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THE EVOLUTION OF COUNTERINSURGENCY WARFARE: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW*

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ABSTRACT

This paper makes a historical overview of the evolution of counterinsurgency in order to understand that this concept has not been rigid and static through the ages. It intends to explain why the understanding of counterinsurgency, its objectives and scope, the actors involved in its practice, and especially the legal and legitimate methods applied, are as they are conceived today. In essence, what began as the use of violence to destroy the insurgency along with its social base through all available means became a political enterprise to build state institutions in every region in a specific country. This, in order to erode the insurgency's connection with communities while providing the services required for social and economic development. It also makes an observation of one of the future dilemmas of the debate on counterinsurgency.

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Key words: Insurgency, counterinsurgency, revolution, colonialism, Spanish Insurrection, Boer War, Vietnam War, Malayan Emergency, Maoism, Iraq, Afghanistan, military doctrine, civic-action, civil-military affairs, hearts and minds.

RESUMEN

El presente ensayo hace una revisión histórica de la evolución de la contrainsurgencia para entender que este concepto no ha sido rígido o estático a través de los años. Pretende explicar por qué la perspectiva existente de contrainsurgencia, sus objetivos y alcance, los actores involucrados en su práctica, y en especial, la legitimidad de los métodos aplicados, son como son en la actualidad. En esencia, lo que comenzó como el uso de la violencia para destruir directamente a las insurgencias incluyendo sus bases sociales de apoyo, a través de todos los medios disponibles, se convirtió en una empresa política para la construcción de instituciones del estado en las regiones de un país determinado. Esto, con el objetivo de erosionar la conexión entre insurgencia y comunidades, mientras se provee de los servicios necesarios para el desarrollo económico y social. Se hará también una observación de uno de los dilemas futuros para el debate de contrainsurgencia.

Palabras clave: Insurgencia, contrainsurgencia, revolución, colonialismo, Insurrección Española, Guerra de los Bóer, Guerra de Vietnam, Emergencia Malaya, Maoísmo, Irak, Afganistán, doctrina militar, acción cívico-militar.

RESUMO

O presente ensaio faz uma revisão histórica da evolução da contra-insurgência a fim de entender que este conceito não tem sido rígido nem estático no decorrer dos anos. Pretende explicar o porquê da perspectiva existente da contra-insurgência, seus objetivos e alcance, quais são os atores envolvidos no conflito e, especialmente, a legitimidade dos métodos aplicados na atualidade. Na sua essência, o que começou como o uso da violência para destruir diretamente as insurgências, incluindo suas bases sociais de apoio através de todos os meios disponíveis, transformou-se em uma empresa política para a construção de instituições do estado nas regiões de um determinado país. Tudo isso, com o objetivo de corroer a conexão entre insurgência e comunidades, enquanto se abastece dos serviços necessários para o desenvolvimento econômico e social. Será feita também uma observação sobre os futuros dilemas para o debate da contra-insurgência.

Palavras chave: Insurgência, contra-insurgência, revolução, colonialismo, Insurreição Espanhola, Guerra dos Boér, Guerra do Vietnam, Emergência Malásia, Maoísmo, Iraque, Afeganistão, doutrina militar, ação cívico-militar.

INTRODUCTION

The conception of counterinsurgency (COIN) is not rigid and static. Its scope and practice, the actors involved in its application, its areas of action, and everything that it entails, have changed through history. What began as a brutal response aimed at the forceful destruction of the enemy along with its supporting communities, ended up as a practice resembling sustainable development. Understanding the current perspective of COIN, the instruments that are considered to be effective and the elements that are counterproductive and should be excluded from its practice, require an observation of past models and the ways they evolved.

Such an evolution can be easily appreciated through the analysis of different types of targets from which different kinds of COIN strategies have been developed. Gil Merom, an expert in guerrilla and COIN, cites three targets: The popular base of an insurgency (national annihilation), the social bond between rebels and the populace (Mild and extreme strategies including isolation) and the military and political cadres (Decapitation and eradication). (Merom; 242)

The indiscriminate and violent perspectives focused on the eradication of insurgents and their popular base, typical of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, gradually gave way to more moderate politically-focused approaches aiming at the destruction of the social bond between insurgents and the population, while focusing on the protection of the community. As it will be explained, whereas extreme strategies for breaking this bond were seen during the 20th century, including isolation and re-concentration, milder strategies seem to be more coherent in the 21st century's context of complexity and hyperconnectivity.

For this purpose, then, the present paper will analyze the evolution of COIN warfare through history observing how the use of force, the methods, the perception of the population, the institutions involved, and the strategies have varied. The objective, as already stated, is to understand why COIN is conceived as it is today, and why particular models and methods are considered valid and effective, while others are counterproductive.

The chapter will first explore the brutal methods practiced during the late 18th and 19th centuries mostly during revolutionary France, the Napoleonic invasion of Europe and the expansion of imperial European powers. It will then observe the emergence of more political approaches of COIN and the brutal responses of totalitarian states during the Second World War, followed by the emergence of Maoism and the observation of both positive and negative COIN experiences. It will finally explore the current practice of COIN warfare and introduce the dilemma of a state-centric understanding of COIN.

THE ERA OF BRUTALITY

The insurgencies that rose in Europe as a response to the Napoleonic invasions, and those in Africa and Asia to contest the Imperial expansion of European powers, were responded with brutal excesses, indiscriminate force and repressive methods. The counterinsurgents targeted not only the insurgents themselves, but frequently also their popular bases.

The Napoleonic expansion through Europe motivated the emergence of the first insurgencies which constituted what Michael Broer denominates 'Napoleon's other war'; real national insurrections where nations, not armies, raised in arms¹. The Spanish insurrection, probably the most significant of all, had a smaller precedent in the Italian region of Calabria from 1806 to 1807 when the Neapolitan dynasty was deposed. It was, however, unsuccessful as the rebels failed to gather support from the community and attract the attention of the Bourbons.(Finley; 84-87)

Charles Esdaile explains the Spanish insurrection through the romantic and religious character of the Spaniards: a national uprising in which the image of heroic combatants embellish the propaganda characteristic of the war itself in which many thousands of Spaniards took part; a cause which made fighters not only bandits but "true defenders of the fatherland... authorized by their government to harass the common enemy". (Esdaile; 3)It was an idea of war that popularized throughout society making it a real national uprising against the French invasion. As explained by Carl Schmitt, a first example in which war was not exclusively fought by an army but by the nation itself:"The guerrillas were the nation in arms. They fought in the morning and worked in the afternoon. They were both soldiers and citizens... The guerrillas were the champions of [Spanish] independence". (Esdaile; 8).

In Calabria, entire towns were garrisoned while in Spain summary executions were applied to those who were absent from home on the assumption that they were *guerrilleros*. Public meetings were forbidden, holidays suspended and clerics deported. It was decreed that for every Frenchman killed, four insurgents would be hanged, and if there weren't any, civilians would take their place. (Beckett; 27)

These methods were similar to those experienced during the Jacobin era in France. With the uprising in the Vendee in 1793 which opposed the revolutionaries in Paris, the death penalty was ordered for all rebels. The infamous *colonnes infernales* (infernal columns) terrorized civilians throughout the province with killings, deportations, fires, confiscations, abusing of woman and drowning of priests.(Beckett; 26) Reynald Sechernames this the 'French genocide': 815,629 individuals affected by the war and 117,257 people who disappeared between 1792 and 1802,

1. This perspective was proposed by Michael Broers, in his book *Napoleon's Other War*.

a 14.38% of the population. (Secher; 208) "All contemporary observers were struck by the monstrous character of the repression that pitilessly exterminated women, children, old men, the infirm, and mature men indiscriminately." (Secher; 213)

Terrorization of civilians was also the practice during the Franco-Prussian War during 1870-1 *franc-tireurs* were intended to fight the Prussians through guerrilla warfare, "to harass the enemy... to obstruct him in his requisitions (...) to capture convoys, cut roads and railways, destroy bridges (...) to disturb him day and night" (Howard; 249). They were only seen as murderers and were not to be tolerated. Retaliatory measures such as burning down houses, or the imposition of forced contributions were imposed upon the civilian communities who harboured them. (Howard; 251) Bismarck himself urged that villages be burned to terrorize the French into rapid submission. (Beckett; 31)

British response to colonial insurgencies was also brutal. There was an order to burn down or blow up all the houses next to railways, bridges or telegraphic lines that were attacked. In the Boer war collective fines were decreed, and civilians were forced to ride the trains as human shields. Martial Law was declared increasing tensions between army and local politicians. The flow of refugees was considerable and the establishment of refugee camps was necessary. By December 1900 the internment system was extended through all the Boer Republics and the population was removed entirely. By 1902, 30,000 farmhouses had been destroyed. 28000 Boer civilians concentrated in 40 camps, and from 16000 to 20000 Blacks held in 66 camps died. (Beckett; 39) Similar mechanisms of extermination were applied in German COIN campaigns in South and East Africa (1904-1907); there, between 50 to 80 per cent of African tribes were eliminated. (Merom; 36)

The words of British Member of Parliament David Lloyd George capture the essence of the atrocities committed by his country in this campaign against the Boer insurrection:

"A war of annexation against a proud people must be a war of extermination, and that is unfortunately what it seems we are now committing ourselves to –burning homesteads and turning women and children out of their homes" (Jackson; 130)

A similar image can be drawn with the words of General Sheridan to Bismarck in a letter from 1901:

"The proper strategy consists in inflicting as telling blows as possible on the enemy's army, and then in causing the inhabitants so much suffering that they must long for peace, and force the government to demand it. The people must be left with nothing but their eyes to weep with over the war." (Jackson; 145)

British expeditions on the northwest frontier were labelled as 'butcher and bolt' by the troops; Germans, wiped out 75,000 natives in suppression of the MajiMaji revolt in East Africa, and 60,000 in the Herero Revolt in South West Africa.(Jackson; 42)

These kind of methods were even still observed during the interwar period when Italy used mustard gas in Libya in the 1920's and in Ethiopia in 1935. So did the United States against Sandino, the Soviets against internal opponents, and the British in Iraq, Aden, Sudan, Somaliland and the North West Frontier. The French appealed to indiscriminate violence in Morocco between 1924 and 1926; they popularized the implementation of the *razzia*, a method with indiscriminate raids involving assassination, plundering and destruction of property and burning crops. (Merom; 39)

During imperial expansion, European powers experimented with strategies aimed at breaking the bond between insurgents and their communities, but methods employed, rather than being mild, were intrusive and disruptive of community's lives. The isolation and re-concentration of civilians was implemented. It consisted on moving entire communities from their original locations to areas where they could be controlled by the counterinsurgent, leaving rebels in spaces where it was possible to search and destroy them. Columns would then be used to pursue guerrilla bands, while food denial programmes were applied in order to starve insurgents of. The objective was to avoid rebels from supplying themselves. As described by Anthony Joes:

"Disrupting the enemy's food supply is of course a venerable stratagem (...) Food denial programmes inevitably suggest population concentration. Concentration generally worked in this way: the military authorities instructed the civilian population in a given region to move with their family members, animals, and foodstuffs into a designated town by a specific date. After that time, any goods or animals found outside the town would be subject to confiscation, and men would be liable to arrest as guerrillas" (Joes; 44)

Charles Callwell, a British Major-General with battlefield experience in Afghanistan and South Africa, recognized re-concentration as a common practice at the end of the 19th century: The British in South Africa, the Spaniards in Cuba, the United States in Philippines and the Russians in the Caucasus focused on physically gathering the civilian population in a specific area to avoid contacts, the provision of food or material to the insurgency, through a heavily guarded system of fortified lines of outposts known as *cordon sanitaire* or *trocha*.(Beckett; 36)

In the Vendée, French General Louis-LazareHoche built fortified posts around the region to isolate it, and had mobile columns pushing systematically outwards until new lines of posts could be established after clearing territory. The objective was to reduce the space for the rebels

to manoeuvre. (Beckett; 26) The creation of outposts was later common during European colonial expansion. In occasions, such outposts were used as centres for civic-military action, as experienced by the Dutch, but in other cases focus was placed on intensively patrolling against remnants of the resistance.

In most cases however, the appalling conditions of communities were counterproductive. Such was the case for Spaniards in Cuba, Americans in the Philippines, and British in the Boer War in South Africa. (Beckett; 39) In the latter, civilian Boers were moved into structures that resembled 'concentration camps'. Over 8000 blockhouses were erected, with intervals of as little as 185 meters. 6400 kilometers of barbed wire linked the blockhouses through the field. 50,000 troops and 16,000 indigenous auxiliaries garrisoned the posts, while on the outside farms and crops were destroyed and livestock removed in order for the insurgency not to find any sources of food. (Beckett; 39)

Americans had problems in the Philippines, especially because at home there was a strong reaction to excesses abroad. A demographic disaster was caused by concentration conditions: a malarial epidemic caused by mosquitoes, micro parasites and cattle spread. "About 11,000 Filipinos died as result of poor hygiene levels." (Joes; 44) With Indian reservations, however, the experience was different. Elements of a 'civic action' campaign were applied, including sanitation measures and public works; a vision which would later constitute a civic approach of American COIN. (Beckett; 37)

Manpower was reinforced with locally raised gendarmeries or guards. During colonial expansion, Britain mastered the process using locals in Abyssinia, Malaya, Egypt and Sudan. The French included natives in North, West and Central Africa. Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Germany, Portugal and even the United States depended largely on native military and police forces. (Beckett; 34)

Both food denial and locally raised forces were to become central tenets of COIN practice for years to come and important instruments to break the bond between rebels and population.

Repressive approaches proved to be inadequate. The terrorization of Spaniards, for instance, only encouraged the guerrillas and attracted more supporters. Rebels used the excesses of the French to fuel the hatred of the locals towards the invaders, while strengthening the legitimacy of their discourse and objectives. Their leader Francisco Espoz y Mina was even able to rebuild his forces after being significantly reduced. Calculations made by Madrid resident Jose Clemente Carnicero on the amount of French losses is telling: "A French commissary general declared they had lost 500 men every week (...) hence we may form some estimate of the enormous waste of French troops in Spain to 700,000 men". (Esdaile; 6) Enrique Rodriguez Solis believes Napoleon lost 500,000 men, 200,000 which died in the formal battle, and 300,000 fallen to the guerrillas. (Esdaile; 7)

Alternative approaches, although marginal, rejected direct attacks to the popular base (to the community itself) and focused on eroding the bond between insurgency and population by winning the support of the people. As explained by insurgency expert Ian Beckett, the most successful of Napoleon's commanders conducted a conciliatory attitude towards the local population seeking peaceful coexistence. Louis-Gabriel Suchet demanded the respect of religious practices, separated taxation between Spaniards and French, and reduced the plundering of locals by raising soldiers' income. Similar examples were appreciated in the Vendée and Brittany during the Jacobin era. Hoche began tolerating priests, conducted efforts to discipline his troops better, returned confiscated properties, disarmed the population, provided compensation for the excesses of troops, and achieved truces which included religious toleration.

It was only with American expansion after 1898 that a 'civic action' approach aimed at breaking the bond between insurgents and the community popularized. An 'attraction' programme was created in the Philippines combining political and military measures. Policies began to include the construction of schools and the development of projects to improve the standards of communication and health, the establishment of general stores, industrial training stations and a homestead. With this approach the idea of directly targeting the enemy became parallel to the objective of winning people's support.

Hoche's method was later improved into what became known as the *tached'huile* (oil slick), a model to spread French influence. As such, political elements needed to be included so civilian administrators were included in field teams; an idea that could well precede today's human terrain system to be explained ahead. Control would be established, but an attempt to win the population would have to be made by offering protection and expanding services like health, markets, and the respect to traditional authority. (Merom; 38) Soldiers would not only be administrators but overseers, workshop managers, teachers, gardeners and farmers.

Charles Gwynn, an Irish born Major General, proposed four principles to guide COIN efforts after studying wars in West Africa, Sudan, Mahdi, and the Middle East during this period:

The primacy of civil power

1. The use of minimum force
2. The need for firm and timely action
3. The need for cooperation between the civil and military authorities (Gwynn; 13)

However, he validated collective punishments with little need to address the grievances of the population, the use of cordon searches and drives, and the imposition of Martial Law, which in the end could be counterproductive if presented by the insurgency as methods of repression. His ideas would later be re-taken during the Maoist era to formulate more comprehensive theories of COIN.

In sum, at the beginning of the twentieth century the approach to COIN was still far away from placing support of the community at the centre of the strategy and although civic-action models were developed, they were generally perceived by locals as the imposition of a culture over its own.

BRUTALITY MEETS CIVIC ACTION

The interwar period served as the scenario for the emergence of a vision of COIN focused less on the direct eradication of insurgents and their base of support, and more on breaking the bond between insurgents and the population by winning people's hearts and minds. However, during the Second World War, totalitarian states exploited harsh and excessive methods of repression.

The problem of insurgencies began to be understood more generally as a political one, requiring solutions which included political elements beyond a simple response by force². As such, traditional strong actions of force began to coexist with methods that aimed at responding to the political dimension. The competition between insurgent and counterinsurgent began to be understood as a dialectical contest in which both parties needed to convince the population of why they were the best option; the psychological dimension thus began to be considered.

In that sense, two elements become relevant: propaganda, as the instrument to sell ideas while diminishing those of the enemy; and intelligence, as a mechanism to raise awareness about the realities of the enemy and to discover how to better confront it. But an organizational consequence is also notable, and would remain as part of COIN practice for years to come: the need to count on strategies of coordination between civil, military and police agencies.

British authorities, for instance, began to give more consideration to the political causes of insurgencies and rebellions and political concessions began to be considered as necessary to counter insurgents' demands. The Arab revolt in Palestine in 1936, for example, was temporarily defused by the promise of the establishment of a Royal Commission on Jewish immigration. (Beckett; 47)

Physical confrontation would begin to coexist with the use of non-violent methods aimed at convincing the population of why the counterinsurgent is right. Propaganda offices were being established, but collective punishments and the imposition of Martial Law were still seen as valid.

2. Hugh Simson identifies the politicization of war in his *British Rule and Rebellion* published in 1937, observing the IRA in Ireland and the revolt in Palestine between 1936 and 1939.

The Second World War became a scenario for considerable expansion of partisan and guerrilla warfare, mainly in the form of resistance to the German and Japanese occupations. Whereas some of the groups acted by themselves, others fought alongside conventional armies. Military Forces began to explore new forms of irregular operations and developed a variety of especial forces linked to local groups. (Becket; 55) The British used locals against the Italians in Ethiopia, and allied with the Malayan People's Anti Japanese Army and the Karens in Burma. The US in the Far East (USAFFE) incorporated guerrilla groups to fight the Japanese in the Phillipines, and coupled with the Kachins in Burma. (Beckett; 36)

The consolidation of air power as a strategic military instrument began to serve a purpose on the fight against insurgents. During the Second World War, British Army Major General Orde Wingate, developed the concept of long-range penetration, which describes the capacity to deploy airborne troops behind enemy lines in the jungles. Such operations were used in Burma and Malaysia against the Japanese.

Totalitarian states responded with extreme force by extending the decapitation and eradication strategies of insurgents to their societies, both punishing those who supported the insurgency and deterring others from providing support. The German response "was characterized by harsh countermeasures, not only against the insurgents themselves, but also against the local civilian population." (Lieb; 57) Similar treatment was given to the Poles by the Soviets or the Abyssinian rebels by Italians. (Merom; 43)

A directive of the *Wehrmacht* Command suggested executing between 50 and 100 communists for every German soldier killed. Some officials approved the death penalty for those demonstrating the slightest sign of hostility, and summary executions for Communist Party commissars serving with the Red Army. Germans "tried to uproot the partisans from their living bases: entire regions were transformed into 'desert zones'. Villages were burned down, the local population was evacuated and all cattle and agricultural products were looted. The units sometimes did not waste time on the complicated evacuation process; instead they just shot the civilians on the spot." (Lieb; 67) In August 1941, it was determined that to the West of the Berezina river those in uniform were to be considered active *guerrilleros*, that those suspected of sabotage were to be sent to concentration camps, and that ten civilians were to be executed if a member of the German Army was killed by partisans. (Beckett; 62)

The so-called 'cauldron operations' were typical from the Germans. They consisted on three phases: (1) Troops from diverse areas were assembled to create a cauldron around the suspected insurgent area. (2) The cauldron was tightened up through a concentric advance from all sides. Specific targets were allocated to each unit, while villages located within the area were searched for partisans and their supporters. (3) The area was overhauled for several days. Drastic and brutal measures were always part of the operations. After 1943, however, cordon-line operations, as explained before, were preferred. (Lieb; 67) Disrupting policing methods were also included

adding new technologies like radio direction and code breaking. Identity cards, restrictions on movement and rationing cards were also used to locate insurgents. To uncover opposition groups the manipulation of criminals and the employment of *agents provocateurs*³ was common.

The German Command realized that brutal actions were counterproductive. In 1942 a different approach was unsuccessfully tried. Retaliatory measures were ordered to be applied in a more judicious fashion, but in the end, intolerance of the people towards local administrations and the introduction of forced labour undermined German control. Many civilians preferred joining the partisans and risking their lives than being forced to work for the Germans. Such a response was not only observed in the eastern front but also in France.

During this period democracies like Britain and the United States were moving closer to a model of COIN more focused on winning the support of the population, and leaving behind the eradications of insurgents and their national base of support. As it has been explained, the response of totalitarian regimes to insurgency was radically opposite to that of democracies. Their strategies were clearly aimed at the eradication of the insurgency including the communities which harboured them through radical and violent means.

THE EMERGENCE OF MAOISM

Mao Tse Tung proposed a model for a conservative and parochial vast rural population, and a semi-feudal and semi-colonial society. (Beckett; 71) He developed a theory for a small weaker actor to override a more powerful enemy by the means of will, time, space and propaganda, in the absence of initial fire power capacity. This is achieved through a three staged process.

A first stage known as *strategic defensive* which is the initiation of the insurgency by a small armed force which attacks and makes a gradual retreat before the strong retaliation of the enemy's Army. The insurgents do not recur to positional warfare; the objective is survival through time. The frustration of the enemy is supposed to multiply as significant victories are denied. A second stage known as *stalemate*, in which the guerrilla tactic of quick strike and quick retreat is the mode of military operations. The sense of futility among Army troops and its home front continues to grow while morale on such camp decreases. The war reaches a state of equilibrium with insurgents controlling little land but maintaining positions of tactical initiative. A programme of expansion of forces and an increase in operations begin as morale of the insurgents grows. With the increase in the frequency and spatial scope of insurgent-guerrilla warfare comes the beginning of large-scale mobile warfare and the creation of regular army units. The third stage, known as *strategic offensive* begins when these regular armies grow in size and positional warfare dominates

3. Enticing agent

the mode of conflict. Guerrilla warfare becomes only complementary, and the insurgent army is ready to pursue the successful termination of war. (Pustay; 31-32)

Maoism became the main paradigm of insurgency warfare throughout the developing world, and COIN would evolve to respond to such paradigm.

Vo Nguyen Giap, commander of the Viet Minh, restyled the three stages of this Popular Protracted Warfare theory. (Beckett; 80) He identified three preconditions to advance from the second to the last stage: superiority of revolutionary forces, a favorable world situation, and a noticeable weakening of the enemy's resolve. (Pustay; 43) He further elaborated on the third stage by including subphases such as (1) gaining moral superiority over the enemy (2) regularization and modernization of the army (3) the configuration of an international situation that tends to weaken the enemy, and (4) gaining a momentum of more direction of war by the insurgents and a decrease of command and control by the army. (Pustay 43-44) He did not consider support of the masses as relevant as Mao did, and proposed relying more on military power. (Beckett; 80)

As demonstrated by the United States in Philippines and Britain in Malaya, COIN response to Maoism would be something radically opposed to what was experienced during the nineteenth century and the Second World War.

The initial experience of the British in Malaya was far from successful, and many favoured traditional methods such as sweeps and drives. (Beckett; 95) Harsher methods such as compulsory registration of the population, the issue of identity cards, controlling population movement, setting curfews, conducting search without warrant, establishing the death penalty for possession of guns and ammunition, and enforcing collective detentions were still seen as valid. (Paget; 53)

Similar failures were seen on the initial response in the Philippines. The governments of Manuel Roxas and Elpidio Quirino were keen on controlling the peasantry without allowing their participation in government. Roxas response to Maoist insurgency was strong in terms of methods of force and control. Every *barrio* in areas of conflict was assumed to be of Huk influence, so screening operations and the use of special squadrons were authorized. Artillery was widely used without any regard for civilian's lives, and brutality was widespread. Instruments such as the collection of tolls, curfews and road blocks only generated greater resentment. As a consequence, the Huk insurgency spread reaching 11000 to 15000 fighters with about 150000 active supporters and a million passive sympathizers. (Beckett; 99)

Filipino security forces were rather unprepared for this kind of confrontation. They were basically police units with strength of ninety-eight men armed with clubs, side arms and carabines, without any possibility to engage and armed, organized, hostile group. (Valeriano and Bonhannan; 114)

The need for a more appropriate response became evident. COIN strategies which focused directly on the eradication of the rebels and its popular base were counter productive. Officials realized that it was necessary to win the support of the populace instead of fuelling hatred. In Malaya, Harold Briggs, a British Officer with experience on the Burma revolts during the Second World War, was appointed as director of operations. He formulated a plan, known as the 'Briggs Plan', which aimed at protecting and isolating the populace from insurgents, while identifying the Malayan Communist Party's (MCP) political body, not the fighters in the jungles, as the priority in confrontation.

An organizational structure was created with the Federal War Council on the national level, and district and village level committees. These collegiate bodies constituted assemblies where diverse institutions came together to discuss insurgency matters and to make decisions on the appropriate actions to be taken. Not only security institutions such as the Army and the Police were included, also civil agencies, and representatives of ethnic communities⁴. While in Malaya Intelligence was to be coordinated through a single chief allowing for better interagency coordination, in the Philippines a similar outcome was guaranteed with the creation of a new Military Intelligence Corps.

In the Philippines, a former United States Army Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) guerrilla leader, Ramon Magsaysay was appointed as Secretary for National Defence. He recognized that it was necessary to redistribute political and economic power favouring those communities who supported the insurgency, so an approach favourable to win people's hearts and minds was also adopted.

In this country, there was also an increased focus on civil affairs with the creation of a Civil Affairs Office. This bureau was responsible for the resettlement of former Huks and their families within spacious farms. Its existence was a direct response to insurgent's efforts to present settlements as concentration camps. Information operations were necessary to win the hearts and minds of the Filipinos, so leaflets were distributed and mobile film projection units were deployed spreading government's messages. Special actions, like broadcasting speeches of the guerrilla commander Luis Taruc's mother persuading rebels to demobilize, became highly instrumental. Direct and efficient channels of communication between government officials and peasants were established so that the response of the state to society's problems was improved. Free legal advice was even conceded when necessary. New agencies were created including the Agriculture Credit and Co-operative Financing Association and the Social Welfare Administration. A minimum wage was introduced, and free primary education was guaranteed for all citizens.

4. Julian Paget makes a more detailed description of both the objectives of the Briggs Plan, and the components of the structure of the system described. (Paget; p. 56-58)

These adaptations became the first examples of a 'comprehensive approach' to counterinsurgency: the idea that the responsibility to fight an insurgency is not exclusive of security institutions, but of a wider range of state and even societal organizations; and where actions must be conducted in areas that go beyond the reach of security actors. These principles would later constitute a central tenet of modern COIN, as it has been experienced in Afghanistan, Iraq and Colombia.

Methods of isolation and food denial were not only valid but effective in Malaya. Entire villages were resettled with the idea of separating communities and insurgents. The existence of cultivated areas beyond the villages not only gave away the location of insurgent camps, but the opportunity to weaken the rebels by destroying their resources. The incorporation of air flights to spot these zones gave the counterinsurgent a significant capacity. Small units of platoons, sections or subsections were deployed, undertaking deep penetration patrols in the jungle, together with the battalions in particular areas.

Clear and hold operations were applied by setting secure bases in the villages from where patrols were deployed into the jungles to progressively dominate the surroundings. (Paget; 58) Deep penetration patrols combined with air attacks kept high pressure in the jungles. The Police became a smaller and more professional organization, and a home guard composed mostly by individuals recruited locally was established to protect the new villages. (Paget; 77)

In the Philippines, the Army was reorganized into self-sufficient all-arms battalion combat teams, deployed on a longer term basis in particular known areas. Operationally, small unit action focused on food denial operations and intensive patrolling where typical, with further guidance provided by reconnaissance aircraft. Civil affairs officers were also attached to each team in order to spread the message of the government. The Police, which evoked hatred among communities, became subordinated to the Army. The use of excessive force ended, and the salaries of policeman were increased to avoid looting. They were meant to carry more food than the regular personal ration in order to provide the population if necessary, especially candy for children.

Political concessions were also vital to defeat the insurgencies. After the Briggs Plan, the promise of independence in 1952 made Malays oppose the MCP. After strong civic campaigns were implemented to win the Chinese population's hearts and minds, they joined the Malays, reducing the MCP's base of support. (Paget; 77) This is an example of a successful strategy aimed at breaking the bond between the population and the insurgency through non violent means. This task was possible after the political and military offices were merged and put under the leadership of a single officer, General Sir Gerald Templer, and after information operations and propaganda were given the necessary degree of relevance. For this purpose a Director of Information Services with a psychological warfare section was established. A 'Surrender Enemy Personnel' programme was created with success in encouraging demobilizations, and the establishment of substantial rewards. Leaflets, radio broadcasts and films were produced and distributed. But propaganda

did not carry an empty message, the status of the Chinese was elevated within its society and their participation in state affairs was increased.

These cases have demonstrated that addressing the grievances of the communities that fuel the insurgency's motivations or discourse, is not necessarily a sign of state weakness, like extremist in national contexts may tend to describe it, but actually a vital part of an effective counterinsurgency strategy.

It was through this period that counterinsurgents finally rejected approaches to COIN aimed at the direct eradication of insurgency and their national base of support. Instead, they began experimenting with methods to break the bond between insurgents, but harsh methods were still considered valid. Instruments of psychological warfare, propaganda, civic action and intelligence would be further exploited in later stages of this development. As summarized by Ian Beckett, the experience against Maoists demonstrated the importance of six factors:

1. Political action designed to prevent insurgents from gaining popular support should have priority over purely military action.
2. Complete civil-military cooperation is necessary.
3. Intelligence should be coordinated
4. Insurgents must be separated from the populations through winning their hearts and minds
5. Pacification should be supported with the appropriate use of military force
6. Lasting political reform should be implemented to prevent the recurrence of insurgency. (Beckett; 107)

THEORIZATION OF COUNTERINSURGENCY DURING THE MAOIST ERA

With the appearance of Maoist insurgencies modern COIN theory flourished. Insurgency began to be understood more widely as having political objectives, although pursued by military means. The idea of fighting them indirectly by making it impossible for them to fight, gained prominence as compared to the idea of seeking its entire destruction. (Paget; 168) As such, methods of national annihilation were practically discarded and strategies focused on breaking the bond between insurgents and their communities gained prominence. Such bond was to be broken by winning the support of the people, by convincing them that the state is a better choice than the insurgents.

Given the political character of insurgencies and having in mind Maoist ideas of developing particular political tasks for the progressive growth of the insurrection, it was recognized that a particular structure was typical of insurgences. Julian Paget, a former British Army Officer, describes a military structure, with a defined hierarchy and territorial distributions; and a political body with a central committee and territorial branches. Similarly Frank Kitson, also a former British

Army Officer, emphasizes on the creation of a political party at the first stages of the insurgency with branches and cells aimed at capturing support of the masses. (Kitson 34-35)

The confrontation between insurgency and counterinsurgency is indeed a dialectical fight to win the acquiescence of the populace. As it was confirmed by David Galula, a Second World War French Officer and military attaché to China, popular support became the most significant instrument for the insurgents and the state to defeat its enemy:

1. Support of the population is necessary for the counterinsurgent as for the insurgent
2. Support is gained by an active minority
3. Support of the population is conditional
4. Intensity of efforts and vastness of means are essential. (Galula; 5-10)

How then to defeat insurgencies? As the experiences of Malaya and Philippines demonstrate, and in the lines of the factors announced by Beckett, it is relevant to note a set of principles which should guide the conduct of successful COIN:

- There must be a clear political aim
- Government's actions must comply with the law
- An overall plan must exist
- Defeating the political subversion is more relevant than defeating the guerrillas
- The government's base are must be secured first⁵

Such principles are a logical consequence to the nature of this confrontation as centred on population support. The political character of this confrontation makes it necessary to both have a clear political aim to which military power is relegated and fight the political subversion.

On the practical tasks to be developed, Galula differentiates two periods: 'cold', before violent actions begin, and 'hot', once violence erupts. In the cold period both direct and indirect actions are possible to avoid the insurgency from flourishing through, for example, infiltration or by changing the contextual elements that fuel the rebellion. Kitson agrees on the vulnerability of insurgencies at the beginning, and recognizes military action might not be necessary at this stage. (Kitson; 39)

The hot period requires a more complex effort. He proposes an eight-step strategy to defeat insurgents:

5. These principles were proposed by Robert Thompson, a former British Royal Air Force Officer who became one of the most recognized COIN theorists. His book was published in 1966. (Marston and Malkasian; 14)

1. Concentrate sufficient armed forces in the area to expel the main body of armed insurgents
2. Detach enough troops to oppose an insurgent comeback, install them in hamlets, villages, and towns where population lives.
3. Establish contact with the population, control its movements in order to cut off links with guerrillas
4. Destroy the local insurgent political organizations
5. Setup, by election, new provisional local authorities
6. Test authorities and organize self defensive units
7. Group and educate leaders in a national political movement
8. Win over or suppress the last insurgent remnants. (Galula; 80)

Thompson, Galula and Paget all point to the importance of propaganda directed both at insurgents and the community. The psychological dimension is indeed central to COIN warfare. They also agree on the need of participating agencies to count on a single direction, Paget even believes in the vitality of Joint Command and Control; on the primacy of the political over the military, on the coordination of the efforts of diverse actors and agents, and the adaptations of minds (both civilian and military) to the challenge of COIN.

For these authors winning hearts and minds is only achieved if the state counts on the real capacity to both defeat the insurgency and protect the population. For such a purpose the government must respect the feelings and aspirations of the nation, provide a firm and fair government, build up public confidence, and establish a campaign of civic action and propaganda to counter the discourse and propositions of the insurgency. Kitson believes on the importance of 'stability operations' designed to regain and retain the allegiance of the population. They should include: Advisory assistance, as means to help build the local force; a civil-military affairs programme to build cooperation between the military and the population; population and resource control; psychological operations; and intelligence. (Kitson; 53)

Regarding troops, Paget argued in favour of increased mobility as opposed to rigidity. (Paget; 169) He believed that units among the population should have priority over those pursuing insurgents. He considered that attacks to bases should have priority over attacks on individual groups and that mobile reserves should be available to follow up insurgents after contact, instead of spreading numerous static points. Psychological operations, propaganda and incentives for insurgents to defect were instruments to break the insurgents will to win.

Some of the methods he validates though would seem incompatible with the values and norms of today's societies. The isolation of population from the guerrillas and the use of punitive measures to make communities cooperate with authorities could be counterproductive. The use of curfews, collective fines, registration of inhabitants, detention of suspects, and restrictions to individual liberties could have negative effects. Some of Galula's propositions may also be

criticized in the current context. Destroying political organizations -even those of the insurgency-, grouping and educating leaders, testing authorities and setting up self defense units, could very well be actions of authoritarian regimes striding away from democratic principles. They could easily be presented as instruments of oppression and with the current context of hyper-communication they might stir new uprisings.

COUNTERINSURGENCY FAILURE DURING THE COLD WAR

As stated before, it is highly relevant for civilians and military to adapt to the efforts required by COIN campaigning; the lack of adaptation is likely to lead into failure. Such was the case of the United States in Vietnam, where the idea of fighting the war through conventional means lead into disaster. "The US entered the Vietnam War with a military trained and equipped to fight a conventional war in Europe, and totally unprepared for the COIN campaign it was about to wage". (Nagl; 119)

US participation began in 1963 with the idea of 'fighting the main war' and leaving work on the villages to the South Vietnamese Army (ARVN). US commanders favoured inappropriate large-scale, search and destroy operations using helicopters and relying on firepower as a substitute for permanent occupation. Two campaigns were implemented. A ground war in South Vietnam based on the doctrine of 'search and destroy' and an air war against North Vietnam known as 'Operation Rolling Thunder'. (Hess; 84) The latter killed around 52,000 civilians in North Vietnam between 1965 and 1967 and injured thousands more; the former failed to destroy the enemy but ended up 'destroying' much of the country the US was trying to save. (Hess; 89) Only the Special Forces and the Marine Corps were concentrated on a campaign styled after the objective of winning the hearts and minds of the population, but their efforts, of course, were insufficient.

The search and destroy strategy was failing to act in regards to the strongest points of the insurgency: gaining control of the villages, providing security against communist forces, working with peasants, and introducing reforms to improve their lives. (Hess; 112) The US was not concerned about securing the cleared areas, allowing the Viet-Cong to return, so every territorial gain was later lost. (Hess; 90) On the other hand, attrition would have been impossible to achieve since the enemy had enough manpower to offset losses. An estimate of 220,000 fighters was killed between 1965 and 1967, and yet the Viet Cong continued to recruit young men and women. The number of combatants actually increased despite heavy casualties. (Hess; 90) There was no joint command or any further centralized control of Marine Corps or air power. Furthermore, actions by other US Agencies such as the US Information Agency, the CIA, and USAID were conducted independently without any coordination.

The programme designed to coordinate intelligence known as the Phoenix Programme was a failure. It was designed by the CIA to collect information about the 'Vietcong infrastructure', the

civilians who supported the guerrillas. Its objective was to neutralize those who were providing aid and comfort to the insurgency. (Baritz; 272) But it became a real campaign of terror with the deployment of paramilitary reconnaissance units to find and detain collaborators and the establishment of interrogation centers. "Official statements that more than 20,000 'eliminations' were achieved by Phoenix raised the image of an indiscriminate CIA-controlled Murder Inc." (Isaacs; 108)

The effects of American warfare on South Vietnamese society were devastating and counterproductive. 184,000 soldiers had died by the end of 1965 and the perception of a military power fighting a small country infuriated civilians. Artillery, air power and defoliants practically destroyed the country. About 500,000 civilians were killed and one million were injured. Millions of people were forced to move from rural areas into overcrowded cities and hatred towards the US spread. (Hess; 90)

An emphasis on conventional operations was also an obstacle for the Salvadorean Army against the *Farabundo Martí de Liberación Nacional*. Their Officers were trained in the United States and could never successfully adapt to small-unit operations. The campaign was also based on attack and interdiction of suspected (instead of known) guerrilla positions; an action that would generate the rejection of locals. Contact with the community was limited. (Beckett; 206) A conventional approach was also dominant in Nicaragua. Heavy artillery, helicopters gunships and the use of defoliants were typical of an indiscriminate campaign, while insurgents went into the cities to conduct urban warfare operations. (Beckett; 207)

In Afghanistan, Russia experienced similar difficulties. There was considerable confusion in the command and control of the Army, under control of Defence Ministry, and troops of Interior Ministry; and there was little coordination among intelligence agencies. The Military Forces were unprepared for the type of operations required for this scenario: mechanized infantry was not trained to fight separately from their vehicles, and they were too heavily equipped to go by foot. They did not have enough helicopters for the transportation of troops, and tanks were ineffective in the terrain. (Beckett; 213) Excesses like the use of chemical weapons such as Sarin, Soman and yellow rain were counterproductive as they generated rejection from the population. The Soviet strategy of scorched earth was perceived as a migratory genocide. The Afghan Mujahedeen kept control of 75 to 90 percent of the territory and the demoralization of Soviet Afghan allies contributed to their defeat. By 1989, 13000 Soviet soldiers had perished, 35000 had been wounded in combat and 50,000 more injured on active service. (Beckett; 210)

In Vietnam, by 1966 it was evident that a different approach was necessary, but the efforts came too late and the political struggle for economic and physical security of the population was already lost. A comprehensive effort was sketched through the Civil Operations and Rural Development Support Programme (CORDS) which unified pacification and other social and economic programmes and incorporated them to the US military command structure. The South

Vietnamese Government agreed to allocate more of its army units to the programme, obtaining more troops to provide security in the villages. CORDS established civilian-military pacification teams with around 6500 troops and 1100 civilians. There was even a Revolutionary Division which dispatched teams to provide security and promote economic development at village level. The main problem was South Vietnam's government lack of interest to resolve the most immediate concerns of the peasants. (Hess; 121-122) In the end, the programme could not compensate for years of mistakes and excesses. Furthermore, when clear and hold operations were encouraged the ARVN was unprepared for such task.

A psychological operations programme known as *Chieu Hoi* (Open Arms) was created with the objective of motivating Viet Cong members to defect. By 1967 approximately 75,000 defections had been recorded, but it is believed that less than 25% of those were genuine. (Beckett; 198) The resettlement programme was also a failure. By cultural convention, Vietnamese peoples were wedded to its land. The new hamlets were built by locals through labour exploitation, and were generally resisted by the population. Few of these were economically viable; they did not count on any strong defenses, while some were too big to be controllable. (Beckett; 211)

In sum, whereas the theorization of COIN gained momentum during the Cold War, military cultures impeded its proper application in the field. The United States who was traditionally sceptical to such type of warfare, decided to act in Vietnam through conventional instruments. As a consequence, mistakes allowed for the growth of the insurgency and the spread of hatred towards the counterinsurgent.

HEARTS AND MINDS AND THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

After Vietnam, insurgency and COIN were practically marginalized in the strategic international agenda, except for specific cases in which lasting insurgencies prevailed. The topic only re-emerged after the West intervened in Iraq and Afghanistan, and a model emerged bringing together elements proposed by theorists during the Cold War and learned during successful campaigns like the one in Malaya. Strategies to break the bond between insurgents and communities by winning the support of the population finally became the main practice, and a comprehensive approach was consolidated including the role of many institutions beyond the military.

In Iraq, once again the initial approach was conventional, and the efforts focused on eliminating the insurgency by force. An indiscriminate perspective ended up, once again, affecting civilians and increasing the population's support of the insurgency. "When confronted with insurgent attacks the US divisions reacted differently, but with a tendency towards conventional-style operations and heavy-handed tactics. Units conducted raids based on scant intelligence and applied firepower loosely. (...) Instead of trying to secure the population [they] launched large-

scale sweeps to roll up insurgents, fired artillery blindly to interdict insurgent activity, purposefully detained innocents to blackmail their insurgent relatives and leveled homes to deter people from supporting the insurgents.” (Malkasian; 300)

But different ideas on how to wage such war existed. General David Petraeus, commander in the North of Iraq, “considered the population to be the key to effective counterinsurgency (...) Rather than undertaking large sweeps, his troopers operated out of outposts in the heart of the city and focused on collecting detailed actionable intelligence for raids against insurgency leadership. Meanwhile Petraeus interacted with elements of society, even holding his own local elections.” (Malkasian; 290)

With the appointment of General George Casey as head of operations in Iraq, the approach began to evolve into what is now known as the clear-hold-build model, balancing political and military elements better. (Malkasian; 294) In general terms this model seeks to clear areas of insurgency, maintain a stable presence of security institutions in order to guarantee the insurgency will not return, and build state institutions and the capabilities for the communities to achieve a sustained development. Similarly, Iraqi Security Forces and the democratization process were strengthened.

After a review of the situation was published by the Iraqi Study Group, a series of structural reformations were recommended: a surge of about 20,000 to 25,000 units along with a greater effort in expanding and training the Iraqi Security Forces. Petraeus was appointed as Commander General of the Multinational Force in Iraq (MNF-I) and his approach focusing on the protection on the civilians was generalized. His vision is rooted on the propositions of Galula, Paget, Thompson and Kitson. In his own words: “we will not just ‘clear’ their neighborhoods of the enemy, we will also stay and help ‘hold’ the neighborhoods so that the ‘build’ phase that many of their communities need can go forward”. (Malkasian; 305)

According to Anthony Celso “The [approach] endorses clearing, holding and building areas formerly bastions of the insurgency. Placing emphasis on protecting the civilian population allows occupation forces better capabilities to isolate and neutralize insurgents. Greater security in towns and villages create the basis for enhanced economic development, better governance, training of local security forces and national reconciliation”. (Celso; 187)

Since 2003 in Afghanistan and 2005 in Iraq, Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) combining military and civilian officers were deployed “to promote reconstruction, pursue security sector reform, and help extend central government authority.” (Marston; 275) They were created to work on the build dimension of the clear-hold-build equation. PRT’s haven’t being flawless, weaknesses have been observed: in Afghanistan they initially answered to their own national governments rather than to a central Afghan government agency and that they failed to sufficiently involve local leaders in planning and implementing projects. (Marston; 275)

Other specific instruments have been implemented in order to increase the knowledge of the communities where the counterinsurgent operates. This is the idea behind the human terrain systems:

“Human Terrain Teams (HTTs) are five- to nine-person teams deployed by the Human Terrain System (HTS) to support field commanders by filling their cultural knowledge gap in the current operating environment and providing cultural interpretations of events occurring within their area of operations. The team is composed of individuals with social science and operational backgrounds that are deployed with tactical and operational military units to assist in bringing knowledge about the local population into a coherent analytic framework and build relationships with the local power-brokers in order to provide advice and opportunities to Commanders and staffs in the field.” (Finney; 2)

The current global social context plays a relevant function in motivating counterinsurgents to adopt this type of approach. In the current world of hyper connectivity and complexity, ideas, realities, and actions that happen in a specific place, may not only be known half way around the world, they may also trigger significant consequences for that distant society. Recalling the analogy of the butterfly effect, a small event may generate significant outcomes in distant places.

This has an important effect in COIN. Given that the dynamic of war is a competition between insurgents and counterinsurgents to win the support of the population, any small mistake committed in the field, any abuse against civilians could be exploited and maximized by its opponent to present it in wider scenarios as an enemy of the population. The case of a soldier hitting an old woman in a particular village might be known throughout the country hurting the image of the counterinsurgent and spreading its rejection. As seen during March 2011, a simple action such as the burning of a Koran in an Evangelical church in Florida triggered major revolts in Afghanistan, adding to the challenges faced by the counterinsurgent there. It is this sensitivity which forces to create real society-centred strategies of COIN aimed at guaranteeing the protection of the population and following principles announced by Thompson.

COIN BEYOND THE STATE: LOOKING TO THE FUTURE?

History demonstrates that the practice of counterinsurgency has been almost defined in state-centred parameters. Insurgents have traditionally challenged the government, the regimes and institutional structures of particular states. For instance the Viet-Cong challenged the Vietnam regime, the Mau Mau did the proper in Kenya and the Tupamaros challenged authority in Uruguay. Naturally, the counterinsurgent has always been thought in terms of state. Even in cases where there are foreign troops involved the state-centred paradigm is maintained: the Allies and the MNF-I in Afghanistan as supporting the central Afghan government and strengthening its military

forces, or the US in Vietnam endorsing the South Vietnamese government.

But when the context, of which references have been made before, is taken into account it is possible to observe that this paradigm of state-centricity is crumbling. Globalization and the spread of communication technologies have created all sorts of instruments for insurgencies to extend beyond the boundaries of a single state. On one hand, the globalization of an ideology, or at least its expansion through a particular region, creates spaces ideal for insurgency expansion. Examples are offered by Political Islam or Islamism and Bolivarianism. In the first case the clear example is Al Qaeda and its affiliated organizations. Authors such as John Mackinlay have explained how independent individuals in remote or particular places can become an active part of an insurgency as they are convinced by the rebels' arguments which are spread through several means of communication⁶. In the case of Bolivarianism it is clear that the expansion of this set of ideas through Latin America has motivated the strengthening of linkages between particular governments, like those in Venezuela, Nicaragua and Ecuador, and several social and political organizations, including armed groups like the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). What it is unclear, and which should motivate further research, is to what extent those linkages represent an opportunity for the insurgency to survive or re-emerge as the Counterinsurgent, in the case of FARC the Colombian state, increases its offensive against it.

But a second element motivating insurgency regionalization could be the mobility of commodities fuelling the conflict, a clear example is offered by narcotics. As history in South America has demonstrated, production of cocaine has changed from country to country as particular states make gains in their own fights against drugs and criminality. During the 1980's Peru's production moved into Colombia, and by 2011 since Colombia was making some advances in its fight, coca crops were re-appearing both in Peru and Bolivia. This sources help maintain insurgent groups such as FARC but also Sendero Luminoso in Peru where two of its columns in the Alto Huayaga Valley and the Valley of the Apurimac River appear to be re-emerging. This leads into the conclusion, that a state-centric approach might be insufficient when the objective is to decisively eliminate the economic cycles derived from a particular commodity that fuel the insurgencies, more specially if such commodity has transformed the objectives of an organization and profit has become a main aim.

It must be clear that insurgencies have historically tended to spread beyond the borders of a single state, especially given the opportunity to find safe haven in neighboring countries, even more if such countries are sympathetic to insurgent goals. That is not new. But an entirely different phenomenon is constituted by globalized or globalizing insurgencies which are transnational by nature, and obey to networked structures with cells, nodes and individuals placed in different countries and locations. It logically follows that the act of a single counterinsurgent state in its

6. For a full explanation of this vision read John Mackinlay's 'The Insurgent Archipelago'.

specific territory will not bring the entire network down, and the possibility of insurgents re-emergence will remain. This organization is not, of course, the main non-state actor in either Iraq or Afghanistan, but if the objective were to defeat it, specific actions in a single state would undoubtedly be limited.

However, while insurgencies seem to adapt to the current international context creating transnational networked structures, COIN thought and practice seem to remain under the paradigm of state-centrism. What would COIN have to look like? Who would the counterinsurgent have to be? This should be the debate now and for the future in the field of COIN theory. John Mackinlay, for example, believes the response to this kind of phenomenon, which he denominates *complex insurgencies*, must not be limited to a single state but needs to be of international scope including military coalitions, bilateral donors, the UN system, international organizations, private security companies and contractors. His recommendations to defeat complex insurgencies include revitalizing cohesive alliances, securing the strategic populations against subversion, developing a universally accepted concept of operations for international COIN operations, and encouraging coalitions to be more globally minded and less individually-centred. (Mackinlay; 2005, vii-viii)

CONCLUSION

It is now clear how the conception of counterinsurgency has not been static and monolithic through history. Its ideas, scope, aims, visions, participating actors and more especially, the methods that are seen as valid, have changed throughout different stages in the past. An initial approach to fight insurgents and rebels, during the 19th and beginning of the 20th Centuries, was characterized by the use of excessive force and brutality, mainly through military means, not only against the rebels themselves but against the population base of the insurgents.

As the approach proved to be counterproductive, the vision of COIN started to change into methods that didn't focus on the destruction of the insurgency directly, but on the disruption of the link between insurgents and its popular base, the civilian communities within which they operated. Whether initially harsh methods, such as entirely moving communities from their places of origin, were seen as valid, later, only mild methods, like propaganda campaigns, proved to be more effective.

The conception broadened from a purely military action to an exercise of all state institutions. In this sense, while initially Military Forces and Police were called to the confrontation against insurgencies, later institutions dealing with local and sustained development, finances, education, health, labour issues and the like, would have to join the fight against rebels. In other words, COIN was finally understood as a political enterprise requiring the participation and coordination of many state institutions, particularly because the commitment of the state moved beyond the

simple elimination of the insurgency and into the construction of state institutions in areas where the rebels were not return.

A question remains open and motivates the conduction of further research. Given the context of globalization, hyper connectivity and complexity, insurgencies seem to be adapting into more networked structures with cells, nodes and individuals placed in different countries. How the counterinsurgent, which has mainly been the state, is about to evolve in order to confront more effectively this type of complex organizations should be a matter of current debate.

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