

# Denkwürdigkeiten



Journal der  
Politisch-  
Militärischen  
Gesellschaft

Nr. 112  
Juni  
2019

Herausgegeben vom Vorstand  
der Politisch-Militärischen Gesell-  
schaft e.V. (pmg) in Berlin

ISSN 1436-3070

## LEADOFF

### Liebe Mitglieder,

die Mitgliederversammlung im Mai zeigte bemerkenswerten Diskussionsbedarf zu einer Reihe politischer, strategischer, militärischer und auch technologischer Themenstellungen. Dabei wurde einmal mehr deutlich, dass unsere Mitglieder enorme Kompetenzen mitbringen, die wir für die interne Diskussion künftig intensiver nutzen wollen. Wir wollen deshalb das Format „Mitgliedergespräch“ häufiger einsetzen und sind hierzu an Ihren Ideen und Beiträgen interessiert – das soll unsere Interessenten nicht davon abhalten sich ebenfalls thematisch einzubringen. Das gilt übrigens auch für die Denkwürdigkeiten, die von Ihren Beiträgen leben. So spannend wie heute waren Politik und Streitkräfte schon lange nicht mehr.

*Ralph Thiele, Vorstandsvorsitzender*

## In dieser Ausgabe

### 1 Demokratie unter Feuer

Ralph Thiele

### 2 Müssen die Europäer Putin verstehen?

Interview mit Dr. Alexander Rahr  
mit einem Vorwort von  
Dr. Hans-Ulrich Seidt

### 7 Conquering the Authoritarian Mindset in the Age of Simulation

Lars Weber

### 8 Floating progressive balance & harmony needed for all civilizations

Dr. Andreas Herberg-Rothe

## THEMEN

### Demokratie unter Feuer

In Sichtweite der deutschen Öffentlichkeit aber ohne deren Beachtung perfektioniert derzeit Russland seine Fähigkeiten in hybrider Kriegführung. Diese heimtückische Form der Aggression umfasst militärische Elemente wie geheimdienstliche, Cyberangriffe und Fake News, ebenso das Befeuern von Aufständen und Terrorismus. Nicht nur Russland, auch China, Iran und Nordkorea entwickeln zunehmend umfangreiche Fähigkeiten. Damit bringen sie Demokratien in Gefahr.

Ganz offensichtlich hat Russland in den vergangenen Jahren nicht nur seine Streitkräfte modernisiert, sondern parallel dazu auch die hybriden Fähigkeiten seiner Machtinstrumente schlagkräftig entwickelt. Dies belegen die anhaltende Aggression in der Ostukraine, das russische Engagement in Syrien, die weltweite Einmischung bei Wahlen und Referenden, die Vergiftung der Familie Skripal, ebenso die Unterstützung radikaler politischer Parteien in europäischen Staaten.

Worum geht es? Dem Gegner seinen Willen aufzwingen, ohne die Schwelle des offenen Krieges zu überschreiten. Deshalb lebt hybride Aggression von der Mehrdeutigkeit und tummelt sich in Grauzonen von innerer und äußerer Sicherheit, Wirtschaft und Verbrechen, Information und Täuschung. Sie zielt auf Verwundbarkeiten unserer offenen Gesellschaften, ihrer Volkswirtschaften und Infrastrukturen. Indem sie das Vertrauen der Menschen in den demokratischen Rechtsstaat und die Fähigkeiten der Regierenden, dessen Funktionsfähigkeit und Prosperität sicherzustellen unterminiert, bekämpft sie das Angriffsziel zugleich von innen und außen. Im „Idealfall“ implodiert der angegriffene Staat, bevor er sich zur Wehr setzen kann.

Die Erfolge der hybriden Kriegführung Russlands in der Ukraine haben uns deren Wirksamkeit vor Augen geführt. Ich komme gerade von einer Konferenz in Litauen, bei der Vertreter der baltischen Staaten, Georgiens und der Ukra-

ine berichteten, wie deren demokratische Ordnungen mit allen technologischen Mitteln unter besonderer Nutzung von Medien und sozialen Medien unter hybridem Dauerfeuer stehen. So sind z.B. die Regierungen und Bürger der baltischen Staaten tagtäglich Ziel strategischer Informationsoperationen und Propagandaaktivitäten Russlands. Diese zielen darauf ab, das Vertrauen in staatlichen Institutionen zu untergraben, ethnische und soziale Spannungen zu schüren und die Kohäsion von NATO und Europäischer Union zu schwächen. Hinzu kommen hybride Aggressionen durch russische Sonderoperationen und reguläre Streitkräfte, die in der Nähe ihrer Grenzen stationiert sind.

Wie kann man hybrider Kriegführung begegnen? Ein gemeinsames Lageverständnis, gemeinsame Bedrohungs- und Risikobewertungen, gemeinsame Planungs- und Ausbildungsprozesse der wichtigsten Akteure und Einrichtungen sind erste Schritte. Regelmäßige Übungen auf der Grundlage hybrider Szenarien sollten eingerichtet werden. Nicht nur die Bildung von Beamten, Politikern, Medien und der Gesellschaft ist ein wichtiges Thema im Kampf gegen hybride Bedrohungen, sondern auch die aktive Kommunikation bei der Identifizierung von Lügen, deren Dekonstruktion, der Entwicklung eigener Botschaften und Narrative.

Da das Vertrauen in die demokratische Ordnung das Angriffsziel ist, müssen sich alle gesellschaftlichen Kräfte an der Verteidigung beteiligen, d.h. auch Unternehmen und Lokalpolitiker, Kirchen und Wohlfahrtsverbände. Darüber hinaus muss hybriden Bedrohungen nicht nur national, sondern auch regional und multilateral begegnet werden. Nicht zuletzt deshalb bündeln auch NATO und EU ihre Kräfte. Derart können ggf. fehlende nationale Fähigkeiten und Kapazitäten "abgedeckt" bzw. deren Aufbau unterstützt werden.

Neben den herkömmlichen Instrumenten der nationalen Macht wie Polizei, Verfassungsschutz, Nachrichtendiensten und Streitkräften wird insbesondere die ei-

gene Resilienz zum Immunsystem einer Nation. Sie ist ein kritischer Faktor, um angesichts hybrider Bedrohungen Stress zu widerstehen und nach Schockereignissen wieder in den Alltag zurückzufinden.

Hier zählt Technologie; denn bei hybrider Aggression und deren Abwehr spielt diese eine entscheidende Rolle. Während die fortlaufende Digitalisierung bereits enorme Veränderungsanforderungen mit sich bringt, bewegt sich die Welt rasant weiter in Richtung einer postdigitalen Ära. Künstlichen Intelligenz, virtuelle Realität und Quanten Rechner werden nicht nur Wohlstand und Sicherheit, sondern auch die Beziehungen Mensch-Maschine, zwischen Individuen und ganzen Gesellschaften neugestalten. Die Menschen setzen neue Technologien mit Elan ein: Kunden und Mitarbeiter, Regierungsbeamte und kriminelle Akteure. Wir können erwarten, dass ein breites Spektrum von Technologien zur hybriden Kriegführung und deren Zielsetzungen beiträgt. Zugleich ist es von entscheidender Bedeutung, um hybrider Aggression zu widerstehen. Es ist deshalb wichtig, dass Resilienz- und Technologiezentren zusammenarbeiten können.

Wir sind gut beraten, die bedrohten ost- und südosteuropäischen Staaten nicht allein zu lassen. Wir sollten mit staatlichen und nicht-staatlichen Organisationen im baltischen Raum, in Georgien, Moldawien und der Ukraine zusammenarbeiten und eine gemeinsame Plattform für Resilienz und die Abwehr hybrider Bedrohungen schaffen. Dies dient nicht nur den demokratischen Institutionen dort, sondern mithin auch uns selbst. Demokratische Ordnung braucht Resilienz und Wehrhaftigkeit, sonst sind ihre Tage gezählt.

*Ralph Thiele*

Ralph Thiele ist Vorsitzender der Politisch-Militärischen Gesellschaft (pmg) und geschäftsführender Inhaber von StratByrd Consulting.

Der Beitrag gibt die persönliche Auffassung des Autors wieder.

## THEMEN

### Müssen die Europäer Putin verstehen?

Kritische Fragen zur Strategie Moskaus

*Interview von Global Review mit Dr. Alexander Rahr. Mit einem Vorwort von Dr. Hans-Ulrich Seidt.*

Ist es korrekt, von der Ukraine-Politik Moskaus zu reden? Oder müsste nicht genauer vom verdeckten Krieg Putins gegen Kiew gesprochen werden? Diese Fragen wurden am 27. Mai 2019 am Ende der PMG-Veranstaltung zur künftigen Sicherheitspolitik Europas gestellt. Sie bestätigten, dass die russische Annexion der Krim und der andauernde Konflikt in der Ostukraine der Diskussion über die europäische Gemeinschaftsbildung starke Impulse geben.

Aber welche politischen Ziele verfolgt Moskau tatsächlich – und zwar nicht nur auf dem pontisch-baltischen Isthmus zwischen Krim und Ostsee? Welchen Strategien folgt die russische Reichselite um Wladimir Putin? Mit welchem operativen Vorgehen ist von Seiten der Russischen Föderation zu rechnen?

Erkennbar ist auf jeden Fall, was der Kreml unter keinen Umständen will, nämlich eine Destabilisierung der Russischen Föderation und einen von außen herbeigeführten regime change. Alle Ansätze für eine russische „Farbrevolution“ oder einen „Russischen Frühling“ werden bereits in der Entstehungsphase identifiziert und neutralisiert, gleichgültig ob es sich um die LGBTQ-Bewegung oder regimekritische Oppositionsgruppen handelt.

Moskaus Führung macht keinen Hehl daraus, dass sie die politische Ordnung der Russischen Föderation als eine prinzipiell autoritär gelenkte Staatsform begreift und wünscht. Der liberaldemokratische ordre public, den die Europäische Union als Wertordnung versteht und nach außen offensiv vertritt, erscheint aus ihrer Perspektive als staats- und gesellschaftsgefährdende westliche Dekadenz. Daher erinnert die russische Innenpolitik der Gegenwart

in mancher Hinsicht an die Regierungszeit Zar Alexanders III. oder auch an gesellschafts- und ordnungspolitische Leitbilder des Nobelpreisträgers Alexander Soltschenizyn, dessen Andenken Präsident Putin persönlich pflegt. Orthodox-imperiales Denken des 19. Jahrhunderts prägt zumindest die russische Innenpolitik der Gegenwart.

Doch wie agiert Moskaus Führung außen- und sicherheitspolitisch? Bereits vor zwölf Jahren, in seiner Grundsatzrede vor der Münchner Sicherheitskonferenz 2007, ließ Wladimir Putin keinen Zweifel daran, dass er Russland nicht als Juniorpartner innerhalb einer von den USA dominierten Weltordnung betrachtet. Russland ist im 21. Jahrhundert in der Wahrnehmung seiner Reichselite zwar keine Weltmacht mehr, denn dazu fehlen die ökonomischen, demographischen und vor allem technologischen Voraussetzungen. Aber sie beharrt auf dem Anspruch, als Führung einer eurasischen Großmacht eine selbständige, den eigenen Interessen entsprechende Politik formulieren und umsetzen zu können.

Dabei folgt die Russische Föderation in markantem Gegensatz zur früheren Sowjetunion keinen ideologischen Dogmen, sondern lagegerechten, im Einzelfall nüchtern kalkulierten Analysen. Moskaus Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik wirkt gut abgestimmt. Sicherlich mag es zwischen ihren wesentlichen Instrumenten, den Geheimdiensten, dem Militär und der Diplomatie, gelegentlich Dissonanzen geben. Aber insgesamt spielen sie gut zusammen.

In der Wahl ihrer Partner kennt die russische Führung keine Scheuklappen. Sie handelt überlegt, falls erforderlich rasch und dort wo möglich auch rücksichtslos. Betrachten wir im Jahre 2019 die Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik der Russischen Föderation seit dem Amtsantritt von Präsident Putin aus Moskauer Perspektive, dann lässt sie sich als wirkungsvoll, zunehmend dynamisch und insgesamt erfolgreich bewerten. Und sie veranlasst Russlands europäische Nachbarn nicht ohne Grund

zu immer kritischeren Fragen, die auch in der PMG intensiv diskutiert werden.

Das nachfolgende Interview des Blogs *Global Review* mit Professor Alexander Rahr versucht, mögliche Antworten auf diese Fragen zu skizzieren. Alexander Rahr ist zumindest den älteren PMG-Mitgliedern als profunder Kenner der untergegangenen Sowjetunion gut bekannt. Er gilt heute im politisch-medialen Verbund Berlins als einer der prominentesten „Russland-Versteher“. Gelegentlich wird er sogar vom Umfeld führender PolitikerInnen als „Einflussagent Putins“ bezeichnet. Seine Sachkunde und Personenkenntnis werden allerdings selbst von Gegnern nicht bestritten.

Das Interview mit Alexander Rahr wurde der PMG dankenswerterweise zur Verfügung gestellt. Es wurde für die Veröffentlichung in den Denkwürdigkeiten etwas gekürzt, kann aber unter [www.global-review.info](http://www.global-review.info) in voller Länge gelesen und diskutiert werden. Der Text soll zur Meinungsbildung innerhalb der PMG anregen. Wie kann die deutsche Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik im Rahmen der Europäischen Union und der Atlantischen Allianz auf Moskaus Politik und Strategie interessengerecht reagieren? Wie definieren wir unsere Position? Der Gedankenaustausch geht weiter!

*Dr. Hans-Ulrich Seidt*

Dr. Hans-Ulrich Seidt, Botschafter a.D., ist stellvertretender Vorsitzender der pmg. Der Beitrag gibt die persönliche Auffassung des Autors wieder.

## INTERVIEW

*„Russia’s main goal is to become an independent and dominant pole in the new polycentric world order“*

Alexander Rahr

**Global Review.** Dr. Rahr, after a period of tensions in the US-Russian relations which accumulated in the retreat from the INF treaty, at the moment both sides seem to get closer. After the Mueller report Trump seems to think that it is time to negotiate with Russia. Trump’s telephone call with Putin at the zenith of the Venezuela and Iran crises seems to be an indicator for that. Trump and Putin discussed Venezuela, Iran, Syria, Ukraine and Trump even proposed an armaments pact with Russia and China. How great do you think the chances are for a Trump-Putin deal and what could be the content? The definition of spheres of influence in Latin America, Africa, the Greater Middle East, Europe and Asia? Could a deal look like this: Russia accepts Guaido in Venezuela for a guarantee for Russian investment and the possession of Citgo, Putin kicks out Iran from Syria and he and Assad get free hand, Putin keeps distance to Iran and China, therefore Trump grants him Crimea and declares Ukraine and Belorussia as neutral puffer states?

**Prof. Rahr.** Trump definitely is a person who loves deals. If he had so much power in the US as Putin in Russia, world politics would already look quite different from now. Important for Trump is foremost American greatness: the Pax Americana. The US should remain the strongest and economically wealthiest country on earth. But Trump understands that there are two competitive powers who can challenge his goals. Russia remains the only country on earth which, theoretically, could destroy the US militarily. And Russia is the only competitor, whom the US is not capable to defeat with military means. China is a second challenge for Trump – less for military might, more in terms of economic power. The Chinese economy will

overtake the US economy by the mid of the century. Trump could be tempted to play Moscow and Beijing out against each other, and he will certainly do it, but he will refrain from acting so bluntly: he will rather try to make deals. After being reelected as US President next year, Trump will become less dependent on the Congress. He will increase his room for maneuver. Yes, he will probably divide the world between him, Putin and Xi. Russia would get back its influence zone on the post-soviet territory, including Ukraine and Crimea. China will not face any objections by the US to develop its Silk-Road-expansionist policy through Asia into Eurasia. Trump's single goal in the Greater Middle East would be the protection of Israel and the weakening of Iran. Trump will demand diplomatic leadership in dismantling any nuclear threats from Iran and North Korea. He may go as far as dismantling NATO. Trump will forge bilateral military alliances with „key“-countries, such as Poland, Romania and Great Britain, but care less about protection of such countries like Germany and France. The disappearance of NATO may end the geopolitical struggle between US and Russia in Europe.

**Global Review:** Western experts on Russia speak of an Russian „strategy of dynamic defense“ and Russian geostrategist Karagamow of an „strategy of patience“. The hypothesis is that Putin's strategy is a revival of the former Russian geostrategists Snesarev and Svecin and takes their strategies, the lessons of the collapse of the Sovjet Union as blueprint for a modern Russian strategy which consists of the following elements:

- No adventurism and massive boots on the ground as, for example, from 1979 to 1989 in Afghanistan, but hybrid warfare, selected strikes, special OPS, intelligence operations ,social media war and cyber warfare,
- no new arms race,
- an independent Eurasian foreign policy which first relies more on China and the Asian pivot, but makes no alliance with China and uses inner contradictions of the

West and patiently waits that the West erodes as a result of his liberal ideology and economic system,

- and with the decline of the West, Russia will be in a position to renegotiate with a new multipolar world from a new, relative position of strength

Do you agree that this is the strategy Putin and the Russian elites follow and, if yes, do you think this strategy will work?

**Prof. Rahr:** Russia's main goal is to become an independent and dominant pole in the new polycentric world order. Russia wants an organic relationship with the US, foremost in fighting Islamism in the Southern hemisphere of our planet. Russia wants pragmatic partnerships with the industrial developed European countries. Russia wants the same influence in European affairs as the US. Russia would welcome the demise of NATO and a strengthening of the OSCE as the main security organisation for the Northern hemisphere of our planet. Russia seeks to revive the idea of a strong Eurasian market and Eurasian security. Here, Russia sees China, Turkey, India as its favorable strategic partners. Russia fully understands that for decades to come, it will remain one if the main energy and other resource bases for the world economy. It suspects other great powers of envying that resource base to Russia. Russia is not an ideological country, as the USSR was. Moscow does not intend to enforce its political system on other states, as the USSR was trying to achieve through the Communist revolution. But Moscow does not want to see the European continent to be a „value community“ – a singular club for liberal democracies – from which countries with a stronger authoritarian system are being expelled. What Moscow does not tolerate are Western attempts to expand its liberal model further to Russian borders. Russia will reject such a Europe of „crusaders“.

**Global Review:** Isn't it pure speculation to envision an Islamist bloc or an Euraisan bloc or a EU-USA bloc as the centrifugal tendencies

seem to be very strong. The former Islam expert of the Bush jr. administration and founder of the Middle East Forum, Daniel Pipes, claims that Islamism had already reached its peak in 2013 and is splitting in different factions as Communism and Panarabism before – this means the opposite of an tendency of unification. Other Islam experts think that Islamism has reached its peak with the Islamic State which was successfully destroyed in the center of the Greater Middle East and that a second wave is now reaching the periphery in Africa and Southeast Asia, but also won't be successful. Shiite Islamism (Iran) is challenged by Trump and will be contained or toppled by regime change or a war. The Muslim brothers and Erdogan's AKP are also in a crisis. The US-EU bloc is challenged by Trump and the EU shows tendencies of desintegration. All these long-term projections of united blocs and regional blocs could thus be a miscalculation. What forces should unite these powers except the Chinese Silkroad or the Quad-Project of an Asia-Africa-Growth Corridor (AAGC)?

**Prof. Rahr:** Nobody can really foresee the future. But all analysts in various think tanks are engaged in guessing how the world will look like by the mid of the century. Dozens of books about Armageddon and the end of times fill the book shelves. And it is true that for the first time since the end of the Cold War, more citizens of Europe feel insecurity. Of course, one can say that the Trump era might be over soon and Barack Obama's former Deputy, Joe Biden, will reorient the US towards Europe. One may, of course, speculate that the British people will have another referendum and stop Brexit. Greece will overcome its financial problems. The problem of nuclear proliferation will be solved. Russia will return to democracy after Putin. The German-French locomotive will lead Europe out of the present mess. It is possible that the EU elites win the fight against euro-populism and a further political integration will fulfill the dreams of the followers of the idea of the United States of Europe. It is legitime to speculate

that Islamism has been successfully defeated and that 9/11 will never repeat itself. I just read a serious article saying that the default of Africa will be delayed since there will not be a demographic explosion at all. Western enlightenment will celebrate more victories and finally influence the entire world population. The liberal democratic model will prevail, state capitalist and authoritarian systems, like those in China, Russia, Turkey, Iran will become history. The planet Earth will become – after the present crises disappear – the nicest place to live in centuries. Technological progress and a return of the world system to multilateralism will halt all negative tendencies, which shocked us so much at the beginning of the 21st century. The West will be the winner again. Asians will remain in the second row. But it is too early to become optimistic again. The multipolar world system is in the midst of its formation, the process is surrounded with dangerous instabilities, more conflicts, mutual aggression and numerous revolutions. My scenario is that which I draw above. I describe it in my new book „2054: Putin decoded“.

**Global Review.** Russian geostrategist Karaganov, ideological promoter of the Russian Asian pivot and Eurasianism speaks about the danger of war and that Russia together with China should have a joint strategy. In another article he proposes that Russia should be the bridge between the East and the West. In another article he summarizes the reaction of Russian academic elites to China's New Silkroad project (OBOR) and claims that while in the beginning there was euphoria that OBOR could be beneficial to Russia, disillusion is now the main tendency. Which position has Putin and the Russian elites on the Russian-Chinese cooperation? Does Russia want to form an Eurasian bloc, become a junior partner or even strategic ally of China? Or what is its own role in a polycetric world? Will Russia choose neutrality?

**Prof. Rahr.** Russia and China have a complicated relationship, full of distrust. However, both

countries are united in their goal to build a multipolar system in the world. Both regard the US hegemony with suspicion. China is interested in Russian natural resources and military technology. Russia knows it has China at its side should the US and EU launch new sanctions against Moscow. China has a robust financial system, which can shield Russia off from heavy blows in case the Americans start new attacks against the Russian banking system. But Russia may immediately turn again towards the West, if the West stops its geopolitical fightings.

**Global Review.** The Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree in Moscow on April 12, 2019, conferring on Prime Minister Narendra Modi Russia's highest state award, the Order of St Andrew the Apostle the First-Called. This is the highest and oldest state order of Russia, first established in 1698. It was abolished under the Soviet Union but re-established in 1998.

Modi is the first leader from the democratic world to receive the Order of St Andrew the Apostle the First-Called. For the beleaguered Indian Prime Minister fighting an existential battle for political survival in the 2019 general elections, this is like manna from the heaven boosting a sagging image in the public perceptions of a government that couldn't get its act together. Does Russia fear that China is getting too strong and wants to get closer to India?

The Beijing-led Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has become bigger with the membership of India and Pakistan, but did it become stronger and more united? China wanted to have Pakistan as a new member, but Russia also wanted India. Will this weaken the SCO, because this means that you get the Indo-Pakistani conflict into the SCO? After Trump won Bolsonaro's Brasil, does Putin now rely more on India in the BRICS as otherwise his vision of a multipolar would become obsolete?

**Prof. Rahr.** Russia's primary goal is to install a multipolar order on

the global scale. Putin wants to enter history as one of the main architects of the multipolar world order, which would replace the unipolar order, which has operated world-wide since the break-up of the Soviet Union. Putin's idea is to establish a new security order for Eurasia and to counter the NATO dominance in the Western hemisphere. He believes that the grand design of globalization is dead. In future, the world economy will disintegrate in several regional market structures – various poles of the future world order. Putin also believes that NATO and the West will never become full-fledged combatants of Russia and China in the global struggle against Islamism. Putin is convinced that the break-up of the Middle East will only lead to a strengthening of Islamism and Islamic terrorism in the fragile Arab world. He seeks to forge an alliance against the threats from the South foremost with the member states of the SCO. The Kremlin leader clearly understands, that Russia has not the potential to create such alliances by itself. China is the real actor on the global scene. Russian diplomacy is designed to press Eurasian and Southeast Asian states – within the Shanghai Organization for Cooperation (SCO) or in BRICS – to confer on these strategic issues. The Shanghai Organization of Cooperation may indeed become the nucleus for such a regional security system, but that will take a long time. The leading member countries of SCO and BRICS are disunited, and India and Pakistan are almost in the stage of war with each other. India and Pakistan are reluctant to follow Russia and China in their endeavor to create a global opposition to the US and the West. However, Trump's rejection of a US-Asian Free Trade Zone, has put China in the pole position regarding the installation of a common economic zone from the Black Sea to the Indian Sea and further to the Pacific Ocean. Russia fully understands this and takes its advantage in offering China a sort of integration between the Eurasian Economic Union and the Chinese Silk-Road strategy. Why do I think, that Russian and Chinese gigantic

plans on Asia will succeed? Very simple: because the West dramatically loses its former influence, which it possessed since the beginning of colonization to China. Instead of asking for cooperation with the SCO, the Silk-Road strategy, or the Eurasian Economic Union, the West ignores these organizations politically. The West even wants to denounce these organizations, restrict their global importance. This Western policy is doomed to fail.

**Global Review:** The director of the Policy Planning staff of Secretary of State Pompeo, Dr. Kiron Skinner, held a speech at the Security Forum of the New American Project claiming that the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the West was a conflict between two Western civilizations. But the new Cold War with China is a conflict with a non-Western civilization. This sounds that she perceives Russia and Putin as part of the Western civilization, while in the case of China we have a clash of civilizations à la Huntington. At the moment most experts see the West as being a liberal democracy with the values of the enlightenment, an open society à la Popper or Soros and the East is defined as authoritarianism. Russian geostrategist Karagonov speaks of an „genetic orientation of the East towards authoritarianism“. Marx and other Western thinkers in the 19th century already talked about Asian despotism and Wittfogel explained the Asian despotism in Russia and China by his theory of hydraulic societies. This is a clear contradiction to Skinner's position. Is her cultural approach leading to anywhere? Aren't Russia and China ideological hybrids between Western and Eastern civilization and Russia more of the West as it is an Eurasian power and China an Asian power which wants to become a global world power? Is Marxism part of the Western tradition or only the ideas of enlightenment? Weren't fascism and national socialism also parts of the Western civilization? How influential are the ideas of Dr. Skinner as a director of the Policy Planning Staff? Is this more an abstract academic discussion as Trump doesn't care about this? Accord-

ing to his categories of a geoeconomist an economically weak, but military strong Russia is not the main competitor for the USA! Instead an economically strong and military ascending power like China is the main competitor and enemy for his MEGA project, a US dominated world order? What is Putin's point of view in these discussions?

**Prof. Rahr:** The Western world has raised to world dominance in the past 500 years due to the „right“ principles, political system, ideas and universal human attraction. Enlightenment was that what made the West so great and successful. The freeing of Man, European policy of secularization, scientific exploration, free market system, democracy, American cult of individualism and Calvinism – that has been the ultimate guideline for mankind development, the only civilizations compass, the ultimate truth, the new religion. In 1990 the West celebrated its greatest historical victory. It defeated at the end of the Cold War the Soviet Union, Marxism, Communism and the only existing alternative project to capitalism and democracy. The contemporary Western philosophers – the new political scientists – proclaimed the „end of history“. Never again mankind would invent such a successful system as the liberal democratic one. The West proclaimed itself as the architect of a new universal free order. This Western-made order survived 30 years. It is now being challenged from outside the Western civilization: from China. The previous Western foe – Communist Russia – was part of the European world, China comes from outside. Nobody knows what a Pax China will look like. But certainly it possesses enormous powers and potentials to divide the world again in East and West. The present-day tendencies make the future world look trilateral. Despite the present quarrels, US and EU will stay together. They have no other choice. Since Europeans mistrust Russia and regard Russia as their potential enemy, squeezing this country out of Europa into Asia, observers speak of future Eurasian Alliances which will ultimately develop into a united mili-

tary and economic bloc. For me, the more interesting question on how the world will look like is this: what consequences will a breakup of the Middle East and Africa will have for us? In my view there is a clear danger that the impact of the implosions in the South will be something of a new Arabic empire, highly anti-Western. That alliance will be formed out of failed states, but heavily armed and effectively operational through a fundamentalistic ideology. Seeing the Western failure to stabilize countries like Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria – not to speak about African states – such a catastrophic scenario cannot be ignored at all.

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Alexander Rahr is honorary professor of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations and Higher school of Economics. He studied at the Munich State University, worked 1980-1994 for the Research Institute of Radio Free Europe, the Federal Institute for East European and International Studies. He was a consultant of RAND Corporation, USA. From 1994-2012 he headed the Russian/Eurasian Center at the German Council on Foreign Relations. He then consulted Wintershall Holding and later Gazprom Brussels on European affairs. Since 2012 he is program director at the German-Russian Forum. He is member of the Petersburg Dialogue, Valdai Club, Yalta European Strategy network, author of several books about Russia.

This interview was first published by Global Review 27<sup>th</sup> May 2019

[www.global-review.info/2019/05/27/interview-with-prof-rahr-adviser-of-gazprom-for-the-eu-russias-main-goal-is-to-become-an-independent-and-dominant-pole-in-the-new-polycentric-world-order/](http://www.global-review.info/2019/05/27/interview-with-prof-rahr-adviser-of-gazprom-for-the-eu-russias-main-goal-is-to-become-an-independent-and-dominant-pole-in-the-new-polycentric-world-order/)

Opinions expressed in this contribution are those of the author.

**THEMEN**

## Conquering the Authoritarian Mindset in the Age of Simulation

Recently I zapped into a film about a battle between a Russian and an American submarine. Here, I stumbled over the term *Täuschkörper*, literally meaning deceptive body, which is of course a decoy. In this case, it was a device expelled by one of the submarines to distract the torpedoes of the other. The *Täuschkörper*, taken for a torpedo, distracted the hostile ones, which finally exploded without harming the attacked submarine that remained fully intact.

For me, there were some compelling aspects in this concept. First of all, the idea to distract the energy of an attacker with a dummy. Secondly, the observation that today not only war parties, but most people have a *Täuschkörper* as a virtual ego on social platforms in the digital realm. And finally, the question of what it means for a society to have agreed on communicating from decoy to decoy.

### How do decoys communicate with each other?

In the case of one virtual *Täuschkörper* harming another, we treat this as an almost real damage, as though the person attached to it had suffered a black eye, or worse.

This pattern reminded me of the old-fashioned concept of honour. Honour is a pre-modern concept, and was once maintained and defended by all possible means – and still is by pre modern societies. From a smack with the sloppy glove to a duel, from the rapier to the monster Cannon “Fat Berta”, all means were justified to sanction the offender and to aggressively reinstall one’s honour.

This sounds familiar to a frequent traveller of the digital world. Here, we defend our virtual digital egos with increasingly drastic methods. Internet mobs even battle each other in the real world, as was recently seen at Berlin’s Alex-

anderplatz<sup>1</sup>. Similar to our physical bodies, our digital *Täuschkörper* are usually protected, geared up and avenged. Meanwhile, powerful players struggle for sovereignty over them with all available weaponry, be it information or disinformation, seduction, demagoguery or incitement. In our apparently peaceful everyday lives, there is a war going on in the concealment of the digital realm. It concerns our virtual *Täuschkörper* and keeps us under permanent attack, producing a constant feeling of latent uncertainty. The attack isn’t tangible – it is not the solid wall of a fortress which is being blown up here, but the borderline between knowledge and superstition, between conspiracy theories and reality. Those who are not completely confused have to ask themselves the following question:

### May I still believe what I know?

In case of war, this high level of digital aggression would be the starting point of a cyber war. Thus, information and disinformation, serving tactical and strategic targets, encounters disoriented recipients who have ceased to believe in the validity of information itself. Especially information that doesn’t comply with their worldview. What are the implications for cyber warfare designed to reach those recipients? There are qualitative codes, of course, which do address internet tribes, and it is always an option to flood the system with an overwhelming quantity of one’s key messages. Cynics like Putin, Orban, Erdogan or Xi Jinping make an effort to split every unity they encounter, and openly or covertly drive communities against each other, so as to promote their targets.

*Ich will nicht Regierungen, ich will Menschen zusammenführen.*

Jean Monnet

Die Mitglieder der nationalen Assoziationen der Initiative EuroDefense nehmen Abschied von Ihrem Gründungsmitglied und Ehrenpräsidenten

**Botschafter a.D.  
Franz-Jochen Schoeller KCVO**

Commandeur de la Legion d’Honneur;  
Encomienda del Orden Isabel La Catolica;  
Großes Bundesverdienstkreuz,  
weitere Orden und Ehrenzeichen

Geb.: 24 Juli 1926      Gest.: 13. Mai 2019

Mit seinem französischen Freund Pierre Schwed  
(Grand Officier de la Legion d’Honneur)  
gründete Franz-Jochen Schoeller 1987 in Paris  
die Initiative EuroDefense. Heute sind nationale  
EuroDefense Assoziationen in 14 europäischen  
Staaten aktiv.

Ralph D. Thiele

Oberst a.D.

Präsident der deutschen Assoziation EuroDefense

### **To kill a man or to abduct a woman**

These are questionable means for a force obliged to act with humanity and credibility, which western democracies continue to be, even in the case of war. As an acting force in cyberspace, they face a virtual battlefield similar to that described by the anthropologist Jared Diamond.

He relates that in the mountains of New Guinea almost every valley hosted a particular tribe. Hundreds of valleys, hundreds of tribes. Almost all of them hostile towards each other. Archaic rules demanded to kill every man seen close to the terrain of a different tribe, because according to the underlying local logic, he could only have two things in mind: to kill a man of the resident tribe or to abduct a woman.

It seems we are readily adapting this kind of tribal logic in cyberspace with only a slight variation, making it even more arbitrary. While the tribes of New Guinea were into deadly defence and procreation, digital tribes wrangle over mere opinions and vanities.

These often narcissistic sensitivities – be they individual or collective – unfold themselves in a parallel world, which is digitally simulated. Although this digital sphere is becoming increasingly homogeneous, it still displays two opposing characteristics. Just as in the virtual space of cyberwar, two mentalities face each other. Let us call them the two systems of infantilization.

### **Patronisation and shepherding**

On the one hand, we see the paternalistic system, providing patronisation alongside an austere, often negligent care, in exchange for obedience (Russia, China, etc.). On the other hand, is our rather maternalistic system, shepherding the infantile modern ego, offering participation, but often without claiming compulsory attendance.

In future, those two methods of infantilization will clash in cyber conflicts. The digital warfare of democratic states, aimed at mental

conquest rather than destruction, will have to learn how to adequately address the paternalistic mindset of citizens of authoritarian states, if it is to gain ground in this battle for minds.

The mere promises of consumption and freedom, as seen in the Cold War, no longer suffice. We have to change perspective and act in a more differentiated way. Here is how.

### **Convincing an incredulous counterpart with non-propagandistic strategies**

To enforce reality in a largely authoritarian world of simulation, I propose non-propagandistic thinking. Instead of insulting people's intelligence and inciting their emotions, as traditional propaganda often does, the intelligence and emotions of the recipient have to be acknowledged and strengthened, so as to be finally challenged in a fair manner.

The recipient, used to authoritarian arbitrariness, and who might very well harbour feelings of dissidence, ought to experience the democratic sender as a self-confident and fair opposite. Attitude, tone and content should convey respect for the discernment of the recipient.

### **A desire for trustworthy narratives**

There are many starting points for this method, only some of them shall be mentioned here. The recipient is possibly inhibited by fear, or even emotionally isolated. This must be understood to guide him out of his constriction. His level of tension is certainly high, he is looking for relief in familiar reference points, content, persons of integrity or even idols. Disillusioned by leaders negating his beliefs, he is looking for orientation, and for new, trustworthy narratives and concepts to follow.

Such recipients not only long for reassurance, but might also look for support so as to help others. An underlying motivation might be the desire to become a hero in the eyes of others.

We should make recipients our guided allies by sharing their needs and thoughts, while addressing them on a level playing field.

### **Creating emotional anchors in the authoritarian mindset**

By these and other measures, we progressively change the recipient's perspective, until we grow the amount of credibility necessary to display and establish our agenda. In other words: undergoing the process drafted above, the recipients will be better prepared to believe what they already know.

Non-propagandistic strategies in a digital setting dominated by fear and distrust will stabilise recipients in the spirit of the self-confident communicator, instead of further destabilising them.

Such strategies create new emotional anchor points in the authoritarian mindset, that provide a basis for the subsequent mental conquest by humane and pro-democratic content.

*Lars Weber*

Lars Weber is Partner „Innovation“ at Kleinundpläcking, consultancy for brand and business strategy.

[www.kleinundplaecking.com](http://www.kleinundplaecking.com)

Opinions expressed in this contribution are those of the author.

## **THEMEN**

### **Floating progressive balance & harmony needed for all civilizations**

In the 1990s, debate and public discourse emerged on "Asian values," in contrast with "Western values." The distinction between Western and Asian values centered on the concept of freedom and whether individual human rights were universal, or historically and culturally determined.

The debate was centered on individual freedom versus community order. The Western understanding favors the individual over the community. Asian proponents of



the debate emphasize the community, which balances the understanding of the individual. In line with interpretations on Islam, Hinduism, Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, the latter understanding gives priority to hierarchically structured social, political and cultural order.

If the imaginary two worlds, the East and the West, were merged largely by 19th century Western imperialism, for the first time in history, it is unprecedented that an underdog would rise up and challenge the global hegemony of Western norms, rules and institutions.

Chinese scholar Zhang Weiwei has raised in his book *The China Wave: Rise of a Civilizational State* the idea that the world is undergoing a watershed moment where the hierarchical international system is being transformed into a symmetrical one.

Zhang is correct that 21st century hierarchical structured international relations are a remnant of European colonization and subsequent US hegemony. This does not only apply to the US, but also for new powers as they shouldn't repeat the mistakes made by the West.

Additionally, the idea of symmetrical relations applies to international relations and also to relations within a nation, culture, and society.

The question is whether the concept of symmetrical relations within a society and hierarchical international relations is how the West understands modernity. It shouldn't be replaced by an Asian understanding of symmetrical international relations and hierarchical societal relations.

Both Western and Asian nations should learn from one another. Concerning this mutual learning process, the Asian and Confucian concept of harmony and that of a floating and progressing balance in between contrasts offered by Clausewitz and Hegel might be important.

Western modernity is characterized by the following five elements: rationality, individualism, nature domestication, secularization and functional differentiation.

Some feel this kind of modernity is partitioned and divided because the complementary (and conflicting) tendencies of these five elements have been neglected in the course of Western modernity: rationality instead of emotion and intuition; individualism instead of community; domestication of nature instead of the feeling of being part of nature; secularization instead of religious feelings; functional differentiation instead of being aware of the whole, that the whole is more than the sum of its parts.

What is needed in the learning curve "between" the West and Asia might be a floating and progressing balance of civilization contrasts: between rationality and emotion, intuition; between individualism and the community; between domestication and nature; between secularization and the religious sphere; between the part and the whole.

In summary, newly rising civilizations should not exchange the Western binary code concerning these contrast by a reversed binary code, but a floating and progressing balance and harmony.

German philosopher Georg Hegel noted the importance of the struggle for recognition between master and slave. His proposition centered on the idea that the master is not working while the slave is working, and although oppressed, the slave is developing and transgressing beyond his status and therefore freeing himself. But if he would become a master, the cycle would repeat itself. The former slave, as the new master, ceases to develop.

Would it be better to abandon hierarchies altogether? No, because total equality would create a new kind of totalitarian movement, as Hannah Arendt noted, the masses need the "Führer."

Instead of symmetrical or hierarchical international and societal relations, the Asian cultural tradition might contribute to a different kind of modernity, which could be a new model for the world, a "harmony" between the individual and community.

*Dr. Andreas Herberg-Rothe*

Dr. Andreas Herberg-Rothe is a senior lecturer at the University of Applied Sciences, Fulda. This paper was first published in *Global Times*, 26 May 2019.

[www.globaltimes.cn/content/1151636.shtml](http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1151636.shtml)

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## IMPRESSUM

### *Denkwürdigkeiten*

Journal der  
Politisch-Militärischen  
Gesellschaft e.V.

#### Herausgeber

Der Vorstand der **pmg**

#### Redaktion

Ralph Thiele (V.i.S.d.P.)

E-Mail: [info@pmg-ev.com](mailto:info@pmg-ev.com)

Webseite: [www.pmg-ev.com](http://www.pmg-ev.com)

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