Article

Securing Swiss Futurity: The *Gefährder* Figure and Switzerland's Counterterrorism Regime

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Abstract: This article explores the notion of the *Gefährder*, the German term for a 'potentially threatening individual', in the context of the latest expansion of both the spaces of prevention and preemption, particularly through the new anti-terror law (PMT) in Switzerland that drew widespread criticism from the international community for its wide judicial reach and vague terminology around terrorist activities, thereby breaching a series of international legal norms and treaties. The term *Gefährder* represents a historical and political assemblage that exists across space and time in various iterations based on the colonial and racialized Other. This article argues that the latest prototype emerging out of the current Swiss counterterrorism architecture has unique qualities. The *Gefährder* serves as a bio- and ontopolitical governance tool, through its bodily and affective qualities, that exerts Swiss state control, and reaffirms Swiss national identity and national conservative underpinnings to preserve a particular kind of Swiss futurity. This research aspires to contribute to a body of research on counterterrorism regimes and its affective and bodily subjects in post-imperial nation-states.

Keywords: counterterrorism; prevention; preemption; governance; biopolitics; affect; radicalization; postcoloniality; identity regime

1. Introduction

In June 2021, a majority of the Swiss population voted in favor of the anti-terror law (PMT) that deepens the current counterterrorism structure and sets a precedent for other countries that wish to extend their social and legal instruments to preemptively restrain a person deemed a 'potential threat', in German a so-called *Gefährder*. Through this law, Switzerland has adopted one of the most far-reaching counterterrorism regimes in the world despite only minor 'terror' incidents in recent years. This article shines light on the latest rendition of the *Gefährder* figure as an affective and bodily governance tool that has expanded both the prevention and preemption spaces within the counterterrorism regime, thereby resulting in an expansion of the state. We argue that the *Gefährder* figure is a political and historical assemblage that helps reaffirm and secure Swiss national identity and national conservative underpinnings.

Twenty years after 9/11, Switzerland has implemented an enormous and far-reaching counterterrorism strategy consisting of laws, programs and social norms around the idea of *who* is deemed a 'terrorist' and what bodies constitute a threat to Western liberal states. This regime has been enabled on the international level through various multilateral bodies, such as the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, which have majorly been driven by a strategic security agenda of the United States (Ucko 2018). This 'grand strategy', as termed by Noam Chomsky (2004), has the expansion of Western capitalism at its core, underpinned by an overwhelming military force which is irreversibly linked to the concept of the Global War on Terror (GWoT) (Altwaiji and Alwuraafi 2021). Among a plethora of academic literature on assemblage and affect theory in connection to regimes of surveillance, counterterrorism and power, Switzerland constitutes an interesting study. Firstly, because of its contradictory stance within the global counterterrorism architecture

and secondly, its own self-understanding as a nation without a colonial past relevant to the historical and political assemblage of the *Gefährder* figure in the Swiss context. On the one hand, Switzerland has been one of the primary architects of the 'Preventing Violent Extremism' agenda, advocating for counterterrorism measures that are committed to upholding human rights standards and tackling the structural root causes at the center of violent extremism. On the other hand, Switzerland has been criticized by the international community for the recent adoption of the above-mentioned PMT that is incompatible with several international human rights laws through its definitional expansion of who a *Gefährder* is. We argue that the counterterrorism architecture is reflective of Switzerland's paradoxical identity regime based on its self-perception as a non-colonial nation due to its absence in a formal colonization process. This attitude has led to a self-understanding of being a non-racist country as well as a perceived lack of a racialized hierarchy. This paradoxical identity regime thus gives rise to the *Gefährder* figure, the newest iteration in a long history of racialized Others. In section two, the article reflects on previous literature on biopolitics and its affect in the context of the GWoT, carving out the silhouettes of the *Gefährder* figure. In section three, we discuss the historical and political assemblage of the *Gefährder* in the Swiss context, focusing on the genealogy of the racialized Other in the Swiss context. In section four, the main part of our argument, we explore how the *Gefährder* has expanded Swiss state control through an elaborate look at the preemptive and preventive space in Switzerland's counterterrorism structure, thereby examining how societies of control and disciplinary societies are slowly merging together and contributing to the existing literature by pointing at the modes of governance at the intersection of body and affect. This section also discusses how the *Gefährder,* embedded in the counterterrorism architecture, helps reaffirm national identity and national conservative underpinnings in the context of an increasingly globalized world.

This article argues that this new iteration of the *Gefährder* figure in the context of the Swiss counterterrorism architecture is unique due to its political and historical assemblage, which reflects the ambiguity of Switzerland's national identity as non-colonial while preserving the white, heteronormative state. We therefore aim to show that the *Gefährder* figure produces a particular kind of Swiss futurity based on a racialized articulation of the Other and the self. In tumultuous times, in which public debates about belonging and not belonging emerge, the question about 'Swissness' and its problematic attachment to whiteness enter the stage. This article therefore perceives the *Gefährder* figure not so much only as an affective and bodily instrument of national security, but of securing Swiss futurity in the wake of calls for new discussions of who Switzerland wants to be in this world.

2. The Typology of the *Gefährder*: Of Bodies and Affect

With the 9/11 incidents and the subsequent manifestation of a global counterterrorism regime based on the rhetoric of the GWoT, the security architecture took a decisive turn towards approaching the problem of so-called 'terrorism'. Changing to a far-reaching risk regime, the post-9/11 security apparatus has been building on, exploiting and deepening narratives of what has historically constituted the Other. This shift has further securitized and intensified modes of power that govern certain bodies. In this section, we will explore the typology of the *Gefährder* and elaborate on the utilization of this terminology within the counterterrorism regime. Building on post-structural academic literature streams, we establish the importance of the *Gefährder* as a helpful framework to understand the inherent governance to the Swiss counterterrorism regime.

A vast range of scholars has analyzed security regimes and how their modes of power impact people, societies and institutions. Related to this body of research, this article aims at deconstructing how the typology of the *Gefährder* is institutionalized in formal and informal governance. Foucault's logic of biopolitics is hereby foundational for this article, as it refers to a political rationality which aims "to ensure, sustain, and multiply life, to put this life in order" (Foucault 1976, p. 138). His writing on biopolitics and biopower illuminates the

technologies of power which operate on the body and on subjectivity. The premise of the typology of the *Gefährder* is hence built on Foucault's work on *disciplinary societies* (Foucault 1977) about the production of 'docile bodies' through disciplining, conforming and making individual bodies obedient within a moral understanding of what constitutes society. Additionally, we ground our argument in Deleuze's writing on *societies of control* (Deleuze 1992), which investigates the extension of power on bodies through maintaining a network of information. These forms of networked governance have surfaced explicitly in the post-9/11 risk-based regime, where the concept of the enemy, in our terms the *Gefährder*, turned into an "object of a supreme antagonism" (Mbembe 2016, p. 26). This supreme antagonism is formed on a demonization of the enemy—the 'terrorist'—who stands against the liberal values of the Western world, introducing conceptual monsters within and outside Western societies (Rai 2004). This abstract concept of the 'terrorist' hence gives validation to a "masculine-effeminate 'subject' that embodies Western civilization's ultimate enemy" (Rai 2004, p. 539) and thus emboldens powerful and purposeful steering instruments by security apparatuses to control whoever is deemed a 'terrorist' within the wider terrorism discourse (Foucault 2007). However, to fully grasp the contemporary nature of counterterrorism, one needs to investigate the spaces of prevention and preemption where we identify affective and biopolitical modes of power. These spaces are marked by a shift towards the discursive use of potential future threats: Preemption, often also referred to as pre-crime space, is the materialization of laws directed at those considered an *imminent* future threat. Prevention on the other hand starts earlier and intervenes on a societal level where a future threat is *not imminent*, but regarded as inevitable (McCulloch and Pickering 2011). This focus on preemption and prevention enables a temporal dimension in dealing with terrorism; the imminent or inevitable threat and the idea of 'preparedness' allow for a state of exception or emergency to deal with a possible, yet unconfirmed futurity (de Goede 2018; Adey and Anderson 2012).

Within this futurity, the role of *affect* is important for the construction of a perceived threat: Inspired by the work of Clough (2007), who investigates how biopolitics is grounded in the affective economy through the meaning of what constitutes a valuable life, the focus of a certain academic strand within critical terrorism studies shifted from an exclusive bodily component towards the discussion of *affect*. This turn to affect theory implies a distinction between the body and the mind and that certain emotions and feelings create a (bodily) response through its cognitive capacity before the mind can recognize it. The preemption and prevention of this perceived threat serves as justification to establish certain modes of affective power, producing objects towards which this power is applied. With his theoretical framework of *ontopower*, Massumi (2015) defines the exertion of affective power through the practical capacity to anticipate, pre-construct, and pre-empt the emergence of harmful yet uncertain futures. He writes that "self-renewing menace potential is the future reality of threat. It could not be more real. Its run of futurity contains so much, potentially, than anything that has already actually happened. Threat is not real in spite of its nonexistence. It is superlatively real, because of it. *Observation:* The future of threat is forever" (Massumi 2015, p. 53). *Ontopower* thus relies heavily on the appliance of speculative and imaginative frameworks as a form of automated governance, building on the idea of who is an individual at risk of 'radicalization' and which bodies are subscribed to this typology. For that matter, *ontopower* is to be understood as a power exceeding biopolitics, working through network governance on the bodily and the affective level.

However, as Clare (2019) criticizes, the clear-cut distinction between the body and the mind within affect theory, particularly pronounced by scholars such as Massumi, often suggests that the affective body is unmarked by categories such as race and gender. Adhering to this critique, we argue that while the bodily component is critical when it comes to modes of governance, certain bodies catalyze an affect configured through fear and threat. This affective dimension is instilled through the power to act and the power to be affected (see Spinoza 1985 or Hardt 2015). In the case of counterterrorism, we have witnessed how affective power is influencing how certain bodies catalyze fear and correspondingly act

upon this sentiment they instill. The instant cognitive reaction of many people when they see a bearded man of color at the airport illustrates how affect cannot be separated from the racialized and gendered body. As a result, these reactions enable and legitimize more rigorous controls of certain bodies. In her writing on terrorist assemblages, Puar (2007) elaborates on the complex nuances of the nationalist empire sustained under the pretext of the GWoT and how this endeavor is connected to heteronormativity, a system of power assuming gender binary. Grounded in her argument that the combination of assemblage and affect within the post-9/11 counterterrorism regime upholds a heteronormative state, we reason that its racialized affective nature therefore not only operates to control certain individuals but also creates an affective, bodily reaction. The combination of the two components, the governance of the body through disciplinary societies and the governance of the affected body through societies of control, is what we argue key to the typology of the *Gefährder*.

As elaborated previously, the shift towards preemption and prevention presents an extension and deepening of the counterterrorism regime and its modalities of governing bodies. While preemption through the establishment of disciplinary societies has been gradually reinforced since nearly the beginning of the post-9/11 period, the prevention pillar within the scope of counterterrorism constitutes a more recent modification of the strategic outline on dealing with terrorism. This focus on prevention has been institutionalized on a global level through the introduction of the agenda of 'Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism' (P/CVE), which is an attempt to escape—or effectively disguise—the discriminatory narratives of the classical counterterrorism regime. As stated by the UNDP (2017, p. 19), P/CVE commonly focuses on non-military responses which "aim at disrupting the activities of violent extremist groups and preventing their expansion, while also addressing the enabling environments in which violent extremism flourishes". In P/CVE activities, 'hard' counter-terrorist measures are complemented by 'soft' strategies, which focus on the root causes and drivers of 'violent extremism', often including socio-economic factors, poor governance, marginalization, human rights violations, collective grievances and psychological factors (UN General Assembly 2015). As a result, P/CVE applies a whole-of-society approach, engaging diverse fields *outside* of the security sector, ranging from the disciplines of psychology and public health to the education and social work sectors. Moreover, the re-orientation of the counterterrorism regime towards the language of 'violent extremism' is marked by a focus on the behavioral level of the individual, where violence is often understood to be a means to achieve 'extremist' ideas (Stephens et al. 2021). The UK's infamous Prevent program introduced after the London Bombings in 2005 is a precursor of anchoring counterterrorism measures in the preventative sphere, targeting explicitly people 'at risk' and 'vulnerable-to-becoming-terrorists' through community engagement activities (Heath-Kelly 2017). This space of prevention therefore operates through the above established societies of control, systematically collecting and subsequently exerting information to uphold a regime of power.

Given this more recent focus on prevention, working in parallel to the established space of preemption, this article's contribution lies in the connection between these two spaces, solidified in disciplinary societies and societies of control, and their modes of affective and bodily governance in relation to the Swiss national identity regime. As we will illustrate in the following sections, the typology of the *Gefährder* works to capture preemption, prevention, body and affect. Moreover, the typology of the *Gefährder* as a political and historical assemblage is key in understanding how this typology works as a way of securing Swiss futurity. We consciously use the German word *Gefährder* as it describes a person who could pose a potential threat. Importantly, the German language is therefore not using a subjectless noun such as 'threat' (which would be 'Gefahr' in German) but establishes a subject noun in its counterterrorism vocabulary. This is relevant as it perfectly describes the bodily and affective dimension of governance when it comes to the spaces of preemption and prevention.

3. Switzerland's Identity of the Self and the Other: The Emergence of the *Gefährder*

The *Gefährder* figure has its roots in earlier versions that have existed during particular political and historical periods and thus represents just one iteration at a specific moment in time in Switzerland. The *Gefährder* has always been perceived as representative of a figure whose identity threatens the liberal order and challenges Switzerland's self-understanding as much as its perception in the world. In the press, the PMT directing at the preemptive containment of individuals 'at risk', who are identified as *Gefährder*, has often been compared to the *Fichenaffäre*, the extensive surveillance of individuals deemed threatening to the Swiss state between 1900 and 1990. When the public found out that the government had compiled more than 900,000 personal files on individuals 'at risk', the outrage was immense. In the 1990s the government ordered a report to assess the extent of the *Fichenaffäre*. The report concluded that the targeted individuals mainly belonged to the political spectrum of the left and many among them foreigners who were either living in Switzerland or applied for asylum (Lento 2020). In retrospect, the *Fichenaffäre* was the outcome of a wider anti-communist rhetoric that has influenced security discourses and has, similar to the counterterrorism agenda, coined counter-insurgency strategies worldwide. In both cases, immigrants constitute an overly surveilled and policed group, whereby immigration and security discourses are intimately intertwined.

The perception of foreigners as a potential threat is very much reflected in the dominant strategy of defense in terms of immigration that centers the fear of *Überfremdung*, the idea that too many foreigners are a threat to Swiss national identity (Riaño and Wastl-Walter 2006). In the last couple of years, the immigration discourse predominantly focused on non-EU citizens perceived as 'culturally distant', whose identity is often seen as an obstacle to assimilating to the Swiss context. This narrative on the 'culturally distant' and oftentimes racialized Other has therefore also legitimized mechanisms of exclusion from the host society and consequently, perpetuated and safeguarded white heteronormativity. According to Riaño and Wastl-Walter (2006), the prevalent construction of the Other as a threat to Swiss values and identity is due to Switzerland's constant need of reaffirming its national identity challenged by a multicultural and multilingual nation-state. These discourses around mobility control are also very much affecting the politics of citizenship, whereby policing turns into a citizenship practice by linking certain identity markers, diverting from white heteronormativity, to causes for suspicion (Schillinger 2020). At the core of the political and historical construction of the *Gefährder* lies therefore the question of citizenship and belonging entrenched in the remains of colonial discourses.

Whereas in many countries explanations for the genealogy of the Other are overtly traced back to a colonial past, Switzerland is still grappling with its own complicity in the global enterprise of colonialism. Hereby, Switzerland's national self is very much grounded in its self-understanding as a country with no colonial ties and 'Swissness' as external to (post-)colonial history and racism (Michel 2015). As such, Switzerland tends its image as a *Sonderfall*, an economic and political exception in the heart of Europe. Anne Lavanchy explains how within Swiss society this idea of being a special case is also reflected in the believed lack of racialized hierarchy, resulting from the absence of formal Swiss colonies. Switzerland's apparent absence in colonial endeavors upheld through public discourse creates the widely shared understanding of racism as a "maladjustment to social norms of tolerance and openness" (Lavanchy 2015, p. 279), values placed at the core of Switzerland's self-understanding. Concurrently, Switzerland has been an enclave within Fortress Europe, demarcating itself through strong national conservative tendencies. The protectionist discourse has been disproportionately dominated by an anti-Muslim rhetoric, articulated through several referendums that point at the cultural incompatibility with Swiss values and potential threats of 'Islamization'. 'Swissness' is very much articulated through a representation of a dangerous Other, a *Gefährder,* that needs to be contained. Therefore, Switzerland's identity regime is distinct in its ambiguity. Despite the fact that today, a wide range of scholars and activists is increasingly shining light onto Switzerland's involvement with colonialism and the continuities of Empire in the present-day nation-

state, many policies continue to reflect how the (formerly) colonial Other is central to shaping national discourses. Particularly the Swiss counterterrorism discourse illustrates how the continuities of Empire do not cease to exist and create new iterations of the Other, or in our article: *The Gefährder*.

Since the early 2000s, Switzerland has become notorious for several policies that have affected Muslim communities. The initiatives against the construction of minarets in 2009 or burqas in public spaces in 2021 are seen by many as a crackdown against Islamic symbols that are perceived to contribute to an *Überfremdung* and of reflecting an Islamization of Swiss society. Concurrently, the fear of terrorist incidents in Europe by so-called 'sleepers' gave rise to heightened surveillance of Muslim communities. The young Muslim man has thus become the latest *Gefährder* prototype. Behind many of these initiatives that are specifically directed towards Muslim communities and cultures stands the *Egerkinger Komitee*, an advocacy group that is committed to resist and fight the advancement of political Islam in Switzerland (Egerkinger Komitee 2021). The board of the *Egerkinger Komitee* is constituted by several politicians that are infamous for their national conservative position. Ulrich Schlüer, one of the current board members, was also member of the *Arbeitsgruppe südliches Afrika* (ASA), a Swiss anti-communist organization that was invested in upholding the apartheid regime in South Africa through media coverage. While economic and political interests were the main motives of the organization, the support expressed towards the ideological foundations of the Apartheid regime are reflective of stark neocolonial ties that Switzerland had forged to the then government (Falk 2015). Peter Hug, a Swiss historian, explains that the main rationale behind the support of the Apartheid regime was that racism was a better option than communism, or in other words human rights violations were seen as necessary in the fight against communism. This opinion was also strongly represented within the government itself and only brought to discussion in the public realm through the mediatic influence of the ASA (Hug 2013). Tracing the ideological roots of the initiatives born out of the *Egerkinger Komitee* back to the ASA, highlights how the construction of the present-day *Gefährder* in form of a young Muslim man is entrenched in security and immigration discourses that are deeply influenced by Switzerland's (neo)colonial history, and manifests continuities of ideological structures that represent the echo of Empire. Additionally, we can observe how the anti-communism rhetoric during the Cold War has set the foundation for the contemporary counterterrorism discourse on the basis of a dangerous Other.

The idea of a *Gefährder*, a 'sleeper', a dangerous Other has made the link between assimilation and Otherness more difficult as it challenges concepts of similarity and belonging (Eckert 2015). In Switzerland, these fears of the dangerous Other have expressed itself in anti-Muslim initiatives as well as in the PMT, the latest measure implemented to counter the risks of an insider enemy. Carl Schmitt's concept of the friend-enemy relation that constitutes the political allows us to understand how the discursive construction of the Other helps secure and reaffirm the nation-state. In the GWoT, the friend-enemy relation turns into a moral presupposition of the fight against good and evil, whereby Schmitt does not attach any moral positions to the friend-enemy distinction (Schmitt 1932 in Eckert 2015). He does however argue that the nation-state overrules any existing legal norms "by virtue of its right to self-preservation" (Schmitt 1932 in Eckert 2015, p. 20). As will be further elaborated below, the PMT, which trumps several international legal norms, illustrates how Switzerland has taken extraordinary measures to counter the internal threat that the dangerous Other may pose to both its security and, even more so, its national identity. While the present-day *Gefährder* figure is a direct continuation of previous iterations as demonstrated earlier, the PMT has resulted in a typology based on imaginative and speculative frameworks that draw a rather grim future about the nation's survival and preservation. Richard Jackson argued that the GWoT "is both a series of institutional practices and an accompanying set of political narratives" (Jackson 2005, p. 147). In what follows, the article illustrates how the latest *Gefährder* figure is the result of legal institutional changes of Switzerland's counterterrorism regime that manifests itself through both

soft and hard measures in the spaces of prevention and preemption. These two spaces solidified in the *Gefährder* are connected to Switzerland's need to reaffirm its own national identity. Dominant political discourses, such as the one of counterterrorism, have proven to be especially effective in upholding the dualism between the identities of the self and the Other. While the connection between counterterrorism discourse and construction of national/supranational identities is not new (see, for example, Baker-Beall 2014), the article points at the temporal expansion through the PMT and particularly the figure of the *Gefährder* by evoking a certain kind of futurity. The consequences of such a temporal expansion harm important international human rights laws as in the case of the PMT. Furthermore, it exposes how the construction of the so-called *Gefährder* figure is reflective of an ideological conflict about identity and belonging in Switzerland, recenters national conservative underpinnings and evokes the central question on Switzerland's futurity: Who will and who will not belong?

4. Pathways towards Bodily and Affective Governance: Prevention and Preemption in Switzerland's Counterterrorism Regime

The two spaces of prevention and preemption are well reflected in Switzerland's counterterrorism regime, which has been fleshed out in the past few years through the introduction of the *Counterterrorism Strategy for Switzerland* in 2015. Constructed in accordance with the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism and its Additional Protocols, the strategy highlights four strategic priorities: prevention, law enforcement, protection, and crisis management provisions. All of the tools currently used within counterterrorism are grounded within these four pillars.

Utilizing the affective and bodily dimension of governance as established in section two, we argue that the Swiss counterterrorism regime demonstrates how the technologies of disciplinary societies and societies of control have steadily merged together to contain the *Gefährder*. The case of Switzerland perfectly illustrates how counterterrorism discourses help produce obedient citizens based on evoking questions around cultural and national belonging, and sexual and gender normality in the face of a time where monsters are ubiquitous and democratic values in constant array (Rai 2004). The objective of this section is thus to explore the typology of the *Gefährder* within Switzerland's spaces of preemption and prevention, analyzing how the Swiss counterterrorism regime deploys affective and bodily governance, thereby expanding state control. At the center of our argument lies the relationship between these two spaces, merging the technologies of societies of control and disciplinary societies, and how this relationship connects to the Swiss national identity regime elaborated in section three.

4.1. Prevention and the Appliance of Social Control

As part of the implementation of its counterterrorism strategy, the Federal Council adopted the *Swiss Foreign Policy Action Plan on the Prevention of Violent Extremism* of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) in 2016 and the *National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Radicalization and Violent Extremism* (NAP) in 2017. The adoption of the two action plans on prevention reflects the trend in the global counterterrorism regime towards the agenda of P/CVE and focus on whole-of-society approaches in tackling terrorism. As explored in section two, this attention on prevention is to be understood as complementary to preemptive efforts. The primary goal in the space of prevention is to create an extensive network of information about individuals who *could* pose a threat in and to the future. Thus, the main goal is to identify 'dangerous' bodies (in comparison to 'safe' human lives, see Kienscherf 2011) and assimilate them at an early stage into a certain given 'morale', considered as society. These societies of control work to manage individuals and communities belonging to identified 'risk communities' and the ideologies associated with them. Beliefs or thoughts that are coded as 'radical' are hence to be monitored, controlled and assimilated by early (state) intervention (Ragazzi 2016). The conceptual idea of 'radicalization', being introduced alongside the policy of

P/CVE, is therefore of crucial significance to understand the governance within the space of prevention. Most importantly, 'radicalization' is used in reference to a *process* "(. . .) where an individual *gradually* [emphasis added] accepts violence or other illegal methods to promote an ideological goal" (Sicherheitsverbund Schweiz 2017, p. 11). With this understanding of radicalization as a linear process, the notion of a *Gefährder* bursts the legal confines of preemption through the shift to prevention and consequently, establishes a deeper societal norm of bio- and ontopolitical difference between 'safe' and 'dangerous' human lives (Kienscherf 2011). The frameworks established to deal with terrorism and violent extremism are hereby largely speculative and imaginative, adopting anticipatory intervention measures for what might become in the future (De Goede and Simon 2012). This utilizes on the one hand an expansion in language to decide *who* is at risk and to what extent, and on the other hand institutes a system of control through the encroachment of the security sector into civilian spaces. We therefore understand the production of the *Gefährder* within this space of prevention as a form of governance that exercises bodily, affective and social control through these two modi operandi.

With the notion of 'radicalization' as an all-pervading threat against which society as a whole has an obligation to act, the P/CVE agenda expanded the cast of 'relevant' actors in the endeavor of crime prevention in schools, universities, health facilities, religious institutions and social services, obligating them to monitor the behavior of communities and individuals for signs of 'radicalization' and to report back to security institutions (Kundnani and Hayes 2018). In Switzerland's counterterrorism regime, the NAP serves the main purpose to achieve institutionalized interdisciplinary cooperation. The Plan discloses that

> "[i]t is recommended that school authorities, social services, social and youth workers, child and adult protection authorities, psychiatric services, police, intelligence services (. . .), cantonal and juvenile prosecution services, integration agencies and other specialist agencies be involved as well as those in the immediate environment of the person concerned, depending on the situation." (Sicherheitsverbund Schweiz 2017, p. 9)

As stated in this excerpt, this goes as far as to include "those in the immediate environment of the person concerned", targeting friends, relatives and families (Sicherheitsverbund Schweiz 2017, p. 16). Similar to the preemptive space, this enlargement of the security sector is emblematic of the governance of counterterrorism, working on the moral, cultural and societal level to establish a governance of body and affect. Importantly, the *Gefährder* is controlled by a whole-of-society approach (read: societies of control) *without* (yet) facing legal consequences. The preemptive policing measures established by the PMT are thus regarded as "complementary yet subsidiary" to the measures established in the NAP (Sicherheitsverbund Schweiz 2017, p. 5). Furthermore, the process of partnering with organizations and institutions outside of the security sector to create early intervention modes very often involves the notion of building resilience, focusing majorly on behavioral factors such as developing cognitive resources, fostering character traits and promoting and strengthening values (Stephens et al. 2021). In the Swiss context, resilience is often translated as (re)integration, referring to the "reestablishment of social, familial, and community ties and positive participation in society" (Sicherheitsverbund Schweiz 2017, p. 11). Yet, applying the concept of resilience, respectively integration, the focus centers the responsibility of change on the bodies 'at risk', neglecting structural factors such as inequalities, discrimination and marginalization in its analysis (Kundnani and Hayes 2018).

The transgression of the security sector into civilian spaces to effectively control and assimilate bodies associated with the typology of the *Gefährder* brings up the question of *which bodies* are considered 'at risk' and what beliefs are considered 'radical'. This linearity of 'radicalization' and the coded understanding of what constitutes 'radical' thought is determined against the white, heteronormative man and is paradoxically softening yet expanding on *who* is at risk of 'radicalization'. The individual with 'radical' ideas is the militant Other (Arghavan 2020), an individual that is to be corrected (Foucault 1977),

creating a lump sum of individuals and groups with certain belief system, ideologies and/or religions whose bodies are marginalized, controlled and in need to be assimilated. According to the six stages of radicalization defined by the Federal Police (Fedpol 2020), the notion of the *Gefährder* within this space of prevention is located at the very first stage, the beginning of radicalization, with the NAP as the primary listed instrument. While the NAP however does not directly engage with the term *Gefährder*, it references "(. . .) links between *risk groups* [emphasis added] and problematic radicalization tendencies, (. . .)" (Sicherheitsverbund Schweiz 2017, p. 15). In further understanding of who is a potential member of this 'risk group', the NAP states at the very beginning that it "(. . .) relates to all forms of radicalization and violent extremism. However, as the Annual Report of the Federal Intelligence Service for 2017 stresses, *jihadist-motivated radicalization* [emphasis added] is currently regarded as the main threat" (Sicherheitsverbund Schweiz 2017, p. 5). Looking at the specialized institutions on the prevention of extremism that have been established within the past six years in Switzerland, a similar picture emerges: Individuals and communities 'at risk' are predominantly categorized as 'jihadist' or 'Islamist' (note: language used by official documents). For example, the Office for Prevention of Violence in the city of Zurich—one of the first of its kind in Switzerland—references in the column 'radicalization' only 'jihadist' 'radicalization' (Stadt Zürich n.d.). The gaze towards 'radicalization' as a process where intervention is necessary at the very beginning deepens thus the already existing 'master discourse' on Islamophobia, where histories, politics, societies and cultures of the Middle East are conflated into a unified negative conception of Islam (Semati 2010, p. 266). The 'good-Muslim-bad-Muslim' discourse (Mamdani 2002) and neo-orientalist agenda of portraying Muslims as victims of fundamentalist dogma (Altwaiji and Alwuraafi 2021) is amplified. The religion—or rather the religious ideology as referenced in the literature—is inevitably located within the linear process of 'radicalization'. Thus, Muslims are portrayed as inherently prone to be radicalized and in need to be assimilated to the white, heteronormative nation-state. The NAP's inclusion of nine explicit and independent references to 'Islam' and 'Muslims' in comparison to a complete void when it comes to right-wing extremism or white supremacy is illustrative of the tendency to demarcate potential 'risk communities' with the category 'Islam', upholding the Swiss identity regime. The typology of the *Gefährder* within the realm of prevention thus presents itself as a gateway between the spaces of ideas and thoughts and the spaces of actions of crime—a space where power is exercised to assimilate 'dangerous' bodies from society through this suggestive categorization of Muslim and other racialized communities as 'radical' Other.

4.2. Preemptive Measures to Discipline Potential Threatening Bodies

While the prevention space has slowly emerged beside the preemption space to expand social control over bodies deemed dangerous, the preemption space in Switzerland has been substantially expanded by the adoption of the PMT. The law allows authorities to take preemptive actions against individuals who could constitute a potential threat, thereby officially introducing the latest iteration of the *Gefährder* in Switzerland's legal system. Fedpol writes on the webpage:

> *"Since the Paris attacks in 2015, terrorist-motivated perpetrators have carried out several dozen attacks in Europe. According to the Federal Intelligence Service (FIS), the terror threat remains elevated in Switzerland as well. Today, police can usually intervene only after a person has committed a crime. In order to be able to prevent terrorist attacks, the Federal Council and Parliament have created a new legal basis with the Federal Law on Police Measures to Combat Terrorism (PMT): In the future, the police will be better able to intervene preventively."*[1] (Fedpol 2021)

The law facilitates the legal enforcement of measures against individuals who can be assumed to engage in a 'terrorist' activity but against whom there is not enough evidence to open an official criminal investigation. These disciplinary preemptive policing measures can include a duty to report to the authorities by schools or other public institutions, a

ban from contacting specific people in question and from leaving the country, or house arrest. Furthermore, the Fedpol has the authority to conduct undercover investigations on the *Gefährder's* behavior on the internet and social media, outside of criminal proceedings (Fedlex 2020). The space of preemption is connected to a general process of blurring public and private spaces, and the judicial and executive forces of the state, reflective of a wider trend in post-9/11 societies where the traditional boundaries between "the political and judicial, public safety and national security, the state of exception and normal life" (McCulloch and Pickering 2009 in Mantello 2016, p. 3) have vanished as a consequence of the global doctrine of preemption. What distinguishes the newly adopted law, however, from previous measures and especially from laws in other countries, is the importance given to 'potentiality', thereby evoking the impediment of a certain kind of futurity, and the further revocation of rights of perceived dangerous bodies on the basis of suspicion without any judicial grounding that results in disciplinary consequences.

The legal properties of the *Gefährder* introduced through the PMT illustrate a larger conceptual shift to preemptive measures within the security paradigm after 9/11. This change in the global security architecture was accompanied by broadening the scope for counterterrorism operations from surveilling and policing 'dangerous' spaces to 'dangerous' bodies, which has led to an increasing involvement of non-security actors (Kundnani and Hayes 2018). The 2021 anti-terror law is the latest security technology in the evolution of the wider Swiss counter-terror regime that marks a gradual shift to preemptive bio- and ontopolitical counterterrorism measures. As elaborated in section three, Switzerland has implemented a series of laws in the last couple of years to counter violent extremism such as the minaret initiative to respond to a spatial manifestation of so-called 'political Islam' in 2009 followed by the national law against burqas in public spaces in 2021. These examples showcase the move from predominantly focusing on the geolocations of terrorism to the biopolitical dimensions of terrorism that are ascribed to certain bodies, whereby the PMT represents the most recent technology on the continuum of security strategies surrounding the biopolitics of the *Gefährder*.

Based on a broad range of literature dealing with the emergence of the biopolitical identity regime of the Other in the post-9/11 regime the *Gefährder* has been identified as the 'Islamic terrorist' (Rai 2004). Also in Switzerland, the conceptual monster is personified by the Muslim man that threatens the liberal values at the core of the nation-state as demonstrated through the public discourse with headlines such as "Muslims in Switzerland: How much Islam can the country bear?" (NZZ Folio 2016). The nationally implemented burqa ban in 2021 manifests how arguments of cultural incompatibility and, most of all, national security, have been mobilized by Switzerland's conservative parties in political campaigning. But also liberal voices have raised concern over the burqa as a symbol of women's oppression by Muslim men. The perceived threat of Muslim communities in Switzerland and especially the potential risk ascribed to these bodies raises questions about the technologies to manage and pacify them. The counterterrorism discourse around the PMT illustrates how different technologies work together to identify and discipline the *Gefährder*, thereby evoking "a civilizational mission that is forever sliding between the assured fixity of a (surveillance) system and the intolerable dispersion of (insurgent, dissenting, resistant terrorist) networks" (Puar and Rai 2002, p. 78). The counterterrorism discourse purposefully blurs the lines between the armed *Gefährder* who poses a 'real' terrorist threat and the unarmed *Gefährder* who challenges the regimes of white supremacy and heteronormativism. This problem was also highlighted during the political campaign around the PMT. The vague definition of the *Gefährder* fails to clearly designate who actually falls into this category and, in turn, destabilizes the long-time stable boundaries between perceived dangerous and non-dangerous bodies. The newest iteration of the *Gefährder* figure therefore opens up the possibility for everyone who may pose a risk to the normative framework of the nation-state to slip into the category of a dangerous body. In this article, we argue that the PMT does not only mark a moment where the technologies of disciplinary societies and societies of control merge to identify and manage dangerous bodies, but that

it gives rise to a new iteration of a *Gefährder.* Although still pertaining to the silhouettes of the racial Other, it blurs the line of the category, thereby producing the potential of encompassing new types of Other. The preemptive space induces a certain kind of futurity that is often adopted into counterterrorism language; whereby, the promise that all risks of terrorism are neutralized before the unimaginable happens. Additionally, a subtle reference to a fixed and romanticized national past is made in Switzerland: a homogenous small, neutral and isolated nation-state. The future-oriented nature of counterterrorism, and the conviction of requiring preemptive measures set the framework for the Swiss anti-terror law. Federal counselor Karin Keller-Sutter explained that "without anti-terror law, we lose youth on the path to radicalization—just as we lost first-generation Islamists" (Gerny and Häsler Sansano 2021), thereby indirectly raising the issue of future generations of potential terrorists that arise in the midst of society and producing new types of Other. Hence, based on considerations about futurity, the necessity emerges to track potential terrorists before they have actually committed a crime or, as we argue, individuals who might threaten 'Swissness' and destabilize the survival of white heteronormative national identity.

4.3. Swiss Futurity: The Nation-State and Its Racialized Others

In recent years, we have witnessed a merging between the governance technologies distinctive to the spaces of prevention and preemption in the Swiss counterterrorism architecture, thereby concurrently disciplining and controlling certain kinds of deviances personified in the *Gefährder* figure. We aim to show how the historical and political assemblage of the present-day *Gefährder* is connected to larger fears about specifically Swiss futurity. The pervasive counterterrorism architecture thereby plays a central role in constantly reconfiguring and re-enforcing the properties of the *Gefährder* figure and discursively creating the urgency to act against them due to the potentiality of a national security threat. We argue, however, that the spaces of prevention and preemption that are directed at the containment of the *Gefährder*, simultaneously build the very foundation for the *Gefährder*'s role in reaffirming 'Swissness' and national conservative underpinnings based on considerations about the future.

In the prevention space, the programming emphasis given to deradicalization processes and structural drivers leading to violent extremism disguises underlying intentions to assimilate and pacify the Other. In the preemption space on the other hand, the objective is not only to discipline the *Gefährder*, but can also go as far as to eradicate the bodies deemed dangerous on the basis of suspicion. Puar discusses in her essay *'I would rather be a cyborg than a goddess'* (Puar 2012) the role of affect within disciplinary societies and societies of control. In disciplinary societies, discipline operates around the perimeters of identity, whereas in societies of control, control operates through the degree of intensity. She explains how "identity is a process involving an intensification of habituation, thus discipline and control are mutually entwined, though not necessarily compatible, with each other" (Puar 2012, p. 62). The interlinkage between discipline and control such as in the case of Switzerland's counterterrorism regime expresses itself on the one hand in practices of exclusion and inclusion through the preemptive containment of the *Gefährder* and, on the other, modulation and tweaking through preventive measures that help assimilate the *Gefährder* to the white heteronormative nation-state. Especially, in the preventive space we can see how dangerous bodies are tweaked and modulated as matter through the power of affect and not so much through signification or identity interpellation (Puar 2012, p. 62). We argue that the *Gefährder* itself is an affective, but racialized body, catalyzing an unfamiliar intensity casted onto its silhouettes. The *Gefährder* is in turn cloaked in a strong sense of potentiality—a becoming. This process constitutes a moment of deterritorialization, a process that cannot be grasped entirely and therefore is charged with possibility. The figure of the *Gefährder* hence represents a complex historical and political assemblage that serves itself as an affective technology, existing in both the preventive and preemptive space, and consolidating discipline and control. In addition to this expansion of state power, in the context of the counterterrorism regime, the *Gefährder* helps reproduce 'Swissness' by sam-

pling out who belongs and who does not belong to the white heteronormative nation-state. The genealogy of the *Gefährder* shows how the figure has been carved out in opposition to a white heteronormative body, linking danger to the properties of non-whiteness and queerness. The affective body is thus not unmarked by categories of race and gender, whereby they would no longer be just questions of ideology, signification, meaning and representation, but also an affective becoming of the body (Clare 2019, p. 6).

The political campaign around the PMT has taken place during a year where questions on identity, belonging and structural inequalities have been at the center stage of the political discourse. When demands of political and social inclusion of different minority groups grew louder through a global anti-racist movement in the aftermath of George Floyd's death in the summer of 2020, discussions about 'Swissness' have been revived as a response. A recurring pattern in the Swiss context is that debates around 'Swissness' are intertwined with larger security and immigrant discourses, in which the question of who is Swiss is indirectly addressed through the typology of the *Gefährder.* The *Gefährder* represents the anti-Swiss, opposing liberal Swiss values and threatening the continuation of a white heteronormative nation-state. The PMT has therefore not only expanded the biopolitical and ontopolitical dimensions of the *Gefährder,* but actually stands in line with other national laws that connect the security discourse with bodies that are considered Other. As established in the beginning of section four, the prevention pillar has significantly contributed to this expansion through strengthening the affective and bodily properties of the *Gefährder.* While preventive measures target so-called individuals 'at risk' and intervene in 'radicalization' processes, they simultaneously define who constitutes a dangerous Other. The integration of civil society actors and social institutions such as schools in the attempt to assimilate the Other have also fueled the debates about cultural incompatibility of 'Swissness' with certain groups. The national burqa ban in public spaces or the discussed hijab ban for schools in certain cantons shows how social institutions play an important role in assimilating certain bodies to the liberal nation-state. Through these interventions, however, these actors also particularly enforce the affective dimension of the bodies deemed dangerous, ascribing to them a threat potential.

The prevention and preemption spaces therefore rely on a powerful post-9/11 discourse to ascribe the 'potentiality' of risk to certain bodies and therefore propel a self-renewing political ontology of threat. This self-renewing menace-potential upheld through the use of speculative and imaginative frameworks was also reflected in the political discourse around the PMT when Karin Keller Sutter for example referenced the new generation of jihadists-in-the-making mentioned earlier in section four. This article, however, argues that it is not just about the hindrance of a future terrorist threat but about reasserting a specific kind of Swiss futurity. The consequences of the temporal expansion by discursively invoking a potential threat that takes place in both the prevention and preemption spaces in the case of Switzerland do not only harm important international norms such as with the PMT but also expose how the construction of the so-called *Gefährder* is symptomatic of an ideological conflict about identity and belonging in Switzerland, recentering national conservative underpinnings. The *Gefährder* figure therefore produces a racialized political ontology of threat. The Swiss counterterrorism regime comprises insofar an interesting case as it plays a crucial role in allowing Switzerland to uphold the very peculiarities of its own postcoloniality. On the one hand, it is about reaffirming the nation-state as a cradle for liberal values and human rights, resonating with its own self-perception that the history of race continues to be extraneous to Switzerland (Michel 2015). On the other, it is about containing the *Gefährder*, the racial Other, from destabilizing the bounds of 'Swissness', or, in other terms, of whiteness. The PMT in particular builds an interesting case in how security discourses evoke future threats on the basis of the Other, in many instances the young Muslim man, and showcases how Switzerland also reasserts its own national identity based on ideological strands stemming from the vestiges of Switzerland's coloniality. Identifying the PMT as a law in a series of initiatives brought forward by national conservative powers in the country, it is aimed at systematically

undermining and trumping international human rights norms, especially the European Convention on Human Rights, as well as demonstrating resistance to a European project (Skenderovic 2012). We argue that this behavior must be contextualized in Switzerland's self-understanding as a nation without colonies, a *Sonderfall*, and the enterprise of simultaneously delineating who belongs and who does not. The *Gefährder* is hence an affective tool, instantly classifying the potentially dangerous bodies through the affect of fear, that secures a particular kind of Swiss futurity in the wake of calls for new discussions of what Switzerland wants to be in this world.

In times in which the white heteronormative nation-state and its production of 'Swissness' is increasingly questioned, it thus comes as no surprise that a new iteration of the *Gefährder* has emerged and been reinforced through a pervasive counterterrorism regime to secure the survival of 'Swissness'. The productive machine of counterterrorism has brought to life new governance tools in both the prevention and preemption spaces that allow to contain the Other. The interlinkages of a racialized political ontology of threat around the *Gefährder* and their affective and bodily properties that allow the nation-state to control and discipline these individuals, become very clear with the following extract from an article published in the Swiss newspaper *Blick* about the death of Nzoy, a black man, who has been murdered by the police at a train station in Morges in August 2021: "The station was already in the headlines almost exactly a year ago: On the evening of 12 September 2020, a Turkish-Swiss Islamist (26) had stabbed a Portuguese outside a kebab snack bar, 100 m from platform 4. A customer in a café recalls, "How can you not think about what happened last year?"[2] (Hürlimann 2021). The extract illustrates multiple things: First, the language used demonstrates how the *Gefährder* figure is inherently racialized and linked to a broader counterterrorism discourse—the stabbing incident. Second, it embellishes the power of the threat potential that is enough cause for the police to take extraordinary measures that go so far as to eliminate the dangerous body. Finally, the rhetorical question placed by the customer is key in understanding how the affective and bodily dimensions of the *Gefährder* express themselves. By automatically recalling the previous incident based on the recognition of the silhouettes of the *Gefährder,* the role of affect is put at the center in the governance of certain bodies. We therefore understand debates about the nature of the Swiss counterterrorism regime in direct relation to conversations on racial justice, Switzerland's colonial past, its own positioning in a globalized world and the desire to preserve a certain kind of Swiss futurity.

5. Conclusions

In the past decades, the counterterrorism regime has found new ways of changing its appearance through small tweaks in terms of definitional turns, and adding and/or replacing language to silence criticism on the abusive nature of the established regime through the emergence of preventive and preemptive measures under the banner of P/CVE. However, by having a closer look at the nature of the counterterrorism regime through the latest iteration of the *Gefährder* figure, we have argued that, rather than abandoning harmful stereotypes, the regime is indeed expanding its modes of governance while adhering to long-established narratives of who constitutes the Other. We acknowledge that while we are explicitly criticizing the intentional political discourse that upholds the dualism between self and Other through the figure of the *Gefährder*, we are indirectly perpetuating a neo-Orientalist discourse through the self-Other distinction (see Samiei 2010). We are, nonetheless, hopeful that this article might contribute to a further deconstruction of this narrative, thereby encouraging a rethinking of the *Gefährder* among us. In the case of Switzerland, this is particularly reflected in the expansion of counterterrorism through the spaces of preemption and prevention, where the nation-state has established a wide network of bodily and affective governance tools, solidifying disciplinary and control measures. As we have illustrated, in both spaces the contemporary prototype of the Other is the Muslim man who stands in strong opposition to what is considered 'Swissness' by national conservative forces in the country and more generally, the liberal nation-state.

The combination of biopolitics and affective modes of governance through which the typology of the *Gefährder* works is hereby crucial to comprehend the depth of a security system that—perceived by some—is simply defying a possible threat. Therefore, the use of imaginative and speculative frameworks in the counterterrorism discourse when dealing with the 'potentiality', the becoming of a future threat, has proven to be a main tool to exploit and build upon existing narratives of the Other. The Swiss identity regime, bound to self-perceptions as non-colonial and non-racist and established in the late twentieth century, is closely tied to today's understanding of which bodies are perceived as a threat to society and in need of either assimilation through prevention or eradication through preemption. The *Gefährder* figure therefore is to be understood as an embodiment of different modes of governance that work in the confines of prevention and preemption that are in itself deeply entrenched by the *Gefährder*'s political and historical assemblage. It is this exact intersection that makes the *Gefährder* in Switzerland such a unique figure: The typology of the *Gefährder* applies affective and bodily governance that serves to maintain and secure a Swiss futurity, which is defined as white heteronormative national identity where the eradication and assimilation of 'dangerous' bodies is seen as a 'survival strategy' in the face of a European project and an increasingly globalized world. A Swiss futurity, which holds the idea of security for some by eradicating and assimilating others.

Notes

[1]   Quote translated by authors.

[2]   Quote translated by authors.

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