

### **Ambivalent Internet and What the State Is For**

My paper tries to show, how the Internet is sharpening up and shifting classic problems of the political ecosystem: of democracy and especially of free speech.

In the first chapter it argues, that regulation is necessary. Regulation is not an enemy of democracy and free speech. On the contrary, regulation in mass society is a precondition of intellectual freedoms, of enlightenment and of democracy.

The second chapter warns that the Internet is not to be romanticised. The Internet is neither enlightenment itself nor is it the information-ecosystem itself. It is a technical revolution and as such it is as ambivalent as may be all technical revolutions have been. The problems and dangers of mass media, Jürgen Habermas denounced, when he studied the yellow press, are strengthened and at the same time weakened by the Internet.

The third chapter stresses the ambivalent impact of acceleration on enlightenment and on democracy. It concludes that there are no simple solutions, neither for the many questions about the impact of the Internet on politics, polity and policy in general nor for questions of democracy and free speech. But truth and truthfulness of the public discourse must be supported and reputation must be protected by the law, if democracy shall survive. (If we have time I could add a “piecemeal solution proposal” for some areas of free speech and democracy law.)

The fourth chapter is about the political ecosystem and the state: The state is the frame of it all. And Kelsen was right, when he identified the state with its law. The modern state is an ambivalent wonder of technical progress. The postdictatorial constitutional democracy, uniting rule of law, fundamental rights and democracy, probably is the greatest achievement of mankind. But it should not be romanticised. At least it is (after having overcome the “Leviathan”) the only possibility for individuals to be protected and to have at least a little bit of influence on the destiny of the whole.