

COUNTERINSURGENCY STRATEGIES: AN ACHILLES' HEEL FOR TWO EMPIRES

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Submitted to
Central European University
Department of Political Science

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

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Budapest, Hungary
(2015)

Abstract

The given work explores the differences and similarities in the flexibility of counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies employed by the British Empire in South Yemen and by the United States of America in Afghanistan. Utilizing the comparative approach the research offers a comparative account of the application of COIN strategies in two selected cases. The study particularly focuses on the application of the principles of *hearts and minds (HAM)* approach to countering insurgency. Moreover, the research conceptualizes counterinsurgency and provides an overall assessment of the effectiveness of British and American conduct of counterinsurgency warfare. In addition, the study explores the correlation between the flexibility of strategies and the outcome of COIN campaigns. The research puzzle of the given study is questioning the extent to which counterinsurgency strategy should be flexible and asks what must remain unchanged in it. The author concludes that, on the one hand, a COIN strategy must be flexible to the extent that does not alter its basic principles. On the other, the strategy must be flexible to the extent of adjusting it to the context of actual military theatre.

Acknowledgements

This research is made possible thanks to the contributions of many people. Primarily, the author wishes to recognize Professor Tamas Mezserics for the intellectual inspiration he has given me as well as for his comprehensive support and guidance along with his patience and competency that bolstered my determination to delve into researching the theme and complete the thesis on the topic. Without any doubt, this inquiry owes to the guidance and expertise of the CEU Political Science Department I was fortunate to receive. The faculty and staff who helped me tremendously during my studies at the university to gain necessary critical skills and well-rounded knowledge base for conducting research work. In particular, special thanks are genuinely addressed to Professors Carsten Schneider, Gabor Toka, Tamas Rudas, Levente Littvay, Dr.Merten Reglitz, and Dr.Robert Sata.

I sincerely appreciate my husband, my parents and my grandmother for their continuous and overwhelming love and care along with unceasing optimism and faith in me. I am also very grateful to my friend Yuliana Pleshakova for her extraordinary help in proof reading my work, her invaluable criticism of my work and the warmest personal support she granted me with.

Special gratitude is expressed to Professor Pal Tamas, Professor Gregory Gleason, and Professor Ken Charman for the incredible impact they have had on the development of my research skills and abilities to think independently.

Earnest thanks to all who have assisted me in the process; nevertheless, all omissions and errors are my own.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Counterinsurgency strategies became an inherent part of the overall military doctrines for most of the contemporary states because insurgency is one of the oldest forms of conflict. Nations on every continent have experienced or intervened in insurgencies and the vast majority of armed conflicts today occurs inside states rather than between them (Nagl 1999). As Kilcullen (2010:ix-x) notes, in the modern era, the Correlates of War Project, a scholarly database maintained since 1963, identifies 464 wars that occurred between 1816 and the end of the twentieth century, of which only 79 (17%) were conventional, while 385 (just under 83%) were civil wars or insurgencies. Nevertheless, the importance of studying insurgency and counterinsurgency is not determined only by the prevalence of unconventional warfare among other types of warfare but also by the significant decline of the nuclear weaponry deterrence effect. The latter has resulted in the growth in the usage of other more available means of conducting warfare.

It comes as no surprise that asymmetric warfare is one of the cheapest and highly effective types of warfare due to its low costs and accessibility of ways to conduct it for the nonconventional military forces such as guerilla, insurgents, rebels etc. However, for the conventional military forces counterinsurgency is expensive difficult and burdensome. Cassidy (2002:2) argues that historically, great powers have fought small wars and counterinsurgencies badly. Namely, he concludes that they do not lose them so much as they fail to win them, adding that asymmetry in strategy, technology, or national will create an Achilles heel for great powers.

Kilcullen (2006a) also elucidates the paradox of the strength and weakness of conventional power in countering insurgency stating that counterinsurgency is a fight with the insurgent for the hearts, minds, and acquiescence of the population, meanwhile the insurgents can defeat anything with less strength than counterinsurgent regardless the fact that the latter has more combat power.

Just like insurgency warfare, counterinsurgency has a long history. Many powerful countries such as the Soviet Union, the UK, the US, and even India have more or less short record of successful counterinsurgency campaigns. Despite that fact, a well-elaborated, effectively and

universally implemented counter insurgency strategy still has not appeared. Therefore, the question is whether it is possible to have a universal strategy. If so, how flexible should or can it be? What elements of such strategy must remain unchanged?

Perhaps, the obstacle to creating universal counterinsurgency strategy can be partly attributed to the bureaucratic nature of an army as an organization. Therefore, in order to remain an army must maintain a precarious equilibrium of adapting changes and yet staying structured and stable. As the result, maintaining such balance creates a paradox within the organization. Excessive changes can negatively affect the stability of the organization by putting at risk its existence; simultaneously, the absence of changes and innovations can also lead to the collapse of the organization due to its inability to adapt to the altering environment. In other words, if the armed forces change too much, they may lose its established identity. Yet, if they fail to adjust, they could cease to exist (Alden 2013). Moreover, this need for a fine balance between adaptability and fixed structure is present not only in the armed forces as organization but also in the military strategies.

4.1 Research Puzzle and Research Purpose

Counterinsurgency strategy as a set of rules and actions on how to conduct irregular warfare requires both rigid planning and relatively high flexibility. This exposes the fundamental quandary of counterinsurgency: the undefined extent to which the conduct of counterinsurgency warfare must be in accordance with the strategy along with unknown degree to which the strategy should be subordinated to the rules derived from the real military practices. *In other words, the question is what level of flexibility of counterinsurgency strategies is necessary to lead for winning outcome? This question represents the overall research puzzle that is being explored in the present study.*

In order to solve this research puzzle the given study looks at the counterinsurgency strategies that were applied in two different contexts and analyzes the dynamics of counterinsurgency warfare conducted in those cases. This research aims to answer the primary

research question: *what are the differences and similarities in flexibility levels of counterinsurgency strategies of the British Empire employed during Aden Emergency and of the US applied in its recent operation in Afghanistan?* Both strategies were developed on so-called *hearts and minds* (HAM) approach; however, both of them adapted the principles of the stated approach to a different extent. Given this, the study focuses on the flexibility/rigidity of considered strategies in comparison with the basic principles of the *HAM* approach. Moreover, the research intends to determine how flexible/rigid the chosen strategies were. It also considers what kind of changes were introduced to the strategies during the conduct of the warfare and to what outcomes they can be traced? Thus, the research provides an overall assessment of the results of counterinsurgency campaigns and compares the flexibility of the strategies with their effectiveness.

Along these lines, the purpose of the present study is to analyze the flexibility/rigidity of the chosen strategies and impart an overall assessment of the results of applications of those counterinsurgency strategies in selected cases.

The hypothesis of the research suggests that any counterinsurgency strategy expresses some level of flexibility. It is the alteration of basic principles of the strategy along with its adaptation to the operational environment that makes the strategy highly flexible. The alteration of basic principles also includes only partial fulfillment of the principles as opposed to their full realization. It must be added, that the research does not measure the actual effect that the level of flexibility has on the outcome of counterinsurgency campaign. The study only aims to find the correlation between the parameter (the level of flexibility) and the outcome (won or lost COIN¹ campaign). Although I assume that there is an effect, the study does not measure it. No causation is implied.

¹COIN is a widely used abbreviation for counterinsurgency. Although some experts believe there is a difference between COIN and counterinsurgency on the conceptual level, such view is not widely accepted and I consider these terms as similar.

The motivation behind the decision to study the chosen issue has arisen from my interest in the current conflict in Afghanistan as well as from my experience in researching terrorism-related issues. Overall, the given study is an attempt to understand and rationalize the apparently paradoxical strength and weakness of both Empires (the UK and the US) in countering insurgency movements.

4.2 Theoretical Framework and Research Contribution

Today there is an abundance of papers produced by academics, practitioners and journalists who dedicated their attention to the issues of conducting irregular warfare. British and US counterinsurgency strategies in particular have been extensively covered by scholars and practitioners across the world; references to works of many of them can be found throughout this paper.

A great amount of literature spans scholarly endeavors to theorize causes of successful counterinsurgency warfare. Thus, there are some comprehensive studies with detailed cases analysis attempting to make a test of a wide range of different factors contributing to the success or failure of different counterinsurgency campaigns. However, many of the studies use a similar set of variables to test hypotheses about the factors contributing to the success of COIN campaigns. In this respect it must be noted that within the frames of quantitative approach numerous authors strive to be build a “standard model” of the effective strategy for COIN warfare.

Undoubtedly, many works revealed common patterns in the conduct of COIN examining various reasons that lead to the particular outcomes. Yet, there is not much of agreement on it today. On the one side, there are many experts who believe in the 'effectiveness' of particular approaches for COIN such as *HAM*. On the other, many argue that specific types of insurgencies require specific responses; therefore, the universal counterinsurgency model is impossible. Meanwhile, there are some proven principles that are necessary (but not sufficient) for the successful outcomes of the COIN campaign. This might mean the strategic principles cannot be

altered and the strategy based on this approach should not be flexible in terms of changing its basic principles.

The *HAM* approach have a clear set of principles distinctly stated by Sir Robert Thompson in his book *Defeating Communist insurgency: the lessons of Malaya and Vietnam* (1966). Both the counterinsurgency doctrinal documents of the British Empire utilized during Aden Emergency and the US counterinsurgency manuals which directed COIN warfare in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2015 are based on the *HAM* approach. However, in spite of relying on the same approach both strategies realized its principles differently. In other words, both strategies were somewhat flexible when applied to the operational environment. In light of this observation, this study aims to determine which strategy was more rigid in realization of the principles of *HAM* approach. In addition, it explores whether strategies were fully adapted to the actual military theatre or they disregarded the context of their implementation.

In general, the scholarship on counterinsurgency lacks the detailed analysis of such characteristics of strategies as their flexibility and adaptability and their correlation with the outcome of the counterinsurgency campaigns. This research seeks to alleviate that deficit. It also offers an empirical testing of two cases in a comparative manner and provides a grounded assessment of their outcomes paying attention to a detailed contextualization of the cases. Therefore, apart from answering the question what the differences and similarities are in counterinsurgency strategies of the UK and the US applied in South Yemen and Afghanistan respectively, the given paper fills the gap in current scholarship on counterinsurgency by providing a detailed analysis of the differences in the flexibility of strategies and compares them to the observed differences in the outcomes. To put it simply, I investigated what strategy was more successful: the more flexible or the more rigid one.

In addition, the given paper conceptualizes the counterinsurgency and pays particular attention to the *HAM* approach for irregular warfare. The study also reviews the evolution of counterinsurgencies in the British Empire and the US and how they have been conducted in the

contexts of South Yemen and Afghanistan. The best and the worst practices of counterinsurgency operations are identified and analyzed in selected cases and the overall assessment of the COIN campaigns is rendered. This is especially important since that currently there are controversial views not only on the ends of the US operation in Afghanistan but also on the British campaign in South Arabia.

4.3 The Scope of the Research

Due to the primarily qualitative character of this research which is defined by the posed research questions the scope of this research is limited to two periods to which the selected cases belong, namely 1962-1967 (Aden Emergency in South Yemen) and 2001-2014 (Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan). It is important to note, that only counterinsurgency campaign of the UK in South Yemen against NFL and FLOSY insurgents is considered. I do not cover counterinsurgency efforts by Egyptian Army led by Nasser that was joining the wider military theatre in Yemen at that time. Similarly, only the US strategy and COIN campaigns conducted by the US military forces in Afghanistan are considered in this research without assessment of COIN strategies of coalition forces fighting within International Security Alliance Forces in Afghanistan in the same period.

4.4 Methodological Framework of the Research

Obviously, there are several methods that can be applied to discover the answer to my research question. Generally, social science inquiry can be encountered with different approaches to make a comparison (Przeworski 1982:33). For the examination of the differences and similarities of the selected strategies and their practical applications I employed the comparative method. The comparative method – sometimes referred to as ‘small N comparison’ – constitutes a distinctive approach to understand social phenomena (Ragin Robinson 2009). Overall, the methodology can be named as a simplified version of comparative case study analysis that allows immersing into the context of the selected cases and yet, staying in the frames of comparative

approach. However, the research does not aim at studying causality but focuses on the comparison. The unit of the analysis is a counterinsurgency strategy.

Undoubtedly, the number of cases inevitably influences the research design. Large n-analysis is usually quantitative. Case-oriented research and qualitative methods are most useful when applied to a small number of cases. However, this research is testing the hypothesis and therefore in order to bridge the divide between qualitative case-oriented research and quantitative, variable-oriented research the comparative method should be utilized (Ragin Robinson 2009).

Finally, this case study does not aim at making overarching generalizations because in case study the sample size is small and this makes the randomization problematic (Gerring 2006:87).

4.4.1 Case Selection

Among the justifications for the selected cases is their independence. Importantly, the cases of counterinsurgency warfare in South Yemen and Afghanistan are the examples of the application of the counterinsurgency strategies that were both developed from classical British doctrine based on the same *HAM* approach. Nevertheless, the selected strategies were developed independently by two different state actors and applied in different contexts and periods of time. The British colonial forces applied the *HAM* approach to the case of Aden Emergency. The US COIN strategy also adopted principles including them into the strategy for COIN in Afghanistan.

In addition, both cases share many characteristics that allow making an adequate comparison. In the selected cases the doctrines were changed; however, the nature of those adjustments was different. Therefore, there is a variation in the adaptation and implementation of the principles of *hearts and minds* approach to the selected strategies. Moreover, there are many similarities as well as many differences between selected strategies and the actual practices of their implementation. In other words, despite the differences between the strategies along some dimensions, there are many shared variables that allow to measure and compare across the strategies and their applications.

4.4.2 Analytical Approach

Thus, the following measures of flexibility of the COIN strategy were comparatively analyzed in the research:

1. Difference between the *HAM* principles and the conduct of COIN campaigns (the comparison of the principles of *HAM* approach to their practical realization during the Aden Emergency and the Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan);
2. Difference in the adaptation of the strategies to the operational environment (comparative evaluation of adjustments of each strategy to the context of its application, its alignment with the reality of actual warfare);

Since both considered strategies were developed on the principles of *HAM* approach I examined how those principles were realized in practice by the British and the US COIN forces. I analyzed how the strategies implemented the principles of *HAM* approach, focusing precisely on understanding which principles were fully realized, which were altered, and which were abandoned altogether in each case. After that I evaluated what COIN doctrine, British or American, appeared to be more rigid in terms of its realization of the basic principles of the *HAM* approach.

Furthermore, I analyzed how the strategies were adjusted to the operational environment, focusing on whether the COIN were taking the context of the warfare into account and were adjusting its warfare to the specifics of the actual military theatre.

In addition, for the exploration of the correlation between flexibility/rigidity of the strategies and their outcomes, I compared the flexibility of the strategies to the outcomes of the COIN wars. In the first case, for the assessment of the outcomes I reviewed the scholars' opinions available in the range of books and academic articles about the ends of Aden Emergency. In the second case, I compared the results of the Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan to the goals of COIN declared in US FM 3-24. To make such judgments I analyzed different experts' assessments of the situation in Afghanistan and the goals of the COIN campaigns indicated or implied by the COIN doctrines with the declared ends of the COIN campaign in Afghanistan.

4.4.3 Variables and Operationalization

Firstly, in order to tell how flexible the chosen strategies were in relation to the basic principles of *HAM* approach I analyzed the texts of the strategies and compared them to the principles of the *HAM* approach. I discovered in which strategy the principles of *HAM* approach were present fully/partially or were altered fully/partially.

Secondly, to measure realization of the basic principles of *HAM* approach in each case I created the comparative matrix with the set of original variables and combined them with several relevant variables taken from the dataset of the comprehensive case study report *Victory Paths to Victory: Lessons from Modern Insurgencies*² (Paul 2010). Borrowed variables were adapted for the sake of making them suitable for the goals of my study. Overall, the variables were utilized to measure how flexible/rigid each strategy was in terms of realization of *HAM* principles of conducting counterinsurgency warfare (see table 1).

This stage of research required the comparison of the actual historical descriptions of the conduct of the selected COIN campaigns to the relevant doctrines. After that, I analyzed whether the doctrines had been altered and adjusted to the operational environments. The table 1 has the list of variables and their operationalized indicators that allow to measure whether the *HAM* principles had been put into practice.

Table 1. Operationalization of the principles of *HAM* approach

Variable	Operationalization
1. Provision of security for population	1.1. COIN force provided or ensured provision of basic services in areas it controlled or claimed to control
	1.2 Perception of security created or maintained among population in areas COIN force claimed to control/ Security of population in area of conflict improved from previous phase
	1.3 COIN force did not employ collective punishment
2. Minimal force usage	2.1 COIN force avoided excessive collateral damage, disproportionate use of force, or other illegitimate applications of force

² The dataset and the report includes detailed case histories for each of the original 30 COIN campaigns. A spreadsheet with the full case data for all 71 cases is available for download at http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR291z1.html

	2.2 COIN force did not engage in more coercion/intimidation than insurgents
	2.3 Amnesty or reward program in place
3. Bolstering governmental legitimacy	3.1 Free and fair elections held
	3.2 Postconflict government was a power-sharing government
	3.3 Government corruption reduced/good governance increased since onset of conflict
	3.4 Government leaders selected in a manner considered just and fair by majority of population in area of conflict
	3.5 Government respected human rights
4. Ground level embedding and integration	4.1 COIN force employed local militias or irregular forces or engaged in/enabled community policing in areas it controlled or claimed to control
	4.2 COIN force included significant numbers of police, paramilitary, militia, or other nonconventional personnel
	4.1 COIN force teamed with local paramilitary and military units for trainings
5. Cultural sensitivity	5.1 COIN force sought to engage and establish positive relations with the population in the area of conflict.
	5.2 The COIN forces employed local interpreters and translators
	5.3 The COIN forces did not suppress religious freedom
6. Big unit action	6.1 Aggressive attacks/operations were initiated by COIN forces as opposed to fighting primarily initiated by insurgency
7. Avoidance of protracted conflict	8.1 The conflict lasted a short period of time that did not allow to wear down the will of COIN forces
	8.2 The COIN force established and then expanded secure areas.
8. Clear political counter-vision	9.1 Aggressive PSYOP ³ were launched to portray insurgency as weak or incompetent
9. Aggressive mobility	10.1 COIN units used roadblocks, raids, ambushes etc.
	10.2 COIN force swept insurgents out of the static points; insurgency sanctuaries were attacked and destroyed;
10. The limited foreign assistance to local government	11.1 COIN force had an exit strategy

The Table 2 contains the indicators that aim to measure the level of adjustments of the strategy to the operational environment. To decide on the flexibility of the strategy it is crucial to review whether the strategy was flexible in terms of its adaptability to the warfare experience that was being gained through the COIN campaigns (see table 2).

³PSYOP – psychological operations

Table 2. Indicators for measuring the level of adjustment of the strategy to the operational environment

Indicators
1.1 The tactics was well adjusted to the terrain (it was not difficult for COIN force to maneuver and stretch COIN force logistics)
1.2 Emphasis on intelligence. Insurgents did not demonstrate potency through impressive or spectacular attacks
1.3 COIN supported the governance in remote tribal areas
1.4 Indigenous forces conducted majority of COIN operations
1.5 The collaboration with the active minority in area of conflict was established by COIN force
1.6 Government sponsorship or protection of unpopular economic and social arrangements or cultural institutions
1.7 Government inclusion of significant societal groups from state power or resources
1.8 COIN supported the development of national institutions at the national, provincial, and district levels
1.9 COIN forces and government interests were aligned at the beginning and throughout the conflict

Lastly, for the assessment of the outcomes or results of COIN the holistic assessment of the end of the conflicts was made. Three results in each case were possible:

1. government/COIN win
2. insurgent win
3. mixed outcome.

It is important to distinguish whether COIN force won in a stable, lasting way; otherwise, the victory of COIN is indicated as a mixed outcome.

1.4 Data Sources

The data were collected by using the desk research method. Evidence for the arguments in the research comes primarily from doctrinal sources developed specifically to deal with counterinsurgency, complemented with insights from key military thinkers and archival sources of relevant practices. In other words, the main source of the data was related to the official counterinsurgency strategies published in the forms of field manuals, pamphlets and books on principles of conducting small wars and historical descriptions of the relevant COIN campaigns.

For the analysis of the US counterinsurgency strategy for Afghanistan's conflict the primary source was the *Field Manual 3-24* and its amended versions (2006; 2014). The first chapter has all the principles of the COIN warfare. The FM3-24 was originally used as a COIN guide for the US campaign in Iraq and only then with slight adaptations to the military operation against Taliban and its allies in Afghanistan. I also analyzed the related official *US Counterinsurgency Guide* (2009) and *Joint Publication 3-24 (2013)* that has the tenets for the joint operations and provides the doctrinal basis for interagency coordination and for the US military involvement in multinational operations.

In case of the British counterinsurgency strategy for Aden Emergency I considered Part 1 and 2 of the War Office publication "Keeping the Peace" (1963). This manual served as an official doctrine and was prepared by Major R.C.W. Thomas who also had experience in Malaya. The manual contained detailed recommendations for the British colonial troops operating in aid of civil power. (French 2011:204).

The basic source for analysis of *HAM* principles was the book *Defeating Communist insurgency: the lessons of Malaya and Vietnam* (1966) by Sir Robert Thompson, a Senior Civil Servant in Malaya, in which key principles for countering insurgency were elaborated.

For the analysis of actual execution of COIN strategies I utilized the historical records provided in relevant books as well as in academic publications and practitioners' reports. Apart from different scholarly articles the books *Aden Insurgency: The Savage War in Yemen 1962-67* by Jonathan Walker (2003) and *Without Glory in Arabia The British Retreat From Aden* by Peter Hinchcliffe, John Ducker and Maria Holt (2006) were particularly helpful for the analysis of COIN campaign in Aden. For the information on the campaign in Afghanistan a range of reports published by RAND Corp. were utilized, particularly Christopher Paul's (2011) study on counterinsurgency in Afghanistan.

Additional sources for this study included printed mass media publications, video interviews and documentaries available online that helped to contextualize the cases and give the overall assessment of the results of counterinsurgency campaigns.

1.5 Limitations of the Research

Firstly, the research is limited to the consideration of two cases only. Admittedly, it could benefit from including more cases for comparative analysis. But notwithstanding its small sample size, the research results yield important implications for the reflection and rich ground for future investigations. Namely, further research can be directed at the exploration of factors that led to the changes in strategies or, alternatively, at explanation why some factors affected the outcome the most.

Secondly, the limitations of this research include the usage of exclusively secondary data sources. In other words, due to financial and time constraints no field work was conducted. Field work would enrich the study and allow a deeper immersion into the context of the studied case of Afghanistan. Particularly, it would help to elaborate the detailed description of the recently terminated US COIN campaign in Afghanistan and help to assess better the results of the whole COIN campaign conducted there.

Lastly, despite the satisfactory amount of the information on the British counterinsurgency warfare during Aden Emergency some documents are available only in specific archives, but could have served as a useful addition to this research.

Chapter II. Understanding Counterinsurgency

In this chapter counterinsurgency concept is examined and an overview of the major theoretical approaches for countering insurgencies is given. The chapter starts by defining key terms necessary for understanding the concept of counterinsurgency. It also addresses the meaning of concomitant concept of counterterrorism and explains the peculiarities of the terms “doctrine” and “strategy”. Later chapter focuses on the overview of literature that shaped modern understanding of small wars. It pays particular attention to the classical works on COIN warfare emphasizing the basic principles derived by scholars from actual practice of counterinsurgency warfare. It also briefly discusses the main findings of contemporary experts of COIN.

2.1 Defining Counterinsurgency

2.1.1 Key Concepts

Almost by definition, in order to understand the meaning of counterinsurgency it is necessary to understand insurgency because the former is inherently linked to the latter. As US COIN Guide (2009) suggests insurgency is the organized use of subversion and violence to seize, nullify or challenge political control of a region while counterinsurgency is the mixture of comprehensive civilian and military efforts for containing insurgency and addressing its root causes.

US Military Field Manual (2008) provides deeper insight in the range of measures that are used in COIN warfare. Thus, it includes the “military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by government to defeat insurgency”. Furthermore, in non-conventional warfare, military means are not usually the most effective elements. They are only supporting the COIN warfare. As it is stated in US Field Manual (2014), some of the best weapons for counterinsurgents do not shoot. Therefore, when we say a state is engaged in counterinsurgency, we generally mean it is attempting to use some combination of political,

administrative, military, psychological, and civic actions to maintain the status quo against insurgent force that is trying to upend its order (Crandall 2014).

To put it clear, counterinsurgency should be understood as an umbrella term describing the complete range of measures that governments take to defeat insurgencies. However, there are nontrivial opinions that claim that counterinsurgency concept is not a failure but might not be a concept as such. As Gray (2012) notes ‘COIN per se is not, and plausibly cannot possibly be, a concept that has failed’ because ‘COIN is not a concept’. Nevertheless, such view is very unpopular and I agree with the majority of the scholars that COIN is a concept despite the fact that it requires some further conceptualization especially due to the changing nature of modern insurgency.

It should be added, that some experts isolate certain differences between the concepts of counterinsurgency and COIN (Gorka& Kilcullen 2011). However, as in many other works, the Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms (2010) uses these terms interchangeably. For the simplicity in this study these terms are equally implied and used.

Furthermore, for the understanding of counterinsurgency, it is crucial to comprehend the differences between conventional and non-conventional warfare because COIN warfare belongs to the latter. While the former is conducted between two or more states and employs conventional weapons and battlefield tactics, non-conventional warfare is conducted between state and non-state actors employing a wide range of military and non-military tactics. Figure 1 shows the place of non-conventional warfare in types of war (see figure 1). Moreover, these days the concept of hybrid warfare that is the sophisticated combination of conventional and unconventional means with cyberwarfare is gaining the popularity.

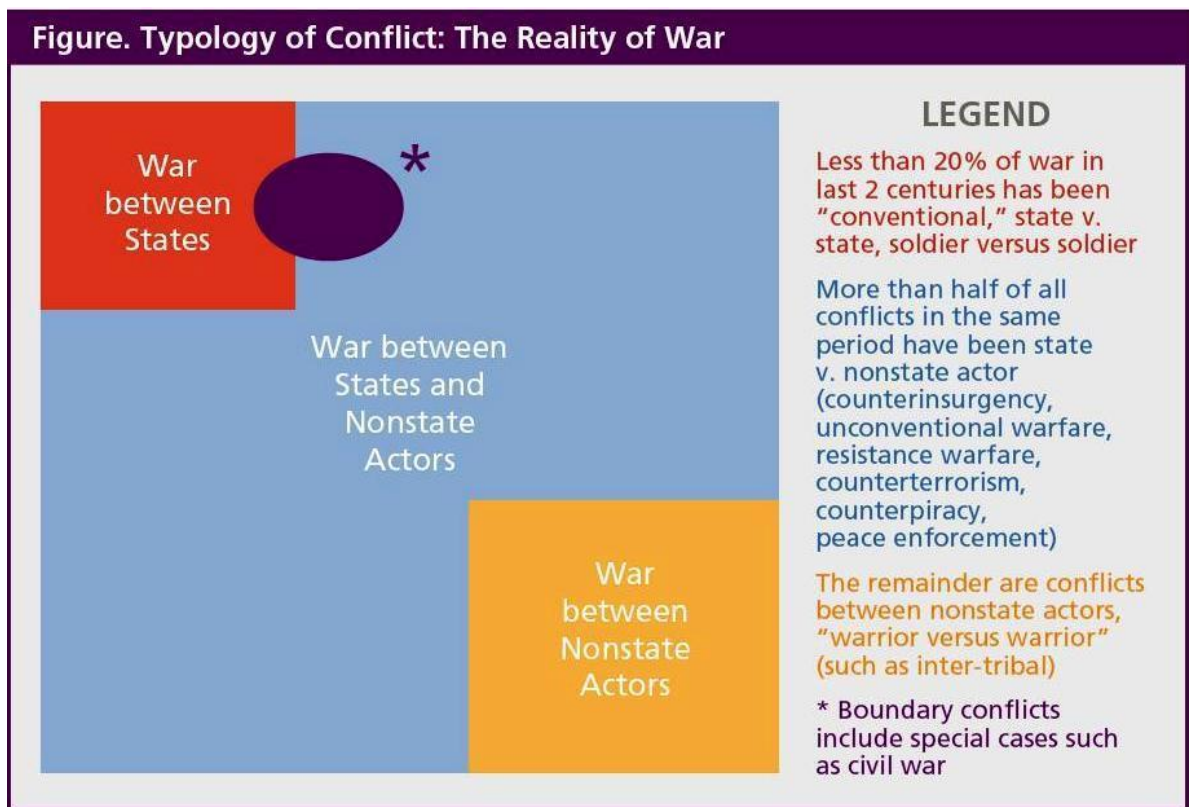


Figure 1: Typology of Conflict.

Source: Gorka and Kilcullen, 2011

The overarching term to which all COIN campaigns belong is *small wars*. As Callwell (1996:21-22) explains, small wars practically include all campaigns other than those where both of the opposing sides consist of regular troops. He adds that the expression "small war" does not refer to the scale on which any campaigns maybe be carried out but denotes operations of regular armies against irregular forces.

Since COIN forces are fighting irregular armies, both sides may employ the full range of military and non-military capabilities against adversary's powers. What distinguishes irregular warfare is the focus of its operations (a relevant population) and its strategic goal that is to gain legitimacy of a political authority to control or influence a relevant population (Jordan 2008:233). Hence, population is the battle space in irregular warfare as opposed to the terrain that is traditionally the battle space in regular warfare. Due to that, the U.S. defense community

commonly calls counterinsurgency as Operations Other Than War (OOTW), which highlights the non-traditional nature of counterinsurgency warfare.

Lastly, COIN belongs to an asymmetric type of warfare, in other words, it is a kind of war when sides of the conflict have different level of conventional military power and often employ different tactics. Thus, Friedman (2012) sees counterinsurgency as a strategy by which a disproportionately powerful conventional force (usually, a state actor) approaches asymmetric warfare. In such warfare the initiative is often on the insurgency side. As the result, COIN operations are usually designed as the response to insurgency attacks.

2.1.1 Counter Terrorism vs. Counterinsurgency

The difference between counter terrorism and counterinsurgency can be understood by analyzing the conceptual discrepancy between insurgency and terrorism. Overall, defining terrorism is a difficult task because its meaning was changing throughout decades (Hoffman2006). Nevertheless, the general premise that is accepted here maintains that terrorism is the method of political violence that is employed to achieve political goals. Consequently, terrorism should not be mistaken for insurgency because terrorism is a method available to pursue the goals of the political movement. Terrorism can also be understood as a policy to strike the opponent with terror and always includes intimidation as its element. Given that, terrorism can be available to anyone, including both: legitimate governments and insurgents.

The term *counterterrorism* is often used by state actors to denote the operations launched by them against insurgency. Indeed, this is often done in order to portray the insurgents negatively. Furthermore, governments describe the insurgency as terrorism even in cases when insurgents do not usually employ intimidating purely terrorist methods. Such negative discourse construction is the part of physiological operations in counterterrorism warfare.

2.1.2 Doctrine or Strategy?

Clausewitz's definition of strategy turns to be one of the most popular among military strategists. In his monumental work *On War*, he defined it as 'the art of the employment of battles as a means to gain the object of war (Hart 1991:319). Here a military strategy is understood as planned usage of military force for the attainment of political goals. The strategy contains the overarching principles and rules for conducting the war and closely linked with state policy, upon which it directly depends, and corresponds to the requirements of military doctrine (The Great Soviet Encyclopedia 1970-1979).

Some regard that the terms *doctrine* and *strategy* differs significantly, but, indeed, the only difference lies in the level on which the strategy operates. To illustrate, a grand strategy is often termed as doctrine. Military doctrine contains the fundamental principles that guide how military forces conduct their actions, and provides military professionals with their body of professional knowledge (Army Doctrine Primer 2011). As Janowitz (1971:257) notices, military doctrine "is a synthesis of scientific knowledge and expertise on the one hand, and traditions and political assumptions on the other".

Last but not least, strategy is often understood narrower than a doctrine. As Gray (2009) explains, strategy bridges the levels of military planning between national strategy and unit. It spells out approaches of conducting particular ways of warfare and states the principles of the conduct of the campaign describing its operational planning and intelligence. Hence, COIN strategies belong to this type.

To summarize, *counterinsurgency strategy* is the application of grand military strategy/doctrine to the case of conducting irregular warfare. Nonetheless, the word collocation *COIN doctrine* appears widespread. For the simplicity in this study COIN doctrine and COIN strategy are used interchangeably.

2.2 Major Theoretical Contributions

The scholarship on studying counterinsurgency strategies can be placed in the intersection between conflict studies, war studies, and strategic studies. Counterinsurgency studies have experienced a fluctuating level of academic and practitioners' attention during the last century. In the period following the Cold War there was a rise of the interest in the causes, the execution and the termination of civil wars. The new wave of growth in strategic studies also occurred. Recently many scholars have focused their attention on the warfare against insurgents. Last fifteen years resulted in significantly more works on counterinsurgency than in previous fifty years. As Arreguín-Toft (2011) notes, the separation between the military practitioners and the experts from academia resulted in the increasingly divided production of the knowledge on counterinsurgency which has led to its redundancy during recent decades.

Observing the scholarship on counterinsurgency one must start from the basic work *Vom Kriege* or *On war* written in 1832 by Carl Clausewitz, Prussian general and military thinker, who has become one of the most respected classics on military strategy (Encyclopedia Britannica 2013). Despite author's emphasis on combat, Clausewitz placed psychological at the center of his theory of war which made a significant step towards developing the theoretical base for further research. However, some claimed Clausewitz to be more a historian than theorist (Clausewitz Howard Paret 1976:12). Although his work is often described as a prominent theoretical study of wars, it does not pay much attention to the counterinsurgency warfare and concentrates on conventional wars.

COIN theory (as opposed to list of practices on anti-guerilla warfare summarized in manuals) is almost entirely a product of the Cold War. It was developed during the active interaction of government and academia that was so common in the decades between the beginning of World War II and the end of Vietnam (Long 2006). Next section of the chapter discusses classical theories of COIN that are casting a long shadow on the contemporary production of theoretical knowledge of COIN warfare.

2.1.2 Classical Counterinsurgency

As Kilcullen (2006b) explains, the term *classical counterinsurgency* summarizes the theory of counter-revolutionary warfare developed in response to the so-called wars of national liberation from 1944 to about 1982 when the term *counterinsurgency* itself was invented. Classical counterinsurgency constitutes a dominant paradigm that frames the contemporary approaches used by practitioners to counter insurgent movements. Major works were published in the 1960s and today those ideas are the pillars for the modern theorists.

David Galula's book *Counterinsurgency Warfare; Theory and Practice* firstly published in 1964 set the paradigm for counterinsurgency theory. This book is indeed among the most cited sources on counterinsurgency theory. Writing it, the author, being not only a theorist but also a French colonel, had relied on his rich experience of countering insurgency in Indochina, Greece, and Algeria. His ideas emphasize most important causal factors behind different outcomes of counterinsurgency campaigns. Furthermore, Galula proposed the key definitions in the field that are widely adopted by contemporary scholars. In general, Galula places both insurgency and counterinsurgency into the frames of "counterrevolutionary war" and defines an insurgency as a civil war.

Galula takes account of Mao Zedong's observation about the importance of political action in revolutionary war and states that "military and political actions cannot be separated, and military action—essential though it is—cannot be the main form of action" (Galula 1964:62). He introduces his theory by stating its purpose that is 'to define the laws of counterinsurgency warfare, to deduce from them its principles, and to outline the corresponding strategy and tactics' (Galula 1964:xi).

Moreover, Galula offered four basic laws of counterinsurgency and paid much attention to the discussion on the prerequisites for the successful guerilla warfare, as well as to elaboration of the strategy and tactics of counterinsurgency. Nowadays, his teachings are still framing policy (Grenoble & Rose 2011).

Another seminal work regarded as *classics* of counterinsurgency scholarship is *Defeating Communist Insurgency* (1966) by Sir Robert Thompson. As Galula's book it was also written soon after the end of the Malaya Emergency. Thompson likewise Galula emphasizes the importance of the establishing control over the population in conducting counterinsurgency campaign. He highlights the necessity of implementation of non-military programs after military operations have been completed. Furthermore, as Galula, Thompson hypothesized that the initiative must be taken away from insurgents to increase the effectiveness of counterinsurgency campaign. What's more, he outlines five basic principles for a successful COIN. First principle stresses the pivotal role of ensuring political and economic stability in the country. Second principle states the superiority of law while the third principle accentuate the significance of governmental planning. Fourth principle assumes the priority of destroying political subversion rather than defeating the guerrillas. Last principle states that the importance of securing base areas by government during guerrilla warfare.

Overall, despite the significance of COIN classics those works are relying on very cases and obviously do not address modern issues such the changing nature of insurgency that happens due to globalization and inevitably affects the rules and principles of counterinsurgency.

2.1.3 Contemporary Theorists of COIN

In contemporary production of knowledge on counterinsurgency the central place is occupied by the works of a renowned Australian anthropologist and army reservist, who advised David Petraeus⁴ during the troop surge in Iraq, David Kilcullen. This expert contributed significantly to the theory of counterinsurgency by analyzing modern COIN warfare in the context of modern globalizing world. In *Counterinsurgency* (2010), Kilcullen concisely collected his

⁴David Petraeus is a retired American military officer and public official. He served as the commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Commander, U.S. Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A) from July 4, 2010, to July 18, 2011.

salient writings presenting it in the form of ‘Twenty-Eight Articles’ and characterized the main rules of carrying out counterinsurgency operations.

In his works Kilcullen takes into account the changing insurgency therefore indicating a diverse nature of modern insurgency. Thus, Kilcullen (2010) challenges the classic assumption that the insurgent fights the government often poorly functioning whereas the counter-insurgent aims to strengthen the state by defeating the threat presented by insurgency. Undoubtedly, that was the case in many modern conflicts. However, in some other cases, modern insurgencies are acting in the failed states. Moreover, the insurgents’ goals are not always to collapse the existing government and establish control over the entire political entity but rather occupy ungoverned territories. Moreover, there are cases, like Afghanistan, the insurgent movement precedes the government. In sum, Kilcullen repudiates a dichotomous struggle between insurgent and counterinsurgent.

Non-simplified understanding of modern insurgency is particularly important these days due to the changing nature of insurgency. Previously, in COIN warfare the following formula was working:

$$I + POP > SF + GOV,$$

Where *I* represents *insurgents*, *POP*-*population*, *SF* represents the *security forces* of the opposing regime, and *GOV* indicates the *government* of the opposing regime (Mackinlay& Al-Baddawy 2008). This formula shows that in order to win, COIN campaign must pull the population to its side. As soon as insurgency loses population support, it is defeated. However, these days insurgency has become an internationally supported, globally organized, and multi-acting entity. Only barely it relies on the help of locals. Consequently, the success of COIN campaign is no longer a matter of correcting the situation from *I + POP* to *I - POP*.

Overall, Kilcullen updated current knowledge on unconventional conflict being one of the world’s most influential experts on counterinsurgency and modern warfare.

Italian scholar, Lorenzo Zambernardi, offered one of the most recent contributions to the development of counterinsurgency theory. He built the classification of compromises that all counterinsurgents have to make in their fight against irregular troops. Zambernardi (2010) drew parallels with the ‘impossible trinity’ concept from economic theory and presented counterinsurgency’s impossible trilemma in order to demonstrate that all three typical goals (force protection, distinction between enemy combatants and noncombatants, and the physical elimination of insurgents) present in COIN doctrines cannot be achieved simultaneously. Real practice of COIN, for instance in Afghanistan, proves the validity of Zambernardi’s statement. The middle of a recent US campaign in Afghanistan had several deadliest years for COIN troops. US government experienced the challenge to achieve protection of its troops as well as to defeat insurgents and to protect local population, all at the same time. Obviously, it failed to meet all three these goals and “sacrificed” its soldiers at some point of the campaign, especially in 2006.

2.1.4 The Battle of Approaches

Currently all theories on counterinsurgency can be divided into two opposing intellectual traditions that can be categorized as "enemy-centric" and "population-centric" schools of thought. In short, *the enemy-centric approach* treats counterinsurgency as a specific type of conventional warfare where insurgency is portrayed as an organized adversary therefore its defeat of that enemy must be the primary goal. Such view is still popular among many US senior military officials. Thus, in a manner of strategies for conventional conflicts the first “strategic pillar” of the National Strategy for Victory in Iraq was “Defeat the Terrorists and Neutralize the Insurgency” (NSC 2005:28 cited in Long 2006). Similar vision was applied to the US strategy for Afghanistan at the beginning of the campaign.

The second school of thought can be labeled *as the population-centric approach*. This approach understands counter-insurgency as essentially a control problem that can be maintained even by military means. It premises that the central characteristic of insurgency is the dependence on the population support in its active or passive forms. Therefore, according to this approach, it

is necessary to maintain control over the population, and the environment (physical and psychological) in the relevant area/region.

On the whole, most scholars are inclined to advocate one or the other school of thought. Galula, for example, flatly states that the population-centric approach is always correct and the authors of the recent US Field Manual on Counterinsurgency (FM 3-24) are also adherents of this approach, while other scholars might reply on the combination of these approaches (Kilcullen 2007).

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter began with a description of key concepts crucial to grasp the notion of counterinsurgency. It was argued that COIN is a highly complex type of warfare which requires extensive knowledge of various approaches and effective tactics accompanied with deep understanding of the context of the warfare. In addition, COIN warfare is impossible to comprehend without initial recognition of the nature of insurgency that COIN force aims to defeat.

In this section of the study I also went on to suggest that there is no substantial difference between COIN doctrine and COIN strategy. Concurrently, the difference between counterterrorism and counterinsurgency can be defined as when opposed insurgency utilizes terror as its primary method of warfare.

In addition, I summarized the theoretical basis of the dominant population-centric approach that embraces the majority of modern counterinsurgency theories. The core principle of this approach states that insurgencies could not be fought like enemies in conventional wars. According to the proponents of this approach, effective COIN requires the placement of the focus of COIN efforts on gaining support of the population rather than trying to defeat the enemy by purely military means. The victory can be achieved by rebuilding the legitimacy of the affected government that will reduce insurgents' influence and eventually lead to their destruction. Nevertheless, the competing school of thought is in favor of the need to focus on fighting insurgencies physically rather than taking control over relevant population.

This part of the research also has an overview of theoretical contributions made by modern experts. They have reconsidered classics of COIN from the point of changing nature of modern insurgency that acts different to the insurgencies of previous centuries. In effect, modern COIN is highly diverse. Although most insurgent movements challenge existing government, some other rebelling organizations might fight without a precise aim to destroy opposing government. Contrastingly, there are insurgent movements that act globally trying to change the world order by revolutionary means.

Chapter III. Development and Practice of *Hearts and Minds* Approach

The purpose of this chapter is to trace the evolution of *HAM* approach and review its practical application. It begins by retrospective examination of the conditions in which the *HAM* paradigm evolved. The particular attention is dedicated to the explanation of its basic principles. The chapter also presents the analysis of fundamental shifts in understanding of irregular warfare that eventually lead to the development of *HAM* approach. Moreover, the views of modern scholars on the actual application of *HAM* principles to the reality of COIN warfare are summarized in this section of the research. In addition, I paid particular attention to the theoretical implications developed by American scholars who advanced *HAM* (*HAM*) theory. Lastly, I considered scholarly views on the actual application of *HAM* approach by British forces.

3.1 The Evolution of “Hearts and Minds” Approach

3.1.1 The Origins of “Hearts and Minds” Approach

The phrase “hearts and minds” in relation to counterinsurgency was popularized by Sir Gerald Templer, a general during the Malayan Emergency, in the late 1940s and 1950s who said: “The answer [to defeating the insurgents] ... rests in the hearts and minds of the Malayan people” (Dickinson 2009). Malayan Emergency, that is also named as the Anti-British National Liberation War happened between 1948 to 1960 when Great Britain supported warfare against communist guerillas in Southeast Asia. *HAM* approach does not constitute a separate school of thought but belongs to the population-centric approach.

HAM counterinsurgency doctrine firstly appeared as Briggs' Plan. It was a military plan prepared by British General Sir Harold Briggs who directed the war operations in 1950 in Malaya. The main goal of the plan was to defeat the Malayan communists through the control of population. Important tactics included restraining insurgency's access to their sources of support from the population by massive forced resettlement of Malayan peasantry in guarded camps called "New

Villages". Other counterinsurgency techniques included flashing out guerrillas from jungles by keeping them in starvation (Wikipedia 2012).

Meanwhile, according to a popular opinion, the main effect on the development of the sound counterinsurgency strategy was the measure ensuring provision of economic help to population in order to win their support. That was one of the main reasons to name such approach as battle for *hearts and minds*. Another important tactics included indicating the opposing groups. As Karl Hack (2009) notes, the source of the insurrection was the Malayan Communist Party. It was composed primarily by ethnic Chinese. British assisted local government in the rising Chinese participation in the legitimate political processes. The consensus view suggests that unique ethnic landscape of Malayan population along with other crucial geo-demographic factors played pivotal role in communist defeat (Ampssler 2010).

In conclusion, the Malayan Emergency is considered as one of the most famous counterinsurgency campaigns launched by Great Britain. It allowed developing enduring counterinsurgency doctrine.

3.1.2 Previous Shifts in Understanding of Irregular Warfare

As previous section of the chapter suggests, the Malayan Emergency resulted in proliferation of counterinsurgency manuals and still is regularly referred to as a source of counterinsurgency lessons. As it can be understood, that counterinsurgency campaign had lead to the development of the classical doctrine on counterinsurgency labeled as *HAM strategy*. The principles of this doctrine were regularly applied in other conflicts between Britain and its colonial countries including South Yemen. Nevertheless, this approach was not rendered only from experience gained in Malaya. Overall, the of the biggest change that framed the *HAM* philosophy in the 1960s was the shift of the focus from physical combat to psychological warfare. This alternation mirrored both the ethical orientations of many theorists as well as a growing rejection of conventional warfare operations against civilians among international community (Birtle 2006).

Furthermore, new understanding of the irregular conflict relied on the previous practices and theoretical implications. As Thornton (2005) correctly points out, the British Army is a counterinsurgency army. To explain further, British experience of conducting COIN campaigns goes back well into the colonial era over a period of the last 200 years (Rigden 2008). Indeed, in 1825 the British Army was reorganized into a two-battalion system known as the “Localized and Linked Battalion Scheme” with the purpose to keep one battalion in the United Kingdom and a sister battalion in the colonies (most members of this second battalion had direct experience of low-level conflict) (Mackinlay & Al-Baddawy 2007).

From the very beginning of its colonial experience, the British Army was actively learning lessons and conveyed them in the form of field officers reports on their operations and senior commanders lengthy accounts of their doings. As the result, by today there are number of key reports and manuals that significantly framed overall British military doctrines and counterinsurgency strategies (French 2011:201). Overall, the evolution of British counterinsurgency strategy based on the principles of *HAM* approach goes along its fluctuating path of counterinsurgency campaigns that Britain was launching in its colonies and other states.

Colonel Charles E. Callwell’s work, *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice* firstly published in 1906 is widely regarded by historians as the first British counter-insurgency manual. Drawing on the nineteenth-century imperial experience (and on the Boer War in later editions), *Small Wars* was a practical ‘how to’ guide for fighting rural guerrillas and emphasized the British Army’s strengths: mobility and firepower (Charters 2009). The main strength of his work is a study of how seemingly weak insurgents can effectively confront strong empires in the peculiar settings of irregular warfare (Cohen, 1996).

Hence, Calwell’s *Small Wars* framed all consequent counterinsurgency strategies. Although his work generally served the purpose of expansion of British Empire, it prepared the fertile ground for the emergence of doctrines oriented on defeating insurgency in controlled colonies.

3.1.3 The HAM Theory and its Coercive Opponent

The knowledge gained by British in its various COIN campaigns resulted in developing *HAM* paradigm. However, American scholars also participated in the theory building. In United States, the group of COIN theorist working for RAND Corp. advanced *HAM* principles to a completed theory. They focused their studies on the issues of modernization and economic development in poor countries. Their studies revealed that instability originated in uneven economic development that conflicted with traditional institutions. This led to the growth of grievances in societies and, consequently, to the emergence of insurgencies that were ready to offer local population better alternatives to the existing governments. Such scenario was typical for many decolonized countries.

US scholars found that separating the population from the insurgents was necessary to defeat the latter. Scientists suggested that the goal can be achieved by rebuilding people's trust in the government and providing the people security. They claimed COIN must include such measures as increasing political rights of the people, improving standards of living, and reducing corruption and abuse of government power. This COIN theory came to be known as "winning the hearts and minds of the people," shortened to "hearts and minds" (*HAM*) theory (Long 2006).

Although the *HAM* theory enjoyed unchallenged success in the early 1960s, in 1965, during US war in Vietnam, Charles Wolf, Jr. proposed cost/benefit theory also known as coercion theory. He declared that progress along the political track, especially popular support, is not essential for defeating insurgents in lesser-developed countries. He opposed the central tenet of *HAM* theory by stating that insurgents need rather population assistance and money for conducting their operations than a positive people's attitude. Therefore, the fundamental idea of Wolf's theory was that development programs in rural areas launched by government must be rational. It meant they must bring benefits for COIN campaign such as receiving help from population in form of cooperation against rebels (Long 2006).

Today, cost/benefit theory is often combined with HAM theory in some COIN doctrines. For example, in Afghanistan US authorities launched the programs helping local farmers to cultivate alternative to poppy crops, so that farmers will reduce their collaboration with Taliban insurgents benefiting from drug production.

3.2 The Assessment of British Application of “Hearts and Minds” Model

Despite the well-recorded British counterinsurgency experience, there is no agreement among scholars on how to evaluate it. Thus, Mockaitis (1990) in his book *British Counterinsurgency, 1919-1960* reflected a previously dominant opinion that British troops are extremely successful in countering guerillas. Such opinion is based on praising British performance during Malayan conflict where, according to some scholars, British effectively applied minimum force and *HAM* approach in general. They argue that British history is relevant to the modern times and their ways to conduct is exemplar. However, many scholars are skeptical about the effectiveness of *HAM* approach stating that successful defeat in Malaya case was due to unique factors and, moreover, British COIN forces often abandoned many HAM principles including the principle of minimal force.

In theory, the principles of *HAM* model appear to be sound and valid. Nonetheless, their practical realization is hard to assess. One of the reason, as David French (2011) and Paul Dixon (2009) argue, the *HAM* model is not depicting the reality of counterinsurgency efforts. Although this approach appeal to mainly political means of fighting guerrilla and implies low level of coercion, the actual war history of Britain demonstrates a very violent nature of British ways to counter insurgency. I find the critical position of Dixon (2009) to be valuable. Thus, he ridicules the term ‘hearts and minds’ stating that the British approach in Malaya did involve high levels of force, was not fought within the law and led to abuses of human rights.

The limited application of the concept of minimal force to the British COIN experience is also advocated by Huw Bennet (2010), who analyzed Britain’s performance in Kenya and Malaya. He also refers to a number of authors such as Simeon Shoul, Jacob Norris, Karl Hack, Matthew

Hughes, Rachel Kerr who scrutinized historical records of various British COIN campaigns (Palestine, Malaya, Iraq, Kenya) and demonstrated that British COIN did not follow the *HAM* principle of minimal force.

Likewise authors mentioned above, French (2011:82) denies the claim that British security forces eschewed employing excessive violence because their actions were constrained by the common law principle. The author asserts there was no consensus about what that principle meant. The decision was left mainly to the military authorities that fixed the limit as very high. Moreover, by 1945 soldiers had learnt that massive firepower won battles. French claims, in actual practices British widely employed large scale coercion, including bombing, cordon and search operations, mass detention without trial, enforced population resettlement, and the creation of free-fire zones, to intimidate and keep the civilian population controlled.

Andrew Mumford (2012) is also debunking the myth of British being the exemplars of asymmetric warfare. Analyzing the application of *HAM* approach to the most significant British counterinsurgency campaigns of the past sixty years he interprets British conduct of irregular warfare strategically inconsistent. He claims that in case of British COIN the quality of experience has been misguidedly conflated by quantity.

I agree with previously cited scholars and argue that the winning outcome in Malaya was mostly due to the unique context of Malayan Emergency coupled with partial application of *HAM* principles. To explain further, the British forces violated some key principles of this approach. In other words, the realization of COIN strategy abandoned some basic principles of *HAM* approach during its application to the actual military theatre in Malaya. As the result, the British COIN doctrine was rigid only on the paper.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter presented a brief history of the development of *HAM* approach. It was shown how the principles of *HAM* paradigm evolved among military specialists of British Empire and was theoretically proved by US scholars.

The *HAM* paradigm became possible due to the rich experience of colonial Empires in conducting small wars. Malayan Emergency helped to develop and solidify *HAM* approach. Overall, this approach should be seen as universal for countering insurgency. It allows addressing fundamental problems therefore helping to ensure winning outcome. Realization of *HAM* approach requires three necessary steps: the COIN must isolate insurgents from their source of support; political reforms must be initiated addressing the root causes of grievances; the COIN forces together with government must win the support of the population.

However, this chapter also provides a contradictory understanding of the British experience of COIN warfare. Thus, some critics relying on the wide range of historical records argue that British methods against insurgents were very violent not only towards their belligerents but to all the people amongst whom they were operating. According to some scholars, in the majority of COIN campaigns British forces violated the principles of *HAM* approach. The next chapter will test whether in case of Aden and Afghanistan the principles of *HAM* approach were also violated.

Chapter IV. Comparing the Cases

This chapter presents the empirical analysis of differences and similarities in the flexibility of the UK and the US COIN strategies applied in South Yemen and Afghanistan respectively. This section of the study begins by reviewing the fundamental differences between British and American ways of conducting asymmetric warfare. Then the chapter presents a description of the settings in which considered conflicts had happened. The specific focus of the chapter is placed on the comparison of practical implementation of *HAM* principles. The strategies' adaptation to the operational environment as an important measure of their flexibility is also studied here. The assessment of the effectiveness of considered COIN campaigns in comparison with the flexibility of the strategies is finalizing this segment of the research along with a brief discussion of some ethical questions that arise in counterinsurgency warfare these days.

4.1 British and American Ways to Counter Insurgencies

4.1.1 “Small War” Army vs. “High Intensity Warfare” Army

Comparing American and British experiences in countering insurgencies it can be said that the latter has always had as its cardinal mission overtaking and then policing the colonies. As Thornton (2005) points out, British Army developed as a “small war” army, and, it may be argued, has remained such even to this day. He adds, the “big wars” of World War I and World War II fitted awkwardly into the army's history, being considered by most officers to be “aberrations”.

The US presents the opposite example. The American Army can be described as the army designed for conventional operations. Nonetheless, the US has a long record of counterinsurgency operations and. In short, the US Army is strong in conducting conventional warfare although it is experienced in both types of wars (McCuen 1966).

Undoubtedly, the British approach to counterinsurgency has influenced the recent development of US counterinsurgency doctrine, despite some considerable differences in the British and American ways to frame and conduct anti-guerilla warfare (Dixon 2009). In general, much of the U.S. military prefers high-intensity warfare, a mission for which the organization is

mentally and materially well prepared; however, mental preparation for this mission makes the military poorly suited to COIN (Long 2008:vii). Counterinsurgency is, oppositely, should be regarded as protracted conflict or war of attrition for regular armies. As Rigden (2008) comments, counterinsurgency campaign is one of the most difficult military operations to conduct and inevitably involves a long and painful path.

According to Friedman (2012) majority of American military scholars and practitioners throughout US war history had been opposing counterinsurgency operations, meanwhile, today many of them began to view counterinsurgency as the inevitable form of future warfare. Nevertheless, the US Army leadership for a long time had been putting little efforts into learning from their COIN experience and applying the gained insights to the elaboration of effective COIN doctrine (Birtle 2006:10).

Furthermore, due to the US Army's focus on the conventional warfare, the first COIN strategy emerging only in 1960s and yet it was not offering any alternative to the conventional military forces. Consequently, the US failed to defeat the "Viet Cong" (Hunt 2010).

Nagl (2005) also opposes British way of conducting COIN warfare to the American over-rigid central control of a COIN doctrine. Although he argues that the British Army was, by 1952, a pragmatic 'learning organisation' encouraging and rapidly analyzing and using feedback from battalion and platoon levels, I am assured that despite some pragmatism Britain's victories were achieved mainly due to the high coercion of their COIN operations.

4.1.2 Lessons not Learnt?

Overall, the judgment based on the results of many previous counterinsurgency campaigns launched by the British and US forces suggests that none of them learnt much from their experience. Although sometimes both Empires enjoyed success, the lessons well distilled in the *HAM* approach were not applied correctly in most of the cases.

Noticeably, in 2008, the US attempted to apply lessons from Malaya at least on paper. They updated the Field Manual on Counterinsurgency and put the emphasis on the need for COIN forces

to become effective ‘learning organizations’ by developing doctrine locally; establishing local training centers, promoting suggestions from the field and subordinates, establishing rapid avenues of disseminating lessons, and being open to advice from local people (Hack 2009). The rest of the chapter will comparatively examine whether British and American COIN strategies were flexible in selected cases and, if so, to what outcome they were linked.

4.2 Contextualization of cases

In order to make an adequate comparison of the flexibility of COIN strategies, the selected cases will be considered in their contexts. In other words, I will briefly present the settings in which the Aden Emergency (South Yemen, 1962-1967) and the Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan, 2001-2014) took place.

4.2.1 Aden Emergency in South Arabia

The Aden Emergency was one of the numerous COIN campaigns that took place at the end of the colonial era as nationalist insurgents in Africa and Asia showed the door to European powers. Aden as a seaport city in Yemen, located by the eastern approach to the Red Sea, had long ago been regarded as an important strategic asset in the maintenance of Britain’s position as a world power (Newsinger 2002:108). Unlike many other colonies, BFAP (British Forces, Arabian Peninsula) established in Aden in April 1958 were directly subordinated to the Chiefs of Staff. Such hierarchy emphasized the strategic importance of the Arabian Peninsula for the British Empire.

The Aden Protectorate was surrounded by network of Yemeni tribes conflicting with each other as well as with colonial forces. Moreover, as the port was developing a strong labor movement emerged. Its radical leaders also opposed British presence in South Arabia. In 1959 attempting to strengthen its control of local elites the British Empire established the Federation of South Arabia (FSA) (see Figure 2). Meanwhile, trade union movement raised its military capabilities and challenged the colonial authorities.

Evidentially, Aden Emergency was a part of a wider military theater. On the background of the Cold War a civil war sparked in Yemen Arab Republic between royalists backed by Saudi Arabia and republicans supported by Egypt. The British troops took a part in that confrontation.

A start of the Aden Emergency was indicated by the attempted assassination of the British High Commissioner for Aden at Aden Airport on 10 December 1963. This attack lead to an official declaration of a state of emergency. Overall, British troops fought both Marxists and tribal forces (Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen and National Liberation Front).

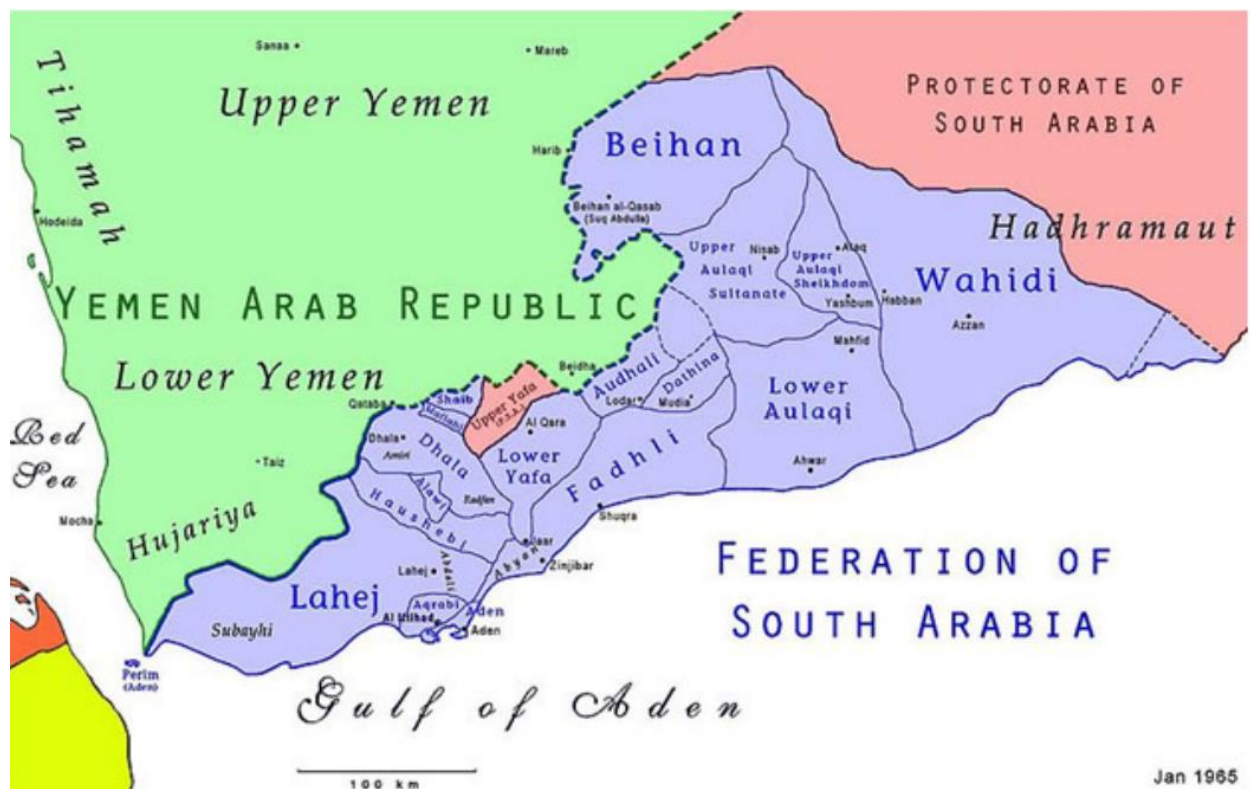


Figure 2: Map of the South Arabian Federation

Source: Drohan, 2015

As the emergency escalated, several massive COIN operations were launched resulting in temporal success. Eventually, despite the importance of that Middle East colonial possession, imperial authorities openly declared the date of their withdrawal and left Aden earlier than planned. The Aden Protectorate went under control of NFL and was replaced with newly established People`s Republic of South Yemen terminating the British dominance in the region.

4.2.2 Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan

Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF-A) launched in Afghanistan after attacks on the World Trade Center in the US in September of 2001 aimed at fighting the elements of transnational jihad which were perceived by the President Bush's Administration as an existential threat. Nonetheless, much of the insurgency in that Central Asian country is linked to specific local grievances connected to the intra-ethnic tensions and the people's dissatisfaction with the wealth and power distribution in their country. The key problem is that the society in Afghanistan is highly fractioned and the Taliban-led insurgents are making use of the tension among the fragments groups where aggrieved ethnic Pashtuns appear to be paramount in supporting the insurgency (Long 2006). Overall, the context in which US conducted the war in Afghanistan exacerbated the conditions for achieving success in defeating insurgents.

Unlike previous COIN operations launched by US (Vietnam, El Salvador etc.) when COIN struggled with communists, in Afghanistan insurgency appear to be framed into the terms of religious confrontation between radical jihadists and moderate Muslims. Nevertheless, behind the veil of religion, as well as behind communist slogans lie local social grievances. This fact allows drawing parallels among almost all insurgencies these days.

The US and coalition forces launched numerous operations and destroyed several insurgents sanctuaries. Meanwhile the casualties among COIN forces were continuously growing. In 2009 the amount of troops was significantly raised in order to increase the security. Equally important, fundamental political reforms were initiated. Despite all the efforts, by the end of the OEF-A the insurgency strengthened and resumed its territorial expansion.

4.3 Comparative Analysis

4.2.3 The Principles and the Practice

In order to discover how flexible the considered strategies were in relation to the basic principles of *HAM* approach on which the strategies were built on, one need to look at the historical descriptions of the conduct of the COIN operations and compare them to those principles. Such

comparison allows discovering whether those principles were implemented fully or were violated and changed to some extent.

The following comparative matrix presents the key principles of *HAM* approach that underlie the British and the US strategies in considered cases. Each principle is operationalized, which permits measuring its practical realization. In the two following tables (see Table 3 and 4) the response is dichotomous, where positive response is indicated with 1 and negative – with 0. The mixed outcome is indicated as 0.5.

Table 3. Comparative matrix of the flexibility of strategic principles in comparison to the principles of *hearts and minds* approach

Variable	Operationalization	Aden Emergency	Operation Enduring Freedom
1. Provision of security for population	1.1. COIN force provided or ensured provision of basic services in areas it controlled or claimed to control	0	0
	1.2 Perception of security created or maintained among population in areas COIN force claimed to control/ Security of population in area of conflict improved from previous phase	0.5	0.5
	1.3 COIN force did not employ collective punishment	0	0
2. Minimal force usage	2.4 COIN force avoided excessive collateral damage, disproportionate use of force, or other illegitimate applications of force	0	0
	2.5 COIN force did not engage in more coercion/intimidation than insurgents	0	0
	2.6 Amnesty or reward program in place	0	1
3. Bolstering governmental legitimacy	3.1 Free and fair elections held	0	0
	3.2 Postconflict government was a power-sharing government	0	1
	3.3 Government corruption reduced/good governance increased since onset of conflict	0	0
	3.4 Government leaders selected in a manner considered just and fair by majority of population in area of conflict	0	0.5
	3.5 Government respected human rights	1	1

4. Ground level embedding and integration	4.1 COIN force employed local militias or irregular forces or engaged in/enabled community policing in areas it controlled or claimed to control	1	1
	4.2 COIN force included significant numbers of police, paramilitary, militia, or other nonconventional personnel	1	1
	4.3 COIN force teamed with local paramilitary and military units for trainings	1	1
5. Cultural sensitivity	5.1 COIN force sought to engage and establish positive relations with the population in the area of conflict.	1	1
	5.2 The COIN forces employed local interpreters and translators	1	1
	5.3 The COIN forces did not suppress religious freedom	1	1
6. Big unit action	6.1 Aggressive attacks/operations were initiated by COIN forces as opposed to fighting primarily initiated by insurgency	1	1
7. Avoidance of protracted conflict	7.1 The conflict lasted a short period of time that did not allow to wear down the will of COIN forces	0	0
	7.2 The COIN force established and then expanded secure areas.	0.5	0.5
8. Clear political counter-vision	8.1 Aggressive PSYOP ⁵ were launched to portray insurgency as weak or incompetent	1	1
9. Aggressive mobility	9.1 COIN units used roadblocks, raids, ambushes etc.	1	1
	9.2 COIN force swept insurgents out of the static points; insurgency sanctuaries were attacked and destroyed.	1	1
10 The limited foreign assistance to local government	10.1 COIN force had an exit strategy	1	1

Source: Constructer by the researcher from sources indicated in the Methodology chapter

As it can be seen from the table 3, both campaigns share many similarities in their implementation of the principles of *HAM* approach. Overall, it can be said that both the British and the American COIN forces significantly violated many key principles of *HAM* approach that are serving as necessary conditions for the effective COIN campaign.

In general, the conduct of COIN warfare by both empires can be characterized as highly coercive. Furthermore, in selected cases there was a considerable emphasis on the conventional

⁵PSYOP – psychological operations

power. To illustrate my point, in both cases COIN forces relied on collective punishment. For example, in Afghanistan the US used targeted or political assassinations sometimes called extrajudicial executions considered by many human rights experts as collective punishment. The British utilized so-called "Air Power Policing". Friedman (2007) succinctly describes this tactic:

If a village or a Sultan caused any trouble, leaflets were dropped, from aircraft warning them they would be bombed and at what time, if they didn't hand in hostages to prove their good behavior in the future. If this instruction was not complied the village would be bombed into oblivion.

Overall, the principle of minimal force usage was violated in both cases, yet to a different degree. The US forces employed the range of coercive methods towards civilians and combatants alike; however, the violence caused by the British during Aden Emergency was significantly higher. As Drohan (2015) states, during the Aden Emergency British forces routinely applied coercion to entire populations. He adds that the burning of crops, destruction of houses, killing of livestock, and eviction of civilians from their land represented a common tactic in British counterinsurgency campaigns.

Another example of similarity between cases is found in the COIN attempts to establish and maintain the perception of security among population in areas COIN force claimed to control. It must be said, both empires failed to realize this task fully. However, they both experienced a fluctuating level of security of population in area of conflict. Thus, the British gained temporary victories after operations "Nutcracker" and "Cap Badge". The US forces achieved similar success during the operations "Battle for Tora-Bora" and "Anaconda". Nonetheless, in both cases COIN forces failed to expand established secure areas. Therefore, in the rows of the table 3 numbered 1.2 and 7.2 the response was 0.5 in both cases.

In spite of many similarities, there are some considerable differences between selected cases. Areas where significant differences have been found include the utilization of the amnesty or reward program. Whereas the US was actively implementing such program, the British handedness in dealing with captured insurgents was very heavy which even decreased international support and legitimacy for the British (Hawkins 2010).

Besides, there are a number of other similarities between cases. For instance, in both cases major COIN efforts were put into integration with local military and paramilitary forces. Although beginning of the operation in Afghanistan there was a lack of training, the collaboration intensified towards the end of the campaign. Due to the US efforts, the capacity of the Afghan National Army has grown considerably researching 150 000 by the end of 2010 (Dorn 2011). As for the British colony in South Arabia there were British training officers who trained Quaiti and Khatiri forces (Hinchcliffe 2006:110). Nonetheless, after police mutiny in Aden there was a sharp decline in a number of unified actions leaving the British alone in their struggle against guerillas.

In addition, although in both cases COIN forces were conducting a brutal war against civilians and guerillas, they still promoted human rights through constitutional processes. However, the US succeeded more than the British Empire by supporting existing government. In spite of the fact that elections in Afghanistan were not perceived as fair by some groups in Afghani society, the postconflict government was designed as a power-sharing system. However, some experts claim that official Pashtun parties suffer from underrepresentation because the recent parliamentary elections have decreased their number of seats in the Afghan National Assembly.

Lastly, comparing the flexibility of strategies we should remember that in contrast to the British COIN strategy, the US COIN doctrine was significantly updated, at least on paper. The new US COIN strategy relied on the foundations and overarching concepts of *HAM* approach more vividly. Simultaneously, the strategy seemed to use lessons derived from experience and foreign examples and was enriched by the introduction of new military and PSYOP technologies. It resulted in the adjustment of the doctrine, including the tactical and technical levels. In such terms, the US COIN strategy were more flexible than the British doctrine. However, the strategy was more rigid in terms of the implementations of its principles while the British COIN tend to violate the principles more often therefore demonstrating higher flexibility in its practical application.

4.4.2 Adjust or not to Adjust?

Another important measure of flexibility of COIN strategy is its adaptability to the operational environment. An operational environment is understood here as a composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect the employment of capabilities and bear on the decisions of the commander (JP 2010). The comparative analysis of the indicators measuring an adjustment of COIN strategies to an operational environment are present in the table below (see table 4).

Table 4. Comparative matrix of the indicators measuring the level of adjustment of the strategy to the operational environment

Indicators	Aden Emergency	Operation Enduring Freedom
1.1 The tactics was well adjusted to the terrain (it was not difficult for COIN force to maneuver and stretch COIN force logistics)	0	1
1.2 Emphasis on intelligence. Insurgents did not demonstrate potency through impressive or spectacular attacks	0	1
1.3 COIN supported the governance in remote tribal areas	0	1
1.4 Indigenous forces conducted majority of COIN operations	0	0
1.5 The collaboration with the active minority in area of conflict was established by COIN force	0	1
1.6 Government sponsorship or protection of unpopular economic and social arrangements or cultural institutions	0	0
1.7 Government inclusion of significant societal groups from state power or resources	1	1
1.8 COIN supported the development of national institutions at the national, provincial, and district levels	0	1
1.9 COIN forces and government interests were aligned at the beginning and throughout the conflict	0	0

Source: Constructed by the researcher from sources indicated in the Methodology chapter

The historical evidence reporting the COIN activities in Aden and the numerous studies and reports describing US actions in Afghanistan suggest that the American forces demonstrated higher flexibility on such parameter as adaptation to the operational environment. In short, the US

forces attempted to immerse themselves in the context of war, while the British poorly adjusted their operations to the settings of war.

The most interesting finding emerge from the analysis of the intelligence. It is widely assumed, the effective use of the intelligence is one of the significant condition of the success in COIN. However, the British did not put enough emphasis on it and paid insufficient attention to the collaboration with Arabs. In contrast, the Americans put major efforts into intelligence work. As comprehensive RAND report suggests intelligence in Afghanistan was adequate to support kill/capture or engagements on COIN force's terms and it was adequate to allow COIN force to disrupt insurgent processes or operations (Paul 2011).

Another most striking difference was observed in the understanding of the physical environment. Although the British tried to apply the experience gained in Malaya, they failed to adjust their knowledge to the terrain of deserted Arabian mountains where most of guerillas were residing. By contrast, the US forces in Afghanistan were carefully adjusting their tactics to the local physical conditions.

Overall, despite the fact that both the American and British forces were perceived as occupiers, the former demonstrated more effective conduct of warfare in terms of its adaptation to the operational environment and the context of war. I assume such flexibility of the strategy was a necessary condition for gaining the objectives in the war against insurgents. Nevertheless, those conditions were not sufficient and the COIN campaign failed. The British lost the war as well, but their failure was more evident as it will be shown in the next section.

4.4 Evaluation of the outcomes of COIN campaigns

There is a popular statement among contemporary COIN theorists that argues "If the COIN does not win, it loses and, oppositely, if insurgency does not lose, it wins". Moreover, there is no clear cut victories in the majority of COIN operations. Similarly, the failures are not always clear cut. Assessing the results of selected COIN campaigns I arrived to the conclusion that both campaigns were lost. Nevertheless, Afghanistan campaign can be seen as less unsuccessful than

that in Aden because in latter case there was no succeeding government left by British forces, while in Afghanistan COIN forces supported the government that still functions.

Up to date, there are many studies that offer a range of instruments to measure the effectiveness of COIN campaign. Many of them can be applied to judge whether the COIN was successful. For example, Sepp's study (2005) provides a list of indicators for measuring effectiveness of COIN. However, the goals of this study do not include a detailed analysis of the effectiveness of selected COIN campaigns but require making a holistic assessment of their results. Two following sections present a brief analysis of results of the considered COIN campaigns.

4.4.1. The Infamous End of Empire in Aden

The Aden colony was the last imperial possession of the British Empire. Despite the fact, that some important lessons were learnt from Malayan Emergence and applied in South Yemen, most of scholars consider the struggle for South Yemen as unsuccessful to the number of reasons. Thus, the British forces had to withdraw earlier than planned. However, to ascribe the COIN failure to the ineffectiveness of the counterinsurgency strategy would be a mistake since the strategy relied on the effective principles. The problem was that those principles were heavily violated.

Moreover, the British retreat from Aden happened in the context of liberation of the region carried out by the growing national anti-colonialist movement. Moreover, as Mumford (2013) points out, overseas military campaigns started to be seen as unviable - the British military presence and operations east of Suez, including Aden, cost £35 million per year by 1966. Similar idea is conveyed by French (2011) who states that the mission in Aden became so expensive, not only in terms of money but also in terms of political capital, that the effort did not seem worthwhile. In addition, the British were mostly responding with large scaled conventional attacks and gained only temporary victory, which Newsinger (2002) named as illusory one.

In sum, the British Empire in South Yemen has made several crucial mistakes summarized in by Friedman his detailed study (2007). He claims, the British COIN miscomprehended the nature of the insurgency mistaking it for usual tribal opposition and underestimated its forces while

in fact the insurgency was both highly militant and well organized. Friedman adds that the insurgency was a truly revolutionary war having a vast population support; therefore, the majority condemned British massive armed attacks. Lastly, British had lacked a good intelligence sources as well as failed to provide the security for the population.

Moreover, the British colonial forces failed to ensure political transition to the post-occupation authority. Instead of political ends that characterized decolonization in other regions, the British mission in southern Arabia ended with military ones. As Mumford (2013) describes, by June 1967 the British Army had passed responsibility the South Arabian Army (SAA) and in a lawless atmosphere they retreated from the port under the guerilla attacks. Overall, the fundamental strategic goal of the Aden military mission, to secure the Protectorate for the FSA, had not been achieved. Therefore, the British Empire lost the COIN campaign.

4.4.2 Assessment of the US campaign in Afghanistan

In order to evaluate the results of the OEF in Afghanistan I compared the objectives of COIN campaign indicated or implied by the COIN doctrines to the various experts' assessments of the ends of US mission in Afghanistan. The goal of the COIN is clearly pronounced in the U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide (2009) that is an improved governance marginalizing the insurgents to the point at which they are destroyed, co-opted or reduced to irrelevance in numbers and capability. It adds the U.S. intervention may discontinue when success is guaranteed but before it is achieved. As it is widely known, by the end of the Operation the situation in Afghanistan was deteriorating. Taliban insurgents were expanding the areas of control and the numbers of recruited insurgents were growing, including deserters from the Afghan Army. In can be said, the COIN campaign in Afghanistan was lost.

In brief, somewhat similar to the British experience in South Yemen, the US has also made many mistakes in countering insurgency in Afghanistan. Thus, the US forces also heavily relied on conventional military means. The pattern shown in the Figure 3 continued till the end of the Operation (see figure 3). Thus, in 2009 Taliban's attacks intensified and the U.S. deployed more

troops as they successfully did in Iraq. Yet the context in Afghanistan differed dramatically from that in Iraq and many experts doubted the prospects of counterinsurgency in Afghanistan (Branch & Wood 2010).

Nevertheless, the main problem of US Army in Afghanistan was legitimacy. As Hippler (2006) notes, despite military superiority of the US, it can hardly compete for political legitimacy with insurgents.

Apart from the lack of legitimacy, the key problem of the US forces in the OEF-A was its strategic goal in COIN. Thus until some changes were introduced to Field Manual 3-24 COIN efforts were almost entirely focused on defeating insurgency instead of establishing control over population. At the beginning of the campaign the US COIN strategy applied to Afghanistan was copied from the strategy utilized in Iraq. As the struggle against Taliban had not given any fruitful results the decision to alter the strategy was taken after military bureaucracy realized the importance of the war context for the success in COIN. As the result, the new Field Manual on counterinsurgency stressed the need for adaptability of the forces and necessity to apply principles of insurgency and utilize lessons from the past.

However, even after the important adjustments were applied and several counterinsurgency attacks seemed to be successful, insurgency continued to sustain.

Friedman (2012) states that Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan have shown that the US military is not very good at counterinsurgency. Overall, the US failed to acquire a strategic success in Afghanistan. According to many experts the failure was due to the substantial focus on defeating insurgents rather than on putting efforts into ensuring the transition to peace. Equally important, the US government avoided financing development projects and poorly invested into enhancing military capabilities of the Afghan Army and other local law enforcement institutions. Moreover, international aid efforts concentrated primarily on the short-term relief.

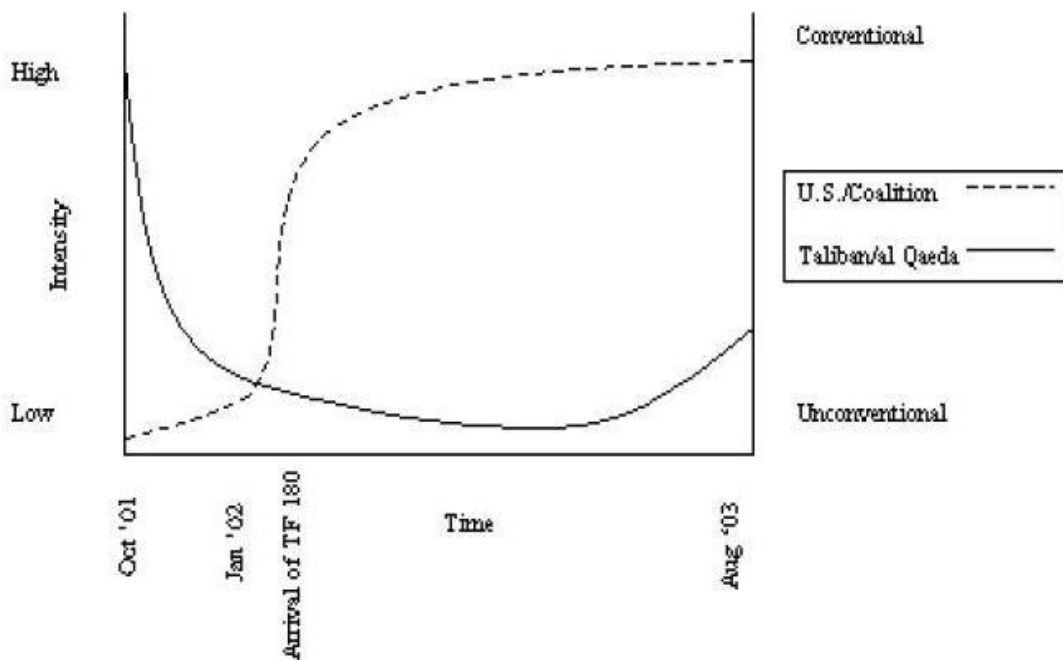


Figure 3. Evolution of Conflict in Afghanistan

Source: Armstrong, 2003

According to Fitzsimmons (2013) another problem that diminished promising political reforms in Afghanistan was the premise that success depends on creating a perception of legitimacy among locals through establishing an effective and efficient government. However, in the political landscape of Afghanistan ethno-religious identities bear prominent importance and the representation of certain groups in the government is seen as necessary by the populace despite the effectiveness of such authorities.

4.4.3 Exploring the relationship between COIN strategies and outcomes of COIN campaigns

Concluding the evaluation of COIN campaigns, it can be said that despite their similar outcomes, there was a difference in the nature and the degree of the outcomes. In the actual implementation of COIN strategies, both empires violated some of the principles of *HAM* approach. In other words, the US better adhered to the basic principles of *HAM* approach, while the British strategy was flexible in terms of its practical application. Oppositely, the US strategy

turned to be more flexible in terms of its adaptation to the actual military theater, while the British COIN strategy remained rigid in that sense.

Overall, both campaigns were lost. Whereas in case of the British Army the failure was undeniable, the end of the US operation in Afghanistan is not so clear-cut. We can conclude there is a positive correlation between the degree of failure of COIN campaign (lost completely/rather lost that did not) and the degree of violation of basic principles of *HAM* approach (number of basic principles that were not realized in practice).

4.5 Ethics of COIN warfare

As it was shown throughout this study, the COIN warfare is qualitatively different from conventional warfighting. Therefore, what is acceptable in war between states might be unacceptable in countering insurgency operations. There are number of ethical issues that arise when forces are not fighting soldiers but insurgents. Most of those issues are rooted in the problem of separating insurgency from populace. To put it simply, a COIN soldier does not always clearly know who his foe is.

4.5.1 Drones usage

Although initially drones were used in conventional warfare and in intelligence as non-lethal weapons, these days such technology is widely applied by the US forces in many countries for targeted killing. Introduction of targeted killing into COIN warfare through drone usage sparked active international debates questioning the ethics, legality and level of justification of their usage. The remote killing appears to be ideal way to defeat insurgencies without risking COIN soldiers' lives. However, human costs of the application of this technology are extremely high on the insurgents' side because such targeted killing proves to be highly imprecise. Consequently, drone operators rely on their subjective judgment. As the result, they often fail. Growing numbers of killed innocent civilians are proving that usage of drones needs to be regulated more strictly.

4.5.2 Private Military and Security Companies

The counterinsurgency operation in Afghanistan as well as in Iraq are unique for many reasons including a high reliance on contractor support on the battlefield. Although civilians have always assisted armed forces, the extent and the nature of the tasks they provide have changed substantially today since not only has almost the entire supply chain been transferred to civilian hands; security-related tasks are provided by the market (Petersohn 2011). However, the problem is not in the extent to which private contracts are involved into COIN operations, but the fact that mercenaries poorly subordinate to the Army headquarters.

The lack of subordination of private military and security companies (PM&SC) to the traditional military institutions leads to the lack of PM&SC's accountability. On September 16, 2007 the global community was shocked by the manslaughter executed by guards of Blackwater Security Consulting, a private military company, who shot 17 and injured 20 Iraqi civilians in Baghdad. The U.S. State Department investigation found the shooting was not justified. Such results sharpened the issue of employing private security contractors. Nevertheless, the lessons were not learnt from *Blackwater scandal* and the US continues the deployment of PM&SC forces across the world.

Obviously, any ethical assessments are subjective in their nature. However, there are some ways to measure whether the action is justified. This assumption applies to COIN operations as a whole and to the particulars measures such as drone usage or PM&SC forces employment. Overall, as the number of innocent victims grows, the usage of drones and recruitment of mercenaries in COIN warfare becomes more morally questionable. Consequently, the adequate international response is needed to adopt better regulations and stipulate military authorities for following them.

4.6 Conclusion

The comparative analysis of COIN strategies presented in this chapter revealed many similarities in the application of the principles of *HAM* by the British and the US forces to the reality of COIN warfare. It was found that the US strategy appeared to be less flexible in terms of

implementation of those principles. By contrast, the analysis of adaptability of the strategies to the operational environment showed that the British COIN strategy was lacking necessary adjustments.

Case study of COIN campaigns showed that both empires had relied on the conventional military means, yet to the different extent. While the British campaign in Southern Arabia can be described as highly coercive, the US COIN were putting noticeable emphasis on the intelligence and securing local population.

The brief assessment of the results of selected counterinsurgency campaigns suggests that both of them were lost, however, the failures happened for different reasons. Nevertheless, the US COIN campaign in Afghanistan did not result in clear-cut failure, which allows us to assume that the US operation in Afghanistan was more successful than the British struggle in South Yemen.

Overall Conclusion

This research was initiated in order to explore the counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies and their practical application for understanding how flexibility of the strategy is connected to the outcome of counterinsurgency campaign. The focus of this study is quite narrow. Thus, *the central question of this study* is what are the differences and similarities in flexibility levels of counterinsurgency strategies of the British Empire employed during the Aden Emergency (South Arabia, 1962-1967⁶) and of the US applied in its *Operation Enduring Freedom* in Afghanistan (2001-2014)? The *additional question* of the study asks what the outcomes of selected COIN campaigns are and to what flexibility levels they are connected.

In order to provide answers to these questions the study was conducted in three directions. In the first direction I explored the concepts crucial for understanding counterinsurgency strategies and the nature of COIN warfare. Thus, we must bear in mind that insurgency is one of the oldest form of conflict. Since almost the very beginning of humanity people opposed the authorities and governments. In fact, the conflicts between state actors is a relatively recent phenomenon and until today the majority of conflicts still happen in the mode of *small wars* (asymmetric warfare) when regular army troops fight unconventional enemy such as insurgents movements. The nature of asymmetric warfare differs from the conventional warfare. In former case, conventional powers have to respond to guerilla resistance who are an inherent part of the population. As the result, governments engage in civil wars where civilians and combatants can be hardly separated.

The peculiarity of counterinsurgency warfare forced the regular armies` authorities to realize the necessity of the development of an adequate response to non-conventional adversary powers since the traditional military means are proved to be mostly ineffective in asymmetric conflicts. Therefore, the traditional military strategies cannot be applied to the reality of

⁶ Officially, the Emergency was declared in 1963, however, the war started earlier and the British troops were engaged in the counterinsurgency campaign before its official announcement.

counterinsurgency warfare. It means counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine must have fundamentally different principles.

Rich experience of the British Empire in conducting *small wars* resulted in elaboration of enduring principles for countering insurgency that laid the foundations of so-called *hearts and minds* (HAM) approach. The *HAM* principles framed all subsequent British COIN strategies and were also adopted by the US Army laying the foundations for the COIN doctrine utilized during the war in Afghanistan. Therefore, in this research I paid particular attention to studying fundamental strategic principles of *hearts and minds* (HAM) approach that underlie the COIN doctrines in selected cases. However, neither the UK nor the US military forces can be characterized as very effective in countering insurgency despite their strategic reliance on the *HAM* approach. It might mean that a well-elaborated, effectively and universally implemented principles of counter insurgency strategy still has not appeared. Therefore, the question is whether it is possible to have such universal strategic principles. If so, how flexible should or can such strategy be? These questions framed the overall research puzzle of this study.

The second direction of the study aimed at conceptualizing and measuring the flexibility of COIN strategy. In this study ***I have argued*** that there are two basic characteristics of the flexibility of the COIN strategy: its adherence to the enduring principles of *hearts and minds* (HAM) approach and its adaptability to the operational environment, namely the context of war. These two measures of flexibility of the strategy were operationalized in this study and employed for the comparative analysis.

In order to provide an adequate answer to this part of the study I compared *HAM* principles that are the basis of COIN doctrines in the selected cases and analyzed how the principles were realized in the actual conduct of COIN warfare. I used the historical descriptions of those campaigns abundantly present in books as well as in the military practitioners' reports.

The third direction of the study required further immersion into the contexts of studied cases. At this point of the research, I also explored the scholarly assessments of the results of

selected COIN campaigns and compared them to the discovered differences in the flexibility of relevant COIN strategies.

The main findings of this study suggest that selected COIN strategies realized the principles of *hearts and minds* approach mostly on paper. The reality of conducted COIN campaigns proves that several basic principles of *HAM* approach were violated by both empires. However, the difference occurs in the extent of those violations. The British Empire tend to rely on conventional power and coercion more often than the US. Moreover, during the conduct of war the US COIN strategy have been updated and its principles were better adjusted to the principles of *HAM* approach. Overall, the US forces better adhered to the *HAM* principles increasingly moving the focus from the physical defeat of the enemy to the provision of security for population. In addition, the US COIN doctrine demonstrated significantly higher flexibility of the strategy in terms of its adaptation to the operational environment. Overall, both campaigns were lost, however, the US failure in Afghanistan were not that clear-cut as it was in case of the British retreat from Aden.

Overall, the effective COIN strategy requires both strict adherence to its fundamental principles and high adaptation to the operational environment. In both cases COIN forces failed to implement this combination of the rigidity and flexibility of their strategies in practice and lost their COIN campaigns.

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