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## Dossier Acta Litt&Arts : La traduction du savoir et ses méthodes (404-la-traduction-du-savoir-et-ses-methodes)

(/) Daniel Emilio Rojas

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ligne**

## Trans-Pacific Connections, World Hegemony and Asymmetric Warfare in 1950

Texte intégral

### Introduction

Studied from the perspective of a long-term chronology, transpacific connections between Asia and Latin-America arise with what some

historians have called "the Iberian globalization" of the 16 and 17th centuries (Gruzinsky, 2004). The most important traces of that period are the Galleon of Manila, which linked the ports of Manila and Acapulco from 1593 until the beginning of the 19th century, and the diplomatic embassy of HASEKURA Tsunenaga, sent from Sendai by DATE Masamune between 1613 and 1620 to establish a Christian bishop in the Tohoku region and to create a trade line between Japan and the Spanish Viceroyalty of New Spain (actually Mexico).

- 2 A second period of this Pacific history would take place between the second half of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century. The opening of Japan to trade after 1853, the construction of the Panama Canal and the boom of the rubber economy led to the first migrations of Japanese and Chinese to Latin America, in particular to México, Panama, Peru and Bolivia. It was the first significant migration from Asia to Latin America, which transformed significantly the social structure of certain regions of Panama and Peru (Heymann, 2016).
- 3 A third period in the history of transpacific relations begins with the end of the Second World War. China and Japan emerge as two different models for the rest of the

world: the first as an alternative of communist modernization, the second as the possibility of creating an economy based on industry and technology. The counter-insurgency war is a product of this period, which will bring together in a single set of procedures and techniques the experiences of irregular warfare in Asia and Europe and the need to contain international communism. In a certain sense, the form and frequency of these connections depend on the dominant role that the US played since then in the geopolitics of the Pacific: American and European officials (at the service of the US) create the possibilities to unite in a same corpus different forms of unconventional war in Asia, Europe and Latin America.

- 4 This article studies an aspect of this third period, when the beginning of the Cold War provoked an unprecedented geopolitical transformation in the Pacific Ocean basin. One of the consequences of this change was the emergence of a synthesis of experiences of non conventional warfare named « counterinsurgency ». This new set of techniques, methods and procedures of war created a global geography of the combat that we will examine in the next pages. Far from belonging to a national tradition, counterinsurgency was a true global phenomenon. For that reason, to understand the true global dimension of counterinsurgency, we must refute the thesis according to which it was a method created by the military schools and the security corporations of the US and shift our gaze to the history of the Philippines archipelago.

## The Philippines crossroad

- 5 With the end of WWII, a new type of rural and irregular warfare appeared in East and Southeast Asia, which had precedents in the opposition to the Japanese expansions of the 19th and 20th centuries, in the Chinese Civil War and in the different forms that assumed the fight against European colonialism. This type of confrontation had a new element with respect to previous experiences of asymmetric warfare, as it was supported by the emergence of national sentiment and the construction of communism.
- 6 The *Filipino experience* of the forties and fifties is the basic reference to understand how this new type of combat was faced. In 1942, in the central Luzon region, on the island of Luzon, a movement called Hukbalahap

was formed, which opposed the expansion of the Japanese imperial army through a guerrilla war<sup>1</sup>. The Huks, as they were popularly known, they implanted in the rural provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga, Tarlac and Nueva Ecija, fighting the troops of Marshal TERAUSHI Hisaichi along with the Philippine Constabulary with the military and logistical assistance of General MacArthur (Connaughton, 2001). They continued to fight the Japanese after the Battle of Bataan, which precipitated the withdrawal of American forces from the archipelago in 1942, and they became a parallel power to the Japanese occupation government.

- 1 Hukbalahap in Filipino is an abbreviation of 'Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon...

7 With the defeat of the Axis powers in 1945 and the creation of the independent Republic of the Philippines in 1946, the war of resistance of the Huks became a movement of peasant's rebellion. Despite having the political legitimacy provided by their opposition to the Japanese invader and a force of approximately ten thousand men, the Huks were not invited to participate in the government. Covered by the impoverishment of rural Luzon communities and the new geostrategic reality of the Far East, they continued to fight. According to a CIA report published in 1946, the rebellion could not be categorized as communist and was based on an inadequate distribution of land and agricultural production in Luzon, whose beneficiaries were the rural owners who supported the first president of the Third Philippine Republic, Manuel Roxas. However, contacts with Mao's China and the Communist Party of the Philippines had narrowed and some Huks, who claimed to be Communists, argued that the rebellion should embrace the entire archipelago, from Luzon to Mindanao.

8 Until 1950 the Huks were considered as an insurgent outbreak that did not threaten the existence of the Philippine State, but that perception changed when the Korean War broke out (1950-1953). As Charles T. Bohannon mentions in a study that remained unpublished until recently, insurgents suddenly became a major threat to Manila and Washington (Ridler, 2015). In June of that year, when hostilities began in Korea, Harry S. Truman disbursed 9.3 million dollars for the Philippine government, which was invested mostly in the creation of mobile multi-purpose combat battalions, endowed with great autonomy and mobility, that resembled the *groupements mobiles* with which the French fought the Viet Minh in Indochina (MacKlintock, 1992; Vaïsse, 2000). The decision was accompanied, months later, by

the appointment of Ramón Magsaysay as defense minister, a former guerrilla fighter who had fought the Japanese and who had a vast network of contacts in the United States.

## A Civilian and Military Counterinsurgency Approach

- 9 The efforts of the Philippine government to quell the Huk rebellion were combined with a new approach to containment of communism promoted from Washington, which sought to prevent the emergence of new allies of the Soviet Union and China through the insurrectional and armed route. In the Philippines, the problem was to create an adequate strategy to combat units of Huks that, in addition to having the support of the local population, knew the terrain and the tactics of fire and movement well.
- 10 Upon his arrival at the ministry, Magsaysay was surrounded by a group of US military advisers, led by Air Force Lieutenant Colonel and intelligence expert Edward Geary Landsdale. The group called Jusmag (Joint United States Military Assistance Group) trained Filipino military units and channelled Washington's financial aid for military, agricultural and educational modernization programs (Pardo, 2014: 92). Magsaysay and Landsdale created an integrated scheme to combat the Huks that gathered the combat experiences behind the lines of the allies in Europe, with those that had been acquired *in situ* in the resistance against the Japanese occupation (MacKlintock, 1992; Ridler, 2005; Pardo, 2014).
- 11 The scheme to fight the Huks combined civil and military actions, public and secret. It contemplated legal and illegal measures to destroy the bases of support of the insurgents, the formation of advisory groups of officers and non-commissioned officers recruited or directed by the CIA, the creation of mobile units with the capacity to respond to the guerrilla groups with complete freedom and to employ tactics of psychological warfare, the execution of social programs managed by the government and the army destined to the civil population and modernization programs of the Armed Forces (FFAA). All the measures were accompanied by

campaigns to influence public opinion and favor the image of the government and the Armed Forces among the civilian population.

12 A civil affairs office was created under the direct control of Magsaysay to manage the disbursement of US resources to the Philippine government and supervise the propaganda activities, the Civil Affairs Office (CAO). The CAO created student organizations in which it disseminated propaganda against communist regimes and the Huks through newspapers, school texts and pamphlets. He also hired independent journalists and paid announcers to speak against the Huks on radio programs. The psychological tactics contemplated the instrumentalization of religion for rural communities to reject the Huks and support the government. To this end, the Far Eastern Broadcasting Company, run by American evangelical missionaries opposed to communism, was asked to distribute radios for free that only capture their emissions (Blaufarb, 1977).

13 A second type of measures was focused on carrying out an ideological work on the Philippine Armed Forces, which was inspired by the role played by the Führungsoffizieren (NSFO) in the Wehrmacht and the Politruks in the Red Army.<sup>2</sup> Landsdale and Bohannan insisted that the war against the Huks should be accompanied by the dissemination of an ideological platform among the military, which would give them the necessary security to back any of the unconventional procedures employed in the war against the insurgents. The CAO's advisors, including Landsdale and Bohannan, insisted on this factor permanently because, as the methods of the Yugoslavian or Greek insurgency during the Second World War proved, the effectiveness of each military operation depended on its political dimension. This principle should apply to all strata of the armed forces, from the minister of defense to the units that were fighting in the Luzon.

14 Finally, in the operative field, covert operations had a fundamental role. The general idea was to act with small mobile units -such as the Huks-, led by three or four officers and formed by less than twenty men, who combined intelligence, psychological warfare and fiery combat. The units had to fight the insurgency without any kind of moral or legal restriction, and to that extent, the use of terror to demoralize the supporters of the Huks and the assassination of their main leaders should be tolerated. The squadrons of the Nenita Comand, a counterinsurgency subdivision composed of volunteers

- 2 An interesting compendium of documents on the activities of the Führungsoff...

- 3 The name Nenita was given in honor of the girlfriend Valeriano had at the t...

from the Constabulary and led by the young Philippine colonel Napoleon Valeriano, was the first detachment trained to fight according to these parameters.<sup>3</sup> The Nenita squads' methods of action included using local beliefs about the Aswangs, vampires-demons of Filipino folklore, to instill fear in the provinces occupied by the Huks. After capturing and killing a rebel, incisions were made in his neck, his blood drained and his body was left near the urban centers so that the inhabitants could associate the Huks' membership with the attacks of the vampires.

- 15 After the implementation of the entire strategy, the Huks quickly collapsed. The offensive of the Armed Forces in the central Luzon, the absence of young huk commanders who relieved the oldest and the inability of the guerrillas to give a national projection to the movement and to establish a point of contact with China and the USSR caused the rebellion ended 1954. Luis Taruc, one of the most important guerrilla leaders, was captured in Manila after a failed negotiation attempt with Magsaysay, who was elected that same year as Philippine president.

## The counterinsurgency in East and Southeast Asia

- 16 The factors that drove the expansion of the counterinsurgency approach in East and Southeast Asia were of different order, but all reflected the great geopolitical disruption that was causing the East-West conflict in the Pacific Ocean basin.
- 17 The first was the decision taken by Moscow and Washington not to use nuclear weapons in the conflict zones that existed then. In the case of the USA, the decision not to use tactical or strategic missiles in the Korean conflict created the need to complement nuclear deterrence with a strategy that combined tactics of asymmetric and conventional warfare. The misgivings of many members of the US General Staff to abandon the procedures of the conventional war made the CIA officers - and not the American FFAA - assume that task.
- 18 A second scenario that spurred the expansion of the counterinsurgency experience was the evolution of the Indochina War (1945-1954), which pitted France against its former protectorates in Southeast Asia. The French

were defeated on May 7, 1954 in the valley of the Dien Bien Phu River and Vietnam was divided into two different states through the parallel 17. The USA, which had cooperated with France since 1950 in the theatre of operations, assumed the defense of the Republic of South Vietnam and created channels of political, economic and military assistance to contain the expansion of communism in the peninsula and fight a war of guerrillas against the Viet Minh (Pardo, 2014; Cadeau, 2013). The Military Mission of Saigon (SMM), led by Lansdale, organized counterinsurgency in South Vietnam under similar parameters to those used in the Philippines to combat the Huks. Bohannon, who had also been to the Philippines and Korea, went to Laos and Cambodia to train military units that had to confront the communists in psychological warfare and unconventional tactics. The final report of the SMM indicates that Magsaysay allowed Valeriano and three other young Filipinos to advise President Ngo Dinh Diem in the organization of the Armed Forces, while a select unit of Vietnamese officers trained in Manila.<sup>4</sup>

- 4 «Lansdale Team's Report on Covert Saigon Mission in 1954 and 1955», Documen...

- 19 Finally, the results of the twentieth congress of the Communist Party of the USSR, in 1956, ended by convincing the governments involved in the Asian conflicts that it was necessary to develop non-conventional military approaches. In the course of the meetings, Nikita Serguéievich Khrushchev modified the Leninist thesis that capitalism and communism could not exist without confronting each other and proclaimed that both ideologies could coexist peacefully. The triumph of socialism over capitalism would be made progressively, through the example that the first would give the second and not through a military confrontation (Service, 1997). That announcement, however, did not mean that the USSR stopped supporting insurrections or communist movements in other continents and opened the door for other conflicts of low and medium intensity to generalize in the southern hemisphere.

## Korea and Colombia, an unprecedented connection

- 20 The Korean War represents an unprecedented connection between the counterinsurgency experience of East and Southeast Asia, and that which will later take place in the countries of Central America, the Caribbean and the Andean area. The dimension and scope of that



phenomenon has not been analyzed yet in detail in Latin American historiography, which tends to subordinate it to the Condor Plan and to the elaboration of the doctrines of national security built after the 1964's coup d'état against the Brazilian President João Goulart.

## The Entry of Colombia into the War

- 21 Colombia was the only Latin American country to participate as a belligerent in the Korean War with land troops and naval material. The request to support the US-led coalition in Korea was raised before the United Nations under the government of Eduardo Santos. Decree 3230 of October 23, 1950, ordered the shipment of the Colombian frigate *Almirante Padilla*, destined to patrol the Korean waters with the VI American Fleet. In December, a new decree created the Infantry Battalion No. 1 Colombia, which after training in Bogota and the US, landed in Pusan on June 16, 1951 to join the other contingents of the United Nations Army. The battalion, which was formed initially with 1051 troops, brought together during the conflict about 150 officers, 590 non-commissioned officers and 5100 combatants. It was in operation throughout the war and after the cessation of hostilities, it monitored until 1954 the fulfillment of the armistice of Panmunjom. The ARC Captain Toro and ARC Admiral Brion frigates, from the Colombian National Navy, participated in logistics and patrolling work in the Yellow and Japan seas.
- 22 Colombian participation in Korea transformed the Armed Forces and helped create a new security paradigm for the Colombian State. Military analysts and historians agree that this experience was the starting point of a close cooperation in security and defense that modernized the Colombian Armed Forces in tactical and equipment. Korea defined the alignment of Bogotá with Washington on international issues, as it would be proved some years later when Colombia participated along with the US in the Crisis of the Suez Canal (1956). From Korea, all Colombian air and maritime protocols to repel a possible aggression from another country in the coastal areas of the Pacific and the Caribbean rest on military cooperation with Washington.<sup>5</sup>
- 5 The original text of the agreement rests in the Archive of the Presidency o...
- 23 The counterinsurgency experience acquired in East and Southeast Asia began to spread among the Colombian armed forces through officers, sub-soldiers and soldiers traveling or returning from Korea. A first sample of the way in which the principles of unconventional war began
- 6 Ruiz Novoa, A. *Las enseñanzas de la campaña de Corea aplicables al Ejército...*

to circulate in Colombia can be found in texts, manuals and articles in military magazines that highlighted the combination of civil and military actions to oppose the country's liberal and communist guerrillas. The teachings of the Korean campaign applicable to the Colombian Army, of Alberto Ruiz Novoa, commander of the Colombia Battalion in Korea and later Minister of War, were published in Bogotá in 1956. In them, besides defending the need to structure a sector of The Armed Forces to fight the guerrillas according to their own principles, Ruiz Novoa pointed out that the military actions against the irregular groups should be accompanied by development plans and an opening to agricultural property for the peasants.<sup>6</sup>

- 24 For Álvaro Valencia Tovar, captain of the same battalion, general of the republic and prolific professor at military schools and universities throughout the hemisphere, Korea allowed Colombians to acquire and improve tactics of fire and movement, improve communications (especially to through the use of radios), introduce intelligence and counterintelligence in combat zones and instruct troops through manuals and texts that included a high ideological content through the path of patriotic discourse. The texts of Ruiz Novoa and Valencia Tovar are a valuable source for understanding the development of counterinsurgency on a global scale and its progressive adaptation in Latin America.

## At the Other Side of the Pacific

- 25 Since the mid-twentieth century, Colombia was the scene of an undeclared internal war. Like the Philippines, Colombia had a predominantly rural population (about 70% lived in the countryside) and approximately 3% of the owners monopolized 50% of the land available for agriculture. Irregular combat and various forms of what might be called a local counterinsurgency existed since the 19th century, but both had increased due to the intensification of the conflict between the liberal and conservative parties within the framework of La Violencia, a period in Colombian history that extends from 1946 to 1958.<sup>7</sup>
- 7 Various forms of insurgency and counterinsurgency existed in the nineteenth...
- 26 The point of inference of La Violencia was the assassination of the liberal leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, who had gained notoriety among the peasants and workers for being the bearer of the postponed tasks of social opening and democratization in the country. In the

weeks after the murder, a wave of terror spread across much of Colombia and over the months, it turned into a civil war that left thousands dead in rural areas. The election to the presidency of the conservative Laureano Gómez in 1949 multiplied the persecution against the Liberals. The expansion of terror affected all the social categories of liberalism, but it was exacerbated in the countryside, as the ruling elites of the party remained protected in the cities.

27 One of the key processes of the period was the development of the rural resistance of liberalism through guerrilla warfare. Unlike previous conflicts in Colombian history, this process created enclaves of Liberal guerrillas opposed to the government, which were not controlled by party bosses and which were led by a heterogeneous sector of popular leaders, peasants, members of the administration municipal and by some workers. Gonzalo Sánchez, specialist of the period, mentions that it was a war led by

peasants tied to partisan loyalties, but also by peasants who had fought independently for land in the previous decades; by popular leaders who, without going into too much detail, had had revolutionary experiences like that of April 9th, as mayors, members of juntas, of militias; by deserted or destitute policemen; by rank fighters who had earned respect and admiration in the course of combat; by migrants, by muleteers and, eventually, although to a lesser extent, by public works workers and workers with some urban union experience (Sanchez, 1989: 143).

28 The Liberal guerrillas had several focuses of expansion in the inter-Andean valleys and in the mountainous areas of the country, but the most important one was in the Eastern Plains (Pardo, 2004: 487). There the insurgents managed to build a stable military organization with defined chains of command; they created a renewable and sufficient supply base based on the supply of live cattle and the existence of immediate return crops, and built political and government programs. The Eastern Plains came to house approximately ten thousand men in arms (Sánchez, 1989: 144). However, that region was

part of the national periphery and was too far away to be able to influence national politics or propose a government alternative to the central power.

29 In Colombia, the Liberal guerrillas were the first to be attacked with unconventional tactics developed after the Second World War in Europe and Asia. As had happened in Greece during the civil war of 1951, and as it occurred later in the central Luzon, the Colombian army depopulated entire villages to reduce the bases of support for the guerrillas (MacKlintock, 1992). In 1952, for example, after an amnesty proposal that was not received by the insurgents, two columns of Colombian army soldiers moved to the towns of Puerto Lopez, El Turpial, Las Delicias, El Frío and San Pedro de Arimena to force its inhabitants to change residence. Subsequently, the villages were bombarded and set on fire to take the base of support and resources from Dumar Aljure's guerrilla (Ramsey, 1981: 200).

30 The arrival of General Gustavo Rojas Pinball to power in 1953 marked a pause in the wave of death and terror that had begun since the assassination of Gaitán. Rojas undertook the task of disarming and demobilizing all the guerrillas of the country and for that he offered a general and unconditional amnesty. In the months following the start of negotiations between the government and the Liberal insurgents, about 3,500 men laid down their arms. However, in previous years, in addition to the Liberal guerrillas, other Communist groups had appeared in the mountainous areas of the departments of Cundinamarca and Tolima, far less important politically and numerically, but which eventually became the vanguard of the insurgency of the country (Matta Aldana, 1999). The disappointment that caused for many liberal guerrillas the absence of support from their party to face the conservative oppression, and the proximity between their agrarian claims and communist collectivism, inclined many of them to join the communists. The supreme leader of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), Manuel Marulanda Vélez, alias Tirofijo, was one of them.<sup>8</sup>

- 8 Alape, A. *Tirofijo: los sueños y las montañas, 1964-1984*, Bogotá, Planeta, 1...

31 The communists did not respond to Rojas's amnesty in the same way. In Tolima and in the region of Sumapaz, near Bogotá, the preaching of reconciliation was taken with caution, because the promises of peace and concord made by the government were combined with aerial bombings and denunciations carried out by former demobilized Liberal guerrillas, who had been co-opted

by the government and worked with it to persuade or force the communists to demobilize (Sánchez, 1989: 163).

- 32 Under the Rojas government, the first training school entirely dedicated to the training of unconventional war units in South America was created. The School of Lancers, created on December 6th, 1955, announced the progressive change experienced by the Colombian Armed Forces in the fifties by subordinating their role as protectors of external borders to that of guarantors of internal security. The first officers were officers and NCOs, several of them were veterans from Korea, who went to the Fort Benning military base to prepare the special operations courses of the 75th Rangers Regiment, the unit of the US Armed Forces where units were trained in unconventional combat techniques and psychological warfare. Ralph Puckett, commander of the Rangers during the Korean War, and then commander of the mountain Rangers division as part of the ranger infantry school, went to Colombia to advise the creation of the school in 1954 (Puckett, 2017).

## Military Equipment and Aerial Geography

- 33 During the Second World War, the Armed Forces of the Latin American countries cooperated with the United States to develop a hemispheric security strategy. The CIA report "Conditions and Trends in Latin America Affecting US Security", published in 1952, reveals that the Colombian government undertook to mobilize the forces and equipment at its disposal to defend the Panama Canal in case of attack of the powers of the axis.<sup>9</sup> However, the report judged that in the event of the outbreak of a global war, neither Colombia nor any of the governments of the region would be in a position to repel a first-class military power without air support and naval of the USA.
- 9 "Conditions and Trends in Latin America Affecting US Security," National In...
- 34 Aware of this weakness, almost all Latin American governments began negotiations with the US to gain access to the powerful range of weapons available in their reserves after the war. Doubts in Truman's immediate environment about the payment capacity of Latin American governments made it difficult for any type of transfer of military equipment, since cash payments were required from Washington, while Latin

Americans tended to pay deferred payments after delivery. However, the Colombian government managed to get the US to change its mind (Atehortúa, 2008: 67).

- 35 The general refusal of the Latin American governments to send troops to the Korean peninsula considerably reduced the international support that Washington hoped to have to lead the coalition against the communist bloc. Laureano Gómez took advantage of the situation and made it known that Colombia would support the US if credit was considered and Truman accepted it (Atehortúa, 2008: 67-69). With the Colombian battalion and the corvettes in Korea, President Gómez first, and General Rojas later, leaked rumors among the diplomatic and military media about the possible withdrawal of the Colombian units due to the lack of funds and equipment. The result was that several models of weapons and military equipment that had been used in the Philippines and in Korea began arriving in the country in different ways.
- 36 Between 1953 and 1954 the H-23 Raven and the H-13 Sioux arrived in Colombia, two models of reconnaissance and evacuation helicopters that had been used intensively in Korea.<sup>10</sup> The increased flow of these teams prompted the creation of the country's first helicopter base and was the first step in the constitution of a national network of helicopter troops.<sup>11</sup> When General Ruiz Novoa published his Lessons from the Korean War, he disapproved the use of tanks in the country and advised the use of helicopters, following the pattern of air / land operations that had been carried out in Korea.
- 10 Ortega, P. «Historia de las Fuerza Aérea Colombiana. Breve reseña históric...
  - 11 At present, it is the base of Lieutenant Colonel Luis F. Pinto Parra, head...
- 37 Along with the helicopters, the transport planes and the bombers constituted for several years the main means to carry out counter-insurgency air operations in the Eastern Plains. The C-54 Skymaster military transport, also used in Korea, began operating in the Colombian airspace in 1954. In 1955, the Colombian Air Force (FAC) received the bombers B-25 and A-26 Invader that had been used in Algeria, Indochina and Korea (Luna, 2006). These last two models were distributed in several countries of the Pacific basin such as El Salvador, Nicaragua, Colombia, Peru and Chile.
- 38 Finally, some models of fighters that had been distributed to the Philippine Armed Forces years ago, such as the Lockheed T-33 Silver Star and the Lockheed F-80 Shooting Star, both of jet engines, arrived at the FAC and

were destined for activities of combat on Colombian soil. In 1956 came the North-American F-86 Saber, which entered service for the first time in Korea, and which was the fighter par excellence used by the allies to confront the MiG-15s driven by North Korean, Chinese and Soviet pilots.

- 39 Air power transformed the relationship between the combatants and the theater of operations substantially; It increased the deployment and reaction capacity of the Armed Forces and gave them a strategic advantage in facing the insurgents. However, it was not enough to eradicate the enclaves of Liberal and Communist guerrillas.

## Connected Stories (but little known)

- 40 Despite the pacification that Rojas successfully promoted in his first year in office, new outbreaks of violence broke out in 1955. There was not a single modality in the resurgence of rural violence, but in most cases it was of conservative leaders who settled accounts with former liberal enemies. The guerrillas who had not yet surrendered their weapons reaffirmed their decision to keep them and those who had done so thought that the government had set a trap for them (Sanchez, 1989: 162-3). That moment coincided with a new migration of Liberals to the communist guerrillas.
- 41 The bipartisan strategy of destabilization of the government was added to the outbreaks of violence. The objective of alienating Rojas from power quickly crystallized between the conservative and liberal leaders, considering that his discourse of union between the government and the people constituted a threat to the party system on which the entire political organization of the country rested. Rojas responded erratically to the old political bosses, who began to close all roads for him and his followers to continue in the government. When he announced his intention to remain in office in 1957, the country's civilian leadership forced him to abandon it.
- 42 The departure of Rojas marked the beginning of the National Front, the bipartisan coalition that restored the reins of political power to the traditional parties and governed Colombia alternately for 16 years. Its first president was Alberto Lleras Camargo.

- 43 In accordance with the bureaucratic parity negotiated with the conservatives, Lleras distributed the most representative positions of the executive between the two parties, authorized the governors to initiate rapprochements with the armed groups and demobilized them, gave continuity to the policy of colonization of the internal borders initiated by the previous government to guarantee access to land and fought the strongholds of the liberal guerrillas and criminal gangs. The demobilization of the guerrillas was almost total but, as had happened before, the communist-oriented continued to watch with suspicion the fact that one of the traditional leaders of liberalism came to power.
- 44 The arrival of Lleras to the presidency marked a period of deepening relations between the US and Colombian armed forces. Lleras had been secretary general of the Organization of American States (OAS) and had many more contacts with the US administration than any of his predecessors in the government. He called for more support from the US to end rural crime and with the guerrillas, who, despite the government's efforts, continued to threaten the country's public order. The response of the Eisenhower administration was to send a mission of military experts to evaluate the request and make a diagnosis of the internal security of the country.

## The Survey Team Mission

- 45 The Directorate of the Department of State, aided by the Department of Defense, asked the CIA for a team of specialists with experience in unconventional warfare in Europe and Asia. At the head of the Survey Team Mission, as the group was named, was the CIA officer Hans Tofte and included Colonel Napoleon Valeriano, Major Charles TR Bohannon, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph T. Koontz, Colonel Berkeley Lewis and to Lieutenant Bruce Walker. All of them had been part of the group that Landsdale had led in the Philippines to fight the Huks (Rempe, 2002).
- 46 A look at the trajectories of the members of the mission shows how contact with a global sphere of circulation created by the Cold War allowed the universalization of military leaders who interacted with local strategic cultures. Born in Copenhagen, Tofte escaped in 1941 from the Nazi occupation in Denmark and joined an Anglo-Saxon intelligence network. In Singapore, he worked behind the lines in territories occupied by the



Japanese and trained units in unconventional tactics. In 1943 he joined the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), predecessor of the CIA, and conducted intelligence operations in Mussolini's Italy. He was then assigned to Yugoslavia, where he coordinated a supply line for Tito's partisans. It is likely that his first contacts with the Colombian troops took place in South Korea, where he also trained units in unconventional war since the outbreak of the war.

- 47 Valeriano, whom we have referred to before, was a Filipino veteran of World War II who escaped from a Japanese concentration camp. He managed to join General MacArthur's troops in Australia and after Philippine independence led the operations against the Huks. In 1954 he went to Vietnam to participate in covert operations against the Viet Minh. Later he visited the School of the Americas in the occupied zone of the Panama Canal and later Colombia, with the mission commanded by Tofte. A year later, in 1960, he was in charge of training one of the groups that participated to the Bay of Pigs disembarkation (MacKlintock, 1992).
- 48 Another case that is worth mentioning is that of Charles Ted Rutledge Bohannon, an American who gained experience in guerrilla warfare against the Japanese in New Guinea and in the Philippines. After World War II, he remained in Manila as a counterintelligence officer of the JUSMAG and was one of the architects of the Philippine participation in military operations in Laos and Vietnam. In 1962 he published with Valeriano the manual *Counter-guerrilla Operations: the Philippine Experience*, considered the first counter-insurgency manual of the Cold War.
- 49 The Survey Military Mission arrived in Bogotá on October 26th, 1959 and remained for two months touring the country. Its members collected data through surveys and interviews with politicians, labor leaders, military commanders, arrested criminals and guerrilla leaders and combatants to determine the causes and possible solutions to the phenomenon of violence. In January 1960, the mission finalized a preliminary report and on May 25th gave a report to Secretary of State Christian Herter (Rempe, 2002: 7).
- 50 In the preliminary report, a series of recommendations was made to the Colombian government that included military, intelligence and productive development tasks in the regions. It was recommended to reorganize the national police, create counterinsurgency units formed

by Lanceros and form an intelligence service of the Army, in addition to modernizing the civil intelligence services grouped in the Colombian Intelligence Service (SIC). As it had been done in the Philippines with the CAO, it was necessary to establish a public information government's service with covert psychological combat capability and establish programs administered by civilians within the Armed Forces that would attract the population and rehabilitate the empathy of public opinion towards them. As in the fight against the Huks and the Viet Minh, the comprehensive plan should be accompanied by national rehabilitation and development programs that would increase the well-being of rural communities. The development of agroproductive projects managed by peasants and supported by the government was essential to reduce violence and the potential nuclei of other conflicts.

- 51 The final report completed the preliminary. This last document analyzed in more detail the phenomenon of violence, its relationship with recent history and agrarian problems, its diverse regional manifestations and the strategies that could be used to stabilize the country. Although the communist guerrillas had to be combated, as it was a factor of destabilization in the medium term opposed to the interests of the Colombian government and that of the US, the report indicated that the main focus of destabilization was the criminal violence produced in the center of the country. In addition to this, there were other social and political elements that created potentially dangerous situations such as the existence of an elite too busy defending their own interests; a type of rural owner confined to a subsistence economy and without the possibility of entering into exchange networks; displaced populations that had not been relocated after 1948; rural illiteracy, racial inequity and the most important hemispheric rates of diseases such as typhoid fever, typhus, yellow fever, smallpox and leprosy (Rempe, 2002: 8). In that perspective, and as Ruiz Novoa had warned, the main component of civil-military action should focus on the realization of political and economic structural changes with a long-term impact, not on the military.
- 52 The report recommended building a stronger and more efficient State and democratizing access to land and public services, but did not deny the need to fight the insurgency. To do so, a politico-military approach was required that integrated economic, social and psychological measures into a security strategy with covert and public components. The main one was to

reorient the Colombian Armed Forces from their mission of guardians of external security to that of guarantors of internal security, which was in line with some of the measures that Rojas and Lleras had taken, but which required the cooperation of the US with military equipment, personnel with experience in unconventional warfare and economic aid.

53 The key elements of that strategy were listed in the preliminary report, but the definitive emphasis was placed on the need for the covert or semi-covered nature of operations. In the short term, the US was to designate an advisory mission headed by a counselor who would act as assistant to the US ambassador in Bogotá. To avoid any indication of interventionism, the Tofte team advised to use

third-country nationals hired by the Colombian government as advisors to the security forces involved in counter-guerrilla operations with undercover contracts, but under the covert control of the US [Third-country nationals] would bring experience and training modalities not widely available in the US and add additional propaganda value by demonstrating international solidarity and support for US goals.

54 After President Lleras's state visit to the US in April 1960, President Eisenhower gave the green light to the supply of military equipment and indicated the need to make a broader study on the needs of the Colombian Armed Forces to combat the insurgency and guarantee joint defense plans in the hemisphere in case of communist attack. The Kennedy administration maintained continuity with the orientation that Eisenhower gave to US policy towards Colombia.

55 Kennedy maintained a policy that combined military assistance and economic aid. A new mission formed by members of the Special Combat Center of the US Army traveled to Colombia in 1962 under the direction of Brig. Gen. William P. Yarborough; the final reports of Yarborough coincided in many points with the Special Survey Team, but this mission initiated an approach of application of the counterinsurgency strategies more inclined towards the military aspects without insisting on the necessity of social reforms. This inclination

illustrates a new moment in relations between Washington and Bogota and a new period in the development of the Cold War in Latin America.

## Conclusions: a Global Geography of Combat

- 56 As European, American, Asian and Latin American officials moved around the world to oppose the expansion of communism and to sponsor the counterinsurgency struggle, a global geography of combat was built. The civilian and military approach implemented in the Philippines under the auspices of Magsaysay and Landsdale to combat the Huks synthesized the teachings of the guerrilla struggle against the Japanese invader, the tactics behind the lines used by the allies to defend Europe from the threat of totalitarianism and the need for an economic opening within the framework of capitalist development. In the Philippines, the new counterinsurgency experience expanded to East and Southeast Asia; from there, through the alliance between Washington and Bogotá, it crossed the Pacific to reach Colombia and expand to the rest of the Andean space.
- 57 As another type of knowledge circulating on a planetary scale, the military is nourished and transformed into contact with local conditions. The counterinsurgency emerged as a government military instrument to oppose the communist insurrections of the fifties, but was nourished by local experiences of insurgent and counterinsurgent combat that are not restricted to the 20th century and whose causes are found in old agrarian and political conflicts of the post-colonial world. The officers who were on the ground, and who later conceptualized the principles of counter-insurgency action in the early 1960s, were aware that the implementation of a comprehensive approach to oppose communism was not carried out in a vacuum; their actions were part of a larger historical continuity and synthesized experiences that took place in different continents and in different cultural contexts. The role of articulators of US officials and the CIA should not be confused with that of creators of new military knowledge. The writings of Bohannon, Valeriano, Galula, Ruiz Novoa and Valencia Tovar show the extent to which counterinsurgency resulted from an exchange of knowledge that included people from all over the world.

- 58 If the counterinsurgency was framed in a wider historical movement than that which has been commonly attributed to it, the fifties gave it an unprecedented scope that made it a global phenomenon. The internationalization of the struggle against communism created a unity of principles that overcame national borders and united hundreds of political and military leaders from around the world in a crusade against the revolutionary threat. The sphere of circulation of officers, military know-how and armaments expanded in an unusual way during that period. Of course, the role of diplomatic, military and commercial networks in the US was evident, but it was not the only one. The counterinsurgency found a fertile ground in societies where the Church and political groups promoted anti-communism and where the State did not have a monopoly of violence. The cases of the Philippines and Colombia demonstrate this pattern, but they are not the only ones.
- 59 Asymmetric warfare turned into counterinsurgent action thanks to the integration of various unconventional tactics in a single combat approach. From there arose a new relationship between weapons, soldiers and the theater of operations that required abandoning many of the military procedures and the legal limitations of regular war. Although this orientation was not well seen by the staffs of the Western Armed Forces, it ended up being imposed as a necessity after the end of the Korean War and the proclamation of peaceful coexistence. Since then, a new combatant profile has begun to expand, a sort of international pilgrim more sensitive to socio-cultural differences and the need to combine the military objective with the political objective at any time and place.
- 60 Without a propaganda effort in public opinion to turn insurgents into enemies of society, the counterinsurgency approach would not have worked. That is why the ideological content was as important as the military one. It was in the field of political and moral values and, ultimately, in the defense of a social model with respect to another, where counterinsurgency emerged as a singular dimension of unconventional warfare. The anti-guerrilla struggle became a counter-insurgency struggle thanks to the ideological work on the officers of the Armed Forces and a psychological device that affected the whole of society through radio, images and newspapers. The creators of that device were not only military. Dozens of civilians linked to the different social sciences and journalism turned freedom of opinion and association into weapons to attack communism.

- 61 In addition to a work on public opinion, the counterinsurgency approach that was developed in East and Southeast Asia presupposed measures of social democratization and access to property that aimed at suppressing focuses of possible popular uprisings. The conception of the counterinsurgent action of Valeriano, Bohannon or Ruiz Novoa was explicit in that respect: without social reform there would be no military effectiveness.
- 62 However, unlike what happened in South Korea, Formosa or Malaysia, in the Philippine and Colombian cases the military measures were carried out effectively, but the implementation of social reforms was postponed. The Filipino and Colombian armed forces overcame the inferiority with which they had confronted the liberal and communist insurgency, but the pockets of political and economic instability continued to exist. To a larger extent, this explains why guerrillas such as the FARC and the Philippine New People's Army emerged in 1960 and remained active until today. The Philippines and Colombia belong to a group of countries in the southern hemisphere in which the modernization of the Armed Forces was not accompanied by an expansion of access to rural property or public services. Therefore, if in the short term counterinsurgency was useful as a strategy to eradicate the insurrectionary forces, in the medium term it made it possible for the insurgent groups to strengthen themselves. By not combining military modernization with social reforms, the insurgents gained political legitimacy; not being defeated in the military field, they adapted their own procedures to successfully face the counterinsurgency.
- 63 That the social reforms needed to prevent the emergence of communist focus were being postponed was not a secret for the United States. The decision-making circles in Washington were aware about the limited effectiveness of the economic cooperation of programs such as SEATO (Southeast Asian Treaty Organization) and the Alliance for Progress. The reports presented by the CIA officers that came to the hands of the US leaders did not hide the fact that the aid of the US sponsored development programs was not invested in the items for which they were intended. On many occasions, the technical modernization of the Armed Forces absorbed resources that had to be oriented towards social investment. This deviation constitutes one of the permanent criticisms against the successive administrations that occupied the White House, but it is explicable in the context of the bipolar conflict and, in

fact, it is part of it: the need to strengthen and maintain alliances with Bogotá and Manila to avoid the advance of communism in the Pacific, in the Caribbean and in the Andean space was the supreme good to which all others must be subordinated. Therefore, support for authoritarian democracies that opposed the communist bloc was never in dispute.

## Notes

1 Hukbalahap in Filipino is an abbreviation of 'Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon', or 'Army of the nation against the Japanese soldiers'. The most complete study of the causes of the rebellion is: Kerkvliet, B. *The Huk Rebellion. A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines*. 1977. Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield, 2002.

2 An interesting compendium of documents on the activities of the Führungsoffizieren can be seen in: Waldemar Besson, "Zur Geschichte des Nationalsozialistischen Führungsoffizieren", *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, January 1961. Available on the page of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte: <[http://www.ifz-muenchen.de/heftarchiv/1961\\_1.pdf](http://www.ifz-muenchen.de/heftarchiv/1961_1.pdf)> [Accessed on November 20, 2017].

3 The name Nenita was given in honor of the girlfriend Valeriano had at the time.

4 «Lansdale Team's Report on Covert Saigon Mission in 1954 and 1955», Documento 95. *The Pentagon Papers*, vol. 1, pp. 573-583. Ediciones Gravel.

5 The original text of the agreement rests in the Archive of the Presidency of the Republic under the title "Secret. Plan of the governments of Colombia and the United States of North America for their common defense ». Embassy of Colombia, Washington, December 31, 1951. APR, 1954, Caja 843, cited by Atehortúa (2008).

6 Ruiz Novoa, A. *Las enseñanzas de la campaña de Corea aplicables al Ejército de Colombia*. Bogotá, Antares, 1956.

7 Various forms of insurgency and counterinsurgency existed in the nineteenth century in Colombia and, generally, in the entire Andean space. That is why the thesis defended by authors such as Carl Schmitt and Marie-Danielle Demélas, according to which the partisan war is deeply linked to the Hispanic world, must be examined carefully. The publication of Gildas Lepetit-Castel's book on counterinsurgency during the Napoleonic occupation of the Iberian Peninsula and Renán Vega Cantor's study of US interference in Colombia have suggestive reflections to extend the emergence of counterinsurgency chronologically, without subjecting it to the twentieth century. See: Carl Schmitt (2002); Gildas Lepetit-Castel (2015); Marie-Danielle Demélas (2007); Renán Vega Cantor (s / f).

8 Alape, A. *Tirofijo: los sueños y las montañas, 1964-1984*, Bogotá, Planeta, 1994.

9 "Conditions and Trends in Latin America Affecting US Security," National Intelligence Estimate, Copy No. 1 for the President of the United States, published December 12, 1952. Harry S. Truman Library; Papers of Harry S. Truman; President's Secretary File, p. 5. Available at <[https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC\\_0000010447.pdf](https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC_0000010447.pdf)> [Accessed November 20th, 2017].

10 Ortega, P. «Historia de las Fuerza Aérea Colombiana. Breve reseña histórica», 2006,

11 At present, it is the base of Lieutenant Colonel Luis F. Pinto Parra, headquarters of the Combat Air Command No. 4 and the Joint School of Helicopters of the Military Forces.

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