Art to be tested in WWII and reworked following the conflict.

In June 1941 Russia was caught strategically and operationally flat footed. Strategic deployment of forces showed a miscalculation by the general staff and the weakness of a post-Stalinist purge of czarists from the military eight years prior. Operationally, the weaknesses of the Red Army were made apparent because it was incapable of offensive or defensive action against the advancing German Divisions.⁶⁵ The initial six month period was devastating to the Red Army. Operational Art was thrown out the window as untrained recruits were hastily thrown in to makeshift “divisions” and used in human wave attacks against German mechanized and armored forces. Stalin lost confidence in his operational commanders and wrested effectively eliminated operational command by getting rid of front-level command. It took a full year with the entirety of Soviet society producing for the war effort for the Red Army to begin to turn the tide against the German Army.

Military reforms reintroduced levels of command that allowed for operational level employment of forces. Additionally, tank corps were reorganized and artillery was expanded. The Air Force was restricted so that combined arms could be massed at the operational level. Ultimately, it was Stalin’s refocusing on sustained operational maneuver, emphasizing large, coherent, mechanized, and armored formations with control at the army or front commander that operational art reemerged successfully in the Red Army.⁶⁶ By 1945, the Red Army was effectively employing operational maneuver in consecutive operations to crush the enemy’s front breaking it in to more manageable parts.⁶⁷ Operational lessons learned were incorporated into

the training the Academy of the General Staff. These lessons helped the Red Army improve operationally over the course of the war.

The Cold War era, however, saw the decline of Soviet operational art. The threat of atomic and nuclear weapons led the Red Army to focus on creating a force with greater mobility and troop protection to be able to survive in this new environment. In the last half of the 1950s mechanized armies were turned in to streamlined tank armies and mechanized and light rifle divisions became motorized to increase mobility. Soviet intellectual work during this period, however, did reaffirm the importance of operational maneuver, stating “military operations in contemporary wars are characterized solely by maneuver. This is made possible by contemporary means of combat, especially the full mechanization and motorization of ground forces...The mobility and maneuverability of ground forces on the field of battle will have decisive importance in operations.”⁶⁸

As the nuclear arms race continued into the 1970s, however, operational considerations were abandoned by the reality of strategic arms race between two superpowers. The Red Army believed that maneuverability became irrelevant in the face of potential nuclear war. While the 1960s mindset was that nuclear weapons would only be employed when maneuver units had reduced the enemy considerably and its use would be the decisive action, the reality of the 1970s was that nuclear war eclipsed all other military options.⁶⁹ Strategic flexibility became the catchphrase throughout the 1970s and into the early 1980s. This required large “units and subunits”, likely division and larger, to be able to strategically reposition in response to massive losses following nuclear attacks.⁷⁰

The Red Army’s experience in Afghanistan painted a future of a nonlinear, asymmetric battlefield in which maneuver, successive and deep operations would prove untenable. The was widespread operational success. It took the Red Army approximately one month to take control

of the capital and key cities, garrisons, airbases and the highway. The entire operation was considered a success. Linking operational success to strategic endstates proved impossible and by 1988 the Red Army withdrew from Afghanistan. This marked the downfall of the Soviet regime, highlighted changes in the future of warfare for large industrial nations and served as a case study for operational thinkers within the Red Army.

From the end of the Soviet Union's war in Afghanistan and the union's collapse in 1991, it would pursue the posture of "defensive sufficiency" and a military strategy of "premeditated defense." Economic realities forced the fledgling Soviet Army to abandon attempts to create a force structure that could address the realities of a nonlinear battle that it had experienced in Afghanistan.⁷¹ If not the primary cause, the military industrialization of the entire Soviet economy certainly served as a linchpin in its ultimate collapse. The growing defense burden throughout the Cold War and its war in Afghanistan highlighted the increasing weakness of the military and the state. In the context of state failure and newly independent states being created, Russia embarked on creating a Russian military from the remnants of the Soviet force. With frontline units being absorbed by newly independent states and Russia losing its strategic buffer zone in the independence of former republics, it began to create a military doctrine based on the realities of nonlinear battlefields and the growing potential of internal strife. Two main operational-strategic forces were established.⁷² Immediate reaction forces (IRF) would be light forces with a strong air component capable of responding within 1 to 3 days. Rapid deployment forces (RDF) would be heavier combined arms force built around a corps and capable of reinforcing the IRF within 3 to 7 days. The immediate reaction force would be comprised 5 airborne divisions, 8 separate airborne brigades, 6 light motorized rifle brigades, supplemented by naval infantry battalions, air assault battalions and reconnaissance-diversionary forces. The rapid deployment force would provided tailored heavier combined arms support to the immediate

reaction force. It would be built around several mobile corps of 3 to 5 brigades (tank, mechanized, or motorized rifle and at least one light motorized rifle battalion, one tank and one motorized rifle division. The RDF would be supported by a significant air component and enhanced mobility and communications support.

While Russia worked to have operational units capable of responding to Western/NATO encroachment into Russia's former sphere of influence, its main focus shifted to internal conflict. Leading in to the its first war with Chechnya, Russian operational level focus was on a new force structure based around four interrelated functional components necessary in modern combat: information, ground, air, and logistical support. Command and control with communications supported by reconnaissance and electronic warfare capabilities made up the traditional headquarters element. Subunits to the headquarters were building blocks of combined arms units to provide flexibility to the operational commander to meet specific combat demands. The air component provided a maneuver element by way of vertical assault forces. The focus of logistics was sustainment to relatively independent sub-headquarters units operating in a nonlinear battlespace.⁷³

Moving in to the late 1990s, the Russian military, like the Red Army before it and the imperial Russian army before that, understood the impact of asymmetric methods in irregular warfare and new technology in conventional warfare at the operational level and the critical importance of communications in a nonlinear battlespace. There were painful lessons learned for the Russian military in the First Chechen War, which would be addressed prior to the second effort in the region.

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¹ Marine Corps Doctrine Publication 1-2, *Campaigning*, 01 August 1997, 76.

² Evangelista, Matthew. *The Chechen Wars: Will Russia Go the Way of the Soviet Union?* Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 2002, 16.

³ Former Soviet Air Force general and Communist party member Dzhokhar Dudayev represented a radical element within the Communist party within Chechnya that wanted to align in a confederation with other Muslim republics in the North Caucasus. By October 1991, he was able to wrest power from those within the new "republic" that wished to maintain strong ties to Moscow. Dudayev was able to organize a small professional army by drawing from the large number of Chechens who had served in the Soviet Army. The new Chechen Army was equipped with modern Russian military hardware left behind in supply and ordnance depots or obtained through black market arms dealers. From 1991 to the start of Chechnya I, Russia and Chechnya, specifically Dudayev, were in constant conflict, both militarily and diplomatically. A large criminal element had emerged and Dudayev struggled to maintain control of Chechnya.

⁴ Evangelista, Matthew. *The Chechen Wars: Will Russia Go the Way of the Soviet Union?* Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 2002, 22-33.

⁵ In its simplest form, Moscow entered Chechnya in 1994 for two main reasons. First, Russia occupies geo-strategically important real estate in the North Caucasus. Russian oil pipelines and major railroad lines transit Chechnya and moving either was financially unfeasible. Secondly, Russian territorial integrity was at risk. Unlike the independence declared by former Soviet Republics on Russia's periphery, Chechnya was believed by most Russians to be an integral part of the Russian Federation. Many within the Russian government believed that Chechen independence had the potential to start the domino effect of territories within post-Soviet era Russian Federation seeking independence. One cannot discount, however, the influence of personality on the Russian invasion of Chechnya. Frustrated by the failure of a series of operations to disrupt or remove the Dudayev regime, President Yeltsin became infuriated when Dudayev was able to expose the involvement of Russian regular forces to overthrow his government. The complexity of the impetus for Russia's invasion of Chechnya is widely debated. What is clear is that the campaign for Grozny was a total failure and did little more than highlight to the world how weak the post-Soviet military had become.

⁶ Jenkinson, Brett. "Tactical Observations from the Grozny Combat Experience." Master's thesis, US Army Command and Staff, 2002, 40.

⁷ Faurby, Ib. "The Battle(s) of Grozny." *Baltic Defense Review*, No. 2 (1999): 75-87 and Jenkinson, Brett. "Tactical Observations from the Grozny Combat Experience." Master's thesis, US Army Command and Staff, 2002 and Oliker, Olga. *Russia's Chechen Wars, 1994-2000: Lessons from Urban Combat*. Arlington: RAND, 2001 and Reed, James. "The Chechen War: Part II." *The Red Thrust Star*, July 1996 <http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/Red-Star/issues/JUL96/JUL96.html> (accessed October 27, 2008).

⁸ Seely, Robert. *Russo-Chechen Conflict, 1800-2000: A Deadly Embrace*. Portland: Frank Cass Publishers, 2001, 226-227.

⁹ Geibel, Adam. "Red Dawn in Chechnya: A Campaign Chronicle." *Armor* (March-April 1995): 12-13.

¹⁰ Seely, Robert. *Russo-Chechen Conflict, 1800-2000: A Deadly Embrace*. Portland: Frank Cass Publishers, 2001, 229-238.

¹¹ The Russian belief was that the Chechens had been able to strengthen their defensive positions in two concentric defensive belts around the center of the city. Significant changes were made to the attack plan. The three task forces were kept intact, but the original objective of encircling the city and attacking key objectives that were lightly defended in order to collapse the Dudayev regime and establish the MVD as a policing element quickly changed.

¹² Lieven, Anatol. *Chechnya: Tombstone of Russian Power*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998, 108-109.

¹³ Jenkinson, Brett. "Tactical Observations from the Grozny Combat Experience." Master's thesis, US Army Command and Staff, 2002, 51.

¹⁴ Reed, James. "The Chechen War: Part II." *The Red Thrust Star*, July 1996. <http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/Red-Star/issues/JUL96/JUL96.html> (accessed October 27, 2008).

¹⁵ *Ibid*

¹⁶ Thomas, Timothy. "Air Operations in Low Intensity Conflict: The Case of Chechnya." *Airpower Journal* (Winter 1997): 57.

¹⁷ Cooling, Norman L. "Russia's 1994-1996 Campaign for Chechnya: A Failure in Shaping the Battlespace." *Marine Corps Gazette* 85, no 10 (October 2001): 61.

¹⁸ Thomas, Timothy. "Air Operations in Low Intensity Conflict: The Case of Chechnya." *Airpower Journal* (Winter 1997): 54.

¹⁹ While President Yeltsin needed to first war in Chechnya to secure his reelection by way of an easy military victory for the post-Soviet military, he needed Russia's second war with Chechnya to propel his newly appointed prime minister, Vladimir Putin, to the presidency as his handpicked successor. President Yeltsin had lost faith in his prime minister at the time, Sergei Stepanov, and sought a replacement who was resolute on resolving the Chechen problem. Putin, a former KGB member, vowed to resolve the problem mercilessly to prevent the spread of Islamic radicalism throughout the North Caucasus.

²⁰ In an acute sense, Russia's return to Chechnya was sparked by growing partnership between Chechen and Dagestani Muslims, united by anti-Russian sentiment, to overthrow the existing Dagestani government. Initially, the local government and volunteers from the Dagestani republic joined to block an invasion from Muslims based out of the eastern mountains of Chechnya. Eventually, after the local forces proved unable to repel the advancing invaders, the Russian Air Force stepped in to carry out a ruthless bombing campaign against the invasion forces moving from Chechnya in to Dagestan. In the context of increased public support for the military, growing political apprehension over the future of the republic, and growing fear among the population Russia mounted its second major invasion into Chechnya.

²¹ As suggested above, planning for Chechnya II began as early as 1996, but was part of a larger transformation project taking place within the MOD. Interestingly, however, it may have been the Ministry of Interior that led Russia back in the Chechnya, rather than the Ministry of Defense. In the wake of the kidnapping of a senior Interior officer, the MVD began planning for a retaliatory strike against Chechnya. None-the-less, the MVD is not solely responsible for moving Russia down the road toward the second conflict. Despite significant opposition to the first Chechen war, in which many senior MOD officers resigned, there was growing support among the General Staff and senior military officers. A plausible explanation suggests that those generals that opposed the first war has long since resigned their position. The remaining military leadership were those who did seriously object to the first invasion. Further, this group of military officers and subordinates wanted retribution for the black eye the MOD received in Chechnya I. Chechnya II seems to have been an inevitability given the perspectives of the post-Chechnya I leadership within the MVD, MOD and Putin himself. From the Russian perspective, the second war was the continuation of military reform, vengeance sought by the MVD and MOD, growing resentment among Russians toward Chechnya and Putin's solution to the historical North Caucasus problem.

²² Orr, Michael. "Second Time Lucky: Evaluating Russian Performance in the Second Chechen War." *Janes Defense Weekly*, March 8, 2000.

²³ Evangelista, Matthew. *The Chechen Wars: Will Russia Go the Way of the Soviet Union?* Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 2002, 59-61.

²⁴ Because of the secretive nature of Putin's government, it is unclear when the MOD began planning for major military operations. There is evidence that the MVD had been planning the operation for months, if not years prior to the fall of 1999. The MOD, while generally planning and conducting exercises focused on a second invasion of Chechnya, has not publicly indicated when concrete efforts were undertaken to conduct deliberate planning for the specific operation that commenced in the fall of 1999. Certainly, there were indications of military thinking based on doctrinal changes taking place between 1996 and 1999 and the nature of the exercises and training being conducted by the MOD and other government ministries.

²⁵ Hodgson, Quentin. "Is the Russian Bear Learning? An Operational and Tactical Analysis of the Second Chechen War, 1999-2002." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 26, no. 2 (June 2003): 69.

²⁶ Thomas, Timothy. "A Tale of Two Theaters: Russian Actions in Chechnya in 1994 and 1999." *Analysis of Current Events* 12, Nos. 5-6 (September 2000).

²⁷ *Ibid*

²⁸ Thomas, Timothy. "A Tale of Two Theaters: Russian Actions in Chechnya in 1994 and 1999." *Analysis of Current Events* 12, Nos. 5-6 (September 2000) and Williams, Brian Glyn. "The Russo-Chechen War: A Threat to Stability in the Middle East and Eurasia?" *Middle East Policy* VIII, no. 1 (March 2001): 139.

²⁹ Hodgson, Quentin. "Is the Russian Bear Learning? An Operational and Tactical Analysis of the Second Chechen War, 1999-2002." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 26, no. 2 (June 2003): 69.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 69.

³¹ Thomas, Timothy. "A Tale of Two Theaters: Russian Actions in Chechnya in 1994 and 1999." *Analysis of Current Events* 12, Nos. 5-6 (September 2000).

³² Russian ground, air and naval infantry units made up the nearly 90,000 man contingent of MOD forces. In addition, there were approximately 30,000 personnel of the MVD from Chechnya and the surrounding region that made up the invasion and security force for the second invasion of Chechnya. The MOD units were as follow: Ground Forces - North Caucasus Military District (58th Army Headquarters and support elements, 136th Motor Rifle

Brigade, 205th Motor Rifle Brigade, 19th Motor Rifle Division), Moscow Military District (3rd Motor Rifle Division, elements of 2nd Guards Motor Rifle and 4th Guards Tank Division), Leningrad Military District (138th Motor Rifle Brigade), Volga Military District (tactical group from 27th Guards Motor Rifle Division), Urals Military District ("Permanent Readiness" Motor Rifle Regiment which is possibly part of the 34th Motor Rifle Division), Siberian Military District ("Permanent Readiness" Motor Rifle Regiment possible part of the 74th Motor Rifle Brigade); Airborne Forces – 5 battalions drawn from 7th, 76th, 98th, and 106th Guards Airborne Division and 31st Airborne Brigades; Naval Infantry – battalions from the Northern, Pacific and Baltic Fleets, Coastal Defense Forces of the Baltic Fleet and 1st Guards Motor Rifle Regiment.

³³ Bakshi, G.D. "The War in Chechnya: A Military Analysis." *Strategic Analysis* 24, No. 5 (August 2000). http://www.ciaonet.org/olj/sa/sa_aug00bag01.html (accessed November 26, 2008) and Williams, Brian Glyn. "The Russo-Chechen War: A Threat to Stability in the Middle East and Eurasia?" *Middle East Policy* VIII, no. 1 (March 2001): 138.

³⁴ Thomas, Timothy. "A Tale of Two Theaters: Russian Actions in Chechnya in 1994 and 1999." *Analysis of Current Events* 12, Nos. 5-6 (September 2000).

³⁵ Bakshi, G.D. "The War in Chechnya: A Military Analysis." *Strategic Analysis* 24, No. 5 (August 2000). http://www.ciaonet.org/olj/sa/sa_aug00bag01.html (accessed November 26, 2008).

³⁶ Marine Corps Intelligence Activity. *Urban Warfare Study: City Case Studies Compilation*. Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, 1999, 11.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 11.

³⁸ Grau, Les and Timothy Thomas. "'Soft Log' and Concrete Canyons: Russian Urban Combat Logistics in Grozny." *Marine Corps Gazette* 83, Issue 10 (October 1999): 67.

³⁹ Olikier, Olga. *Russia's Chechen Wars, 1994-2000: Lessons from Urban Combat*. Arlington: RAND, 2001, 5.

⁴⁰ The number of troops needed is based on the Soviet tactical requirement of a 6:1 ratio for urban combat as described in Grau, Les. "Changing Russian Urban Tactics: The Aftermath of the Battle for Grozny." *Foreign Military Studies Office Publications*, 1995. <http://call.army.mil/call/fms/fmsopubs/issues/grozny.htm> (accessed December 7, 2008).

⁴¹ Olikier, Olga. *Russia's Chechen Wars, 1994-2000: Lessons from Urban Combat*. Arlington: RAND, 2001, 8.

⁴² Cooling, Norman L. "Russia's 1994-1996 Campaign for Chechnya: A Failure in Shaping the Battlespace." *Marine Corps Gazette* 85, no 10 (October 2001): 68.

⁴³ The command structure has been simplified, so that the MOD coordinates all forces involved in an operation. The chain of command runs from the General Staff in Moscow, to the NCMD and then to a Unified Command of all federal forces, under an army general. Below him there are operational groupings, each commanded by a general. In the case of Chechnya II, there were five operational groupings. At the lowest level, the traditional division/regiment/battalion or brigade/battalion system is replaced by a new structure of tactical groupings. These are built around battalions with strong reinforcements, particularly in artillery.

⁴⁴ Included in "armed forces" are defense and interior forces, border guards and civil defense forces.

⁴⁵ Orr, Michael. "Second Time Lucky: Evaluating Russian Performance in the Second Chechen War." *Janes Defense Weekly*, March 8, 2000, 34.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 34.

⁴⁷ Bakshi, G.D. "The War in Chechnya: A Military Analysis." *Strategic Analysis* 24, No. 5 (August 2000). http://www.ciaonet.org/olj/sa/sa_aug00bag01.html (accessed November 26, 2008).

⁴⁸ Thomas, Timothy. "A Tale of Two Theaters: Russian Actions in Chechnya in 1994 and 1999." *Analysis of Current Events* 12, Nos. 5-6 (September 2000).

⁴⁹ Thomas, Timothy. "Grozny 2000: Urban Combat Lessons Learned." *Military Review* LXXX, no. 4 (July-August 2000): 54.

⁵⁰ Hodgson, Quentin. "Is the Russian Bear Learning? An Operational and Tactical Analysis of the Second Chechen War, 1999-2002." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 26, no. 2 (June 2003): 71-72.

⁵¹ de Haas, Marcel. "The Use of Russian Air Power in the Second Chechen War." *The Royal Air Force Air Power Review* 6, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 47-48.

⁵² Olikier, Olga. *Russia's Chechen Wars, 1994-2000: Lessons from Urban Combat*. Arlington: RAND, 2001, 61-62.

⁵³ Despite the improvements in inter-ministry groupings, Chechen rebels were able to exploit seams between the larger operational groupings (North, South, East, West and Grozny).

⁵⁴ Thomas, Timothy and Les Grau. "Russian Lessons Learned from the Battles for Grozny." *Marine Corps Gazette* 84, no. 4 (April 2000): 45 and Thomas, Timothy. "Grozny 2000: Urban Combat Lessons Learned." *Military Review* LXXX, no. 4 (July-August 2000): 54.

⁵⁵ Harrison, Richard W. *The Russian Way of War: Operational Art, 1904-1940*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001, 24-25.

⁵⁶ See, Glantz, David M. *Soviet Military Operational Art: In Pursuit of the Deep Battle*. Portland: FRANK CASS, 1991; Harrison, Richard W. *The Russian Way of War: Operational Art, 1904-1940*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001; Higham, Robin and Frederick W. Kagan, eds. *The Military History of the Soviet Union*. New York: PALGRAVE, 2002; Kipp, Jacob W. "Mass, Mobility, and the Red Army's Road to Operational Art, 1918-1936." Foreign Military Studies Office Publications, 1988. <http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/redopart.htm> (accessed November 12, 2008); Krause, Michael D. and R. Cody Phillips. *Historical Perspectives of the Operational Art*. Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2005; Orenstein, Harold S., trans. *The Evolution of Soviet Operational Art, 1927-1991: The Documentary Basis*, Volume II, *Operational Art, 1965-1991*. Portland: FRANK CASS, 1995; Savkin, Vasilii Yefisovich. *The Basic Principles of Operational Art and Tactics*. Edited and Translated by the United States Air Force. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office; and Scott, Harriet Fast and William F. Scott, eds. *The Soviet Art of War: Doctrine, Strategy, and Tactics*. Boulder: Westview Press, Inc., 1982.

⁵⁷ Harrison, Richard W. *The Russian Way of War: Operational Art, 1904-1940*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001, 39.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 83.

⁵⁹ Throughout the 1920s, the Red Army went through a period of debate over how to tailor the new military machine to meet the needs of a workers' state. Marxist-Leninist ideology suggests that along with the political-economic revolution would come a revolution in the military system. The Red Army set out to establish a unified military doctrine informed by Marxist-Leninist ideological considerations to provide junior proletarian officers.

⁶⁰ Orenstein, Harold S., trans. *The Evolution of Soviet Operational Art, 1927-1991: The Documentary Basis*, Volume II, *Operational Art, 1965-1991*. Portland: FRANK CASS, 1995, 4.

⁶¹ Harrison, Richard W. *The Russian Way of War: Operational Art, 1904-1940*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001, 131.

⁶² M. V. Tukhachevsky suggested that what was required for making the new concept of operational art a feasible strategic option was nothing less than the complete militarization of the national economy in order to produce the new tools of mechanized warfare. (See Kipp. "Mass, Mobility, and the Red Army's Road to Operational Art, 1918-1936.")

⁶³ Harrison, Richard W. *The Russian Way of War: Operational Art, 1904-1940*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001, 119-168.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 154.

⁶⁵ Higham, Robin and Frederick W. Kagan, eds. *The Military History of the Soviet Union*. New York: PALGRAVE, 2002, 111-114 and Krause, Michael D. and R. Cody Phillips. *Historical Perspectives of the Operational Art*. Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2005, 247-253.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*

⁶⁷ See the discussion of the Manchuria operation in 1945 discussed in Krause, Michael D. and R. Cody Phillips. *Historical Perspectives of the Operational Art*. Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2005, 266-267 and Higham's discussion of Soviet operational success to the end of the war in Higham, Robin and Frederick W. Kagan, eds. *The Military History of the Soviet Union*. New York: PALGRAVE, 2002, 148-149.

⁶⁸ Krause, Michael D. and R. Cody Phillips. *Historical Perspectives of the Operational Art*. Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2005, 269.

⁶⁹ Orenstein, Harold S., trans. *The Evolution of Soviet Operational Art, 1927-1991: The Documentary Basis*, Volume II, *Operational Art, 1965-1991*. Portland: FRANK CASS, 1995, 121-124.

⁷⁰ Scott, Harriet Fast and William F. Scott, eds. *The Soviet Art of War: Doctrine, Strategy, and Tactics*. Boulder: Westview Press, Inc., 1982, 291-293.

⁷¹ Krause, Michael D. and R. Cody Phillips. *Historical Perspectives of the Operational Art*. Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2005, 276.

⁷² *Ibid*, 279-280.

⁷³ Glantz, David M. *Soviet Military Operational Art: In Pursuit of the Deep Battle*. Portland: FRANK CASS, 1991, 255-256 and Krause, Michael D. and R. Cody Phillips. *Historical Perspectives of the Operational Art*. Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2005, 279.