



M1 Commander in Chief, cartoon by Ramses Morales Izquierdo, 23.01.2025

Ein History Snack mit englischen Quellen

Auf mehrfach geäußerten Wunsch liegt hier erstmals ein *History Snack* mit englischen Materialien vor.

Beleuchtet werden die ersten Wochen der zweiten Präsidentschaft Trumps, der mithilfe zahlloser Regierungsdekrete nicht nur die Bürokratie abbauen will, sondern auch Gewaltenteilung und Verfassung massiv in Frage stellt. So wurden die Verantwortlichen für den Sturm auf das Kapitol (6. Jänner 2021) pauschal begnadigt. Unterstützt wird er dabei vom reichsten Mann der Welt, Elon Musk, der ohne politisches Mandat Behörden schließt und massenhaft Entlassungen ausspricht. Dazu kommt ein Kulturkampf gegen Frauen- und Minderheitenrechte sowie alles „Woke“, wobei Big Tech (Meta, Amazon und Co.) nur zu bereitwillig assistiert.

Zudem definiert Trump die Rolle der USA in der Welt neu und greift da auf Mittel zurück, die eigentlich alt sind: eine merkantilistische Zollpolitik, und unverhüllte Drohungen zur Durchsetzung von US-Interessen, sei es an Rohstoffen, der Deportation von Migrantinnen und Migranten oder betreffend den Panamakanal. Widerstand und Protest gegen den Staatsumbau formieren sich nur langsam.

Einige dieser Aspekte werden hier anhand von Texten und Karikaturen für eine kritische Auseinandersetzung (z. B. in Gruppenarbeit) aufbereitet.

Trump – Shaking American democracy and the world?

Of course it's a coup

M2 Historian *Timothy Snyder* warns against the dangers to US-democracy:

Historically, [... the] center of power was a physical place. Occupying it, and driving out the people who held office, was to claim control. So if a cohort of armed men with odd symbols had stormed government buildings, Americans would have recognized that as a coup attempt.

Now imagine that, instead, the scene goes like this. A couple dozen young men go from government office to government office, dressed in civilian clothes and armed only with zip drives. Using technical jargon and vague references to orders from on high, they gain access to the basic computer systems of the federal government. Having done so, they proceed to grant their Supreme Leader [Elon Musk] access to information and the power to start and stop all government payments. That coup is, in fact, happening. And if we do not recognize it for what it is, it could succeed.

In the third decade of the twenty first century, power is more digital than physical. [...] The ongoing actions by Musk and his followers are a coup because the individuals seizing power have no right to it. Elon Musk was elected to no office and there is no office that would give him the authority to do what he is doing. It is all illegal. It is also a coup in its intended effects: to undo democratic practice and violate human rights. [...]

In gaining the ability to stop payments by the Department of the Treasury, Musk would also make democracy meaningless. We vote for representatives in Congress, who pass laws that determine how our tax money is spent. If Musk has the power to halt this process at the level of payment, he can make laws meaningless. Which means, in turn, that Congress is meaningless, and our votes are meaningless, as is our citizenship.

Resistance to the coup is the defense of the human against the digital and the democratic against the oligarchic. If Musk controls these digital systems, Republican elected officials will be just as helpless as Democratic ones. The institutions that they voted to create can also be “deleted,” as Musk puts it. [...]

A coup is underway, against Americans as possessors of human rights and dignities, and against Americans as citizens of a democratic republic.

Zit. nach: *substack.com*

1 Staatsstreich; 2 Schar/Gruppe; 3 fortfahren; 4 ergreifen; 5 Finanzministerium



M3 Cartoon by Marian Kamensky, 17.02.2025

Trumpoleon...



M4 Cartoon by Dave Granlund, 29.12.2024

M5 US political scientist Francis Fukuyama on Trump's foreign policy:

The New American Imperialism

Prior to the election, it was safe to assume that Trump's instincts were isolationist. He criticized America's involvement in "forever wars" in Afghanistan and Iraq. But beginning with his Inaugural Address on January 20, he pivoted to being an old-fashioned imperialist. He announced his intention to reclaim the Panama Canal, and has subsequently threatened Denmark with harsh tariffs if it does not cede control of Greenland to the United States.

Greenland has indeed become more strategically important to the United States as global warming opens up new Arctic passageways, and could be an important source of minerals. But Trump's moves seem like aggression for aggression's sake: the Danes indicated earlier that they were happy to grant America a greater security role and mining rights to the world's largest island in a quiet negotiation. But Trump insisted on threatening them with the use of military force. This creates an unprecedented situation. NATO's Article Five calls for mutual support if one member is attacked; it has no provisions for what happens if one NATO member attacks another one.

Trump's crowning act as a neo-imperialist, however, was his recent suggestion that America take control of the Gaza Strip after emptying it of its roughly 2 million Palestinian inhabitants. [...]

Even if Trump's threats to Panama, Greenland, and Gaza are hollow, they set an absolutely terrible precedent. One of the great achievements of the post-1945 world was acceptance of a general norm that great powers should not use military force to grab someone else's territory. This norm was massively violated by Putin's Russia in 2014 and 2022 when it annexed parts of Ukraine, and China has been contemplating the use of force to retake Taiwan. Trump has basically revived the 19th century idea of spheres of influence: that great powers should be able to control regions geographically close to them. Russia's claim to Ukraine and China's claim to Taiwan are stronger than America's claim to Panama or Greenland, and Trump's announced desire for territorial expansion gives a green light to both countries to follow suit.

Source: *persuasion.community*

1 sich umdrehen; 2 noch nie dagewesen; 3 in Betracht ziehen

Trump, foreign policy and Ukraine

M6 From Trump's address to Congress, March 4, 2025:

The Panama Canal was built by Americans for Americans [...]. We didn't give it to China, we gave it to Panama, and we're taking it back. [...]

And I also have a message tonight for the incredible people of Greenland. We strongly support your right to determine your own future, and if you choose, we welcome you into the United States of America. We need Greenland for national security and even international security [...].

The United States has sent hundreds of billions of dollars to support Ukraine's defense, with no security, with no way. [...] And we've spent perhaps \$350 billion. [...] And they've spent \$100 billion [the Europeans]*. What a difference that is. And we have an ocean separating us. And they don't. [...]

Earlier today, I received an important letter from President Zelenskyy of Ukraine. The letter reads: "Ukraine is ready to come to the negotiating table as soon as possible to bring lasting peace closer. Nobody wants peace more than the Ukrainians," he said. "My team and I stand ready to work under President Trump's strong leadership to get a peace that lasts. We do really value how much America has done to help Ukraine maintain its sovereignty and independence. Regarding the agreement on minerals and security, Ukraine is ready to sign it at any time that is convenient for you."

I appreciate that he sent this letter [...]. Simultaneously, we've had serious discussion with Russia and have received strong signals that they are ready for peace. [...] If you want to end wars, you have to talk to both sides.

Transcript: *ap*

*According to fact checks the numbers are not correct.

Some days before this speech, a meeting of Zelenskyy and Trump escalated and Zelenskyy was asked to leave the White House. Meanwhile Trump has cancelled all assistance to Ukraine.

Reversing climate policies

M9 From the website of Energy in Demand promoting zero carbon transition:

Trump's more than 200 executive orders included a so-called National Energy Emergency Declaration, in which he:

- ▶ Withdrew the U.S. from the Paris Climate Agreement, which he called one-sided, joining only three other petro-states — Iran, Libya and Yemen — that are not signatories to the Agreement.
- ▶ Signed an order aimed at “unleashing American energy.”
- ▶ Signed a declaration that would allow his administration to fast-track permits for new fossil fuel.
- ▶ Blocked all new offshore wind power development.
- ▶ Revoked former president Joe Biden's order that half of vehicles sold by 2030 be electric.
- ▶ Enabled new oil and gas development on federal lands, including reversing restrictions on petroleum extraction in Alaska and the Arctic Wildlife Reserve. [“Drill, baby drill.”]

Source: Energy in Demand

Note: In 2017 Elon Musk criticized Trump for leaving the Paris Climate Agreement.



M10 Trump on the X-Account of the White House after cancelling the congestion tax in New York, created with AI, 19.02.2025, Screenshot

The role of Elon Musk



M7 Trump Musk Demolition, cartoon by Dave Whamond, 21.01.2025

Charting the Effects of DOGE Cuts

M8 The Trump critical independent news site DCReport about the work of DOGE (Department of Government Efficiency):

National parks will be turning away visitors, income tax refunds and VA benefits may be delayed, forest fire preparations may not get underway as scheduled, civil rights complaints will be ignored — all as the effects of widespread and relatively random federal spending cuts being ordered by Elon Musk at the nod of Donald Trump.

In cities and towns across the country, including in Republican states, there is worry about the effects of spending cuts in Washington that are only beginning to show in services lost to dismissals, layoffs and buyouts of federal workers. *The Washington Post* found documents on how DOGE plans to expand dismissals to target staffers who are not in DEI roles and employees who work in offices established by law to ensure equal rights, including in civil rights cases or health coverage for minorities — surefire material for more lawsuits. [...]

Some of the DOGE cuts will produce intended results; Trump knows that dismissing staff at the Bureau of Consumer Protection will lessen complaints about businesses and banks, for example. But some cuts are showing up already in odd places. The Trump administration fired 300 staffers at the National Nuclear Security Administration as part of Energy Department reductions apparently forgetting or not knowing that these are people involved with managing the nation's nuclear weapons. [...]

Of course, in freezing money as well as launching dismissals, the Trump program also is prompting serious humanitarian issues, putting foreign aid workers at risk, and endangering a list of Americans from farmers to researchers who were receiving grant or contracted money. [...]

But the approach from Musk and Trump reflects politics, not government efficiencies. Musk wants to show he can do anything to shrink the government rolls, and Trump wants Civil Service protections removed for absolute Trump loyalists, no matter how many federal workers there are. Both want “savings” from government worker rolls to pay for permanent tax cuts that will benefit the wealthy and corporations and will pay for programs like mass deportation.

Source: DCReport

- 1 entfesseln; 2 rückgängig machen; 3 City Maut; 4 Veterans Affairs: Veteranen; 5 Entlassungen; 6 Abfindung; 7 Klage; 8 vertraglich gesichert; 9 Schutzklauseln für Beamte

Trump 2.0: Is there any resistance out there?

M11 Journalist Frankie Taggart for AFP:

Although there has been sporadic protest, the United States has seen almost none of the mass mobilisation that made opposition to Trump in 2017 [...].

Even in Congress, Democrats have been more inclined in recent weeks to talk about “working with” Trump - noting his popular vote victory - rather than going after the Republican at every opportunity. [...]

There has been some limited action by Democratic leaders in California to counter Trumpism, mainly behind-the-scenes, and The People’s March in Washington [January 18,] was reasonably well attended. But it was tiny compared to the 500,000-strong 2017 Women’s March.

“The Resistance hasn’t vanished – it has evolved. It has moved from the streets to the courts. Well-crafted legal challenges have replaced protests and public displays of opposition”, said political consultant Andrew Koneschusky.

He pointed to more than 20 Democratic states suing to block Trump’s executive order ending birthright citizenship and civil society groups like the ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union] girding for a variety of legal fights. The lawsuit, rather than the protest, is the new resistance.

Source: miz

Rolling back diversity, equity and inclusion measures

M12 What is DEI?

Diversity, equity, and inclusion programs can take many forms, but they generally describe efforts to increase access to and remove barriers from things like higher education and jobs for those from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, races, and genders.

Trump’s recent executive order to terminate federal DEI programs and encourage private companies to follow suit has added to the growing trend of organizations stepping away from such initiatives.

The programs often play a critical role in preventing discrimination, however, and ensuring compliance with federal and state anti-discrimination laws. Without them, employees face greater barriers to fair treatment, pay equity, and advancement opportunities.

Sources: CNN, hrgrapevine.com



M13 Cartoon by Steve Kelly, 30.01.2025



M14 Protests against Trump and Musk in Washington D.C., 04.02.2025

Street protests are organized by the newly formed political action group **50501** (originally short for “**50 protests, 50 states, one day**”). It started on Reddit and protests the policies and actions of the second Donald Trump.

Courts have repealed some of Musk’s measures and dismissals.

At townhalls Republican Congress people are increasingly criticized for the policies of Musk and DOGE.

Farmers and the CEOs of the car industry are critical of Trump’s tariff policies.

M15 New York Governor Katie Hochul’s (Democrat) answer to the posting M10:

“New York hasn’t labored under a king in over 250 years. We sure as hell are not going to start now ... In case you don’t know New Yorkers, we’re going to fight. We do not back down, not now, not ever.”

Source: The Guardian

The donkey represents the Democrats (M13).

1 Berater; 2 Children born in the US get the US citizenship regardless of the parents’ citizenship. This right is part of the Constitution. 3 Regierungsdekrete: Directive of the president to put in practice measures without Congress. So far Trump has signed about 70 executive orders. 4 Wahlerversammlungen; 5 Zoll

Arbeitsaufgaben

Seite 1

- 1 Diskutieren Sie in kleinen Gruppen, wie sehr Sie das Geschehen in den USA verfolgen und warum.
 - 2 Analysieren Sie in M2 die Argumente von Timothy Snyder.
 - 3 Erläutern Sie, wie die Gewaltenteilung – zentrales Prinzip eine Demokratie – aushebelt wird.
 - 4 Analysieren Sie den Cartoon (M3). Achten Sie dabei auf die verwendeten Symbole.
 - 5 Bewerten Sie mithilfe von M2 die zentrale Botschaft des Cartoonisten.
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Seite 2

- 6 Erläutern Sie die Argumentation Francis Fukuyamas (M5) betreffend weltpolitische Änderungen und deren Auswirkungen auf kleine Länder.
 - 7 Analysieren Sie den Cartoon M4.
 - 8 Zeigen Sie anhand von M6 Grundzüge von Trumps Außenpolitik. In welcher Weise kommt darin sein „America First“-Motto zum Ausdruck?
 - 9 In der Rede zitiert Trump einen Brief Selenskis. Wie schätzen Sie den Ton ein, den Selenski hier anschlägt?
 - 10 Diskutieren Sie möglichen Folgen der Außenpolitik Trumps für die Ukraine oder auch für Gaza.
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Seite 3

- 11 Erläutern Sie anhand von M9 Trumps Klimapolitik und mögliche Folgen.
 - 12 Beschreiben Sie M10 und das Selbstbild Trumps, das hier zum Ausdruck kommt. Bewerten Sie dieses Sujet. Beziehen Sie sich dabei auch auf M8.
Eine wichtige Komponente der Politik Trumps sind umfassende Ausgabenkürzungen im Staatsapparat. Diese liegen bei DOGE unter der Führung von Trumps größtem Wahlkampfspender Elon Musk. Dieser verfügt über keinerlei politische Legitimation, hat aber mit seinem Stab von jungen Programmierern Zugang zu den Datensystemen der Ministerien, um dort Entlassungen zu verfügen.
 - 13 Zeigen Sie anhand von M9 die bisherigen Folgen der Arbeit von DOGE.
 - 14 Diskutieren Sie mögliche Folgen dieser Arbeit von Politik für die breite Masse der Bevölkerung oder auch für die Wissenschaft.
 - 15 Nehmen Sie Stellung zum Cartoon M7 und bewerten Sie die Aussage des Cartoonisten.
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Seite 4

Bei Maßnahmen gegen DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) geht es auch um Aspekte wie sexuelle Orientierung, political correctness, Gleichstellung der Frauen, Schwulen- und Genderrechte sowie die vermeintliche Benachteiligung der Weißen. Unter den Wähler:innen von Trump sind solche Themen sehr populär.

- 16 Analysieren Sie den Cartoon M13. Achten Sie dabei besonders auf die verwendeten Symbole (Farben, Parteisymbole). Wie werden die Demokraten dargestellt? Was kritisiert der Cartoonist?
 - 17 Diskutieren Sie der Kleingruppe, gegen welche der angesprochenen Maßnahmen Sie politisch tätig werden würden und in welcher Form (Demo, Postings, Petition etc.).
-

Anmerkung: Die Schreibweise des Namens Selenski variiert.

Sources used:

- M1 | <https://www.cartoonstock.com/cartoon?searchID=CS628107>; Ramses Morales Izquierdo
- M2 | <https://snyder.substack.com/p/of-course-its-a-coup>
- M3 | <https://www.cartoonstock.com/cartoon?searchID=CS629299>; Marian Kamensky
- M4 | <https://www.cartoonstock.com/cartoon?searchID=EC513078>; Dave Granlund
- M5 | <https://www.persuasion.community/p/the-new-american-imperialism>
- M6 | <https://apnews.com/article/trump-speech-congress-transcript-751b5891a3265ff1e5c1409c391fef7c>
- M7 | <https://www.cartoonstock.com/cartoon?searchID=EC512714>; Dave Whamond
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- M10 | <https://x.com/whitehouse?lang=de>
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- M14 | https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:We_Choose_to_Fight-_Nobody_Elected_Elon_Protest_-_54308120310.jpg; © Geoff Livingston, CC BY 2.0
- M15 | <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/feb/19/trump-backlash-social-media-king>

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