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## Table of contents

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Table of contents .....	1
Peischel: Editorial .....	3
Lapins/Velija: An Albanian unitary state without effective power .....	5
Dialectic of Enlightenment .....	5
Kosovo's role in the problems surrounding Greater Albania/Pan-Albania .....	5
The Vetëvendosje Party .....	9
Greater Albania in the intellectual discourse of the 1990s and 2000s .....	11
Pan-Albanian dreams in Southern Serbia .....	14
... and in Macedonia .....	16
Territorial exchange .....	16
Conclusion .....	18
Curriculum Vitae .....	23
Budde: Nuclear arms control - Current dimension and future challenges .....	24
Geostrategic situation .....	25
Deterrence as a strategic concept .....	26
The nuclear arsenals .....	28
Existing agreements .....	30
Verification .....	33
Conclusion .....	34
Curriculum Vitae .....	36
Herrmann/Maninger: Will steel remain decisive? .....	37
The tank debate .....	37
Urban situations .....	41
Future Combat Systems .....	45
Firepower: lethality of the system/platform .....	46
Protection: Survivability of the system/platform .....	47
Mobility: the ability to move on the road and in the field .....	47
Networkability: the ability to communicate with other vehicles, units, control centres and systems .....	48
Sustainability: its reliability, efficiency and logistical footprint .....	48
Flexibility: this means the adaptability of the platform .....	49
Conclusion .....	50
Curriculum Vitae .....	51
Kaiser: The invisible third party .....	52
Introduction .....	52

Nature and characteristics .....	52
Invisibility.....	53
Fear and anxiety .....	56
Localisation and dissolution of boundaries .....	58
Partisans, soldiers and mercenaries .....	60
Conclusion .....	67
Corriculum Vitae .....	68

## Editorial

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Dear readers,

With the peer-reviewed analysis of the concept of Pan-Albania Wulf Lapins and Enes Velija continued their research on the Albanian quest for national greatness on the western Balkan region, which they started in edition 3/2021. An EU integration process slowed down by the French, Dutch and Danish vetoes as well as by the specific interests of the US, the Russian Federation and Turkey would lead to the creation of a security and power vacuum, but also to decreasing trust in EU credibility. This kind of development seems all the more perilous as the western Balkan region already has to strike a balance between the Western, post-humanist narrative of peace making and visions of a big state, whereby foundation myths, language, culture, religion, ethnicity and ideology seem to promote the latter. This supports the thesis that strategic thinking is not only in itself dependent on the sphere of culture, but that its assessment has to take into account the particularities of this very sphere as important factors of influence.

In his series on the ministers of defence of the Second Republic Manfred Rauchensteiner this time dedicated himself to Karl Ferdinand (Baron of) Lütgendorf, minister of defence from February 1971 to May 1977. Even before taking office, Lütgendorf started to discuss "small-scale war" as a thinkable process and, with his efforts to reposition the armed forces, aroused the enmity of pacifistic and military-hostile circles, which finally transferred the polemics against him to parliament. In November 1971, he presented "Armed Forces Organisation 72", a reorganisation draft, to the national defence council. Towards the end of his term in office, there were signs of a serious conflict between him and the then commanding general of the armed forces regarding the concept of area defence.



In his contribution Dieter Budde, a notorious expert regarding the development of nuclear arms control agreements, sheds light on their current dimensions and the challenges they will face in the future. In his view, large-scale arms control agreements are history by now. Although he considers nuclear arms to have been a considerable factor during the Cold War, he thinks the nuclear arms build-up of China, North Korea, and Iran has generated a new arms race, whose limits comprehensive arms control agreements will not be able to set in the near future. One might add that Europe should be careful urging the US and Russia to abide by arms control regulations that do not bind emergent powers like China and Iran - especially, when the EU itself depends on US "extended deterrence".

With their essay Christian Herrmann and Stephan Maninger considerably contribute to answering the question of the future importance of armoured troops in modern armed forces. They conclude that different usages of identical technologies might lead to fundamentally different results. This means that even if a technology loses importance with one actor, it could gain a completely new dimension of impact through another actor, which is, for instance, superior in the areas of AI and autonomous systems. According to the authors, the main battle tank will - due to its combat capacity both in conventional and asymmetric warfare - in all probability remain operational until at least 2035. Regardless of the conclusions drawn and the questioning of the role of armoured troops, the credibility of Europe's defence policy largely depends on the capacity to reliably protect the Baltics; the potential of the latter, which no doubt entails a subjective threat perception, is largely based on a core of mechanised capabilities subject to continuous technological development.

Matthias Kaiser examines the phenomenon of the "partisan" in the more general sense of a "factionist of a new order". The author uses this definition to demonstrate its era-spanning dimension. To this end, he has to surpass the internationally recognised, narrower definition of the term. Its broad meaning, in particular, allows the thesis that, originally, the modern state order made the soldier the monopolist of war, thereby attributing a destabilising effect to the partisan, but also that the answer to current asymmetric threats might lie in a new rise of the mercenary, a privatisation of war, i.e. the soldier increasingly turning partisan.

Wolfgang Peischel, Editor in Chief

## An Albanian unitary state without effective power

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### The EU as a long-term objective without innovative thrust power

Wulf Lapins, Enes Velija

"The programme of the Enlightenment was the disenchantment of the world. It wanted to dissolve myths and overthrow imagination by means of knowledge." (Max Horkheimer/Theodor W. Adorno)

### Dialectic of Enlightenment

This contribution is the continuation of the article "Quest for and temptations surrounding national grandeur in the Western Balkans – myths, stakeholders, implications" in the AMJ 3/2021 and proceeds with the analysis of the problems connected with the great or pan-Albanian narrative.

### Kosovo's role in the problems surrounding Greater Albania/Pan-Albania

In 1963, the then autonomous region of Kosovo and Metohija was transformed into an autonomous province of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: "The Albanians and the Hungarians in Yugoslavia, however, were not granted the status of a nation, but only that of a nationality. Accordingly, their main settlement areas, Vojvodina and Kosovo, did not become republics."<sup>1</sup> In 1967, in the course of being renamed Kosovo, their autonomous status became quasi-equal to that of the six Yugoslav republics, which meant extensive self-administration.<sup>2</sup> However, Belgrade deliberately avoided its recognition as a de jure republic, for fear of even greater autonomy and thus rapprochement with Albania. This, in turn, triggered violent demonstrations in Kosovo a year later, because Montenegro had been granted this legal status. During the riots, it was not only the status of a republic that was demanded, but also, for the first time, annexation to Albania.<sup>3</sup>

The protests also spread to the western part of Macedonia. The Albanians living there demanded a unification of their settlement area with Kosovo to form an "Albanian territorial unit in Yugoslavia".<sup>4</sup> The Belgrade leadership could not permanently withstand the political pressure of the Kosovo Albanians and was forced to grant them further concessions and strengthen their autonomy rights.

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<sup>1</sup>"Den Albanern und den Ungarn in Jugoslawien wurde hingegen nicht der Status einer Nation zugestanden, sondern nur der einer Nationalität. Dementsprechend wurden ihre vornehmlichen Siedlungsgebiete, Vojvodina und Kosovo, keine Republiken." Egbert Jahn, "Nie wieder Krieg! Nie wieder Völkermord!" Der Kosovo-Konflikt als europäisches Problem, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/71741887.pdf>, p.5 (25 September 2020).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Carl Polónyi, Heil und Zerstörung. Nationale Mythen und Krieg am Beispiel Jugoslawiens 1980-2004. Berlin 2010, p.105ff.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Oliver Jens Schmitt, Kosovo. Kurze Geschichte einer zentralbalkanischen Landschaft. Wien/Köln/Weimar 2008, p.232.

A short time after Tito's death in 1980, the Albanian question re-entered public awareness for the first time since the end of World War II. Discontent in Kosovo culminated in a student uprising in 1981. This was mainly directed against the poor study conditions and the lack of prospects that the majority of students faced after graduation. After a few weeks, political demands mingled with the protests and calls for a Republic of Kosovo within the Yugoslav Federation or a unification with the Albanian territory grew louder, and the demonstrations found significant support among the majority of the Kosovo Albanian population as well as in the Albanian-populated areas in northern Macedonia.<sup>5</sup> The Yugoslav government strongly condemned the unrest and, in particular, the unification postulates as "counter-revolutionary actions".<sup>6</sup> Tirana gave the Kosovo Albanians only verbal support in their rejection of the Serbian government organs. The mother country itself was struggling with domestic problems. Moreover, massive ideological obstacles continued to exist between Stalinist Albania and "Kosovo infected by revisionism".<sup>7</sup>

With the constitutional amendment of 23 March 1989 and in the context of its domestic political personnel equalisation/"anti-bureaucratic revolution", Belgrade under Slobodan Milošević abolished the extensive autonomy of Kosovo and Vojvodina, which had been in force since 1974, and revised their status to that of the 1963 constitution.<sup>8</sup> However, the increasingly problematic situation in Kosovo attracted little international attention at the beginning of the 1990s and, due to the wars of disintegration in the former Yugoslav republics of Slovenia, Croatia and above all Bosnia-Herzegovina, it was treated as marginal, since the conflict potential had not been considered so urgent until then, despite the fact that the Kosovar President, Ibrahim Rugova,<sup>9</sup> had already warned in a "Spiegel" interview in 1992 against a Serbian military intervention – which Belgrade, of course, had considered as illegal.<sup>10</sup> He then stated programmatically in response to the question of his prognosis of a Serbian approval of an independent Kosovo: "The alternative to this would not be desirable for Serbia – namely a permanent trouble spot within its borders. We would be prepared to declare ourselves a neutral

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Christiane Jaenicke, *Albanien: Ein Länderporträt*. CH.Links Verlag Berlin 2019, p.71.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Julie Mertus, *Kosovo: How Myths and Truths Started a War*, Berkeley. University of California Press 1999, p.34.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Peter Schubert, *Zündstoff im Konfliktfeld des Balkan, Die albanische Frage*, Baden-Baden, 1997, p.27.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Carl Polónyi, l.c., p.118.

<sup>9</sup> In a referendum held from 21-30 September 1991, the Kosovo Albanians voted for independence from Serbia with a majority of 99.98%. The approximately 10% Serb residents, however, boycotted the vote unanimously. Ibrahim Rugova was elected president on 24 May 1992.

<sup>10</sup> At this time, the question of military intervention was also raised in peace research. An example of this is: Dieter Senghaas, *Weltinnenpolitik-Ansätze für ein Konzept*, in: *Europa- Archiv 1992 Folge 22*, p.650/651: "If a policy, for whatever reason (civil war, economic policy with catastrophic consequences, racism), deliberately or as a consequence drives people away so that they have to seek protection and help elsewhere if they want to survive, intervention is called for [...] There is therefore a legitimate interest and also a right to stop such causes. If, for example, Serbian policy in Kosovo should soon lead to Kosovo Albanians fleeing their country as a result of "ethnic cleansing", possibly even threatening a war between Albania and Serbia, this is a case of this second category." [„Wenn eine Politik, gleich aus welchen Gründen (Bürgerkrieg, Wirtschaftspolitik mit katastrophalen Folgen, Rassismus), gezielt oder in der Konsequenz Menschen vertreibt, so daß diese, wollen sie überleben, Schutz und Hilfe andernorts suchen müssen, ist Intervention geboten [...] Es besteht daher ein legitimes Interesse und auch ein Recht, solche Ursachen abzustellen. Sollte beispielsweise demnächst serbische Politik im Kosovo dazu führen, daß die Kosovo-Albaner als Ergebnis „ethnischer Säuberung“ ihr Land fluchtartig verlassen, möglicherweise sogar eine kriegerische Auseinandersetzung zwischen Albanien und Serbien droht, handelt es sich um einen Fall dieser zweiten Kategorie.“]

state and not enter into a union with Albania for the time being. However, annexation to Albania is, admittedly, our natural goal."<sup>11</sup>

At this point, the extensive journalistic<sup>12</sup> and academic discourse<sup>13</sup> of the violent conflict dynamics in Kosovo up to the final international military deployment cannot be reflected here. *Nota bene*: "The violent resolution of this conflict by military means was a civil war. Neither the Belgrade leadership nor any other government would understand and judge this violent final phase of the Kosovo conflict as a civil war. Only the strategy and tactics of the UÇK indicate that its leadership consistently adhered to the principles of a civil war."<sup>14</sup> This was how the German General Heinz Loquai judged the situation as a military advisor to the OSCE in Vienna from 1995-1999.

Nevertheless, a few key points of the historical genesis of the conflict are outlined below: The Bosnian War made brought home to Kosovo Albanians the consequences of a potential violent Serb escalation for their ethnic group. Previous multiple, merely latent discriminations, such as exclusion from access to state offices, now progressively gave way to open Serbian suppression. President Ibrahim Rugova nevertheless continued to pursue his course of passive civil resistance. On the ladder of conflict escalation developed as a standard of orientation by Friedrich Glasl<sup>15</sup> the Serbian authorities and the Kosovo Albanian society meandered within the first five stages.

However, this changed in the context of the Dayton Agreement (signed in Paris on 14 December 1995). With this agreement, the West accepted the implicit division of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the "Republika Srpska", inhabited by Serbs, thus approvingly accepting the de facto status created by force

<sup>11</sup> "Die Alternative dazu wäre für Serbien nicht erstrebenswert - nämlich ein permanenter Krisenherd innerhalb seiner Grenzen. Wir wären bereit, uns zum neutralen Staat zu erklären und vorerst keine Vereinigung mit Albanien einzugehen. Allerdings ist der Anschluss an Albanien, zugegebenermaßen, unser natürliches Ziel." Da spielen wir nicht mit, <https://magazin.spiegel.de/EpubDelivery/spiegel/pdf/13681757> (25 September 2020).

<sup>12</sup> As an example: Heinz Loquai, *Der Kosovo-Konflikt-Wege in einen vermeidbaren Krieg*, Baden-Baden 2000; Ulrich Albrecht/Paul Schäfer (ed.) *Der Kosovo-Krieg*, Köln 1999; Erich Rathfelder: *Kosovo. Geschichte eines Konflikts*. Suhrkamp Verlag, Berlin 2011; Cathrin Schütz: *Die NATO-Intervention in Jugoslawien. Hintergründe, Nebenwirkungen und Folgen*. Wilhelm Braumüller Universitäts- und Verlagsbuchhandlung, 2003.

<sup>13</sup> The academic research literature on the escalation of violence in the Kosovo War in the following links was reviewed from 1-10 December 2020. It is cited here as an example of the scope. Cf. Johannes Rüger/ David Schmid, *Der Kosovo-Konflikt*, [file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/Dossier\\_Kosovo%20\(5\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/Dossier_Kosovo%20(5).pdf); Silvia Tzenova, Diplomarbeit, *Das Konfliktmanagement der EU am Beispiel des Kosovo-Konflikts 1998-1999*, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/11583563.pdf>; Wieland Schneider, Diplomarbeit, *Kosovo/Kosova in der albanisch-serbischen und der internationalen Auseinandersetzung*, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/11582315.pdf>; Rasmus Tenbergen, Dissertation, *Der Kosovo-Krieg - eine gerechte Intervention?* [http://publications.rwth-aachen.de/record/56111/files/Tenbergen\\_Rasmus.pdf](http://publications.rwth-aachen.de/record/56111/files/Tenbergen_Rasmus.pdf); Ognian Popov, Diplomarbeit, *Der Kosovo-Krieg und seine internationale Dimension*, <http://othes.univie.ac.at/248/1/SammelmappePopov.pdf>; Mustafa Berat Keskin, Masterarbeit, *Die Rolle der internationalen Organisationen im Kosovo-Konflikt*, [http://othes.univie.ac.at/30437/1/2013-10-29\\_0606787.pdf](http://othes.univie.ac.at/30437/1/2013-10-29_0606787.pdf); Gisela Reicherter, Dissertation, *Rechtsgrundlagen der humanitären Intervention unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Kosovo-Konflikts*, <https://athene-forschung.unibw.de/doc/85359/85359.pdf>; Kurt Gritsch: *Krieg um Kosovo. Geschichte, Hintergründe, Folgen*. Innsbruck University Press, Innsbruck 2016.

<sup>14</sup> "Die gewaltsame Austragung dieses Konflikts mit militärischen Mitteln war ein Bürgerkrieg. Weder von der Belgrader Führung noch von irgendeiner anderen Regierung würde diese gewaltsame Endphase des Kosovokonflikts als Bürgerkrieg begriffen und beurteilt. Lediglich Strategie und Taktiken der UCK lassen erkennen, dass sich deren Führung konsequent an die Prinzipien eines Bürgerkrieges hielt." [English translation by AAF Language Institute] Heinz Loquai, l.c. p.21.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Friedrich Glasl, *Konfliktmanagement*, [https://www.hsfk.de/fileadmin/HSFK/hsfk\\_downloads/Glasl\\_fertig.PDF](https://www.hsfk.de/fileadmin/HSFK/hsfk_downloads/Glasl_fertig.PDF) S. 127/128, (10 December 2020).



during the war, including ethnic cleansing.<sup>16</sup> The Dayton Agreement itself did not mention a settlement regarding Kosovo and left the Kosovo conflict as an internal affair of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Thus, the West had at least indicated a "carte blanche" to Milošević for the implementation of his ideas regarding a settlement in Kosovo. The question why the Kosovo crisis was excluded as a subject of negotiation in Dayton remains open. Either it was simply the time factor or the West feared that Milošević would not agree to Western interference in the Kosovo conflict, which would have jeopardised the entire treaty.<sup>17</sup>

Dayton was now perceived, especially among the young Kosovan generation, as a "point of no return" for the restitution of the constitutional autonomy of 1989, triggering a process of radicalisation. Rugova's moderate political course was from then on derided as a dead end by these protagonists of violence. "An autonomy solution was no longer enough; independence from Serbia was demanded. The UÇK, which in 1996 and 1997 was not much more than a bunch of armed gangs that rivalled each other along clan lines, became an organised and financially supported gathering point for young Kosovars ready to use violence."<sup>18</sup>

The potential Serbian, even military, intervention in Kosovo in 1992 has already been mentioned above. US President H.W. Bush threatened President Slobodan Milošević with military force in a letter, the so-called "Christmas Warning of 1992" to, for just such a case.<sup>19</sup> Literature does not indicate that this clear written stop sign was known in Albania or Kosovo. The foundation of the UÇK can be dated to 1994, but according to other sources, it was founded as early as 1992, emerging from various armed groups operating underground.<sup>20</sup> Targeted assassination attempts against Serbian police officers and local suspected collaborators were first carried out in 1996. Thus, there was obviously no coincidence of President Bush's warning call and the Kosovo-Albanian armed struggle. In addition, after US Special Envoy Robert S. Gelbhard's meeting with Milošević in Belgrade on 23 February 1998, the US diplomat

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<sup>16</sup> Cf., Fabian Schmidt, Opinion: 10 Years After Dayton, an Unfair Peace, <https://www.dw.com/en/opinion-10-years-after-dayton-an-unfair-peace/a-1784907> (10 December 2020).

<sup>17</sup> Christoph Rohloff, Krieg im Namen der Menschenrechte? Eine Bestandsaufnahme nach der NATO-Intervention im Kosovo, <https://www.uni-due.de/imperia/md/content/inef/report38.pdf> p.14/15. (10 December 2020).

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Jochen Hils, Goodbye Leadership. Die Balkanpolitik der USA nach dem 11. September, file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/14501607.pdf ,Fn. 73 S. 442; "In December 1992, then President Bush delivered an unequivocal warning in a letter to President Milosevic that the United States was prepared to intervene militarily if Serbia attacked the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. President Clinton repeated this so-called Christmas warning after he took office in 1993." Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate, May 6, 1998 <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-105shrg49265/html/CHRG-105shrg49265.htm> , Absatz 11 (11 December 2020).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Klaus Lange, Die UCK- Anmerkung zu Geschichte, Struktur und Zielen, In: Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte 34/1999, p. 33-39; Christian Christians, Die UCK und der geheimdienstliche Hintergrund des Krieges, <http://www.kiezdoc.de/DieUCKgeheimdienstlich.htm> (11 December 2020).

revealed that "the US rejected unilateral changes to internationally recognised borders, described the UÇK as a terrorist organisation and the actions of Serbian security forces as police violence".<sup>21</sup>

According to OSCE estimates, the UÇK controlled about 30-40% of Kosovar territory towards the end of June 1998. It is against this background that the USA's radical change of sides must probably be interpreted, when the US special envoy and architect of the Dayton Agreement, Richard Holbrooke, met with armed UÇK fighters on 14 June 1998, which was well-covered by the media. "Three months after a high representative of the American government had still dubbed the UÇK as terrorists, it was a recognised interlocutor on the international stage."<sup>22</sup>

All further steps in the conflict escalation model according to Friedrich Glasl (footnote 15) up to the internationalised military conflict commonly referred to as the Kosovo War will not be traced here, because they do not correlate with the theme of the strive for an Albanian unitary state and the role of the EU in the Western Balkans. However, the dynamics of development are evident from the literature listed in footnotes 12 and 13.

UN Security Council Resolution 1244<sup>23</sup> of 10 June 1999 officially ended the Kosovo War. The then Serbian province was subsequently restructured on 25 July 1999 into an international special administration, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo/UNMIK. However, Resolution 1244 does not explicitly formulate the final status under international law. On the one hand, it emphasises the territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/FRY, but only in the preamble and not in the legally binding operative part. On the other hand, Kosovo is granted the right of autonomy and self-government.<sup>24</sup> With the establishment of UNMIK, the sovereignty of the FRY over Kosovo was de facto abolished at that time.<sup>25</sup>

## The Vetëvendosje Party

The civic initiative Lëvizja Vetëvendosje/Movement for Self-Determination emerged from a protest movement of the Kosovo Action Network against foreign rule by the UNMIK administration, which was mainly supported by young intellectual Kosovo Albanians. In 2004, it was also founded as a party

<sup>21</sup> "Die USA lehnten einseitig vorgenommene Veränderungen international anerkannter Grenzen ab, die UÇK bezeichnete er als terroristische Organisation und das Vorgehen der serbischen Sicherheitskräfte als Polizeigewalt" Heinz Loquai, I.c., p.23. Siehe dazu auch die Aussage von Botschafter Gelbard auf der Pressekonferenz am 22.2.1998 in Pristina: „At the same time, we also condemn the attacks against the police and others by the group that calls itself the UCK [Kosovo Liberation Army]. As I have said before, I consider these to be terrorists actions, and it is the strong and firm policy of the United States to fully oppose all terrorists actions and all terrorists organizations." [https://1997-2001.state.gov/policy\\_remarks/1998/980222\\_gelbard\\_pristina.html](https://1997-2001.state.gov/policy_remarks/1998/980222_gelbard_pristina.html) (11 December 2020).

<sup>22</sup> "Drei Monate, nachdem ein hoher Repräsentant der amerikanischen Regierung die UÇK noch als Terroristen titulierte hatte, war sie anerkannter Gesprächspartner auf der internationalen Bühne." Heinz Loquai, I.c., p.28.

<sup>23</sup> United Nations Resolution 1244, <https://unmik.unmissions.org/united-nations-resolution-1244> (25 September 2020).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 11a: "Promoting the establishment, pending a final settlement, of substantial autonomy and self-government in Kosovo, taking full account of annex 2 and of the Rambouillet accords (S/1999/648)".

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Valbona Myteveli, Nationale Identität im Wandel. Erscheinungsformen des albanischen Nationalismus (Albanische Forschungen, Band 40). Wiesbaden 2018, p.185.

bearing the same name. It continued to gain support from young citizens who were convinced by the party's clear course against the corrupt political and economic elites and the sovereignty-restricting international presence. The ideological left-national/nationalist profile looks like an idiosyncratic mixture of the parties Lega Nord, Syriza, Podemos, and the Greens in Germany in their early phase. The major co-founder is Albin Kurti<sup>26</sup>, mastermind and ringleader of conflict-ready street protesters who attacked the Kosovan parliament with tear gas in 2015.

In literature as well as in the ongoing political debate, his earlier actionist activities are often held against him and, above all, his Albanian unification statements from past years, also with a view to shaping the present. However, with time and through multiple contacts with international interlocutors, Albin Kurti is no longer the rebellious political actionist. His tone has also become more moderate. Nevertheless, he remains true to his principles with regard to the so-called Albanian question. The three statements below, made over a period of several years, exemplify this. In the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung"/NZZ of 9 October 2010 he says: "Firstly, we do not use the term Greater Albania; we speak of a unification of Kosovo and Albania. And secondly, we demand this only as a right, as every sovereign state is entitled to. If France and Germany want to unite, no one can stop them – two referendums and the matter is settled. Why should Kosovo not have the same right? We are against constitutional article 1.3, which states that Kosovo shall not unite with any other state. This reminds me of Brezhnev's concept of the limited sovereignty of socialist states."<sup>27</sup> In an interview from 2017, he is cited as follows: "A unification of Albania and Kosovo does not come about through a decision by the prime minister, but through the will of the people. (...) In any case, I advocate that a unification with Albania should only take place in a democratic, constitutional and peaceful manner. We will not risk any conflicts for this goal."<sup>28</sup> Two years later, he says: "I respect and love the Kosovar state, but our language, culture and history is Albanian, which means that we are one nation with two states. (...) Our constitution forbids us to join another state. This contradicts another provision of the same constitution, which defines Kosovo as a sovereign state. That is why we would like to have the

<sup>26</sup> Der Unruhestifter, <https://datum.at/der-unruhestifter/>, (25 September 2020); Albin Kurti, Wikipedia, [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albin\\_Kurti](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albin_Kurti), (25 September 2020).

<sup>27</sup> "Erstens benutzen wir nicht den Begriff Großalbanien; wir sprechen von einer Vereinigung von Kosovo und Albanien. Und zweitens fordern wir dies nur als ein Recht, wie es jedem souveränen Staat zusteht. Wenn Frankreich und Deutschland sich vereinigen wollen, kann sie niemand daran hindern - zwei Referenden, und die Sache ist erledigt. Warum soll Kosovo nicht dasselbe Recht haben? Wir sind gegen den Verfassungsartikel 1.3, der festhält, dass Kosovo sich nicht mit einem anderen Staat vereinigen soll. Das erinnert mich an Breschnews Konzept der beschränkten Souveränität sozialistischer Staaten." Quote in: Ernst Köhler, Zeichen der Zeit - Kosovo 2010, <http://www.guenterposch.de/koehleraufsatz-11.html> (12 February 2021), the shortened quote also in Paul Lendvai, Riskante Wachablöse im Kosovo, <https://www.derstandard.de/story/2000109598474/riskante-wachabloese-im-kosovo> (25 September 2020). Beispielhaft ebenfalls Wolf Oschlies, Albin Kurti: Mit wohlbekannten Methoden auf dem Weg nach Groß-Albanien, <https://www.eurasischesmagazin.de/artikel/Albin-Kurti-Mit-wohlbekannten-Methoden-auf-dem-Weg-nach-Grosz-Albanien/20060705>, (25 September 2020).

<sup>28</sup> "Eine Vereinigung von Albanien und Kosovo entsteht nicht durch eine Entscheidung des Ministerpräsidenten, sondern durch den Willen des Volkes.(...) Ich plädiere jedenfalls dafür, dass eine Vereinigung mit Albanien nur auf demokratische, verfassungsmäßige und friedliche Weise erfolgt. Wir werden für dieses Ziel keine Konflikte riskieren." Keno Verseck, Albin Kurti: „Niemand muss uns fürchten“, <http://www.keno-verseck.de/albin-kurti-niemand-muss-uns-fuerchten/> (25 September 2020).

right to hold such a referendum. But we will not start another Balkan War over it. We want to achieve this in a peaceful, democratic and constitutional way."<sup>29</sup>

From February to June 2020, Albin Kurti served as Prime Minister of Kosovo in a coalition of his left-wing democratic party Vetëvendosje with the centre-right LDK party and two Serbian parties with direct links to Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić. However, the LDK quickly toppled him with a motion of no confidence. On the surface, it was about the LDK interior minister declaring a state of emergency because of the Corona crisis. However, there are indications that the real reason was Kurti's refusal to sign the 'peace agreement' with Serbia favoured by the USA while Donald Trump was still in office.<sup>30</sup> He emerged even stronger from the new elections on 14 February 2021. 67 out of 120 MPs voted for his re-election as Kosovo's prime minister on 22 March. "Kurti's government is based on the 58 representatives of his party Vetëvendosje (Self-Determination) as well as representatives of the non-Serb ethnic lists, among them Bosniaks, Turks and Roma. (...) The post of Minister for Communities and Returnees is held by Goran Rakić, an ethnic Serb."<sup>31</sup> So much for the continuous accusations against him of wanting to marginalise the ethnic minorities in Kosovo.

## Greater Albania in the intellectual discourse of the 1990s and 2000s

Now who are the exemplary and authoritative intellectual triggers, supporters and drivers of the conceptual considerations, positions and postulates of the Greater Albanian/pan-Albanian narrative? Narratives are established, often traditional, and meaningful stories with accompanying mediation of values and emotions for orientation, cohesion and legitimation.<sup>32</sup> It is not surprising that they are also part of the essence of politics in pre- and semi-democratic societies as well as in autocratic contexts. With them, political actors influence the form, content and development of political processes.<sup>33</sup> "In telling the story of our becoming, as an individual, a nation, a people, we establish who we are.

<sup>29</sup> "Ich achte und liebe den kosovarischen Staat, aber unsere Sprache, Kultur und Geschichte ist nun einmal albanisch, was bedeutet, dass wir eine Nation mit zwei Staaten sind. (...) Unsere Verfassung verbietet uns den Anschluss an einen anderen Staat. Das steht im Widerspruch zu einer anderen Bestimmung derselben Verfassung, in welcher das Kosovo als souveräner Staat definiert wird. Deswegen hätten wir gerne das Recht auf ein solches Referendum. Aber wir werden nicht einen weiteren Balkankrieg deswegen beginnen. Wir wollen das auf friedliche, demokratische und verfassungsgemäße Weise erreichen." Michael Martens, "Wir sind eine Nation mit zwei Staaten" [https://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/ausland/wahl-im-kosovo-albin-kurti-ueber-eine-nation-mit-zwei-staaten-16420796.html?printPagedArticle=true#pageIndex\\_2](https://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/ausland/wahl-im-kosovo-albin-kurti-ueber-eine-nation-mit-zwei-staaten-16420796.html?printPagedArticle=true#pageIndex_2) (25 September 2020).

<sup>30</sup> Kosovos Regierung durch Misstrauensantrag gestürzt, <https://www.dw.com/de/richter-stoppen-regierungsbildung-im-kosovo/a-53310120> (12 February 2021).

<sup>31</sup> "Kurtis Regierung stützt sich auf die 58 Mandatare seiner Partei Vetëvendosje (Selbstbestimmung) sowie auf Vertreter der nicht-serbischen ethnischen Listen, unter ihnen Bosniaken, Türken und Roma. (...) Das Amt des Ministers für Kommunen und Rückkehrer bekleidet mit Goran Rakić ein ethnischer Serbe." Kosovos Parlament bestätigt linke Reformregierung von Kurti, <https://www.derstandard.de/story/2000125270422/kosovos-parlament-bestaetigt-linke-reformregierung-von-kurti> (23 February 2021).

<sup>32</sup> Beispielhaft: Wolfgang Seibel, Hegemoniale Semantiken und radikale Gegennarrative, <https://www.exc16.uni-konstanz.de/fileadmin/all/downloads/veranstaltungen2009/Seibel-Heg-Semantiken-090122.pdf> (25 November 2020).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Phillip Hammak/Andre Pilecki, Narrative as a Root of Metaphor for Political Psychology, <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.924.3525&rep=rep1&type=pdf> (25 September 2020).



Narratives may be employed strategically to strengthen a collective identity but they also may precede and make possible the development of a coherent community, nation, or collective actor."<sup>34</sup>

After the unilateral declaration of independence by the Kosovar parliament, fears grew again about a potential prelude to a future unification/affiliation with Albania constitution the first stage of a "Greater Albania". However, the fact that the Kosovar constitution already prominently prohibits unification with another state in the first article, paragraph 3,<sup>35</sup> was often simply ignored. The historian of Southeast Europe, Oliver Jens Schmitt, consequently advises more tranquillity: "Although numerous maps of a Greater Albania are circulating on the internet, to my knowledge no one has yet presented a draft of how this state would be structured and where its political centre would lie."<sup>36</sup>

In the academic field, the sources point to the renowned Kosovar Albanian literary and cultural scholar Rexhep Qosja, with his plea for the formation of an Albanian state that would encompass all Albanian settlement areas, as a pioneer and visionary caller (albeit in the desert).<sup>37</sup> In his manifesto-like publication of 1992, he argues for a necessary historical restitution of justice. The Albanian people were treated unjustly in 1878 and 1912/13. However, he does not take into account that, historically, a unified all-Albanian state or an old Albanian empire did not exist.

His words were preceded by deeds. "In November 1991, together with Ismail Kadare, the most prominent Albanian writer, he initiated the movement of "reconciliation and all-national unification" (Pajtim dhe bashkim mbarëkombëtar), which was to lead to an "All-Albanian People's Convention" (Kuvend mbarëkombëtar) to solve the Albanian question. (...) The task of this body was to be the sanctioning of a single programme for the unification of the whole Albanian nation within the framework of a large Albanian state as a stabilising factor in the Balkans. This initiative dried up in its beginnings already. It was an attempt at a new start under a national-patriotic sign, which included mutual tolerance and reconciliation. Even the term "reconciliation", not adequately defined by the authors, was negatively connoted by specific social and political tensions that were virulent at the time, following the collapse of the old structures."<sup>38</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Francesca Polletta, *Contending Stories: Narrative in Social Movements*, Qualitative Sociology, Vol. 21, No. 4, 1998 [http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~polletta/Articles%20and%20Book%20Chapters\\_files/1998%20contending%20stories,%20qualitative%20sociology.pdf](http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~polletta/Articles%20and%20Book%20Chapters_files/1998%20contending%20stories,%20qualitative%20sociology.pdf), p.422 (25 September 2020).

<sup>35</sup> "The Republic of Kosovo shall have no territorial claims against, and shall seek no union with, any State or part of any State." [https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/1182051/1504\\_1261396269\\_constitution.pdf](https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/1182051/1504_1261396269_constitution.pdf) (25 September 2020).

<sup>36</sup> "Zwar sind zahlreiche Karten eines Groß-Albanien im Internet im Umlauf, doch hat bislang m. W. noch niemand einen Entwurf vorgelegt, wie dieser Staat aufgebaut sein würde und wo sein politisches Zentrum zu liegen käme." Oliver Jens Schmitt, l.c., p.369.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Rexhep Qosja, *Strategjia e Bashkimit Kombëtar* (Strategie der nationalen Vereinigung). Prishtina 1992.

<sup>38</sup> "Gemeinsam mit Ismail Kadare, dem prominentesten albanischen Schriftsteller, initiierte er im November 1991 die Bewegung der „Ausöhnung und der gesamtationalen Vereinigung“ (Pajtim dhe bashkim mbarëkombëtar), die in einen „Gesamtalbanischen Volkskonvent“ (Kuvend mbarëkombëtar) zur Lösung der albanischen Frage münden sollte. (...) Aufgabe des Gremiums sollte die Sanktionierung eines einheitlichen Programms zum Zusammenschluss der ganzen albanischen Nation im Rahmen eines großen albanischen Staates als stabilisierender Faktor auf dem Balkan sein. Diese Initiative blieb bereits in den Anfängen stecken. Es war der Versuch eines Neubeginns unter national-patriotischem Vorzeichen, der gegenseitige Toleranz und Versöhnung einschloss. Schon der Begriff

Qosja, as a supporter of a "Greater Albania", naturally did not agree at all with Sali Berisha's political order of silence after the international pressure (cf. his elaborations in the first part of our series, in the chapter titled "Tirana meanders around the all-Albanian question...the conservatives"). In a public letter addressed to him he says: "Albania has never accepted its existing borders and has always tried to remind international circles that these borders are unjust, dividing the Albanian land into two. They are borders that go through the very heart of the Albanian people".<sup>39</sup> In the spring of 1993, Sali Berisha replied to him in an open letter, in which he emphasised that "Albania must adhere unreservedly to the Helsinki Final Act, which rules out any change in borders by force. The rejection of any form of violence or terrorism to achieve political goals was particularly important, because only in this way could an Albanian as well as a Balkan tragedy be avoided."<sup>40</sup>

The Berisha-Qosja controversy highlighted the demarcated fronts between the intellectual circles with their visions and the politicians from Kosovo and Albania with their limitations to act. At that time, an overly strong propagation of "Greater Albanian" ambitions on the part of Albania, with a view to Kosovo had been associated with a considerable risk of conflict with the militarily superior Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the likelihood of a spill-over effect in the region, which the international community of states resolutely wanted to prevent in the light of the Yugoslav civil war, lest the entire Western Balkans sink into violence and chaos.<sup>41</sup> This scenario played out in Albania in 1997/98 after all. Civil war-like unrest (lottery uprising)<sup>42</sup> had brought the state into a serious crisis. Due to massive European/international financial aid, the state was de facto under the administration of its international donors. It was no longer possible to think of a stronger positioning in the Kosovo problem against the European or US line of enforcing a peaceful solution in Kosovo as a realistic option.<sup>43</sup>

Intellectuals like Qosja also ignored the political realities: Albanians and Kosovo Albanians had gone through a completely different development within two different political systems. The Albanians were oppressed during the Hoxha regime and eked out an existence in abject poverty, which continued even after the dictatorship. Their compatriots socialised in Kosovo under socialist Yugoslavia, enjoyed freedom of movement, often used for labour emigration, and resisted political oppression from the Serbian government. Greater Albanian slogans in this context therefore met with moderate approval

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„Aussöhnung“, von den Autoren nicht hinreichend definiert, war durch spezifische, damals virulente soziale und politische Spannungen nach dem Zusammenbruch der alten Strukturen negativ belegt.“ Peter Schubert, *Zündstoff im Konfliktfeld des Balkan*, I.c., p.35/36.

<sup>39</sup> Albanian-American newspaper *Illyria*, 3 February 1993, p.5.

<sup>40</sup> „Albanien habe sich vorbehaltlos an die Schlussakte von Helsinki zu halten, die gewaltsame Grenzänderungen ausschließe. Die Absage an jede Form von Gewalt oder Terrorismus zur Erreichung politischer Ziele sei besonders wichtig, weil nur so eine albanische wie auch eine Balkantragödie vermieden werden könne.“ Jens Reuter, *Der Traum vom Grossalbanien*, <https://folio.nzz.ch/1999/juni/der-traum-vom-grossalbanien> (25 September 2020).

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Peter Schubert, I.c., p.41.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Hans Krech (ed.) *Der Bürgerkrieg in Albanien 1997*, Berlin 2000.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Valbona Myteveli, I.c., p.180.

in the Albanian motherland.<sup>44</sup> The collapse of Albanian communist dictatorship delegitimised state institutions that had been propagating an overarching Albanian national consciousness and were now regarded with rejection and scepticism by the population.<sup>45</sup>

The "Greater Albanian" or "Pan-Albanian" baton has now been held by the Tiranian philosopher Koco Danaj for some years,<sup>46</sup> but without a significant number of followers. A potential trigger, however, could be the Albanian perception of EU membership talks as powerless and slow. There are also mediating voices in the national-patriotic Kosovar-Albanian spectrum, such as that of Adem Demaçi.<sup>47</sup> During the Kosovo war, he was the political spokesman for the Kosovo Liberation Army/UÇK and resigned from this position in protest over the peace plan of the international contact group in Rambouillet, which did not envisage statehood for Kosovo. After the war, he became involved in ethnic reconciliation.

### Pan-Albanian dreams in Southern Serbia....

One year after the Kosovo Albanians, the Albanian inhabitants of the Preševo Valley (southern Serbia)<sup>48</sup> also held an unofficial referendum in 1992, articulating their desire to secede from Serbia and join Kosovo.<sup>49</sup> The Albanians often refer to the Preševo Valley as "East Kosovo".<sup>50</sup> Intellectual circles provided propaganda support. The Preševo Valley formed an important part of their programmatic ideological-political "Greater Albania" concept. After the independence of the respective Albanian-populated areas, a United Albania would comprise the following territories: Kosovo, the Preševo Valley, the Albanian-populated areas in Montenegro (Rožaje, Plav, Gusinje, Ulcinj, and Tuzi). An upgrading of the Albanians living in Northern Macedonia<sup>51</sup> to a people supportive of the state as an intermediate step to a later separation from this Northern Macedonian state would be the consequence.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Ulrich Ladurner, Hallo Nachbar, [https://www.zeit.de/2000/14/200014.grossalbanien\\_.xml/komplettansicht](https://www.zeit.de/2000/14/200014.grossalbanien_.xml/komplettansicht) (25 September 2020); Valbona Myteveli, l.c., p.178.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Peter Schubert, l.c., p.60.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Das Projekt Großalbanien, <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/sport/sportpolitik/hintergrund-der-skandalflagge-das-projekt-grossalbanien-13209960.html>, (25 September 2020); Steffen Honig, Sehnsucht nach Großalbanien, [https://www.volksstimme.de/nachrichten/deutschland\\_und\\_welt/meinung\\_und\\_debatte/558352\\_Sehnsucht-nach-Grossalbanien.html](https://www.volksstimme.de/nachrichten/deutschland_und_welt/meinung_und_debatte/558352_Sehnsucht-nach-Grossalbanien.html), (25 September 2020).

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Adem Demaçi - 1991, Kosovo, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/sakharovprize/de/adem-demaci-1991-kosovo/products-details/20200330CAN54166>, (25 September 2020).

<sup>48</sup> The towns Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa are situated in the Preševo Valley.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Dušan Janjić, Challenges of the Peace Process in the South of Serbia, [https://www.bundesheer.at/pdf\\_pool/publikationen/10\\_wg\\_intpeaceplan\\_60.pdf](https://www.bundesheer.at/pdf_pool/publikationen/10_wg_intpeaceplan_60.pdf) p.58. (25 September 2020). Zur Vertiefung der Preševo-Problematik vgl. Beata Huszka, The Preševo Valley of Southern Serbia alongside Kosovo - The Case for Decentralisation and Minority Protection. In: Centre for European Policy Studies - Policy brief, 2007, No. 120; International Crisis Group/ICG). Peace in Preševo. Quick Fix or Long Term Solution ? In: ICG Balkans Report 2001, No. 116; ICG, Serbia - Maintaining Peace in the Preševo Valley. In Europe Report 2007, No.186.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Nikolaos Arvanitis, Balkanski čvor /Balkanischer Knoten Belgrad ANDA 2002, p.59.

A self-named "Liberation Army of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđa /UÇMPB – Ushtria Çlirimtare e Preshevës, Medvegjës dhe Bujanocit" –, a successor organisation to the UÇK in Kosovo<sup>53</sup> composed of radical nationalist Albanians – provoked riot-like unrest in June 2000 in the southern Serbian towns of Preševo, Bujanovac, and Medveđa with an Albanian majority or a significant Albanian share of the population.<sup>54</sup> In analogy to the armed guerrillas in neighbouring Kosovo a year earlier, the UÇMPB in the Preševo Valley tried to lure the Serbian side into the trap of a highly repressive, disproportionate counter-reaction by targeting Serbian state organs.<sup>55</sup> The rebels' calculation was to force NATO's entry into the conflict in their favour and to use violence to push for the separation of the Preševo Valley from the Serbian State and its subsequent annexation to Kosovo.

In order to avoid an escalation of the conflict and not jeopardise the development of new positive relations with Serbia, NATO and the international community distanced themselves from new border demarcations and agreed with Belgrade that the Serbian army could advance into the demilitarised zone established after the end of the Kosovo War between Serbian army units and the KFOR forces along the border with Kosovo. The Albanian uprising was put down by the Serbian military.<sup>56</sup> The fact that NATO's assessment of the conflict and its actors turned out to be different from what the Albanian extremists had calculated was due to various reasons: Their actions could not be declared – as in neighbouring Kosovo – as a fight for human and minority rights. Moreover, the illegal sphere of power established by the UÇK was to be expanded across borders, first in southern Serbia and, a little later, in northern Macedonia so a "Greater Kosovo" rather than a "Greater Albania" would have emerged as the long-term goal.<sup>57</sup> The resignation of Serbian President Slobodan Milošević on 5 October 2000 considerably reduced international attention to the Albanian question.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> On the history of the UÇK cf. Heinz Loquai, Heinz, *Der Kosovo-Konflikt - Wege in einen vermeidbaren Krieg*, Baden-Baden 2000, p.21-44; Wieland Schneider, „Kosovo/Kosova in der albanisch-serbischen und der internationalen Auseinandersetzung“, Diplomarbeit, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/11582315.pdf>, p.54-65. (25 September 2020).

<sup>54</sup> Oliver Jens Schmitt, l.c. p.,343.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Dušan Janjić, l.c., p..60.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. ICG-Balkans Report 2001, p.17.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Wolf Oschlies, *Süd-Serbiens Presevo-Tal, interethnischer Brennpunkt oder regionales Befriedigungsmodell?* SWP-Studie S.27, Berlin September 2001, p.7.

<sup>58</sup> From 21 November 2011 to 20 January 2012, a recent ethno-political conflict occurred in the city of Preševo. The subject of dispute was the erection of a questionable monument in honour of the fallen soldiers of the UÇMPB, which was removed by Serbian security forces on 20 January. The monument, provocative for Serbia, was intended to once again draw international attention to the status of the Albanian minority in southern Serbia.



## ... and in Macedonia<sup>59</sup>

With the armed attack by the Macedonian offshoot of the Kosovo-Albanian paramilitary organisation UÇK ("itinerant guerrillas")<sup>60</sup> on a police station in the municipality of Tearce in January 2001, a violent conflict began that lasted until the summer, with focal points in and around the towns of Tetovo and Kumanovo. This is the main settlement area of the Albanian minority<sup>61</sup>, directly on the border with Kosovo. The Albanian extremists were not always unanimous about their goals: A minority favoured far-reaching self-determination, while the majority wanted the Albanian-populated areas to break away and join Kosovo.<sup>62</sup> Under the pressure from the USA, the EU, and the OSCE, the conflict was settled with the Ohrid Framework Agreement on 13 August 2001 by means of a "power sharing". In particular, the decentralisation of administrations, the redefinition of municipalities, and Albanian as the lingua franca in the administration were agreed upon.<sup>63</sup>

A year later, the compromise, which had been reached with great difficulty, was challenged once again when the Armata Kombëtare Shqiptare/Albanian National Army, a kind of splinter group of the UÇK in northern Macedonia, appeared in public in 2002 with a lot of publicity and demanded the unification of all Albanian-populated territories into an Albanian state.<sup>64</sup> The lack of credibility and acceptance among the Albanian population in Macedonia, however, quickly made it sink to insignificance. It should be noted that the Kosovar UÇK and its Northern Macedonian counterpart gained popularity and support as soon as they distanced themselves from the idea of a "Greater Albania" and instead demanded the independence of Kosovo or a constitutional upgrading of the Albanians living in Macedonia.<sup>65</sup>

## Territorial exchange

After the secession of Montenegro, Serbia drafted a new constitution in 2006, in whose preamble the "province of Kosovo and Metohija as an integral part of the Serbian state territory"<sup>66</sup> is considered a binding normative constitutional principle. The ongoing Serbian-Kosovar conflict cannot get out of its continuous loop, despite a normalisation process supported by Brussels. This has given way to

<sup>59</sup> Name change in Northern Macedonia in February 2019. For more in-depth discussion of the issue cf. Pan-Albanianism. How Big a Threat to Balkan Stability? In: ICG Europe Report 2004, No 153, p.7-10 and p.17-19; Stephan Hensell, Modernisierung und Gewalt in Mazedonien, <https://www.wiso.uni-hamburg.de/fachbereich-sowi/professuren/jakobeit/forschung/akuf/archiv/arbeitspapiere/mazedonien-hensell-2002.pdf> (25 September 2020); Ulrich Büchsenschütz, Die Mazedonien-Krise. Bonn 2002; Alice Ackermann, Auf des Messers Schneide - Mazedonien zehn Jahre nach der Unabhängigkeit, <https://ifsh.de/file-CORE/documents/jahrbuch/01/Ackermann.pdf> (25 September 2020).

<sup>60</sup> Peter Schubert, Der albanische Faktor nach dem Kosovo-Krieg, in: WeltTrends Nr. 32/ 2001, p.41.

<sup>61</sup> According to official Macedonian numbers from 2002: 25.2%. The Albanians there estimate their ethnic group as larger.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Stefan Troebst, „Groß-Kosovo!“ [https://www.bundesheer.at/pdf\\_pool/publikationen/03\\_jb01\\_19\\_tro.pdf](https://www.bundesheer.at/pdf_pool/publikationen/03_jb01_19_tro.pdf) S.78, (25 September 2020).

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Power Sharing and the Implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, [https://web.archive.org/web/20160823161129/http://www.fes.org.mk/pdf/OFA\\_english.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20160823161129/http://www.fes.org.mk/pdf/OFA_english.pdf) (25 September 2020).

<sup>64</sup> Cf. ICG 2004, Europe Report 2004, No 153, p.7-10.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p.10.

<sup>66</sup> "Provinz Kosovo und Metohija als integraler Teil des serbischen Staatsterritoriums" Christoph Hofstätter/ Marko Stanković, Die Verfassung der Republik Serbien, <https://www.nomos-elibrary.de/10.5771/0030-6444-2016-3-272.pdf> (25 September 2020).

alternative solutions. In June 2018, the Center for Euro-Atlantic Studies in Belgrade presented an exchange of territories<sup>67</sup> between Serbia and Kosovo as a proposed solution.<sup>68</sup> The majority Serb-populated areas in the north of Kosovo<sup>69</sup> should be annexed to Serbia in exchange for the Preševo Valley<sup>70</sup>, which is largely inhabited by ethnic Albanians.

A division, and not an exchange of territory, had already been proposed in 1968 by the Serbian intellectual and later president of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Dobrica Ćosić (1992-93).<sup>71</sup> The intention was to establish a peace order in Kosovo. Northern Kosovo, including the Trepča mine complex, i.e. an area of high value, was to be granted to the Serbs. The south-eastern, largely mountainous region would be awarded to the Albanians. The border between the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the People's Republic of Albania was thus to lie between Mitrovica and Priština. However, the plan at that time did not include the Preševo Valley, which already had a distinctly Albanian-dominated population (44.3% in 1961).

The Euro-Atlantic study speaks of a "correction of the administrative line" between Serbia and Kosovo, which should lead to a revitalisation of the stalled normalisation process.<sup>72</sup> Correspondingly, outstanding border disputes between Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Croatia as well as other disagreements that have arisen in the aftermath of the disintegration of the Yugoslav multi-ethnic state are to be resolved on this basis.<sup>73</sup>

Following prior consultation with then EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, and EU Enlargement Commissioner Johannes Hahn, the Presidents of Serbia and Kosovo, Aleksandar Vučić and Hashim Thaçi presented a joint proposal/plan at the European Forum in Alpbach/Austria on 25 August 2018.<sup>74</sup> Further dispute settlement talks between Serbia and Kosovo were agreed on for 7 September 2018. However, the proposal was widely rejected at the Gymnich meeting of EU foreign ministers in Vienna on 30/31 August 2018.<sup>75</sup> By contrast, the Trump

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<sup>67</sup> The term "territorial exchange" is used less by the Serbian side as this term is associated with the recognition of Kosovo as an independent state. Instead, the terms "correction" or "modification" are used.

<sup>68</sup> West Side Story, [https://www.ceas-serbia.org/images/2018/CEAS\\_Study\\_-\\_West\\_Side\\_Story.pdf](https://www.ceas-serbia.org/images/2018/CEAS_Study_-_West_Side_Story.pdf), (25 September 2020).

<sup>69</sup> The municipalities North-Mitrovica, Zvečan, Zubin Potok and Leposavić are almost only inhabited by Serbs.

<sup>70</sup> The mostly Albanian-inhabited municipalities Preševo, Medvedja and Bujanovac.

<sup>71</sup> Dobrica Ćosić, Kosovo, Belgrad Novosti 2004.

<sup>72</sup> West Side Story, p.1.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Werner Weidenfeld/ Wolfgang Wessels, (ed.), *Jahrbuch der Europäischen Integration* 2018. Baden-Baden 2018, p. 386. The idea of a territorial exchange is said to have been proposed to President Aleksandar Vučić and Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama as early as 2016. Cf. Doris Akrap, *Normalisierung? Der von der EU geführte Dialogprozess zwischen Serbien und Kosovo*, <https://www.boell.de/de/2019/03/27/normalisierung-der-von-der-eu-gefuehrte-dialogprozess-zwischen-serbien-und-kosovo> (25 September 2020).

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Werner Weidenfeld/Wolfgang Wessels, *ibid.*

administration, with its then National Security Advisor John Bolton, advocated a border correction, and the EU Commission also gave it the green light.<sup>76</sup>

Kosovo's head of government, Ramush Haradinaj, who was still in office in 2018, spoke out against new border demarcations: "The tragedies in the Balkans have always had to do with border issues – those who raise these issues anew conjure up new tragedies".<sup>77</sup> The Speaker of Parliament, Kadri Veseli, was also not among those in favour of border adjustments.<sup>78</sup>

Albin Kurti and the Vetëvendosje party also expressed their opposition with a demonstration organised in Priština on 29 September 2018.<sup>79</sup> In April 2019, Thaçi also made a U-turn in the end, publicly distancing himself from all plans regarding a territorial exchange and speaking only of a rapprochement with the Albanians residing in the Preševo Valley under the umbrella of the EU.<sup>80</sup>

This example again shows the ambiguity concerning a Greater Albania often encountered in political circles. As soon as resistance on the part of the international community begins to emerge, all ideas of a unification are rejected or reformulated – ultimately leaving much room for interpretation. At the same time, however, they are articulated in Albanian with subtexts and insinuations that are often not recognisable to outsiders.

## Conclusion

In the following, the multi-layered context of "Greater Albanian/Pan-Albanian" images in the minds and European stability is summarised.

The political narrative of a "Greater Albania" is not based on a programmatic concept or even a political project. It merely reflects some romanticised, historical longing. It reflects a nostalgic, melancholic atmosphere that manifests itself as a political idea with Albanian national-patriotic circles, in debates with friends, and at round-table discussions at government level with little factual substance staged by the media. "Meanwhile, in the chorus of primary initiatives and secondary resonance the most important voice, of the political actors of the international community, is missing. They look the other way, indignantly as it were, when the Kosovo Albanian UÇK already displays in its emblem the Greater

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<sup>76</sup> Cf. Kai Küstner, Neue Grenzen auf dem Balkan? <https://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/eu-kommission-balkan-101.html>, (25 September 2020).

<sup>77</sup> Zündeln auf dem Balkan, in: Der Spiegel No. 13/23 March 2019, p.86-87.

<sup>78</sup> Doris Akrap, *ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Die Morina, Thousands in Kosovo Protest Against 'Border Correction' Proposals, <https://balkaninsight.com/2018/09/29/thousands-citizens-protest-against-kosovo-president-09-29-2018/>, (25 September 2020).

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Jan Puhl/Keno Verseck, "Serben und Kosovaren trennt ein ganzer Fluss aus Blut", <https://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/serbien-muss-das-kosovo-endlich-anerkennen-hashim-thaci-im-interview-a-1265179.html>, (25 September 2020).

Albania it is planning".<sup>81</sup> This assessment, however, dates back to 2002 and no longer has any current relevance, just like the Russian concern about a "Greater Kosovo" in 2001.<sup>82</sup>

At first glance, the Serbian threat perception and the reception of current (published) statements in Albania or Kosovo, which could be read as an endorsement of a "Greater Albania", resemble the Pavlovian stimulus-reaction pattern. At second glance, however, Belgrade's reflexes seem almost ritualised and without any concrete fear of actual political implementation, which is intentional. The Albanian nemesis is in fact also instrumentalised by Belgrade politics according to domestic political needs – and the construction of the Other or the tactical principle of "stop the thief" also has its political tradition in Serbia, because the idea of a "Greater Serbia", with its first conception in 1844, is even several decades older than its Albanian counterpart.<sup>83</sup>

Nevertheless, with regard to the long hoped-for but repeatedly disappointed expectation of an invitation to EU accession negotiations, Tirana is steering a very cautious but also systematic course of action on the "Albanian" question. In recent years, transnational Albanian networks have been observed in the Albanian settlement areas of Albania, Kosovo, Northern Macedonia as well as in Montenegro and Southern Serbia in economic, media and cultural fields. From the Serbian point of view, a functional integration in the sense of a transnational "Greater Albanosphere" is being promoted. In terms of realpolitik, these processes carry less weight, although the EU is observing all this critically and carefully. However, there are no substantial arguments against the strive for good neighbourly relations, especially between Albania and Kosovo.

Bulgaria, Romania, Cyprus, Greece, Slovakia, and Spain keep refusing to recognise Kosovo's independence. They fear a signal effect for their respective national minorities, who then might also seek independence. All other EU states, however, have taken the step of recognition, but continue to show a stop sign to any Greater Albania thinking.

At the EU-Western Balkans summit in May 2020, which was only digital because of the Corona pandemic, Brussels pledged €3.3 billion in economic aid to the candidate countries. Before this virtual meeting, EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen declared: "In this pandemic, we have a special responsibility to help our partners in the Western Balkans, because their future clearly lies in the

<sup>81</sup> "In dem Chor aus primären Initiativen und sekundärer Resonanz fehlt indessen die wichtigste Stimme, die der politischen Akteure der internationalen Gemeinschaft. Sie schauen gewissermaßen indigniert zur Seite, wenn die kosovoalbanische UÇK den Umfang des von ihr geplanten Groß-Albanien bereits in ihrem Emblem zeigt". Wolf Oschlies, „Groß“-Staaten auf dem Balkan, SWP- Studie p. 30, Berlin, September 2002, p.5.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Ju. V. Morozov et al. (Hrsg.), *Balkany segodnja i zavtra/Der Balkan heute und morgen*, Moskau 2001.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Wulf Lapins/Enes Velija, „Großserbien“ in Geschichte und Gegenwart. Historische Konzepte und aktuelle Politik, in: *WeltTrends* Nr. 173/2021, p.13-18.



European Union."<sup>84</sup> For the Western Balkans as the "courtyard of the EU" [Innenhof der EU] (Minister of State Michael Roth), in particular, the summit was predominantly about further defining the political narrative in the region. Serbia, for example, has recently repeatedly stressed the EU's incapacity and flirted with China as an apparent alternative to the Union. Against this background: "Albania and Northern Macedonia were promised the start of formal accession negotiations by the EU in March after years of deadlock. A concrete date for the first round of negotiations has not yet been set, partly because of the Corona pandemic. Prior to this commitment, France, Denmark and the Netherlands had pushed through a reform of the accession process. It should now be easier to break off negotiations if a candidate country does not fulfil its commitments. While the EU is still negotiating future relations with the former member state Britain, the way is to be paved for new admissions at the same time."<sup>85</sup>

In Albania and Kosovo, a democratic culture of dispute does not yet exist. Restricted corridors of opinion and intolerant attitudes of Albanian political forces in the region have so far prevented an overall Albanian consensus marked by a willingness to compromise and dialogue; such an accord would also stand out as an acceptable settlement of the Albanian national question, detached from ideological ties and violence, especially for the Western Balkans frame of reference.

With the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU in 2007 in mind, which happened too early from today's point of view, Brussels is now trying, on the one hand, to adhere to the accession criteria for the Western Balkan states and not to move too far away from them. On the other hand, however, a passive political style implies that things are taking on a life of their own and calls into question the role of the community as a weighty organising power. Decreasing EU commitment, in turn, gives rise to disintegrative forces and could make taboo-breaking acceptable, which could increasingly be considered a realistic and long-term option but which poses a high risk to peace. These would be the socio-political popularisation of a "Greater Albanian" state as well as the open rejection by Serb and Croat nationalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a state.

The security and power vacuum that is growing as a consequence of the slow EU integration process has been exacerbated by the delay in opening accession negotiations, caused by the French, Dutch and Danish vetoes. External powers such as the USA, the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation, and Turkey are thrusting into the vacuum with their respective disparate interests and

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<sup>84</sup> "In dieser Pandemie haben wir eine spezielle Verantwortung, unseren Partnern auf dem Westbalkan zu helfen, denn ihre Zukunft liegt eindeutig in der Europäischen Union." Bernd Riegert, EU will den Westbalkan bei Laune halten, <https://www.dw.com/de/eu-will-den-westbalkan-bei-laune-halten/a-53337178> (11 December 2020).

<sup>85</sup> "Albanien und Nord-Mazedonien wurde die Aufnahme von förmlichen Beitrittsverhandlungen nach jahrelanger Hängepartie im März von der EU zugesagt. Ein konkretes Datum für die erste Verhandlungsrunde gibt es - auch wegen der Corona-Pandemie - noch nicht. Frankreich, Dänemark und die Niederlande hatten vor dieser Zusage eine Reform des Beitrittsprozesses durchgesetzt. Ein Abbruch der Verhandlungen soll nun leichter sein, falls ein Kandidatenland seine Zusagen nicht erfüllt. Während die EU noch mit dem ehemaligen Mitgliedsland Großbritannien über die künftigen Beziehungen verhandelt, soll gleichzeitig der Weg für neue Aufnahmen geebnet werden.", *ibid.*

creating facts in socio-economic, media and cultural-religious areas that will one day have to be taken into account within the framework of EU integration.

In March 2020, the European ministers gave their approval for the opening of accession talks with Albania and Northern Macedonia, but the scarcely developed health and social systems of the Western Balkan states are severely overburdened with the Corona crisis. In view of national crisis management efforts of some EU member states, the Western Balkan states complain about the lack of solidarity and assistance from the EU. This perception not only jeopardises credibility and support for the EU, but also provides a new target for external powers to extend their influence.

If a territorial swap between Serbia and Kosovo were to happen, it would be difficult to see it as a prelude to the creation of a "Greater Albania". However, this could fuel further Serbian and Croatian demands for reciprocal territorial exchanges. The resulting implications are difficult to assess. The debate on territorial exchange does not take place in a transparent manner and does not include a component that provides for citizen participation, for example in the form of a referendum. In the case of a potential exchange, the EU would face the dilemma that, if it agrees to it, it would be encouraging a process that is not in itself a policy goal of the EU – the creation of mono-ethnic states. This could lead to imitation effects which, among other things, would revive or reinforce dreams of reunion that have lasted for decades within the EU itself (South Tyrol and Northern Ireland) and demands for national autonomy (Catalonia, Basque Country).

Furthermore, all those nationalist concepts in the Western Balkans that propagate ethno-political homogeneity and the forcible shifting of borders while rejecting multi-ethnic realities would, in all likelihood, be re-invigorated. This would lay the foundation for new ethnically motivated conflicts and seriously endanger the painstakingly constructed peace order in the Western Balkans. Of course, none of this is inevitable. The renowned British historian Timothy Garton Ash formulated the memorable statement: "In the stock market of history, you never know what will happen."<sup>86</sup>

The feeling of having fallen victim to a historical injustice and having lost in the historical lottery is still present in the consciousness of the Albanian people today and could fuel the creation of an Albanian unitary state in the future. This "early warning" opens up an area for a broader political science study that takes into account the narratives of Albanian-populated areas in northern Macedonia, southern Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece as part of a more comprehensive research effort.

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<sup>86</sup> "Auf dem Aktienmarkt der Geschichte weiß man nie, was passiert." Spiegel-Gespräch, in: Der Spiegel No. 40/2020, p.112.

Within the framework of its accession agenda, integrated Europe has sufficient creative power to dry up visions of large states in the Western Balkans with its narrative<sup>87</sup> of peace-making. It is the following historical steps taken by European countries that could lead to the formation of a European identity: being counterparts at first, then side-by-side and, finally, achieving togetherness. However, the EU itself is in troubled waters. The economic implications of the Corona pandemic, the breakaway of some of its member states from the rule-of-law structure of the Copenhagen criteria, the barely harmonisable interests of the member states in the North and the South, in the historic West and the new East, and, especially, the inability of the European Council as well as the European Commission to set a common global policy, as well as the increasingly difficult budget negotiations are narrowing a strategic view in the capitals and in Brussels. Against this backdrop, the EU is currently not providing any innovative thrust for the Western Balkans.

The myth associated with the "Greater Albania" or "pan-Albanian" idea still echoes in its own echo chamber. The 'elephant' EU continues to have priority in the geopolitical arena. But this does not have to remain the only effective force. Black swans could be added. In this respect, the politics of the Western Balkans are trying to keep an equilibrium on the balance beam, with Western European posthumanism beckoning to them in the shape of liquid and fluid identities, while the traditional manifest narratives are tugging at them. Which of the two will fertilise the political breeding ground for the future here?

Concerning this question the renowned military-academic Austrian strategy researcher Wolfgang Peischel readjusts the perspective with the assessment: "How long, for example, has one held on to the dogma that exclusively politically or contractually agreed borders drawn on the map would determine national identity and thus could form the basis for a stable spatial order accepted by states? Today, a multitude of conflicts and critical disintegration scenarios show that besides border demarcations, treaties and constitutions, it is after all also founding myths, language, culture, religion, ethnicity and ideology that establish a sense of identity."<sup>88</sup>

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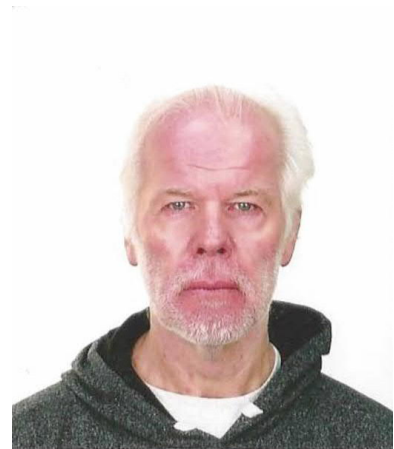
<sup>87</sup> "Narrative sind eine Machtquelle, weil sie Grenzen des Vorstellbaren und des Machbaren setzen". [Narratives are a source of power because they set limits to what can be imagined and what can be done.] Clive Hamilton/Mareike Ohlberg. *Die Lautlose Eroberung. Wie China westliche Demokratien unterwandert und die Welt neu ordnet*. München 2020, p.182.

<sup>88</sup> "Wie lange hat man beispielsweise an dem Dogma festgehalten, dass ausschließlich politisch oder vertraglich vereinbarte, in die Karte gezeichnete Grenzen die nationale Identität bestimmen würden und so die Grundlage für eine von den Staaten akzeptierte stabile Raumordnung bilden könnten? Heute zeigt eine Vielzahl von Konflikten und kritischen Zerfallsszenarien, dass es neben Grenzziehungen, Verträgen und Verfassungen doch auch die Gründungsmythen, Sprache, Kultur, Religion, ethnische Zugehörigkeit und Ideologie sind, welche ein Identitätsgefühl begründen." Wolfgang Peischel, *Ein Erklärungsansatz für die fehlende Reichweite europäischen strategischen Denkens*, in: id. (ed.) *Wiener Strategie-Konferenz 2018*, Berlin, p.96.

## Corriculum Vitae

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# Nuclear arms control - Current dimension and future challenges

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## Current dimension and future challenges

Dieter Budde

Important disarmament treaties such as START I, START II, ABM, INF and Open Skies are now history.

The ABM Treaty was an arms control treaty between the USA and the USSR to limit missile defence systems. It was concluded on 28 May 1972 with unlimited validity and could be terminated with six months' notice. With the ABM Treaty, the USA and the USSR committed themselves not to build nationwide defence systems against ballistic missiles. The treaty limits the development and deployment of permitted strategic missile defence. Each party to the treaty is allowed only two locally limited missile defence systems. On 13 June 2002, the USA unilaterally withdrew from the treaty.

The USA and Russia cancelled the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. The latter was terminated on 2 August 2020. The INF Treaty represented a significant step towards reducing the nuclear weapons potential for and in Europe and was a cornerstone of the European security structure.

The Open Skies Treaty was signed by 24 states on 24 March 1992 on the margins of the fourth CSCE follow-up meeting.<sup>89</sup> It enables large-scale observation of military installations and activities in all of Europe, Russia and North America. The treaty contains a large number of details such as active and passive quotas of observation flights, sensor equipment of the aircraft, availability of acquired information as well as flight rules and flight plans.<sup>90</sup> These observation flights allow a larger number of states or "groups of states" to participate in an air observation regime. The USA terminated this treaty in May 2020.<sup>91</sup> Subsequently, Russia also left this agreement on military observation flights in January 2021, but is keeping open the option to continue the treaty, should the USA rejoin.

Possession and development of nuclear weapons were essential framework conditions at the time of the Cold War. They were a means for the world powers and regional great powers to assert their power positions within the international system. With the development of nuclear weapons and their carrier systems, their significance and influence shifted.

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<sup>89</sup> Europa Archiv: Zeitschrift für internationale Politik, vol. 8/1992, p. Z103.

<sup>90</sup> Bundespresseamt: BPA, Bulletin, No. 48, 8 May 1992.

<sup>91</sup> The USA withdrew on 21 May 2020. Effective after six months. URL: <https://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article208140357/Open-Skies-USA-kuendigt-Militaervertrag-auf-Berlin-will-das-verhindern.html>. (20 June 2020).



## Geostrategic situation

After the end of the Cold War, the geopolitical and geostrategic world situation changed. There have always been paradigm shifts in the globalised and multipolar world. The number of states with missiles, cruise missiles and nuclear warheads has increased. The USA, Russia, Great Britain, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea are in possession of nuclear weapons and carrier systems. Trouble spots in the Middle East, between China, India and Pakistan, in the Sea of Japan, the Yellow Sea and the China Sea, and confrontations between the USA, Russia and China threaten security and peace.

It is essentially about power, interests, the balance of power, morality as well as peace and stability. This also applies with regard to nuclear armament, arms control and disarmament. Foreign policy is about asserting defined strategic interests. These include preventing or eliminating unwanted foreign restrictions on the sovereignty of one's own state and maintaining or strengthening the security of the state and its socio-political system vis-à-vis other states. In the pursuit of these interests, a security dilemma arises. Distrust of an opponent and fear of their attack lead to the strengthening of defence measures, which in turn lead to corresponding reactions on the part of the opponent. Accumulation of power, power competition and armament may then lead to the use of force and war, even by means of nuclear weapons. Power is also a way of competitively ensuring security in foreign policy in and through the structures of the international system. National interest and power have determined the international actions of nation states and alliances. Striving for hegemony, equilibrium policy and safeguarding one's own spheres of interest are essential foundations of the states' orientation and corresponding actions. The exercise of power by one state leads to protection measures by the other. This creates insecurity, instability, and a perceived need to protect oneself. The development of power and counter-power creates a certain balance of power. This is an essential element of the interaction of states.<sup>92</sup> The rivalries between the USA, Russia, and China have intensified. They extend across the political spectrum and include trade, security, the environment, as well as the role of multilateral institutions. A series of trouble spots, from Korea to the South China Sea, Ukraine, Crimea and Syria, have highlighted the controversies between those countries as well as the likelihood of hostile encounters.<sup>93</sup>

Today's nuclear order consists of triangular and bilateral relationships, in which the arms programmes are perceived as a threat by the respective other state(s). The triangular relationships exist between

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<sup>92</sup> Cf. Kenneth, N. Waltz;(1966): Grundkategorien der Analyse von Krieg und Frieden, in: Nerlich, Uwe (ed.): Krieg und Frieden im industriellen Zeitalter, Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, p.334.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. Joseph Camilleri A Michael Hamel-Green; Yoshida, Fumihiko (2019): Introduction: Rethinking the path to nuclear disarmament. In: Joseph A. Camilleri (ed.): The 2017 Nuclear Ban Treaty. A new path to nuclear disarmament. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, p.1.

the USA, Russia and China, the USA, Russia and NATO states as well as between China, Pakistan and India. Bilateral relations exist between the USA and North Korea, the USA and Iran, Israel and Iran, and between other states in the Middle East. This multipolarity impedes arms control and disarmament. When taking into account the strategic interests of the states and the existing or developing power structures, the issue of deterrence must also be considered. With regard to deterrence, the psychological-ideological dimension is an essential element of international action.

## Deterrence as a strategic concept

Deterrence is the act of influencing the will of a potential adversary in order to dissuade them from possible aggression. It is about inducing a potential aggressor not to attack at all and thus prevent nuclear or large-scale conventional attacks by the other side. Nuclear deterrence is based on the assumption that the threat of the enormous destruction caused by nuclear weapons will effectively prevent aggression so in practice the threat never needs to be turned into action. Deterrence and the possession of nuclear weapons require rational decision-making; irrationality can lead to disaster. Therefore, nuclear deterrence is essentially about influencing the intentions of a potential aggressor. The risks they run shall far outweigh the intended gains. Deterrence involves the ability and willingness to use military means, which requires a threat potential on one's own side.

The concept of nuclear deterrence is based on four central prerequisites: war-fighting capability, invulnerability, second-strike capability and credibility. For deterrence, a sufficient number of nuclear weapons is required; to effectively carry out a nuclear weapons mission, nuclear warheads of different detonation values and corresponding survivable carrier systems are needed to be able to inflict system-threatening damage on a possible adversary. Invulnerability requires ready weapon systems, political and military procedures and technical capabilities to survive a nuclear first strike– at least to a large extent. Second-strike capability requires the ability to respond to a first strike in a comprehensive or destructive manner, using nuclear weapons. There must be sufficient resolve to use nuclear weapons to create an unacceptable risk for the adversary. The credibility of deterrence depends on one's intentions, capabilities, as well as a potential adversary's perception thereof. It results from the attacked party's assessment of the costs and benefits of a potential counter-reaction. The attacker can only guess the scope of such a benefit-damage calculation. These mutual assumptions and uncertainties essentially characterise the system of deterrence.

The credibility of a nuclear deterrence capability also depends on the modernisation of nuclear weapons, different nuclear weapons carrier systems, adequate communication systems as well as the ability to break through missile defences. The political credibility of a nuclear strategy is only given if

both sides can accept the parity of their forces and if there is a capability for selective and flexible target selection. Furthermore, the defender must have a credible survival capability.

There is a risk of potentially destabilising developments. It can be countered by unilateral measures, negotiation, avoidance of technological developments, ensuring a second-strike capability, and appropriate communication during crises. If nuclear deterrence is also used to potentially counter chemical, biological and cyber threats, further destabilisation may develop. Another problem is the proliferation of nuclear weapons or weapons-grade nuclear material and carrier systems. The acquisition of a "dirty bomb", nuclear weapons or nuclear material by violent non-state adversaries also constitutes a serious threat in the future.

The assumed stability created by nuclear deterrence is called into question by the possibility of a first use of nuclear weapons. Uncertainty about first use has a deterrent effect, but is critical in the context of international politics when there is mutual mistrust and insinuation. The possibility of a first use of nuclear weapons, technological development, political tensions as well as a loss of transparency, verification mechanisms and communication channels between the major nuclear powers call strategic stability into question. Furthermore, misinterpretation, technical and human failure, miscalculations or errors regarding an assumed attack have occurred in the past and are a serious risk to the threat of world peace.

Another critical aspect of deterrence is that, due to a possible increase of the threat potential or developments in weapons technology, it may generate an awareness of fear, mistrust, confrontation and aggressiveness and thus jeopardise strategic stability. Policies of mutual threat and provocation promote the arms race and reduce the possibility of arms limitation and disarmament. Nuclear deterrence is inherently fragile and risky, largely due to the possibility of first use of nuclear weapons. It tends to undermine strategic stability.<sup>94</sup>

There is also the question of whether a goal justifies the means of large-scale destruction and the death of many civilians, possibly even the extinction of humanity. A global nuclear war would have incalculable consequences, but even a "limited nuclear war" in Europe would have devastating ramifications, given the population density and the proximity of military targets to civilian settlements. The paradox of nuclear deterrence is to prevent the outbreak of war while preparing for it. A truly satisfactory solution cannot be found with regard to the dilemmas of nuclear deterrence.

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<sup>94</sup> Cf. SIPRI (2020): Insights on Peace and Security. TOWARDS GREATER NUCLEAR RESTRAINT: RAISING THE THRESHOLD FOR NUCLEAR WEAPON USE, No. 2020/6 May 2020, S.20-21. URL [https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/sipriinsight2006\\_3.pdf](https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/sipriinsight2006_3.pdf). (30 July 2020).

The only serious alternative to deterrence is nuclear disarmament. Currently, there are nine countries in possession of nuclear weapons, and some others that base their security on an alliance that builds on nuclear deterrence. However, the nuclear states continue to rely on their own nuclear capabilities. Arms control and disarmament have so far been seen as a means to a more permanent and predictable form of strategic stability. Therefore, nuclear disarmament is unlikely to occur. The knowledge how to build nuclear weapons already exists in the world; threat perception and the exercise of power and influence are elements of international politics. The question is therefore not whether states want to live with nuclear weapons, but how they can achieve and maintain stability and peace despite or because of nuclear weapons. This requires a discussion and clarification of strategic disagreements between and mutual threat perceptions of the major, if not all, nuclear-weapon states. Another possibility is the declared renunciation or prohibition of first use.

## The nuclear arsenals

The SIPRI Yearbook 2019<sup>95</sup> gives the following numbers of nuclear weapons as of 2018, noting that the figures contain inaccuracies due to secrecy or only partial publication:

Under President Barack Obama, the USA began to revive the nuclear triad (naval, land and air forces). With the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) under Trump, the existing nuclear weapons with smaller explosive power are to be equipped with smaller warheads on sea-based ballistic missiles and supplemented with another category of sea-based cruise missiles. Technical developments and efforts to achieve superiority in order to be able to wage and win a nuclear war threaten balance and security. This also applies to efforts in the cyber context and with regard to the military use of space. In its 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR)<sup>96</sup>, the USA sets out its programme to modernise its nuclear arsenal and complex in response to what it sees as an increase in threats from Russia, China, and North Korea. Among other things, the Trump administration established new nuclear weapons programmes: a "low yield" nuclear warhead for the submarine-launched Trident ballistic missile (SLBM), a Long Range Standoff Cruise Missile (LRSO), and a Sea-Launched Cruise Missile (SLCM) that could be based on a surface ship or submarine.<sup>97</sup>

In his speech<sup>98</sup> on 1 March 2018, Russian President Vladimir Putin unveiled the latest Russian strategic weapons systems. He said the development was a response to the unilateral withdrawal of the USA from the ABM Treaty and the deployment of missile defence systems in the USA and outside its

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<sup>95</sup> SIPRI YEARBOOK 2019, Kurzfassung auf Deutsch p.11. URL: [https://sipri.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/yb19\\_summary\\_de.pdf](https://sipri.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/yb19_summary_de.pdf).

<sup>96</sup> Cf. US OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (2018): NUCLEAR POSTURE REVIEW FEBRUARY 2018. URL: <https://media.defense.gov/2018/Feb/02/2001872886/-1/-1/1/2018-NUCLEAR-POSTURE-REVIEW-FINAL-REPORT.PDF>. (27 July 2020).

<sup>97</sup> US OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (2018): Nuclear Posture Review. URL: <https://media.defense.gov/2018/Feb/02/2001872886/-1/-1/1/2018-NUCLEAR-POSTURE-REVIEW-FINAL-REPORT.PDF>. (29 July 2020).

<sup>98</sup> Tagesspiegel (2018): Rede an die Nation. Putin präsentiert neue Atomwaffen vom 1.3.2018. URL: Rede an die Nation: Putin präsentiert neue Atomwaffen - Politik - Tagesspiegel. (5 December 2020).

borders. These new systems include a heavy intercontinental ballistic missile (Sarmat), a nuclear-powered cruise missile of almost unlimited range (Burevestnik), high-precision hypersonic gliders (Awangard), a small high-power nuclear energy facility and a new type of torpedo (Poseidon) with conventional and nuclear warheads.

China was the first country to adopt a "No First Use" resolution in 1964, citing the "purely self-defensive nature" of its nuclear strategy. Today, China is also modernising its nuclear armament, especially by improving the safety, reliability and effectiveness of its ballistic missiles. This includes building a triad with a focus on land-based ICBMs, bombers and submarines. China is also building up its capabilities in terms of penetration, precision and survivability. It is concerned that the modernisation of US and Russian nuclear weapons will challenge its second-strike capability. It is therefore difficult to expect China to forgo modernising and building up its nuclear capability. To what extent the no-first-use policy will still apply in the future remains to be seen.

India adopted the no-first-use policy after the Pokhran II tests in 1998, assuring that its newly acquired arsenal would be used only as a deterrent. India's doctrine also stated that it would not use nuclear weapons against states that did not possess nuclear weapons.<sup>99</sup>

North Korea continues to expand its nuclear weapons potential. This is connected with threats against the USA and its South Korean and Japanese allies. It continues to develop both nuclear warheads and ICBMs. North Korea has conducted six confirmed nuclear tests since 2006.

NATO will continue to strengthen and technologically adapt its deterrence and defence capability with an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional and missile defence systems. As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO intends to remain a nuclear alliance.<sup>100</sup>

The nuclear armament of China, North Korea and Iran, as well as the efforts of all nuclear powers to modernise technology, develop carrier systems, improve the survivability of nuclear weapons and strive for or improve second-strike capability, is creating an arms race. This leads to instabilities in the international system and drains important resources from national economies.

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<sup>99</sup> Cf. India's "No First Use" Nuclear Policy: URL: <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/indias-no-first-use-nuclear-policy-explained-in-five-points-2086126>. (30 July 2020).

<sup>100</sup> Cf. NATO Summit 2019 London Declaration. URL: <https://uk.usembassy.gov/nato-summit-2019-london-declaration/>. (29 July 2020).

## Existing agreements

Under the previous Strategic Arms Control Treaties, the SALT I Treaty<sup>101</sup> (1973), SALT II Treaty (1979), START Treaty<sup>102</sup> (1991), START II Treaty (1993) and SORT Treaty<sup>103</sup> (2002), the New START Treaty (2010) was concluded between the USA and Russia, valid until February 2021.

The treaty limits the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads to 1,550. It also limits the number of deployed and non-deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and heavy bombers equipped for a nuclear mission. The treaty, allowing for satellite and remote monitoring and 18 on-site inspections per year, entered into force on 5 February 2011 and was renewed in February 2021.<sup>104</sup> After the USA backed down on its demand to include China in the New START treaty, the opportunity opened up for an extension of the agreement. The New START treaty is the last of the nuclear arms treaties remaining from the Cold War era. The extent to which this bilateral agreement extends into the distant future is uncertain. The USA and Russia are calling for the inclusion of other nuclear states in negotiations. The USA demanded the inclusion of China, Russia the inclusion of Great Britain and France. Both sides refrained from their demands in the course of the negotiations. After protracted consultations, this treaty was extended for five years.<sup>105</sup> The extension limits a numerical arms race of this weapons arsenal. However, this does not mean that technological developments are excepted. The treaty offers the possibility of safeguarding the security interests of both states in the strategic nuclear field. Russia and the USA politically renounce the first strike. Both sides continue to have a secured second-strike capability. The extension of the treaty is expedient for both sides. It safeguards the political, strategic and economic interests of both states. Politically, both states are acting on an equal footing, which is advantageous for Russia; the USA is thus demonstrating its willingness to cooperate internationally. Strategically, the treaty benefits both sides because the second-strike capability is maintained and both states have a nuclear potential that is superior to all other nuclear powers. Economically, both states can thus limit their expenditure on nuclear potential.

An important existing treaty is the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) of 1 July 1968<sup>106</sup>, which is intended to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons by states possessing nuclear weapons. In this context, the states were essentially concerned with preserving their own nuclear options but denying them to other states. In the Non-Proliferation Treaty, in force since 5 March 1970, the signatory states (India,

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<sup>101</sup> Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT).

<sup>102</sup> Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START).

<sup>103</sup> Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty (SORT).

<sup>104</sup> ABS CBN News: Russia and US extend New START arms pact as Putin, Biden chat Gabrielle Tétrault-Farber and Trevor Hunnicutt, Reuters, Posted at Jan 27 2021 05:08 AM: URL: Russia and US extend New START arms pact as Putin, Biden chat | ABS-CBN News (abs-cbn.com). (29 January 2021).

<sup>105</sup> Cf. <https://www.msn.com/de-de/nachrichten/politik/auch-usa-beschlie%C3%9Fen-verl%C3%A4ngerung-von-new-start-vertrag-mit-russland/ar-BB1dmhTU?ocid=msedgdhp>. (3 February 2021).

<sup>106</sup> UN Office of Disarmament Affairs: Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). URL: <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt/text/>. (20 June 2020).



Israel, Pakistan, and South Sudan did not sign; North Korea withdrew from the Treaty in January 2003) undertook not to transfer nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices or the power to dispose of them to anyone and not to assist a non-nuclear-weapon state in producing, acquiring or gaining the power to dispose of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (Art. I). In Art. II of this treaty, the non-nuclear-weapon states commit themselves not to manufacture or acquire nuclear weapons or to seek or accept support for them. Regular checks are to take place. Furthermore, negotiations are to be conducted on a treaty for general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. By 2020, 190 states had signed the treaty. Since 1968, only gradual progress has been made in multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. In the 2010 NPT Review Conference, attention was drawn to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. This led to the first conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons (Humanitarian Consequences Initiative) in 2013. The NPT Review Conference in May 2015 failed. The review planned for 2020 was postponed to 2021.<sup>107</sup>

Through the Humanitarian Consequences Initiative (HCI), a new global approach to disarmament emerged. Instead of a state-centred approach based on deterrence, the elimination of nuclear weapons is to follow a new approach that takes into account the serious humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. In doing so, it was determined that nuclear weapons are fundamentally inhumane and unlawful and that a Nuclear Ban Treaty (NBT) should be pursued in place of a traditional incremental arms control approach. Since 2013, there have been a number of conferences to examine the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. This led to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in 2017, which 122 UN member states agreed upon. Under this treaty, the possession, production, testing, use, threat of use, transfer or deployment of nuclear weapons overseas are prohibited. It is no longer a question of testing, first use or rearmament. None of the nuclear powers or NATO states, except the Netherlands, have agreed on the treaty. The treaty aims at a greater openness and for humanitarian progress and faster nuclear disarmament to be taken into account. The treaty entered into force on 22 January 2021, after the necessary number of 50 ratifications was reached through ratification on the part of Honduras.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) is an attempt to outlaw nuclear weapons of mass destruction, following the prohibition of biological weapons (1972) and chemical weapons (1993). Its preamble emphasises the obligation of states to refrain from threatening the use of force or using force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state and to establish and maintain peace in their international relations. It is intended to prevent the potentially

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<sup>107</sup> UN HQ: Documentation for the NPT Review Conference. <https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/20-137nve-note-verbale.pdf>. 20 June 2020).

catastrophic consequences of nuclear war. The treaty emphasises the importance of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the establishment of regional nuclear-weapon-free zones (NWFZs) for peace, security, and a world without nuclear weapons. Once in force, it prohibits states from producing, testing, possessing, using or threatening to use, transferring or stationing nuclear weapons on their own or another state's territory. Any state possessing nuclear weapons upon accession undertakes to destroy them as soon as possible.

Nuclear-weapon states argue that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons deprives the concept of nuclear deterrence of its legitimacy and destabilises the international security architecture. In a statement, France, the UK, and the USA make it clear that they did not participate in the negotiations and have no intention of signing, ratifying or ever becoming signatories to the treaty.<sup>108</sup> They further emphasise that the current global political situation does not allow for an absolute ban on nuclear weapons. Nuclear deterrence and defence is an essential element of NATO's strategy. The sharing of nuclear weapons should continue to constitute one of the main security guarantees and represent the indivisibility of security.<sup>109</sup> NATO should also maintain its nuclear deterrent in the future.<sup>110</sup> Proponents of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons counter that one must not just stand on the sidelines, watching the increasing rearmament efforts of some states and the possible catastrophic consequences of a nuclear war.

With a view to reducing nuclear risks, the following is proposed: raising awareness of the risks, declaratory policies and transparency measures, condemnation of nuclear weapons as a means of war, no-first-use policies, a dialogue on strategic stability, reducing uncertainties through transparency and discussions on doctrines, concrete measures regarding verifiable arms control and unilateral action.<sup>111</sup> The nuclear powers and the NATO states seek to prevent or moderate discrimination against nuclear weapons by non-nuclear weapon states within the international system. They insist on retaining the right to possess, develop and use nuclear weapons. The treaty is opposed by the official nuclear powers USA, Russia, France, Great Britain and China as well as the unofficial nuclear weapon states Pakistan, India, North Korea, and Israel.

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<sup>108</sup> Joint Press Statement from the Permanent Representatives to the United Nations of the United States, United Kingdom, and France Following the Adoption. URL: <https://usun.usmission.gov/joint-press-statement-from-the-permanent-representatives-to-the-united-nations-of-the-united-states-united-kingdom-and-france-following-the-adoption/>. (28 July 2020).

<sup>109</sup> Cf. Thomas de Maizière et al. (2020): NATO 2030: United for a New ERA. Analysis and Recommendation of the Reflection. Group Appointed by the NATO Secretary General, p.36. URL: 201201-Reflection-Group-Final-Report-Uni.pdf (nato.int) (29 January 2021).

<sup>110</sup> Cf. Ibid., p.38.

<sup>111</sup> Cf. SIPRI (2020): Insights on Peace and Security. TOWARDS GREATER NUCLEAR RESTRAINT: RAISING THE THRESHOLD FOR NUCLEAR WEAPON USE, No. 2020/6 May 2020, S.12. URL [https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/sipriinsight2006\\_3.pdf](https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/sipriinsight2006_3.pdf). (30 July 2020).

## Verification

Nuclear disarmament requires verification to ensure that the arms reduction and disarmament steps to which a state has committed itself are actually carried out. A verification system is designed to check the parties' compliance with the agreements made and to prevent potential circumvention of the contractual arrangements. It is an essential element of arms control, arms limitation or disarmament agreements. Verification must essentially cover the production, limitation or destruction of nuclear weapon carrier systems as well as the destruction or dismantlement of associated nuclear warheads. One problem is that the disarming state does not want to disclose militarily sensitive information or otherwise protected areas, but the verifying states expect comprehensive information. Furthermore, nuclear-weapon-specific information could reach non-nuclear-weapon states if provisions of the treaty are violated. The verifying states must ensure that the carrier systems and nuclear warheads have indeed been destroyed or rendered unusable. A further difficulty exists with regard to dual-use carrier systems.

Verification requires the establishment of an efficient verification system involving the inspection of data, the destruction, or closure of facilities, of quota as well as the verification of potential production facilities. This should include declarations of stockpiles and nuclear facilities, National Technical Means (NTM), technical means of containment and observation, on-site inspections and regulated access, and technical information on nuclear explosive devices. However, on-site inspections or other thorough verification measures could reveal too much classified information that could jeopardise the preservation of the legitimate security interests of the state.

To develop an adequate verification system, the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV) was initiated by the US State Department in 2014.<sup>112</sup> It is an initiative encompassing more than 25 nuclear-and non-nuclear-weapon states to identify challenges related to nuclear disarmament verification and develop procedures and technologies to address these challenges. It addresses, among other things, monitoring and verification objectives, the verification of nuclear weapons, on-site inspections, the verification of reductions, technical challenges and solutions, and technologies for verification. An implementation of verification requires a multi-stage process characterised by: declarations; destruction of weapons stockpiles, materials and carrier systems; peaceful use of nuclear material; measures against violation and breach of the treaty.<sup>113</sup> The possibilities of verification, but also of surveillance, have grown in recent decades. Sensor platforms,

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<sup>112</sup> See <https://www.ipndv.org/>

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Jürgen Scheffran (2019): Verification and security of transformation to a nuclear- weapon-free world: the framework of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. In: Joseph A. Camilleri (Hg.): The 2017 Nuclear Ban Treaty. A new path to nuclear disarmament. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, p.156.

remote reconnaissance by satellites and drones, methods of different signal captures, cyber technology and increase in data transmission speeds enable results in near real time.

Should states wish to renounce nuclear deterrence while a perceived threat exists, it is necessary to have conventional forces that allow the adversary to assess a conventional attack as unsuccessful. However, conventional forces are not sufficient if the adversary is willing to use tactical nuclear weapons. The extent to which a political or legal no-first-use declaration protects against the possible use of nuclear weapons cannot be determined with certainty.

## Conclusion

The availability of armaments, including nuclear armaments, as well as provisions on their scope and nature have been and continue to be claimed by nation states as essential elements of their sovereignty. The armaments also reflect the political, social and economic conditions of states and alliances. They were and are essential means of power politics, even if they are not/were not deployed but used as threat potentials to enforce certain interests. Efforts at arms control and disarmament are also part of the power-political calculations of states. Those efforts are characterised by the endeavour to maintain or expand their own advantages and maintain their technological lead or economic capacities. They are essentially subject to the parameters of sovereignty, power, interest, balance and hegemony that show in the actions of states and organisations. The aim is to expand political, economic and military influence. In essence, this is not about nuclear arms control and disarmament, but about maintaining a limited power to use nuclear weapons and about a future technological hegemony of the superpowers USA, Russia, and China.

The limits for arms control and disarmament lie where a state or an alliance of states sees its vital national or common interests endangered and has to expect a loss of power. Political objectives, historical location, economic and military resources as well as fundamentalist, doctrinaire or cooperative behaviour influence arms control and disarmament. In the case of overall aggressive and hostile policies, there are few possibilities for communication and cooperation is limited. Arms control and disarmament will continue to face problems such as second-strike capability, double use of carrier systems, no first use, expansion of the circle of nuclear powers, proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear knowledge, and establishment of an effective verification system. A further problem lies in the strategies involving a protective umbrella function (extended security) of nuclear powers vis-à-vis allies, as in the NATO strategy. These would cease to apply in the event of a complete renunciation of nuclear weapons.

It is therefore necessary to develop a system of confidence-building measures that does justice to the changed situation in the world, balances interests, promotes international cooperation and reduces new risks. It should be noted that the development and effectiveness of confidence-building measures can only unfold in the context of the framework conditions of international politics and that their interdependence with other policy areas has a decisive influence on their application and success. The abandonment or prohibition of first use could, under the condition of conventional non-aggression and a certain parity, enhance the existing security system and promote a transition to new negotiations on arms control and disarmament. However, in the event of a threat due to conventional superiority, security would be jeopardised. The development of politically, militarily and economically viable assessment criteria that the states find acceptable is of great importance for the further development of arms control. To this end, structural approaches to negotiations and the subject matter of negotiations, weapons categories, military means and area of application as well as weapons parameters and measures are decisive for the progress and success of negotiations. In this context, it is necessary to develop the principles, contents and procedures through the interaction of theory and practice in order to be able to do justice to both the particular and common interests of the states.

Possible measures to limit and outlaw nuclear weapons are: the adoption of the policy of no first use of nuclear weapons, a reduction of nuclear weapons by the USA, Russia and other states, politically and legally binding Negative Security Assurances (NSA) for non-nuclear weapon states; furthermore, the ratification of the protocols concerning the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaties, and increasing the security procedures for the use of nuclear weapons.<sup>114</sup> As long as nuclear weapons exist and states adhere to a doctrine of deterrence, the nuclear age will continue. The logic of nuclear deterrence will see to that. Only fundamental changes in the framework conditions of international politics, not least including mutual trust, conventional arms control and disarmament, may lead to a renunciation of nuclear weapons. The nuclear armament of China, North Korea, and Iran as well as the efforts of all nuclear powers to modernise technology, develop carrier systems, improve the survivability of nuclear weapons, and strive for or improve their second-strike capability, cause an arms race. The further development of arms control and disarmament on a global scale is problematic. The strategic interests of the states possessing nuclear weapons are too different to expect comprehensive arms control agreements or disarmament in the near future.

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<sup>114</sup> Cf. Mitsuru Kurosawa (2019): Stigmatizing and Delegitimizing Nuclear Weapons. In: Joseph A. Camilleri (ed.): The 2017 Nuclear Ban Treaty. A new path to nuclear disarmament. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, p.92.

## Corriculum Vitae

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## Will steel remain decisive?

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### On the relevance of armoured units for modern armed forces

Christian Herrmann/Stephan Maninger

The introduction of the armoured fighting vehicle as the ultimate weapon on the ground more than 100 years ago revolutionised warfare, as did the emergence of air power, the later opening-up of space and the addition of today's cyber dimension. For military planners, it is therefore always crucial to be aware of the "expiry date" of their assets. Emotional attachment to the English longbow, colourful uniforms or dashing cavalry were aspects of the human quest for continuity and predictability accompanied by military disasters. Military innovation, on the other hand, is necessarily pragmatic, i.e. almost exclusively oriented towards effectiveness, it knows moral categories but is otherwise oriented neither towards ideology nor "monument preservation". Even when competing actors have the identical technology, the way it is applied can lead to very different results. The inventors of the armoured fighting vehicle and victors of the First World War had to realise that in the first phase of the Second World War they were at the mercy of the Wehrmacht's "mobile warfare" without having had a technological (Char B, T-34) or numerical (France, Soviet Union) disadvantage. Therefore, even in times of an omnipresent technological "revolution in military affairs", the question arises whether the classic armoured fighting vehicles and units have a future. In this sense, this essay does not intend to pass judgement in favour of one side or the other, but to stimulate reflection and discussion on the future of armoured forces.

### The tank debate

At cyclical intervals, most recently after the end of the Cold War and the onset of the (special) infantry-intensive "War on Terror" after 2001, the infantry vs. armoured forces controversy has been brought up again and again. As part of a healthy exchange of ideas on the future viability of armed forces, different sub-areas of "new" wars are highlighted. However, if one looks at the structure of modern armed forces, it is clear that no nation so far intends to fundamentally reduce its armoured forces; rather, the opposite seems to be the case: Currently, the "Next Generation/Third Generation Advanced MBT"<sup>115</sup> is being introduced.

In 2015, the Russian Federation presented its T-90MS enhanced combat vehicles and the completely new T-14 Armata development, while the Federal Republic of Germany was setting up another

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<sup>115</sup>Main Battle Tank.

armoured battalion comprised of Leopard 2 A7 vehicles and was working on the development of the Leopard 3. Meanwhile, Turkey and South Korea jointly developed the Altay main battle tank.

A look at Asia rounds off the picture: The People's Republic of China is fielding the Type 99A2 as a combat-value-enhanced model as well as the VT-4 as a new development, whereas South Korea is upgrading the K2 Black Panther, Japan the Type 10 and India the Arjun 2. Even Iran is fielding at least a new model, the Karrar combat vehicle (based on the T-90), while Israel has developed the Merkava 4. In the USA, the M1A2C main battle tank has been in service since 2017. Even Pakistan, together with China, intends to develop a new main battle tank on the basis of existing models (Al-Khalid 2).

There are also new developments in the field of infantry fighting vehicles, e.g. in the Federal Republic of Germany the Puma, in China the ZBD97, in Russia the BMP-3 and the T-15, in South Korea the K21, while the US armed forces have the Bradley and the Stryker. The consideration of infantry fighting vehicles is important particularly because they have now become dangerous opponents, even for tanks. While it was still an unusual achievement in 1987 that Ratel-90 infantry fighting vehicles were successfully deployed against T-55s and T-62s in southern Angola,<sup>116</sup> four years later in the 1991 Gulf War more Iraqi battle tanks were shot down by Bradley infantry fighting vehicles with their TOW guided missiles than by Abrams main battle tanks.<sup>117</sup>

Even if the tank-versus-tank duel has become rare, the current debate seems to run more in favour of the continued use of armoured combat vehicles. However, due to exponential technological development, this may be the last generation of battle tanks. For the sceptics of continued tank development put forward the following arguments:

The cost argument: It is often argued that tank troops would also cause such high costs due to their maintenance and supply requirements that sustainability could only be ensured to a limited extent and would place a disproportionate burden on logistics. Since MBTs are heavy vehicles that consume considerable resources in fuel and operating materials and also require an uninterrupted supply chain for spare parts and specialists, such a calculation must always be in proportion to the benefits and risks.<sup>118</sup> War is therefore always subject to a cold logic that is largely oriented towards what is necessary and possible. Nevertheless, the experience of the German armoured forces in particular shows the dramatic effects of bottlenecks that can arise from a lack of resources, the loss of workshops

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<sup>116</sup> Cf. Willem Steenkamp and Helmoed-Römer Heitman: *Mobility Conquers: The Story of 61 Mechanised Battalion Group 1978-2005*, Helion & Company, West Midlands, 2016, p.867.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Sebastien Roblin: *Get the Missiles: The Army's Bradley Fighting Vehicle Is Getting a Big Upgrade*, <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/get-missiles-armys-bradley-fighting-vehicle-getting-big-upgrade-101802>, accessed on 1 May 2020.

<sup>118</sup> Just because 70% of all German tank losses on the Western Front in 1944/45 could be attributed to Allied air raids, there would have been no military gain to be made by refraining from continuing tank production on this basis, on the grounds that this would save production, training and maintenance costs.

or key personnel caused in an operation. For example, the loss of 5,000 highly experienced tank soldiers<sup>119</sup> at the Battle of Stalingrad had an extremely negative impact on the performance of the armoured divisions of the German Ostheer in the following year, while the subsequent loss of key workshops due to retreat movements was accompanied by the loss of numerous tanks that were merely in need of repair or maintenance.<sup>120</sup> The fall of Tunis in May 1943 was also a similar disaster for the armoured force.<sup>121</sup> Nevertheless, it is true that the cost-benefit equation has led to a constant and justified re-examination of the usefulness of heavy systems such as battle tanks due to the increasing availability of cheaper dual technologies.

New conflicts, and especially the war on terror, are being fought infantry-style. This argument is based on practical experience made since 2001, starting with Afghanistan, a war that was, and still is, predominantly fought by special forces and infantry. This deployment clearly shows, so the argument goes, that the time of armoured troops is over, since in new conflict scenarios the targeted elimination of individuals ("individualisation" of war) stands in the foreground and they also fight infantry-style or asymmetrically. In practice, however, armoured forces also prove to be advantageous in less conventional situations. Even in asymmetric conflicts, they still have the ability to monitor large terrain sections with optronic devices and ultimately establish battlefield dominance.

The effect of modern hand-held anti-tank weapons and IEDs: This argument has been used since the Yom Kippur War in 1973 and is by no means new. At that time, Egyptian infantry soldiers were surprisingly successful in fighting Israeli tanks. Nevertheless, it is often forgotten that the battle was ultimately decided in tank-versus-tank combat, and that at the end of the fighting 400 Israeli tanks were destroyed, while 2,250 Arab tanks were destroyed or captured.<sup>122</sup> It is true, however, that the remaining 600 tanks of the Israeli armoured forces had also been damaged almost without exception, many of them by RPG7 hand-held anti-tank weapons. According to tank sceptics, the effect of these and also that of IEDs is so overwhelming that modern tank troops are now at a loss.<sup>123</sup> Until then, US tank forces had been extremely successful in tank warfare and had eliminated the armoured troops of the Iraqi Republican Guard, most of whom were equipped with T-72 main battle tanks and BMP-2 infantry fighting vehicles, with relative ease. This was followed by insurgencies, including the battles for Fallujah, which also required the use of battle tanks. The insurgents used mainly light weapons such as the AK-47 assault rifle, the Dragunov precision rifle, the RPG-7 and RPG-29 hand-held anti-tank

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<sup>119</sup> These were the personnel of a total of twelve tank divisions and seven assault gun divisions.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Robert Forczyk: Tank Warfare on the Eastern Front 1943-1945, Pen& Sword Books, South Yorkshire 2016, p.12.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. Peter Lieb: Krieg in Nordafrika 1940-1943, Phillip Reclam jun. Verlag, Ditzingen 2018.

<sup>122</sup> Cf. Abraham Rabinovich: The Yom Kippur War: The Epic Encounter that Transformed the Middle East, Schocken Books, New York 2004, p.496.

<sup>123</sup> Cf. Mark Spikes: A Crisis of Confidence in Armor?, Armor, March-April 1998, p.20-22, 44.

weapons as well as modern anti-tank guided missiles from Western European and Russian production (9M133, AT-14 Spriggin).

It should be noted here that the focus was on taking out infantry fighting vehicles such as the Bradley, while the Abrams main battle tank proved to be consistently successful and highly resistant to hand-held anti-tank weapons and IEDs, even in urban combat.<sup>124</sup> However, the effect of the increasing introduction of "smart" precision munitions cannot yet be calculated. The anti-tank defences of the future are likely to be lighter, cheaper and far more effective.

In 2006, Israeli forces intervened in Lebanon after previous aggression by the Shiite Hezbollah. Initially planned as an air-only offensive, it developed into a ground-based intervention using armoured forces. For a long time, booby traps had been the only effective weapons of Hezbollah in southern Lebanon and Hamas in the Gaza Strip and West Bank in the fight against the armoured forces of the Israeli Army. The Israeli battle tanks of the "Merkava" series in particular had enjoyed a reputation as extremely robust weapons – until that operation. The first Merkava to be destroyed in southern Lebanon was lost directly during an improvised rescue operation on 12 July, when it drove onto a booby trap. In total, six Merkavas fell victim to such explosions. In addition, numerous other main battle tanks were severely damaged or even completely destroyed by anti-tank weapons (presumably as the Israeli Army advanced into Lebanese territory where no booby traps had been prepared). Even the latest version of the Merkava, the Merkava MK4, was put out of action by Hezbollah's anti-tank missiles, although the damage to crew and equipment was less than to the previous models.<sup>125</sup>

Israeli forces suffered a defeat, especially at Bint Jbeil: The intended capture of the village was not successful. In retrospect, however, it was determined that there had been a tactically flawed deployment of the armoured troops. Consequently, there was insufficient infantry or armoured infantry support, so that the Hezbollah forces were able to take out some Merkava tanks with modern ATGMs and IEDs. In addition, there were training deficiencies on the Israeli side.<sup>126</sup> Thus, the causes cannot generally be attributed to the ineffectiveness of armoured forces. The open conflict therefore seems – only superficially – to call into question the decisive value of mechanised forces even in asymmetric operations. The fact that the Israelis suffered surprisingly heavy losses of infantry fighting vehicles and even main battle tanks is essentially due to the fact that the opponent had been underestimated by the Israeli political and military leadership. Neither the degree of fortification of the Hezbollah positions (concreted, overlapping fire compartments, underground connections) nor the

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<sup>124</sup> Cf. David Zucchino: *Thunder Run: Three Days in the Battle for Baghdad*, Atlantic Books, London 2004, p.121-127.

<sup>125</sup> The presence and use of modern Russian anti-tank weapons such as KONKURS and METIS are seen as a clear sign that Syria is also strongly supporting Hezbollah with arms supplies.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. Matt M. Matthews: *We Were Caught Unprepared: The 2006 Hezbollah-Israeli War*, The Long War Series Occasional Paper 26, p.62.

anti-tank guided missiles effective at medium distances nor the relatively high level of training were initially accurately perceived by the attacking Israelis.<sup>127</sup> The Israeli experiences derived from these weapons made it clear how important state-of-the-art protective armour is. For example, the casualty rate of fatally injured occupants in Israeli armoured vehicles hit in 2006 fell by 50% compared to that in the Yom Kippur War, although the penetration performance of the anti-tank weapons used had improved enormously in some cases since then.<sup>128</sup> Turkey's intervention in Syria from 2016 onwards, which was accompanied by considerable tank losses, serves as a current example. The militia of the "Islamic State" (IS) succeeded in destroying numerous obsolete M60 Patton tanks as well as about ten Leopard 2 A4s. The question as to the causes is nevertheless focused on considerable training deficiencies in the Turkish Armed Forces; moreover, the tanks in question were the A4 model of the Leopard 2, which is no longer in service with the German Army.<sup>129</sup>

## Urban situations

With the "new wars", the focus of operations is also shifting. While in the past it was preferentially the terrain favourable to movement, far away from built-up areas and vegetation, it has been noticeable for years that operations in urban environments are becoming more and more important.<sup>130</sup> Increasing urbanisation and the use of asymmetric assets favour the emergence of urban security situations, while the importance of open terrain decreases and thus the probability of symmetrical tank battles.<sup>131</sup> The political, cultural and economic centres of states are also concentrated in urban environments.

However, the urban battlefield differs strikingly from the classic battlefield. It ranges from metropolises with highly developed and networked infrastructure to sprawling, extremely confusing slums with a high population density and only rudimentary infrastructure. The urban environment is characterised by being three-dimensional also for ground-based forces. Limited visibility as well as difficult reconnaissance and identification of the enemy lead to short reaction times, especially in duel situations. In addition, civilians of all cultural, ethnic and social backgrounds can be found here who are not the target of the operations. This and the often unclear information infrastructure increase the risk of collateral damage. The threat situation in urban environments is often characterised by opponents who fight asymmetrically and use hand-held and anti-tank weapons, mines and booby traps

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<sup>127</sup> Modern anti-tank guided missiles with operational distances of more than 1,000 m, as they could be used by Hezbollah thanks to Syrian and Iranian supplies, were not nearly as widespread as RPG-7 bazookas.

<sup>128</sup> Verein für Sicherheitspolitik und Wehrwissenschaft (2007), Panzerwaffe und gepanzerte Fahrzeuge- aktuelle Perspektiven und Einsatzformen, p.12.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. Sebastien Roblin: Germany's Leopard 2 Tank Was Considered One of the Best (Until It Went to Syria), <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/germanys-leopard-2-tank-was-considered-one-the-best-until-it-24234>, accessed on 2 May 2020.

<sup>130</sup> Demographic studies show that as much as 75% of the world's population lived in cities in 2020.

<sup>131</sup> Cf. O'Hanlon, Michael and Petraeus, David, „America's Awesome Military“, Foreign Affairs Magazine, Vol. 95 No. 5, September/October 2016, p.12.

as well as terrorist sabotage. In the urban environment, they find cover, opportunities to hide and optimal combat distances for their main weapon systems. Not to be neglected is also the threat posed by biological and chemical agents, especially in the vicinity of industrial production facilities or through the outbreak of diseases and epidemics.

Despite the increased likelihood of urban situations, the deployment of forces in such an environment is by no means new. As early as on 8 September 1939, a week after the war began, the German 4<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division suffered the first setback for armoured forces of the Second World War in a Warsaw suburb. The lesson was that tanks without accompanying infantry lost combat value in urban terrain, where they were at a disadvantage against determined defenders. As early as in 1944, the American forces developed a "Guide MOUT" (Military Operations in Urban Terrain), which summarised the experiences of the battles around the city of Aachen. Similar guides were also produced during the Korean War (Seoul, 1951) and the Vietnam War (Hue, 1968). What these conflicts have in common is that urban operations were actually the exception to combat operations for armoured units. If they were nevertheless necessary, the tactics and techniques of the otherwise predominant way of fighting did not prove effective, so that adjustments had to be made in response. Close cooperation between armoured troops and infantry forces always proved to be particularly expedient. After the end of the Cold War, there was a short-lived trend towards light troops for urban operations. The complexity of possible scenarios and the combat actions taking place in different intensities within an operation have been insufficiently considered. The militarily acceptable but politically painful experience of the USA in Mogadishu (1992) made planners question the use of only light forces. The actual demands on the armed forces then became abundantly clear in the Iraq war, in which the mechanised units, i.e. battle tanks and infantry fighting vehicles, had to bear the brunt of the fighting both in the initial operation and in the subsequent stabilisation operation. Their protection, mobility and superior firepower proved to be indispensable components.

However, these operational principles for urban operations never found their way into the command and control doctrine of the armed forces. Other armies also had experiences with military operations in urban environments in the past. For the Israeli Armed Forces, for example in Gaza, it has been shown that the intensity of fighting in an urban environment can change from one second to the next. Israel also deploys armoured units in urban operations and since 1990 has specifically optimised the Merkava for the special hazards and risks in urban conflicts.

Therefore, what would normally be considered an infantry-intensive situation has certainly led to the use of armoured forces in modern practice. Whether in Grozny (1994/95 and 1999/2000) or in Fallujah (2004): tanks, as mobile artillery platforms, have cleared the way for the infantry before and after the



turn of the millennium. In Syria as well as in Ukraine, which are current hotspots of conflict, numerous tanks are also being deployed in this function. In the Syria conflict, a civil war has been raging since 2011 between the Sunni majority and the Alawite-Shiite regime in Damascus. Currently (as of 2020), a victory of the Alawite-Shiite faction is emerging, which can be attributed to a considerable extent to the successful use of tanks. Already at the beginning of the war, the government forces relied massively on armoured forces, also in the urban environment of the so-called "vertical battlefield", where situational awareness must extend from the basement to the roof. Despite enormous losses, often due to outdated equipment (T-72) and inadequate training of tank crews, this method nevertheless proved effective. A helpful circumstance was that the opposition was only step-by-step supplied with hand-held anti-tank weapons and that it was largely poorly trained.<sup>132</sup> In the first documented battles in 2011 and 2012, the battle tanks were deployed very statically and without accompanying infantry, which resulted in a high loss of vehicles. When units were encircled by the enemy, as was the case with a unit of government troops in the Damascus district of Jobar in 2015, the firefight had to be conducted in all directions and vertically, which requires a particularly high degree of coordination, especially in urban areas. From 2013 onwards, a clear adaptation of tactics and combat technique was noticeable. The battle tanks (platoons of three T-72s each) were now accompanied by infantry fighting vehicles (up to four BMP-2s) and infantry, engineer support was provided by Brem armoured recovery vehicles and bulldozers with improvised armour, while the artillery directly supported the frontline units with indirect fire.<sup>133</sup>

Locating and engaging the enemy in urban terrain is difficult and must be done in all three dimensions. In the case of armoured vehicles, a large elevation angle of the weapon systems is of great importance. The BMP-2, in its support role as an infantry fighting vehicle, achieves an elevation angle of 70° with its 30mm machine gun and coaxial 7.62mm machine gun, which allows the vehicle to effectively engage opponents on the upper floors of a building.

The firing distances of the main battle tanks range from 100m to 1,500m, while the infantry fighting vehicles tend to operate at shorter distances, but with a greater elevation range. In the case of the T-72, the muzzle velocity of the explosive ammunition (3VOF22/3OF19) is 850 m/s; with the resulting flat trajectory, a good first-shot hit probability is still achieved even with inaccurate range estimates. The safety regulations concerning shooting over and laterally past own forces cannot be observed in built-up areas. In addition, the pressure effect of these large-calibre weapon systems is lethal to people at close range. Recent reports also show that firing with heavy weapons sometimes takes place

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<sup>132</sup> Jihadist militias, which are highly motivated and already have sound combat experience due to their origins (Iraq, Chechnya), must be excluded here.

<sup>133</sup> Cf. Francois Villard: Der Einsatz von gepanzerten Fahrzeugen in Syrien, ASMZ, 01/02-2015, 181.Jg, p.24-25.

through cover (walls), with target reconnaissance and observation being carried out by other vehicles or dismounted troops. Since tank crews hear the sounds of combat, especially from small-calibre weapons, only weakly or not at all, close cooperation with dismounted formations – also in target assignment – is of great importance.

Both the BMP-2 and the T-72 have a relatively high power-to-weight ratio (kilowatts per tonne) and are therefore very manoeuvrable. Limitations arise when hitting kerbstones from the side (risk of the tracks being torn off) because of the laterally mounted reactive protection modules, which increase the vehicle width, as well as due to the long smoothbore gun of the T-72, which is likely to touch a wall once in a while when manoeuvring carelessly, resulting in an elaborate readjustment of the optics to the weapon system.

The attack position is often approached via motorway or highway in order to be able to ensure the highest possible speed. The main assault then usually takes place via main roads that are at least ten metres wide (two armoured vehicles); otherwise, there is the danger that a downed vehicle will prevent both most of the fire and the movement, thus bringing the assault to a standstill.

The vehicles' reactive armour is very effective against the RPG-7 anti-tank weapons widely used among both government forces and insurgents. The T-72 can also evade enemy vision by injecting diesel into a smoke generator on the right side of the hull, but with the risk of completely befogging itself if the vehicle does not immediately withdraw.

Despite the intense heat, the hatches of the vehicles are mostly closed in order to protect the crew from snipers, fragmentation and pressure effects of the large number of weapon systems deployed as well as hand grenades and Molotov cocktails. However, this reduces the crew's command and control capability, especially when interacting with armoured infantry forces.

In general, whether in Syria or elsewhere, barricades, rubble or collapsed houses, among other things, limit the tactical mobility of the battle tank in urban operations. Therefore, the ability to clear obstacles by means of a clearing blade is essential and by no means an end in itself, and in the case of the Bundeswehr's Leopard 2 UrbOp main battle tank, it combines weapon effectiveness with mobility. This, in turn, is what makes it possible for subsequent forces to act with tank support in the first place, since currently – apart from the largely unarmed, now increasingly obsolete Keiler system – there is still no mine-protected clearance capability available in the German Army.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Cf. Jürgen Beitzel, Rolf Köpke, Mathias Scholz: „Die Wiedergeburt des Kampfpanzers“, <https://www.panzertuppe.com/detailansicht/wiedergeburt.html>, accessed on 6 May 2020.

A consistent evaluation of all empirical data from urban operations makes it clear that armoured troops can significantly contribute to the success of operations of any intensity in urban environments as well. However, in times of rapid technological development, the pressure to adapt is high and the armoured combat vehicles of the future will have to have completely different characteristics than those of the past.

## Future Combat Systems

As pioneers of the "Revolution in Military Affairs", planners and developers are focusing on the replacement of the current heavy combat armoured vehicles by lighter, so-called "Future Combat Systems" (FCS) in the medium to long-term. They include a whole series of systems that are to have state-of-the-art armour, stealth functions, a spectrum of effective weapons systems, as well as hybrid propulsion systems.<sup>135</sup> In the past, the expectations of clients have often been unrealistically optimistic, and projects have had to be cancelled after incurring considerable costs. Forced incorporation of immature technologies usually drove up costs and delayed development. Moreover, hi-tech systems also reveal vulnerabilities when they are confronted with adversaries that have "anti-access/area denial" (A2/AD) capabilities. They threaten the sensitive "neural pathways" of hi-tech forces with cyber, electric, satellite and long range precision weapons.<sup>136</sup> This is facilitated by the technology parity of the future in which the development and availability of dual technologies, especially their half-life, reduce any technological advantages to only a short duration. The US Army War College's assessment reads as follows:

"In 2035 the rapid development and diffusion of technologies, and scientific knowledge that underpins them, will result in near technological parity between competitors. The economic engines of future regional powers ensure that they will have timely access to the capabilities of that era. Technology – such as stealth, precision munitions, artificial intelligence informatics, robotics, and secure communications – in a fundamental sense will not offer significant advantages. Robot tanks engaging robot tank killers and stealth drone swarms engaging anti stealth drone swarms will result in contests of parity and attrition."<sup>137</sup>

The improved tanks of the next and possibly last generation count for some experts only as "transitional technology" and part of a risky "status quo mentality".<sup>138</sup> This generation of tanks will be

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<sup>135</sup> Cf. Max Boot: *War Made New: Weapons, Warriors, and the Making of the Modern World*, Gotham Books, New York 2007, p.420-421.

<sup>136</sup> Cf. Mac Thornberry and Andrew Krepinevich: „Preserving Primacy: A Defense Strategy for the New Administration“, *Foreign Affairs Magazine*, Vol. 95 No. 5, September/October 2016, p.27.

<sup>137</sup> Cf. Samuel White (ed.): *Futures Seminar: The United States Army in 2035 and Beyond*. Compendium of US Army College Student Papers (Volume 4, 2017)., Center for Strategic Leadership, Carlisle, 2018, p.23.

<sup>138</sup> Cf. Christian Brose: *The New Revolution in Military Affairs*, *Foreign Affairs Magazine*, Volume 98 Number 3, May/June 2019, p.122, 124, 132.

followed by powerful, light, small and intelligent agents of nano- and quantum technologies that will establish a completely different kind of warfare and may reduce the military significance of the armoured fighting vehicle to that of the lancer. Combined with significant advances in the development of "artificial intelligence", a new revolution in military affairs is emerging here, with traditionalists and innovators once again facing off in a dispute over which direction to take.<sup>139</sup>

Experience has also strongly shaped the debate between "heavy" and "light" approaches. Heavy formations, even in an environment of modern infrastructure, can only be moved with considerable logistical effort, which is hardly feasible without disruption and interference with the non-military sector. Transport routes, bridges and supply chains suffer more from troop movements than was the case during the Cold War. But even in the remote theatre of operations, the logistical effort is hardly in proportion to the requirements of the mission or mission objectives. With their super-heavy M1 tanks and completely unprotected Humvees, the US Army brigades during Operation Desert Storm (1991) were "too fat to fly and too light to fight".<sup>140</sup> This led to the development of the Stryker 8x8 wheeled combat vehicle and the establishment of medium-weight brigades. Such wheeled combat vehicles weigh 32-36 tonnes and are more manoeuvrable. The lighter weight enables such units to drive into the theatre of operations on their own wheels. These troops leave a much smaller logistical footprint. US Stryker brigades are therefore among the strong mobile forces that can react quickly when needed. In combination with heavy armoured fighting vehicles, an effective mix of speed and firepower has been created. One of the biggest future developments in armoured fighting vehicle design will therefore be the switch from tracks to wheels.

Given the cost of developing armoured vehicles and the small production runs as well as shortened lifetimes due to exponential technological development, the next main battle tank will probably also be able to be used as a platform for infantry fighting vehicles and self-propelled artillery. The suitability criteria for this are:

#### *Firepower: lethality of the system/platform*

Currently, the tank is the most lethal system in the army, but it must become even more lethal to prevent an ambiguous combat outcome with an equal opponent. The organic lethality of the tank, as measured by both direct and indirect fires, must increase significantly. Examples of improvements in direct fire lethality range from upgunning the Bradley family of vehicles or replacing them (either with an existing combat vehicle in another country's inventory or a new development item) with turrets

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<sup>139</sup> Cf. Paul Scharre: The Real Dangers of an AI Arms Race, Foreign Affairs Magazine, Volume 98 Number 3, May/June 2019, p.135.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Adam Muspratt: Armoured vehicle mobility: Strike brigades and future trends, <https://www.defenceiq.com/armoured-vehicles/articles/armoured-vehicle-mobility-mechanized-strike-brigades-and-future-trends>, accessed on 1 May 2020.

with 30 mm or 40 mm guns, which are unmanned or accessible to humans, to a new cannon that fires 130 mm anti-tank guided missiles (ATGM) mounted on the Abrams Main Battle Tank. Moreover, the development and subsequent integration of a real fire-and-forget ATGM for the Bradley (or its replacement) will increase both lethality and survivability. Interestingly, both Germany and Israel are treading many of the same paths, offering the army a potential opportunity to partner with both countries' ongoing modernisation efforts.

The battlefield of 2030 will be awash with indirect precision fire. Systems must have the organic capability not only to return fire but also to achieve the tactical effects, be it suppression or neutralisation of enemy forces.

### *Protection: Survivability of the system/platform*

The most important requirement for any future tank design is to reduce size and weight without compromising survivability. This will result in smaller tanks with less space and better protection. To achieve this, the crew size of manned systems will be reduced, possibly to only two or three persons, as is already the case with the T-14 Armata of the Russian Armed Forces. In order to protect them adequately against increasingly effective fire, options for additional armour (active and passive additional armour) continue to develop in the context of combat upgrades, which should secure a future for tank forces in the medium term. The requirements for modern systems therefore also include the separation of the crew from the vehicle's ammunition store. This has proven possible - if the combat vehicle guns are mounted in a remote-controlled turret with an automatic loader. Again, the T-14 Armata can serve as an example, but so can the German Puma infantry fighting vehicle.

### *Mobility: the ability to move on the road and in the field*

Like protection, mobility is a decisive capability needed on the future battlefield.

Tracked combat platforms have a greater mobility than wheeled platforms and can carry higher weight densities. This is not a final judgement in favour or against one solution (wheels/tracks). Which system is used is ultimately decided with a view to the mission. The impediments for tracked vehicle mobility are largely weight-related and stem from the space under the armour to achieve crew protection. This is a critical concern for modern combat vehicles. The tracked combat platforms of 2030-35 will achieve survivability through improved protection capabilities, thereby enabling modest weight reductions. In addition, emerging advances in metal forming and forging techniques will enable improved force protection (armour) capabilities per pound. In addition, hybrid engines will be integrated into all combat platforms, reducing the logistical burden of fuel supply and enabling battery rechargeability

for both on- and off-platform systems. The reduced logistical burden also increases the tactical and operational mobility of the force.

*Networkability: the ability to communicate with other vehicles, units, control centres and systems*

In addition, there will be increased possibilities for robotisation, i.e. the use of unmanned armoured systems. In addition to reducing manning levels and increasing the size of armoured formations, an important step would be the increased use of unmanned ground and air vehicles capable of conducting intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) operations far away from headquarters. Currently, unmanned aerial vehicles with limited capability are deployed to conduct ISR missions at the platoon and section level. As the battlefield becomes more dispersed and lethal over multiple areas, the need for immediate information on the composition of the enemy force and the terrain in the vicinity will continue to increase. Should the armoured platoon or armoured company grow larger, the organisation of unmanned air and ground platforms at the platoon level will enable small units to make rapid decisions to quickly outmanoeuvre the enemy – a key component of the army's nascent multi-domain concept of operations.

Perhaps the most important development in the near future is unmanned ground vehicles (UGVs). Remote-controlled tanks require less protection, so they can become smaller and lighter while maintaining high combat power. They are more mobile, easier to deploy and cheaper. An example of this is the Russian Uran-9 system, which was also deployed in Syria; however, the operational successes were probably mixed and work is being done to improve the system, which is already in regular service. Countries such as Serbia (Milos system) and Turkey (UKAP) have also put their first UGV systems into service. This makes it clear:

Manned and unmanned smaller tanks will be fully networked with other "intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance" (ISR) drones in the multidomain concept of operations, thereby having real-time updates of the overall situation, especially terrain and enemy movements. One such future concept currently being tested is tank pairs. Accordingly, only one tank has a crew, while the other is unmanned. The second tank serves as a "wingman", enabling efficient joint firing. A first approach to this can be found in the Russian system Taifun, which is used to protect Topol-M bases; this system will also incorporate elements of artificial intelligence (AI).

*Sustainability: its reliability, efficiency and logistical footprint*

In addition, to overwhelm enemy forces, hypersonic and loitering munitions must be developed and integrated at all levels:



By 2035, many aviation and mobility/counter-mobility tasks and organisations will be largely robotic. Manned and unmanned teams are essential to increase the survivability and effectiveness of both operations. Unmanned systems (i.e. robots) will be used as ground and air shock forces to identify, destroy and initially penetrate tactical air defences so that manned platforms are not exposed to hostile pre-planned engagement areas or 'kill boxes'.

Similarly, unmanned systems should be used extensively in urban operations to spare friendly forces. Robots can be used as reconnaissance, breaching, decoy and fire platform support. Ultimately, robots will reinforce dismounted infantry in urban areas.

*Flexibility: this means the adaptability of the platform<sup>141</sup>*

One of the biggest future developments in combat vehicle design will be the shift from tracks to wheels, the first beginnings of which can be found in the Stryker model since the turn of the millennium:

While wheeled vehicles are comparatively inexpensive to procure and maintain, tracked vehicles have the great advantage of being able to move at relatively high speeds even through debris and rubble, which are common in combat in built-up areas. In addition, tracked vehicles can adapt to a sudden situational change much more quickly and flexibly due to their ability to turn around on their own tracks. However, the future will bring changes in favour of wheeled vehicles here: with the installation of electric hub drive in each wheel, a wheeled armoured vehicle will be more mobile than an equivalent tracked vehicle. Other aspects concern propulsion: since an electric drive is much smaller than a diesel engine, this would have many advantages. But since we are probably a decade away from an appropriate battery technology, the next tank generation will certainly still have a diesel engine. Yet, catchword *mobility*: tanks will become lighter: New, particularly lightweight composite armour is under development. Graphene and other carbon allotropes weigh only a fraction of steel, but can be many times stronger. Finally yet importantly, innovative developments in tank-mounted weapons can also be expected: high-speed hypersonic missiles could overcome the active protection of modern tanks. Electromagnetic pulse (EMP) weapons could also revolutionise tank warfare. They could destroy all electrical systems and immobilise a tank without killing the crew.

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<sup>141</sup> Survivability and protection of own forces have the highest priority in Bundeswehr operations. The armour of the Leopard 2 main battle tank was designed to be the strongest frontally and has been optimised against the threat of enemy main battle tanks. It currently comprises only passive measures. In addition, the A6M version of the Leopard 2 main battle tank has been optimised for protection against mines in the hull area. Against the horizontal and three-dimensional threat in urban environments, e.g. from directional mines, anti-tank hand weapons, booby traps during slow movements or in static operations, it is currently not optimally armoured to effectively protect the lives of the crew from the effects of these weapons.

Examples of active protection capabilities are indirect fire protection capabilities (IFPC) and active protection systems (APS), both of which are in various degrees of development and production today. Examples of passive protection are decoys, signature management, camouflage and armour.

## Conclusion

It is not difficult to see from the above statements that in the future a further diversification of the operational spectrum and scenarios of armoured warfare can be expected. The spectrum of operations in the foreseeable future ranges from relief operations to peacekeeping operations with varying threat and conflict intensity to peace enforcement operations worldwide, also under difficult terrain, visibility and climatic conditions. Similarly, the threat to future combat vehicles is becoming more diverse and effective – it is also impossible to estimate its overall development with certainty. This makes the development and design of a future combat system an extremely demanding and difficult task.

The significance of the tank in the conventional sense is changing, but it is likely to remain so in the short term. In addition, armoured forces continue to retain a significant psychological impact on enemy infantry.<sup>142</sup> Armoured vehicles, their protection, firepower and mobility will thus remain decisive means of prevailing against conventional and asymmetrically operating opponents. The minimisation of losses of own soldiers and the better assertive profile still justify the expenditure for procurement, maintenance and training. Most armed forces plan to keep the currently deployed main battle tank models in service until at least 2035. Armoured vehicles will thus continue to dominate the image of modern European armies for a long time to come, until nanotechnological developments make them obsolete.

In the coming decade, developments will continue to focus primarily on electronics and digitalisation:

- Automation of firefighting (reconnaissance, tracking and engagement of targets),
- command and information systems (network-centric warfare),
- unmanned operations (remote-controlled or semi-autonomous),
- stand-off protection (softkill, hardkill, active camouflage or signature reduction),
- virtual reality systems (target reconnaissance and assignment),

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<sup>142</sup> Matsimus: do we still need tanks? The future of armored warfare. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUTfgOnpKP8>, accessed on 24.6.2019; [https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-future-combat-systems-\(FCS\)-overview-Dietterle/d8ff448b59754f74804b92aa9320a2279c46aab6/figure/1](https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-future-combat-systems-(FCS)-overview-Dietterle/d8ff448b59754f74804b92aa9320a2279c46aab6/figure/1), accessed on 23 April 2020; <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2017/12/12/red-robots-rising-behind-the-rapid-development-of-russian-unmanned-military-systems>, accessed on 23 April 2020.

- hybrid propulsion systems (fuel consumption and noise reduction).

The high survivability of the crew and the battle tank's ability to assert itself against modern enemy weapon systems is, in addition to the deterrent effect in the run-up to conflicts, which is to be evaluated as psychologically significant, a decisive prerequisite for the rapid management and termination of conflicts. In view of the foreseeable technological developments, however, planners are faced with the fundamental question of whether to invest in more individual weapon systems or in faster "kill chains". Christian Brose's assessment may be ground-breaking here when he writes that the decision will determine not only with what but rather how the wars of the future will be fought.

## Corriculum Vitae

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## The invisible third party

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### The partisan, war and anxiety

Matthias Kaiser

#### Introduction

The term partisan, from the Italian "partigiano", which translates as factionist, is intended to comprise the terms freedom fighter, guerrillero, rebel, franc-tireur, resistance fighter, peasant rout, insurgent, revolutionary and irregular fighter in the text below. On the one hand, this definition of terms serves to clarify the epoch-spanning phenomenon as well as the appropriate meaning as partisans of a new, own order that is yet to come. No matter what this new order contains in terms of political ideology, territorial expansion or the form of state to be achieved, the partisan always takes sides absolutely with these conceptions, without being identical with its meaning. The partisan is a factionist of the new order, not necessarily of the organisational form it takes once it has been won.

#### Nature and characteristics

The partisan possesses specific characteristics and abilities; only these genuine features enable him to distinguish himself from other participants in a war and make him stand out. Invisibility through hiding or concealment as well as his spreading fear among the ranks of his enemies lead to several paradoxes, including that of localisation and dissolving boundaries. Fishing in the primordial ground of this narrative could be paraphrased with the saying "L'état c'est moi", which is readily associated with Louis XIV's rule over France. The difference with the partisan is only that he does not merely symbolise the new other state; he is this state; he embodies it with his own corporeality. The struggle against the partisan is therefore not aimed at conquering a clearly definable space; it is aimed at the body of the partisan himself, because he is its embodiment.

*"Universality and the world are rooted in the innermost of individuality and the subject itself. This never becomes more understandable as long as the world is made into an object. However, it is understood immediately when the world is the field of all our experiences and we ourselves are nothing but a view of the world."*<sup>143</sup>

The space of the partisan cannot be taken over because it is as fluid and intangible as the phenomenon and the concrete figure of the partisan itself. The result is a de-regulation, disenfranchisement and disinhibition not only in the struggle against the partisan, but also with regard to state-maintained

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<sup>143</sup>Maurice Merleau-Ponty: Phänomenologie der Wahrnehmung. München 1974. p.462.

actors using force. Invisibility, a dissolution of boundaries and the spread of fear not only expand the space of the partisan, but in turn also the state of exception. This makes the partisan a threat to the sovereignty of the old order as well as to public order.<sup>144</sup> He becomes an outlaw, an absolute enemy, the homo sacer of postmodern warfare.

*"Sovereign is the sphere in which one can kill without committing murder and without celebrating a sacrifice; and sacred, that is killable but not sacrificial, is the life enclosed in this sphere."*<sup>145</sup>

The structure of the partisan, his innermost being, makes the hope of rule-based action in a war scenario fade. The subsections will try to show this. This is a political phenomenology of the partisan from an existential point of view.

## Invisibility

Invisibility initially appears as a paradoxical condition; this paradox is based on a centrally missing quality of non-recognisable and perceptible visibility of an existing entity. Invisibility could also be confused with "non-existent" or "nothing" and would include the assertion of invisibility, yet not the assertion of actually "existing" or "being".

*"But nothingness is nothing, and there cannot be a difference between imagined and "actual" nothingness, if otherwise nothingness represents complete indistinguishability. The "actual" nothingness itself, however - is this not again that hidden, but contradictory concept of a being nothingness?"*<sup>146</sup>

A non-existing nothingness is not contradictory, because it has the characteristic of being invisible. Now, it is impossible for something to be and not be at the same time. Visibility should always be understood here as actually existing and not, as in a mind game, that a dead partisan is in a box.

A partisan is a human being who cannot put on a cloak of invisibility like Siegfried the Dragonslayer did, but must hide or go underground in order to become invisible. Both abilities, disappearing and hiding, require a change of shape that makes the partisan indistinguishable from his surroundings. Becoming invisible, therefore, does not mean that he loses his other attributes, such as being hostile, armed or partial to something; nor is it that the attribute of visibility is lost, but it means that a new and decisive ability, namely becoming invisible as an action, is added. The partisan becomes invisible through a lack of distinguishability with his environment, for this he must make parts of the attributes

<sup>144</sup> Giorgio Agamben: *Ausnahmezustand*. Frankfurt am Main 2004, p.7.

<sup>145</sup> Giorgio Agamben: *Homo sacer. Die souveräne Macht und das nackte Leben*. Berlin 2012, p.93.

<sup>146</sup> Martin Heidegger: *Was ist Metaphysik?*. Frankfurt am Main 1969, p.30.

of his environment his own, merge with it in the best way he can. He must originate from it in order to acquire these attributes, which is why the partisan possesses a telluric essence.

*"I would like to comment on another, fourth characteristic of the true partisan, which Jover Zamora has called the telluric character. It is important for the fundamentally defensive situation of the partisan, who, despite all his tactical mobility, changes his nature when he identifies with the absolute aggressiveness of a world revolutionary or a technicist ideology. But also the partisan struggles of the Second World War and the following years in Indochina and other countries, which are sufficiently described by the names of Mao Zedong, Ho Chi-minh and Fidel Castro, show that the connection with the soil, with the autochthonous population and the geographical character of the country, i.e. the mountains, the forests, the jungles or the deserts, remains undiminishedly current."*<sup>147</sup>

The term telluric should therefore be understood here in a double sense: It means not only that the partisan can become indistinguishable from the landscape surrounding him (forest, desert, mountains), but also that he can act and go into hiding under the protection of the population (city).

This leads to the fundamental distinction between escaping and disappearing with the knowledge, consent and support of the population and hiding in the landscape (forest, desert, mountains) with a great understanding of the natural conditions.

Going into hiding demands some requirements regarding what Schmitt calls the autochthonous population from which the partisan is recruited.<sup>148</sup> Partisan warfare is inconceivable without a declaration of will to go to war by at least a significant part of the population. The partisan must become one with the population; this condition is considered his legitimisation for the struggle. If this does not happen, he is an easy target that can be quickly tracked down and fought.<sup>149</sup> The process of becoming invisible can be done with the help of propaganda, or the acts of the partisan himself are considered as an invitation for support.

*"However, the best results are achieved through propaganda in the guerrilla area itself. The aim of this propaganda is to make the inhabitants thoroughly familiar with the ideas of the insurgents."*<sup>150</sup>

Here, too, the paradox of invisibility appears: although the partisan has no visibility, which would be a demonstration of strength, he does not lose his other attributes (hostile, armed, partisan) as a result.

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<sup>147</sup> Carl Schmitt: Theorie des Partisanen. Zwischenbemerkung zum Begriff des Politischen. Berlin 1963, p.26.

<sup>148</sup> Schmitt, I.c., S.35.

<sup>149</sup> Herfried Münkler: Der Partisan. Theorie, Strategie, Gestalt. Leverkusen 1990, p.27.

<sup>150</sup> Ernesto Guevara: Guerillakampf und Befreiungsbewegung. Dortmund 1986, p.167.



Invisibility, let it be understood, for the enemy, not for the population, which is in permanent contact and balance with him.

*"A constant, on the other hand, is that all those engaged in small-scale warfare require a certain degree of support from the local population - up to the extreme case where the latter itself takes up arms in large numbers."*<sup>151</sup>

The violent act, therefore, does not always serve only the military expediency of fighting the enemy, but, if successfully carried out, also promotes popular consent and thus subversion. But violence as propaganda of acting<sup>152</sup> is not sufficient; otherwise the partisan would be nothing else but a terrorist.

The communication of political target content is similar to a cross-front and tries to appeal to as many supporters of violence as possible.

*"The linking of urban nationalism with peasant revolts could, with considerable explosive force, be reinterpreted as a struggle against "imperialism" and "feudalism". Utopian notions of a "just" social order that was supposed to have existed in a distant past also exerted a considerable influence subliminally. However, even during the wars of decolonisation - similar to the French Revolution - partisan movements were by no means always left-wing, and the Third World partisan cannot simply be related to the revolutionary."*<sup>153</sup>

An interplay of interests and impositions develops between partisan resistance and the population, in which advantage and balance are sought. However, this state of affairs cannot be long-lasting; just as the partisan is an old phenomenon of world history, but its duration of concrete existence is narrowly limited in time.

Hiding in the landscape can be understood as a second way of becoming invisible. Partisan warfare with a rural character uses the prevailing natural conditions to operate from ambush. Knowledge of space is essential here and makes the partisan appear as a defensive character, because where he is not telluric, he cannot be.

*"For small-scale warfare, such terrain is also - and especially - suitable, which in its nature seems unsuitable or only slightly suitable for waging a "large-scale" war with modern means: high mountains,*

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<sup>151</sup> Beatrice Heuser: Rebellen, Partisanen, Guerilleros. Asymmetrische Kriegsführung von der Antike bis heute. Paderborn München Wien Zürich 2013, p.110.

<sup>152</sup> Cf.: Ulrich Linse. „Propaganda der Tat“ und „Direkte Aktion“. Zwei Formen anarchistischer Gewaltanwendung. In: Mommsen, Wolfgang: Sozialprotest, Gewalt, Terror. Gewaltanwendung durch politische und gesellschaftliche Randgruppen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Stuttgart 1982, p.237-270.

<sup>153</sup> Boris Barth: Partisan und Partisanenkriege in Theorie und Geschichte. Zur historischen Dimension der Entstaatlichung von Kriegen. In: Militärgeschichtliche Zeitschrift. 1/2005, p. 81.

*extensive forests, jungles, the maze of streets in a big city. Small-scale warfare is conceivable in any space whose terrain coverage, structure and population density enable the guerrillas' action groups to infiltrate unnoticed by the enemy, strike by surprise and go into hiding after carrying out the action.*"<sup>154</sup>

The idea appears that in highly industrialised nations, guerrilla warfare no longer seems possible because of the broadly developed infrastructure and transport routes. But on the one hand, it should be noted that power-political peripheries still exist and that man-made landscapes such as cities are, in the end, only landscapes. In the course of the Syrian and Afghan civil wars, cities such as Aleppo and Kabul were transformed from communal spaces shaped by social interactions into a war landscape; the city became a space of warlike interaction.

Although social interactions with the non-combatant population take on a more central role in cities, there can be no question about the end of the partisan as a result of advancing mechanisation.

*"For every technological advantage the Americans possessed, the Taliban seemed to have an equivalent or counteragent. Apache helicopters are equipped with thermal imaging devices that register body heat in the mountains, and therefore the Taliban disappear by hiding under a blanket on a rock. The Americans use unmanned drones to pinpoint the enemy, but the Taliban manage to do the same by watching the flocks of crows circling over the American soldiers in search of food. The Americans have virtually unlimited firepower, so the Taliban send just one man to take on an entire firing position. Whether he loses his life or not, he manages to hold off the enemy's war machine for another day."*<sup>155</sup>

The element of invisibility removes the partisan from the mundane<sup>156</sup>, mythologises him and turns him from a political subject into a theological one. His struggle is not a political-theoretical one, but it is political theology, an act of faith in the new order.

## Fear and anxiety

Fear of the partisan is rooted in his invisibility and the possibility of death at the hands of the partisan. Hereby, the fear of the partisan is affected by a paradox just like invisibility. Fear results from being thrown into this world. Fear is also an abstract emotional state that can only come about through an awareness of one's own mortality. The paradox is this: Man feels fear of his own death, but he cannot

<sup>154</sup> Friedrich August von der Heydte: Der Moderne Kleinkrieg. Als wehrpolitisches und militärisches Phänomen. Würzburg 1972, p.112-113.

<sup>155</sup> Sebastian Junger: War ein Jahr im Krieg. München 2010, p.106, 107.

<sup>156</sup> Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie. Band 11. Artikel: Unsichtbarkeit. p.267.

attain it during his lifetime. The redemption from fear, however, is his death, so he fears the redemption from fear through his own demise.

*"The thrownness into death reveals itself to him more originally and more insistently in the state of fear. Fear of death is fear "of" one's own most immediate and unsurpassable being-capability."*<sup>157</sup>

The determining element of fear differs from that of anxiety. Anxiety is directed towards something concrete; it can contribute to relief because something has finally found a direction.<sup>158</sup> Combat therefore occupies a special position; not only as a manifestation of the partisan's own existence and ability, but also in partisan combat as an alleviation of fear. This is true for all wars, but for guerrilla warfare in particular, since it knows no fronts or clearly delimited spaces.

*"Strange as it may sound to some who have never struggled for existence: The sight of the enemy brings not only ultimate horror but also relief from heavy, unbearable pressure. This is the lust of blood that hangs over war like a red storm sail over a black galley, related only to love in its boundless momentum."*<sup>159</sup>

If these concepts of fear and invisibility are brought together, their religious character quickly becomes apparent. Both stand at the beginning of the original Christian fear of God; this is the fear of the invisible God who judges sins.

*The committed sin is at the same time a consequence in itself, even if it is a consequence alien to freedom. This consequence announces itself; and the rate of fear is a relation to the entrance of this consequence, which is the possibility of a new state. However low an individual has sunk, it can sink even lower, and this "can" is the object of fear.*<sup>160</sup>

This insight can be helpful for an analysis because it explains much more in the context of partisan warfare and its appearance in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. The modern 20<sup>th</sup> century lost the conventions of rationality and moderation in warfare: it degenerated into an age of totality.<sup>161</sup>

Through irregular combat in the invisible, even the last codified and non-codified rules of war are undermined. The fear triggered by this causes overreactions, an equal lack of rules and a spatial expansion of the state of war. The political-theological core of the partisan is independent of his religious denomination, political location or ethnic affiliation; he is first and foremost an embodiment

<sup>157</sup> Martin Heidegger: Sein und Zeit. Tübingen 2006, p.251.

<sup>158</sup> Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie. Band 1. Artikel: Angst, Furcht. Darmstadt 2001, p.310.

<sup>159</sup> Ernst Jünger: Der Kampf als inneres Erlebnis. Stuttgart 2016, p.8.

<sup>160</sup> Søren Kierkegaard: Der Begriff Angst. Stuttgart 1992, p.124.

<sup>161</sup> Jörg Baberowski. Moderne Zeiten?. Krieg, Revolution und Gewalt im 20. Jahrhundert. Göttingen 2006, p.9.

of the myth of the state and its community. The phenomenon of the partisan is a pre-Enlightenment synthesis of contouring and emotion; a reduction to the concrete when reflecting on it would not do it justice.<sup>162</sup> Rather, a causal analysis is prevented by the myth; it is its flipside, for the mythical knows no boundaries and prevents the division of the whole into its individual parts.<sup>163</sup> Thus, it is possible to speak of the myth of the partisan and mean the myth of the new, yet to come state that it symbolises. Ernst Cassirer describes myth, like art, as the original phenomenon of all human culture, because it connects the tangible world of things with a world of imagination shaped by emotions.<sup>164</sup>

The fear of the partisan is also founded not only in the mortality of man, but also in the knowledge of the decay of the existing and defensible old order. This justifies the totality and brutality of the struggle, for under the cloak of the primacy of the political a spiritual spirit is hidden.

*"A French scholar, E. Doutté, has written a very interesting book "Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord". In it, he tries to give a short and clear definition of myth. According to Doutté, the gods and demons we find in primitive societies are nothing but the personifications of collective desires. Myth, says Doutté, is "le désir collectif personnifié" - the personified collective desire."*<sup>165</sup>

Without adopting the talk of the primitive, it is nevertheless advisable to consider the etymology of the Latin *primitivus*: the first of its kind. Partisan warfare is the first war; it stood at the beginning, even before the discovery of the state,<sup>166</sup> for it formed the first own order of the community.

## Localisation and dissolution of boundaries

The irregularity of the partisan is also based on his de-limitation of space and the deregulation of war. The partisan struggle is favoured by an already weak political order, inadequate infrastructure, poor social and economic regulation. To abbreviate this, a highly simplified but nevertheless useful distinction is presented here to illustrate the peripheral character of partisan warfare:

Periphery refers to the edge of an extension of rule; this is characterised by a weak order and is also subject to many external military and political factors of influence.

Empire is the domain of a sprawling power of order that finds its origin in the capital. The imperial space of order can be described as the space in which set rules are applied almost reliably and, if necessary, can also be enforced against resistance.

<sup>162</sup> Ernst Cassirer: Philosophie der symbolischen Formen. Erster Teil: Die Sprache. Hamburg 2010, p.10.

<sup>163</sup> Ernst Cassirer: Philosophie der symbolischen Formen. Zweiter Teil: Das mythische Denken. Hamburg 2010, p.63.

<sup>164</sup> Ernst Cassirer: Versuch über den Menschen. Einführung in eine Philosophie der Kultur. Hamburg 1990, p.50.

<sup>165</sup> Ernst Cassirer: Vom Mythos des Staates. Hamburg 2017, p.365.

<sup>166</sup> Herfried Münkler: Der Partisan. Theorie, Strategie, Gestalt. Leverkusen 1990, p.30;31.

Capitals are those centres of power from which regulations of order emanate. An empire can have a large number of these capitals.

This distinction, made only on the basis of Menzel<sup>167</sup>, makes it possible, despite its weaknesses and omissions, to highlight a spatial differentiation of partisan warfare.

The hierarchy of order shows the capital as the centre in the middle, from which the essential political and social impulses emanate. These impulses lose their effect on the way from the capital to the political periphery.

The space of the partisan is the space in which the already weak impulses (culture, economy, violence, law) and enforcement options of the state (power, rule, discipline) are challenged by the partisan. This space behaves amorously to the same extent that the regulatory prerequisites of an old order assume an amorphous state in the periphery of its power to act.

This analysis has a profoundly situational character: What appears to be firmly in the hands of the existing political order today may be located on the periphery of the order tomorrow and soon be permeated by partisanship. To use another image: Fort Saint-Jean adorns the harbour entrance of Marseille, but the fort was not meant to deter potential foreign attackers coming from the open Mediterranean: its cannons were aimed at the city and thus at its own population. A sure indicator of the peacefulness of a society is therefore the absence of means of force rather than their open display. The signals of the periphery can also reveal themselves quite subtly to the viewer.

Nevertheless, the emergence of the partisan is not only dependent on weak impulses from the rulership, but also on a favourable topographical and geopolitical location. A favourable topographical situation generally means landscapes that are difficult to access.

*"Fighters in small-scale conflicts are favoured by mountainous, swampy or otherwise inaccessible terrain, which is usually more difficult to overcome by regular troops and provides hiding places for irregular forces. The mountainous areas of Yugoslavia or Albania or the swampy areas of Iraq and Afghanistan are accordingly particularly well suited for such warfare, as would become apparent several times in the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries."*<sup>168</sup>

The space-power-structure seems to be as conducive to a partisan space as an inaccessible landscape. It can always be helpful if there are spaces of retreat with foreign powers that show an interest in

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<sup>167</sup> Ulrich Menzel: Die Ordnung der Welt. Imperium oder Hegemonie in der Hierarchie der Staatenwelt. Berlin 2015, pp.65; 76; 225; 800; 802-803.

<sup>168</sup> Heuser, I.c., p.43.

supporting the partisan. The motives for this can be manifold, and there is no shortage of historical and contemporary examples: for example, the war in Afghanistan with retreat spaces in Pakistan and support through fighters and weapons from these very spaces;<sup>169</sup> the circumvention of front lines or stronger enemy formations through supply routes to neighbouring countries during the Vietnam War through Laos and Cambodia; or, and with very fatal consequences for Angola, with two very powerful interested third parties at the same time during the Angolan civil war.<sup>170</sup> This support of the warring parties in Angola by UNITA-USA and MPLA-USSR, prolong the partisan war in the long term and make a peace agreement much more difficult. The constant supply of arms through purchase and the resulting dependence of the warring parties shows the importance of interested third parties in maintaining partisan status.<sup>171</sup> Neither the USSR nor the USA are neighbouring states of Angola; this further demonstrates that the more powerful the interested third party is, the more far-reaching its support can be, even over long distances in space and time.

## Partisans, soldiers and mercenaries

The idea of an ascending straight line should be helpful at this point. This straight line begins at the lower end with the phenomenon of the terrorist and rises via the pariah bandit to the path of the partisan. This path is interrupted by mercenaries and ends with the soldier at the top. Many associations can be made with this straight line. Meaningful associations would be those from disorder to order, or from invisibility to visibility; apt would also be those from asymmetry to symmetry.

The terrorist is a poor creature, especially poor in possibilities: He has neither approval for his goals in society nor the means to exercise force in the struggle for a new order emanating from him. His only capital comes from spreading fear: through kidnappings, attacks and murders. The more helpless and weak his victims are, the more terrible and simple his act becomes. If the terrorist's path were also a straight line of hope of becoming a partisan, then at the lowest end of this straight line would be the attack on helpless victims and at the upper end that on armed and ready-to-defend enemies. The choice of victims is an indication of weakness or strength. Useful examples are the inscriptions on Napoleonic marshals' staffs which read: "Terror belli decus pacis" translated as terror in war, ornament in peace. For terrorists, the inscription "Terror pacis decus belli" would be a good motto. Terror in peace, ornament in war, because war would be an ornament for one's existence. Unfortunately, this struggle for recognition as a legitimate participant in war often enough takes place through the use of

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<sup>169</sup> Ahmad Rashid: *Am Abgrund. Afghanistan, Pakistan und der Westen*. London 2012, p.66-67.

<sup>170</sup> Cf.: James Martin: *A Political History of the Civil War in Angola. 1974-1990*. New Brunswick 2011.

<sup>171</sup> Mathis Balz: *Die Politische Ökonomie von Bürgerkriegen. Eine Kritik der „Neuen Kriege“ anhand der Fallbeispiele Angola, Somalia und Afghanistan*. Hamburg 2009, p.40-41.



soldiers. Using a state's military forces to fight terrorism is a triumph, which should be denied to terrorists.

The task of police manhunts is to separate terrorists from the peaceful population; that is the purpose of dragnet searches.<sup>172</sup> Wherever this is no longer possible, the telluric essence of the partisan appears: here is a demarcation from the partisan to the terrorist.

Terrorism is the scout of the new; it blasts and murders its way into people's minds and the institutions of the state. In this, left-wing terrorists, right-wing terrorists and terror-spreading Islamists as well as cult followers are strikingly similar; they are united by a loathing of the political present. Their political goals, their utopias for the past and the future may differ fundamentally from one another, as do their hopes for what is to come; they are all in agreement that the existing is sick and must be destroyed. This disgust with the present, with the state as it is, unites all radical currents and ideologies; the same political diagnosis of the times is hidden in all motivations.

Destabilisation and unrest are meant to create a new political space of possibility. The confrontation is clear because it is: Pax versus terror, ordo versus progressus (terror versus peace, order versus progress).

*"Before terror is a real act of violence (which of course it always is), terror is a threat: the threat that this one experienced violence is only the beginning, only the sign of a much greater, all-surpassing violence. This threat draws its power primarily from its own opacity, i.e. from the fundamental - practical as well as theoretical - incomprehensibility of the "before" of terror. In this way, terror actually transforms the world into an "unhome", makes it "uncanny", because its opacity destroys all reliability and horizons of expectation, makes any escape into the familiar and predictable impossible."*<sup>173</sup>

In Kierkegaard's sense, terrorism throws people into the vertigo of freedom as a possibility for possibility, it makes them look into the yawning abyss of their own being and recognise their own transience.<sup>174</sup>

It can be seen that any definition of terrorism or terrorists involves certain variables that must be taken into account. However, if we follow the straight line to the new order, we do not recognise a dividing line even at the transition from terrorist to partisan. Partisans are capable of terrorist acts (attacks, murders, kidnappings) in individual cases, but without losing their other characteristics and abilities.

<sup>172</sup> Cf.: Stephan Wanner: Die negative Rasterfahndung. Eine moderne und umstrittene Methode zur repressiven Verbrechensbekämpfung. München 1985.

<sup>173</sup> Tobias Klass: Schreckgespenster. Überlegungen zur politischen Theologie der Angst nach Kierkegaard, Heidegger und Hobbes In: Zeitschrift für Medien- und Kulturforschung. 2009/1, p. 117.

<sup>174</sup> Søren Kierkegaard: Der Begriff Angst. Stuttgart 1992, p. 64.

The difference is that partisans are not exclusively limited to them. It is therefore possible to speak of terrorist acts within a partisan context. They are, of course, testimony to weakness rather than strength, but the space of the partisan is also amorphous and differentiated, marked by inadequacies in its own military strike capability. Meaningful examples of such acts committed in a partisan context would be the attack by Vietcong fighters on the US embassy in Saigon in the course of the Tet Offensive,<sup>175</sup> the assassination of the city commander of Nantes Karl Hotz by members of the French Resistance,<sup>176</sup> the kidnapping of Major General Kneipe by Greek partisans.<sup>177</sup>

But beyond these indifferences, the ascending straight line symbolises the transformative character of the partisan, whose figure is temporary and not manifest. This endangered position is marked by the constant possibility of becoming a fanatical terrorist or a profiteering bandit. In this observation, the practitioners of partisan warfare also resemble each other in their theoretical analysis.

*"We already pointed this out at that time (at the 1<sup>st</sup> Party Congress of the Hunan-Kiangsi Border Area), after some comrades from the Djinggang Mountains on the border of Hunan and Kiangsi Provinces had asked the question in the winter of 1927 and spring of 1928, shortly after the beginning of the guerrilla war in China: 'How long will we be able to keep the red flag flying?' For this was a question of most fundamental importance; without answering the question of whether the revolutionary base areas in China and the Chinese Red Army could exist and develop, we could not have taken a single step forward."*<sup>178</sup>

Partisanship is not an institution, it is a state that lasts only for a limited time. If this state remains too long and does not make progress, it inevitably descends.

This would be a further differentiation from terrorism: the partisan's struggle is entirely shaped by the present; disgust as a motivation is alien to it, for it has long been part of the political and social cosmos. The partisan affects the old existing order, its existence is lived history. It is this participation in historicity in the course of which it shapes presentness. This is also the cause of the democratic appearance of partisan war.

Democratic pretence is the momentous confusion of tellurian essence through the support of a select population group and democratic legitimacy through elections from a population. It is a struggle for legitimacy of rule and not rule by legitimacy. The fight against partisanship is characterised by the appearance of partisan legitimacy, because actual popular support cannot be precisely defined. Thus,

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<sup>175</sup> Cf.: Don Oberdorfer: Tet!. The Turning Point in the Vietnam War. Baltimore 2001.

<sup>176</sup> Cf.: Ernst Jünger: Zur Geiselfrage. Schilderungen der Fälle und ihrer Auswirkungen. Stuttgart 2011.

<sup>177</sup> Cf.: Patrick Fermor: Die Entführung des Generals. Zürich 2015.

<sup>178</sup> Mao Tse-tung: Ausgewählte Werke. Band 1. Peking 1972, p.229.

entire populations can be held hostage and affected by excessive violence.<sup>179</sup> The fight against partisanship finds itself in a dilemma here, since even the toleration of the partisan by large sections of the population can be interpreted as support. Countermeasures range from fighting for the hearts and minds of the population to punitive measures and genocide. This can have two consequences, firstly that the population continues to show solidarity with the partisan and that his telluric nature solidifies, or that the population distances itself from the struggle as it pays a high blood price for supporting him.

The partisan's struggle is not exclusively for state-political domination; it is for order in general. Although the soldier is at the top of this ascending straight line, the phenomenon of the partisan is older than the invention of the modern nation state. The scheme of the straight line, due to the fluid and transformative character of the partisan with its ability to spread fear, to dissolve boundaries and to become invisible, should, on closer examination, show a curvature. This curvature results from the fact that as soon as the partisan evolves from asymmetry to symmetry, or from irregularity to regularity, he loses his central qualities and abilities. The escape from the fear of the partisan is the death of the partisan in the regularity of the new order existing through him. In this order, the new regular army of soldiers is formed from the nucleus of the former partisan.

*"Especially in the beginning, the actual fighting technique was the guerrilla. In the Vietnamese theatre of war, this technique brought great victories. The guerrillas could operate in the mountains and in the delta, with good or mediocre weapons, or even without weapons. They could equip themselves at the expense of the enemy. In interaction with the regular army, they succeeded in weakening or wearing down the enemy troops. As our armed forces developed, operational techniques soon changed. Guerrilla warfare soon turned into mobile wars - a mobile war was still strongly influenced by guerrilla technique, but soon became the primary form of combat on the main front in the north. This development from guerrilla warfare to the mobile war was paralleled by a steady increase in the size of our People's Army."*<sup>180</sup>

It is under this classification of the Vietnamese general Võ Nguyên Giáp in the struggle against the French colonial empire that the wars for the Cuban and Chinese orders can also be considered. With the Chinese People's Liberation Army, Mao even achieved several transformations from regularity to irregularity, depending on whether he was facing the Kuomintang or the Japanese army. These transformations were always accompanied by changes in character, from partisan to soldier and vice versa, always, of course, with the danger of descending to the terrorist or bandit.

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<sup>179</sup> Heuser, I.c., p.172-214.

<sup>180</sup> Nguyễn Võ Giáp: Volkskrieg, Volksarmee. München 1968, p.23.

A pariah in the sense of this list, a phenomenon that stands outside, is the bandit. Bandits fight and rob; they have the ability to go underground and hide to the extent that terrorists would be able to do so. The predominant reason for their actions, however, is not the establishment of a new order of their own. Their struggle is primarily determined by the motive of personal enrichment. Nevertheless, the bandit can appear as a partisan when he is given the respective attributes from outside. This gives him the appearance of a telluric being: the cult of crime is a first sign of this. This, however, is more a reflection of the moods and hopes of those who offer cultic veneration to such figures. The partisan also exposes himself to this danger on his way to the new order.

*"The human has the feeling of being under foreign rule, and in this relation the criminal appears to be related to him. When the bandit Giuliano, a robber and multiple murderer, was hunted down in Sicily, mourning spread far and wide. The experiment of living and continuing life in the wild had failed. Everyone within the grey masses was affected by this and reinforced in their sense of being trapped. This leads to the heroisation of the perpetrator. It also creates the moral twilight in all resistance movements, and not only there."*<sup>181</sup>

Jünger calls the danger of descent "the moral twilight" and prefers to recommend morality in the struggle as well as in society to his partisan, whom he calls a forest walker; admittedly, a little engagement with philosophy is also supposed to be quite helpful.<sup>182</sup> The decisive factor that allows a distinction to be made, however, is once again his lack of telluric nature and the regulatory motivation behind his actions. Jesse James, known to many as a gunslinger and mythical bandit of the so-called Wild West, was actually a member of the Quantrill's Raiders, a partisan army to re-establish the Confederate States of America.<sup>183</sup> The tributes to him as a Western hero continue to our present day in numerous films and publications: This is a semblance of a tellurian essence of partisanship.<sup>184</sup> This diffusion in the consideration of Jesse James illustrates the ambivalent relationship between banditry and partisanship, marked by rise and fall.

Another pariah on the road to the new order is the phenomenon of the mercenary. The term mercenary is a collective term for any private military service provider; this includes private logistics companies, supply and training facilities, security services and property protection, material maintenance, but also military companies with offensive combat capabilities.<sup>185</sup> The term mercenary

<sup>181</sup> Ernst Jünger: Der Waldgang. Frankfurt am Main 1962, p.84.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., p.85.

<sup>183</sup> Cf.: T. J. Stiles: Jesse James: Last Rebel of the Civil War. London 2003.

<sup>184</sup> Cf.: Matthew Hulbert: The Ghosts of Guerrilla Memory. How Civil War Bushwhackers became Gunslingers in the American West. Athens 2016.

<sup>185</sup> Sahra Cotton: Hired Guns. Views about armed contractors in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Santa Monica 2010, S.9, 10.

also includes lansquenets, condottieri, private military contractors, but also employees of a security service or security.

This clarification of terms should be emphasised, because all too often in professional-academic and public discourse there is talk of private security service providers, military contractors, etc., where the term mercenary would be more appropriate. Such euphemisms lead to ambiguities and at the same time obscure the clear historical derivation of the mercenary and its history.

*"The condottiere is becoming respectable again. In fact, there is hardly any talk of "mercenaries" any more, as reference is made again and again to the truly awkward and impracticable definition of them in international protocols and agreements, disqualifying the meaningful use of this term for that reason alone."*<sup>186</sup>

Among the primary characteristics, as is also the case with bandits, is financial motivation. Unlike bandits, their task is explicitly military in nature and not, as in the case of the bandit, compulsory or resulting from the illegality of his actions.

In mercenaryism, several distinctions can be made within the phenomenon. Basically, this is possible by the degree of connection between the client and the contractor and, as a result, the extent to which the contractor can become embedded in existing military structures. Mercenaries with a high degree of embeddedness can be deployed in all areas of the military craft; externally, they are sometimes indistinguishable from regular armed forces.<sup>187</sup> The analogy to partisan immersion should be noted here. Or mercenaries take over security services as well as combat operations in conflict regions largely autonomously and on their own responsibility. Admittedly, with a variable degree of support services in terms of logistics, material and pay of their clients, this with a high correlation of the military capabilities of the clients. These clients can be states and their intelligence services, companies concerned about their investments or personally and financially motivated individuals.

As a special case within this panorama of mercenaryism, the legionary is unique, a chameleon of military history. This special case as a bridge to the soldier illustrates the connection between loyalty and the myth of statehood, but also the nation as a construction of sameness of multicultural, multireligious as well as multi-ethnic diversity. Furthermore, legionaries are to be understood as all units that are under direct state control, but are not recruited from its citizens. Classifiable examples

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<sup>186</sup> Stig Förster: Rückkehr der Condottieri? Krieg und Militär zwischen staatlichem Monopol und Privatisierung. Paderborn München Wien Zürich 2010, p. 302.

<sup>187</sup> Thomas Jäger. Die Komplexität der Kriege. Berlin 2010, p. 105, 106.

of this would be the French Foreign Legion, the British Gurkha Brigade as well as the Swiss Guard of the Vatican, which have endured to the present day.

*"Despite the great difference both in terms of the social and cultural background of the legionnaires and what they experience in the legion, the "old" Foreign Legion, from its foundation in 1831 until Algeria's independence in 1962, nevertheless represented a space of experience that provided its members with certain framework of experiences that differed significantly from those of non-members and can be analysed accordingly. The legion as a mercenary force was an anachronism in the age of nation-state conscript armies and at the same time appears as a successor to early modern mercenary armies as well as - from an ex-post perspective - a precursor of current tendencies towards the "privatisation" of wars."*<sup>188</sup>

The proximity of the mercenary to the partisan is no coincidence; the mercenary preceded the soldier. It was only the emergence of European nations as an organisational model, conscription and mass armies that made the war among mercenaries disappear. With the decline in importance of the European nations, also with regard to their relative importance to powers such as the USA and China, receding from state warfare and the abolition of conscription, the importance of the mercenary on the world's battlefields is increasing.

Soldiers, unlike mercenaries, embody an existing and consolidated order. Qualities such as a telluric being, mythical or other partisan elements may be present, but are not mandatory for existence. Soldiers and the military in general find an embedding in the institutions of a state system and only attain a particularly prominent position in times of war, although armed forces always present prominent characteristics compared to other functional organs. The partisan's ascent to the rank of soldier therefore also conceals an absurdity: as soon as the goal is reached, this leads to the abolition of the partisan, because he loses central characteristics and abilities.

The names of former partisan armies, which have now been transformed into regular armed forces, still bear witness to their past: China (People's Liberation Army), Cuba (Revolutionary Armed Forces) or, and this refers to the historical circumstances of the Islamic Revolution in Iran (Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution/Revolutionary Guards), as branches of Iran's regular army (Artesh).

By contrast, the armed forces of Great Britain (Her Majesty's Armed Forces or Armed Forces of the Crown) and Germany (Bundeswehr) refer to a monarchical and state-institutional tradition, respectively.

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<sup>188</sup> Christian Koller: Die Fremdenlegion. Kolonialismus, Söldnertum, Gewalt. Paderborn München Wien Zürich 2013, p.9.

The soldier is an embodiment of political and military power and does not have a fluid but a manifest form. His birth came from the spirit of the mercenary, his ancestor in essence not only according to the designation from the pay that both receive.

*"In the long run, however, order arose out of chaos. As soon as the Peace Treaties of Westphalia were signed, many mercenary troops who had fought in the war were sent home. The rest were absorbed into the standing armies, or militia perpetua, as they were called. Tasks such as the recruitment of soldiers, their enlistment, payment, clothing, equipment and promotion were centralised in the hands of the newly created war ministries."<sup>189</sup>*

Soldiers are therefore also more than just warlike tools of power; they embody state sovereignty.

Due to the disintegration of statehood and partisan warfare as well as an increased use of technology when using force, the modern phenomenon of the regular soldier serving in a nation-state appears to be threatened in its position at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The eternal change of orders shows that no actor can claim war as its sole metier.

## Conclusion

The birth of the soldier from the spirit of the modern order of states made him the monopolist of war. Partisans, on the other hand, were merely a phenomenon of colonial wars and were regarded as marginal. Regular armed forces were a prerequisite institution of state wars that only large nation states could maintain.

The soldier's profession as well as the soldierly craft of war have undergone a thorough transformation. In addition to the increased use of technology and extensive specialisation, however, more and more partisan analogies can be discerned. It should be noted, for example, that soldiers increasingly operate covertly and in secrecy. These formerly tactical exceptions are becoming more frequent and are turning into a strategy, but this calls into question the regularity in war and the self-image as a visible monopolist. The resurgence of the mercenary must therefore always be seen in the context of the change in the soldier. The partial loss of regularity changes the conception of sovereignty of the states that send these new soldiers. The answer to the challenge of guerrilla warfare so far seems to be a "partisanisation" of the soldier, or a privatisation of war that gives rise to the mercenary.

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<sup>189</sup> Martin Van Creveld: Aufstieg und Untergang des Staates. München 1999. p.184.



## Corriculum Vitae

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