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Behind the curtain of „Zeitenwende“. An Alternative Perspective on the German War Posture in the southern Caucasus

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**Keywords:** Germany, Ukraine, Nakhchivan, Artsakh, multipolar, unipolar, history.

*The article presents an alternative to the widespread opinion to blame only Russia for the current war in Ukraine. Chancellor Olaf Scholz's presentation of the concept of the "turning point" is criticized as a facade and attention is drawn to Armenia and its situation. In reality, the term "turning point" serves, among other things, as an instrument for pursuing Eastern expansionist policies.*

*The study is based on the analysis of publications on the war over Karabakh in 2020 and the invasion of Armenia by Azerbaijan in 2022. Methodologically, the study of Levon Abrahamyan (2005) was also used. In addition, political and cultural relations between Germany and Azerbaijan in recent decades were analyzed.*

*Looking at the interactions between Germany and Azerbaijan in the political and scientific spheres, it turns out that Germany uses them as an instrument to assert its own claims in the South Caucasus. However, to the extent that it wants to enforce them, to the extent it is itself manipulated by Azerbaijan. This is described in the political sphere (the so-called German-Azerbaijani connection), in the scientific sphere (the Aliyev-funded chair of Azerbaijani history at the Humboldt University in Berlin) and in the cultural sphere (the trophy park in Baku).*

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Յուրգեն Գիսպերտ

ազգագրագետ, պ.գ.դ.

Հիմնաբառեր՝ Գերմանիա, Ուկրաինա, Նախիջևան, Արցախ, բազմաբևեռ, միաբևեռ, պատմություն:

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## Պատմություն/ History

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Հոդվածում ներկայացված է Ուկրաինայում ընթացող պատերազմի համար միայն Ռուսաստանին մեղադրելու տարածված կարծիքի այլընտրանքը: Կանցլեր Օլաֆ Շոլցի «շրջադարձային կետի» հայեցակարգի ներկայացումը քննադատվում է որպես արտաքին կողմ, և ուշադրություն է հրավիրվում Հայաստանի և նրա իրավիճակի վրա: Իրականում «շրջադարձային կետ» եզրույթը, ի թիվս այլ բաների, ծառայում է որպես արևելյան նվաճողական քաղաքականությունն վարելու գործիք: Ուսումնասիրությունը հիմնված է 2020 թվականին Ղարաբաղի շուրջ պատերազմի և 2022 թվականին Ադրբեջանի կողմից Հայաստան ներխուժման վերաբերյալ հրապարակումների վերլուծության վրա: Մեթոդաբանորեն օգտագործվել է նաև Լևոն Աբրահամյանի (2005 թ.) ուսումնասիրությունը: Բացի այդ, վերլուծվել են Գերմանիայի և Ադրբեջանի միջև վերջին տասնամյակների քաղաքական և մշակութային հարաբերությունները: Գերմանիայի գաղափարախոսությունը ներդրված է նրա անդրատլանտյան հարաբերությունների մեջ, որոնք կենտրոնացած են Միացյալ Նահանգների վրա: Դիտելով Գերմանիայի և Ադրբեջանի փոխազդեցությունները քաղաքական և գիտական ոլորտներում՝ պարզվում է, որ Գերմանիան դրանք օգտագործում է որպես Հարավային Կովկասում սեփական հավակնությունները հաստատելու գործիք: Մակայն որքան նա ցանկանում է պարտադրել դրանք, այնքանով, այն շահարկվում է Ադրբեջանի կողմից: Մա նկարագրված է քաղաքական ոլորտում (այսպես կոչված՝ գերմանա-ադրբեջանական կապ), գիտական ոլորտում (Ալինի կողմից ֆինանսավորվող Բեռլինի Հումբոլդտի համալսարանի Ադրբեջանի պատմության ամբիոնը) և մշակութային ոլորտում (Բաքվի ռազմավարի պուրակ):

За кулисами «Цайтенвенде». Альтернативный взгляд на военную позицию Германии на Южном Кавказе

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**Ключевые слова:** Германия, Украина, Нахичевань, Арцах, многополярность, однополярность, история.

*В статье представлена альтернатива распространенному мнению винить в нынешней войне на Украине только Россию. Презентация канцлером Олафом Шольцем концепции «поворотного момента» подвергается критике как фасад и внимание привлекается к Армении и ее ситуации. В действительности термин «поворотный момент» служит, помимо прочего, инструментом проведения восточной экспансионистской политики. Исследование основано на анализе публикаций о войне за Карабах в 2020 году и вторжении Азербайджана в Армению в 2022 году. Методологически также использовалось исследование Левона Абрамяна (2005).*

*Кроме того, были проанализированы политические и культурные отношения между Германией и Азербайджаном в последние десятилетия. Идеология Германии встроена в ее трансатлантические отношения, в центре которых находятся Соединенные Штаты. Если посмотреть на взаимодействие Германии и Азербайджана в политической и научной сферах, то окажется, что Германия использует их как инструмент утверждения собственных претензий на Южном Кавказе.*

*Однако в той мере, в какой он хочет их обеспечить, в той мере, в какой он сам манипулирует Азербайджаном. Это описано в политической сфере (так называемая немецко-азербайджанская связь), в научной сфере (финансируемая Алиевым кафедра истории Азербайджана в Университете Гумбольдта в Берлине) и в культурной сфере (парк трофеев в Баку).*

\* \* \*

**Intro:** On February 27th 2022, three days after war in Ukraine began, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz called it a “Zeitenwende“, that is to say, a turning point, an end of epoch and the beginning of a new era.

The alleged new quality of the current times is doubtful: “Zeitenwende“ is a rhetoric device, a façade to hide away certain correlations, which would lead to other conclusions than merely blaming the Russians for this war.

I shall try to illustrate some of these correlations to shift attention from the western-centric view of the Ukraine War, to Armenia and the situation there.

In part one Scholz's term "turning point" will be discussed. It is striking how Scholz frames the multipolar world (mainly the US and Europe) against a supposedly unipolar world view of Putin. To strengthen multipolarity, he foresees a "new role" for Germany within the framework of the transatlantic partnership.

The relationship within the transatlantic partnership is emphasized chiefly by the German Green Party (the Greens), differentiating between the "willing" and "less willing" nations with magic words like "rule-based order" and "value-oriented foreign policy" used as a yardstick. This scheme also includes climate policy, which has since mutated into the de-facto sovereign of Green ideology.

To discuss interrelations and their effect on the South Caucasus region, examples of political contact between Germany, the Republic of Armenia and Azerbaijan will be explained.

First, I will speak to the so-called German-Azerbaijan-connection. Its origins date back to aftermath of the downfall of the Iron Curtain, a stepping stone for the West in its own expansionist ambitions in the East. Here we witness dubious business dealings between the EU with Germany on one and Azerbaijan on the other side. This includes a tendency of ahistorization, shown on the example of German-Azerbaijani scientific exchange. Both sides try to instrumentalize each other, and how heteronomies are entered into the German discourse.

Methodologically, I'll draw on Levon Abrahamyan's (2005) four-type model ("Paths of identity").

**The term "turning point“:** Scholz's characterization "turning point" for the beginning of the war was immediately taken up by the German media. Practical derivations from "Ur-Zeitenwende" were calculated - political, economic and especially energy policy changes were justified with Putin's attack on Ukraine. The phrase particularly suggests the "zero hour", which leads us to think of the timeline as a mathematical x-axis: We imagine the zero at its centre. In concrete terms, February 24<sup>th</sup> is conflated with points in time further to the left and their content predominantly interpreted in context of February 24<sup>th</sup>.

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The phrase "contrary to international law" gains exceptionality by being put into context of the turning times caused by Russia: Unfolding war events resulted into discussions, whether the millions of starvation-deaths in Ukraine in the 1930s, called *holodomor*, should be classified as "genocide". This would insinuate that there were in fact genocides in many Soviet republics and much more seriously: Consequently, this serves to relativize Auschwitz by means of Kiev, which is risqué, considering it is being done by the German Bundestag (Daniel Isabelle, ZEIT ONLINE, 30.33-2022)

Scholz, introduces the term to the mainstream chiefly on two occasions. In addition to the one above from his government address, where he states the existence of a turning point, in an article on Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> he expounds on the point. Whereas on February he uses the term rather selectively for the events that happened, by December the "turn of an era" has taken on global proportions: "The world after is no longer the same as the world before" (Scholz Olaf, The Global Zeitenwende)

Scholz allows "Zeitenwende" to radiate across the globe: "The Zeitenwende goes beyond the war in Ukraine and beyond the issue of European security. The central question is this: How can we, as Europeans and as the European Union, remain independent actors in an increasingly multipolar world?" (Scholz Olaf, The Global Zeitenwende)

Scholz pits a multipolar world in which the West shares with other willing countries against a unipolar-minded Putin who still thinks in terms of "spheres of influence" and empires.

**Germany and the transatlantic relationship:** For Scholz the attack presented a key moment for subsequent actions, above all the 100 billion euros for rearmament that emerge out of thin air. The immediacy and magnitude of the sanctions imposed on Russia is striking as well and implies an automatism of modes of action, rather than just the implementation of an operational plan for the emergency as it occurred. Scholz speaks of a new role for Germany to now assume: "Germany's new role will require a new strategic culture, and the national security strategy [...] will reflect this fact" (Scholz Olaf, The Global Zeitenwende).

Scholz makes mention of Europe - ostensibly - at peace for three decades, which gave security policy different concerns and let military issues recede into the background. But that is now history: "Now, the guiding question will be which threats we and our allies must confront in Europe, most immediately from Russia" (Scholz Olaf, The Global Zeitenwende).

Scholz's comparison is remarkable: The rearmament of the Bundeswehr is the sharpest change since its introduction in 1955, which was synonymous with NATO membership. The impression is created of exoneration from one's own past, which is paired with the above-mentioned decision about a "genocide" in the Ukrainians - for the period in which the persecution of the Jews in the German Reich took shape.

A balanced and resilient transatlantic partnership also requires that Germany and Europe play active roles" (Scholz Olaf, The Global Zeitenwende). The term "transatlantic partnership" can be seen strongly emphasized by the German party "Bündnis '90/Die Grünen". While it was previously a rhetorical talking point meaning "Western community", now it is to be understood, especially from the mouth of the German Foreign Minister Anna-Lena Baerbock, as a declaration of war in the direction of Moscow - and this even

long before the start of the war. The transatlantic relationship is also linked to diffuse climate goals - under the ultimate leadership of the United States, which Scholz also underscored.

This, however, makes one critically question Scholz's diametrical juxtaposition of multipolar (West) and unipolar (Russia), beginning with the term itself. Is the unipolar not itself already part of the multipolar? The many contains the one, accordingly a pole is part of the totality of all poles, indifferent to the inner nature of its orientation to many worlds in an inherently multipolar world (Cf. Daniel Charms 2005, *Über die Zeit, über den Raum, über die Existenz*).

But Scholz and his department heads from the ministries of foreign affairs and economy divide the world into good and evil. Before doing so, they still signal a willingness to engage in dialogue: "Ultimately, in a multipolar world, dialogue and cooperation must go beyond the democratic comfort zone. The new U.S. National Security Strategy rightly recognizes the need to work with countries that do not embrace democratic institutions but nevertheless rely on and support a rules-based international system. The world's democracies will need to work with these countries to defend and maintain a global order that binds power to rules and counters revisionist acts such as Russia's war of aggression. This effort will require pragmatism and a measure of humility" (Scholz Olaf, *The Global Zeitenwende*).

Foreign Minister Baerbock here uses the term „rule-based order“: „In addition to the legally binding norms of international law, the "rules-based order" also includes legally non-binding norms, standards and codes of conduct“ (Plenarprotokoll).

This results in gradual differentiations into those countries that meet U.S. requirements and those that (want to) do so less - but to the extent that the (Eastern) world is differentially oriented toward itself, to the extent that the multipolar itself becomes unipolar.

Moreover, the relationship between legally binding and legally non-binding standards pointed out by Baerbock is questionable: The "legally non-binding standards" are particularly explosive, because they are more effective than mere legally binding norms, if we take a look at the long-termed influence of shaping cultural processes with the help of political correctness, woke, gender mainstreaming, and finally cancel culture.

Non-binding norms open up the space for a number of equally valid possibilities for action, which becomes particularly relevant in conflict situations: "A conflict situation involves the question of what problem the conflict contains and what service(s) (or problem solution(s) are available to the actors in order to arrive at a solution. The mix of problems and possible solutions are among the factors that determine whether the actor can act out or is only able to be reactive. [...]. Rarely does it happen in practice that there is an exact solution to a certain problem, is so that one could speak of an adequate relationship between the two. A well-known example of this is the relationship between master and servant in an indirect command situation. The master sits in the recliner and says 'I'm in a draft!' The servant learns through this sentence statement that his master has a problem. The sentence statement opens up an ambivalent space of possible solutions within which the servant has to satisfy the master“ (Gispert Jürgen, 2022, 254).

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**Climate and territory:** Minister of Economic Affairs Robert Habeck pledged during his visit to Washington in March that Germany was ready to "exercise a serving leadership"<sup>1</sup> (Bünder Helmut, Energieversorgung: Habecks Diener in Qatar war doch nicht ganz umsonst). The German government's willingness to spend 100 billion euros on military and to supply weapons to Ukraine is also linked to a willingness to take on more responsibility within NATO, Habeck said. "And that is, after all, the plan." Freedom, he said, "must be financed" (Berger Jens, Baerbocks Grundsatzrede – Die Größenwahnsinnige).

The aspect of linking freedom to financing as its basis is not so new in itself, but it acquires a peculiar thing when it comes to the above-mentioned gradations of willing countries. If such countries help us to finance freedom and this state is to remain stable then we must in turn do everything we can to ensure that they also remain stable. Because only in this way can our freedom be preserved. But that would be a contradiction of the concept of freedom propagated by the government, which may be due to the fact that freedom is derived from money.

Climate protection and related policies are becoming a "quasi-sovereign" in the case of the Greens as a mobilization strategy, as has been noted by more conservative circles (Söllner, Pritzl, Moralismus, Ideologie und Staatsdirigimus bei den Grünen). The "climate protection instruments" would lack efficiency and social balance - the climate crisis would be equated with (one's own) culture par excellence, citing a quote from the Minister of Economics: "The climate crisis [...] is precisely being conducted not only as an economic debate, but also as a cultural one"<sup>2</sup> (Söllner, Pritzl, Moralismus, Ideologie und Staatsdirigimus bei den Grünen). Thus, the battle over climate becomes a battle of cultures, since the question of climate is elevated to a fundamental question of the cultural, while the question of neoliberalism's participation in the misery as a system is explicitly left out.

The accusation of „left-wing“ state dirigisme by conservative circles is devoid of the idea that the Greens particularly are to be assigned to the transatlantic line because of their dirigisme. Climate policy is the quasi-sovereign of the Greens, to which it must be subordinated. Baerbock is an ethicist: Russia must be „ruined“<sup>3</sup>

Transatlantic relations, particularly, are emphasized by the Greens and pursued in a two-step with diffuse climate goals and under the given economic conditions, which in themselves are never up for debate: "Qualitatively and quantitatively, Germany must become more than it already is in each case. Europe - first the west of the continent, then gradually at least everything west of the Russian border - is the space with which Germany must and wants to be able to calculate as a market, which means nothing less than: as a source of its economic and political power, as a reservoir of available human and material resources. Its capitalistically potent wealth has become the instrument to take this space into use for its own benefit. Germany has thus not imposed any self-restraint on itself at all; in consideration of its ever-expanding

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<sup>1</sup>Baerbock demands a leading role for Germany within Europe alongside the USA0. The servant leadership role in Washington mutated with Habeck during his Quatar visit to the servant before the Lord with gas itself.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Weber's distinction between ethics of conscience and ethics of responsibility in „Politik als Beruf“ in: <https://www.textlog.de/2296.html>.

<sup>3</sup> In this context, Baerbock's expression "value compass" is instructive: a value compass aligns the world with values, whereas compass values make the relationship between the one who measures and the thing to be measured appear more precise, the needle cannot bend with grief.

neighborhood only as much as appeared and appears necessary and useful for its ever-expanding utilization" (Deutschlan will den Krieg – warum eigentlich?) Ecology needs space! Space means as one of its visible features: Territory.

**The CDU-Azerbaijan Connection:** We can distinguish between different phases in which the “new German foreign policy was discussed“. Particularly „[...] the period immediately after the German reunification and after the transition of government from Helmut Kohl to Gerhard Schröder in 1998“ (Hellmann, Jacobi, Urrestarazu, Einleitung: „Neue“ deutsche Außenpolitik?, 5).

Also in 2014, when at the important Munich Security Conference the then Foreign Minister Steinmeier and the then Federal President Gauck made coordinated speeches. It should be remembered that the conference was held in early February and that the annexation of Crimea took place on March 18. It should also be emphasized that Steinmeier was Foreign Minister at the time, before he became Federal President, and thus was and still is a pillar of foreign policy. The phenomenon of "new German foreign policy" thus runs through thread from after the fall of the Berlin Wall until today. Perhaps emblematic of this is the fact that today's Foreign Minister Baerbock had the Bismarck Room in her chambers renamed the "Hall of German Unity" - a portrait of Bismarck was removed. The old contents of the room were moved to the former federal capital, Bonn (Nach scharfer Kritik an Baerbock: Bismarck-Zimmer befindet sich jetzt in Bonn).

A strategic interest of the German Social Democrats in the Caspian Sea region can be noted in 1998, when they published a reference paper. The SPD paper essentially focuses on raw materials in the east, starting with Azerbaijan, continuing through Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. For the country's respective interior conditions political stability is important in order to secure the European energy supply - via "direct participation in the large Caspian oil and gas consortia" (Zukunftsregion Kaspisches Meer).

In this state of affairs the SPD still uses the moral category to pronounce its strategy by binding success to Human Rights. But they mourn backwardness of the systems involved – Clanish structures underlying the social relationships there. This was in 1998: „As long as these patrimonial structures still prevail, they must be taken into account. No promotion of economic cooperation will work without establishing lasting personal contacts with the leaders“ (Zukunftsregion Kaspisches Meer). This approach is still ongoing. And it was at the same time of the published SPD-paper, when the former Minister of Defense (Rühe), a Christian Democrat, said, if there were a north-south line between Russia, Armenia and Iran, the "defense case" would occur. Here we may ask whether someone who has been using war rhetoric for decades, truly has peace on their mind?! In 2011, the CDU brought out a paper in which it was made clear that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict would be perceived as disruptive to Germany's gas supply. Since the CDU also supports the Western integration policy, it holds Armenia solely responsible (Gispert, Kolter, Offener Brief).

Thus it seems that the West tries to gain and intensify influence in the East via Azerbaijan at the price of ignoring the internal regional problems, i.e. the war between Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia. Conversely, Azerbaijan is not only trying to get the same thing, no, we must suspect that only the specific German request together with the Ukraine war opened the possibilities for the youngest invasions by Azerbaijan.

In the following I will sketch out the importance of the Caspian Caviar. In the case of the implementation of the Azeri dictatorship in the Council of Europe it served as a door opener. Caviar is

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**Ցայտենվեճի կուլիսներում. Հարավային Կովկասում Գերմանիայի ռազմական դիրքորոշման վերաբերյալ այլընտրանքային տեսակետ**

symbolizing the richness of Azerbaijan, it serves as a diplomatic medium: “There are a lot of deputies in the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly whose first greeting, after ‘Hello’, is ‘Where is the caviar?’” (Caviar Diplomacy. Why every European should care).

In the context of the caviar diplomacy the CDU developed a voting pattern pro Azerbaijan, which not only was important in business issues, but also in affairs of Human Rights. Members of the CDU spoke about "democratic tradition in Azerbaijan" and that Aliyev leads to independence. Baden Württemberg in the South-West of Germany got the nickname „Baku-Württemberg“. Referring to the intended energy diversification with Azerbaijan we have the Swabian Günter Oettinger, who was head of the Energy Commission in Brussel until 2014 (Veser Reinhard, FAZ, 26.3. 3). By this we may conclude the possibility, that the war of aggression by Azerbaijan was ideologically covered.

The Christian Democrat Parties CDU/CSU were the focussed on by the Aliyev regime and their concerns. Florian Hahn, for example, is a party member of the CSU and a member of the Bundestag. In Hahn's case, it is striking that as an expert on defense policy, he is important for relations with Azerbaijan. He was also a member of PACE (Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe): "The Council of Europe in Strasbourg was the European epicenter of the Azerbaijan affair for years" (Caviar Diplomacy. Why every European should care).

Contacts of the pro-regime lobbying group TEAS (The European Azerbaijan Society) and PACE, led to interconnections between TEAS, political Berlin and Baku, extending invitations to select politicians. Conversely, there was a house pass for the TEAS representative to the Bundestag. The daughter of the Azerbaijani president organized an event on Nagorno-Karabakh at the Humboldt University in Berlin. Hahn gave "a speech in which he pointed out the importance of settling the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (Caviar Diplomacy. Why every European should care).

Consequently, during the 2020 war, "[Germany] was conspicuously reticent [...] in criticizing the Aliyev regime, which was probably also due to successful lobbying." Secret documents reveal "the regime's years-long efforts to win supporters in Berlin for Azerbaijan's plan to reconquer the Nagorno-Karabakh region" ([Dachsel Felix, Hofmann Robert, Azerbaijan-Affair](#)).

The critical point is, that by inviting the nation of Azerbaijan into its house, the latter gave also an inroad for Aliyev's capriciousness. So corrupting the European Convention on Human Rights led to the most serious crisis in the history of the Council of Europe. On the face of it, the invitation of Azerbaijan was made with the idea that Council of Europe membership would gradually transform Azerbaijan. Altruism can be doubted here, taking into consideration the plan to instrumentalize the invitation as a bridge to get a foothold in the East. A main purpose of the European Council – the Human Rights – is turned into its contrary. Caviar diplomacy works as a kind of a Trojan horse (Caviar Diplomacy. Why every European should care).

**Experiencing Azerbaijan’s omnivor practice – the Baku-Berlin arrangement:** In his book „Armenian identity in a changing world“, Levon Abrahamyan develops a so-called „park of identity“ with four „tree-types“, which he connects to the Russian (selective), Armenian (root-oriented), Georgian (prestigious) and Azerbaijani (omnivor) case. No nation „follows only one of these models. However, some nations may choose one or another of the four schemes as the basic axis for their national speculations“ (Abrahamyan, 2005, 7).



In the *omnivor*-model, an attempt is made to manipulate everything in historical terms, literally, as the name of the model says: to swallow everything that does not correspond to one's own artificial genealogical line. It is necessary to know that the Azerbaijan state in its territorial extent of today - which includes Karabakh - goes back to Stalin. Well, nobody wants to descend from Stalin, at least not posthumously. Thus, they made up a story.

The "Armenian model" is based on the genealogical root and is oriented at its core as a "fight against the aliens." The only aliens that interfere in the Armenian model are the Urartians who lived on the historical and present territory of Armenia between the 6th and the 9th CE. The struggle concerning the identity issue of Urartians and Armenians experienced a significant climax in the final phases of the Soviet system and emerging armed conflicts in its aftermath. In the theoretical struggle, the dissolution of a foreign Urartu was conducive to the cementing of an autochthony thesis (Abrahamyan, 2005, 10-12).

It may be significant here, that in an exhibition in the Archaeological Museum in Frankfurt/Germany is shown a map of Urartu, which is allocated to „Azerbaijan“ (Kantian Raffi, Was hat Urartu mit Aserbaidtschan zu tun?).

**Berlin and Baku or: an extraordinary science love:** If we want to test the Azeri model we just have to test caviar and its practice. By swallowing caviar the Christian Democrats themselves are swallowed. It can be shown, too, how by this omnivor model Azerbaijan not only shapes its own history, but actively creates or influences other political and cultural processes, for example in Germany.

From 2010 to 2021, there was a chair of Azerbaijani history at the Humboldt University in Berlin, headed by a historian socialized in the GDR and educated in Baku, named Eva-Maria Auch. It was mainly financed by Aliyev. The money flowed into the university's third-party budget. With her retirement, not only Mrs. Auch disappeared, but also her chair.

The institute was quite peculiar in its somewhat direct proximity to a foreign state, however in regard to third-party funded research the structure in which Mrs. Auch was situated is only one of many such addresses. The very difference is the exclusively political character of this chair, which has nothing to do with science in a more Humboldtian sense, as the name of the Berlin University promises, rather, it testifies to a high degree of heteronomy under neoliberal conditions.

Searching for some material about the content of Mrs. Auch's tenure, we must have a look at the website of the Institute for Historical Sciences in general. The Website of the chair was shut down from there, no further information is available.

But there was a certain series of lectures, having taken place in 2018, in which Mrs. Auch participated. The title of this series was „Fake news“. There were reports with titles such as: "Fake News as a Political Communication Strategy"; "Fake science? Truth and Lies in the State Socialist Historical Discourse"; "Rumors and Falsifications in the Middle Ages; News and Fake News in the Early Modern Period"<sup>1</sup> (Ringvorlesung „Fake News“). The lecture with state socialism as its subject is particularly significant, considering that Mrs. Auch also gave a lecture titled „Coverage of German Media from Crisis areas - the case of Karabakh“.

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed discussion of Azerbaijani historiography Gispert Jürgen 2022, ch. 4.5.5

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Without knowing the content of her report we are allowed to conclude that by analyzing the German Media about Karabakh probably as fake news she simply projected the Azeri method to manipulate history thus creating their own one which in reality itself is „fake science“.

The endowment contract for the Chair between the Humboldt University and the Azeri Embassy was not publicly available and since has disappeared. The reason given by Humboldt University: The contract was a diplomatic document and thus classified information. This means that the University as a public-law institution and the main actor in creating education is on one side host and place of the event, which is legally fixed, on the other side there is nothing to prove this. The Foreign Office of Germany announced that the contract is not a diplomatic piece - nevertheless it remains under lock and key. With Mrs. Auch's retirement, she too disappeared, as did her Chair, as if it never was there in the first place.

Embassy and University are also in an interesting relationship: Being swallowed by their own policy the University in its alleged autonomous status is swallowed by the Azeri Embassy.

**Trophy Park:** In the trophy park in Baku, which Aliyev opened on the occasion of the victory over Arzakh on 12.4.2021, The vanquished are depicted in the humiliating posture of being in the moment of defeat.

One can see lifelike mannequins in full uniform, posed as dead, dying or tied up. Weapons captured in the war, tanks, artillery, rockets, anti-aircraft guns as well as vehicles are also on display (Petrosyan Tigran, Propaganda in Aserbaidzhan: Ausgestellter Hass ) It is not the enemy defeated in a concrete battle, but it is the concrete enemy Armenians chosen to be destroyed - with basic aid of Turkey.

Highlight of the opening was Aliyev in uniform walking through an avenue formed by two shelf walls filled with helmets of dead Armenian soldiers. Curious is a justification given by the exhibition organizers, who claimed to have taken their concept from Western “colonial exhibitions” (Agha Javid, Opinion On the apologists of Baku’s Military Trophy Park).

Now Azerbaijan itself has not experienced a colonial period - it has not possessed any colonies, never could, because as a Soviet republic it could not have any and as a republic of Azerbaijan it has none. The reference to Western exhibitions is erroneous. There uniforms, helmets, rifles and other objects are exhibited in a neutral way as artifacts to teach visitors about combat conditions.

Here, we may allow a small comparison concerning the use of the word “captured“. It is also given in the context of the German discourse on looted art especially in concern over discussions on so-called anti-colonial orientation of new exhibition concepts. Here, of all things, the Humboldt Forum to which the Humboldt University is affiliated stands out. This also relates to the Grassi Museum in Leipzig. The anti-colonial critique in such new conceptions is criticized for having lost the reference to the object, i.e. for being ahistorical. This means that the objects are stripped of their historical character, colonialism 2.0, so to speak is dressed up as anti-colonialist with the result that the exhibits destroy their own past or the reference to it.

And the exhibition by Ali does not represent a historical relationship, because Armenia and Armenians do not exist for Ali. A text about the Humboldt Forum says that in a figurative sense the new conception makes the old exhibits appear indistinguishable (Kilb Andrea, FAZ, 22.9-2021, 9). The idea of

convergence between Aliyev's style and the new conceptions in Germany comes up. Aliyev's propaganda refers to alleged colonial exhibitions in Germany, which they resembled only conceptually. In Germany the conventional exhibition objectifies an individual as an object of art, but the collector (according to the new conception) is subsumed to colonialism and both, collector and objects, disappear indistinguishably (behind the curtain of the same "turning point") on the heap of a supposed past.

At this point, the Berlin curators' choice to take a caricature of Bismarck from that time, which shows Bismarck as a peacock with colonial feathers, should also be emphasized. This closes a circle to Mrs. Baerbock's decision to abolish the Bismarck Room in Berlin. It may be recalled here that Bismarck exercised caution with regard to German foreign policy.

We would encounter the same ahistorical approach if we were to declare all Armenians who died violently in the past to be victims and consign them to a now amorphous past as a preliminary stage of oblivion. Thus 1915 would be filed away on this mere victim level. The same would then apply to the subject of Hay Dat as a mere matter of the diaspora of the past and file it away as well. In a comparison, we can recognize common tendencies towards the ahistorical between Azerbaijan and Germany, but potentially also Armenia, which are, however, of different character.

In practice, Azerbaijan under Aliyev gives itself a history that never existed and wants to erase the history of Armenians. He thus confronts an Armenian counter-history under conditions of foreign domination by anti-history. The past is negated.

**Alijev's map lecture:** An archeology of their own can't be expected from Azerbaijan because it has no history of its own. Manipulations and destructions of Armenian monuments are to be placed in this context.<sup>1</sup> An impressive example for this is shown by Azerbaijani dictator himself. A video appeared in 2020 on Youtube titles „Alijev confused by historical maps“. Alijev is in a hall together with another man, probably a research assistant, who shows old historical maps to Alijev, hanging on a wall. At first he is happy to see, how large Azerbaijan has been in old times. But then he realizes, that he can't find the name. He is told, that „[t]here was no Azerbaijan at this time.“ Alijev rejects this: „What do you mean – look. This is where I was born, right here. How is it possible that it is not Azerbaijan. I see the error. It should be... see here is Bagdad, Gabadam, Nachivan – what do you mean by this, Bro, this map isn't even to scale – Azerbaijan should be touching. This map says its all Armenian`. Bro, this map is wrong – it says my dad was born in Armenia. [...] Bro, this is literally Azerbaijan. [...] Dude, how can it be in Armenia, when we're literally in Azerbaijan, right. Let me guess, spoiler, all these maps say Armenia, right. Dude, look, that's my oil pipeline. It's not the Armenian pipeline. Fuck this map and that map. Redraw it“ (Alijev can not find Azerbaijan on an old map).

By virtue of his authority Alijev tries to transfer a present political situation to the whole history. „Armenia“ doesn't exist in history. Alijev's father was born in 1923 in the city Nachichevan in the historical Armenian part Nachitchevan. This was shortly before becoming an autonomous part of Azerbaijan in 1924 as a result of the Kars- Treaty in 1921 between Ata Turk and Stalin. Like Karabakh it never was an integral part of Azerbaijan – as an autonomous regio, Nachichevan by itself was never genuinely part of an Azeri country.

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<sup>1</sup>During war Armenian cultural property was quickly archived before it was handed over to the historyless, that is, to the Azerbaijanis. Compare f.e.: Nutt David, Report shows near-total erasure of Armenian heritage sites. <https://news.cornell.edu/stories/2022/09/report-shows-near-total-erasure-armenian-heritage-sites>. Comp. to Jugha in Nachitchevan, which was totally erased by Alijev: Gispert Jürgen, 2022, ch. 4.5.

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Ցայտենվեճի կուլիսներում. Հարավային Կովկասում Գերմանիայի ռազմական դիրքորոշման վերաբերյալ այլընտրանքային տեսակետ

Conclusion We described Germany's ignorance of regional peculiarities of the South Caucasus region and its acceptance and reinforcement of internal contradictions prevailing there. Germany's "rearmament", his assistance to Ukraine are not only a sudden reaction to the Russian attack, but are to be understood as part of an expansion process that goes back in time far beyond the events of February 2022.

The contrast multipolar - unipolar stated by the German chancellor is misleading. The degree of differentiation between willing and less willing states determines the development of their own unipolarity. Climate policy proves to be a political-economic weapon internally and externally.

While instrumentalizing Azerbaijan, Germany itself is instrumentalized, damaging its cultural and political system.

Using Levon Abrahamyan's typification we could identify the Azeri society case as the omnivore model. The omnivor character of Azerbaijani war practice and historical theory coincides with a high degree of heteronomy between science and politics or economics.

We learned about the scientific relationship between Berlin and Baku and about how history seems to be dissolved into nothing. A parallel situation we witness in the realm of exhibition. The behavior during the war is practically objectified in the figuration of the exhibition: constant erasure of the Other. The trophy museum can be described as an energetic source of social mobilization against the Armenian enemy.

The Berlin-Baku affair also shows that sphere of science and (exhibition) art degenerated to an entertainment branch of the military-industrial complex – in Azerbaijan as well as in Germany.

By meeting Aliyev and congratulating him in Baku (April 2021) after the Arzakh attack and visiting the trophy park, too, the history of the German scientist Eva-Maria Auch brings us full circle: She had money for a story, but it had less to do with history as a science.

In this perspective Levon Abrahamyan's „park of identity“ finds its very mirror in Alijev's trophy park, which by its character indeed gives us an idea about present-day Azeri's identity.

Hannah Arendt said from exile shortly after World War II, under the impression of Hitler's barbarism: "One can say that to some extent fascism has added a new variation to the old art of lying — the most devilish variation — that of lying the truth" (Arendt, Hamman. 1989, 29). At least as far as Aliyev's person is concerned, the sentence seems to have acquired sad topicality.

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