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The communicational war and utopias

As utopias e a guerra comunicacional

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Picture 1 – EZL fights the Mexican Government.



Picture 2 – Maroccon family fights in Syria with Al Qaeda forces.

ABSTRACT

This study consists in an analysis of the communicational war, the one faced in the asymmetric confrontations perpetrated by ISIS, the Islamic State. The main goal of these confrontations is not to win the war over the enemy, but to control the public's perception. These military actions intend on dominating news agency – the terrorist act and the uncontrolled violence are means through which revolutionary groups can draw attention from newsrooms and change public opinion. 41 ongoing conflicts since 2013 are analysed here; their motives are mainly political and religious utopias. Our conclusion leads us to see utopia as one of the main influencers of militant actions in these conflicts.

KEYWORDS: Utopia. Asymmetrical War. Perception.

RESUMO

Este estudo faz uma análise da guerra comunicacional, a que ocorre nos enfrentamentos assimétricos tais como os realizados pelo Estado Islâmico. O principal objetivo deste tipo de embate não é vencer o inimigo, mas controlar a percepção do público. Estas ações militares visam principalmente dominar a agenda noticiosa. O ato terrorista e a violência indiscriminada são meios através dos quais os grupos revolucionários atraem a atenção das redações e através delas exercem forte influência sobre o clima de opinião pública. Faz-se aqui uma análise de 41 conflitos que estavam em andamento em 2013 motivados principalmente por utopias políticas e religiosas. Conclui-se que a utopia é um dos principais fatores que influenciam a ação dos militantes nestes confrontos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVES: Utopia. Guerra Assimétrica. Percepção.

Revolutionary utopias cause wars. Redemptive dreams of this type have little tolerance for the slow rhythm of history. Rebels do not display patience. With their radical and violent acts they want to create not only a new society but also a new human being. It means that the perfectionist utopia is pretentious. As a result, political actions performed by utopians are always accompanied by an educational project. It aims to change moral, social, economic and cultural patterns in a profound way. That explains why the indoctrination of militants is a necessary condition of their political and military work. This is what we are seeing today, for example, among Salafists. Usually, these Islamic groups are not interested in elections. The exception for this rule was the decision taken by Al Nur, a salafist group that decided to run for parliament after the overthrow of the government of Hosni Mubarak in Egypt. The

remaining Salafist groups are fighting with weapons in various parts of the world aiming to build a new caliphate. They wish to impose on all the rule of shaaria. The tactic of mujahaidin is assymetrical. In fact, this type of fighting through which small groups of militants use terror to undermine the morale of the enemy has been used for a long time. The anarchists of the XIX century, for example, practiced urban warfare. The press became now and again an instrument to revolutionary who wish throught it to win the sympathy of public opinion, enlisting political and financial support, recruiting militants, undermining the reputation of the enemy and arousing hope among the people.

Data presented in the Conflict Barometer 2013 by HIICR (Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research) show that ideological disputes were the cause for 148 conflicts that occurred in the world in 2013. As in previous years, this item was the most relevant among the 10 analyzed in the study. This means that at least one actor involved in the dispute aimed to modify or wanted to maintain certain political or economic system, or wanted to enforce their values and worldview. Asia & Oceania were the regions most affected by asymmetric warfare. The Middle East came second followed by the Americas, Europe and finally sub-Saharan Africa.

The case of Zapatism

The Zapatist rebellion that began in the Mexican state of Chiapas on January 1, 1994, filled to some extent the utopian vacuum caused in the West by the collapse of the communist world. By taking by force the control of five cities in southern Mexico on the day Nafta Free Trade Agreement between the United States, Canad and Mexico began, the army of 3000 indigenous guerrillas surprised the country and encouraged those who, for some time, were protesting in various parts of the world against the economic and cultural globalization and those who aimed to recover, at least in some

degree, the revolutionary enthusiasm that had characterized the agitation of previous decades.

In the case of this Mexican crisis there was a concrete and visible dilemma. It concerned the damage the constitutional change approved in the Mexican parliament would have on its indigenous population. Article 27 was one the main achievements of the Mexican revolution of 1910 whose leaders were Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Vila. This Article 27 ensured the public ownership of the land. With the change the *ejido* system was threatened and its collective ownership became subject to privatization. In fact, this land reform crisis is old. At the time of the revolution of 1910, two thirds of all farms in the country belonged to only 900 families. The same battle cry against the landlords at that time of Emiliano Zapata (1879-1919), in the south, and Pancho Vila (1878-1923) in the north, is being now repeated in southern Mexico. In this area it is possible to hear again the same slogan for Land Reform. The 1994 fight evoked the same reasons of 1910. Then the enemies were the dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz and landowners. Now the targets of the rebellion are the government, landowners and neoliberalism.

Netwar

Very often many commentators use the epithet 'postmodern' to name the Zapatista rebellion. This happens because the Zapatistas were the pioneers in netwar/cyberwar techniques. These concepts originally formulated at the Rand Corporation refer nowadays a large number of low-intensity conflicts played on the web (Ronfeldt, 1998). Actors like terrorists, criminals, gangs, government officials, multinational corporations, extremists and activists in social movements, among many others, are involved in them. Although the strategy used by Zapatista sympathizers was originally hierarchical (following the usual Leninist practice of linear chain of command), it

quickly became a decentralized action. Thus, those who belonged to the Zapatist net began to communicate among themselves. This new medium gave to Zapatistas a degree of exerting influence that no other communication technology has previously offered.

Of course, the virtual guerrilla's performance depends on the network design. Al-Qaeda, for example, consists of semi-autonomous groups. The Chinese Falun Gong changed its hierarchical structure, which imitated the Communist Party's. It then became a decentralized mass movement. The technological level applied is also decisive. But the three most relevant elements are the doctrine that motivates the members of the net, personal ties that bind them and the common history that is narrated by all. That's what gives them identity.

In México, La Neta network was one of the first to act in support of the Zapatistas. Another, the Association for Progressive Communication (APC), also took part in this militancy that was formed between 1982 and 1987. Originally it consisted of the British GreenNet and the Institute for Global Communications (IGC) of the United States then called peaceNet/EcoNet. APC attracted similar groups in Sweden (NordNet), Canada (Web), Brazil (IBASE), Nicaragua (Nicarao) and Australia (Pegasus). Today it involves organizations from 50 countries.

Their lands should be defended, as well their habits, customs and institutions. It is clear that there is in this international militancy an unmistakable sense of opposition to the suggestion to fully assimilate the indigenous people to the uses and customs of modern capitalist society. The natives live another lifestyle, they say. In Brazil this same kind of tension between these two doctrines persists since 1910 when the Indian Protection Service (SIP) was created by Marechal Rondon. The mission delegated by the government to SIP was to protect the indigenous peoples and their innocence until the moment the Indians could finally integrate

the 'civilization'. 'Non obligatory' fundamental and vocational education should be offered by the new body (replaced by FUNAI in 1973). Numerous other tasks were also delegated to FUNAI, including the construction of roads between villages, creation of centers of consumption, granting land titles and attraction of nomadic tribes.

In 1973, there was a small, but significant change. The new Indian Statute defined indigenous people as 'relatively capable'. FUNAI's goal remained being to integrate the Brazilian Indians into society, "assimilating them smoothly and progressively". In 1988, the new constitution of the country accepted the notion of relative autonomy of these populations. The document recognized their cultural identities, their unique lifestyle and their right over the land they lived. However, according to the new law, only Indians' rights and not the people would be tutored.

In the 1990's, this same type of conflict between autonomists and developmentists had turned Mexico into a laboratory. Several actions began to be tested by supporters of Indigenism in the the virtual battlefield. At the beginning, the announcements made by Subcomandante Marcos (one every two days) were recorded on floppy disks and then taken to San Cristobal de las Casas where they were placed on the web by supporters involved in the actions of 'electronic gerrilla'.

Originally, the Zapatista war had been planned to follow the rules of the Maoist strategy, that is, a guerrilla and popular conflict that would last in time. However, after 12 days of battles in which the bombing of the Mexican army slaughtered hundreds of native fighters, this type of open war quickly became a virtual conflict, a netwar. Several supporters of the Zapatistas helped the group acting outside the Mexican border. The first EZLN page released on the network from a foreign server was posted on Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania. On the opposite site began what is now being called 'virtual counterinsurgency'.

Since 1994, the virtual warfare techniques originally developed in the Mexican struggle have been copied and used in various parts of the world by Salafist groups and as well by racist, liberal, nationalist, conservative and anarchists' ones. This was the case in Chechnya, Burma (or Myanmar), East Timor and Serbia besides many other conflicts. What was at stake in these struggles was the ability of NGOs to influence public opinion at least in some degree.

Public Perception

Therefore, for small groups promoting guerrilla insurgencies, perception has become something more decisive than military victory on the battlefield. This type of confrontation is being called now 4GW (Fourth Generation Warfare) (Lind et al., 1989). According to this concept in the end the fight can be won by its psychological effect caused to the public. In other words, the military combat is not the main goal. What really matters is the propaganda result of the battle. In this view, the rhetorical effect is as powerful as weapons, or more. Urban warfare carried out by Hamas in Gaza against Israel in 2014 is a recent example of such battle. Other examples are the war in Chechnya (Goulding, 2000-1), the fight of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua in 1979 and the campaign of the Vietcong (1955-1975) (Mack, 1975). In Afghanistan, between 1979 and 1989, the goal of the *mujahideen* was to persuade the Soviet leadership to withdraw from the invaded country and not to win the war.

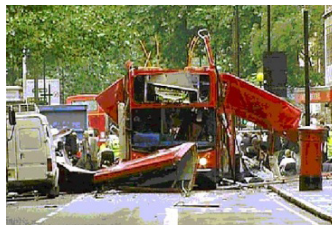
According to the 4GW concept, the guerrilla warfare involves the decentralized action of cells of militants operating in the middle of the native civilian popularion that very often serves as a human shield to combatants. The aimd of this kind of struggle has been less to destroy the enemy and more to demoralize it. The conflict thus becomes a communicational war. Al Qaeda site has commented extensively on the new 4GW doctrine originally published in the *Marine Corps*

Gazette (<https://www.mca-marines.org/gazette>). It said, “The Fourth Generation Wars have occurred and they revealed the superiority of the theoretically waker party.”

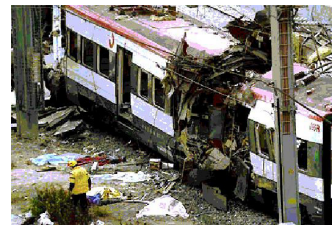
In these wars what is relevant is the ability of the actors to manipulate the flow of incoming information to newsrooms and through them the audience. From the point of view of the rebels the supply of dramatic content becomes a decisive factor of the military strategy. By offering shocking images to the public consumption, as were the cases of beheading of westerners in Iraq, the attack on the towers in New York, the explosion of a bus in London and a train in Madrid, asymmetric warfare reaches its goal of undermining psychologically the confidence and self esteem of the public. By reporting these actions the media helps these groups to recruit new members, including converts to Islam in the West. Other authors have created similar labels for this type of clash, among them Hybrid Warfare or Complex Irregular Warfare (Hoffman, 2007). Therefore, facing a conventional army there is always a non-state actor. These are the cases, for example, of Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State (IS) and Boko Haram.



Picture 3 – A person is beheaded by IS in 2014.



Picture 4 – Terrorist attack in London in 2005.



Picture 5 – Bomb destroyed a train in Madrid in 2004.



Picture 6 – Attack of Al-Qaeda in 2001.

According to Lind et al. (1989), the Fourth Generation refers to the intensive use of propaganda, indoctrination, terror and secret. The insurgent does wish to overcome the military superiority of the opposition by shaking his reputation, challenging him and humiliating him. Many of these insurgents operate globally. Their moral victory is obtained causing internal divisions in the public opinion of the enemy, threatening it constantly and spreading uncertainty and mistrust about its economic future. That is, the target of rebel groups is the enemy's society as a whole, not only its military. In these cases there is not a clear distinction between the internal front and the battlefield. It also ends the distinction between the civilian and the military. Therefore, it seems to the rebels more relevant to conquer a few minutes in TV news prime time than killing soldiers. This type of action is equivalent to the anarchist concept of "direct action" and "propaganda by the deeds". In other words, it is a kind of struggle through which the principles are disseminated not with words, but with events that become in the eyes of observers more powerful and irresistible form of propaganda (Wainberg, 2014, p. 74).

Dilemma

As a result, the military manuals are now facing the dilemma of formulating a new military doctrine able to face this type of communicational war. Among the many suggestions that are being presented for the Marines (the forces that usually invade and dominate the territory of the enemies) is the intense personal interaction of soldiers with natives (Petraeus, 2008). The recommendation being made is that the military should act in this new situation in a similar way to the London police (known as British Bobbies). These policemen interact with the population of the streets and neighborhoods in which they circulate.

The main goal of this type of encounter between the troops and the civilian population should be to avoid the escalation of the conflict (Imperial and Royal Austro-

Hungarian Marine Corps, 2008). Among the techniques offered in this document are the following: to equip all patrol with a camera; sponsor a television program in places where captured enemies responsible for the death of civilian are being interrogated by the police; differentiate captured opponents based on their motivation, tribe, religion or other criteria that local people recognize it; treat them honorably, freeing them while continuing trapping other militants. The document says, “It (this policy) will cause suspicion and divisions among our opponents.” In its dealing with the press the document suggests the army to adopt either a defensive or an offensive strategy. In the first case, the goal is to control the information flow and minimize bad news publication. That’s what was done in the wars of the second and third generations. Now, in the 4GW, the offensive strategy aims to make use of the press rather than to control it. In order to achieve this goal it is needed transparency. This will give the Marines more credibility and promote cooperation of the soldiers with the media.

It is possible to get the conclusion that this type of confrontation is in essence a psychological operation on a large scale. According to Thomas Hammes (2004), the Fourth Generation Wars are the ones that the Unites Staes has lost. This had happened in Vietnam, Lebanon and Somalia. This type of warfare also defeated the French in Vietnam and Algeria and the URSS in Afghanistan. It has also challenged Israel in its confrontation with Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza. In the 1800-1998 periods, the weak actor won 30% of all asymmetric warfares (Arreguin-Toft, 2011, p. 93-128). As a result, it became less clear what victory means in war (Mandel, 2007).

Asymmetric warfare victories. In %.

Period	Strong actor	Weak actor
1800-49	88,2	11,8
1850-99	79,5	20,5
1900-49	65,1	34,9
1950-98	45	55

Source: Arreguin-Toft, 2011.

The truth is that the military literature and action have always valued the psychosocial dimension of military clashes. The psyops (psychological operations) are part of the history of warfare. Now the asymmetrical war is usually defined as a military confrontation between two unequal combat forces. In many cases the weaker party, which has fewer weapons and less soldiers, compensates this weakness not only with terrorism and other heinous actions, but also with a religious and political motivation. The intense indoctrination gives 'sacred' meaning to the militant's fight. That also explains the action of Al Qaeda and other Salafist groups that are attacking today in various parts of the world (Lee, 2014).

In other words, political and/or religious utopia is the justification offered by the combatants for this type of irregular warfare. Anarchists, communists, nationalists and Islamists benefit from the 'ideological disparity' (Stepanova, 2008) that favors them. The holiness of their causes is used as an alibi to their 'just wars'. For example, the Jihad is saturated with messianic zeal. The struggle of Islam fighters aims to transform the 'House of War' (the territory in which the *infidels* are living) into the 'House of Islam'.

The revolutionaries have this advantage: they are irreducible in their political goals. What stimulates them is not the opposition against some aspect or episode of government policy. Their discomfort is ample and unrestricted. Their struggle is against the foundations of society they are confronting. It is worth recalling that between 1968 and 1997 left-wing groups stimulated by this type of perfectionist dream held 1869 worldwide attacks causing 829 deaths. The nationalists were responsible for 1723 events (3015 victims). Religious groups performed in the same period of time 497 terrorist acts (1640 victims).

Utopia, unlike ideology (1) aims to fix reality, (2) proposes a perfectionist ideal, (3) advocates a cause, (4) arouses the imagination of the militant, (5) refers to an

unknown world, (6) articulates the discontented and (7) spreads hope. Very often, the revolutionary (8) uses violent methods of struggle, including asymmetric warfare. (9) Utopia gives an answer to the social decay perceived as intolerable by the rebel. This revolutionary struggle (10) which aims to forge a new human being, (11) seduces and recruits new supporters and (12) oppose democratic rules. That is, in the utopian rebellions take part actors that dream with profound transformation of society.

It should be noted on this subject a passage of *Ideology and Utopia*. Karl Mannheim warns that it is difficult for an observer to accurately distinguish the two concepts since “utopian and ideological elements do not occur separately in the historical process” (Mannheim, 1985; p. 203). By definition utopia is a place that does not exist. Ideology, in turn, aims to break the limit imposed by this extreme idealism. It draws attention to certain group of reference to aspects of reality that deserve his attention. It explains to this group why the world is the way it is. It makes a diagnosis of the environment and points to an actor who is not part of the group of reference as being the main responsible for the existing troubles. Besides being a cognitive map that allows a person to examine and interpret reality, ideology ends turning utopia into a political program.

Based on the aforementioned criteria that operationalize this concept it is possible to identify in Table 1 the following contemporary utopian rebellions.

Table 1 – The political and religious utopias conflicts in 2013.

Local	Actors Involved in the Conflict	Beginning of the Conflict	Operational Definition: Utopia*	Level of Violence**
Bosnia & Herzegovina	1. Wahabits groups × Government	2007	<i>Islamic State</i> Islamic militants came to Bosnia in 1992 to help the local Muslims against the Croats and Serbians. They came from North Africa, and the Middle East.	1
Italia	2. Red Brigades × Government	1970	The Communist Revolution A new generation of Brigadistas is known now as the New Red Brigades/Communists Combatants' Party. Its action began in 1999 with the murder of Massimo D'Antona, an advisor to Ministry of Labor of Italy.	2
Russia	3. Salafist group × Government	1989	<i>Islamic State</i> Chechen group wants to expel Russia from north Caucasus and replace it with a new Islamic state in the region.	4
Serbia	4. Wahabit group × Government	2007	<i>Islamic State</i>	1
Kenya	5. Mungiki × Government	1997	<i>African Nativism</i> Mungiki is the name given to a mystical organization born in the 1980's. It defends the idea of returning to the original African traditions. It rejects westernization, Christians and everything else that may be connected to colonialism. It also rejects modernization. Its enemies describe this organization as the Kenyan mafia due to its underground operation methods that include terrorism and extortion.	3

cont.

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** Level of violence: 5 = War; 4 = Limited War; 3 = Violent crisis; 2 = Non violent crisis; 1 = Dispute.

Table 1 (continuation)

Local	Actors Involved in the Conflict	Beginning of the Conflict	Operational Definition: Utopia*	Level of Violence**
Mali	6. <i>Ansar Dine (Fefenders of the Faith)</i> × <i>Azaude National Liberation Movement</i> × <i>High Conseil for the Unity of Azud & Azaude Arab Movement</i>	2012	<i>Islamic State</i> Ansar Dine is a Al Qaeda dissident group in the Islamic Magreb region. It was founded in 2012. It gathers Islamic Tuareg rebels, a Berber people from Sahara that is fighting for the liberation of the north region from Mali. The Azud movement is an Arab organization founded in 2012. It aims to defend the Arab peoples in the north Mali region.	3
Mali	7. <i>al-Mourabitoun & Ansar Dine & Al Qaeda & Movement for the Unity of Jihad in North Africa</i> × <i>Government</i>	2009	<i>Islamic State</i> Islamic groups fight against the government of the country and its supporters coming from France, African States Union and UN forces. Their forces began to concentrate in the north region of the country in 2012, being expelled from there in 2013 by international forces.	5
Niger	8. <i>AQIM, MUJNA</i> × <i>Government</i>	2008	<i>Islamic State</i> Al Qaeda (AQIM) and the Movement for the Unity and Jihad of North Africa fight against government forces.	3
Nigeria	9. <i>Boko Haram</i> × <i>Government</i>	2003	<i>Islamic State</i> The Islamic group Boko Haram wants to impose the shaaria law to all in the country. It uses terror against its enemies.	5
Nigeria	10. <i>Christian groups</i> × <i>Islamic groups</i>	1960	<i>Islamic State</i> The conflict over shaaria law began in 1999 and it is the last stage of an ancient confront between Christians and Muslims in the country. Shaaria law was imposed to the Muslim population living in many locations where they are majority.	3

cont.

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Table 1 (continuation)

Local	Actors Involved in the Conflict	Beginning of the Conflict	Operational Definition: Utopia*	Level of Violence**
Somalia	11. <i>al-Shabaab</i> × Government and armed forces from Kenya fighting in Somalia	2006	<i>Islamic State</i> The Al-Shabaab Islamic group was founded in 2004.	5
Colombia	12. <i>ELN</i> × Government	1964	<i>The Communist Revolution</i> The National Liberation Army (ELN) is a guerrilla organization created in Colombia in 1965. It aims to build a communist state by emulating Cuba. In its defense there are many catholic priests whose fight is inspired in the Liberation theology.	3
Colombia	13. <i>FARC</i> × Government	1964	<i>The Communist Revolution</i> The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) is a guerrilla group that also aims to establish a communist state. ¹	4
Mexico	14. <i>Revolutionary Popular Army</i> × Government	1995	<i>The Communist Revolution</i> This Maoist groups was created in 1996 as part of the Revolutionary Party (PDRP)	2
Paraguay	15. <i>Popular Army of the Paraguayan People</i> × Government	1989	<i>The communist revolution</i>	3
Peru	16. <i>Shinning Path</i> × Government	1980	<i>The Communist revolution</i> The Shinning Path is a Maoist guerrilla group established in 1960 by students and professors from the University of Peru. It still is operational in the south region of the country.	3
Bangladesh	17. <i>Islamic groups Harkatul-Jihad-al Islami Bangladesh (HuJI-B), Jamatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), and Hefazat-e Islam</i> × Government	2004	<i>Islamic State</i> Islamic groups continue their engagement with government forces.	3

cont.

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Local	Actors Involved in the Conflict	Beginning of the Conflict	Operational Definition: Utopia*	Level of Violence**
Bangladesh	18. <i>Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami & Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir</i> × <i>Awami Bangladesh League & Chhatra Bangladesh League</i>	2000	<i>Islamic State</i> Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami is the largest Islamic party of the country. It was declared illegal in 2013. Its political goal is to create an Islamic state. Its youth group is called Islami Chhatra Shibir. In 1971 these youngsters created the Al Badar, a paramilitary group responsible for various murders of intellectuals. Both groups fight against the government party, the Popular League of Bangladesh. Another enemy is the League of Students of East Pakistan.	3
India	19. <i>Hizbul Mujahideen & Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami & Mujahideen og India & Jaish-e-Mohammed & Lashkar-e-Taiba & Islamic Student Movements of India</i> × Government	2000	<i>Islamic State</i> Hizbul Mujahideen operates in the Jammu and Kashmir states and in another area controlled by Pakistan known as the Free Kashmir. Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami is an Islamic organization that fights in Pakistan, Bangladesh and India. The Indian Mujahideen (IM) uses terror in its struggle in India. The Mohammed Army, or Jaish-e-Mohammed, is based in Pakistan. Its goal is to separate Kashmir from India. It makes use of terror. The <i>Lashkar-e-Taiba</i> (Gods' Army) is the most active terrorist group in southern Asia. Its base is located in Pakistan. Finally, the Indian Islamic Students Movement aims to liberate India from the western cultural influence converting the country to Islam.	3
India	20. <i>Naxalite group (Communist Party of India)</i> × Government	1997	<i>Communist Revolution</i> 20.000 Maoist guerrillas known as naxalite fight to establish a communist state. In 2009 they were acting in 180 districts of India.	3

cont.

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Table 1 (continuation)

Local	Actors Involved in the Conflict	Beginning of the Conflict	Operational Definition: Utopia*	Level of Violence**
India	21. PULF × Government	1993	<i>Islamic State</i> The United Popular Front for the Liberation (PULF) aims not only to protect de Muslim community of Manipur, a region in the border between India and Myanmar, but also to create an Islamic state in the region through armed struggle.	2
Indonesia	22. Islamic groups (JAT, JI) × Government	1981	<i>Islamic State</i> Islamic groups such as Jemaah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT) and Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) fight for the establishment of an Islamic state.	3
Kazakhstan	23. <i>Djund al-Khalifat (The soldiers of califa)</i> × Government	2011	<i>Islamic State</i>	2
Pakistan	24. Islamic groups (<i>al-Qaeda, Haqqani Network, LI, TTP</i>) × Government	2001	<i>Islamic State</i> Groups like Tehrik-i-Taliban from Pakistan (TTP), Lashkar-e-Islam (LI), al-Qaeda & Haqqani fight against government forces in the country.	5
Philippines	25. Communist Party × Government	1968	<i>Communist Revolution</i> Since its beginning in 1968 the Communist Party of the Philippines is fighting with guerrillas for the establishment of a communist state in the country.	3
Philippines	26. Moro National Liberation Front × Government	1969	<i>Islamic State</i>	5
Philippines	27. Abu Sayyaf group × Government	1991	<i>Islamic State</i>	3

cont.

* (1) Utopia aims to fix reality, (2) it proposes a perfectionist ideal, (3) it defends a cause, (4) it arouses militant's imaginations, (5) it refers to an unknown world, (6) it articulates the discontents, (7) it propagates hope. Very often, utopians (8) make use of asymmetrical warfare. (9) Utopia gives an answer to the social decay perceived by the militant as intolerable. This revolutionary struggle, (10) wishes to create a new human being, (11) and to seduce and recruit new supporters. (12) Finally, utopians behave against the democratic rules.

** Level of violence: 5 = War; 4 = Limited War; 3 = Violent crisis; 2 = Non violent crisis; 1 = Dispute.

Table 1 (continuation)

Local	Actors Involved in the Conflict	Beginning of the Conflict	Operational Definition: Utopia*	Level of Violence**
Afghanistan	28. <i>Talibans, Haqqani Network, al-Qaeda, Hezb-e-Islami Gulbuddin, Islamic movement of Uzbekistan</i> × Government	1994	<i>Islamic State</i> The talibans, the Haqqani network, the Hezb-e-Islami and many other groups are fighting against an International Force (ISAF) and the government of the country.	5
Argelia	29. AQIM, MUJAO, <i>al-Mourabitoun</i> × Government	1989	<i>Islamic State</i> Al-Qaeda of the Islamic Magreb (AQIM), the Movement for the Unity, the Jihad in Western Africa (MUJAO) and al-Mourabitoun are fighting the government.	4
Egypt	30. <i>Salafists groups</i> × Government	1992	<i>Islami State</i> Salafist groups began to attack government forces in the Sinai desert.	4
Egypt	31. <i>Salafists groups</i> × Government	1954	<i>Islamic State</i> The Muslim Brotherhood has returned to the opposition after Muhammad Mursi took office.	5
Irak	32. <i>Suni groups (Ansar al-Islam, AQI, ISIS)</i> × Government	2003	<i>Islamic State</i> The Islamic group ISIS, now called IS (Islamic state) and other Sunni groups continue their attacks in 2013 against government forces.	5
Lebanon	33. <i>Fatah al-Islam, fundamentalists groups</i> × Government	2006	<i>Islamic State</i> The Palestinian Fatah al-Islam is a jihadist group operating in North Lebanon.	3
Mauritania	34. AQIM × Government	2007	<i>Islamic State</i>	2
Marrocos	35. AQIM × government	2003	<i>Islamic State</i>	2
Syria	36. <i>ISIS</i> × <i>Islamic al-Nusra Front</i> × <i>Islamic groups</i> × opposition forces	2013	<i>Islamic State</i>	3

cont.

* (1) Utopia aims to fix reality, (2) it proposes a perfectionist ideal, (3) it defends a cause, (4) it arouses militant's imaginations, (5) it refers to an unknown world, (6) it articulates the discontents, (7) it propagates hope. Very often, utopians (8) make use of asymmetrical warfare. (9) Utopia gives an answer to the social decay perceived by the militant as intolerable. This revolutionary struggle, (10) wishes to create a new human being, (11) and to seduce and recruit new supporters. (12) Finally, utopians behave against the democratic rules.

** Level of violence: 5 = War; 4 = Limited War; 3 = Violent crisis; 2 = Non violent crisis; 1 = Dispute.

Table 1 (conclusion)

Local	Actors Involved in the Conflict	Beginning of the Conflict	Operational Definition: Utopia*	Level of Violence**
Syria	37. Opposition forces, The Freedom Syrian Army (FSA), <i>Islamic State (IS)</i> , <i>al-Nusra</i> and other groups × Government	2011	<i>Islamic State</i>	5
Yemen	38. AQAP, Ansar al-Sharia × Government	1992	<i>Islamic State</i>	5
Tajikistan	39. <i>Islamic groups</i> (Hizb-ut-Tahrir, Moviment for Uzbequistan (IMU), Jamaat Ansarullah, Jundullah, Tablig-i-Jamaat) × Government	1997	<i>Islamic State</i>	3
Uzbekistan	40. <i>Islamic groups</i> × Government	1991	<i>Islamic State</i>	1
Saud Arabia	41. <i>The Arabic península Al Qaeda (AQAP)</i> × Government	1990	<i>Islamic State</i>	2

* (1) Utopia aims to fix reality, (2) it proposes a perfectionist ideal, (3) it defends a cause, (4) it arouses militant's imaginations, (5) it refers to an unknown world, (6) it articulates the discontents, (7) it propagates hope. Very often, utopians (8) make use of asymmetrical warfare. (9) Utopia gives an answer to the social decay perceived by the militant as intolerable. This revolutionary struggle, (10) wishes to create a new human being, (11) and to seduce and recruit new supporters. (12) Finally, utopians behave against the democratic rules.

** Level of violence: 5 = War; 4 = Limited War; 3 = Violent crisis; 2 = Non violent crisis; 1 = Dispute.

Source: HIICR

Conclusion and Discussion

The communicational war, usual in contemporary asymmetric insurgencies, is the strategy used by the weak belligerent against a stronger enemy aiming to exert a higher degree of control of the perception from people watching from a distance the armed clashes. With his violent acts, among them terrorist's acts, the weaker aims to control the news agenda, to recruit new supporters and to spread fear through the media.

The netwar is another feature of the Fourth Generation Warfare (4GW). The Zapatista case illustrates the origin of ideological cyberactivism that allowed for the first time rebels challenging the authority in a non-violent manner. The Zapatista case also reveals a peculiarity, the ability revealed by this movement to contain the revolutionary ambition of the rebels, something that does not occur with Islamic Salafists, the main revolutionary force at work in the world today.

In spite of exploring an utopian and emotional prose through which it calls and articulates the discontented, arouses the imagination, proposes an ideal and makes the defense of a cause, the Zapatistas did not make use of asymmetrical warfare or terrorism. After 12 days of battle no more shots were fired, proclaim with pride now its spokesmen. The rifles are defensive weapons, they say. "The character of movement is peaceful." Before leaving his post of leadership, Subcomandante Marcos used to say that "we do not want to defeat a government to put ourselves in its place. We want to open a democratic space where society can participate and decide which political direction [the country] will have."

It is true that the famous Zapatista statement "Ya Basta" was delivered under the influence of the liberation theology, Maoism, the movement of indigenous movement, Guevarism and Marxism. It is also true that this armed rebellion was organized not only by mestizos and local Indians, but also by 'ladinos' that had infiltrated the jungle to prepare the revolt. Since 1972 revolutionaries tried to settle in the Lacandona forest, located in the south near the border of Guatemala. In 1983, a small group of Marxist militants of the National Liberation Forces (FNL), a group established in 1969, also moved to that location. They had received military training in the Sandinista Nicaragua and Cuba (in 1971/72). In 1982, they returned to the island of Fidel Castro. Living with the local populations FNL members learned the local languages and customs. These 'ladinos' were mostly University Nuevo Leon graduates. At one point they decided to

put into practice what was being proposed by the French philosopher Louis Althusser, one of their major intellectual mentors.

The revolutionary ideas had in the past exercised a strong influence on Emiliano Zapata as well. The main source of this influence was Cipriano Riarco Flores Magón (1874-1922), an anarchist of the Mexican Liberal Party. His ideas in support of indigenous autonomy and against the landlords influenced the rebellion of 1910 and resonate in the current Zapatista movement. New signs of revolt appeared in 1959. At that time the rebel leader was Rubén Jaramillo, a Methodist preacher and communist murdered in the Morelos state in 1962. Another rebel was Genaro Vásquez Rojas (1931-1972), a trade union leader that represented the teachers. He went underground and organized several armed groups that acted in the Sierra Madre del Sur, near the Pacific coast, in the 1960's and 1970's. Lucio Cabañas, the leader of the Army of the Poor formed by 300 guerrillas who took refuge in the Guerrero Mountains, began to fight at his side.

In the 1980's, among those who decided to continue the religious and political work were Catholic catechists (under the influence of the Jesuits, Dominicans and Marists, mainly), Protestant preachers, Maoists belonging to the People's Union Party and Popular Politics (PP), the latter being a group that was created among university students who took part of the rebellions in 1968. PP's leader was Adolfo Orive Berlinguer, a professor and economist from Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). This man spent some time studying in France with Charles Bettelheim (1913-2006), a Stalinist that had converted to Maoism. On his return to the country, Berlinguer would establish the Emiliano Zapata Brigades at UNAM aiming to face and resist the military occupation of the campus. Finally, he helped to establish the EZLN. The trotskists arrived in this region in 1970 together with the Communist Party militants.

It happens that the Zapatista rebellion has been labeled by many authors and commentators as ‘postmodern’. There are good theoretical reasons for using this epithet. First because the revolt managed to put into practice the old anarchist dream of creating autonomous zones, it means the 27 Autonomous Municipalities of the Zapatista rebels (known by the acronym MARZ in Spanish). In these sites controlled by the Zapatistas live today 300.000 families. This movement is also seen as postmodern because, as mentioned, it was able to avoid the rigid behavior of the communists during the Cold War period. While it is true that the initial core of the rebels consisting of two dozen professors and professionals (among them there were not workers, peasants or locals) intended to establish a communist state, it is also true that this dream changed along the way. Now, the rebels say that the Zapatistas do not have a finished doctrine. “It is an intuition.” They now claim that movement is “open and flexible”.

This rebellion is also defined as postmodern because her declared ideals – freedom, equality and democracy – are still relatively vague objectives in this speech. This explains why since 1994 a vast intellectual work has been produced to decipher these terms in the context of current Mexican reality. International meetings organized by the movement have attracted supporters coming mainly from the developed western countries. This neo-Marxist tendency is characterized by its support of a post-material life style which aims to revigorate the environmental, alternative, animic and communitary discourse of the 70’s.

Zapatista’s supporters cultivate a chronic sense of bad feeling regarding consumerism. On the other hand they welcome the Zapatista rhetoric that merges the indigenous traditions with the classics of Western literature in an ironic, paradoxical, humorous and challenging prose. Subcomandante Marcos used to explain the visitors that the movement aims to “explain through the heart the ideas that were intended for

the head.” The truth is that there is a certain amount of innocence (which fascinates the foreign observer) in the language games of these manifestos. Visitors also note with interest and hope the participatory democracy being applied in the indigenous communities. It involves consultations, community assemblies and the Councils of Good Governance whose task is to apply their decisions.



Picture 7 – Emilio Zapata



Picture 8 – Pancho Vila



Picture 9 – Lucio Cabañas



Picture 10 – Vázquez Rojas



Pictures 11 and 12 – Guillén Vicente as Subcomandante Marcos

Of course, the utopian considers his goals a viable option. As a result they label the opposite view as conservative and reactionary because it points out the limitations of perfectionism. It should note that this is the main marker of utopia. It is the desire to create by any means a new human being is what differentiates this concept from ideology.

The analysis of 148 ideological conflicts listed in the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research shows in Table 1 that (1) the most influential utopia in the contemporary world is the one that suggests the formation of an Islamic State. (2) In 2013, groups advocating this Islamic utopia acted in Syria, Yemen, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia, Philippines, Serbia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Mauritania, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Saudi Arabia.

Table 2 – Utopian and ideological conflicts in the world in 2013.

Level of Violence	Islamic State	Communist Revolution	African Nativism	Total Utopias	% Total Utopias	% Total World Conflicts n=418	Total Ideologies	% Total Ideologies	% Total World Conflicts n=418	Total	% Total World Conflicts n=418
1	3	–	–	3	7,3	0,7	13	12,1	2,9	16	3,8
2	5	2	–	7	17	1,7	29	27,1	7,2	36	8,6
3	10	5	1	17	41,5	4	60	56	13,9	77	18,4
4	4	1	–	4	9,7	0,95	4	3,7	0,95	8	1,9
5	10	–	–	10	24	2,4	1	0,9	0,47	11	2,6
Total	32	8	1	41	100	9,8	107	100	25,5	148	35,4

Source: Conflict Barometer 2013, Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIICR).
Level of conflict: 5 = War; 4 = Limited War; 3 = Violent crisis; 2 = Non-violent crisis; 1 = Dispute

Table 3 – Periods in which the 2013 conflict have begun.

	A. Utopia: Islamic Revolution	B. Utopia: Communist Revolution	C. Utopia: African Nativism	D = A+B+C Utopias: Subtotal	E. Ideologies in Conflict	F Ideologies: Subtotal	D+F Total
1900-1939	–	–	–	–	1	1	1
1940-1950		–	–	–	10	11	11
1951-1960	2	–	–	2	2	13	15
1961-1970	1	5	–	6	5	18	24
1971-1980	–	1	–	1	12	30	37
1981-1990	4	1	–	5	6	36	48
1991-2000	9	1	1	11	15	51	75
2001-2010	12	–	–	12	28	79	113
2011	2	–	–	2	12	91	127
2012	1	–	–	1	7	98	135
2013	1	–	–	1	9	107	148
Total in 2013	32	8	1	41	107	107	148

(3) The communist utopia in the second most influential in the world. Revolutionary groups advocating this dream acted in 2013 in Italy, Colombia, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, India and the Philippines. (4) As shown in Table 2, three utopias (the Islamic, the Communist and the one native from the Mungiki group in Kenya) caused 41 conflicts (9, 8% of all conflicts in the world in 2013) in 31 countries. On the other hand, ideologies caused 107 conflicts (25.5%) in 62 locations. (5) Proportionally, utopia generated more violent conflicts than ideologies. By summing up categories 3, 4 and 5 we get the conclusion that 75% of all conflicts generated by utopias were highly violent against 60.7% of ideologies'. Seventy-five percent of all conflicts involving the Islamic utopia and 77,8% of crises involving the Communist utopia were violent. (6) In absolute

terms, it is possibly to say that utopias generated 10 wars (level five), all of them involving the ambition of revolutionary Muslims to form an Islamic state. Ideologies produced just one [open] war. (7) In the world prevails the violent conflict, i.e. the crisis of level 3. (8) Table 3 shows that the Islamic utopias became very active in the 1980's, just when the frustration with the 'real socialism' cooled off the communist utopia. (9) In 2013, 107 ideologies were being disputed in the world in 2013. (10) The conflicts that started in 1991 represented 66% of the total of crises still occurring in 2013. The remaining conflicts were remnants of a period starting in 1902 when a dispute between the Islamic groups Barisan Revolusi Nasional and United Liberation Pattani against the Thai government began.

Finally, it should be noted the fact that the use of another operational definition for utopia certainly would alter the typology used in this study. This change of definition would impact the finding that under certain conditions the revolutionary movements retract. In cases where ideologies are stronger than utopias they perform a pragmatic role that helps to limit the ambitious of religious and political utopias. This is what had happened now not only with the Zapatistas in Mexico but as well as with the Tupamaros in Uruguay and the the German Red Army Faction. Supporters of this latter group, also known as the Baader Meinhof Gang, migrated in the 1980's to environmental activism. Other revolutionaries are now heading toward the human rights movements. After the failure of the communist experience and the growing disinterest of public opinion for armed struggles (Wainberg, 2015) the appreciation for this human rights dream has matured (Moyn, 2010). He began in the US where public opinion began to support the Soviet dissidents. This struggle became then a fight for the liberation of the individual from state oppression. This kind of mindset change is also being used to distinguish the neoconservatives from the paleoconservatives. One should remember that neoconservatism was established as movement by

former Trotskyist militants. It means that a neoconservative is a liberal fustigated by reality. ●

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