

# Great power politics in the course of time

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In the present essay the approach against „fake news“ is to be contrasted with the fight against false messages coming from Napoleon's dominion into Austria. The topic both in the time of Napoleon and today was and is the basic question how the spreading of true information necessary for the continued existence of a nation concerned can be quickly guaranteed. Napoleon tried to destroy the Austrian nation with fake news in printed media and with rumours, thus especially trying to eliminate the reign of the Austrian Emperor. As could be demonstrated, the Austrian counter measures consisted of preventing the importing of books, journals and newspapers from France and the foreign countries influenced by France, as well as censoring the manuscripts for national printed matter with problematic contents. The enormous effort, especially with the censoring of periodicals, as the readers would have had to assume that all printed matter had been endorsed or considered correct by the government, led to the result that only the „Wiener Zeitung“ was subject to censorship, and that the other daily newspapers were pledged to print only those political contents which were reported in the „Wiener Zeitung“. On respective occasions the Emperor tasked qualified personalities to author books, periodicals, pamphlets and invocations, which were to enlighten both the plain people and the educated citizens about the respective facts, thus influencing them positively in a national manner. In general, at that time the population opposed the French emperor, who pestered the people with quartering, requisitions and contributing payments, in a renunciative manner. The frequently lacking information on the actual situation as well as a certain sensationalism, however, had rumours sprout. Policemen in plain clothes and police confidants tried to soothingly influence the people in conversations on market places as well as in coffeehouses, thus avoiding disturbances and riots. The biggest obstruction, especially in times of war, however, was the unsatisfactory speed with which news could be transmitted. There was not enough time to examine the truth of victory reports, as the Emperor had ordered, and so they often remained undone, which contributed to a further feeling of insecurity of the population. All in all Napoleon was unable to provoke a subversion in the Austrian population. One, however, has to put up with the cruel perception that present information technologies, with computer networks liable at any place, makes it possible to paralyse the vital functions of a state without force of arms and without physical invasion into territories, thus highly endangering the security of a state, the unauthorized intrusion often being recognized not until the disturbance has been discerned.

