

ITMG 2026

„Concepts of War and Expectations of War: the past and imagined Futures of war(fare)“

Organized in Berlin from 27 to 29 October 2026

by the Bundeswehr Centre of Military History and Social Sciences (ZMSBw) in cooperation with the Federal Academy for Security Policy (BAKS)

Preliminary program as of 3 June 2026

1st Conference Day (27 October 2026)

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM

Arrival and registration

1:30 PM

Welcome address by the President of BAKS

1:45 PM

Welcome address by the Commander of ZMSBw

2:00 PM

Introduction to the conference by the ZMSBw conference organizing team

2:15 PM – 3:45 PM

Panel 1: Imagining War

Chair: *Silvia-Lucretia Nicola, ZMSBw*

Kriegsbilder als strategische Praxis: Russische Inszenierungen und deutsche Erwartungsräume im Kontext kognitiver Kriegsführung (Images of War as Strategic Practice: Russian Staging and German Spaces of Expectation in the Context of Cognitive Warfare)

Julia Maria Jülide Hofmann, Helmut Schmidt University of the Bundeswehr Hamburg

Taming the Natives, Saving the Nation: The narrative construction of future climate wars in the French Army's Red Team project

Eric Sangar, Science Po Lille

Wann und wo beginnt der Dritte Weltkrieg, und wird er nuklear geführt werden? Antworten aus Wissenschaft und Literatur (When and Where Will World War III Begin—and Will It Be Fought with Nuclear Weapons? Answers from Academia and Literature)

Armin Wagner, ZMSBw

3:45 PM – 4:15 PM

Coffee break

4:15 PM – 5:15 PM

Panel 2: Innovation and Adaptation in the Military

Chair: *Gerhard Kümmel, ZMSBw*

Master of my Fate, Captain of my Soul: An Astropolitical History of European Spaceplanes and the Futures of INVICTUS

Rachel Hill, University College London

When the Chameleon Fades: Friction, Shock, and the Struggle for Military Adaptation

Alexander Schäbler, Bundeswehr

5:15 PM – 6:30 PM

Optional dinner

6:30 PM – 7:00 PM

Admission for the Discussion Panel

7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Evening Event: Discussion Panel: Research on the Military in Times of Democratic Erosion: Authors, Editors and Academic Freedom

Language: German

Chair: *Janika Spannagel, FU Berlin & SCRIPTS Projekt "Science Friction: Patterns, Causes and Effects of Academic Freedom Contestations"*

Christoph Harig, Scandinavian Journal of Military Studies

Albrecht von Lucke, Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik

Manfred Sapper, Zeitschrift Osteuropa

Including Reception

2nd Conference Day (28 October 2026)

09:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Panel 3: Forming Strategy in the Military

Chair: *Martin Elbe, ZMSBw*

Deja-HU. NATO's response to the Russian Invasion of Hungary (1956) & Ukraine (2022)

Christopher L. Gunn, Coastal Carolina University

Zwischen Wunschdenken und strategischer Notwendigkeit: Der Kampf um die Meinungs- und Deutungshoheit des Kriegsbildes im Bundesministerium der Verteidigung zu Beginn der 1990er Jahre (Between Wishful Thinking and Strategic Imperative: The Struggle for Dominance over the Narrative and Interpretation of Warfare within the Federal Ministry of Defence in the early 1990s)

Martin Reese, ZMSBw

Von AirLandBattle zu MultiDomainOperations: Konzeptionen vom Krieg zwischen Technologieabhängigkeit und „menschlichem Faktor“ (From AirLand Battle to Multi-Domain Operations: Concepts of Warfare Between Technological Dependence and the “Human Factor”)

Frank Hagemann, ZMSBw

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Coffee break

11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Panel 4: Concepts of War

Chair: *Johann Schmid, ZMSBw*

From Conquest to Containment: Evolving Concepts of War on the Afghan Frontier, 1850–1940

Arka Chowdhury, Sri Ramkrishna Sarada Vidya Mahapitha

Future War and Next War: Perceptions of Modern Warfare in Latvia, 1920s–1930s

Karlis Dambitis, National Defence Academy of Latvia

War without Warfare. China's Gray-Zone Strategy and the Redefinition of Conflict

Christopher K. Tong, University of Maryland

12:30 PM – 02:00 PM

Lunch break

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Panel 5: Laboratories of War (I): Germany and Great Britain from World War I to the 1930s

Chair: *Friederike Hartung, ZMSBw*

Fullers „Plan 1919“ – die Vision einer revolutionären Kriegführung (Fullers „Plan 1919“ – The vision of revolutionary warfare)

Karsten Richter, Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge

Vermeidung vs. Optimierung – Der Totale Krieg in den Vorstellungen vom „Krieg der Zukunft“ in der Reichsheerführung (1920–1926) (Avoidance vs. Optimization—Total War in Conceptions of the “War of the Future” within the Reichsheer Leadership (1920–1926))

Christian Stachelbeck, ZMSBw

Krieg: Eine gesamtgesellschaftliche Angelegenheit – Über die Demilitarisierung des Kriegs der Zukunft und seine zivile Aneignung in den 1920er und 1930 Jahren (War: A Whole-of-Society Affair—On the Demilitarization of the “War of the Future” and Its Civilian Appropriation in the 1920s and 1930s)

Frank Reichherzer, ZMSBw

3:30 PM – 6:00 PM

Two parallel guided tours of the Schönhausen Palace and an opportunity for dinner

6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Admission for the Keynote Address

7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Evening Event: Keynote Address (Title TBD)

Language: English

Tim Sweijs, HCSS

Moderation: *Alaric Searle, ZMSBw*

Including Reception

3rd Conference Day (29 October 2026)

9:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Panel 6: Laboratories of War (II): The American Military Century

Chair: *N.N.*

Preparing For What War? The U.S. Army in a Time of Transition, 1919-1939

Alexander Reineke, Ruhr-University Bochum

“A Marvelous Excuse”: General William DePuy, Interwar Escapism, and Concepts of War in the U.S. Army, 1973-1976

Eric Michael Burke, formerly US Army

Continuity in a changing security environment. US armed forces planning, 2001-2014

Philipp Münch, ZMSBw

11:00 AM – 11:15 AM

Coffee break

11:15 AM – 12:15 PM

Panel 7: Legacies of War

Chair: *Jörg Echternkamp, ZMSBw*

The Suez Crisis: Colonial Conflict, the Cold War, and the Call to Criminalize Aggressive Warfare

Theresa Whitely, University of Florida

Das Schlachtfeld der Erinnerung: Das kulturelle Gedächtnis als Filter von Kriegsbildern und Konstrukteur militärischer Identität (The Battlefield of Memory: Cultural Memory as a Filter of War Imagery and a Constructor of Military Identity)

Michael Rohschürmann, Institut für Sicherheitspolitik Kiel

12:15 PM – 12:30 PM

Closing remarks and farewell

End of conference