

2010/3/3: Denationalization of violence and conflict

Denationalization of violence and conflict

Fernando Pérez de Lema

Especially after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc and the end of the Cold War forms of conflicts have become topical which do not correspond with the paradigm of the classical war of states. Modern armies of the Western countries have increasingly intervened in wars in which no nations are the actors of violence, and which proceed with different and apparently chaotic rules. These interventions have taken place in different forms: humanitarian assistance in Bosnia or Somalia, stabilisation missions in Rwanda or Haiti, military advisors in Central America, air attacks on Serbia, military occupation of Iraq, raids in the Kurdish part of Iraq, and many others. Often the armed forces have not been able to complete their missions, not even partially, because their equipment, training and strategy were not appropriate for these interventions. The reason for the difficulties of the armed forces in being successful in these conflicts is apparently the unsatisfactory understanding for the particular form of war they are confronted with. War is a social form of violence. Different societies apply different forms of war. Since the 50ies of the last century and especially since the end of the Cold War forms of war have appeared in which one or more opponents are non-governmental. They are often called „New Wars“. Even the most modern armies have difficulties to succeed in such wars against apparently inferior fighters. But these wars are only partially new. War is a social phenomenon and reflects the societies making it. By means of the „Three Waves Model“ by Alvin and Heidi Toffler forms of war can be classed with the different forms of societies. Toffler argues and explains in his work of 1995 „War and Anti-War“ that societies make war following the same principles as when making wealth. In Toffler's works as well as in the studies based on them it is assumed as a rule that the technologically and organisationally more modern society and its armed forces are superior. Experience, however, proves that this is not always the case. First Toffler's model is presented. Then the principles of warfare of the First, Second and Third Wave are demonstrated. The war between nations is a form of war of the Second Wave, a war between industrial societies. In societies of the First and Third Wave some violent actors are not governmental. After taking a closer look at the problem of armed conflicts between societies of different „Waves“, the author develops outlines of a strategy against an „alliance“ of warriors of the First and Third Wave.

Übersetzung durch ObstdhmtD Mag. G. Gnaser (KdoFüU/IMG)

