Report on Ph.D. Thesis Defence

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Dissertation Title	Analysing Aum Shinrikyo's WMD Terrorism and Crimes: An Anatomy of Intentions and Capabilities

Result: Pass (subject to minor changes)

1. Abstract

Aum Shinrikyo attacked the Tokyo subways with sarin in March 1995, killing 13 and injuring 6,273 people. This event has marked a new phase of terrorism that may tend to use weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Aum remains perhaps the most notable example of a religious cult with enough financial and human resources and motivations to use unconventional weapons against civilians.

What was the overview of the Aum WMD programs? Why did Aum Shinrikyo select the WMD as their choice of primary weapon? What was the radicalization process within Aum? What factors shaped the Aum Shinrikyo's obsession with the WMD? In recent years, mainstream terrorism studies have focused on explaining terrorist behavior by a strategic model that assumes that a terrorist group acts rationally or by a group dynamics theory that examines intragroup dynamic interactions behind terrorist radicalization. To what extent can these theories explain the Aum decision-making on WMD? This paper attempts to find answers to these questions.

This paper consists of two parts. Part I consists of six chapters that attempt to reconstruct an overall picture of Aum Shinrikyo's WMD activities and the associated radicalization process. Aum members tested and carried out many acts of crimes and terrorism using various types of weapons, most notably WMD. Aum explored various WMD options, extending beyond biological, chemical, and nuclear. Asahara expressed his interest in WMD since the onset of his organization. Key motivating factors included their belief in Armageddon, their antagonism to the government, their belief of enemy existence, and the availability of human resources with scientific background in relevant fields. Aum violent activities were executed chiefly by a selected number of its

key leaders.

Part II analyses factors behind Aum radicalization and attempts to explain why Aum key members decided on WMD activities. Chapter 7 analyses factors that shaped Aum radicalization and explains why the core Aum members became obsessed with WMD. Three levels of analysis are used in this regard: external, organizational, and individual environments. In each level of analysis, multiple factors are examined as driving factors behind Aum radicalization in pursuit of WMD. Chapter 8 attempts to analyse the extent to which Aum decision-making process can be explained by key theories of decision-making in terrorism studies. This paper applies a strategic model (a rational actor model) and its variant, a bounded rationality model, as well as groupthink and group dynamics. Aum's key decisions on WMD activities were driven primarily by its internally available human resources. Resource-driven decision-making process was its peculiar characteristics. In the end, Aum WMD activities were not well planned nor well prepared in many cases. Most plans failed to produce the expected results or simply failed.

Drawing from the above analyses, this paper provides lessons learned from the Aum WMD activities for the efforts to prevent WMD terrorism and crimes. The most important finding of the paper is as follows. Aum did not possess stable "intention" and stable "capability". Both elements evolved dramatically, interacting with each other. As the Aum Shinrikyo expanded, the organization developed various resources available for WMD activities that were previously difficult to obtain. As the WMD activities expanded, their objectives were also affected conversely. Then, Aum members pursued additional capabilities and resources to achieve their expanded goals. In reflection, the Japanese authority failed to grasp Aum expanding objective and increasing capability. The intelligence should have better analysed how the organization's objective could shift with the change in their capability.

2. Result /Notes from the Examining meeting / Final Evaluation

本論文の報告に引き続き、平成 23 年 7 月 20 日（水)、審査委員会を開催した。審査委員は白石隆教授（主査)、道下徳成准教授（副査)、青木節子教授（副査）の 3 名であり、論文の構成、データの収集と分析、論理の展開といった点において、完成度の高い優れた論文であると評価された。その際、以下の点について、修正が提言された。

1. 論文の構成を変更し、アウムのラディカル化のプロセスを数章にわけて記述し、章のタイトル､サブタイトルを見ただけで､ラディカル化の論理がわかるようにする。

またオウムの生物兵器プログラムに加え、化学兵器プログラムについても分析する。

2. モデルを「合理的選択＋限界合理性モデル」と「グループ・ダイナミックス＋groupthink」の二つに整理し、その理論的枠組みを以下のような観点から評価する。「合理的選択＋限界合理性モデル」については、個別の重要意思決定において、そうした判断の元となる合理性をどこまで説明できるかの観点から事例を検討する。一方、「グループ・ダイナミックス＋groupthink」については、個別の決定の合理性ではなく、そうした決定に至るまでのグループ内 variables のダイナミックなインターアクションのプロセスに注目し、なぜオウムが過激な意思決定をグループとしてするに至ったか、そのプロセスに着目した説明を試みる。
3. リーダーシップ論については、グループ・ダイナミックスと不可分のため、「グループ・ダイナミックス＋groupthink」モデルに取り込む。
4. 論文の知見と政策的インプリケーションの関係をもっとわかりやすくする。

著者は、上記のコメントに対応して論文の修正を行い、修正稿を提出し、主査の最終確認、各審査委員の了解を得た上で博士論文最終版として提出した。審査委員全員は本論文が本学博士論文として妥当であると結論した。

なお、筆者は今後、本論文を単著として出版する準備を進める予定である。