

W H E R E

A R E

W E

HEADING?

YEARS
30

Alfred
Herrhausen
Gesellschaft

Navigating a changing world



P R E A M B L E

Dear friends of the Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft,

We're thinking a lot at the moment about the past thirty years. Until Putin's invasion of Ukraine and the war that has raged ever since, many of us had believed that the big questions of how we could live and trade together peacefully had been settled with the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s. We were wrong. We live in turbulent times of war, inflation, global warming, species loss, famine. And it's becoming clear just how fragile liberal democracies are.

It was also thirty years ago that the Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft began its work. A glance in our archives shows that the intervening period has been anything but uneventful. Many of the challenges facing us today have roots stretching back a very long time, many of the questions we are now grappling with were first asked years or decades ago, many apparent quick-fix solutions and 'silver bullets' have proven to be illusory.

How can we learn to rise to these challenges more effectively? How can we harness big-picture thinking, an ability to see things from other points of view and a willingness to engage in dialogue, and come up with new proposals and solutions for the one world we all share? How can we inspire people with forward-looking ideas? What positive experiences and lessons from the last thirty years should we apply more often and more ambitiously?



For this anniversary magazine, we've invited international voices from the worlds of politics, business and civil society, including the historian Heinrich August Winkler, Munich Young Leader Kanica Rakhra and political commentator Diana Kinnert, to address these questions and help us to navigate the issues they raise. We also go on a photographic journey through time and present a selection of past projects, with the aim of identifying the issues and approaches we should continue to focus on as we move forward.

Then, now and in the future, we are bound to change: but where are we heading? I hope you enjoy the magazine and find it a thought-provoking read. ■

Anna Herrhausen

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Parameters of change – the Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft’s work and projects are guided by certain core principles: interdisciplinarity, far-sightedness, courage, openness, clarity and a sense of responsibility. It’s vital to have values to guide you, especially in times of far-reaching change and upheaval. In this anniversary magazine, we’ve identified four parameters that we believe have an important and constructive role to play in helping us to navigate change: open dialogue, switching perspectives, self-efficacy and forward-looking ideas.

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OPEN

DI A

LOGUE

AS A KEY TO NEW INSIGHTS
AND UNDERSTANDING

In our society, how willing are we to listen, accept different views and engage in fair debate? That question is more relevant than ever. Many commentators have observed an increasing tendency towards polarisation and lack of mutual understanding. There are growing calls for 'more dialogue', because **only truly open dialogue can yield new insights and results that allow us to progress as a society.** Moreover, it is the only way to ensure social acceptance for the ideas underpinning that progress. Open dialogue strengthens democracy and social cohesion, by allowing us to work through disagreements and come to the best solutions.

KNOWLEDGE: FOSTERING NEW IDEAS AND INSIGHTS

Open dialogue is central to the Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft's work. Our projects provide a forum for stakeholders from politics, academia, business and civil society to engage in a fruitful exchange of views. One example is the **Denk ich an Deutschland (DiaD) conferences** that we hosted in partnership with the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* until 2019. Across a number of debates, pioneering thinkers and stakeholders from various fields discussed key social issues from new perspectives and offered up fresh ideas. The conferences created a forum for dialogue, learning and a transfer of knowledge.

The dialogical method was already being used back in ancient times by Socrates, whose philosophy was based around dialogues with his students. Dialogue can be a valuable tool to develop knowledge and understanding. Nowadays, many people (rightly) feel that the complex issues and challenges facing us defy 'simple' solutions. It's often necessary to pool together ideas and knowledge from different fields, including science, business and politics. We can only advance our knowledge by combining what we already know with input from a wide array of experts.

Openness also means that no idea is off limits, and that unconventional ways of thinking are expressly welcomed. The transformations our society is going through today challenge us to re-examine inherited certainties and dogmas, as the questions these transformations raise demand new answers.

ENCOUNTERS: BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER AND ACHIEVING MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

Dialogue-based approaches bring together people who might not otherwise have much contact with each other and get them talking. At the DiaD conferences, for instance, far-right AfD politicians talked with representatives of the socialist Left Party, while Chaos Computer Club hackers shared a panel with constitutional court judges.

Forums for dialogue don't just help us to advance our knowledge and understanding, they are also places where people with opposing ideas can meet and try to find some common ground or at least points on which they can agree to disagree. **Debates don't operate on a purely rational level, but also involve the emotions.** Coming face to face with people you disagree with can foster a willingness to listen and compromise, help bridge the gulf between different groups' entrenched positions and promote mutual understanding. And that's important if we want to bring the whole of society with us as we tackle the challenges the future will bring. ■

DEFINITION: OPEN DIALOGUE

Open dialogue refers to people or groups being able to exchange facts and opinions on a fair and equal footing. It promotes mutual understanding and a re-examination of existing beliefs with the goal of achieving new insights.

'THERE'S
SOMETHING
SERIOUSLY
DYSFUNCTIONAL IN
OUR RELATIONSHIPS
AND WAYS OF
COMMUNICATING.'

Diana Kinnert
Commentator and CDU politician

THE TONE OF PUBLIC DEBATE IN OUR SOCIETY HAS BECOME MORE STRIDENT AND AGGRESSIVE. WHAT ARE THE CAUSES, AND WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT? WE ASKED POLITICAL COMMENTATOR AND CDU POLITICIAN DIANA KINNERT AND *ZEIT* JOURNALIST BASTIAN BERBNER.

Diana, why has it become so difficult in Western democratic societies for people to talk freely and openly with each other?

DIANA: I've done a lot of work recently on the topic of loneliness. As we know, our society is hyper-individualistic, people's working lives are becoming more fragmented and the digital world tends to drive people apart. I see this not just as an individual issue, but a social and political one. I feel there's something seriously dysfunctional in our relationships and ways of communicating.

Do you agree with that analysis, Bastian? Are isolated individuals unable to properly engage in dialogue, or groups so polarised they can't talk to each other any more?

BASTIAN: My sense is that nowadays, many people in Western democracies feel compelled to be part of a group. You're either a Covid denier or a Covid believer, pro-vax or anti-vax, Democrat or Republican. Once you've picked a side, you pass judgements before you've even formed your own opinion. There are studies that show that loyalty to your own team has become more important than what you actually believe.

DIANA: The more people feel like they can't achieve anything by themselves, the more they look for a group they can belong to. I think there's a link between feeling powerless and the desire to be part of a tribe.

BASTIAN: One of the core promises of democratic societies is that citizens have a voice, that they're listened to and are able to participate. If that promise isn't kept, problems will arise. A few years ago, I spoke to a man at a rally by the far-right group Pegida. He said, 'I vote at every election and still get the same government each time.' Behind these words is a deep-seated disillusionment in the democratic process. Of course, as a political analysis what he said is rather trite and simplistic. But what I took from this man was the sense that his voice didn't count. I think that's at least part of the explanation for why we've seen such a surge in far-right movements in many Western societies. →

BASTIAN BERBNER

Bastian Berbner is a Hamburg-based journalist who works for the *ZEIT* newspaper. He is the author of *180 Grad – Geschichten gegen den Hass* ('180 Degrees – Stories against Hate'). He has won numerous journalism awards for his articles and podcasts.

DIANA KINNERT

Diana Kinnert is a freelance political consultant and commentator, who works for a variety of research institutes and think tanks. She is a member of the Christian Democrat party (CDU) and the Federal Expert Panel on Social Cohesion. Her publications include *Für die Zukunft seh' ich schwarz* ('A Case for Modern Conservatism', 2017) and *Das Zukunftsmanifest* ('The Future Manifesto', co-author, 2013).

GETTING PEOPLE TO TALK ONE ON ONE:

- The less that members of different social groups talk to each other, the more that prejudice will flourish. The question is, how can we encourage direct contact between people, so as to facilitate open dialogue?

Where does hate come from?

BASTIAN: As a rule, people don't hate a specific person. Rather, they hate foreigners, Turkish people, Muslims or Jews *in general*. They hate an abstract group. The less that members of different social groups talk to each other, the more reliant they are on prejudices. And these prejudices can be stirred up by populists like Trump. But hate can also be fuelled by highly charged events and issues, like in the debates around immigration, the climate and Covid. That's why I work on ways to encourage dialogue between people from different social groups.

What have you learned?

BASTIAN: When people from different groups meet one on one, they generally get on much better than you would expect. But if whole groups meet, things can go very differently and it can potentially be dangerous.

You met a neo-Nazi who trekked through a desert with a left-wing socialist. Afterwards, the neo-Nazi said, 'That guy was OK. But lefties are still bloody awful.' What's been gained if people are accepting of the individual person they meet but not the group that individual belongs to?

BASTIAN: It varies greatly. I met an older couple whose prejudices in general melted away when they met and befriended a Roma family. By contrast, the neo-Nazi you mentioned realised that personal relationships reduce hatred. But he said, 'I don't want that. OK, I've now spent a while with a leftie in Africa, we got on really well, almost became friends. That can't be allowed to happen again.' He now lives in a small town where he's surrounded by other neo-Nazis. He's organised his life so that he has as



Bastian Berbner recording his podcast 180 Degrees

little contact as possible with people who think differently. That way, he can hold on to his view of the world. His life is the polar opposite to what would be possible if people were open to talking with people from outside their social bubble.

DIANA: In an increasingly diverse society, my personal story is no longer exceptional. Lots of people have had the experience of one or more aspects of their lives making them a minority. But I also think that interpersonal relationships offer vital opportunities for democracy and debate. One core part of my work on loneliness looks at the barriers to personal contact and relationships that now exist where they didn't before.



BASTIAN: Life is easier if you interact with people like yourself. But in the long run that leads to entrenched social groups that no longer understand each other, and in the worst-case scenario see each other as enemies. We know from psychological research that groups give people a sense of coherence and identity. But they also breed aggression towards members of other groups.

How can you get people from different social groups to start talking to each other again?

BASTIAN: For my book, I did a lot of research on the Citizens' Assembly in Ireland. Members of the assembly are randomly selected. I found it really encouraging to see how over the course of the process, people actually became politicians, and good ones at that. The assembly paved the way to peacefully resolve divisions in Irish society over two big issues: abortion and same-sex marriage. The members of the assembly concluded that both should be legalised, and they reached this conclusion in a very peaceable, constructive way.

If people don't want to talk to each other, should you force them?

BASTIAN: 'Force' is a big word. Personal freedom is one of the greatest goods of democratic societies. But there is a middle way. Citizens' assemblies are just one small example. The people who were selected didn't have to participate. But despite that, many saw it as their civic duty. You can of course also go all the way and have things like compulsory military or civilian service.

Would you be in favour of that?

BASTIAN: It would depend how it was done. I was very pleased when the German president, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, revived this debate, and then a little disappointed that the scope of the proposal was quickly limited just to young people. I think it would definitely be worth considering some sort of universal national service, for the whole of society.

DIANA: That could benefit everyone. You would just have to be careful that poorly paid jobs aren't simply replaced by ones that pay even less. And that unskilled individuals aren't put in positions that require professionally qualified workers. But if it were set up as volunteering for an unpaid post of your choice, I'd support it.

Many thanks to you both. ■

'I THINK IT WOULD
BE WORTH CONSIDERING
UNIVERSAL NATIONAL
SERVICE.'

Bastian Berbner

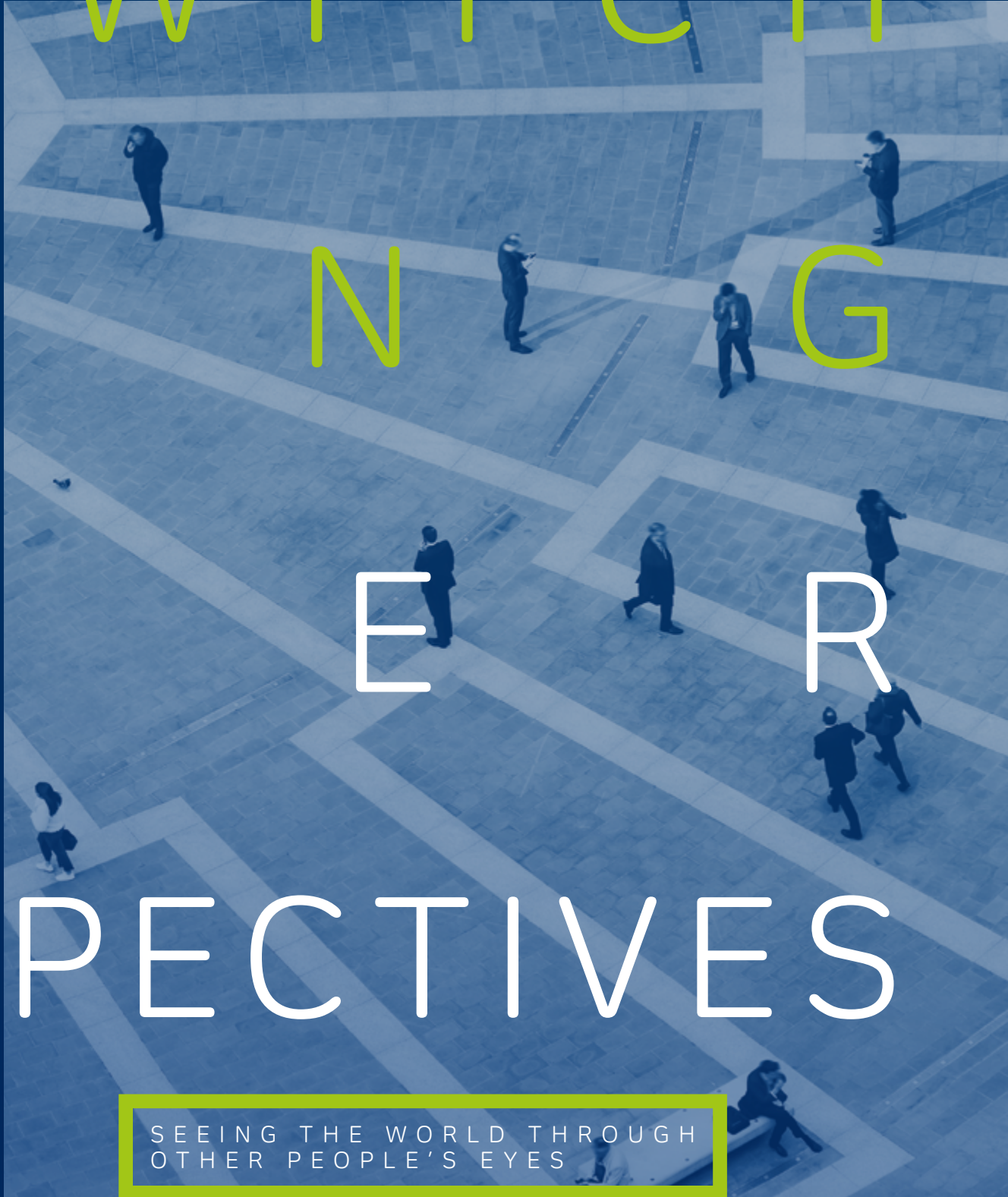
SWITCH

ING

PEER

SPECTIVES

SEEING THE WORLD THROUGH
OTHER PEOPLE'S EYES



The way we view a certain situation or event, or the way we see the world in general, is strongly dependent on our perspective. This perspective is shaped by our culture and socialisation, our experiences, interests, knowledge and so on. And it then in turn determines how we act. Although most people are aware that everyone has a different perspective, it's often difficult to make the mental switch and see things from another point of view. But the ability to do so is vital, as it allows us to challenge ideas and attitudes we've unreflectively acquired and instead foster mutual understanding. Switching perspectives helps us to break free of conventional ways of thinking and acting and come up with better solutions.

EXPANDING HORIZONS WITH THE FORESIGHT CONFERENCE SERIES

'Seeing the world through other people's eyes' has long been a guiding principle for the Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft. One example can be seen in the [Foresight project](#) launched in 2005, which aimed to **promote greater understanding of key international issues and more dialogue between emerging and established powers, between the Global South and the West.**

Against a backdrop of growing global interdependencies and shifting power relations, the Foresight project encouraged participants to collectively reflect on global trends, taking domestic political realities and cultural contexts into account without getting mired down in them. At conferences in Russia, the USA, Brazil and China, we discussed issues such as resource scarcity, security and the digital revolution. That involved switching perspectives and trying to see things from different points of view: talking with each other rather than over each other.

BUILDING A LIVEABLE FUTURE AT LOCAL LEVEL

Before we can see things from other people's perspective, we need to understand that perspective in its local context. Our [Urban Age](#) project provided a forum for dialogue between experts on urban environments. Mayors, state government representatives and academics from across the world analysed economic, political and cultural issues and developed solutions for the cities of the future. The initiative, which was run in partnership with the London School of Economics and LSE Cities, was premised on the idea that **global challenges need to be tackled in the places where they're most acutely felt.** It was essential to involve local stakeholders with varying perspectives, priorities and knowledge.

Eighteen international conferences took place across four continents. One emerging focus was on Africa, where rapidly growing cities are already engines of transformation with the potential to drive progress in areas such as social security, sustainability, technology and healthcare. These cities served as a prism through which to consider fundamental questions, such as who is best positioned to build a liveable future, and how this can be done most effectively.

We should be guided by the principle of showing mutual respect for other people and trying to see things from their point of view. It's unhelpful when, for instance, G7 states invite Global South representatives to summits but set the frame of reference themselves or take action without properly considering other perspectives. What's needed, as with open dialogue, is a mutual exchange of ideas and viewpoints, so that effective decisions about the future can be taken. ■

DEFINITION: SWITCHING PERSPECTIVES

- Switching perspectives means seeing the world through other people's eyes: putting yourself in the position of people or groups with different socialisation, experiences, knowledge, agency, needs and so on.

CHANGING
PERSPECTIVES IN
TIMES OF GLOBAL
INSECURITY



E S S A Y

TEXT Kanica Rakhra • PICTURE Private

24 February 2022 will be remembered as an important date in history, as it saw war return to Europe after more than two decades. It also brought back memories of the Cold War and Europe's long, tumultuous history with Russia. But unlike in the past, this crisis is taking place in a multilateral world, where there are no fixed blocs and where friends can quickly become enemies. The new multipolar order gives Asia a more pivotal role. How do Asian states view the situation, and how have they helped to address it? And what impact has the Asian response had on Europe?

As US pledges of aid to Ukraine reached 53 billion dollars within months of the conflict, European leaders too showed strong support by visiting Kyiv and pledging their solidarity with Ukraine. Transatlantic unity, which was at an all-time low during the Trump era, was revived almost overnight.

Despite these acts of support and solidarity, Europe has been gripped by insecurity and a fear of escalation, as is evident in the harder stances that European states are now taking compared with their earlier

positions. Recent examples include Sweden and Finland choosing to join NATO or the Kosovo–Serbia crisis, which has seen clashes between ethnic Albanians and ethnic Serbs in northern Kosovo, with protesters blocking roads using trucks and heavy vehicles.

ASIAN INVOLVEMENT

The growing importance of Asia, both economically and in terms of global security, has prompted great interest in the Asian response. Now, as the war in Ukraine escalates and its impact is felt around the world, Asia is becoming embroiled in the crisis too. The initial responses from the continent were rather muted, but they have become more decisive with time even as there has been greater divergence between individual states.

Some states have shown support. Japan has been providing aid to Ukraine via the World Bank, while Korea recently stepped up Asian involvement to the level of direct military support when it sold Poland over a thousand tanks, more than six hundred pieces of artillery and dozens of fighter jets specifically for the defence of Kyiv.

But other states, such as China, are further toughening their stances due to rising global insecurity. This insecurity is fuelling fear and anxiety among state actors, which in turn is sharpening their responses to incidents. The recent decision by Sweden and Finland to join NATO might not have received as much scrutiny by Russia if the crisis in Ukraine had not escalated to its current level. Similarly, Nancy Pelosi's trip to Taiwan in August ignited a diplomatic firestorm. The fact that she is the most senior elected US official to visit Taiwan in twenty-five years just added fuel to the →

'TRANSATLANTIC
UNITY WAS REVIVED
ALMOST OVERNIGHT.'

flame. China first suspended some imports from Taiwan and later, after Pelosi's visit, sent twenty-seven Chinese warplanes into Taiwan's air defence zone as a sign of defiance.

In times of global insecurity, states tend to lose empathy with their adversaries. But empathy with your opponents and their fears are of utmost importance when contemplating course-changing decisions.

CALLS FOR DIPLOMACY

In this interconnected and globalised world, India has opted for a measured response, calling for diplomacy and promoting dialogue to end the conflict. Focusing on respect for international law and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states, it has chosen the side of peace and called for an immediate end to violence.

Turkey's attempts to broker a deal between Russia, Ukraine and the UN represent a further step in this direction. These efforts were successful, and the Sierra Leone-flagged cargo ship *Razoni*, carrying Ukrainian corn, recently left the Black Sea port of Odessa for the first time since February. The Black Sea Grain Initiative is the first successful mediation in the conflict by a non-EU state.

It gives hope that Asian states may be able to exert a more positive influence and successfully defuse tensions and fears among multilateral state parties. But will this reduce global insecurity and help to change perspectives?

NEED TO ALLEVIATE PSYCHOLOGICAL FEARS

The European concept of liberal democracy is espoused by many states in the international system. The lure or aspiration of European or 'Western' liberal values has percolated into many cultures and impacted on lives in different parts of the world. It is one of the main reasons why Albania, Serbia, Ukraine and Moldova all want to join the EU. And it is these values that have united Europe and fostered a common view on the conflict, whereas Asian states (as described above) have responded less uniformly.

Views of conflict in Asia are shaped by the region's unique history. Most Asian states have witnessed long-term conflict at close quarters, whether that be the Kashmir conflict in the south or the Senkaku Islands dispute in the north-east, and are familiar with its repercussions. This is why states such as India have been calling for dialogue and diplomacy to take centre stage. That would help reduce global insecurity and the psychological fear of attack by adversaries. The ability to take other points of view into account, and to understand and respect these views, is absolutely necessary for good international relations and a policy of balance. ■

KANICA RAKHRA

Consultant at the New Delhi-based think tank RIS, which is affiliated to the Indian Ministry of External Affairs. In 2022, she attended the Munich Security Conference as a Munich Young Leader.



FOCUSING ON
THE BASICS:
AFRICA'S PIVOT
TO PROSPERITY

HOPE, AS THE CLICHÉ GOES, IS NOT STRATEGY. THIS AXIOM UNDERPINS A SHIFT IN PERSPECTIVE ON HOW WE DO DEVELOPMENT IN AN ERA OF CONSTANTLY EVOLVING CHANGE. BY 2050, AFRICA'S POPULATION WILL SURPASS TWO BILLION, DOUBLE WHAT IT WAS IN 2017. MOST WILL BE YOUNG, AND SO WILL REPRESENT A TREMENDOUS FORCE FOR POSITIVE CHANGE – UNLESS WE FAIL TO FOCUS ON THE RIGHT THINGS.

TEXT Marie-Noelle Nwokolo • PICTURE Private

Despite improvement in several areas, Africa's economic fortunes have failed to live up to the aspirations of its independence leaders. Instead, poverty, unemployment, inequality and violence have proved formidable opponents. In addition, the lingering effects of the pandemic and Russia's war on Ukraine have made life difficult for ordinary citizens. We can no longer *hope* that the future will be good or that things will work out; we must *act* to ensure they do. To succeed, our aspirations and plans must be rooted in getting the basics right – including the right policies on infrastructure, agriculture and education and measures to create an enabling environment.

History suggests, and the experiences of more economically advanced regions show, that if the 'basics' are in place to support development, fortune is more likely to deal you a good hand. Instructive examples can be seen in countries like Japan, which focused on the fundamentals – agricultural reform, broad-based education, moving into higher-value exports and developing infrastructure for efficient market access and higher productivity.

Technological advances also promise a lot: to create jobs, reduce inefficiencies, cut costs and increase productivity. Yet while technology has helped Africans make some significant steps forward, it is primarily an enabler and not an instant or standalone solution. It is, rather, the policies on the basics, such as infrastructure financing and agricultural reform, that determine the extent to which technology can be harnessed for more positive and inclusive outcomes.

Unless people have the requisite skills, easier access to land ownership and the electricity and roads needed to power industry and transport commodities to market, innovative technologies will do little but patch the glaring gaps in the African development landscape.

'UNFORTUNATELY, MANY POLITICIANS AND POLITICAL ANALYSTS ASSUME THAT THE GOVERNMENT DRIVES THE ECONOMY.'

This means that how far we go as a continent will be determined by what African governments do and don't do, and by how they implement other elements of the required reform package, such as creating and permitting a space in which the private sector can operate.

In Africa, relations between governments and private enterprises, which have been instrumental to progress in other places, are fraught with mistrust and hostility. Rather than interfering with and stifling business, government needs to develop a symbiotic relationship and learn when, where and how the state should let go, and where it should remain involved. Unfortunately, many politicians and political analysts assume that the government drives the economy when in fact it is small and medium businesses. So policies that support and build partnerships with the private sector will be critical to growing economies and creating jobs for Africa's burgeoning population.

Lastly, citizens must commit to holding government accountable in this rapidly evolving and technologically adept era. Because as Ugandan opposition leader Bobi Wine says, 'We are not going to get what we deserve, but what we demand.' ■

MARIE-NOELLE NWOKOLO

Researcher at the Brenthurst Foundation, where she provides strategic advisory and research support. Her work focuses on understanding the economic underpinnings of growth and development in Africa. Marie-Noelle holds a master's in development management from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

M I L E S T O N E S



Heinrich August Winkler
at *Denk ich an Deutschland* in 2015
(Picture: Marc Darchingner)

A 'TURNING POINT IN HISTORY'

TESTING TIMES FOR WESTERN DEMOCRACY

Rarely has the world changed so profoundly in such a short period of time as it has in the just over three decades since the pivotal events of 1989 to 1991, when the Berlin Wall fell, the Soviet Union collapsed and a new chapter of history began. In the political sphere, a similar idea is expressed in the notion of a 'turning point in history' (a *Zeitenwende*), as Chancellor Olaf Scholz put it at a special session of the German Bundestag on 27 February 2022, referring to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The 'unipolar moment' described by American columnist Charles Krauthammer in 1990/91 only lasted a short time. The USA is no longer the only global superpower. The People's Republic of China has become a world power, Russia under Putin has regained its strength, Global South countries like India and Brazil are major players in international affairs. If Donald Trump returns to the White House in 2024 or another isolationist 'Trumpist' wins the US presidency, it would place the transatlantic alliance under great strain. For the foreseeable future, the EU will not be able to step into the breach if the USA does opt for isolationism. In order to pursue common foreign policy objectives, the EU's liberal (in the broadest sense of the term) democracies will have no choice but to work more closely together.

But the Western normative project still has global appeal in the guise of the political ideas that emerged from the American and French revolutions. It is the West's capacity to learn that will determine whether the late eighteenth-century ideas invoked by Jürgen Habermas and others can survive the historic turning point we are currently living through. ■

HEINRICH AUGUST WINKLER

Historian and emeritus professor at institutions including Humboldt University, Berlin. His latest book, *Nationalstaat wider Willen* ('The Reluctant Nation State'), will be published in 2022.



DIGITAL

Scan the QR code to
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of this essay.



M I L L E

30 YEARS OF THE ALFRED HERRHAUSEN GESELLSCHAFT

S T O N E S

1992

1993

1994

1995

1996

1997

1992

27 April 1992: [Founding](#)
of the Alfred Herrhausen
Gesellschaft in Berlin



Alfred Herrhausen Society
for International Dialogue
A DEUTSCHE BANK FORUM

From 1992

1992–2004: [Annual conferences](#) on topics such as 'The Future of Borderless Economics' and 'Capitalism in the Twenty-First Century'. Participants included Ralf Dahrendorf, Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker, Gerhard Schröder and Wolfgang Schäuble (picture from 2002).



SOUTH AMERICAN CITIES: SECURING AN URBAN FUTURE



From 2004

2004–2022: [Urban Age](#) research programme on the future of cities in collaboration with LSE Cities. Eighteen conferences in thirteen cities, including New York, Berlin, Addis Ababa, New Delhi, São Paulo (picture: Governor José Serra, 2008) and Hong Kong. Three books were published, most recently *Shaping Cities*.

1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008

2004

November 2004: International [Club of Three](#) conference in Moscow on the topic 'Democracy, International Governance and the World Order'. Participants included Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov.



From 2005

2005–2014: The [Foresight](#) conference series looked to the future of the G20 and BRICS states (picture: Meera Shankar, Indian ambassador to the US, 2009 conference).



Since 2018

Urban Africa Roundtable: Dialogues about urban development in Africa and opportunities for German-African cooperation.



From 2015

Germany Listening: One lecture in the series was 'Transatlantic Relations in the Age of "America First" – Implications for Germany and Europe' (2008) by researcher and analyst Constanze Stelzenmüller (pictured).

2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018



From 2009

From 2009 to 2019, the **Denk ich an Deutschland (DiaD)** conferences were held in partnership with the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. Topics included 'Germany 2025 – Have We Made It?' (2016) and 'This Is Europe's Hour: What Germany Has to Tackle Now' (2017).





Since 2020

New Urban Progress fellowship: Future leaders from Germany and the USA discuss social, political and economic trends in post-industrial societies. In cooperation with Das Progressive Zentrum and the Progressive Policy Institute.



From 2020

The series **Digital Europe 2030** outlines different scenarios for the future of Europe in terms of data and democracy. Workshops with the German Federal Foreign Office, Bitkom, the Federal Chancellery and the Office of the Federal President. Launch of the Digital Europe fellowship.

2019

2020

2021

2022



2019

Think. Order. Form. Forwards. Exhibition (pictured) and book launch with contributors including Heinrich August Winkler, Mikhail Gorbachev and Henry Kissinger. Topics included 'A Human-Centric Economy', 'No Power without Responsibility' and 'Our Future – Europe'.

Start of the **podcast series Think Forwards** on key social and political issues such as energy, EU asylum law, digital sovereignty and transatlantic relations, with guests including Naika Foroutan and Cathryn Clöver Ashbrook.



MORE

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FEELING YOU CAN
MAKE A DIFFERENCE



We have to say what we think. We have to do what we say. And we have to be what we do.' These words of Alfred Herrhausen express a key aspect to achieving political and social change. Whatever goal you're campaigning for – better environmental regulations, say, or educational reform – it's actions and not just words that count. Self-efficacy – **the feeling of being able to influence political decisions, which anyone can experience either as an individual or a group – strengthens our democracy and society.**

ACTION, NOT JUST WORDS

Since 2021, the Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft and the Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe have been awarding fellowships to young people from across Europe who actively engage with social and political issues. The [Digital Europe and Thinking of Europe fellowships](#) empower young people to create educational content themselves. The fellows develop their own interactive workshops on topics such as digital transformation, social injustice and climate action, allowing them to focus on the things that matter to them and share their knowledge with other young people. The peer-to-peer approach enables students at schools across Europe, from Ireland to Germany to Armenia, to learn from each other. This self-directed learning and teaching process, with the content designed and delivered by the young people themselves, is an act of self-efficacy.

BRIDGING THE GULF BETWEEN POLITICS AND EVERYDAY LIFE

In some areas, such as education and social policy, it's more obvious we can get involved and make a difference. They seem less distant from our everyday lives than, say, foreign policy. But as the Ukraine war has made starkly clear, our foreign

relations can have a big impact on our day-to-day reality. In our [Politikwerkstatt](#) project, we talked to ordinary people about Germany's national interests and what role the country should play in the EU to secure democracy, peace, freedom and prosperity over the long term. We tried to draw a direct link between foreign policy issues and people's actual lives, and articulated their worries and concerns in specific calls for action. Interactive workshops allowed participants to consider the arguments not just from a national perspective but also within a wider European context.

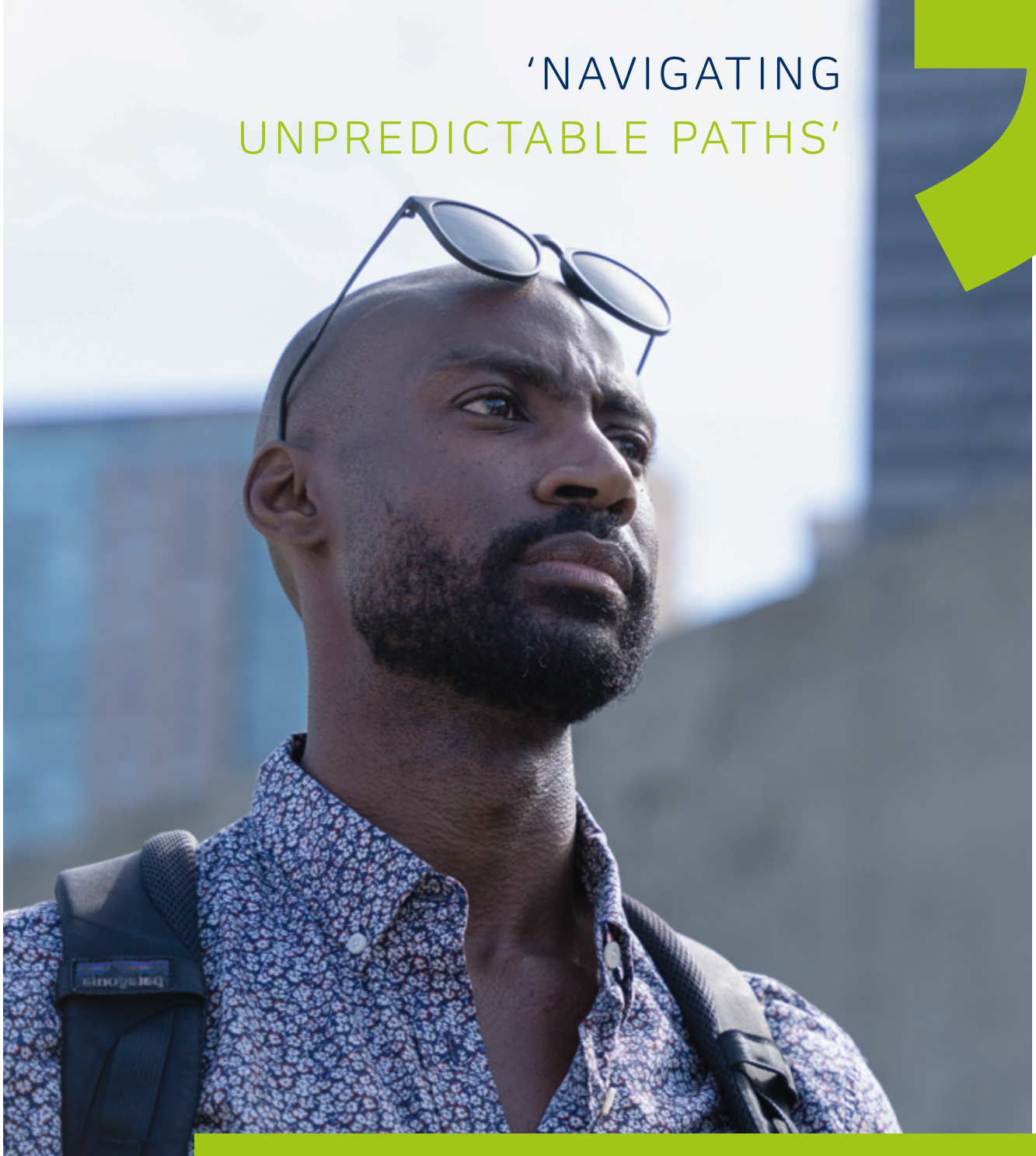
The Digital Europe and Thinking of Europe fellowship programmes and Politikwerkstatt project help people to realise that, as members of our society, they can actively bring about change. Someone who believes they can successfully have an influence will be more motivated to actually take action. Self-awareness and self-efficacy make people more willing to participate in democratic processes, to act on their values and to adopt a broader social perspective. **These are virtues worth cultivating, and can help make people less apprehensive or hostile towards the changes that will be needed in future.** ■

DEFINITION: SELF-EFFICACY

- Self-efficacy comes down to each individual. It is an essential condition for taking responsibility, whether for our own interests or those of our community as a whole. Self-efficacy is the subjective confidence that we can use our own skills and abilities to make a difference. In politics, it refers to ordinary people's belief that they can have an influence on the political process.

3 QUESTIONS FOR JAMAAL GLENN

'NAVIGATING
UNPREDICTABLE PATHS'



TEXT Jamaal Glenn • PICTURE Alexander Probst

1 How do you attain and strengthen self-efficacy through your work and/or other activities?

I built and sold a digital media start-up in my twenties and experienced how entrepreneurship could be a self-efficacy tool. Now, I wield that tool as an impact investor, using money to amplify the self-efficacy of brilliant people whose visions of the future match my own. These collective visions centre on industries where we share strong beliefs about the future. That entails finding founders who are solving problems in big markets such as education, more efficiently moving people and goods, improving cities and simplifying how we interact with our healthcare institutions. That future is one where a network of all-electric autonomous airships delivers goods to the more than one billion people who lack access to basic transportation infrastructure. If I'm doing my job right, I'm not merely providing financial capital but also paving the road for these people to master their own challenges by helping them find customers, jump regulatory hurdles and meet other investors.

2 Who do you empower to achieve self-efficacy – and how?

Like many venture capital investors, I look for entrepreneurs with traits such as brilliance, resilience and domain expertise. But two of my favourite traits to look for are entrepreneurial temperament and lived experience. I look for entrepreneurial temperament because I believe that promising entrepreneurs thrive in navigating unpredictable paths, and share

a healthy lack of respect for institutions and authority. Lived experience is when a founder operates in a market that is a central character in their personal narrative. This year, we invested in a founder who embodies these ideas. After suffering a spinal cord injury as a teenager, he has dedicated much of his life to improving the world for people with disabilities. His company is collecting and organising all the world's accessibility data, which will fundamentally change how people and organisations interact with physical spaces.

3 What is the value of self-efficacy for change and democracy, and to what extent can self-efficacy be institutionalised?

Unfortunately, some of the world's most critical problems don't fit conveniently into traditional boxes. Where governments are needed, they've often neglected to act. Where markets are required, they've often failed. Each needs more tolerance for risk and proactive experimentation. Impact investing gives support and helps to fill this gap.

I believe that this work is essential for the future of democracy. In order to effectively fight the rising tides of extremism, misinformation and a host of other global problems, the current and future leaders of our most vital democratic institutions will need to think creatively and nimbly about how to fill the gaps in their work. ■

JAMAAL GLENN

Investor, entrepreneur, university professor and writer. He is currently a director at Schmidt Futures and an adjunct professor at New York University and the City University of New York.

3 QUESTIONS FOR PHILIP HUSEMANN

1 How do you attain and strengthen self-efficacy through your work and/or other activities?

In my work for JoinPolitics, I feel like I'm really making a difference when I find a previously unknown political talent and am able to support them as they take their first steps into politics. It gives me a great sense of fulfilment when I feel I've been instrumental in something that has a positive influence on politics. For instance, when we choose a worthy candidate to support with our programme, or when we give good political advice. My personal feeling of self-efficacy, my sense that I can make a difference with my work, is directly connected to the self-efficacy of all the talented future politicians that we support. Within a year of our launch, one of them had already made it into the Bundestag, and another had their diversity policy reforms included in the government's coalition agreement.

2 Who do you empower to attain self-efficacy – and how?

We support talented individuals who are working on specific solutions to some of the major challenges facing us as we move forwards, and want to go into politics to put those solutions into practice. When we're scouting for candidates, we look for people with particular personality traits. For instance, do they have the ability to push things through while taking others with them, which is a must in the tough world of politics? And what values are they guided by?

We believe in the power of the individual – the drive to take action yourself for social progress, especially in times of crisis. And there's a big pool of untapped potential: political entrepreneurs who are passionate about certain issues but have gone under the radar until now and faced barriers getting into politics. For instance, we supported Verena Hubertz, who is now deputy leader of the SPD parliamentary group and

is working to set up a sovereign wealth fund for public-interest investment. We're currently supporting the drummer Felix Eicke, who founded the alliance D-Popkultur to build bridges between politics and pop culture.

Each participant begins by creating a political impact plan setting out precisely what they want to achieve. They are awarded up to 50,000 euros of funding for a six-month period and take part in a training programme. We want to be something like an incubator for political talents, allowing them to test their ideas, experiment, network and achieve impact. In the ideal-case scenario, the programme will help launch them into a career in politics.

3 What is the value of self-efficacy for democracy, and to what extent can self-efficacy be institutionalised?

Self-efficacy encourages people to act in a way guided by their values, to commit to things, to accept limitations instead of being frustrated and demotivated by them. And what's true of self-efficacy at the individual level also applies to a society that's open to change. How can society as a whole benefit from individuals' feelings of self-efficacy? A good first step would be innovative legislation that promotes democracy by allocating funding to outstanding political initiatives and problem-solvers; that would be a good fit for the self-declared 'progressive coalition' in Berlin. ■

PHILIP HUSEMANN

• Co-director of JoinPolitics and former head of the *Offene Gesellschaft* (Open Society) initiative. He has also worked as a press officer for an elected official and as a political communications consultant.



'WE BELIEVE IN
THE POWER OF THE
INDIVIDUAL.'

TEXT Philip Husemann • PICTURE Frederike van der Straeten

3 QUESTIONS FOR LISA GLYBCHENKO

'DIGITAL
VISUALISATIONS OF
PEACE'



TEXT Lisa Glybchenko • PICTURE Stefanie Loos

1 How do you attain and strengthen self-efficacy through your work and/or other activities?

One of my recent projects was to create the workshop Peace in Europe: Digital and Virtual Reality Peacebuilding, as part of my Thinking of Europe fellowship. I am an artist interested in technology, and this workshop combines my artistic and technological aspirations. As part of my doctoral project Visual Peacetech: Digital Visual Images as Security-Building Tools, which I am currently completing at Tampere University, Finland, I research digital visualisations of peace. I employ virtual and augmented reality tools to try and draw greater awareness to people's visions of peace.

2 Who do you empower to attain self-efficacy – and how?

As a Ukrainian, I have been working with other Ukrainians who fled the war in my country and came to Tampere. I created a series of art-for-peace workshops for them, using artistic expression as a transformative tool to imagine peaceful futures and create visual models of them. In my current project too, I invite Ukrainians all over the world who are affected by war and would like to utilise art-making as a peace-building strategy. In what ways can virtual reality tools democratise peacebuilding? Can the production of augmented reality images help bring about peaceful futures? The idea is to empower more people to take part in shaping peace by visualising what peace is to them, creating dialogue and legitimising visions of peace through art-making. I hope that Europeans and the global community will support young Ukrainians in educational collaborations and make more financial resources available for Ukrainian activists.

This could help us to launch and develop initiatives to counter Russian propaganda, which has penetrated international academia and media information spaces.

3 What is the value of self-efficacy for change and democracy, and to what extent can self-efficacy be institutionalised?

When Russia illegally occupied my home region, Crimea, in 2014, my experience of that violence affected my choice of study, my hobbies and the profession I have today. The lives people used to live before the conflict, including my own personal life, are a legacy of peace. Whether this legacy is expressed digitally or artistically, or is embodied in people's actual lives, it's always a cultural good that has to be protected and preserved. Similar efforts to protect the legacy of peace need to be institutionalised. The full-scale war on Ukraine this year showed that many institutions lack self-efficacy: aid came slowly from institutions abroad, and energy security appears to be more important to some states and institutions than all the Ukrainian lives lost in the war since 2014. The value of self-efficacy is that it helps us to face the truth, take responsibility and act decisively – in the name of freedom rather than comfort. Whether in virtual or augmented reality, art and technology can help people imagine alternatives – as models for how to make our embodied realities peaceful too. ■

LISA GLYBCHENKO

Artist and alumna of the Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft and Schwarzkopf Foundation's Thinking of Europe fellowship. She is currently completing a doctorate on the use of digital images as security-building tools.

F O R
W A R D
L O O K I N G
I D E A S



According to Alfred Herrhausen, we can only master the uncertainty of the future if we are able to think as freely and flexibly as possible. He thought that no idea should be off limits or narrow-mindedly rejected without first examining its merits. That allows us a broader perspective on fundamental questions: where do we want to go and how can we get there? What is meant by progress and change? How are global power relations changing? In the 1980s, Alfred Herrhausen showed that addressing these questions often requires visionary thinking and new approaches. For instance, he sparked a debate on debt relief for developing countries.

LAYING THE GROUND FOR CHANGE – DIGITAL EUROPE 2030

One of the core questions asked by our foresight project [Digital Europe 2030](#) was how Europe could flourish in a digital future. The participants devised several scenarios for how the world might plausibly develop over the long term and so imagined the concrete form that our uncertain future could take. The scenarios were a helpful way to **get some distance, think outside the box, make sense of complex interrelationships and identify 'guiding threads', so that we can lay the ground today for the changes we will have to face in the future.**

The first stage of the project focused on how the public sphere and political decision-making could or should develop by 2030 in the context of digital transformation. Experts from various fields methodically developed three scenarios. Our aim was to think ideas and approaches that already exist today through to their logical conclusion and come up with big-picture visions of our common future. We then formulated answers and possible courses of action in response to questions such as: how can we successfully steer the digital transformation

in the EU along a path aligned with democratic values? How will we use and engage with data in the future?

FREEDOM AND RISKS

Acting and thinking in a forward-looking way means learning from mistakes instead of repeating them, and seeking to build on valuable experiences. The future is open, which means we have the freedom to shape it. The actions and decisions we take today can have a great impact. But there's a high risk of missteps and misjudgements, as the situations we're faced with are often highly complex in nature. Consider, for instance, policy on Russia, migration, the pandemic or digital transformation. And the further we try to look into the future, the more difficult matters become.

But politicians and all the rest of us have no choice but to try and imagine the future we'd like to see, and start charting its course. **We have to prevent our society and economy from ossifying, and ensure they are able to learn, adapt and remain productive.** ■

DEFINITION: FORWARD-LOOKING IDEAS

- Forward-looking ideas are ones that help inspire action to shape the future. That includes devising potential scenarios for how the future might unfold, based on a far-sighted perspective capable of grasping complexity. It also means taking up trailblazing trends and imagining how they could be developed – or starting new trends.

STRATEGIC
FORESIGHT IN
TEMPESTUOUS
TIMES



ESSAY

TEXT Ingo Kollosche • PICTURE Private

Climate change, the pandemic, digital transformation, economic crises, military conflicts and mass displacements of people are putting the world under enormous strain. Lines of potential conflict are multiplying and intersecting. We're seeing a rise in what would once have been considered 'wild card' events – rare occurrences with a disruptive impact. The public mood is nervous, agitated, restive. Many of us are still operating with our old mental maps of a fossil-fuelled world. And we're trapped in the path dependencies of our modern lifestyles, which blind us to the possibility of change. The prevailing meta-narrative: there is no alternative.

RENEGOTIATING SOCIETY'S VALUES

A turning point in history, the dawning of a new era, a changing of the guard – there are many different metaphors, but they're all talking about the same thing. Global society is in the throes of a dramatic upheaval, which is unfolding at various interconnected levels. We have neither the time nor the peace and calm needed for a controlled, managed transformation. The ship needs to be rebuilt while still sailing full speed in

stormy waters. It's against this backdrop that our society's values are being renegotiated. Where can political, business and civil society leaders turn for guidance in such times? How can they retain, or regain, their agency?

The objectives of strategic foresight are, firstly, to provide meaningful insights under conditions of uncertainty; secondly, to construct new possibilities out of the restructuring of our existing reality; and thirdly, to build capacity for strategic action. This systematic approach to envisioning different futures has always been a specific form of expectation management.

But strategic foresight itself is under strain too. Firstly, due to the demand that it respond to dynamic, complex processes of transformation in an agile manner; secondly, due to the expectations that it will deliver on its potential and do everything it's meant to. **The method of foresight itself needs to actively participate in the public conversations about our values as a society.** New formats and interventions are needed to help make change visible, experienceable, comprehensible. →

WE NEED TO GET BETTER AT LINKING ANALYSIS TO SOLUTIONS

Two even more crucial success factors for strategic foresight are public acceptance of transformation processes and people's behaviours in response to them. We have good analyses of the problems and good ideas for solutions. Where we often fall short is knowing how to link the two together. What form must futures research and strategic foresight take so they can serve as agile tools for navigating transformation and shaping the future?

We might take inspiration from the words of Gottfried Benn: 'Recognise your situation! Face your defects, take as a basis your essential self, not your theories.' **One key task for strategic foresight is to give an in-depth, systemic analysis of a situation.** But new ways of communicating are also needed in order to reach a diverse range of audiences and target groups. The myriad possibilities of digital technology need to be harnessed, in particular formats that use images and other visual elements to communicate information through association and in a clear and engaging way (data visualisations, animations, virtual games).

'NEW WAYS OF COMMUNICATING ARE NEEDED IN ORDER TO REACH A DIVERSE RANGE OF AUDIENCES AND TARGET GROUPS.'

STRONGER COMMUNICATION

This brings us to another challenge: the need for stronger communication in the futures research and strategic foresight fields. The methods used in these fields are, in effect, structured processes of communication. Innovative approaches are needed to keep the strategic conversations fresh and energised.

More productive use should be made of fictional narratives or scenarios, which as paradoxical interventions can serve to prompt critical reflection, reveal alternatives, remap people's mental geographies and encourage collaborative approaches to shaping our future course. One potent example would be to imagine decoupling value creation from the traditional productivity paradigm. Reflecting on this fictional scenario would help to open up the debate and bring in alternative conceptions of future prosperity. What I'm proposing here isn't a new idea, but a different and more productive way of applying the strategic foresight method that would get people thinking about the social, economic and institutional conditions of creating value through a process of renegotiating values.

Critical futures research can only overcome lock-ins and path dependencies if it explicitly addresses the elephants in the room: the factors and barriers that all too often stand in the way of change. And this is where the political dimension of futures research becomes apparent. At its heart there is always a question of public significance: 'How do we want to live together as a society?' ■

INGO
KOLLOSCHÉ

Head of Futures and Transformation Research at the Institute for Futures Studies and Technology Assessment, Berlin. He lectures at TU Berlin and previously worked for Foresight Intelligence and DaimlerChrysler.




PREDICTING AND
SHAPING THE
FUTURE IN A TIME OF
HISTORIC CHANGE

WHEN RUSSIA INVADED UKRAINE IN FEBRUARY 2022, MANY POLITICIANS REALISED THAT VLADIMIR PUTIN HAD 'HOODWINKED' THEM AND THAT THEY WOULD NEED TO TAKE A NEW POLITICAL TACK.

TEXT Astrid Séville • PICTURE Ch. Mukherjee

Crises demand decisive action, but a solution is often not immediately apparent.



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz declared it to be a 'turning point in history'; President Frank-Walter Steinmeier conceded the flaws of his previous Russia policy; Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said that we 'woke up in a different world' in February. Ever since, the pages of newspapers have been filled with journalists and historians discussing a 'return of history', the new and old Cold Wars and the way Putin has instrumentalised history.

These responses show that politicians and the public are palpably aware of the historic significance of our current political moment and the crisis we are living through. Crises demand decisive political action, but the path to a solution is usually not immediately apparent. This fact prompted SPD leader Lars Klingbeil to quote the Italian thinker Antonio Gramsci in June 2022: 'The old world is dying, and the new world struggles to be born.'

'MODERNITY IS
BASED ON THE
IDEA OF AN OPEN
FUTURE, ONE THAT IS
UNCERTAIN BUT CAN
STILL BE SHAPED
AND MOULDED.'

POLITICAL FORESIGHT IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

How does our view of the present change if we understand it as a time of radical crisis with no clear end in sight? If we don't know how or when we will get past this crisis, then how is political foresight possible? Will awareness that the present is a crisis of historic proportions lead us to attach greater value to the future and progress – or will it lead to melancholy scepticism about our ability to predict the future and about any overly optimistic visions of future progress? Examples of both can be found in the history of political thought.

Progress is a difficult and problematic concept. It implies constant movement in a certain direction, things constantly getting better. We cannot imagine the future being worse than the present, or we refuse to imagine it. But narratives of linear progress and theories of history that claim society will simply keep on becoming more just, democratic or liberal have lost credibility. We now understand past, present and future in more ambivalent terms, as a series of steps forwards and steps backwards. Modernity is based on the idea of an open future, one that is uncertain but can still be shaped and moulded. We can't control the future, any more than we can control a wave crashing over us – but through politics, we can influence its course. Progress is a political category, a contested concept that is open to interpretation.

APOCALYPSE VERSUS PROGRESS


But what happens if trust in progress erodes, if we lose faith in our ability to shape the future and make it better than the present? Apocalyptic visions of the future are already being expressed today: by the Alt Right movement in the USA, by conspiracy theorist groups, by Extinction Rebellion activists. Such visions feed into

pessimistic theories of history, predicated not on progression but on regression – on ‘negative utopias’. Though to be clear, not everyone has become a pessimist: many remain apathetic and apolitical, concerned only with their own private affairs, while many others are wholeheartedly engaged in the democratic process.

In the debate about the historical significance of the present, between the two extremes of progression and regression a third possibility is also mooted, namely that of stagnation: the idea that things will continue unchanged after the ‘end of history’, as famously proclaimed by Francis Fukuyama in 1989. French philosopher Jacques Derrida called this idea ‘a tiresome anachronism’, which since the end of WWII had already been repeatedly wheeled out by figures such as Arnold Gehlen and Vilém Flusser.

In the post-war period, it has frequently been suggested, sometimes with a touch of wistfulness, that we cannot expect any more radical changes in the future.

This contrasts sharply with the views quoted at the start of this essay, according to which we have been deeply naive and are only now waking up. Our thinking is too linear. We have become blind to turning points in history and stopped believing in the possibility of radical change. But political foresight must take these turning points into account. Today, it’s clear that we’re not at the end of history. Melancholy wistfulness is as inadequate a response as giving up in despair. The dominant mood is not one of timeless ahistoricity, but rather a sense of living through a historic moment.



‘OUR THINKING IS TOO LINEAR. TODAY, IT’S CLEAR THAT WE’RE NOT AT THE END OF HISTORY.’

AWARENESS OF OUR POLITICAL AGENCY

The old narratives of progress, growth and things constantly getting better have lost credibility. What we need today, perhaps, is less emotive rhetoric about progress and more awareness of our political agency and ability to change things, like the attitude German historian Christian Meier ascribes to the ancient Greeks as their counterpart to the modern idea of progress. According to Meier, politics involves making decisions in conditions of uncertainty, sometimes with absolutely no idea what the future will bring. ■

ASTRID SÉVILLE

•

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W E

T H I N K

C H A N G E

THE ALFRED HERRHAUSEN GESELLSCHAFT HAS BEEN COMMITTED TO DEMOCRACY, FREEDOM AND PROGRESS FOR THIRTY YEARS. IN A WORLD OF DISRUPTION, WE THINK CHANGE – AND HELP TO RESPONSIBLY SHAPE THE TRANSFORMATION OUR SOCIETY IS GOING THROUGH.

ABOUT US

Our work is aimed at decision-makers in politics, business and civil society and at thought leaders and think tanks. We want to empower and embolden them to make the necessary decisions with wisdom and foresight. At the same time, we think it's vital to involve young people, who have their finger on the pulse and understand the key issues facing us in the current social and economic transformation. We believe that the older generation can learn a lot from the younger one – and vice versa.

In our projects, we develop interdisciplinary solutions to the challenges currently facing us. Sometimes, these solutions are set out in publications and podcasts, in other cases they emerge out of the discussions fostered by our fellowships, workshops and conferences. The aim is to exchange ideas, develop new ways of thinking and devise strategies for shaping our future trajectory. All our projects are interdisciplinary in nature, and champion a democratic society and a social market economy.

There are numerous uncertainties to contend with along the way, of course. What direction might Europe head in the coming decades? What will international relations look like in the future? What opportunities does digitalisation offer us – including with a view to freedom and democracy? None of the big questions of our time can be answered by restricting our attention to a single issue or country. The mutual dependencies of the modern world force us to adopt interdisciplinary perspectives, to think flexibly and to find solutions that transcend cultural and geographic divides. ■

To achieve progress, our liberal democracy and social market economy must be allowed to freely develop and unlock their full potential. Our work is guided by the principles of our namesake Alfred Herrhausen: interdisciplinarity, far-sightedness, courage, openness, clarity and a sense of responsibility. Building on these principles, we've been contributing to social and political debates ever since our founding in 1992.

Picture: EschCollection



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'FREEDOM AND
THE OPENNESS
THAT GOES WITH IT
AREN'T GIVEN TO US
FOR FREE. PEOPLE
HAVE TO FIGHT FOR
THEM, OVER AND
OVER AGAIN.'

Alfred Herrhausen (1930–1989)

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