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RLS BREMEN · BREITENWEG 25 · 28195 BREMEN

Proposal for a lecture

The Drone Wars

February 2014

The Drone Wars – From the “War on Terror” to the robot wars of the future?

The *drone wars* – the beginning of November 2013 it has been their eleven-year anniversary – are an expression of a rapid development: from the “global war on terrorism” after 9/11 to the warfare of the future. A future that sometimes seem to come from the *science fiction* genre, in which the robot struggle the dirty wars of humankind and ultimately rise up against their creators. The latter is still far from being in the realm of the possible while paths to the creation of autonomous combat robots are, however, already been taken.



Reaper drone with Hellfire missile (M), Source: The Atlantic

The term *drone war* has turned over the last three years into a popular slogan and summarizes a number of global political and military developments. Including killing operations of British and American remote-controlled combat drones of the *Predator* and *Reaper* types bombarding ground targets mainly with *Hellfire* missiles (air-to-ground missiles) were known. These inserts (currently mainly in Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen) have become a significant shaping of the global “war on terror” – if it is not its most concise appearance at all – and serve the killing of suspected members of terrorist groups, so-called *targeted killings*. But this form of “hunting terrorists” is anything but precise and clean, because with the explosions with which the terror suspects are quasi executed, again and again numerous bystanders or civilians die, such as by the bombardment of residential buildings, cars or other civilian targets.

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The *signature strikes* are a type of “Rasterfahndung” (dragnet investigation) with drones and on-site execution by firing rockets in certain areas (“strike zones”, like in the tribal areas in Northwest Pakistan), the identity of the target person does not have to be known any more: Already very general patterns of behaviour and group characteristics (“all military-age males in a strike zone”) suffice as cause for suspicion – on which the kill decision is then based.

The legal and political problems of this type of warfare are serious and diverse, after all, it is a form of extra-judicial execution by the state, it is killing based on suspicion and it is a covert, global “dirty” war. Dangers lie in the rapid escalation dynamics, which bring the *drone wars* with them: The world is at the beginning of a new arms race. The face of modern warfare is changing radically, largely autonomously acting *killer robots* are already in development.

Norbert Schepers, political scientist and head of the Bremen office of the *Rosa Luxembourg Foundation*, gives an introduction to the phenomenon of the *drone war*, assigns them into the security background and provides an outlook for potential developments. For more on the person see also <http://www.rosa-luxemburg.com/initiative/norbert-schepers/>



Event overview:

- Wednesday, 17th, April 2013 in Bremen
- Thursday, 27th, June 2013 in Buxtehude
- Wednesday, 11th, September 2013 in Bremen
- Friday, 13th, September 2013 in Berlin
- Wednesday, 25th, September 2013 in Bremen-Vegesack
- Tuesday, 19th, November 2013 in Berlin
- Thursday, 21st, November 2013 in Bremerhaven
- At the 30C3 – 30th Chaos Communication Congress by the CCC from 27th to 30th December 2013 in Hamburg
- Wednesday, 22nd, January 2014 in Saarbrücken
- On 23rd and 24th, February 2014 in Ramallah and Bethlehem at the presentation of the study “Sleepless in Gaza”
- Wednesday, 26th, February 2014 in Wismar
- Sunday, 2nd, March 2014 in the Colbitz-Letzlinger Heide in the North of Sachsen-Anhalt
- Tuesday, 15th, April 2014 in Gotha
- Thursday, 11th, September 2014 in Bremen

There are **continually more dates** in other locations or with other organizers.

See also <http://norbert.schepers.info/p/the-drone-wars.html>

Invite me: I give this lecture in this or similar form also in other places.

Requests for events, please contact:

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