

**Section I.**

**The First World War and  
its Influences**

# CHAPTER 1

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## **‘Bellification’ War, Military, Society and Knowledge in the Age of World Wars (and beyond)**

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### **1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

“The experience of the world war shows us that the frames of war we draw – war as a purely military affair and business – were too narrow. We now know that we have to study war as a whole; that means war as an affair of society as a whole”.<sup>2</sup> This is a quote from Oskar Ritter von Niedermayer’s book ‘Wehrpolitik’ (Defence Policy) of 1939 taken from the chapter ‘Wehr und Wissenschaft’ (Defence and science/academia). In the 1930s, Niedermayer was a colonel on leave (Ergänzungsoffizier) and worked as a professor and director of the Institute for Defence Policy (Institut für Wehrpolitik) at Berlin University. Niedermayer knew what he was talking about. As a soldier and a researcher, his field of action was the zone between military and academia from his early career.<sup>3</sup>

By analysing Niedermayer’s words, one can get an impression of the general characterisation of war in ‘high modernity’<sup>4</sup>: a) understanding war as mainly a military affair is too simple; b) modern war should not be seen as a fight of military organisation vs military organisation but as a clash of societies vs societies; c) this opens a zone where military and many parts of civil society interact; and d) the role and flows of knowledge for planning, organising, fighting, and even

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<sup>1</sup> This article is based on the research in my book Reichherzer: ‘Alles ist Front!’. Here further literature on the touched topics and source material are presented. This paper is also part of the work of a recent research group ‘Knowledge, Military, Force and Violence’ at the German Armed Forces Center of Military History and Social Sciences.

<sup>2</sup> Niedermayer: Wehrpolitik, p. 137.

<sup>3</sup> Niedermayer’s life is captured in Seidt: Berlin Kabul Moskau. Regarding World War I see Seidt: From Palestine to Caucasus. For Niedermayer’s life and activities during the NS-regime and his ambivalent attitudes toward NS-ideology see Jahr: Generalmajor Oskar Ritter von Niedermayer.

<sup>4</sup> ‘High modernity’ tries to make sense of the years from the 1880s to the 1970s. For this temporal framework see Scott: Seeing Like a State; Herbert: Europe in High Modernity. For a critique and differentiation see Raphael: Ordnungsmuster der ‘Hochmoderne’.

imagining war could be added.

The observations and arguments in Niedermayer's book – more than 20 years after the beginning of World War I – were honestly spoken; they were not a revolution. One can find ideas and phrases like these in many articles, books, and governmental and military memos worldwide. However, before World War I, questioning the military's role in preparing and fighting a war after a more or less political decision to go to war – especially in Germany – would cause much irritation – not only in the military establishment.<sup>5</sup> Niedermayer's and similar ideas did nothing less than question the monopoly of the military on warfare.

Niedermayer's quote leads to questions: What happened between the turn of the century and the 1940s in how people thought about the nexus of war, military, and society? What was the role of knowledge about war and warfare, and further, what does this all mean? Hence, my paper will try to give answers to these questions. Thus, I develop my argument on three levels.

The first is *empirically*. During World War I, society became more critical of a common and joint war effort. War resonated in almost every societal system. This development caused a power shift in the triangle of war, military, and society. A centrepiece in this complex relationship is a manifold 'knowledge about war'.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, the academic field, especially the implementation and development of concepts and institutionalisation of 'Wehrwissenschaften' ('war studies'/'defence studies') in Germany in the interwar years, is the focus of my interest.

Secondly, I will move to an *analytical* level. The question of knowledge in academia and its connection to war opens a broader view. Hence, a characteristic

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<sup>5</sup> The dispute between the General Staffs Historical Division and the historian Hans Delbrück about strategy of Friedrich II in the Seven Years War is an example. One vindication for the General Staffs position was that Delbrück was a civilian with less military experience. See Lange: Hans Delbrück und der ‚Strategiestreit‘; Bucholz: Hans Delbrück and the German Military Establishment.

<sup>6</sup> I understand 'knowledge' here in a broad sense. It implies 'know how', 'know to', 'scientific', 'artisan', and 'tacit' knowledge. A very good introduction into the field of knowledge is Burke: What is the History of Knowledge?

signature of the Age of World Wars becomes possible to sketch: '*Bellification*'.<sup>7</sup> The term derives from the Latin word '*bellum*' for war. Bellification as an analytical tool makes it possible to discuss the process and intensity of how a society orients itself toward war or how far the imagination of war affects societies.

By having this first outline in mind, my paper will deepen this in three parts:

1. In the first part, I will point out the imagined 'future war' and answer how and why thinking of war changed during/especially after World War I and what consequences arose from this change.
2. My second part outlines the role of knowledge and impact of 'totality' of warfare on the academic world and the 'war studies' concept in Germany as a 'total' approach.
3. Moreover, in the last short part, I will sketch the concept of 'bellification' as a heuristical and analytical tool for research and discussion of twentieth-century history.

## **2. Shifting Paradigms. Framing War in the Age of World Wars**

The contemporaries perceived World War I as a war unequal to all former wars. The war reconfigured the relationship between experience and expectation.<sup>8</sup> Phrases like "The Revolution of the war ..."<sup>9</sup> and "The war was a rigorous cleaning-up of old-fashioned attitudes..."<sup>10</sup> could be found everywhere. Sure, one could easily find wordings and framings like this for every war in history. However, in the case of the Great War of 14-18, the contemporaries felt a very deep caesura

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<sup>7</sup> This word was coined in the context of a research centre at Tübingen University (SFB 437) and further developed and conceptualised by my own empirical studies. See Reichherzer: 'Alles ist Front!', esp. pp. 413-426. For a similar understanding see the works of Rüdiger Bergien and Michael Geyer. For example, Bergien: *Bellizistische Republik*; Geyer: *The Militarization of Europe*; Geyer: *Der zur Organisation erhobene Burgfrieden*. For a summary of the work of the Tübingen Center see Beyrau/Hochgeschwender/Langewiesche (Ed.): *Formen des Krieges*.

<sup>8</sup> Reinhart Koselleck's work on temporality and history (icity) and the interconnectedness of the past, present and future, especially the concepts of "spaces of expectation" (*Erfahrungsräume*) and "horizons of expectation" (*Erwartungshorizonte*) provide a profound framework. See e.g. Koselleck: 'Space of Expectation' and 'Horizons of Expectation'. For a further conceptualization of war and experience in modern Europe see: Buschmann/Carl (Ed.): *Die Erfahrung des Krieges*.

<sup>9</sup> Benary: *Die Revolution des Krieges*, p. 757.

<sup>10</sup> Cochenhausen: *Wehrkunde als Lehrfach*, p. 263.

and acted based on new ‘imagined realities’, which were relatively constant till the 1970s. Hence World War I represented – in the words of the philosopher of science Thomas S. Kuhn – a fundamental ‘paradigm shift’, or according to the likewise famous term of Ludwik Fleck, a changing ‘style of thought’.<sup>11</sup>

Here, two long-lasting processes were critical. One becomes visible from catchwords like industrialisation, mechanisation, and a high level of technology. The other one is mass-mobilisation. These processes started in the eighteenth century and became crucial in the nineteenth century’s last 20 or 30 years. In World War I, their destructive potential came together. Industrialisation/the spread of technology and mass-mobilisation, communication, and logistics went hand in hand. The catchy phrase ‘total war’, coined in the 1930s, epitomizes this in contemporary discussions and marks the process of ‘totalisation’.<sup>12</sup>

With a closer look, it becomes clear that the visions of war and the arising consequences were based on two commonly accepted, unquestioned beliefs. First, war is unavoidable or even permanent with the only statuses being war and non-war. Furthermore, war is an event without any limits. These two core elements became almost axiomatic assumptions of military and political planning and the ‘total mobilisation’ of society, along with the seemingly new needs of war.<sup>13</sup>

- *War is unavoidable/permanent*

Indeed, the belief that war is unavoidable was not new. In former times war was regarded as divine intervention in nature and human history. Nevertheless, in the late 19th century and during World War I, war was seen – especially in right-wing circles – more and more within the context of a conflict-oriented reading of Darwinist theory. The ‘struggle for existence’

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<sup>11</sup> See Kuhn: *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*; Fleck: *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact*.

<sup>12</sup> For the historicizing ‘total war’ see Förster/Nagler (Ed.): *On the Road to Total War*; Boemeke/Chickering/Förster. (Ed.): *Anticipating Total War*; Chickering/Förster, (Ed.): *Great War, Total War*; Chickering/Förster (Ed.): *The Shadows of Total War*; Chickering/Förster/Greiner (Ed.): *A World at Total War*.

<sup>13</sup> For this see the war poet Ernst Jünger, Jünger: *Die totale Mobilmachung*.

became a key concept of life and applied to social organisation.<sup>14</sup> So, war seemed to be a non-neglectable essential part of human life. "Blood alone [...] drives the wheel of world history",<sup>15</sup> as a popular author wrote. Connected to this, the 'good' order of the society would be a society built along with the needs and categories of war. Hence war lost its character as a political instrument and became an endless 'struggle for existence', namely in national-socialist ideology. The vision of an unavoidable war in the near future legitimised organising society for war and fuelled a certain kind of radicalism.

- *War without limits*

In the eyes of the contemporaries, war became an unlimited, 'total' event. This understanding is observable in many areas. Just to highlight some examples: the breaking down of borders between war and peace, between the 'front' and the 'homeland' (the latter becoming 'home-front'), between the soldier and the civilian, between military and political leadership, between military and civil use of technology and infrastructures, and the questioning but destruction of ethical values and standards by the so-called 'necessity of war'.<sup>16</sup> This shows that the border between the military and civil spheres dissolved during World War I. In the interwar years, the vision of a future war swept it away. War was, in the eyes of the many contemporaries, no longer limited to the military and its institutions.<sup>17</sup> Instead, now war was characterised as an affair of society as a whole, and its 'civil' aspects were getting attention. So, war had to be conceptualised as a 'total' phenomenon. In this interpretation, again, war was everything and became the top category for the organisation of society. That means that every action, subject, and object had to be valued by their necessity for the future war effort. So, from this point of view, war became the measure

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<sup>14</sup> On the metaphorical use of this theory see Weingart: 'Struggle for Existence'.

<sup>15</sup> Soldan: Mensch und die Schlacht der Zukunft, p. 104.

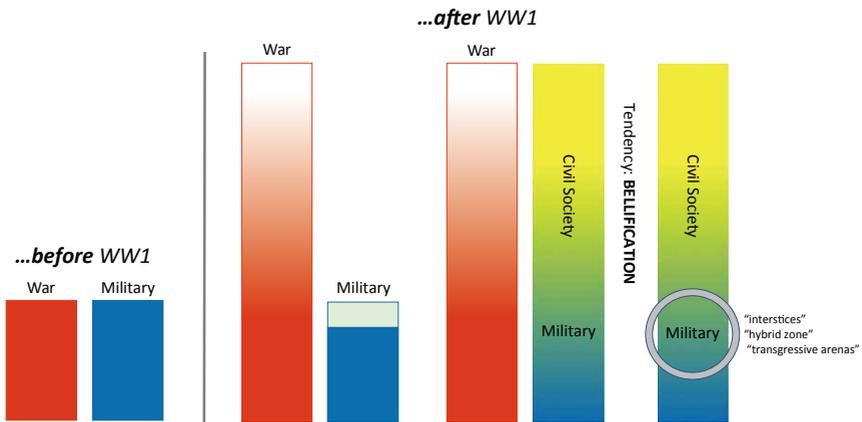
<sup>16</sup> See Reichherzer: 'Alles ist Front!', pp. 43-63.

<sup>17</sup> For one of the many voices see Linnebach: Wehrwissenschaften. Begriff und System. For a critique of this trend, Ambrosius: Zur Totalität des Zukunftskrieges, pp. 187-188.

of all things (including man).

From this outlook, two divergent but entangled processes emerged from the interpretation of war experience: a) civil appropriation of war and b) demilitarisation of war.

**Figure 1: The Nexus of War – Military – Society...**



In a schematic and simplified view (Figure 1), seen from nineteenth-century history, military and war were congruent before World War I. Dealing with war and warfare was a pure affair of the military and its institutions. During World War I, war became more and more unlimited – as mentioned above. Military assets like soldiers, tanks, artillery, ships, planes, and trucks were seen as a necessity for warring. All capacities of the country – the whole ‘potential de guerre’ – had to be taken into account. Hence a wide gap opened between war on the one hand and the military organisation on the other. The proponents of civil society aimed to fill this gap. According to these ambitions, they focused on new perceived factors – the civil dimension of war. The agents of many parts of the civil sphere tried to identify and solve the problems of total war in a scientific/academic manner, which

arose from the specific interpretation of war as an unlimited event. Overarching knowledge about warfare was the key factor for solving problems of imagined total warfare.<sup>18</sup> Those problems could range from the 'perfect' organisation of society, and the preparedness of the economic system for war, to area studies and the arrangement of landscape and urban spaces for war. Here, on the one hand, an appropriation of war by non-military actors and their expertise becomes visible. On the other, this process can be described as 'demilitarisation of war'. The 'old and traditional term war' (Kriegsbegriff) became 'substituted by the new political term of defence'<sup>19</sup> (Wehrbegriff). The military lost its ultimate capability in all matters of warfare. Moreover, there was no apparent difference where the tasks of the military end and the responsibility of civil society begins.<sup>20</sup> Here, an area with interstices developed – the habitat for civil-military hybrids and the realm of transmission and translation of knowledge.

This development happened all over Europe and North America and maybe in Japan.<sup>21</sup> In the case of Germany in the interwar years, the substantial 'civil' engagement was amplified by the restrictive military provisions of the Treaty of Versailles and within the context of the revitalisation of war in politics, culture, and art during the late 1920s, and not to forget rising militant masculinity, nationalism, and Nazism during the interbellum.<sup>22</sup>

The reduction of the German army to a small military force allowed no room for answering the questions of a 'total' war with an extension of the Army or the incorporation of experts into military institutions. The opposite was the fact. For sure, the peace treaty prohibited military-related activities outside the

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<sup>18</sup> Programatic is Szöllösi-Janze: Wissensgesellschaft in Deutschland; see as well Ash: Wissenschaft – Krieg – Modernität; and for the NS-Regime Flachowsky, Hachtmann, Schmalz (Ed.): Ressourcenmobilisierung.

<sup>19</sup> Niedermayer: Wehrgeographie, p. 7.

<sup>20</sup> So Erich Ludendorff, First Quartermaster-General of the Imperial Army's Great General Staff in the second half of the First World War, Ludendorff: Kriegserinnerungen, p. 1.

<sup>21</sup> For Japan see Tomohide: Militarismus des Zivilen in Japan 1937–1940; for Britain see: Edgerton: Warfare State; for the USA this process grew strong short before World War II and especially during the Cold War. See for a mass of literature and bridging the times, Lowen: Creating the Cold War University.

<sup>22</sup> For further references see Reichherzer: 'Alles ist Front!', pp. 96-127.

military – especially at universities and in private associations (Art. 177, Treaty of Versailles). However, military and civil authority and even private organisations could camouflage these ‘civil’ actions easily. The military leaders were forced to cooperate with civilian administrative staff and civilian organisations, and the universities. With the Treaty of Versailles, the Allies destroyed the famous Prusso-German general staff as the central military planning organisation and the centrepiece for waging war. Hence civil-military cooperation became more necessary and less questioned.<sup>23</sup> So, forced from outside, the military had to give up its monopoly on warfare. In the context of ‘demilitarisation of war’, military planning organisations tried to induce and manage action within fields of the civil society and to channel the different activities outside and beside the military organisation. Here, they were confronted with self-confident civil actors who claimed management of warfare for themselves.<sup>24</sup> Rivalry and cooperation went hand in hand. Civil-military relations were negotiated in a permanent process.<sup>25</sup> However, a manifold civil-military complex came into existence in interwar Germany, which fitted much better with the image of ‘total war’ than a pure military general staff as a unique supreme planning unit.

### **3. ‘Wehrwissenschaften’ – The Impact of ‘Total War’ on the Academic World**

When researching about the impact of war experiences in German science and academia and the role of knowledge and even management of knowledge after World War I, one will find a new and vague concept in German, which is called ‘Wehrwissenschaften’. The term ‘Wehrwissenschaften’ was a fashionable neologism. The phrase appeared in Germany in the above described political and socio-cultural atmosphere of the late 1920s. Librarians at the Army Central Library (Heeresbücherei) in Berlin coined the term. The librarians had to categorise the new literature on the civil aspects of war. Thus, they used ‘Wehrwissenschaften’ as an umbrella term. So, the word was pragmatically created but became very

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<sup>23</sup> See Bergien: *Bellizistische Republik*.

<sup>24</sup> Dülffer *Vom Bündnispartner zum Erfüllungsgehilfen*, pp. 291-292; Reichherzer ‘Alles ist Front!’, pp. 161-170.

<sup>25</sup> A thought-provoking study of civil-military relations is still Huntington: *The Soldier and the State*.

popular soon. It was able to work as the focal point of all activities connected with the civil aspects of war or in the space between military, science, academia, politics, economy, and any other field – in short, society as a whole.<sup>26</sup>

Although there are similar phenomena in many countries, 'Wehrwissenschaften' is not easy to translate. It has a special meaning, which derives from particular German circumstances in the interwar period. 'War studies', '(total) science of war', 'military studies', 'national defence studies', 'preparedness studies', 'polemologie' and many more terms are found in journals, newspapers, and pamphlets in the US, Britain, and France in connection with 'Wehrwissenschaften'. However, there is no direct hit among these translations. 'Wehrwissenschaften' is an all-inclusive term that covers all implications of the concept. Drawing together all these aspects mentioned here, like the totality of defence measures, preparedness, and possibility to switch from peace to war within a short period, provides an impression of what is meant by the concept of 'Wehrwissenschaften'. I will call this 'war studies' in a broad sense below.

A heterogeneous group of people advanced the concept from different parts of society, who acted in the space between military, administration, and academia. Proponents of war studies never developed or established a coherent program. We can see intense discussions and different manifestations within the academic landscape.<sup>27</sup> However, on a meta-level, all these concepts and manifestations had some things in common. The common intention of war studies and its proponents was, following the image of total war, to mobilise society for an anticipated war. Academia, science, humanities, universities, and other research institutions should be the core of this project. Within the context of a rising information and knowledge society, knowledge was the key to this kind of mobilisation. Hence, generating, augmenting, distributing – the flow of knowledge – was seen as a necessity. By looking at articles, programmatic studies, pamphlets, memos, and many other sources, three main components become visible, shaping war studies' aims.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Reichherzer: 'Alles ist Front!', pp. 140-141.

<sup>27</sup> For examples see Reichherzer: 'Alles ist Front!', pp. 140-189.

<sup>28</sup> See in a comprehensive form Reichherzer: 'Alles ist Front!', pp. 17-19.

- *Crosslinking and Flows of Knowledge*

The first was the striving for integration and cross-linking of knowledge. This was a direct reaction to the experience of an unlimited war. Integration and cross-linking were means of handling unlimited war under the umbrella term of ‘Wehrwissenschaften’/‘war-studies’. Integration should be achieved within academia between the classical disciplines as well as between politics, military, academia, and administration. Linking should enable the flow of concepts, ideas, and outcomes between different disciplines, different people and different social systems. Needless to say, the interconnected questions of war were the driving impulse here.<sup>29</sup>

- *Knowledge-Based Policy Advice*

The second component could be described as knowledge-based policy advice and the education of policymakers. The background for this aim is the diagnosis of a lack of knowledge about the war in the political leadership of the German Empire before and during World War I on the one hand and the lack of understanding of political affairs by the general staff and military leaders on the other hand. In this context, war studies should constantly contribute scientific knowledge about war to the decision-making process. To overcome the lack of knowledge about warfare, proponents of war studies advocated that every higher official should acquire a basic knowledge of war and warfare. The ubiquity of war implied that almost every issue had to be analysed from the outlook of war over any other aspect. So, the constant consideration of war was necessary: for example, providing a tax break for allterrain trucks, which could later be used in the army, building rail coaches which make transportation of the wounded possible, to transforming landscapes and urban areas into ‘warscapes’.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> For a conceptual approach on circulation of knowledge see the volume of ‘Nach Feierabend’, Gugerli et al: *Zirkulationen*; see as well the steady growing articles on the topic on the following site. <<https://historyofknowledge.net/category/circulation-of-knowledge/>> (15.09.2021).

<sup>30</sup> See for example Oestreich: *Vom Wesen der Wehrgeschichte*, p. 232; Frauenholz: *Wehrpolitik und Wehrwissen*, pp. 124-135. Especially for the idea of warscapes (Wehrlandschaft) see the chapter in Wiekping-Jürgensmann: *Die Landschaftsfibel*.

- *Affecting and Organising Society by Knowledge*

The third aim dealt with the education of society as a whole for the needs of war. A popular form of 'war studies' was to bring the knowledge of war into every corner of society. The traumatic experience of the defeat in 1918 seemed to make necessary the creation of a society ready for war at all times. Proponents of war studies saw within this 'mental armament' a factor (almost) equal to the 'material armament' of the nation. This does not mean the creation of a pure 'warrior nation'. The project of 'Wehrwissenschaften' had a more subtle approach: Modern men (and even women), the agents of total war, should be two-faced. They should be able to live a peaceful life but also be able to fight an ultimate all-out war, in a tank, in a submarine or fight on the shop floor, in a laboratory or an office.<sup>31</sup>

As a consequence, war studies could not simply be one discipline among others. From my point of view, which is inspired by intellectual history, this specific German type of war studies could not be measured in categories of the standard modern academic order built around the concept of easily separated disciplines. They should be viewed as an overarching conception busting academic disciplines in the classic sense. Like 'environment' or 'climate' today, 'war' affected everything and everybody. If war is 'total', it could not be investigated by one discipline. So, war studies transgressed and overarched the borders of disciplines. Hence, they have to be understood as – in terms of science studies – an 'inter' – or even 'transdisciplinary' approach with the object of investigation of war in the centre.<sup>32</sup>

This is also reflected in the systematisation of war studies. War studies could find arenas of transgressions in the disciplinary system, but they could not change the system. So, they were present in the academic landscape in four different variations.

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<sup>31</sup> See for example Linnebach: s. v. Wehrwissenschaften, p. 742; Siehe hierzu exempl.: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Wehrpolitik und Wehrwissenschaften (Ed.): *Kleine Wehrkunde*.

<sup>32</sup> For this and the following see Reichherzer: 'Alles ist Front!', esp. pp. 377-382.

The first step was a more general version, which collected, processed, and distributed the outcomes of other disciplines dealing with war. This manifestation of war studies gave an overview of the main topics of war studies for a broad audience from all parts of universities and even from the public. Switching from peace to war and thinking about war already in peacetime should be possible for anybody. In this process, knowledge of war should trickle down to all parts of society and be made applicable by everyone.

The second form of dealing with war in academia was found within traditional disciplines – like history or physics – which in particular were oriented toward war. Scholars in areas of interest for warfare should look at their field from the angle of war and generate specific knowledge for the field. For example, geographers paid attention to geopolitical questions, and historians covered the history of war. By the way, historical and geographical studies were reasonable means for painting a broad picture of war – because the categories of time (history) and space (geography) could – in the eyes of the contemporaries – be used in an integrative, ‘total’ way.<sup>33</sup> Course catalogues and syllabi from the 1930s and 1940s tell us, for example, that chemists and biologists were informed about chemical warfare. Likewise, students of medical science and law had to take this knowledge about chemical agents into account.

The third step was an integrative and even intensive study of war. Collecting and systematising information and data from other disciplines and transforming it into a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of war was a centrepiece.<sup>34</sup> An Encyclopaedia of Wehrwissenschaften, which was published from 1936 onwards, fostered the approach of systematisation and distribution of knowledge.<sup>35</sup> In a kind of feedback loop, this overarching knowledge should be influence research in the

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<sup>33</sup> See for the case of history e.g. Schmitthener: *Die Wehrkunde und ihr Lehrgebäude* and for geography Niedermayer: *Wehrgeographie*. Practical outputs of his institute include the visualization of knowledge in different atlases (*Wehrgeographische Atlanten*) for France, UK, USSR, and USA, in print in winter 1944/45. These atlases functioned as devices which systematize different knowledge and brought intelligence in maps and visualizations together.

<sup>34</sup> E.g. Niedermayer: *Wehrgeographie*; Niedermayer: *Wehrpolitik*; Linnebach: *Wehrwissenschaften. Begriff und System*; or Ewald: *Wehrwissenschaft*.

<sup>35</sup> Franke: *Handbuch der neuzeitlichen Wehrwissenschaften*.

discipline. The synthesised, systematised, and aggregate knowledge should be distributed to other fields of knowledge and interested ministries, other political institutions, and the private sector.

At the beginning of the 1930s, the concept manifested itself in teaching appointments at almost every German university. In a few hotspots (like Berlin and Heidelberg), the universities established special institutes dealing with war studies in more or less close relationships with the military.<sup>36</sup> Besides this, the German Association for Defence Policy and War-Studies (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Wehrpolitik und Wehrwissenschaften) was founded, which works as a central network for distributing knowledge of war.<sup>37</sup> The association tried to specify the concept, coordinate the outcomes, and give advice to politicians, military leaders and lecturers and professors at the university. A look into university course catalogues and calendars shows us an increasing number of themes dealing with war in the 1930s. War studies were intensively pushed by people acting in the space between the military, academia, science, industry, administration, and student organisations. These civil-military 'hybrids' or 'go-betweenes' worked – almost literally – as interpreters in the intermediate sphere between academia, the military, administration, and any other part of society.

#### **4. Beyond Militarisation – Bellification as a Signature for Analysing Twentieth-Century History?**

The birth of the concept named 'Wehrwissenschaften' (war studies) in the interwar years shows that the image of industrialised mass warfare without limits – 'total war' – provided the basis for claiming the concept of 'total studies of war'. If war has become total, it has to become a project of society as a whole. In this context, war studies were both: a) an indicator and b) an agent in a process called 'bellification' of society.

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<sup>36</sup> For example at the Universities of Heidelberg and Berlin.

<sup>37</sup> See Kolmsee: *Die Rolle der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Wehrpolitik und Wehrwissenschaften*; Reichherzer: 'Alles ist Front!', pp. 233-253.

War advanced in the modern mindset to a guiding principle of collective belief systems. War took a diffuse meaning as an influential idea of order in virtually every area of society – regardless of a liberal, a communist or an authoritarian-fascist worldview. The societies of the twentieth century, in particular, were primarily structured with the threat of war looming over them. War became the measure of all things during this period: Every action, subject, and object was questioned and evaluated for relevance to the common (future) war effort.

In my view, this tendency, what I suggest we call ‘bellification’, was an essential signature of the twentieth century with the high tide from the interwar years till the fading of the Cold War order since the 1970s. Why ‘bellification’? The analytical framework of bellification is related to but differs from ‘militarisation’ or ‘militarism’. First: Militarisation focuses on the military and the expansion of military organisational values and into civil society and social systems. In contrast, the military was not the centre and not the role model, which advanced the process. It was the self-empowerment of the civil society for war besides a military sphere. Hence second: ‘Militarisation’ often implies a hijacking of the civil society by the military. Conversely, bellification brings the agency and actions of the civil society into the focus of analysis. Third, looking from a bellicistic point of view back on twentieth-century history, we can identify civil societies in a status of permeant preparedness and total mobilisation ready for switching from peace to war literally in one second. Nevertheless, society became not a uniformed military camp or a ‘garrison state’<sup>38</sup>. Such kind of ‘hyper-militarisation’ was impossible and never a goal and was even seen as dysfunctional by most proponents of civil mobilisation and even within the military.

Instead, the situation was very complex. Bellification sheds light on this. A quote from German war poet Ernst Jünger in his essay ‘Total mobilisation’ finally made clear what bellification was about: “Just pressing one button on the console, and the widely ramified net of energies of peaceful, modern life had to be channelled

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<sup>38</sup> See Lasswell: The Garrison State.

to the power of war".<sup>39</sup> So, the crucial point of 'war' in the twentieth century is more subtle. The heuristic framework of bellification allows for identification and analysis of self-mobilisation, self-authorisation, or even self-empowerment of the civil society and emphasises on the appropriation of all affairs of planning and waging war by non-military actors. War became or should become 'in-scripted' into civil societies. Air raid shelters in the basement of skyscrapers or in subway stations, highways designed to work as potential airfields, public health matters, pre-military training in schools, transfer of technology to the arms industries, the resilience of critical infrastructures and many more are examples of taking a potential war in civil affairs into account – sometimes more visible, sometimes less visible. The consequence is a hybrid situation, which was neither war nor peace. However, war has to be put in quotation marks because 'war' is a fluid phenomenon. Sure, 'war' could be seen as an armed conflict. Further, 'war' is an idea, an imagination, or principle of order, and at the very least, 'war' is a powerful metaphor. Bellification takes all this into account.

Hence the imperative for research using bellification could be: Look at the twilight zone between war and peace, between military and civil society. This could be fruitful for historians and social scientists alike. Bellification works well as a heuristic and analytical device to explore the role of 'war' in societies. The concept of bellification sheds light on civil-military relations. It makes processes of using 'war' and the specific form and intensity of an orientation towards 'war' and their advocates in different quantity and quality visible. Moreover, bellification is connectable to other processes.

Applying bellification to twentieth-century history, it becomes clear how the order of war shaped the twentieth century from World War I to the 1970s. Beginning in the late 1960s and especially since the 1970s, the organisational power of war for arranging society was questioned from many sides. The implosion of the Cold War paradigm started from then and faded during the 1980s. If there is a switch from the concept and metaphor of 'war' to 'market' as an organising principle

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<sup>39</sup> Jünger: *Die totale Mobilmachung*, p. 14.

during the last decades of the twentieth century and maybe to something else today – this would be another story.

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