

The kinetic part of “hybrid” warfare

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Irregular warfare

- or asymmetric warfare
- or guerilla warfare
- or insurgency
- or partisans



Features of irregular warfare

Compared to conventional (regular, symmetrical, ...) warfare:

- mobility and flexibility, there is no front
- avoiding direct and open battle
- poorly armed and equipped, dependent on external support and spoils
- political, telluric

Compared to terrorism:

- control of territory and population
- targets enemy military and government
- imitated military structure
- willing to engage when advantageous

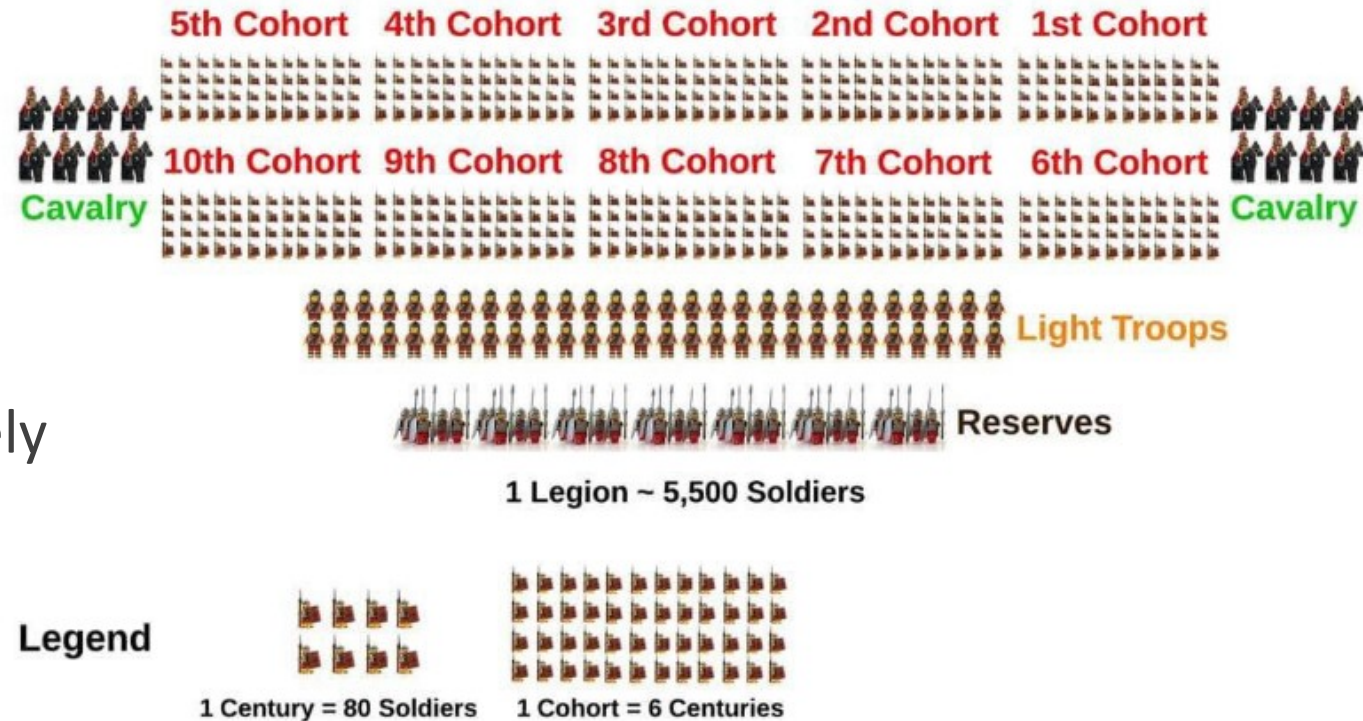
Long term perspective

- asymmetric/irregular warfare is actually the original, “normal” warfare
- characteristic for tribal conflicts and so is “counterinsurgency”
- it is referenced in the oldest records

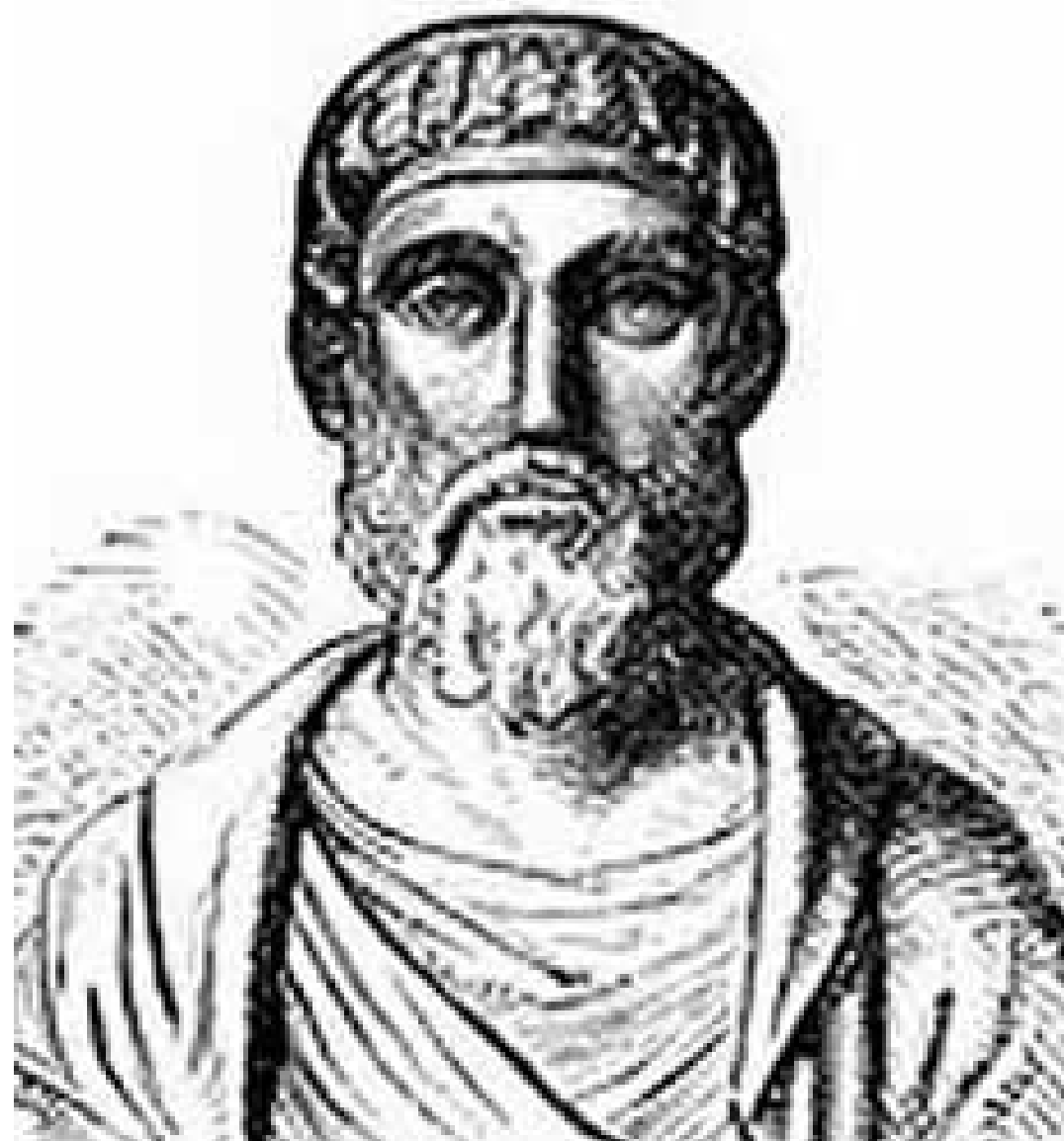
- conventional/regular warfare is comparatively recent invention
 - it requires “civilization”

historically more visible and attractive

The Roman Legion



“They are very quick in their operations of exceeding speed and fond of surprising their enemies. They suddenly disperse and then reunite and again after having inflicted vast loss upon the enemy, scatter themselves over the whole plane in irregular formations, always avoiding a fort or an entrenchment.”



Ammianus Marcellinus, 375AD

Oldest period

Sun Tzu (6th century B.C.)

- “An army may be likened to water, for just as flowing water avoids the heights and hastens to the lowlands, so an army avoids strength and strikes weakness.”
- “The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting.”

Quintus Fabius Maximus Verrucosus (3rd century B.C.)

- adopted “Fabian strategy” after initial Hannibal’s victories
- avoiding direct battle, attacking supply routes, war of attrition
- time must be on the side of defender
- military success, political disaster

Zealots and Sicarii in Judea (1st century A.D.)

- guerrilla warfare against Roman Empire





Middle ages

- some bits of asymmetric warfare can be seen during the Hundred Years' (1337-1453) and Thirty Years' (1618-1648) wars
- anti-Ottoman resistance in the Balkans
- colonial wars
- Irish resistance 1594-1603

American War of Independence (1775–1783)

almost perfect conditions for asymmetric warfare

attacks on supply routes, officers, etc.

war was eventually decided back in London due to lack of support



Napoleon's Spanish "ulcer" (1807-1814)

"It is manifest that, though a great army may easily defeat or disperse another army, less or greater, yet it is not in a like degree formidable to a determined people, nor efficient in a like degree to subdue them, or to keep them in subjugation—much less if this people, like those of Spain in the present instance, be numerous, and, like them, inhabit a territory extensive and strong by nature. For a great army, and even several great armies, cannot accomplish this by marching about the country, unbroken, but each must split itself into many portions, and the several detachments become weak accordingly, not merely as they are small in size, but because the soldiery, acting thus, necessarily relinquish much of that part of their superiority, which lies in what may be called the engineer of war; and far more, because they lose, in proportion as they are broken, the power of profiting by the military skill of the Commanders, or by their own military habits. The experienced soldier is thus brought down nearer to the plain ground of the inexperienced man to the level of man: and it is then, that the truly brave man rises, the man of good hopes and purposes; and superiority in moral brings with it superiority in physical power."

- William Wordsworth



Modern Era

- American Civil War (1861-1865)
 - both sides legitimized local guerillas
 - option to prolong the war
- Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871)
 - “francs-tireurs” – French anti-Prussian guerrillas in captured territory
- Boer Wars (1880-1881, 1899-1902)
 - both wars highly asymmetrical
 - Boers very effective “mobile snipers”
 - British army adapted well (camouflage, fortifications, protected supply routes, razing enemy supplies, concentration camps, pursuit units, armoured trains)
 - decent conditions of surrender



THE WAR IN THE TRANSVAAL: THE BOERS' METHOD OF FIGHTING.—SEE PAGE 15.



The Great War

- T.E. Lawrence (and Gertrude Bell)
 - tried to create anti-Ottoman Arab revolt
 - “successful”, consequences still felt today (Sykes-Picot line)
 - Germany tried the same thing against India (Niedermayer expedition)

- Paul von Letow-Vorbeck
 - undefeated German colonel in Tanzania
 - waged asymmetric war against much larger British army in Africa
 - goal was to force Entente to keep forces in Africa
 - no supplies, lived off the land

<https://youtu.be/4iKHwHPpIKQ?t=2280>

Thinkers and theoreticians

- T. E. Lawrence (1888-1935)

- “War upon rebellion is messy and slow, like eating soup with a knife.”
- “We were an influence, an idea, a thing invulnerable, intangible, without front or back, drifting about like a gas? Armies were like plants, immobile as a whole, firm-rooted, nourished through long stems to the head, we might be a vapor, blowing where we listed.”

- Mao Zedong (1893-1976)

- “The people are the sea that the revolutionary swims in”
- “The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue.”
- 3 steps of revolutionary war

- Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara (1928-1967) “foco”

- “Guerrilla warfare is used by the side which is supported by a majority but which possesses a much smaller number of arms for use in defense against oppression.”



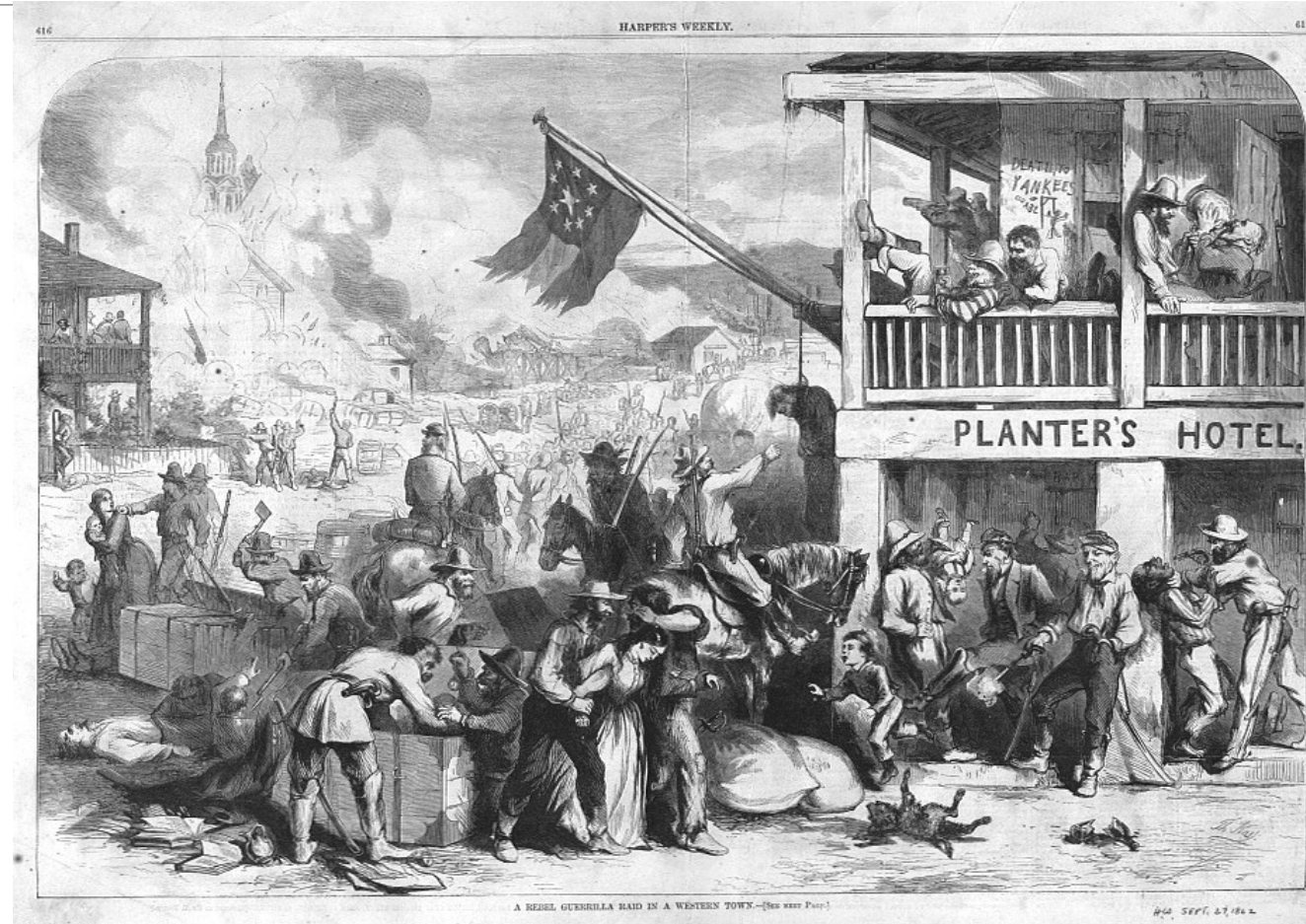
Role of terrain

- geography and climate
 - mountains, forests, swamps?
 - or deserts, islands, plains?
- international borders
 - where? how long? with whom?
 - what about coastline?
- population centers
 - cities as a specific type of terrain
- type of economy
 - industrial/agrarian
 - concentrated/dispersed
 - modern/developing country



Role of population

- control of population is more important than control of territory
- it is source of money, information, fighters, and any other kind of support
- goal of the guerilla is to take control over the population at the detriment of government





Role of cause

- what are they fighting for or against
- decisive factor regarding:
 - control of population
 - external support
 - internal resistance
- best cause is one that brings you maximum number of supporters and also weakens the enemy as much as possible
- it will differ case by case
- its importance declines with duration and escalation

Role of entropy

- laws of nature are helping the irregulars
- all systems and structures naturally tend towards decline and disorder (entropy increases over time, second law of thermodynamics)
- maintenance takes effort, resources and time
- therefore destroying things is cheaper and easier than building them or protecting them
- this makes war relatively easier for guerillas

- the aim is to bleed out the government
- H. Kissinger: „The conventional army loses if it does not win. The guerrilla wins if it does not lose.“



How to fight against it?

- in general, countermeasures are more effective in the beginning but also harder to justify
- once they can be justified, it might be too late
- cannot do much with the terrain, but try to control key points
- chasing guerillas across forests and mountains with regular forces rarely works
 - special operations can work, but depend on: intelligence, terrain and surprise, cooperation of local population
- control population
 - good<---> bad, build schools or execute people
 - isolate it from the guerillas, or even move it
 - it's a competition for their support
 - mobilize your supporters

Counterinsurgency theory

1. Assume military control of the area
 2. Soldiers live with the people
 3. Control movement of population (census)
 4. Eliminate local supporters of the rebels
 5. Elect new, loyal local leaders
 6. Test their loyalty, organize home defence militias
 7. Educate and politicize locals
 8. Destroy rest of the guerillas
- it is order-sensitive and dependent on chosen area



Other things to note

- people's actions align with their interests, but are not always rational
- most will not openly support what they perceive to be the losing side
- if guerillas cannot lay down their arms and get amnesty, they will just keep fighting
- population control can easily turn into counterproductive brutality
- there is huge difference between local and expeditionary counterinsurgency

- history lessons are always forgotten, mistakes are always repeated
 - because armies hate to fight like this
 - they prefer conventional, symmetrical war

- some "rebels" are not political but just profit-driven (warlords)

Further conflicts

partisans and occupation resistance movements during WW2

- France, Poland, Yugoslavia, and many others

Chinese revolution and Mao's Long March

de-colonization wars

- Africa and Asia

Vietnam War

Afghan War

Videos

Algiers - [/p00txp61/](#)

Paris - [/p00txp44/](#) (4:00)

Bin Hao - [/p00txnyc/](#)

Vietnam 1 - [/p00txp2s/](#)

Vietnam 2 - [/p00txnwv/](#)

Iraq - [/p00txqjt/](#) (2:00)