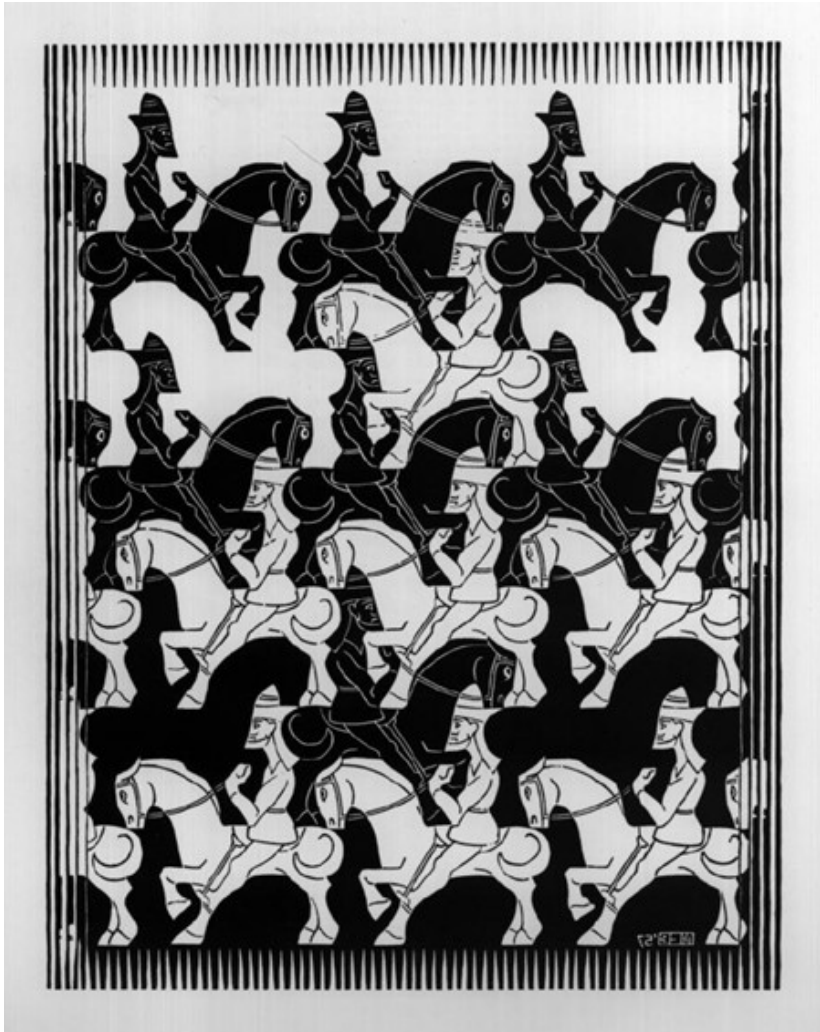


The Guerrilla Way



Space...

The chessboard is only a chessboard because it's neatly divided by its 64 squares and governed by precise rules. The stage becomes a stage when it is placed in relationship to backstage, to the audience, and to the history and norms of theater. Our world is no different. You're not standing in empty space but in a social world, with geography and history and rules.

Chess men can never move except as proscribed and actors have to speak their lines, but we are more flexible. We can affect and reconstitute our space. (I don't mean electoral politics. Electoral politics operates inside our social world. It's part of the rules that govern our social space, the way the rules of chess govern the movement of the pieces on the board.)

The vast black void of outer-space, empty, waiting to be filled with stuff: like a chessboard without any pieces, or a stage before the play – our clean ideal of space. But, look around you (go on, look). “We don't live inside a void” but “inside a set of relations”.

||| *“One of the most fundamental tasks of the State is to striate the space over which it reigns” -Deleuze* |||

Interlude I

Trajectories, tactics, and rhetorics

As unrecognized producers, poets of their own acts, silent discoverers of their own paths in the jungle of functionalist rationality, consumers produce through their signifying practices something that might be considered similar to the "wandering lines" ("lignes derre") drawn by the autistic children studied by F. Deligny: "indirect" or "errant" trajectories obeying their own logic. In the technocratically constructed, written, and functionalized space in which the consumers move about, their trajectories form unforeseeable sentences, partly unreadable paths across a space. Although they are composed with the vocabularies of established languages (those of television, newspapers, supermarkets, or museum sequences) and although they remain subordinated to the prescribed syntactical forms (temporal modes of schedules, paradigmatic orders of spaces, etc.), the trajectories trace out the ruses of other interests and desires that are neither determined nor captured by the systems in which they develop.

Michel de Certeau

War!

War is conflict. The kings declare war and the generals march off. They call up the troops; they draw up their armies. They draw their armies on the map: thick lines that sprout arrows. The enemy does the same. The arrows tangle and clash.

Force is opposed with force. One side pushes the other until the whole land is one solid color.

We are weak against the state. So we find power in our weakness. We use jujitsu. We use non-violence and the media all sorts of techniques and tactics, tricks and gimmicks to find power in places other than the gun. That's wonderful.

But it's still war. We still confront power with power as we try to control and recreate the social space around us.

||| *"Politics is war by other means"*
-Foucault |||

Interlude II

At one end of the spectrum, ranks of electronic boxes buried deep in the earth hungrily consume data and spew out endless tapes. Scientists and engineers confer in air-conditioned offices; missiles are checked by intense men who move about them silently, almost reverently. In forty minutes, count down begins.

At the other end of this spectrum, a tired man wearing a greasy felt hat, a tattered shirt, and soiled shorts is seated, his back against a tree. Barrel pressed between his knees, butt resting on the moist earth between sandaled feet is a Browning automatic rifle. Hooked to his belt, two dirty canvas sacks—one holding three home-made bombs, the other four magazines loaded with 30-caliber ammunition. Draped around his neck, a sausage-like cloth tube with three days' supply of rice. The man stands, raises a water bottle to his lips, rinses his mouth, spits out the water. He looks about him carefully, corks the bottle, slaps the stock of the Browning three times, pauses, slaps it again twice, and disappears silently into the shadows. In forty minutes, his group of fifteen men will occupy a previously prepared ambush.

Brigadier-General Samuel B. Griffith

... good for?

War movies always have that scene back at HQ with the generals gathered around a big map. War is fought on maps. Armies conquer by sweeping over the land, but they never actually touch the ground. It's a game of power taking place above reality. War doesn't engage with space, it's just armies against armies, force against force.

Mass movement activism mobilizes and arrays and abstracts people into a demonstration like an army that is then unleashed against the powers that be. It fights the good fight, in the theater of war, like a game of chess. We get a bit of progress. We replace one social space with another.

This war model only gets us so far. We often lose because opposing the power of the state is tough going. And then, we fail to win because we focus on power and not on space. We end up merely reforming space, not revolutionizing it.

||| *"The territory no longer precedes the map [...].
Henceforth, it is the map that precedes the territory"*
-Baudrillard |||

Interlude III

Here was a pompous, professorial beginning. My wits, hostile to the abstract, took refuge in Arabia again. Translated into Arabic, the algebraic factor would first take practical account of the area we wished to deliver, and I began idly to calculate how many square miles:sixty: eighty: one hundred: perhaps one hundred and forty thousand square miles. And how would the Turks defend all that? No doubt by a trench line across the bottom, if we came like an army with banners;but suppose we were (as we might be) an influence, an idea, a thing intangible, invulnerable, without front or back, drifting about like a gas? Armies were like plants, immobile, firm-rooted, nourished through long stems to the head. We might be a vapor, blowing where we listed. Our kingdoms lay in each man's mind; and as we wanted nothing material to live on, so we might offer nothing material to the killing. It seemed a regular soldier might be helpless without a target, owning only what he sat on, and subjugating only what, by order, he could poke his rifle at.

Lieutenant Colonel T.E. Lawrence

Antiwar,

Make them play whac-a-mole. Laugh and run away. There's no need to beat the cops. There's no need to hold the streets. We don't want the streets. Small, local, disconnected, actions do add up. They don't add up to a battle line. They add up to a guerrilla war where victory isn't conquest and occupation but uncontrollable space.

The Guerrilla Warrior doesn't take control of space but negates control of space. She disrupts the application of power in space and continuously challenges the enemy to the (impossible) task of proving control of that space.

G-war isn't insurrection. If war is above space, insurrection takes the fight to every single point in space. That's impractical. And it still misses the point, though less. The only places I want to assert power over are maybe a few rebel hide-outs where we can cook FNB and play a game of twister. Everywhere else should be a giant dance floor.

|| *"the best weapon against the simulacrum is not to unmask it as a false copy, but to force it to be a true copy"* ||

-Massumi

Interlude IV

It is often said that guerrilla warfare is primitive, This generalization is dangerously misleading and true only in the technological sense. If one considers the picture as a whole, a paradox is immediately apparent, and the primitive form is understood to be in fact more sophisticated than nuclear war or atomic war or war as it was waged by conventional armies, navies, and air forces. Guerrilla war is not dependent for success on the efficient operation of complex mechanical devices, highly organized logistical systems, or the accuracy of electronic computers. It can be conducted in any terrain, in any climate, in any weather; in swamps, in mountains, in farmed fields. Its basic element is man, and man is more complex than any of his machines. He is endowed with intelligence, emotions, and will. Guerrilla warfare is therefore suffused with, and reflects, man's admirable qualities as well as his less pleasant ones, While it is not always humane, it is human, which is more than can be said for the strategy of extinction.

Brigadier-General Samuel B. Griffith

Praxis:

Guerrilla warfare is mobile & avoids direct confrontation, preferring to hit and run and attack supply and communication lines to wear down the enemy. The Guerrilla Warrior acts locally, relying on knowledge of the terrain and a direct relationship to space. Support of the population is crucial. The Guerrilla Warrior understands and embodies the politics of her actions.

Guerrilla warfare isn't a set of tactics to pick and choose from, nor a grand strategy waiting to be implemented. It's a schema: it helps us understand what do and points towards new possibilities for praxis.

I don't know you (though, I would love to meet you!), or your situation. All guerrilla warfare can do is stimulate your brainstorming session by suggesting a new way of looking at activism. I wrote this zine because I was trying to understand, for myself, why certain types of activism appealed to me and seemed to do what I wanted to be doing.

||| *"Philosophy is subjective proposition, desire, and praxis that are applied to the event."* -Negri |||

Interlude V

Guerrilla warfare must always be dynamic, and maintain momentum. [...] Static defense has no part in guerrilla action, and fixed defense no place, except in the momentary way involved in laying an ambush.

Strategically, guerrilla action reverses the normal practice of of warfare by seeking to avoid battle; and tactically, by evading any engagement where it is likely to suffer losses. [...] So 'hit and run' is the distinctive principle of guerrilla action. Indeed, 'tip and run' is a better term, being more comprehensive. For a multiplicity of minor coups and threats can have a greater effect in tipping the scales than a few major hits - by producing more cumulative distractions, disturbances and demoralization among the enemy, along with a more widespread impression among the population. Ubiquity combined with intangibility is a basic secret of progress in such a campaign. Moreover 'tip and run' is often the best way to fulfill the offensive purpose of luring the enemy into ambushes.

Guerrilla war, too, inverts one of the main principles of orthodox war, the principle of 'concentration'. For dispersion is an essential condition of survival and success on the guerrilla side, which must never present a target, and thus can only operate in minute particles though these may momentarily coagulate like globules of quicksilver to overwhelm some weakly guarded objective.

Captain B.H. Liddle Hart

End game.

Old school communist style guerrilla warfare (think Mao and Che) stressed that there had to be a transition to a regular army because bands of guerrillas could never set up a state. Guerrillas can't conquer, or occupy, or extend power beyond their local situation. And, in guerrilla warfare all structure is ad hoc and lateral, connecting only proximal groups.	After the revolution I'm going to: _____ _____ _____
My friends and I sometimes joke that the revolution will happen next Tuesday. But really, the guerrilla war will go on forever, and that's a good thing: not continuous revolution but continuous resistance to a tidy ordering and unification of space.	_____
with my band of guerrillas, in our own neck of the woods.	_____

“every instant the region of real perception is completed and the possible positions of a sought object are constructed” -Riemann

Interlude VI

The partisan has then a real, but not an absolute enemy. That proceeds from his political character. Another boundary of enmity follows from the telluric¹ character of the partisan. He defends a patch of earth to which he has an autochthonic² relation. His basic position remains defensive despite his increasing mobility. He comports himself just as St. Joan of Arc did before her ecclesiastical court of judgment. She was not a partisan; she fought the English in a regular way. When asked a theological trick question by the judge – whether she claimed God hated the English – she responded: “Whether God loved or hated the English, I do not know, I only know that they must be driven out of France.” This is the answer that every normal partisan of the defense of the national soil would have given. This fundamentally defensive attitude characterizes the fundamental restriction of enmity as well. The real enemy is not declared the absolute enemy, and also not the ultimate enemy of mankind as such.

Carl Schmitt

[1] Of or belonging to the earth or soil.

[2] Native to the soil, aboriginal, indigenous.