

Dear fellow travellers in struggle,

With this letter we want to pick up some of the questions that came up in the discussions on counter-insurgency at the antimilitarist camp against the GÜZ.¹ First we'll look at the instrumentalization of victims – in this respect, we like to present to you a very informative text about the war in Darfur, which can be read as a kind of blueprint of a strategy of legitimization in the war on terror. Moreover we will talk about collective memory, about our shared knowledge of those who step up to become our enemies, about their changing and yet old familiar strategies – as well as about our own perception of them, which is also undergoing changes that lead to different assessments and consequences. The pending question above the particular aspects of this letter was posed by a comrade right at the start of the discussion on Friday: „What do you want from US then?“ We like to take up this question as central thread, as it shows that we succeeded, despite bumpy moments in the presentation, to put into focus what we think is the crux of the matter, if we really want to stop the war.

To develop and keep up a dual-track strategy, that, simultaneously with the attempt to understand and to fight the ongoing war in all its actually atrocious existence, always taking as the point of departure our own life in wartime, a point of departure as completely personal as it is collective. To come to a realistic evaluation of our possibilities to act, we think it is necessary to acknowledge that which we have not chosen: That we are in a state of war *everywhere in the world*, even if the international division of labor distributes suffering unequally. The acknowledge of this point should not to be mistaken for a self-righteous „Yes to war!“ combative bathos, which despite *feeling* less helpless nevertheless gets stuck in a twisted understanding of our situation, swapping the places where power and powerlessness are to be found in our lives in a confused manner. Put rudely: Those ruling us don't give a shit which fantasies of omnipotence we devote ourselves to, regardless of whichever fantasy we like better, be it the pose of the wise prophet of peace or that of the apocalyptic nihilist warrior. Both serve the function to shift our desire for self-determination to spheres far out of our reach, while we can barely face up to even the most tiny changes in our everyday life.

This misapprehension of the spheres upon which we can have an impact can be understood as the effect of a superposition of the strategic discussions important for us – to recognize and to organize our own force – with ethically loaded questions in which we hardly have any decision-making power. Do we like or dislike the extinction of species, Al Qaeda, or Fukushima? From the perspective of lived autonomy these questions will be posed differently. Presumably, when confronted with nuclear waste in their own backyard, no village would decide to have a nuclear power plant, just as it is likely that a society, when confronted with the choice of going to war, will think twice whether or not they would want themselves to face the aftermath of a war.

Who profits, when we discuss in a way, as if our actually existing position in war would depend on whether we define ourselves inside or outside of war? Let us admit that in the pacified, rich western States as well, most people were again led into war by their elites *without being asked*. Instead of erasing this fact in a reflex of guilt upon viewing the victims – which is of no cost to us, and of no use to them – we should better have a closer look at the discourse of victimization in recent years, which is trying to incorporate us into the western camp of war even by our shame at the actions of *our* armies. For instance, not that we refuse to take responsibility for our obviously insufficient acting against the war. The question is, whose responsibility for what? After all, we're neither the NATO headquarter nor the Department of Defense. There is more than the hypocrisy of the warmongers in this discussion, which time and time again creates confusion even amongst

1 The GÜZ is the internationally used, high-tech combat training center (GefechtsÜbungsZentrum) of the German Army Bundeswehr, situated two hours west of Berlin. You'll find more about the GÜZ, the War Starts Here Camp, that took place in September 2012, as well as the call-out in several languages on <http://warstartsherecamp.org>

people close to us – the last time during the civil war in Libya - whether we could take the responsibility to „just sit back and watch“ people being bombed „over there“, and whether we therefore would not have to grudgingly agree to the military intervention. In times when open support is lacking for war in some places, the question organizes enough insecurity to nevertheless fail to stop war, but also, and more importantly, this ostensibly selfless perspective on the victims depoliticizes the war itself, as it ideologically paves the way for a political transformation, that in their choice of words, geographically and logically develops along the old colonial lines.

In the book of Mahmood Mamdani on the conflict in Darfur [1] we found a description, that sheds light on how discourse of victimization can function as a tool of a new paternalism. Our sympathy with the victims is mobilized in a way that first of all aims at incapacitation. What remains in focus is just the passive, naked survival of „human beings“. Political or collective rights, the right of self-determination, including the legitimacy to fight for it in person, are not to be discussed any more. That France intervened in Libya only after the supply contracts for the oil were settled – or that a NATO deployment always serves to determine the development of a country for Western interests (deregulation, structural adjustment, refugee management) as well – is not seen anymore in contradiction to the fight for liberation of the insurgents. The discourse of victimization wipes out autonomy as a potential answer. From the perspective of rule, conceivable „protagonists“ can only be institutions;² it reduces the question opened up in insurrection „How do we want to live?“ to the multiple-choice question of „Who should govern the population?“ - and always gives itself the answer: Supposedly it will be us! As the old state demonstrably failed, only external candidates remain on the list of „protective powers.“ And who would continue to reject the direction of these external powers is at risk of being blamed as egoistic, heartless, or instrumentalizing. Besides, it is absurd, if of all people, it's the fans of military intervention that pass the ball back to us with the assertion „You don't care about the victims, heh?“ when it is the very process of war that turns people into victims in the first place. After all, empathy is not the last of our reasons to fight war. In pretending to act in the same interest as us – „And who does not finally want to protect an endangered populations?“ - those in power try to give the impression that in fact it is them, who, from a position of deeply-felt care, want to bring relief to the people affected by war. Without bringing back into play offensively the idea of autonomy, the obvious innate freedom of everyone to do what they want with their personal as well as collective life, it's not possible to break through this hermetic argumentation, a break through needed to escape the comprehensive incorporation of the homefront.

Back to the conversations from the camp, and so the question of a comrade, what do we expect by revisiting the old story of counter-insurgency? Let us approach the question in the spirit of a necessary quest: Why are we not succeeding at stopping the war, although basically – almost – everyone is against it? Is our analysis wrong or obsolete? Don't we know our enemy well enough, or maybe we don't know the enemy well enough anymore? Some of you will definitely get annoyed at the term „enemy.“ What else should we call those who consciously and with all their force want to prevent us from taking our lives back? Who, against all reason of planetary survival and without being forced to, *turn themselves* into our enemies³? Violence is in the world; this has to be acknowledged, but at the same time we should refuse the temptation to derive from this state of affairs a cynical welcoming of violence, to slip on the hoodie and feel cool about being engaged in

2 A fascinating trick to – schwuppdwupp – spirit away „common“ women and men. Does not function differently in post-war protectorates and civil society, watch out for it.

3 Why we think that we are fooling ourselves with the utopia of a non-violent world (an idea that, how else could it be, stems from an extremely violent world), why a ban on violence could maybe give birth to a different world, but not to a less violent one, could be the topic of a next letter. A sincere discussion with pacifists not aiming at state solutions would be a pleasure for us. Not at least, as through this it could become clearer (again), what distinguishes an emancipatory pacifist argumentation from the increasingly professionalizing strategies of non-violence in NGO-circles, that offer their services in consulting teams and method workshops to those in power not least in war.

„social war, until a knife in your leg reminds you that a state of war might make the bad conditions more perceptible but yet not the slightest bit better.

Back to the subject: the emotions you witnessed the last few lines is due to a certain despair (perhaps you who know the film „Groundhog Day“?) caused by running against the same blockages in our analysis, our campaigns, our critiques and our practices, with the only choice being walking right into the same traps or exchanging an old one-dimensional analysis for a new one-dimensional analysis, turned around 180 degrees. Why is that? Provided we are not just searching for an easy excuse or an alternative career (yawn!), the question is whether something escaped our notice – in our understanding of how the system, the enemy, ourselves, and the terrain of the struggle are linked and function together *for the purposes of the enemy*. Let us not wait for the next turbo-authoritarian regime to fill the dream of our cause with life again. We certainly do not say this to spread out urgency according to the principle that revolution is calling, we'll take care of secondary contradictions afterwards! Exactly the opposite: just because we have the privilege to not starve or hang out in trenches, it should suit us to get to the bottom of the truly awkward contradictions of our politics – but without staying there, as has happened too often in recent years. To get a tangible start, without getting lost in some trendy reflection on the nature of the self, we propose to take up an idea of the SPK, the Socialist Patients' Collective from the 1970s, and turn our „disease into a weapon“ [2]. To acknowledge being criss-crossed by power relations – being strangers to ourselves, others, and the world – can only be a first step. The next can not consist of an even better understanding and an even more complex description. Also from this tiny hermetic world we can leave, only if we allow an external element to enter, not just as a genealogical component in the creation of our self, but in its own right as well; you might call it the vestige of the world.

Let us turn to face those people, structures, and techniques that generate this situation of strangeness, meaninglessness and emptiness in us, and which moreover suggest to us, to feel comfortable even in our quiet our daily failures. We should not just look at ourselves if we want to change our miserable conditions, but confront what resists our emancipation. Of our pain, our powerlessness, we will be reminded of this every day anyways, this component will not be forgotten too fast – for its counterpart, the persons and structures that play an active role in keep us passive, this is way more likely. After all it is not rare that those people who work like lunatics for the maintainance of the system, attach great importance to discretion. Who knows the strategists of the „book club“ of Bertelsmann?⁴ We propose to leave the victim's perspective, or better: to preserve and abolish it simultaneously.⁵ Recognizing the experiences of the victims – we fight both together yet differently - against those who have the nerve to turn others into victims. In this we preserve the experiences of the victims in our collective memory *as people in struggle* (not as an abstract „public“ that includes our enemies). At the same time we enter into relationships, try to cultivate a kind of togetherness, as today there is no room left for such childish bullshit as innate supremacy. This is the magic of the slogan „All power to the people!“

We should not give in to our urge to bring to the forefront our entanglement with power and oppression time and time again. Our trust in this desire covers the tremendous distrust we apparently have in ourselves. Why else would we navel-gaze at our western privileges as if our bad behaviour would fall into place automatically as soon as we turn to face those responsible for only one moment? That whites can ignore blacks, the rich can ignore the poor, and men can ignore the female perspective on the world, does not really mean that they have to. There is another message: Just as every TV program tells you to „remain seated on your couch and be happy to do nothing,“ a certain tokenistic discourse on minorities bets on an ever more sophisticated theoretical discourse

4 Bertelsmann Foundation is one of the major think tanks in Germany, consulting the government, but also the EU in nearly all political fields. Meanwhile, most people only know the publishing house and the book club attached to it.

5 The German word „aufheben“ carries this double meaning

which finally loses track of what distinguishes this discourse from attempts of any company to rid itself of discrimination, radiates only one message: There is no solidarity, no „us“ in the struggle. Distrust yourself and the others - and leave the government alone. Are we that so used to the current direction, that we do not see the directing itself anymore?

Let us take as another example our daily participation in the discourse of security. Without surprise, simply saying goodbye to revolution passes for an argument today, because one has to work and therefore one never has time anymore. Again, here we see at work an odd inversion of the case where one starts a revolution precisely when the conditions are unbearable. In contrast, today we do not make revolution anymore because the conditions are a pain in the ass. On a personal level exhaustion might of course be totally understandable, and should at all costs be met with gentleness by comrades. Nevertheless, as an argument against the possibility of acting for revolution, it remains completely illogical and can not politically be accepted. So what's wrong? What in the discourse of victimization so overwrites the perspective of autonomy, such that the discourse of security consigns to oblivion the option of confronting our existential fear – the normal condition under capitalism – by relying together on friends instead of money. All that is remembered is that only Big Brother cares for you.

Also this operation is based on the effect of a cheap trick, to assert an absurd opposition: As soon as someone starts to talk about some collectivity, it is assumed reflexively that collective life would aim at the elimination of the individual. This is not only totally as impossible by nature as tearing apart the two sides of a piece of paper, but can also not be in the interest of a collective itself, as it is well known that a forest can only be as strong as the trees that form it. Except for some mad Stalinists no-one will say anything otherwise today. Yet still: How often do we hear in large meetings that we do not need a common call out, a joint action, because it would be also possible to do wonderful things in groups of five. Sure! No-one ever questioned that! This defensiveness when faced with the prospect of collective action is not rooted in some serious argument that collective action would hinder the actions of small groups, either at the fringe of events or during the rest of the time. It is more about feeling the need to protect oneself from recuperation. Where does this feeling come from? Are there concrete reasons for it? There are really not many groups left, that would seriously try something like that in autonomous, anarchist, radical left meetings in recent years.⁶ And those who try, such as the Interventionist Left, are essentially quite weak in their arguments and transparent in their intentions. There is no need to have shaking knees when considering a proposal to work with unions and political parties. Where does this reflex come from to defend the individual? Why don't we have confidence in our own organizing, while we are much less sceptical about the individual with all its history and culture of isolation and submission? A culture in the midst of mass consumption, that has nothing to offer in the end than the choice between different colors of the same products? If we are afraid „to get dissolved“ in the collective, what do we think of the state of affairs today where humans are like ants, interconnected with iPhone, with its permanent threat to either act in conformity or get kicked out? Do we consider collective organizing amongst us to be the means to provide us with the security to survive or will it in the end nevertheless be Riester-Rente⁷ and condominium?

6 For most of us, it is the basis of our encounter to not agree to this form of organizing. Let us not forget that the German Autonomen came into being, when they turned their back against the dogmatic politics of the K-Groups, where the „K“ stood for „Kommunismus,“ communism. Where are those now who thought that a different practice would develop – quasi-automatically – from sheer opposition to them? Or why is it, that in our reaction to this critique, that we still carry some lousy organizational heritage? Of which the belief in the New (Wo)Men is not the least to be mentioned.

7 Specifically, the private investment into your own pension, proposed by social democrat Mr. Riester, that was part of the social cuts called Hartz-Reform and the first step to liberate the state from the obligation to guarantee a sufficient income to the elderly.

You ask yourself, „What does this have to do with war?“ Admittedly, it is not too easy to sort out the subtle threads of being set up for war that move right through ourselves. This is exactly why we find it interesting to have a close look at counterinsurgency, as it thinks and practically links together from the start repression and the shaping of public opinion. This is not to talk about some great world-spanning conspiracy, but a systemic functioning where the question of conscious decisions and manipulation in favor of war *alone* is not sufficient to understand. This is about techniques of militarized thinking spreading throughout life, the transformation of our lives in direction of the preservation of the system at any cost: social engineering. In which way can we understand and dismantle the conscious and unconscious processes of this reorganization, how it becomes possible to leave this cybernetic model of society – so often portrayed as control circuit including feedback loops – might become clearer, if we remind ourselves of an old finding of feminism.

It contributed quite a lot to the recognition of our own strength to think through directly the concept that the structural violence of patriarchy is closely tied to personal experiences in relationships, friendship circles, job, and so on. A woman, who above all always doubts herself in the first instance and who asks herself whether or not her husband deceives her, because she is too old, too ugly, or too stupid; this woman is posing the wrong question. Wrong, because it is exactly the question that patriarchy is suggesting that she pose, namely that everything remains just the way it is. This answer protects the operational principles of patriarchy when the woman is quarreling with herself instead of seeing that already her personal perception is already tinged with patriarchal presumptions. To take one's own feelings not as protective shelter, opposed to a cold and calculating outside world, but as a collaborator of patriarchy, of one's own submission, is not an easy step. On the other hand, once the feelings are stripped of their hypocritical immediacy, it is much more easy, to welcome them in the struggle for liberation, which promises to overcome a certain old division so we can finally fight with heart *and* mind.

Maybe this example⁸ can help to free ourselves from thinking militarization either as a personally staged intrigue of generals and bosses – which would not work out if they could not in some way count on our cooperation or at least make sure we keep quiet – or as an abstract mechanism, where there is no protagonists anymore, which is so absurd that we won't go into it. We are clear about the fact that we can't derive our response on this dilemma from our studies of counterinsurgency, as counterinsurgency was itself the defensive reaction against revolutionary movements. There, not in the fear of revolutionary movements by those in power, is our strength to be found. Still, considering counter-insurgency makes it clear to us that it's not sufficient to fight only repression to destroy the mechanisms by which the establishment tries to ensure society's contribution to its preservation. The idea for the discussion on the camp was released by a recent text from CLESID, a French security think tank, which explicitly talks about transferring war from the battle grounds to the field of perception [3]. At first this did not fit into the concept we had in mind of counter-insurgency, in which there existed little else than deliberate murder and torture. The idea that counter-insurgency is at the same time *integration*, as a military handbook stressed in the 1970s, was new to us. Somehow we had not managed to save this knowledge about the methods of our adversaries down through the generations. And in the same moment it was also forgotten, that the ruling powers were back then really convinced of the need to drain the guerilla of the support in which they lived. This causes the government makes social offers to drum into people's head, that it's the government – and not themselves – that can best care for them. The history of our defeats we do remember well, which is not the case with times where there was a very real chance of revolution.

8 Unfortunately we do not know which theorists should be credited with this breach of normal thinking of the 1970s. If someone can remember them (and not, like us, just be practically taught by these thoughts), you could do a great favour in the decolonization of all of us by bringing these texts back into discussion, or by reformulating these texts anew for the current situation. Please! We need it.

And so we read some texts on counter-insurgency and made some surprising discoveries.

Let us start with the words of a nearly forgotten social democrat on counter-insurgency, who understood far better than the openly reactionary rats, how to sustainably inject his poison under our skin:

„All tendencies of change fall back on guerilla warfare. It would be extremely dangerous to assume, that the process of revolutionizing Europe could not be started“ - „It would testify to a dangerous lack of imagination, to think [...] the developments described would be impossible as this possibility is traced out in the lines of development, which have to really exist already now in our considerations and we are aiming at repulse. From such a strategic viewpoint the fight against terrorism attains of course a completely different importance. This is an issue that can turn out to be existential for the state. If terrorism can be a first link in a chain of threats reaching deeply, it is not sufficient anymore to hold it in check, it has to be eliminated.“

Horst Herold, Head of German Federal Criminal Police BKA, 1979

Developed in colonial wars, counter-insurgency was elaborated as a strategy after the Second World War, repeatedly put into action every 20 years. As the formation of historical knowledge amongst us is left to personal initiative and chance, it happens quite sometimes, that older comrades are telling us „Sure, this is an old hat we know well enough“, while the younger identify current attempts of civil-military cooperation as a new quality of comprehensive warfare that follows on the heels of conventional war. Be it fatalism or fear of the future: Finally, insisting that everything remains the same contributes just as much to stagnation as proving over and over again that everything constantly gets worse.

Our gap in our memory is not only due to our incapacity to pass on knowledge, but at the same time resulting from the dirty history of counter-insurgency, which works way less successfully than one might think first. One weakness of the strategy is its need to legitimize its deployment to the own population, as well as to the global public. When directly glossing over the question becomes impossible, other routes are taken: Expansion and redefinition of existing institutions, tightening of control of information and communication, defamation of the opposition, manipulation of memory.

When a war in which counter-insurgency played a role ended, the warlords had a keen interest to veil and play down their actions (such as the Indian Wars in the US), to stop talking about it (which is what really fueled the „Vietnam Trauma“), and to name things differently next time (Reagan's *Low Intensity Warfare* in the 1980s in Central America). The many names given to counter-insurgency over time, besides trying to persuade the population that the deployment makes sense (War on Terror, humanitarian mission), point to a weakness – rather a forgotten strength – of ours. After World War II the establishment was fighting anti-subversive and so respectively anti-revolutionary wars. These terms were still used by the military, while in public the talk was long since about terrorists, gangs, criminals, and the like.

Whereas the ruling powers found themselves confronted with a revolutionary threat in the 1960s (after Mao and Fidel, one, two, three many Vietnams?) - the handbook of the counter-insurgency training center, newly created by Kennedy, fills nearly half of its pages with how to prevent revolution through the sentiment of social reform – the communist threat that Reagan saw at work in the 1980s was already the product of „Paranoia & Propaganda Ltd.“ to such an extent that the effort was not taken anymore, to even pretend to implement programs „that impress the people with the ability and determination of the government to help their citizens to get a better life“ [4]. The cornerstones of counter-insurgency in that era are „Preventive Medicine – Urban

Insurgency – Rapid Deployment – Massive Firepower“ [5].⁹ Its mainly this type that moulds our memory: massacres of civilizations by the Contras in Nicaragua, the scorched earth policy in Guatemala, CIA, torture. The constructive element neglected at that time, to have an effect on society, comes back today dressed in new clothes.

The planning of psychological operations has to understand:

- a) *That successful counter-insurgency operations are based on the involvement and identification of the population with the plans and operations of the government.*
- b) *That the population acts on the basis of what they believe – without consideration of the facts.*
- c) *That the action of the population in support of the government will only emerge, if the people believe, that they can reach their individual and collective objectives best through this government.*

- *Counter-Insurgency Planning Guide, U.S. Army Special Warfare School, Fort Bragg*

The military failure in Iraq and Afghanistan led to a revival of the concept of counter-insurgency, and to a surge of policy dispute inside the armed forces about how to deal with the changing form of war and what actually constitutes this change: Will coming wars be utterly armed high-tech conflicts or fourth generation warfare in tradition of the guerilla (4GW) - which, not least in consideration of the military superiority of their enemies, will be fought and won first of all on the political front. One thing's for certain, the dispute is only about the best ratio to mix the purely tactical (!) struggle for the hearts and minds with the use of military force – it is no question for the military on all sides that the two necessarily complement each other.

To link the exploitability of the Third World with the stability of the western industrial nations – this is the ideal picture of a successful counter-insurgency campaign.

- *Jochen Hippler, Krieg im Frieden*

After the Second World War, counter-insurgency aimed with all civic and military means at a *roll-back* of the communist threat. Its constructive moment, which consists today in the creation of a population that keeps itself in containment, is the extended line of the idea, to deprive the guerilla of support like fishes in the water. Already the way, in which we perceive ourselves in society, how much we have internalized „the separation of fish and water“ – to either feel ourselves as either subjects of power like fish or part of the map of power like water – speaks of decades of preventive counter-insurgency, of not considering revolution. We can't deduce our strategy from how action is taken against us. As it is exactly the advantages that we hold over existence that is meant to be neutralized, or, where this is not possible, simulated: The idea of a better, good life without the pig system!

Inside the US Army, the discussion about the enemies of the West is lead in purely technical terms. Of an idea to be countered, only the effects are of any interest. The strength of the social grassroots projects of the First Intifada, especially Hizbollah, is analysed without even mentioning their political perspective. „It is also inevitable that diverse groups around the world will be left behind as the world progresses to the Information Age economy“ [7]. That's that. The framework to allows for no alternatives; which other objectives other than Western values and exploitation could be there anyways? The fact that the establishment does not see the need at the moment to offer some pseudo-alternatives can be seen as the success of their earlier counter-insurgency campaigns or as weakness of the movements: Why wasn't there, following the Arab Spring, hardly any practical recognition of the parallels in Europe? Why do we stay calm, while the situation, that put the world up in turmoil in the 1970s, did not get better? In all fields of the war against humanity and nature

9 As we want to emphasize the general tendency here, sure in the 80s too, attempts were made to buy out the population. As Thomas O. Enders (State Department) put it for El Salvador: „Noone doubts that landowning farmers will be a strong bulwark against the Marxist-Leninist subversion. There is no other choice if we want to prevent economic and social chaos and a subsequent victory of the guerilla.“ (quoted in Hippler 1986)

we see becoming real today that which has been first invoked in the coming nightmares from back then. Maybe we are neither more intelligent nor more disillusioned than the old comrades, but simply pacified.

Wool off our eyes

We are not intending to grumble neither about us nor the conditions. By a discussion about counter-insurgency we hope to gain some clarity about our situation, to find again a perspective of a struggle for liberation – which we need no less than the people in the Global South, Iran or Russia. In that we see in the attack of the state not only repression, the conscious suppression of inner enemies and others, but also the complementary, constructive component – the integration of smashing eggs to make a omelette – that could also be used to understand our peculiar paralysis, which lets even our critiques congeal into confessions. The constructive moment of counter-insurgency consists today – at the end of the history of progress (and its false promises) – in making us believe that we do not have any influence on reality, that we cannot change our perspective, even if the system does not have to offer one anymore. If we simply believe this or deduce it in a highly academic way, if it is indifference, the fear of being recuperated, or military superiority that leads us to not finding other ways, this doesn't matter from the viewpoint of counter-insurgency. What counts is the effect.

Without the idea of an autonomous perspective, our disputes about the best political line only appear to be radical in either theory or practice, and so are adaptable to the strategy of Second Life: To construct a togetherness that functions as a feedback circuit, insofar as people take for granted that they necessarily depend on the state as a mediator inasmuch as their memory does not tell them about their very own submission, the destruction of non-conformist solidarities and collective independence, this extremely violent production makes one susceptible to blackmail, blackmail that replaces any previous solidarit with goods and services: Reality control.

Yet still their white lie has to be nourished from this world, has to be founded on the real world, as there is no other! What autonomy means is an adherence to different *perspectives* on the world, and, in consequence, the defense of different *practices*. What unites us in the first place is the rejection of this stupid monopoly on life we face today, the remainig questions – cooperation, separation, war - will then be up for discussion amongst those concerned. *We do not intend to replace their abstract model with another one* – and, in the following, to quarrel and kill each other, until there is once again only one proposition left. To begin with, autonomy means to end their hermetic bullshit, to stop, take a breath and to push open the door. Cheerfully, completely at our own risk. Do the real thing!

Those from the Friday discussion, January 2013

PS: It would be nice to get responses. We tried to have a closer look at some less obvious aspects touched, in our opinion, by counter-insurgency operations in the sense of a preventive being set up for war, for that no-one in these constantly more absurd times might suddenly have the idea to get rid of the empire. There is a whole lot to discuss considering perception, consciousness, and memory: The role of the media for the coherence of society, of education reduced to the creation of functional elites and users, the promotion of a schematic thinking à la PowerPoint, consiting only of checking, whether an enumeration is complete and the terms of reference are met. Not least the revival of an image of (wo)man as a potential killer, which could paradoxically only be harnessed by the state. The goat as gardener...

Furthering the question, if it would be interesting, within the framework of our correspondence, to talk about the directional decisions and structural changes discussed in the military, the transformation of the German army Bundeswehr or the debate on fourth generation warfare in the US-Army. What could be our political interest in such an investigation? Which questions do we have, in that sense, on the expansion and the merging of the European „security forces“? Against whom the security architecture is actually erected?

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- „**Einstellungsantrag der Verteidigung** zum Verfahren gegen Christian Klar und Brigitte Mohnhaupt vor dem OLG Stuttgart 1984“ In: Janssen & Schubert. *Staatssicherheit: Die Bekämpfung des politischen Feindes.* (deals with the fight against terrorism as a part of international military counter-insurgency – made us think about the deficits of our collective memory)
- Frantz Fanon.** *Die Verdammten dieser Erde.* [1961] Hamburg 1969 (still informative, not least in respect of preventive techniques of governance tested in the colonial laboratory)
- David Galula.** *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice.* Praeger Publishers, 2006.
- Detlef Hartmann.** „Die Knarre in der einen Hand, den Bleistift in der anderen“. In: *Failing Sciences, Embedded Stakeholders: Wider den SFB 700.* Berlin 2009. (The Think Tank stationed at the Free University Berlin does research on „Governance in areas of limited statehood“ - <http://materialien.org/texte/hartmann/700-2-2.pdf>)
- Informationsstelle Militarisierung (IMI) e.V.** „Die UN und der neue Militarismus“ Tübingen 2011. (Many good articles on the topic, amongst others in their journal „Ausdruck“ <http://www.imi-online.de>)
- Jan Koehler und Christoph Zuercher.** *Quick Impact Projects in Nordost-Afghanistan: Eine Studie im Auftrag des BMVg.* 2007 (Two of SFB 700 on „quickly implementable, visible measures that offer a quick effect in the sense of a bettered target group acceptance“)
- Gregory Kreuder.** *Sharpening the Needle: Non-Lethal Air Power for Joint Urban Operations 2020.* Air Command Staff College/Air University. Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama: 2008 (Not exactly on topic, but as many comrades asked for the reference...)
- Mathieu Rigouste.** *L'ennemi intérieur: La généalogie coloniale et militaire de l'ordre sécuritaire dans la France contemporaine.* La Découverte, Paris 2009.
- Wolfgang Rüdtenklau.** *Störenfried: DDR-Opposition 1986-1989.* Berlin 1992 (reports among other things on the ordinary methods of the Stasi. Written shortly after the so far only popular storming of secret service archives in German history)
- Unidentified anarchist publishing** *COINTELPRO – The Danger We Face.* 2009 (online on <http://anti-politics.net>)

From the last chapter of Mahmood Mamdani's book¹⁰

We quote the line of thought from „Saviors and Survivors: Darfur, Politics, and the War on Terror“ at length here, even if our perspective cannot be based on the political rights of citizens, as we think that it is in the logic of rights granted by the state to govern with the implicitly contained threat that the state can take these rights away again. Still the text made us think far beyond the context described.

„At the outbreak of World War II, the international order consisted of two unequal parts, one privileged and one oppressed: The system of sovereign states in the western hemisphere on one side and the colonial system in large parts of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East on the other side. With decolonization in progress in the postwar era, the former colonies were recognized as states. In this manner, the scope of the principle of sovereignty, key to intergovernmental relations, was extended to the whole world. With the end of the Cold War another fundamental change happened. This was the harbinger of a „humanitarian world order“, promising to degrade the sovereignty of states if these states would not meet international human rights standards. Many believe, that we find ourselves, in respect to international relations, in the middle of a systemic change. Fatefully, the frame of reference concerning responsibility existing up to now – international law – is getting dismissed in favour of a frame of singular rights. As the Bush-Administration made perfectly clear during their invasion of Iraq, one does not have to bother about existing laws during „humanitarian interventions“. Rather, what sets apart such an intervention is exactly to be above the law. Therefore „humanitarian intervention“ matches the „war on terror“.

This new world order, officially accepted on the UN World Summit 2005, makes it its task to protect „endangered populations“. Responsibility is taken by the „international community“, but in practice it would be the United Nations and especially the Security Council with its permanent members consisting of the superpowers, to take on the task and be in charge. This new world order is sanctioned in terms which differ clearly from the previous expressions. There is no talk anymore about international law and citizen rights. The protected populations are called „humans“; the crisis, that which they go through, the intervention, that which should be undertaken for their salvation, and finally the institutions, that consider to carry out the intervention: they all are given the label „humanitarian“. [...] On a closer and more critical inspection it shows that the change we experience today is not complete, but just a partial one. The transition from the old system of sovereignty to the new „humanitarian world order“ is limited to a set of entities called „failed states“ or „rogue states“. So we deal again with a system divided in two: In large parts of the world the sovereignty of the states is still respected, yet it is repealed in more and more countries of Africa and the Middle East.

The principle realized since the Peace of Westphalia – the sovereignty of the state - this coin is still in circulation in the international system. But one should look at both sides of this coin: Sovereignty and citizenship. [...] the discourse about „humanitarian intervention“ was detached from the discourse about citizen rights. As far as the „humanitarian world order“ pretends to stand up for rights, what is at stake is the remaining rights of a human being, not the full spectrum of rights of a citizen. While the rights of a citizen are exceedingly political, the rights of a human being concern only its bare survival – in one word: its protection. Here we do not speak about holders of rights, which work towards liberating themselves of their yoke, but of passive beneficiaries of a „Responsibility to Protect“ taken over from abroad. Those subdued to the „humanitarian order“ resemble more receivers of alms than citizens with legal rights. Humanitarianism per definition cares about the preservation of human lives only, not the promotion of independent action. What is promoted is only dependency. Humanitarianism marks the beginning of a trustee system. [285 ff]

Later he talks about the role of NGO's, their war economy. There are some parallels opening up to policies in so-called „problem-quarters.“ Here and there it is in the interest of the NGO-workers that their ward will still need their care in the future and that their income depends on the persistence of the bad situation. In turn the dependency so cultivated produces the need for help from outside, and in this way creates its own subject.

„All that was so unbelievable, I could hardly believe my eyes and ears, but the external intervention had indeed created an interior protagonist: the internal displaced persons demanding to be saved. They cling desperately to their hope for another world and remained unsuspecting to the politics of this world. Given the fact, that the internally exiled called in a chorus for a non-African intervention, the mediator of the African Union Salim Ahmed Salim pointed out, that only an external intervention could have a chance of success if it supports an internal process and is not perceived as a replacement of it. [...] He wanted to warn the Darfuri of putting all their hopes on an external intervention, as this would amount to the renouncement of any action in one's own responsibility. But he was left quite on his own with this opinion...Instead of dismissing the view of the internally exiled as a kind of „false consciousness“, we should better ask ourselves, from which vantage point this view makes sense. Some Darfuri social workers seemed to have realized a „consumer mentality“ spreading among the internally exiled. In this case the consumer forms the counterpart to the citizen. The more the citizen moves to the background, the more the consumer moves to the foreground. In that sense the consumer mentality is both key element and important product of „humanitarian“ interventionism.“ [309]

¹⁰ Unfortunately we had no English version of the book at hand, so the translation made from the German book might differ from the original. Anyways, we tried our best. Page numbers refer to the German book.