

Putin displays Ukraine Chess Mastery

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Russia's celebrations of the 69th anniversary of the defeat of fascism in World War II come just days after Ukrainian neo-fascists enacted an appalling [Odessa massacre](#). For those who know their history, the graphic symbolism speaks for itself.

And then a geopolitical chess gambit added outright puzzlement to the trademark hypocrisy displayed by the self-proclaimed representatives of "Western civilization".

The gambit comes from – who else – Russian President Vladimir Putin, who is now actively mixing chess moves with Sun Tzu's *Art of War* and Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching*. No wonder all those American PR skills, helpless State Department spokespersons and NATOstan generals are clueless.

Unlike the Obama administration's juvenile delinquent school of diplomacy – which wants to "isolate" Putin and Russia – a truce and possible deal in the ongoing Ukrainian tragedy has been negotiated between adults on speaking terms, Putin and German Chancellor Angela Merkel, then discussed and finally announced in a press conference by the president of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Didier Burghalter.

The deal will hold as long as the regime changers in Kiev – which should be described as the NATO neo-liberal, neo-fascist junta – abandon their ongoing "anti-terrorist operation" and are ready to negotiate with the federalists in Eastern and Southern Ukraine. [1]

Putin's gambit has been to sacrifice not one but two pieces; he'd rather have the referendums this Sunday in Eastern Ukraine be postponed. At the same time, changing the Kremlin's position, he said the presidential elections on May 25 might be a step in the right direction.

Moscow knows the referendums will be erroneously interpreted by the misinformed NATOstan combo as an argument for Eastern Ukraine to join Russia, as in Crimea. They could be used as pretext for more sanctions. And most of all Moscow is keen to prevent any possible false flags. [2]

Yet Moscow has not abandoned its firm position from the start; before a presidential election there should be constitutional changes towards federalization and more power for largely autonomous provinces. It's not happening anytime soon – if at all.

With the Kiev NATO junta making an absolute mess of "governing"; the International Monetary Fund already running the [disaster capitalism show](#), Russia cutting off trade and energy subsidies, and the federalist movement growing by the minute after the Odessa massacre, Ukraine is so absolutely toxic that Moscow has all the time in the world on its

side. Putin's strategy is indeed *Tao Te Ching* meets *Art of War*: watch the river flow while giving enough rope for your enemy to hang himself.

You're with us or against us

Putin asking the people in the Donbass region to postpone the referendum – which will take place anyway [3] – unleashed a fierce debate, in eastern Ukraine and across Russia, over a possible Russian betrayal of Russian speakers in Ukraine.

After all, the NATO neo-liberal, neo-fascist junta has unleashed an “anti-terrorist operation” against average Ukrainians where even the terminology comes straight from the “you're with us or against us” Cheney regime.

And once again the Disinformer-in-Chief is – who else – US Secretary of State John Kerry, who is “very concerned about efforts of pro-Russian separatists in Donetsk, in Lugansk to organize, frankly, a contrived, bogus independence referendum on May 11”. It's “the Crimea playbook all over again and no civilized nation is going to recognize the results of such a bogus effort”.

It's hopeless to expect Kerry to know what he's talking about, but still: the people in Donbass are not separatists. These are average Ukrainians – factory workers, miners, store clerks, farmers – who are pro-democracy, anti-NATO junta and – oh, the capital crime – Russian speakers.

And by the way, you don't need to be Thomas Piketty to identify this as classic class struggle; workers and peasants against oligarchs – the oligarchs currently aligned with the NATO junta, some deployed as regional governors, and all planning to remain in charge after the May 25 elections.

The people in Donbass want federalism, and strong autonomy in their provinces. They don't want to split from Ukraine. Against the US-prescribed, Kiev-enforced “anti-terrorism” onslaught, they have their popular defense committees, local associations and yes, militias, to defend themselves. And most of all “bogus” referendums to make it absolutely clear they won't submit to a centralized, oligarch-infested junta.

So the referendums will go ahead – and will be duly ignored by the NATOstan combo. The May 25 presidential election will go ahead – right in the middle of an “anti-terrorist operation” against almost half of the population – and will be recognized as “legitimate” by the NATOstan combo.

Way beyond this cosmically shameful behavior of the “civilized” West, what next?

Nothing will make the ironclad hatred the NATO neo-liberal neo-fascist junta with its Western Ukraine neo-nazi Banderastan supporters feel against the eastern Donbass go away. But then, in a few months, all Ukrainians will feel in their skins what the IMF has in store for them, irrespective of location. And wait if the new president – be it chocolate billionaire Petro Poroshenko or holy corrupt “Saint Yulia” Timoschenko – doesn't pay Gazprom's US\$2.7 billion energy bill.

Once again, Putin does not need to “invade” anything. He knows this is not the way to “rescue” eastern and southern Ukraine. He knows the people in the Donbass will make life

miserable for the NATO junta and its May 25 offspring. He knows when Kiev needs real cash – not the current IMF self-serving Mob-style loans – nobody in his right mind in the political midget EU will be forthcoming. Nobody will want to rescue a failed state. And Kiev will have to beg, once again, for Moscow's help, the lender of first and last resort.

Lao Tzu Putin is far from going to checkmate. He may – and will – wait. The exceptionalist empire will keep doing what it does best – foment chaos – even as sensible Europeans, Merkel included, try somewhat for appeasement. Well, at least Washington's prayers have been answered. It took a while, but they finally found the new bogeyman: Osama Bin Putin.

Notes:

1. [Putin-Burkhalter talks: an elusive chance for Ukraine](#), Oriental Review, May 8, 2014.
2. [Ukrainian forces prepare provocation against Russia in Donetsk](#), Voice of America, May 6, 2014.
3. [2 southeast Ukrainian regions to hold referendum May 11 as planned](#), RT, May 8, 2014.

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