

**Discussing the symbiosis between
antinarcotics and counterinsurgency:
ideas for a different theoretical framework ***

**La discusión sobre la relación entre
antinarcóticos y contrainsurgencia:
ideas para la construcción de un marco teórico diferente**

**Un discusion sur la symbiose entre
opérations antinarcotiques et contre-insurrection:
des idées pour un cadre théorique différent**

**A discussão sobre a relação entre
antinarcóticos e contrainsurgência:
idéias para um quadro teórico diferente**

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Abstract. The present article discusses the relation between antinarcotics and counterinsurgency. As explained by several criminologists, insurgencies may experience processes of transformation when they establish connections with criminal organizations or when they increasingly develop criminal activities by themselves. The case with narcotics is a clear example. States have confronted such insurgencies through a combination of antinarcotics and counterinsurgency instruments, but according to several scholars, they are both at odds and the former is actually counterproductive for the latter. This article explains how these two concepts are in fact interdependent and mutually necessary. In the end, it proposes the bases, and only the bases, for a particular theoretical framework on the relation between counterinsurgency and antinarcotics, without fully discussing the details that would constitute a paradigm.

Keywords. Insurgency, counterinsurgency, drugs, antinarcotics, networks, criminality, terrorism.

Resumen. El presente artículo discute la relación entre antinarcóticos y contrainsurgencia. Como lo han explicado varios criminólogos, las insurgencias pueden experimentar procesos de transformación cuando establecen conexiones con organizaciones criminales o a medida que desarrollan actividades criminales por sí mismas. El caso de los narcóticos es un ejemplo claro. Los estados han confrontado dicho tipo de insurgencias a través de una combinación de instrumentos de antinarcóticos y contrainsurgencia, pero de acuerdo a algunos académicos, estos no solo son opuestos sino que el primero es contraproducente para el segundo. Este artículo explica como estos dos conceptos, de hecho, son interdependientes y se necesitan mutuamente. Al final, se propone la base, y solo la base, para un marco teórico sobre la relación entre contrainsurgencia y antinarcóticos, sin discutir los detalles que constituirían un paradigma.

Palabras clave. Insurgencia, contrainsurgencia, drogas, antinarcoticos, redes, criminalidad, terrorismo.

Résumé. Le présent article examine la relation entre opérations antinarcotiques et contre-insurrection. Comme il est expliqué par les criminologues, plusieurs insurrections subissent des processus de transformation quand ils établissent des liens avec des organisations criminelles ou à mesure qu'ils développent des activités criminelles par eux-mêmes. Le cas d'utilisation de stupéfiants constitue un exemple clair. Ce type des insurrections ont été confrontés par les États à travers une combinaison de opérations antinarcotiques et contre-insurrection; mais selon quelques spécialistes, ceux-ci ne sont pas seulement opposés mais les premiers produisent des effets contraires à ceux des seconds. Cet article explique comment ces deux concepts sont en fait interdépendants et mutuellement nécessaires. A la fin, il propose les bases (et seulement les bases), les bases d'un cadre théorique décrivant les relations entre la contre-insurrection et des opérations antinarcotiques, sans discuter des détails qui pourraient constituer un paradigme.

Mots-clés. Insurrection, Contre-insurrection, drogue trafic, les anti-narcotiques réseaux, criminalité, terrorisme.

Resumo. Este artigo discute a relação entre antinarcóticos e contrainsurgência. Segundo os criminologistas, as insurgências podem sofrer processos de transformação quando estabelecem conexões com o crime organizado ou à medida que, elas desenvolvem atividades criminosas. O caso dos narcóticos é um exemplo claro. Os Estados têm enfrentado este tipo de insurgências por meio de uma combinação de instrumentos de antinarcóticos e contrainsurgência mas, de acordo com alguns estudiosos, estes não são apenas opostos, pois o primeiro é contraproducente para o segundo. Este artigo, explica como estes dois conceitos, na verdade, são interdependentes e precisam um do outro. Finalmente, propõe-se a base, e somente a base para um enquadramento teórico sobre a relação entre a contrainsurgência e antinarcóticos, sem discutir os detalhes que constituiriam um paradigma.

Palavras-chave. Insurgência, contra-insurgência, drogas, antinarcóticos, redes, criminalidade, terrorismo.

Introduction

The complex world of non-state actors has become central to Strategic and Security Studies. The existence of innumerable terrorist organizations, insurgencies, cartels, criminal entities, gangs and mafias have made policy formulation more difficult, while their interaction, in the context of highly interconnected societies, is making the state look as weak actor to respond to the problem. Although there are many ways in which such actors interrelate, generating an immeasurable amount of processes, consequences and strategic scenarios, this paper will elaborate on one particular reality: insurgencies which display criminal interests derived from the production and trade of narcotics.

Insurgencies may become hybrids of criminality and political insurrection, when a source as profitable as narcotics becomes a motivation for individuals or sectors within the insurgency, to continue waging war. Conflict scenarios become nothing more than a gray combination of unattended causes of grievance, interests of profit within and outside the insurgency, and the impossibility of marginalized communities to find profitable sources of sustenance within the licit economy.

There are several examples of insurgencies dealing with narcotics, though they differ on the purpose and degree of importance of such activity: the Taliban in Afghanistan, Sendero Luminoso in Peru, tribal independent movements in Burma, the Hmong minority in Laos, the IRA in Northern Ireland, the ETA in the Spain, the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, and The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).

States have recurred to counterinsurgency actions, on one hand, and anti-narcotics operations on the other. It is possible to believe, as state officials usually do, that the efforts are complimentary; but others argue anti-narcotics is counterproductive for counterinsurgency. The present document discusses how, according to different levels of interaction between crime and terror, both instruments are in fact interdependent, and in the end, presents a particular theoretical approach as a framework for further theorization. It must be made clear that this paper will not explore the specific practical actions or mechanisms to be developed by counterinsurgents regarding antinarcotics/ counterinsurgency; it merely presents a base for a theoretical approach from which such propositions might be further explored.

For this purpose, the involvement of insurgencies on narcotics, and the organizational consequences will be explored, revising several sources from the field of Criminology. Afterwards, the antinarcotics-counterinsurgency dilemma will be explored, followed by the current approach to the construction of counterinsurgency theory. A final section will explore a different theoretical construction from which to build the relation between counterinsurgency and antinarcotics.

1. Networks and the nexus between criminality and insurgency

Christopher Coker explains how “every age fights wars in its own ways, every era has its own defining characteristics” (Coker, 2009, ix). While agricultural societies fought with basic instruments, in a war which was centred on the possession of territory, industrial societies incorporated industrial instruments to warfare creating the massive total wars of the 20th Century. Today, an interconnected global society features networked and global non-state actors as one of the main protagonists of the strategic scenario.

Just like corporations and multinational companies expand through several countries creating linkages with other corporations and placing nodes of operations overseas, so do criminal actors, insurgencies and terrorists creating what Manuel Castells refers to as the global criminal economy (Castells, 1998).

The network has become the main structure of actors in war (Bunker, 2005, Bousquet, 2009, Arquila and Ronfeldt, 2001), and insurgency itself has become characterized by networks of individuals placed in different societies and different countries (Mackinlay, 2009, Kilcullen, 2009). Phillip Bobbit, who wrote a seminal piece on the history of war and peace, explains how today, in the era of the ‘market state’, terrorism becomes a malevolent form of a market state through varied sources of interconnection. (Sullivan, 2005, 69)

Narcotics structures are increasingly becoming more networked, extending beyond the borders of the country where they operate. Cartels are setting nodes in different countries and increasing their connections with others, as exemplified by FARC and Mexican mafias, or Colombian drug dealers in West Africa. This reality challenges the power of the state since its capacity of action beyond its borders is limited and as drug networks create the possibility for criminals to survive. The balloon effect, which is explained ahead, strengthens this possibility.

It is through this networked environment that the interaction between criminals and insurgents has flourished during recent decades, more than at any other period in history. But how is that interaction happening? To what extent are insurgents using narcotics becoming criminals?

Interactions were first believed to happen in terms of methods. Louise Shelley and John Picarely initially explained how cooperation was given through intersected network structures (Shelley, 2002, 85-87), arguing that transnational criminal organizations and terror/insurgency groups adopt similar methods but strive for divergent ends; the basis of a “methods not motives approach” (Shelley and Picarely, 2002, 85-87).

But the doubt about a simple interaction in terms of methods motivated further study, and the convergence of both insurgent and criminal organizations emerged. Tamara Makarenko, proposing this became evident through the 1990s developed a continuum of interaction. (Figure 1.1).

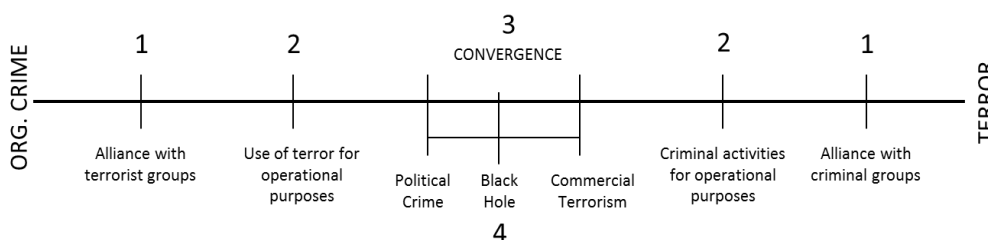


Figure 1. A continuum of interaction, through networked narcotics structures, between transnational criminal organizations and terror/insurgency groups emerged.

Source: Makarenko, 2004, 130.

The continuum implies four kinds of crime-terror relationships (numbers represented in the figure):

1. Alliances: Organizations remain close to both ends of the continuum, (FARC and Mexican Cartels, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Afghan Mafia, Al Qaeda and Bosnian Criminals). They can be strategic alliances on the long term or agreements of action for a particular situation.
2. Operational motivations: Organizations mutating to take on the non-traditional role rather than maintaining cooperation with others. Criminal groups using terrorism and terrorist groups taking part in criminal activities *as an operational tool*, (Italian Mafia, ETA, FARC, PKK, Hizbullah).
3. Convergence: The gray area. Criminal and political organizations converge into a single entity that initially displays characteristics of both simultaneously, but with the potential of transforming into an entity placed at the end of the spectrum. Transformation occurs in such a degree that the original motivations of the organization change. This would include criminal groups that display political motivations (Russian and Albanian Mafia) and terrorist groups interested in criminal profit with the facade of a political cause, (Abu Sayyaf, IMU, FARC).
4. Black Hole syndrome: Where weak or failed states foster a convergence between transnational organized crime and terrorism. A safe haven for convergent groups. It encompasses two situations: motivations of groups engaged in civil war change from political to criminal, and the state is successfully taken over by a hybrid group.

Phil Williams went a step further. He believed that categories should be further disaggregated. He made a difference between the essence of organizations and the instrumental use of peripheral activities, making distinctions between organized crime as a method, as an entity, and terrorism as method and as entity. In that sense he defined different types of interactions: cooperation between entities, appropriation of criminal activities by terrorist entities, terrorist activities by criminal entities. (Williams, 2008)

But his vital proposition consists on the idea of hybrid entities. These are organizations for which it is not possible to have a clear definition of its nature (either political or criminal). Thus, he describes the possibility of the transformation of organizations; most likely that of terrorist into criminals. Williams believes that although cooperation between groups is common, transformation is more likely. (Williams, 2008, 145)

Now, how are these instruments of analysis relevant for counterinsurgency? Basically, depending of the type of interaction, the importance of the fight against narcotics for counterinsurgency varies.

2. Counterinsurgency and narcotics

The relation between counterinsurgency and antinarcotics has been of relative interest, and in general terms, a systematic effort to theorize about this linkage has hardly existed.

The narcoterrorism approach has traditionally been a basis of state action. Governments have argued that insurgents and drug dealers or traffickers are essentially the same, and that narcotics constitute the main reason for conflict to exist.¹ Premises of this approach include the idea that the end to war is achieved through the elimination of drugs; that the political objectives of an organization are lost when it establishes contacts with criminal organizations; that interests on peace negotiations are non-existent; and that only through the use of force there will there be a solution. (Felbab-Brown, 2010, 4-5)

The most recent proposition on the subject was made by Vanda Felbab-Brown from the Brookings Institution, contradicting the traditional view of the correlation between counterinsurgency and antinarcotics as understood by the narcoterrorism approach. She believes counterinsurgency is at odds with antinarcotics, that the 'war on drugs' have not only failed to eliminate insurgencies but it had eroded government's efforts in counterinsurgency. This, because through the narcotics economy insurgents generate political capital materialized through freedom of action, popular support and legitimacy from the communities that depend on drug production/trade. Antinarcotics make the counterinsurgent unpopular because it destroys the very source on which communities rely for their sustainment.

In Felbab-Brown's view legitimacy is not only constructed in terms of ideological affinity, there is also legitimacy derived from the ability to feed, protect and serve. She even believes the latter might be a more reliable source of legitimacy than ideology itself. (Felbab-Brown, 2010, 1-33)

As true as elements presented by Felbab-Brown are, the negative correlation between counterinsurgency and antinarcotics is overrated. The two camps are not necessarily at odds and even in certain circumstances the latter is necessary for the former.

It is undeniable that the lens of 'narcoterrorism' oversimplifies the complexity of the situation. It is true that differences need to be recognized between insurgencies and other groups such as traffickers, mafias, cartels, and that their interests might collide. It is also correct to criticize the categorization of insurgencies as entirely criminals, and most of all, her explanations are valuable in the recognition that popular support also emerges in the absence of an ideology, through the provision of sources.

But the correlation between counterinsurgency and the struggle against narcotics becomes evident when the dynamics of the networks between criminals and insurgents are brought into analysis. The degree of dependence of counterinsurgency on antinarcotics should vary according to the degree of interaction terrorism/crime presented above. In principle and by logic:

When an insurgency remains in its natural end, the 'terror' end for Makarenko, traditional counterinsurgency should suffice.

¹ Ehrenfeld notes that the phenomenon started to be studied by the American government around 1982 (Ehrenfeld, 1990)

When alliances with criminals exist, focusing on the political nature of the insurgency might still seem logical as long as the linkages with criminals are broken and sectors of insurgency do not feel tempted by the criminal side of the equation. Fighting it solely through antinarcotics becomes insufficient, since the insurgency will search new sources of funding by either establishing new alliances or appropriating criminal activities.

When the insurgency has appropriated criminal methods for operational purpose then, like in the case before, fighting the political side should succeed since the political motivation of the insurgency is still the goal, unless sectors become attracted to the profits. If only a criminal side is fought, the insurgency will very likely find alternative sources of funding.

But if transformation is present, if the organization is a hybrid or a commercial insurgency in the terms of Williams and Metz, if a degree of convergence according to Makarenko exists in the term of a loss in original purposes, then it logically follows that focusing on the political nature of the insurgency is insufficient. It is also necessary to address both its political and its criminal dimensions. In practical terms, if such insurgency is fought solely through antinarcotics, it is likely that alternative sources of funding will be found while preserving the popular support of communities (Felbab-Brown's thesis). But, if only the political dimension is addressed (in Felbab-Brown's terms the popular support from communities) then narcotic networks could provide the means for the continued existence of such entity. In the words of Grant Wardlaw:

"In some cases it might be more appropriate to apply pressure on the narcotic side of the equation such as with FARC, when centrality of drugs is vital to the fortunes of the insurgency, "If the government reacts to the problem basically as if they were an insurgency and give low priorities to antidrug measures, such actions may form a self defeating strategy." (Wardlaw, 1988, 14)

A positive correlation can be further observed when the differentiation of the two forms of legitimacy is further analysed. The proper question in this case might not be if there is popular support derived from the provision of services, but what the nature of this support is, or how 'loyal' this support becomes. When legitimacy deriving from an ideology is at play, a real dialectical competition to win the hearts and minds of the population becomes necessary; the counterinsurgent has to convince the community of why his vision, his propositions and his ideas are better than those of the insurgent.

When support for the insurgency is based only in its capability to provide services to the community, then, to put it in simple terms, its loyalty is 'for sale'. The real concern of the population is to have its services provided, not who provides them (with an advantage for the government explained ahead). The attachment to the insurgency then could be breakable if other actor (the state) is able to provide the same or better services that allow the continuance of its living conditions. If a counterinsurgency model is capable of providing such elements while keeping the insurgency away, then narcotics remain as a unique source of power for the insurgency and in order to achieve their defeat antinarcotics become relevant.

If there is friction between counterinsurgency and antinarcotics it is a matter of praxis, not of theory. It is a problem of the 'how to'. The counterinsurgency model needs to be less a matter of convincing the population of why its visions or ideas are better, and more of about providing economic alternatives (Develop-centred counterinsurgency, if liked).

On the other hand, a deeper observation of society might offer advantages to the counterinsurgent in its conduction of antinarcotics. Population is not a monolithic mass; it might not be insensitive to realities and concerns other than their own. Legitimacy is defined in terms of actions that are

beneficial and justified. But how do individuals in the communities interpret this benefit? Do they see it as a benefit for themselves in spite of the impacts on the national level? Do they perceive that their actions might generate a wider national rejection? If individuals genuinely believe that their actions might not be beneficial or seen as legitimate for society as a whole, they might be willing to abandon their involvement in narcotics.

The population, in order to achieve stability within the law, might accept a trade-off between their illicit sources of income for security, tranquillity and even the goodwill of the nation. Even if such exchange represent a marginal loss in their income (which is not necessarily always the case). This is the advantage that the government has against the insurgent in the balance of the competition between 'service providers'.

But this is not the end of the dilemma, even though counterinsurgency and antinarcotics can be understood as interdependent instruments when fighting a specific type of hybrid insurgency, there is still one problem to address. As stated before the dynamics of narcotic networks are borderless and tend to be global. In that sense, they may offer opportunities for the insurgency to survive. An example is offered by the 'balloon effect': when coca or poppy crops are reduced in a specific zone or region, they increase in other areas. This mobility offers the possibility of carrying elements of the insurgency to other areas, and even to return, if crops re-appear in the first zones. In that sense, a different theoretical approach can be constructed in order to deal with this obstacle, but this requires an understanding of how the thought on counterinsurgency has been constructed.

3. The construction of counterinsurgency theory

Military Historian Jonathan Gumz, has explained how the historical narrative of Counterinsurgency has been mis-constructed. He believes specific periods of history have been erroneously placed within the limits of either conventional or unconventional conflict, creating a strict dichotomy between the two camps. (Gumz, 2009, 557)

The American narrative of counterinsurgency, concentrates heavily in the last sixty years of conflict, marginalizing the Second World War, usually cited as an entire conventional conflict. The Civil War, the First and Second World Wars and Korea, created a vision of war deeply embedded within military culture as conventional battles between mass armies. The Military Services became the most advanced, powerful and strong to wage conventional warfare, while irregular warfare was understood as a type of war not worthy to fight, or to be prepared for. This is the essence of what became known as 'the American way of war'².

The negative results in Vietnam reinforced the study of the AirLand battle doctrine during the 1970s and the 1980s, which was further strengthened with the technological advances from the late 1980s and 1990s: the maximization of air power, precision, stealth, force projection and battlespace awareness. This was the core of a vision commonly denominated as the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), widely promoted by Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld: A "major change in the nature of warfare brought about by the innovative application of technologies which, combined with dramatic changes in military doctrine and operational and organizational concepts, fundamentally alters the character and conduct of military operations." (Sloan; 2002, 3)

² Authors like Andrew Krepinevich and Colin Gray have referred to this American way of warfare, which Gray qualifies as: apolitical, astrategic, ahistorical, problem solving-optimistic, culturally challenged, technology dependent, focused on firepower, large-scaled, aggressive-offensive, profoundly regular, impatient, logistically excellent, and highly sensitive to casualties.

The dichotomy was materialized through doctrine with the formulation of concepts like Small Wars, during the 1940s, with the publication of the Small Wars Manual; Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) around mid-1980s with the publication of Field Manual 100-20 and Military Operations Other than War (MOOTW) during the 1990's.

Unlike the United States, as Robert Cassidy explains, British doctrine was not written until well advanced the twentieth century. However, following Bruce Hoffman, after the Second World War, a conception of a separate 'type of war' existed.³ During the 1950's doctrine placed nuclear deterrence and coercion as the priority, while a minor reference to low intensity law enforcement was made.⁴ But, also by contrast to US experience, the British forces have been historically more structured to face irregular warfare.⁵

As a consequence of the dichotomy, according to Gumz, counterinsurgency writers in the United States create an alternative historical narrative concentrating in the American involvement in irregular contentions during the last 200 years, "removing the history of the twentieth century warfare from Europe in the first half of the twentieth century to the rest of the world in the post 1945 era (...) charting involvement with insurgency from the Revolutionary war, to the Indian Wars, to the Philippines, to Marine-led intervention in Central America, to Vietnam and finally to Iraq," (Gumz, 2009, 557)⁶. In other words, COIN authors concentrate in the modern era of insurgency, which is an "extra European narrative that begins in 1945 (...) and is tied to Third World national liberation movements as well as to communist insurgencies" (Gumz, 2009, 558)

In a general view, the universal study of counterinsurgency follows this pattern, looking before the First World War, then to the interwar period (although a 'Fourth Generation Warfare' perspective would omit this lapse) continuing with the post Second World War era of national liberation and communist insurgencies; and today, almost exclusively to Al Qaeda and its associate organizations worldwide. As M.L.R. Smiths correctly asserts, the theorization of COIN brought guerrilla separated from war, especially after Vietnam and Algeria. (Smith, 2003)

Following Gumz, this understanding is less an effort to resituate the evolution of insurgency in warfare and more the creation of a new memory of insurgency for military purposes, maintaining "an insistent dichotomy between conventional warfare and insurgency because this historical narrative is far more a narrative of the present than of the past (...) This suggest that most of the current professional military scholarship on insurgency is driven by the desire to make arguments about the priorities in the here and the now, not the relative importance of insurgency in the past." (Gumz, 2009, 559)

Gumz cites two consequences to this construction. On one hand, there is no real interest on understanding the origins of insurgency and its evolution; and on the other, authors create an incorrect teleology of warfare, as a progression through stages (the logic behind the 'generations of war' theory). (Gumz, 2009, 560)

³ For a detailed development of this doctrine, and an analysis of mistakes committed during the counterinsurgency campaigns revise (Hoffman and Taw, 1991, 14)

⁴ This could be understood by reading (Hoffman and Taw, 1991, 14) or (United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff, 2001, iii)

⁵ The case is very well argued by US Colonel Robert Cassidy in (Cassidy, 2005, 54-57)

⁶ Jonathan Gumz, "Reframing the Historical Problematic of Insurgency: How the Professional Military Literature Created a New Story and Missed the Past", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, (Vol. 32 No. 4, 2009) p. 557

For the dilemma of narcotics, this model of COIN places support of the society as the centre of gravity to be won in order to achieve victory, picturing communities as an homogeneous monolithic mass with synonymous interests, sensitive to a dialectical contest in which the insurgent and the counterinsurgent fight with the most attractive idea for the population, and where the counterinsurgent promotes a broad idea of development. This perspective does not seem useful when individuals, indifferent to the political struggle, perpetuate the existence of the insurgency with their profiting interests.

If a globalized network dynamic of narcotics in its combination with insurgencies and terrorism rests behind a particular insurgency, and at some point it is able to sustain it, then efforts to win support of the population in specific areas within national borders seems to be limited as only one piece of the puzzle of a wider problem. Counterinsurgency should then acquire a different dimension to be able to address the problem in the entirety of its complexity. How can this be done?

4. The concept of war autonomy and an alternative construction for counterinsurgency theory

Jonathan Gumz proposes a different historical construction based on the idea of the loss of war autonomy as proposed by Carl Schmitt. He explores Schmitt's vision

“as a starting point alongside the current literature on the development of war (...) starting with Schmitt and then moving to key points in the loss of war's autonomy over the last for 220 years (...) to sketch a historical narrative of insurgency radically different from the one that prevails in the current professional military literature on insurgency”

(Gumz, 2009, 567)

According to Schmitt, insurgency is the result of the breakup of the contention of war, the loss of war autonomy, and the inclusion of the population into the realm of war. (Gumz, 2009, 576) Contained war consisted in its restriction as an affair of states, and its conduction by organized military forces under the direction of national governments. Civilians remained excluded from it, and thus war remained as 'autonomous' institution from society. It's the breakup of such contention, from the late eighteenth until the early twentieth century, which provides a different historiography for insurgency.

The highest level in the autonomy of war was reached through the formulation of the *jus publicum europaeum*, “the system of law born out of the Westphalia Treaty that informed foreign policy between nations states and regulated hostility and war between them.” (Slump, 2005, 508) Within this order, according to Gabriella Slump there was a marked distinction between war and peace, civil and military, enemy and criminal, external and internal. (Slump, 2005, 508)

The reason behind the collapse is a matter of debate, but as argued by Gumz, events from the eighteenth and nineteenth century put it at pressure: the Jacobin *levee en masse*, Napoleon's disruptive occupations of other societies, and colonial expansion of European powers. All of these forced people to take arms, and war started to leave the traditional realm of the state and its military, to include the mass of societies. The Prussian Landstrum Edict of 1812, constituted for Schmitt a sort of Magna Carta of partisanship or insurgency: an official document by King Wilhelm III inviting “every citizen (...) to resist the intruder enemy with weapons of whatever kind.” (Schmitt, 1963, 33)

After the Napoleonic demise, the Congress of Vienna managed to restore the autonomy of war to a certain extent. How it was achieved and how deep the restitution was is a matter of juridical technicality. But further actions of states, particularly the increase in manned and industrial firepower of Germany and Russia, made it impossible to keep war out of society's reach. Mass mobilization was progressively accepted during the First World War, and during the Second World War the trend accelerated. When such events are analysed from the point of view of the loss of war autonomy and not from 'conventionality', they become part of the narrative on insurgencies. Referring to the Second World War Gumz argues that:

"Wars became fundamentally ideologically fought not just across Europe in a geographical sense, but cut across European societies producing a series of nationalizing and ideological wars which constituted the heart of World War II (...) they can largely be conceptualized as a series of unbounded insurgencies in that they were not solely confined to professional militaries alone, but rather involved several ideological and nationalized groups"

(Gumz, 2001, 577)

In the end it was the Geneva Conventions, in Schmitt's view, that buried the autonomy of war by equating members of an organized resistance movement to members of militias and volunteer corps and conferring on them rights and privileges of regular combatants. Insurgency became a normatively and legally accepted mode of war. (Schmitt, 1963, 15)

Now, how is this narrative relevant for counterinsurgency and anti-narcotics? When insurgency is understood as a consequence of the brake up of the autonomy of war, counterinsurgency becomes much more than the simple construction of recommendations for specific strategic scenarios gathering 'lessons learned' from past experiences. It acquires a new dimension in the direction of theoretically restoring the contention or autonomy of war, and taking away the elements that allow societies to wage war by themselves. This must be understood as a philosophical-theoretical construct, as a direction for actions to follow, but not as a practical objective itself to be achieved by nation-states. A return to the autonomy of war is almost a utopic enterprise.

Neither does this mean that counterinsurgency is equivalent to such reinstatement; this task goes far beyond the interest in insurgencies, and demands political, juridical, social, strategic, military, economic, and trade actions of almost impossible reach. But for theoretical and conceptual purposes counterinsurgency acquires a new dimension entitled with the mission of confronting the dilemmas of insurgency as a whole, and not particular insurgencies in the field. It becomes a very different philosophical construct requiring the action not of states but of the entire international society.

Theorizing on counterinsurgency along these lines is a vast and complex enterprise; a fact recognized by Gumz himself, but he has opened the door for scholars to theorize about particular areas within this wider effort.

From this perspective, anti-narcotics becomes a logical component of counterinsurgency, as one, and only one, of the efforts in which the international society must engage in order to 'take away' all elements that place war in the hands of societies; that allow insurgencies to exist. The restriction of narcotics, as one of the sources which provide funds for societies (insurgencies) to fight, is a logical task under this approach. This vision is also coherent with the structure of today's highly interconnected and global society, and the existence of a global criminal economy as explained by Castells: The networked, global and state-less dynamics of the criminal structures of narcotics make local, state-based efforts more limited.

Conclusion

It is evident that in several cases there is a connection between insurgency and crime, particularly through narcotics, with considerable implications. Not only conflicts last longer, but insurgencies suffer a process of transformation eroding its original political purpose.

This circumstance forces states to combine elements from counterinsurgency and antinarcotics in order to confront them successfully. But, in the field, it seems like the two instruments are at odds and antinarcotics is counterproductive for counterinsurgency. However, given different stages of cooperation and transformation criminals/insurgents, it is still necessary to deal with the problem of drugs in the path of fighting rebels.

From the traditional approach to the theorization of counterinsurgency, viewing it as a separate kind of war, it is more difficult to address the networked character of drug chains as an integral part of the problem of insurgencies, because as a 'separate entity' it does not necessarily include the fight against drug production/trafficking. This is why a different approach to the construction of theory is here proposed: one in which fighting against the insurgency and fighting against the sources which allow the insurgency to exist (including narcotics) are conceived as inherent part of the same effort. The approach is especially useful when the transnational character of narcotic networks is included in the analysis: a state centred approach to counterinsurgency seems to be insufficient because drug networks will exist beyond the borders of a particular state, creating the opportunities for criminal actors to survive. A transnational approach, actions by the international society, seems to be more appropriate in this case.

Once again, this article was not interested in presenting the practical actions that should follow according to the approach to the theorization of counterinsurgency here proposed, but it is an invitation into further thinking on this subject.

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