

IGA-222M / Session 08

Counterinsurgency

Erica Chenoweth (they/them)

Dara Cohen (she/her)

Zoe Marks (she/her)

Stephen Walt (he/him)

Robert Wilkinson (he/him)

Yuri Zhukov (he/him)

Harvard Kennedy School

April 11, 2024

Today's objectives

1. *Define:* insurgency and counterinsurgency
 - a) Actors, goals, tactics
 - b) Recent historical trends
2. *Consider:* why insurgencies are so hard to defeat
 - a) Several common explanations
 - b) U.S. counterinsurgency field manual
3. *Case Study:* Algerian War of Independence
 - a) Brief history
 - b) Galula, Trinquier and the origins of U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine

What is (Counter)Insurgency?

Insurgency:

organized political violence by *sub-state or non-state groups*, directed against the agents of an incumbent government

includes:

1. anti-occupational uprisings
2. secessionist and revolutionary movements
3. terrorist groups

excludes:

1. unorganized political violence ("lone wolves")
2. organized crime
3. riots and protests

objective:

- change political status quo



Figure 1: Insurgents

Counterinsurgency:

efforts by *agents of an incumbent government* to contain or defeat an insurgency

includes:

1. army
2. police
3. foreign military forces
4. pro-government militia
5. contractors
6. non-military agencies

excludes:

1. deposed regime
2. mutinies and coups

objective:

- maintain political status quo



Figure 2: Counterinsurgents

Definitions of success

1. *Insurgent success*
 - a) minimum: extraction of political concessions from government
 - b) maximum: full attainment of political aims (e.g. independence, revolution)
2. *Counterinsurgent success*
 - a) minimum: denial of political concessions to insurgents
 - b) maximum: neutralization of insurgent political and military organization

Remember: **(Counter)insurgency is bargaining by other means**

- ultimate purpose of violence is to coerce, not to destroy the enemy

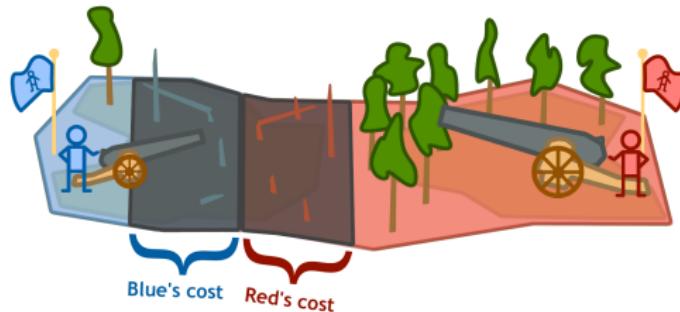


Figure 3: Like this, but more lopsided

How to gain bargaining leverage: *popular support* (or at least acquiescence)

- information
- taxes
- labor
- food & shelter
- non-interference



Figure 4: Making rebellion costly

Popular support is a collective action problem for (counter)insurgents

1. Insurgents need cooperation from a supportive public
2. . . . but cooperation is individually costly for civilians
 - a) cooperate with government → retaliation by rebels
 - b) cooperate with rebels → retaliation by government
3. Combatants secure cooperation with selective incentives (punish/reward)
4. But it's not easy to know who should be punished/rewarded
 - a) indistinguishability of combatants from civilians
 - b) reluctance of population to reveal combatants' identities



Figure 5: Conventional war. Clear front lines, combatants easy to identify.



Figure 6: Irregular war. Combatants hide among civilians, hard to identify.



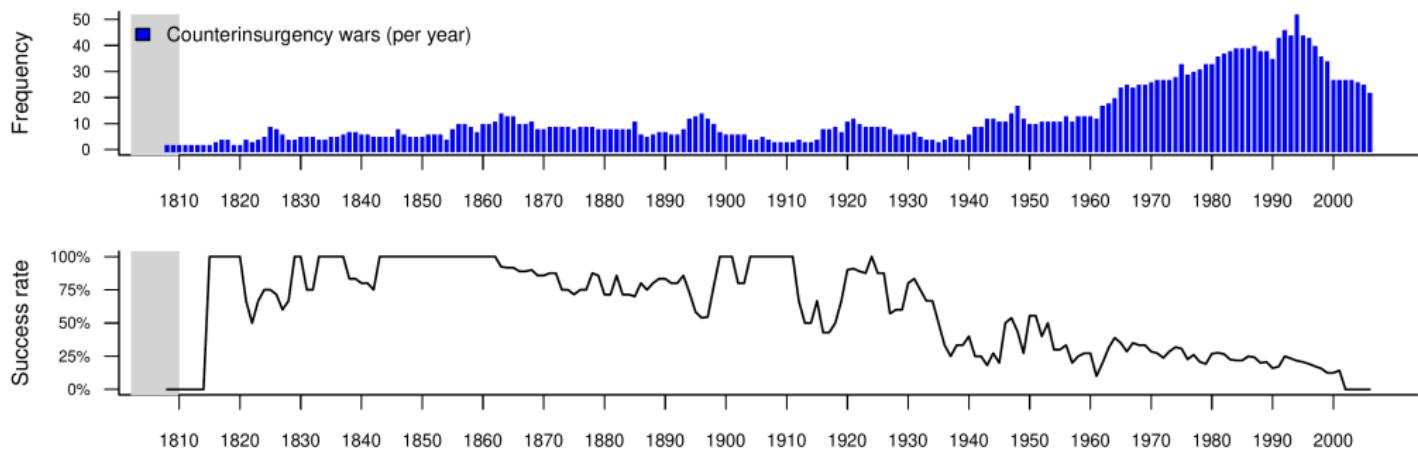
Figure 7: Asymmetric irregular war. One side easier to identify than other.

Historical trends since 1800

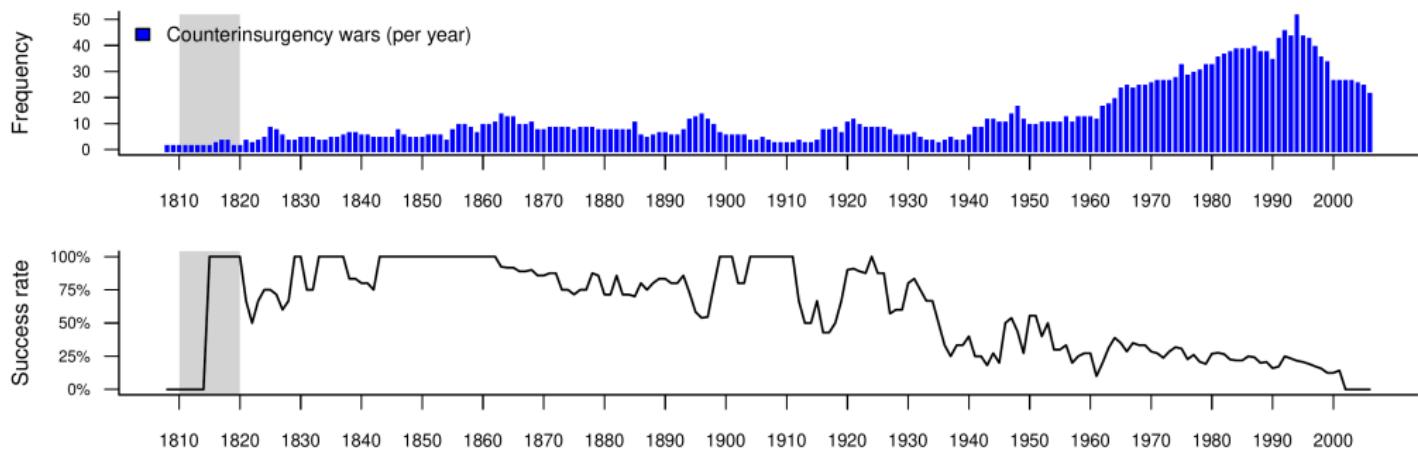
1800's



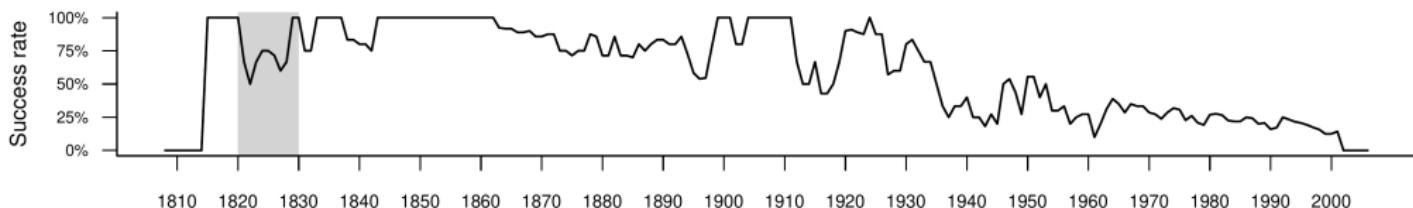
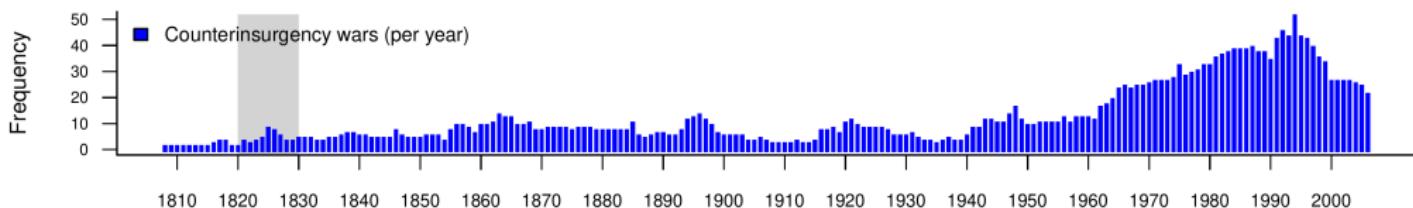
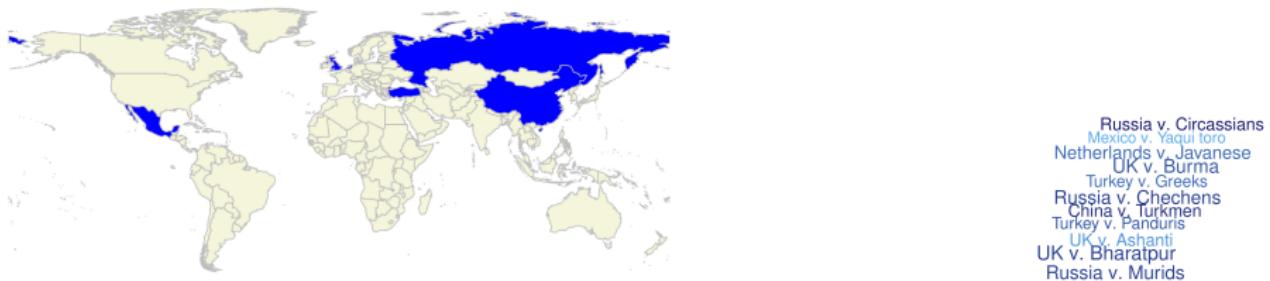
France v. Spain



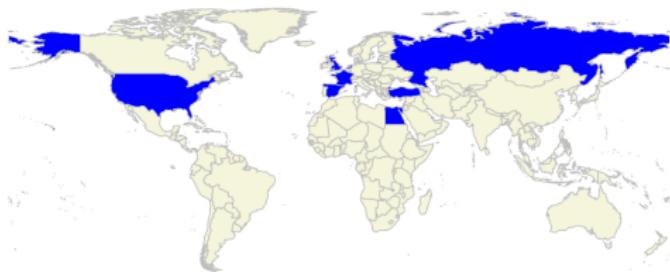
1810's



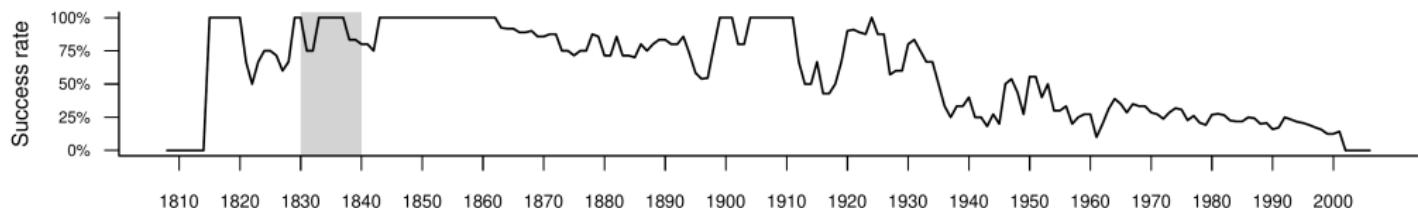
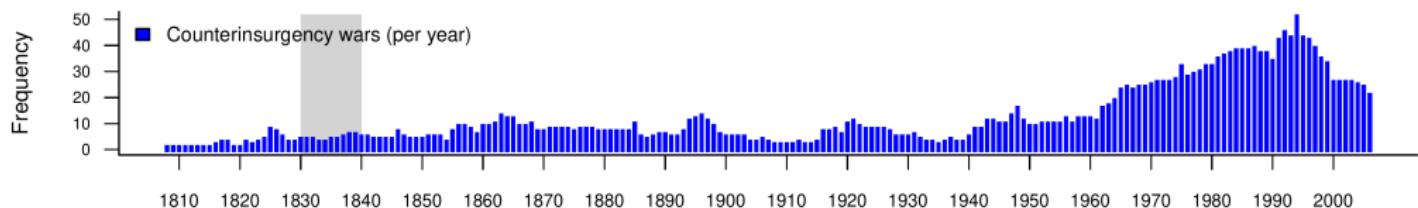
1820's



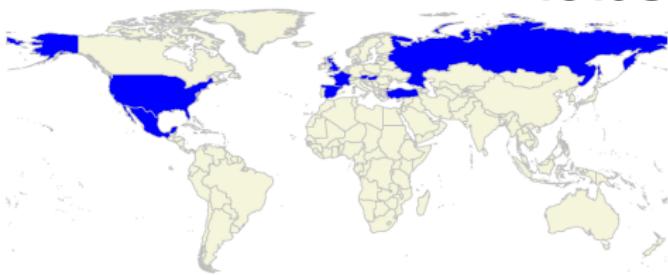
1830's



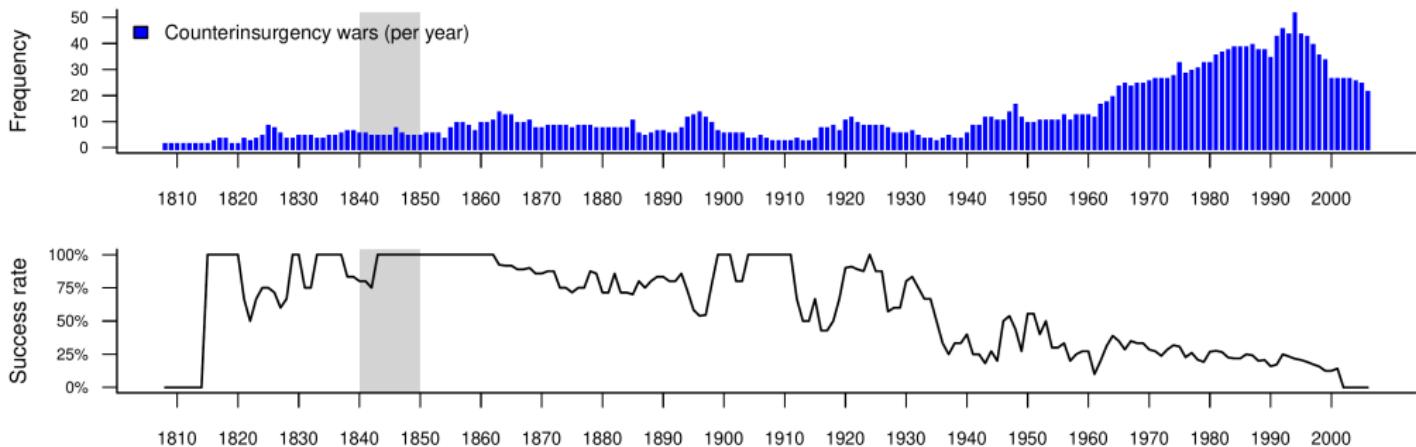
USA v. Sauk/Fox
Egypt v. Druze
Russia v. Circassians
Netherlands v. Javanese
Spain v. Carlists
Turkey v. Syrians
USA v. Seminoles
France v. el-Kader
Russia v. Murids
UK v. Ashanti
UK v. Afghans



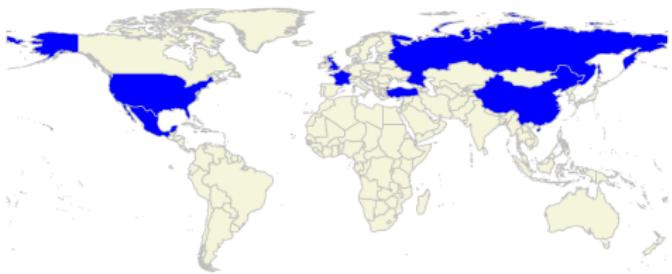
1840's



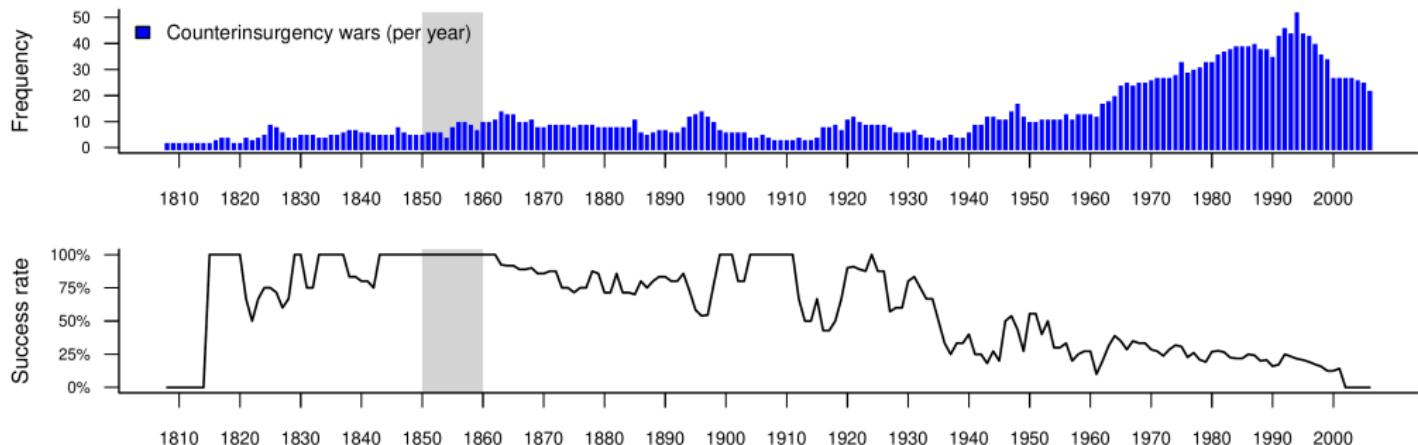
Turkey v. Wallachians
UK v. Afghans
Mexico v. Cruzobs
Russia v. Murids
UK v. Baluchi
AUH v. Cracow
Turkey v. Bosnian
UK v. Maoris
France v. el Kader
UK v. Shil Umu Xhosa
Spain v. Carlists
Russia v. Circassians
France v. Moroccan
USA v. Seminoles
UK v. Xhosa



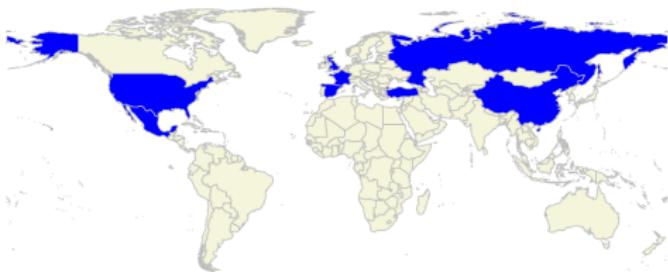
1850's



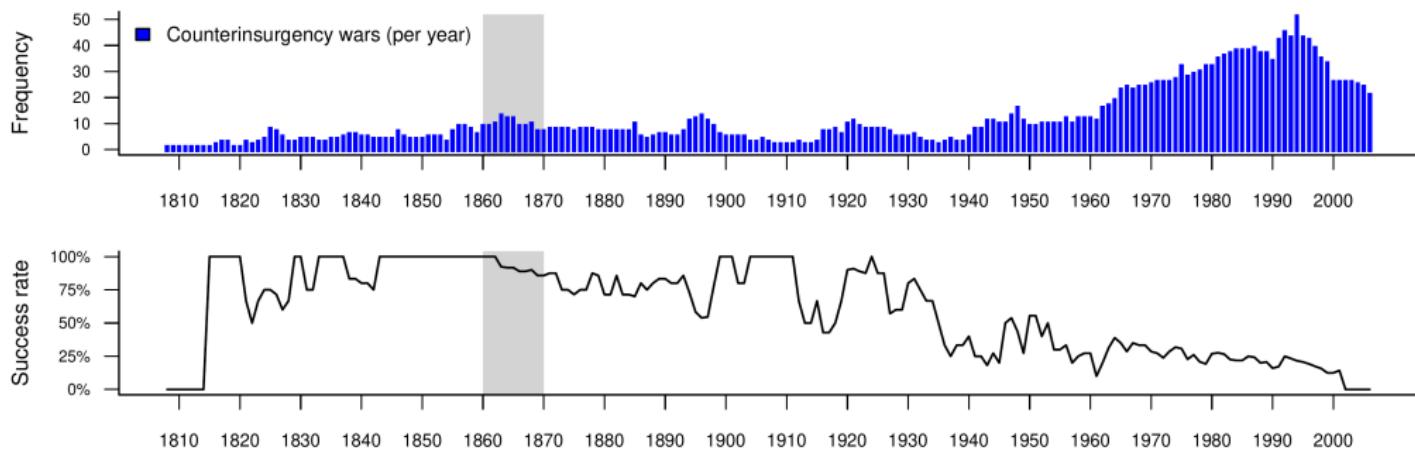
- USA v. Apaches
- China v. Miao
- Russia v. Murids
- France v. Kabyles
- China v. Nien UK v. Xhosa
- France v. Vietnam
- USA v. Navajo
- China v. Yunnan UK v. Burma
- UK v. Captain
- Mexico v. Cruzobs
- UK v. Maoris
- USA v. Semipoles
- China v. Taiping
- Turkey v. Wallachians
- France v. Tukulor
- USA v. Yakima**



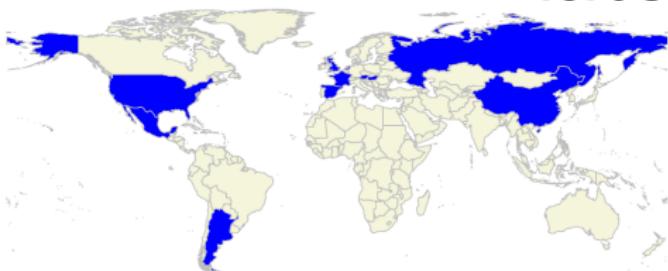
1860's



USA v. Sioux
Spain v. Cubans
China v. Taiping
Turkey v. Crete
USA v. Navajo/UK v. Bhutan
China v. Sinkiang
France v. Vietnam
Russia v. Poland
USA v. Apaches
Mexico v. Cruzob
China v. Yunnan
USA v. Sioux/UK v. Maoris
China v. Nien
China v. Miao
Spain v. DR rebels



1870's



Argentina v. Ranqueles

France v. Vietnam

France v. Kabylie

China v. Taiping USA v. Apaches

Spain v. Carlists

UK v. Ashanti

China v. Miao AUH v. Boshnians

UK v. Boers China v. Yunnan

Russia v. Aborigines USA v. Apaches

UK v. Zulu Spain v. Cubans

UK v. Maoris

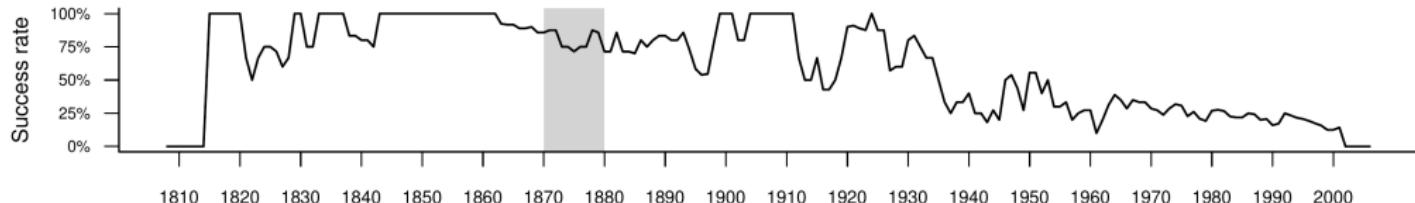
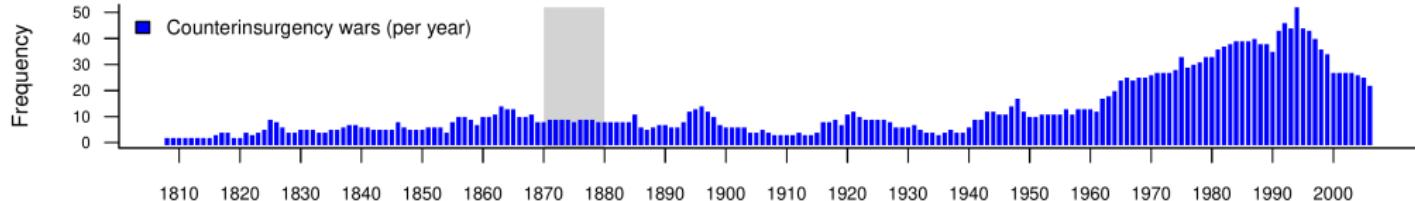
China v. Sinkiang

Netherlands v. Achinese

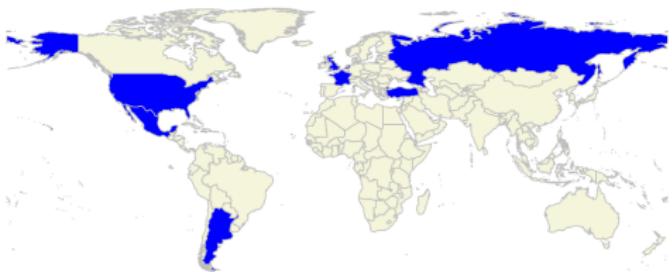
USA v. Sioux

Mexico v. Cruzobz

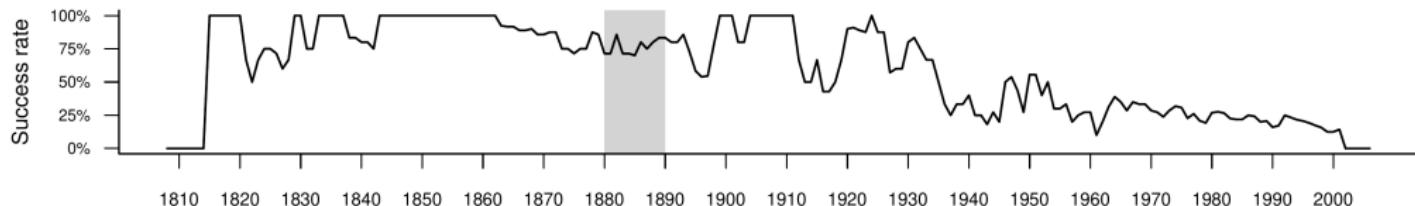
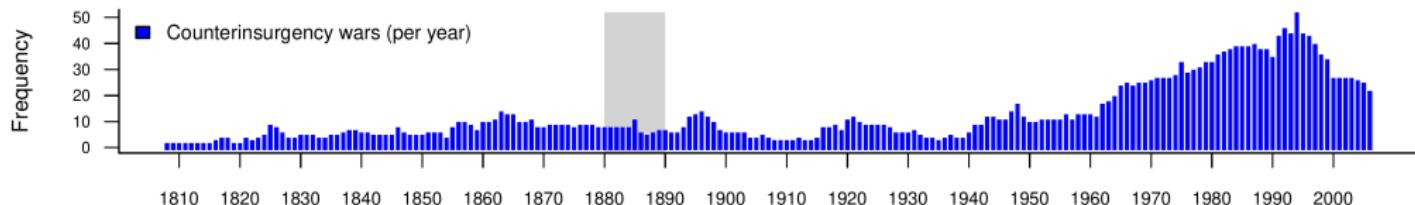
USA v. Comanche



1880's



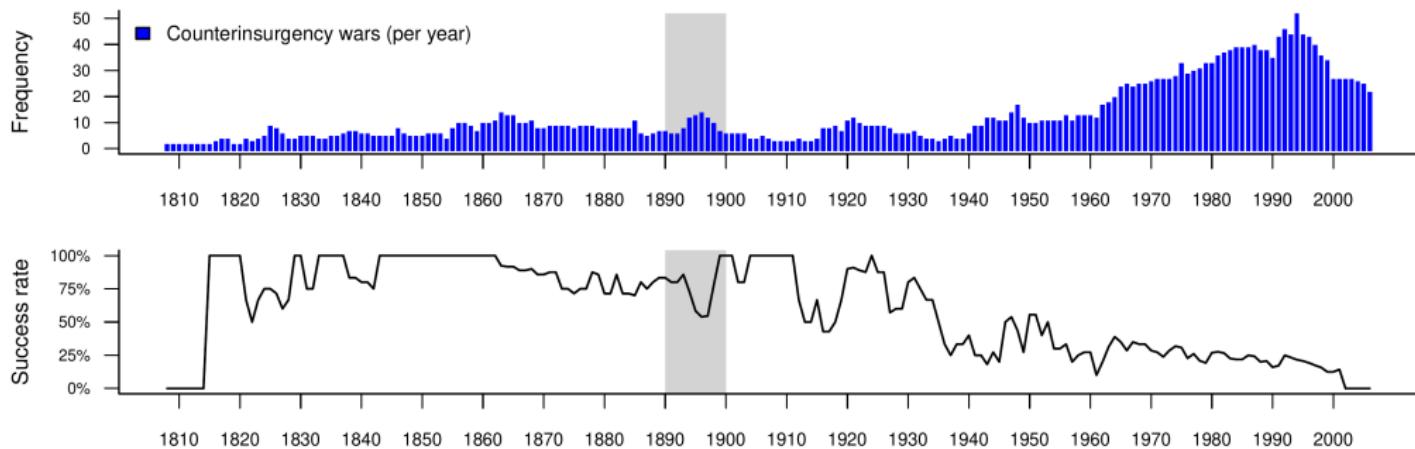
France v. Tunisia
 France v. Phan
 UK v. Burma
 France v. Vietnam
 France v. Dahomey
 Mexico v. Cruzobs
 France v. Mandingo
 France v. Vietnam
 Turkey v. Crete
 Netherlands v. Achinese
 USA v. Apaches
 UK v. Afghans Turkey v. Mahdi
 France v. Merina
 Russia v. Afghans
 France v. Senegalese
 UK v. Boers
 Argentina v. Ranqueles



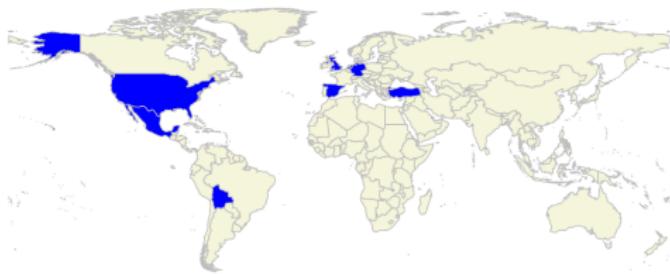
1890's



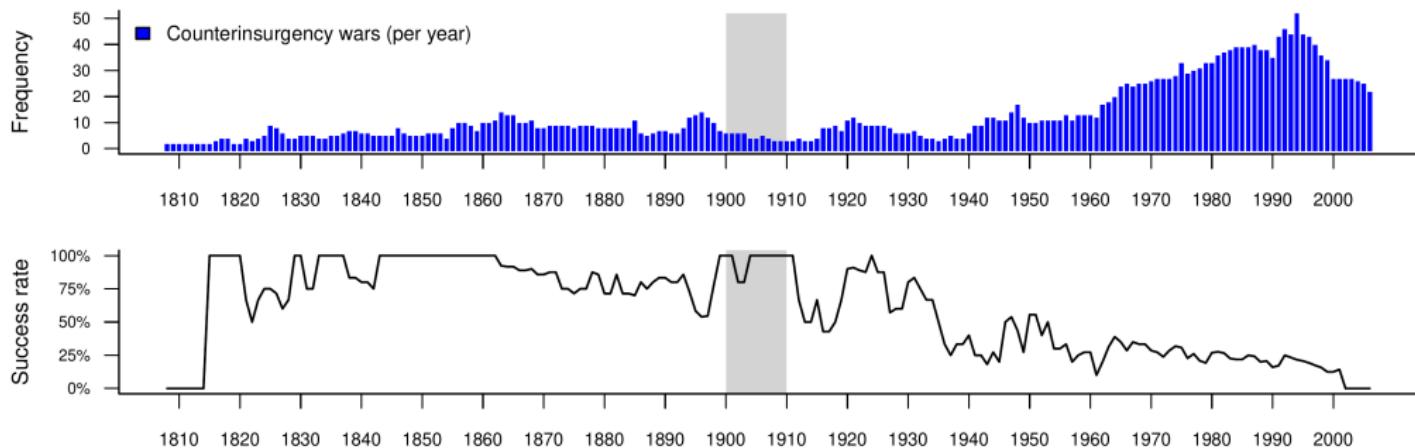
Australia v. Jandamara
Turkey v. Druze
France v. Dahomey France v. Mandingo
Italy v. Ethiopians
Spain v. Cubans
Netherlands v. Achinese
UK v. Mad Mullah
USA v. Phan UK v. Sierra Leone
USA v. Filipino France v. Malagascans
Mexico v. Cruzobs Korea v. Tonghak
UK v. Ashanti UK v. Nupe Japan v. Black Flags
UK v. Ashanti Spain v. Filipino
France v. Senegalese
Turkey v. Cretans France v. Thai
UK v. Burma UK v. Sudanese
Italy v. Madists Belgium v. Congo Arabs
UK v. Boers
Netherlands v. Balianese
UK v. Mad Mullah
Brazil v. Jacundos



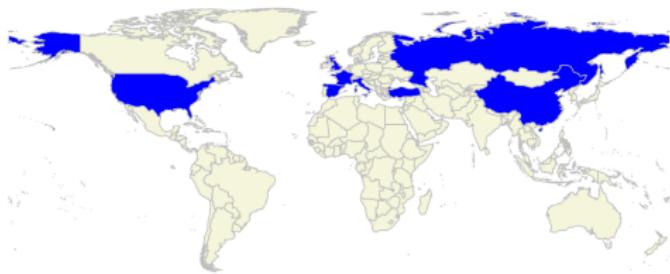
1900's



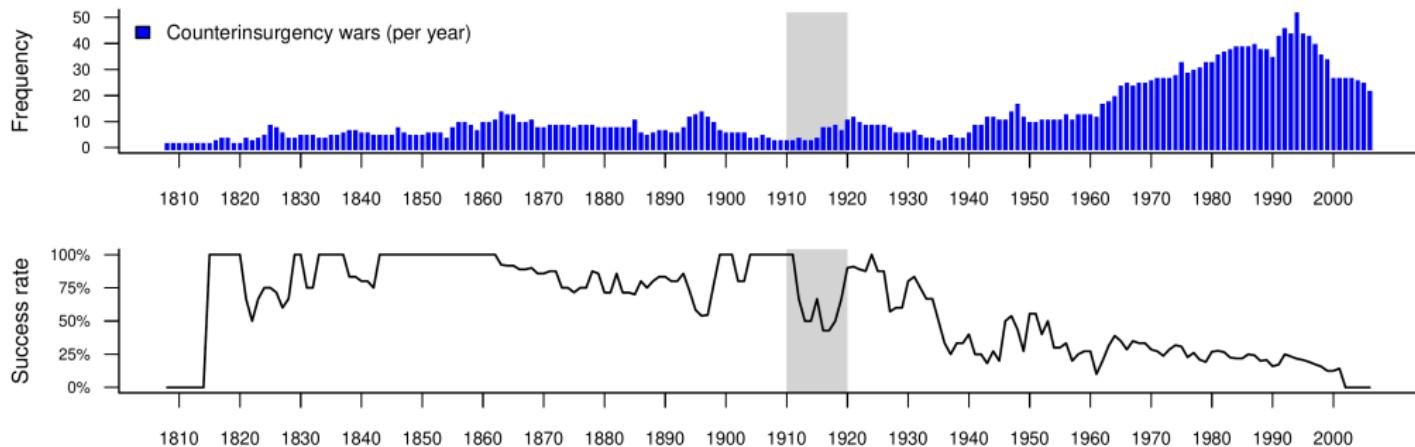
UK v. Mad Mullah
Bolivia v. Acre
UK v. Boers
Germany v. Maji Maji
Netherlands v. Achinese
USA v. Filipino
Germany v. Herero
Turkey v. Macedonians
Spain v. Moroccan
Mexico v. Cruzobs
UK v. Zulu



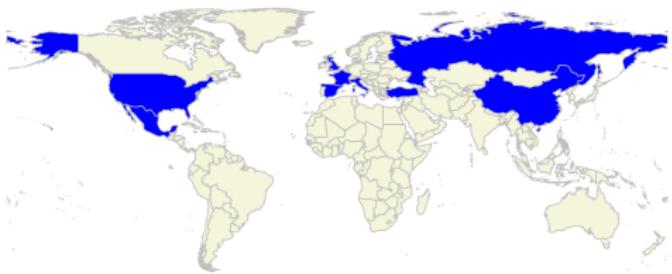
1910's



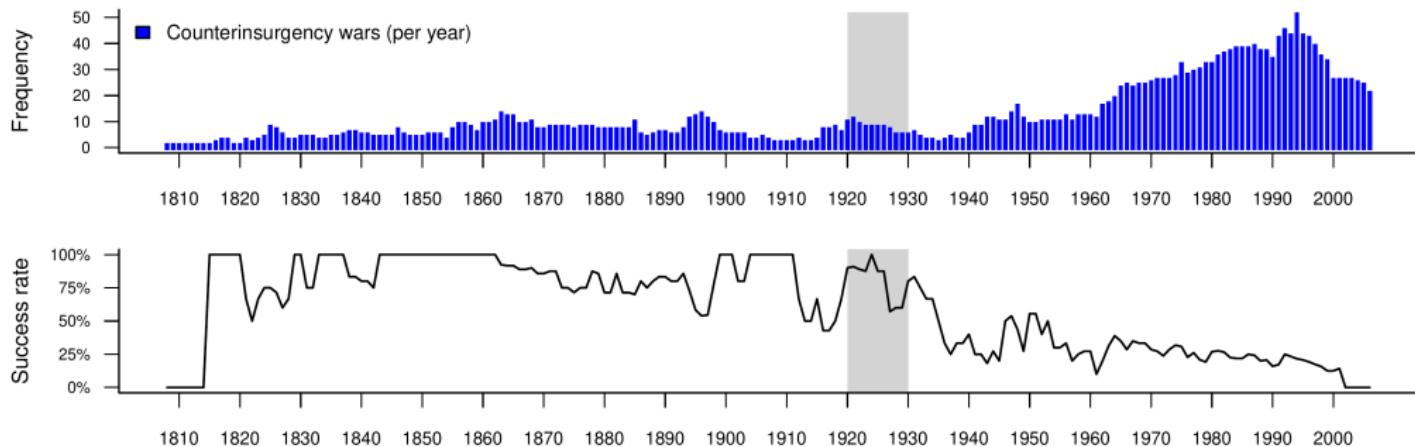
Spain v. Moroccan
UK v. Germany Turkey v. KTC
Turkey v. Arabs
China v. Tibet
France v. Fez Tribesmen
USA v. Cacos
France v. Syrians
Italy v. Somalis
USA v. DR rebels
UK v. Iraqi UK v. Irish
France v. Fez Tribesmen
UK v. Afghans USSR v. Zikrists
USSR v. Greens China v. Tibet
UK v. Mad Mullah



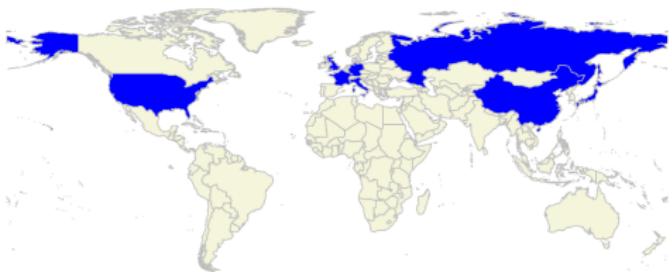
1920's



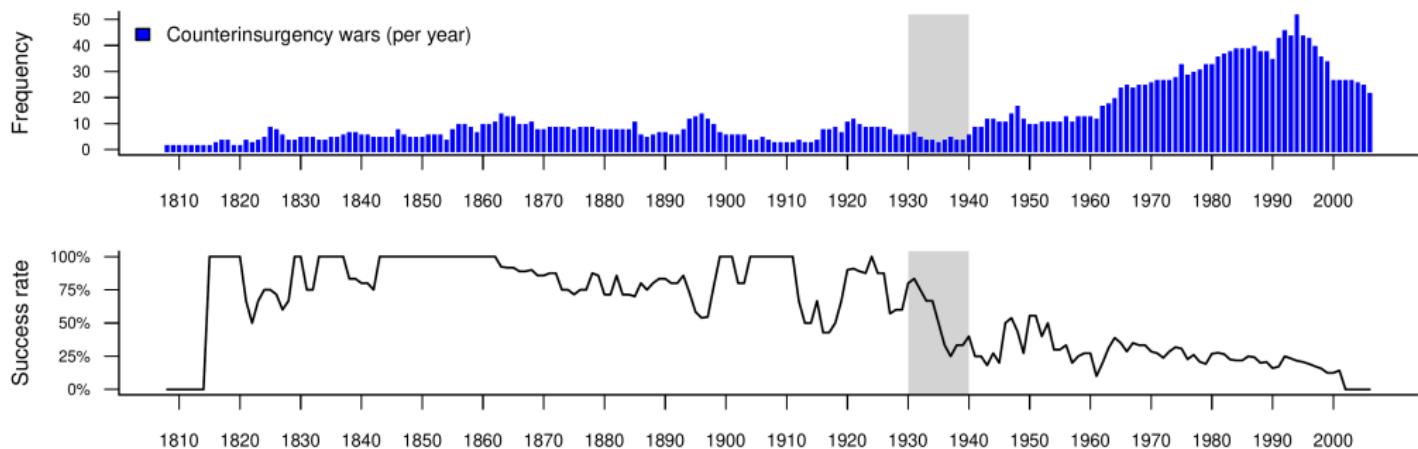
UK v. Mad Mullah
 Mexico v. Cristero
France v. Rif tribes
 Turkey v. Azad USSR v. Basmachi
 UK v. Irish
 USA v. Cacos USA v. IRA rebels
 Turkey v. KTC Spain v. Rif tribes
 UK v. Iraqi
 France v. Syrians
 France v. Rif tribes
 UK v. Galen Army Italy v. Sanusi
China v. CCP
 USSR v. Greens
 USSR v. Zikrists
 France v. Druze



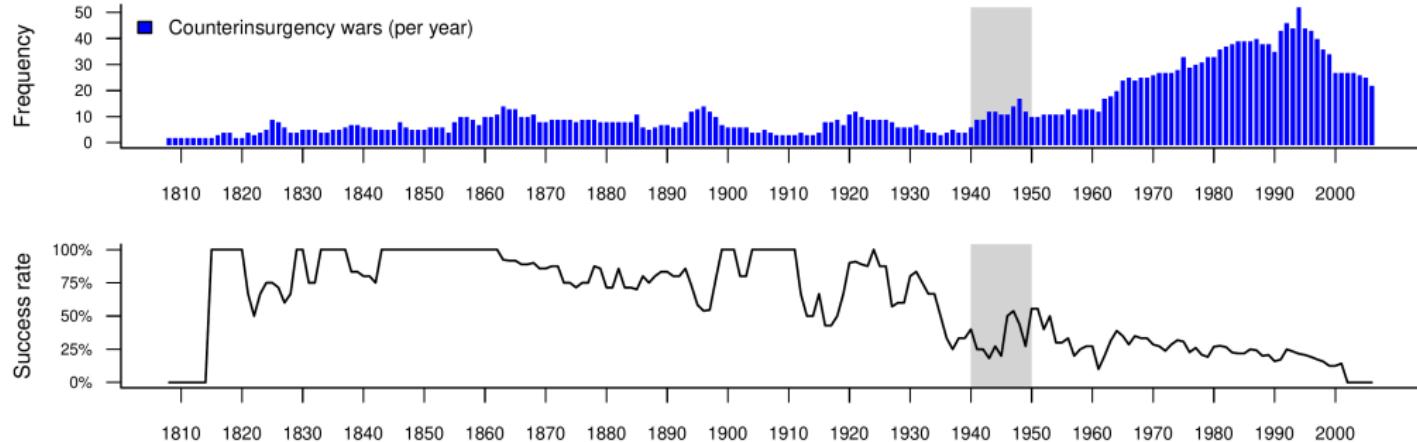
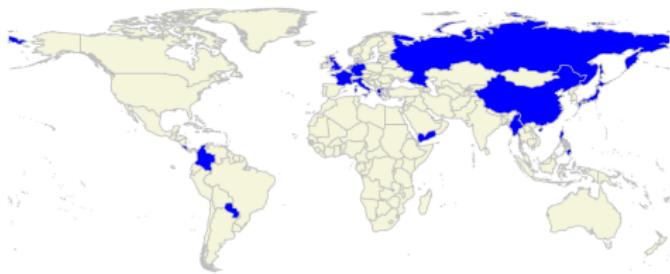
1930's



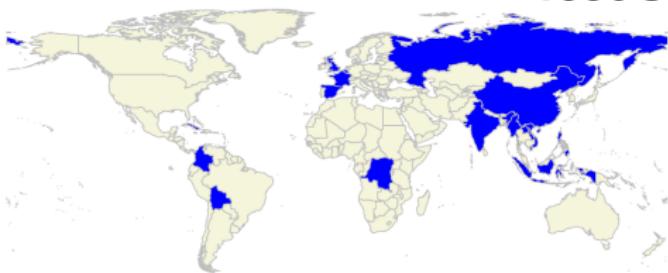
USSR v. Basmachi
Germany v. CNR
UK v. Galen Army
Italy v. Sanusi
Japan v. Chinese
USA v. Cacos
France v. Thai rebels
Japan v. Manchurians
USSR v. Chechens
UK v. Arab rebels
China v. CCP



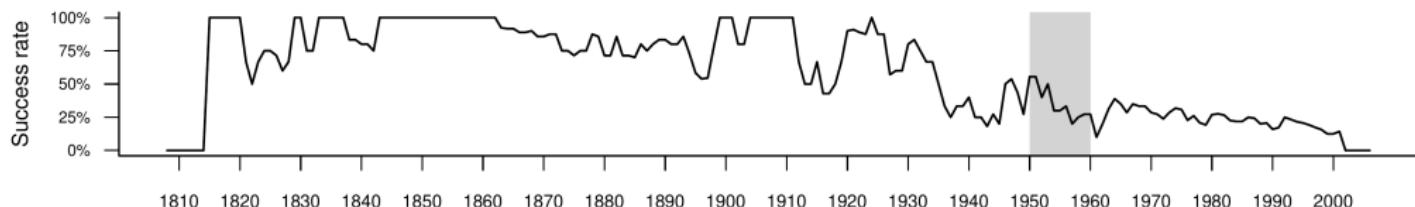
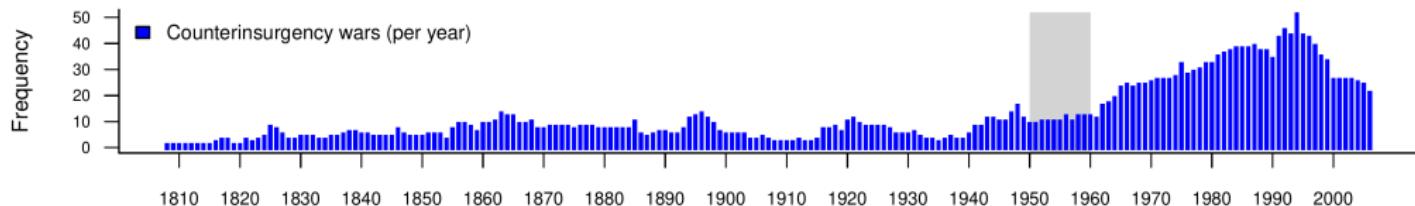
1940's



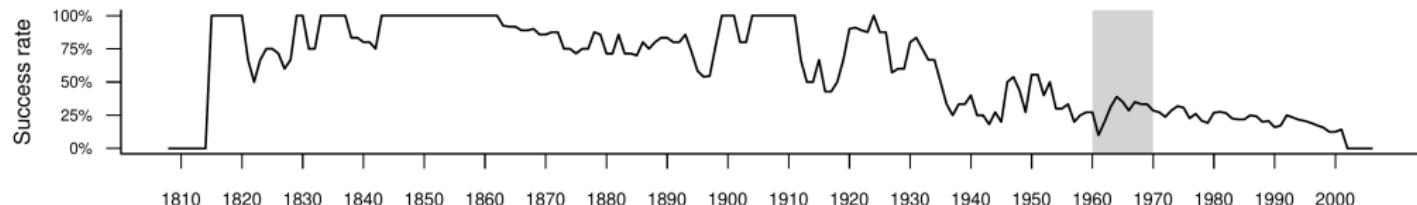
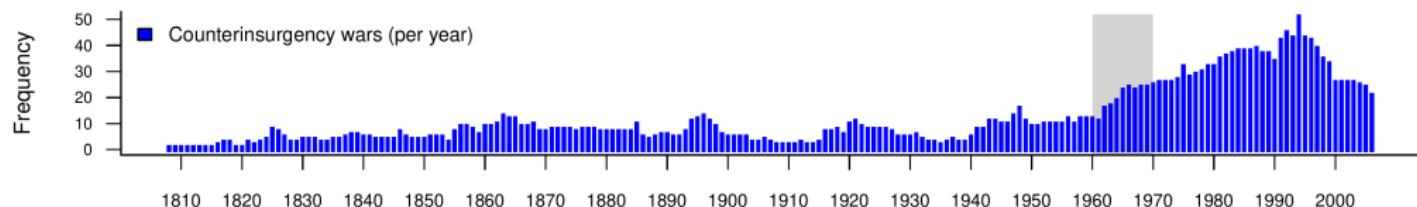
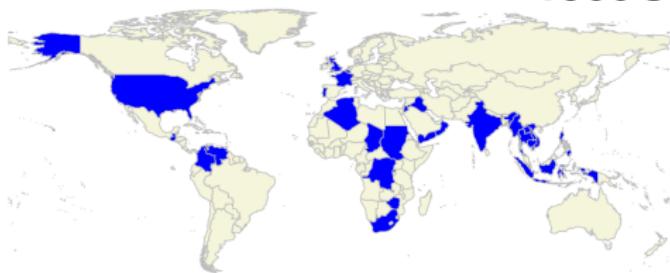
1950's



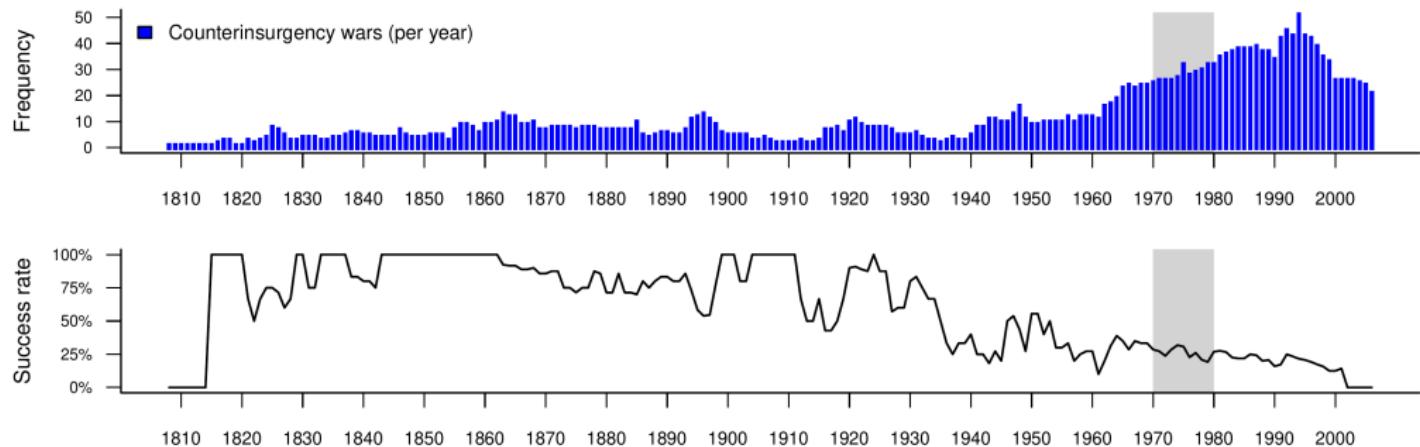
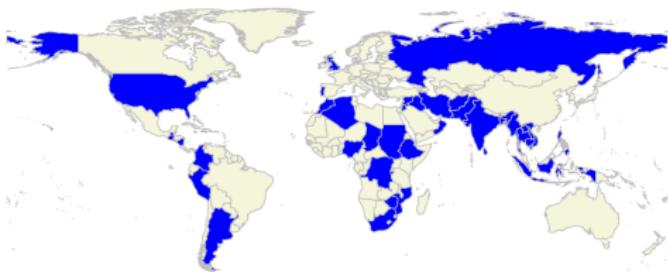
Bolivia v. MNR
 Indonesia v. Assorted
 France v. Moroccan Rebels
 UK v. Shifra India v. Nagas
 UK v. EOKA UK v. Communists
 France v. Tunisians USSR v. LLKS
 Cuba v. Communists Burma v. SSA
 Laos v. Pathet Lao Philippines v. Huk
 Indonesia v. Perul Islam
 DRC v. Katanga USSR v. Tibet France v. Vietnam
 France v. Algerians China v. Tibet
 Colombia v. Various UK v. Mau Mau
 Belgium v. PARMEHUTU
 Spain v. Sahrawi
 Burma v. Kachin/Karen
 South Vietnam v. Vietcong



1960's

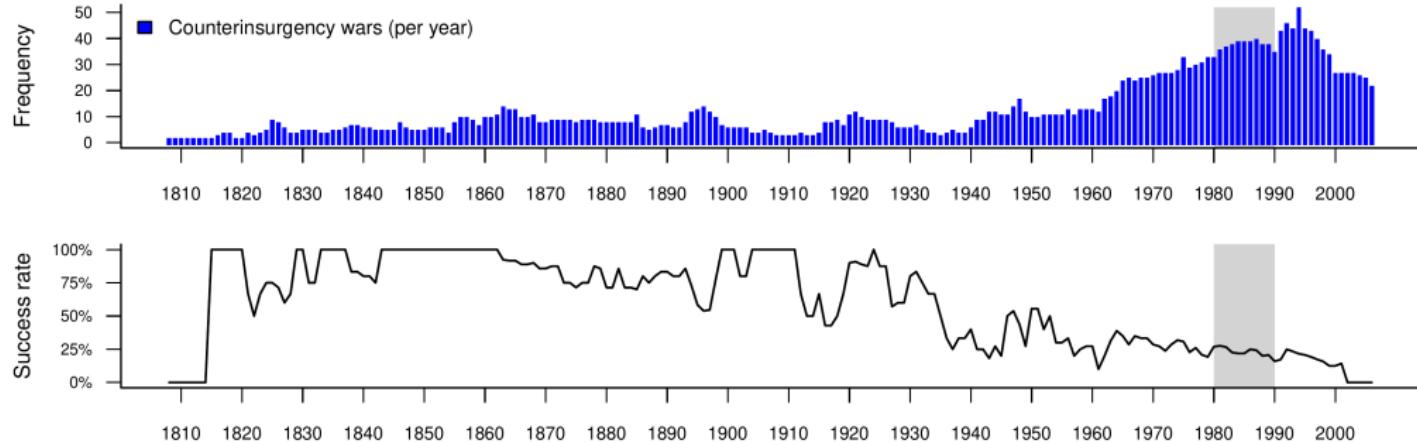
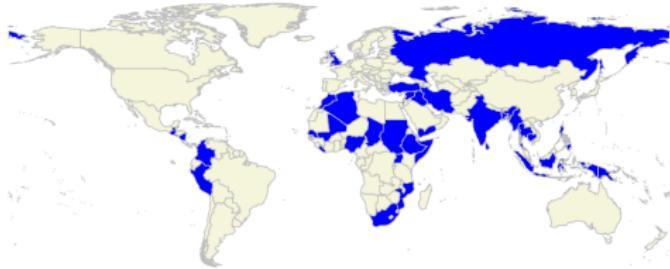


1970's

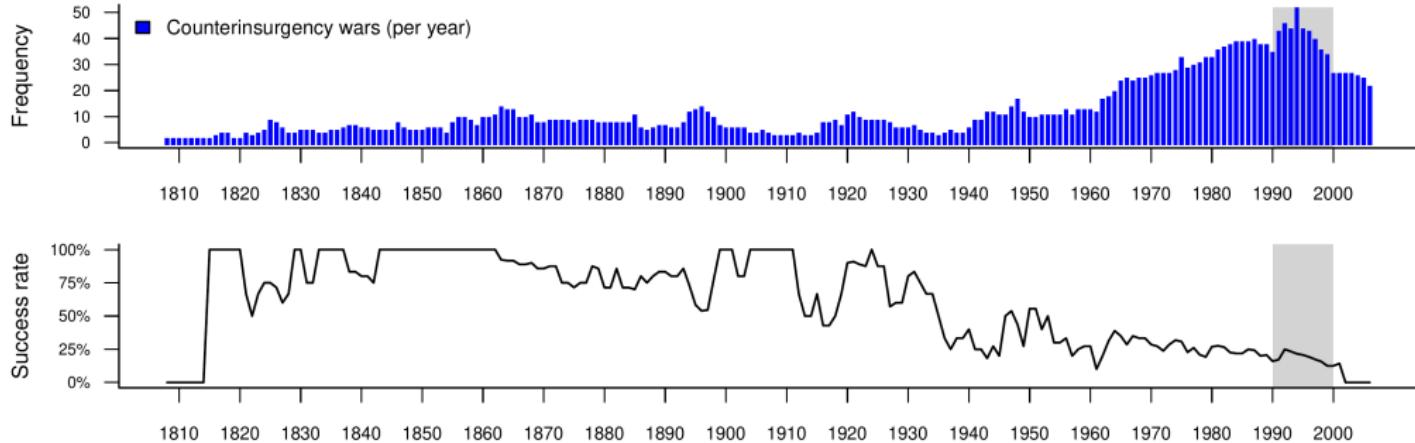
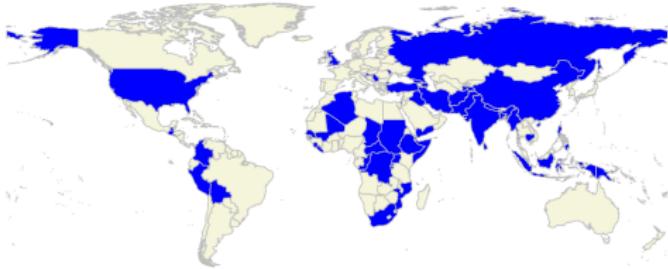


Cambodia v. Khmer Rouge
Ethiopia v. Eritrea Chad v. FROLINAT
Thailand v. Communists
Argentina v. ERP
Bangladesh v. Shanti Bahini
Guatemala v. URNG Indonesia v. OPM
Iran v. MEK Iraq v. Kurds Philippines v. CPF
Syria v. MB Philippines v. MNLF India v. MCC/CPI
El Salvador v. FMLN
Portugal v. Angola Afghanistan v. Afghans
Indonesia v. Fretilin South Africa v. SWAPO Sudan v. Anya Nya
Burma v. SSA Burundi v. Hutu Oman v. DFL
India v. Naxalites Zimbabwe v. ZANU Nicaragua v. FSLN
Philippines v. MILF Nigeria v. MNLF Pakistan v. Baluchi
Peru v. SL Pakistan v. Mutttagong Lebanon v. Various
Angola v. UNITA Zimbabwe v. ZANU India v. NDFB
UK v. IRA Sri Lanka v. JVP DRC v. FLNC
Morocco v. Polisario Iraq v. Kurds
Cambodia v. FUNK Laos v. Pathet Lau
USSR v. Afghanistan Portugal v. PAIGC
Indonesia v. GAM USA v. Vietcong
Portugal v. Fretilin Chad v. FROLINAT
Burma v. Kachin/Karen
Jordan v. Fedeyeen
Colombia v. M-19

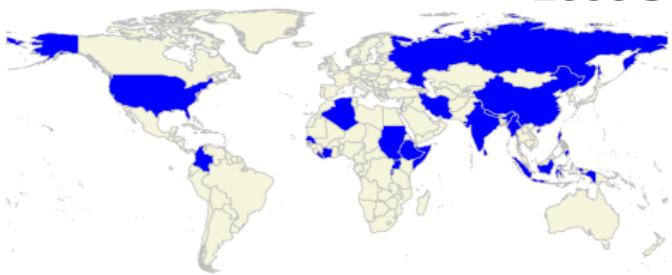
1980's



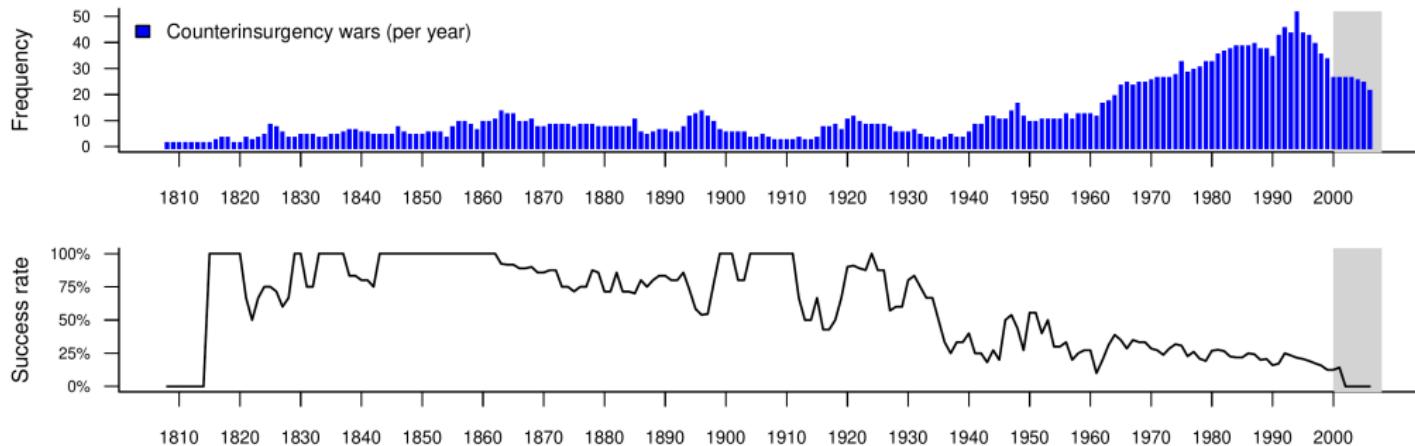
1990's



2000's



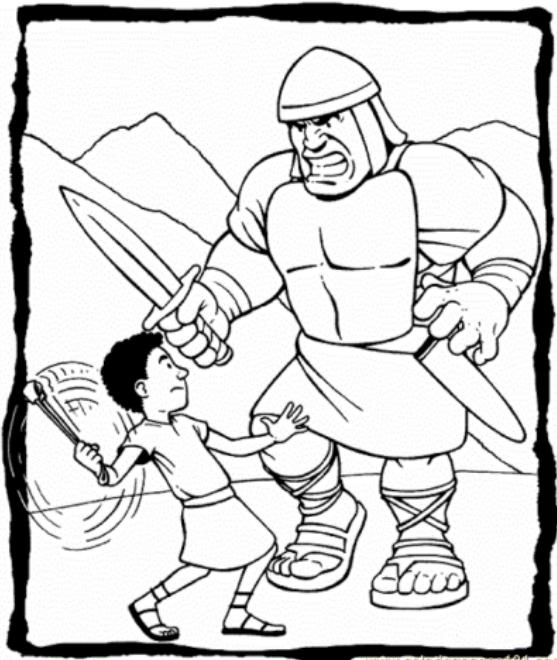
Ivory Coast v. PMIC
 Angola v. UNITA
 Russia v. Chechens USA v. Iraq
 Colombia v. FARC Philippines v. MILF
 Angola v. FLEC Rwanda v. ALIR
 Somalia & Various Uganda v. LRA
 Liberia v. LURD China v. ETIM
 Indonesia v. GAM
 India v. Kashmir
 Senegal v. MFDC Algeria v. GIA Israel v. Palestinian
 Indonesia v. CPI Philippines v. CPP
 Sudan v. SPLM Sudan v. SLMA
 Iran v. IRIK Burma v. SSA Burundi v. FDD
 Ethiopia v. ONLF Nepal v. CPN
 Burundi v. Patriote
 Sri Lanka v. LTTE
 India v. MCC/CPI
 USA v. Afghanistan



Explaining counterinsurgency success and failure

Puzzle of insurgency

1. Power disparities should make war *less* likely
2. Insurgents are (much) weaker than states
 - a) Taliban: 25,000-50,000 troops
 - b) Coalition: 500,000 troops (peak strength)
+ 50% world GDP
3. Insurgencies are unfair fights
4. So why are they becoming more frequent?
5. And why are they becoming so much harder to defeat over time?



www.coloringpages101.com

Figure 8: An unfair fight?

Why have (counter)insurgents become (less)more successful over time?

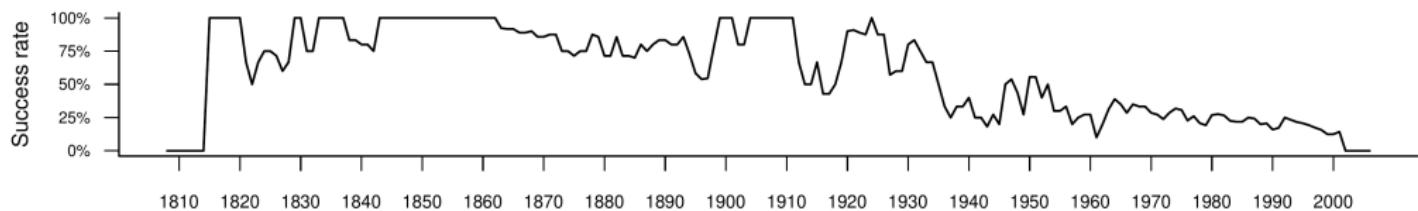


Figure 9: Success = conflict ends without major concessions by government

International level

- Cold War
- Decolonization
- Interdependence
- Globalization
- Power vacuums

Domestic level

- Democratization
- Media
- State failure
- Normative changes
- Social movements

Battlefield level

- Rules of engagement
- Technology
- Tactical innovation
- Doctrine & strategy
- Information
- Mechanization

Other?

- _____

Field Manual 3-24

1. Developed under GEN David Petraeus, USA
2. Finalized Dec 2006
3. Doctrinal basis for 2007 Iraq Surge

“Popular support allows counterinsurgents to develop the intelligence necessary to identify and defeat insurgents.”

– FM 3-24 (1:29)



How to earn a population's support?

Alternative approach	FM 3-24
coercive violence	vs. "hearts and minds" ✓
attack enemy forces	vs. defense of civilian population ✓
small commando units	vs. large conventional forces ✓
military avoids civilian duties	vs. military performs civilian duties ✓
short-term, limited	vs. long-term, costly ✓

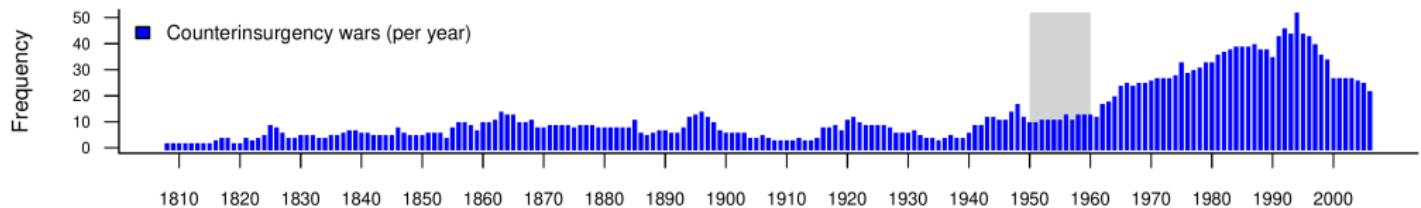
Theoretical basis for FM-3-24:

counterinsurgency "classics" of 1960's (not contemporary civil war literature)

Empirical basis for FM-3-24:

Algerian War of Independence (not Vietnam)

Case Study: Algerian War of Independence



Historical context of the Algerian war

1. Global wave of insurgencies in 1950-60s
2. Mao's "Protracted Popular War" strategy goes viral
 - a) phase 1: prerevolutionary (underground organization)
 - b) phase 2: strategic stalemate (guerrilla warfare)
 - c) phase 3: strategic offensive (conventional warfare)
3. Military leaders scrambling to develop response
4. Two opposing views emerge:
 - a) David Galula
 - b) Roger Trinquier

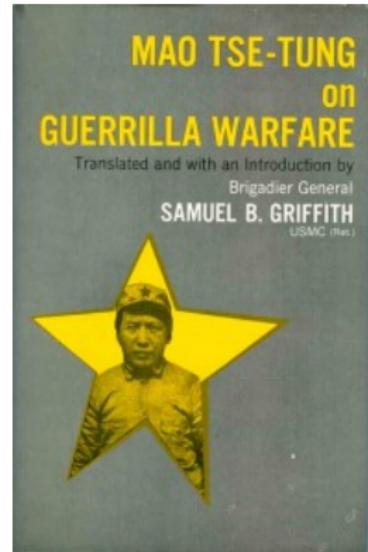


Figure 11: FM-Mao

Background

Prewar history

1. French conquer Algiers in 1830
2. Algeria becomes part of metropolitan France (not a colony... technically)
3. Large European settler population (Pied-Noir)
4. Political, economic discrimination against native Arabs & Berbers
5. French empire in collapse post-WWII



Figure 12: Pied-Noir

Front de Liberation National (FLN)

1. FLN begins massive rebellion for independence
2. Follows Mao's PPW strategy in rural areas
3. Urban guerrilla warfare in cities
4. Campaign of terrorism & targeted killings vs. European settlers
5. France sends 400,000 troops



Figure 13: Aftermath of FLN attack

France's "counter-revolutionary struggle"

1. Population control
2. Forceable resettlement
3. Psychological warfare
4. Offensive operations
5. Summary executions
6. Collective reprisals
7. Torture

Pied-Noirs also declare war

1. Reprisals vs. native Algerians
2. Terrorism against "soft" elements in French army & government



Figure 14: Paratroopers arrive

de Gaulle makes a deal

1. By 1959, military campaign a success
2. But no political breakthrough
3. Growing domestic opposition to war
4. President de Gaulle makes calls for "self-determination", reaches out to FLN
5. Algeria independent in 1962



Figure 15: Charles de Gaulle

Galula vs. Triquier

David Galula

1. Born in French Algeria
2. Served in China, Philippines, Hong Kong, Balkans
3. Company commander in rural Kabylie region during war

Book: *Pacification in Algeria* (1963)

1. Counterinsurgency means “building a political organization from the population upward”
2. Population-centric war
3. Insurgents start in weakness
4. Counterinsurgents need local allies



Figure 16: David Galula

Galula in FM 3-24:

Clear-Hold-Build

1. Eliminate insurgents
2. Protect population
3. Build government institutions
4. Repeat

Goal: keep insurgents in “phase 1”

1. Dismantle rebel institutions
2. Deny rebels future material support from population
3. Keep rebels incapable of major operations



Figure 17: Clearing is the easy part

Limitations of Galula's approach

1. Requires massive, long-term commitment
2. Requires population control
3. Asks army to take role of civilian government
4. Focus on rural counterinsurgency

Some of Galula's ideas are not in FM 3-24

1. Immediate and *public* punishment of rebels
2. Forceable resettlement of civilians



Figure 18: Mission creep?

Roger Trinquier

1. Decade older than Galula
2. Served in China, Indochina
3. Intel chief of 10th Parachute Division in Algiers

Book: *Modern Warfare* (1961)

1. Counterinsurgency means destroying the insurgents' military organization
2. Insurgents exploit "fiction of peace"
3. Local police not up to task
4. Civilian law too constraining
5. Martial law is necessary

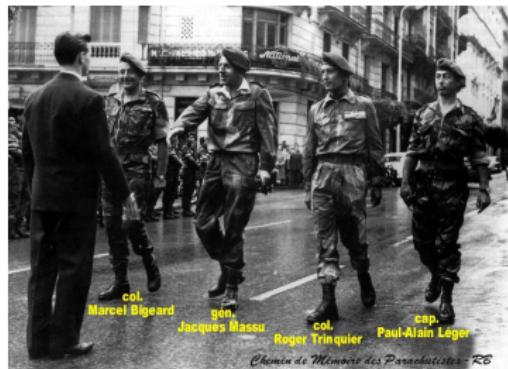


Figure 19: In real life



Figure 20: In *Battle of Algiers*

Trinquier in FM 3-24:

Human intelligence

1. Mapping the “human terrain”
2. Census, ID cards, checkpoints
3. Intelligence collection on insurgent leadership, organization



Figure 21: Taking a census

Some of Trinquier's ideas not in FM 3-24

1. Torture

- a) once insurgent captured, his info only good for short time
- b) each piece of intel leads to more sweeps, more intel
- c) psychological impact on rebels
- d) civilians spontaneously cooperate during sweeps

2. Coercion

- a) aggressive sweeps
- b) summary executions



Figure 22: The dark side