

Fortress Europe?

Debates at the Burgtheater



Ivan Krastev

Democratic
Dissatisfaction

Robert Kagan

Post-American
Obama

Timothy Snyder

Ghosts of
Katyn

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Discussing "The Others Among Us" at the Vienna Burgtheater: Seyla Benhabib, Armin Laschet, Krzysztof Michalski, Giuliano Amato and Roger Köppel (see page 4). The event on March 21 was part of the matinée series "Debating Europe" which brings leading politicians, scholars and intellectuals together on stage to discuss essential issues of European identity.



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Institute for Human Sciences

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Editorial

In Vielfalt geeint“ heißt das Motto der Europäischen Union. Damit ist längst nicht mehr nur die Diversität der nationalen Kulturen gemeint. Europa ist zu einem bevorzugten Ziel von Migration geworden. Damit steigt nicht nur die ethnische, religiöse und kulturelle Vielfalt innerhalb der Union. Auch Diskriminierung, Ausländerfeindlichkeit und rechter Populismus nehmen zu. Dagegen, das wurde bei der Debatte „The Others Among Us“ im Wiener Burgtheater (S. 4) deutlich, hilft kein (weiterer) Ausbau der „Festung Europa“, sondern nur die Schaffung des Bewusstseins, dass die europäischen Gesellschaften zu Einwanderungsgesellschaften geworden sind.

Ist es bis zum ersten muslimischen Präsidenten der EU noch ein weiter Weg, so ist doch der erste schwarze Präsident der USA inzwischen Wirklichkeit. Im November 2008 triumphierte Barack Obama bei der amerikanischen Präsidentschaftswahl. Bereits im Wahlkampf hatte er mit dem Slogan „Yes, we can!“ Hoffnung auf einen Wandel in der Weltpolitik gemacht. Nach eineinhalb Jahren seiner Präsidentschaft zogen nun die Debatte „Obama and the Europeans“ im Burgtheater (S. 3) und eine Józef Tischner Debatte in Warschau Bilanz (S. 6). „Can he? No, he can't“, meint Robert Kagan, Teilnehmer der Burgtheater Debatte, in seinem Gastbeitrag (S. 14 und 15): Obama werde die Welt nicht verändern, denn die USA werden in ihr eine immer kleinere Rolle spielen.

1989 wurde als großer Sieg der Demokratie gefeiert. Doch wie ist es heute, zwanzig Jahre nach den friedlichen Revolutionen in Osteuropa, um die Demokratie bestellt? In einer Essayreihe hebt Ivan Krastev noch einmal den zentralen Vorteil der Demokratie gegenüber anderen politischen Systemen hervor, nämlich die Mitbestimmung (S. 7); Mykola Riabchuk analysiert die Demokratie in der Ukraine nach der Abwahl der Orangen Revolution (S. 8), und Haideh Daragahi zeigt die entscheidende Rolle von Frauen in der demokratischen Bewegung im Iran auf (S. 9).

Auf dem Weg zu einer Gedenkfeier anlässlich des Massakers von Katyn, kam am 10. April diesen Jahres bei einem Flugzeugunglück ein Großteil der politischen Elite Polens ums Leben. Ein tragischer Verlust und eine schreckliche Ironie, doch, so hofft Timothy Snyder im abschließenden Beitrag dieser IWMpost, markiert dieses Ereignis vielleicht auch einen Neuanfang im Umgang Polens wie Rußlands mit einer gemeinsamen bitteren Vergangenheit.

Eine vielfältige Lektüre wünscht,

Sven Hartwig

United in Diversity“—this is the motto of the European Union. Today, its meaning extends beyond the variety of national cultures. Europe has become a preferred destination for migrants. This not only leads to greater ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity: discrimination, xenophobia, and right-wing populism are also on the rise. The debate “The Others Among Us” at the Burgtheater (p. 4) made clear that this trend cannot be stopped by raising the walls around “fortress Europe” still higher. European societies need to develop an understanding of themselves as societies of immigration.

While there is still a long way to go before the EU has its first Muslim president, the US already has its first black president. When Barack Obama won the election in November 2008, he had become the symbol of hope around the world. His campaign slogan “Yes, we can!” raised expectations for fundamental changes in international politics. The Burgtheater debate “Obama and the Europeans” (p. 3) and a Józef Tischner debate in Warsaw (p. 6) asked what remains of this hope halfway through the second year of Obama's presidency. “Can he? No, he can't,” believes Robert Kagan, participant in the Burgtheater debate, in his guest contribution (pp. 15–16): Obama will not change the world because the role of the US in international politics is going to become less important.

The year 1989 was celebrated as a victory for democracy. But what is the state of democracy twenty years after the peaceful revolutions in Eastern Europe? In three essays we present here, Ivan Krastev again emphasizes the major advantage of democracy, namely participation (p. 7); Mykola Riabchuk analyzes Ukrainian democracy after the political defeat of the Orange Revolutionaries (p. 8); and Haideh Daragahi examines the central role of women in the democratic movement in Iran (p. 9).

On April 10, a plane carrying a significant part of Poland's political elite crashed, killing everybody on board. They had been on their way to Katyn to commemorate the murder of thousands of Polish army officers on Stalin's orders. In the final article of this IWMpost, Timothy Snyder expresses his hope that this catastrophe may, despite its brutal irony, mark a new beginning for Poland and Russia in dealing with their bitter common past.

I hope this newsletter is an exciting and varied read!

Sven Hartwig

Europe's Obama

BY CHRISTOPH PRANTNER

Around 800 people came to Vienna's Burgtheater to listen to the debate "Obama and the Europeans—What Has Changed?" on February 28. This year's first event in the *matinée* series "Debating Europe" brought together Stanley Greenberg, Robert Kagan, Karl Schwarzenberg, Michael Spindelegger and Ivan Vejvoda to discuss whether Europe's high expectations of Obama have been disappointed as American interests have shifted towards the Pacific and other regions. The conclusion: not the us but Europe has to do more to bring about a change in transatlantic relations.



From left: I. Vejvoda, K. Schwarzenberg, M. Spindelegger, A. Förderl-Schmid, R. Kagan, S. Greenberg

Photos: Philipp Steinweller

Is politics just about opinion polls? Or is it also a place for screwballs, fantasists and visionaries, the kind one meets in the theater sometimes? With this, Burgtheater Director Matthias Hartmann gave the stage to a highly distinguished panel on a Sunday morning. The aim of the debate "Obama and the Europeans:" to analyze the transatlantic relationship in quasi-dramatic fashion...



The us are the cowboys, the Europeans are the saloon owners

Robert Kagan

Robert Kagan, leading neoconservative thinker from Washington, was concerned from the start to keep the visions down to earth and keep in check any screwballs who may have been present: "There were excessive expectations about how much us foreign policy would change. But national interests and national attitudes don't change with electoral cycles." The us still operates a post-9/11 mentality, he said. This distinguishes Europe's understanding of power from the Amer-

ican one—the Obama administration included. "Obama's Secretary of Defense Robert Gates recently said that the pacification of Europe was a blessing for the 20th century but a threat for the 21st."

Predictably, this met with protest from the European side. Ivan Vejvoda, Director of the Balkan Trust for Democracy in Belgrade, spoke of a fundamental change in "tone and style." Obama had inherited a "mountain of problems" from the Bush administration, and this called for modesty. Likewise, Austrian Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger remarked that the new us president had found a "necessary new language" towards Europe. There are high expectations that have yet to be met, he said.

"On the eve of his election victory, I said I felt very sorry for Obama," recalled former Czech Foreign Minister Karl Schwarzenberg. "Saviors are rare in history and they must be crucified before they are really accepted." American domestic affairs are far more important to Obama than foreign policy, and even dictate it, said Schwarzenberg. The president still has to improve the dire economic situation and must push through his healthcare reform. Seen from this angle, Europe is not necessarily Obama's top priority.

Schwarzenberg noted a shift in us foreign policy away from the Atlantic towards the Pacific. Hillary Clinton's first move after becoming Secretary of State was not to travel to Europe, as her predecessors had done, but to go on an extended tour of Asia. After all, the Europeans had not exactly excelled as partners for the us. "If transatlantic relations are to be relevant for America, then Europe has got to do more."

For American political advisor Stanley Greenberg, the shift in us

foreign policy was a simple case of "follow the money." "And also the power," added Kagan. Lisbon Treaty or no Lisbon Treaty, Europe is currently suffering from a crisis of



The shift in us foreign policy was a simple case of "follow the money"

Stanley Greenberg

confidence. Fears of being ignored by Obama were circulating before he had even thought about the matter. "Unlike in the Bush era, today Europeans are depressed about their domestic situation, and we're trying to cheer them up," joked Kagan about the unexpected "change" that has taken place in the last year.

Any us president entering office asks himself two questions, according to Kagan: "Who is causing us problems? And who can help me?" Europe is no longer causing problems, and so is irrelevant in questions of power. Nor does it seem that Europe can help solve other problems.

Keyword Iran, keyword Afghanistan. For Kagan, the nuclear conflict will be the test of how

strong US-EU relations remain. It is up to the us and Europe to increase the pressure on Tehran by stepping up sanctions. Spindelegger added that it needs to be clear by the end of April 2010 whether further sanctions will be imposed. The UN Security Council is currently engaged in difficult negotiations on this. "We want to target the regime and not the population."

The Austrian Foreign Minister had more difficulty saying anything concrete about Afghanistan. Austria is sending five policemen to Kabul to help train the Afghan security services. To send 100 soldiers to the Hindu Kush makes no

difference, yet sending more would be too expensive...

Robert Kagan seized on this as proof for his theory about the different understandings of power. "The us are the cowboys, the Europeans are the saloon owners. I think we know that we aren't unanimous on this. The question is how we continue." How then? Even the eloquent Kagan was lost for an answer. <

From: *Der Standard*, March 1, 2010. Translated by Simon Garnett. For the article in German please refer to our website: www.iwm.at > Publications > IWMpost

Debating Europe / Europa im Diskurs

Debate 1:
Obama and the Europeans—
What Has Changed?
February 28

Stanley Greenberg
Political scientist; Chairman and CEO of the international consulting firm Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, Washington D.C.

Robert Kagan
US publicist and columnist, *The Washington Post*; Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C.

Karl Schwarzenberg
former Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic; former President of the European Council; Chair of the Party TOP 09, Prague

Michael Spindelegger
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Austria, Vienna

Ivan Vejvoda
Executive Director, Balkan Trust for Democracy, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, Belgrade

Chair: **Alexandra Förderl-Schmid**
Editor-in-Chief, *Der Standard*

Debate 2:
The Others Among Us: The
Opportunities and Dangers of
Immigration
March 21

Giuliano Amato
former Prime Minister and former Interior Minister of Italy; Vice President of the Convention on the Future of Europe that drafted the new European Constitution

Seyla Benhabib
Professor of Political Science and Philosophy, Yale University

Roger Köppel
Editor-in-Chief of the Swiss weekly *Die Weltwoche*

Armin Laschet
Minister for Intergenerational Affairs, Family, Women and Integration of the German State North Rhine-Westphalia

Chair: **Krzysztof Michalski**
Rector of the IWM

The series is a cooperation between the Burgtheater, the IWM and *Der Standard*, supported by Erste Foundation.

United in Diversity?

BY CHRISTOPH PRANTNER

More than 20 million foreign citizens have taken up residence in EU member states. But still Europe refuses to perceive itself as a continent of immigration. People from outside the EU continue to face tough asylum criteria, residence and labour restrictions, xenophobia and right-wing violence. At the second Burgtheater debate it became clear what Europe lacks: a diversity management which regards cultural differences as an asset, not a threat, to society. Debating about “The Others Among Us:” Giuliano Amato, Seyla Benhabib, Roger Köppel and Armin Laschet.



From left: S. Benhabib, A. Laschet, K. Michalski, G. Amato, R. Köppel

Photos: Philipp Steinkellner

Immigration and integration. How to formulate the problem? That in itself is a challenge.” With this, Krzysztof Michalski, Rector of the IWM, opened the second discussion in the series “Debating Europe.” Around five hundred people had come to the Burgtheater to listen to what Giuliano Amato, Seyla Benhabib, Roger Köppel and Armin Laschet had to say on the subject of immigration, its dangers and its opportunities.

The social democrat Amato, twice Italian Prime Minister and until two years ago foreign minister in Rome, made his opinion clear from the outset: those who want to allow only highly qualified immigrants into Europe are barking up the wrong tree. “Those who come are above all people who no longer see future perspectives in their own countries.” Lack of education and poor language skills provide fertile ground for conflict over immigration, said Amato. On top of this come inadequate rights for immigrants and their shameless exploitation by many locals. “Religion, on the other hand, is far less to blame for all the problems than we think. For example, it says in the Koran: I have made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other and become friends.”

Seyla Benhabib, political scientist at Yale University, also pointed out the difficult legal situation for migrants: “The Declaration of Human Rights grants every person the right to emigrate, but not the right

also to be admitted anywhere. What we have is legal paradoxes: globalized migrant flows collide with the restrictive admission systems of na-



In 1980, Germany paid for tickets home. Now we must offer migrants a bonus to stay

Armin Laschet

tion-states, which are much too hesitant with naturalizations.”

For Benhabib, who has Sephardic roots and a Turkish passport and has herself lived for a long time in Germany, migration is one of the biggest topics of the 21st century. While the world’s population quadrupled between 1910 and 2000, within the same period the number of migrants increased six times over, from 33 mil-

lion to 175 million. It is above all citizens of Europe who react “confusedly to what confronts them as a result of immigration.” Instead of helping citizens by explaining the situation to them, politicians add to their insecurity with populism. However, “it is not only migrants who must adapt,” Benhabib emphasized, “the Other’ must also be recognized as part of European society.”

Roger Köppel, not a politician himself but the editor-in-chief of the Swiss magazine *Die Weltwoche*, responded with statistics: “In Switzerland, 90 per cent of prisoners and 45.6 of the jobless are foreigners. We don’t want people immigrating into our prisons and into our welfare state.” For Köppel, it is unacceptable for politicians to claim that immigration is uncontrollable. It must be steered and restricted. Integration is above all “a matter of the will” of immigrants themselves. The minaret debate, according to Köppel, has unfairly left Switzerland smelling faintly of racism. Yet the fact is merely that Swiss citizens cannot accept any religion with political undertones—and Islam is definitely one of those, he said.

A matter of will? A dubious notion according to Armin Laschet, Minister for Integration in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany’s largest state. Germany solicited guest workers (“a strange concept,” Laschet added, “since guests usually don’t work”) on a massive scale,

first from Europe and then from Turkey. By the end of the 1970s it had become clear that the guests would stay. “We ought to have begun with



It is not only migrants who must adapt—“the Other” must also be recognized as part of European society

Seyla Benhabib

integration back then, but nothing happened,” explained Laschet. “So it isn’t so much a matter of migrants’ will to integrate than whether a society realizes that it’s a country of immigration.”

Today around 38 per cent of nursery school children in German cities have a “migrant background,” underlined Laschet. They will be the elite

of 2020, he said, because there will quite simply be no one else. “Today we already have a problem with well-educated young people with Turkish roots emigrating back to Turkey. In 1980, Germany paid for tickets home. Now we must offer migrants a bonus to stay.”

The fact that many citizens would not see it that way is largely because “the Other” that wants to come to Europe bears the image of the Muslim migrant, said Benhabib. Why? Because of 9/11 (Köppel) and general difficulties with modernity (Amato). For the Italian politician, the problem lies in an increasing collapse of the division between state and religion in the countries of origin, along with a confusion of cultural backwardness with religious precepts: “Beating a woman has nothing to do with God. Fifty years ago that was also very common in Sicily. And no Muslims live there. Backwardness has got nothing to do with religion!”... <

From: *Der Standard*, March 22, 2010. Translated by Simon Garnett. For the article in German please refer to our website: www.iwm.at > Publications > IWMpost

You can also watch a video of this debate on our website: www.iwm.at > Mediathek

Democracy and Dissatisfaction

Monthly Lecture: **Ivan Krastev**, January 26

Krastev's lecture contemplated the curiously manichean responses to the 20th anniversary of the fall of communism. Scholars have either celebrated the triumph of democracy or feared increasing public dissatisfaction with democracy. He suggested instead that the consequences of these revolutions are both more subtle and more significant. In the first place, the revolutions helped to produce a major change in European political culture by overcoming the deep-seated am-



Ivan Krastev is Chair of the Board at the Centre for Liberal Strategies in Sofia and Visiting Fellow at the IWM.

bivalence towards democracy as alternately weak or dangerous and normalizing the idea of a politics that

is both democratic and liberal. Second, the transitions challenged the traditional idea that democracy and markets are incompatible, at least in their origins, and has shown that citizens could both elect their governments and choose painful economic reforms. However, and this was his final point, these achievements came at a cost. By embracing all of these

values so completely and uncritically, the new democracies have lost some of democracy's unique ability to experiment and seek novel solutions. The cost of normality is not dissatisfaction—this is a natural part of democratic life—but a lack of understanding of this dissatisfaction and the ways that democracy can be used to deal with it. <

Andrew Roberts

See also Krastev's contribution on page 7

Grenzfälle

Buchpräsentation mit **Muriel Blaive** und **Berthold Molden**, 9. Februar



Photo: IWM

Wie tief sind die Spuren, die der Eiserne Vorhang im Grenzland zwischen Österreich und Tschechien hinterlassen hat? Dieser Frage gingen die Historiker/innen und ehemaligen IWM Junior Fellows Muriel Blaive und Berthold Molden in den Städten Gmünd im nördlichen Niederösterreich und České Velenice in Südböhmen nach. Auf Basis von zahlreichen Interviews und intensiven Archivrecherchen haben sie die Freundschaften und Vorurteile, die Erinnerungen und Zukunftserwartungen an der Grenze analysiert: vom Habsburgerreich über die Gründung der ČSSR und ihre spätere Okkupation durch das Dritte Reich, den Holocaust, die Vertreibung der Deutschen und Österreicher aus Böhmen nach 1945, das Leben in zwei grundverschiedenen Gesellschaften während des Kalten Krieges bis zur EU-Integration nach 1989. Mit ihrem Buch *Grenzfälle. Österreichische und tschechische Erfahrungen am Eisernen Vorhang* (Bibliothek der Provinz, 2009) präsentierten sie am IWM diese detailreiche Bestandsaufnahme politischer Identitäten in Mitteleuropa 20 Jahre nach dem Mauerfall. Deutlich wurde, dass die Spur des Eisernen Vorhangs sich zwar nicht mehr durch die Landschaft, aber immer noch durch die Kulturen zieht. Zahlreiche Stereotypen, wie jener österreichische, dass „der Tscheche falsch“ sei und man ihm nicht vertrauen könne, sind jedoch nicht das Resultat des Kalten Krieges, sondern reichen weit ins 19. Jahrhundert zurück. Hier spielen weniger die Trennung durch den Kommunismus als vielmehr der jahrhundertelange Nationalitätenkonflikt eine Rolle. Doch mit einer zunehmenden ökonomischen Angleichung beider Länder und der Einrichtung gemeinsamer Orte der Begegnung ist die Hoffnung verbunden, dass im österreichisch-tschechischen Verhältnis schließlich auch noch die Grenze in den Köpfen fällt. <

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Muriel Blaive, Koordinatorin der Forschungsstelle „Kommunismus“, Ludwig Boltzmann Institut (LBI) für Europäische Geschichte und Öffentlichkeit, Wien; IWM Junior Visiting Fellow 2004.

Berthold Molden, Gastprofessor für Globalgeschichte, Universität Wien; IWM Junior Visiting Fellow 2004.

Im Anschluß an den Vortrag diskutierten die Autoren/innen mit:

Thomas Lindenberger, Direktor des LBI für Europäische Geschichte und Öffentlichkeit, Wien.

Oliver Rathkolb, Vorstand des Instituts für Zeitgeschichte der Universität Wien.

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Crisis Management Without Reforms

Monthly Lecture: **Lajos Bokros**, February 12

From a high-grade performer among the former Eastern bloc countries in the first years after *die Wende* in 1989, in the new millennium Hungary was going headlong to hit the economic bottom. Lajos Bokros described the postsocialist path of the Hungarian economy as one decade of convergence when the country was at the forefront of change with structural reforms (notably tax and bank reforms, privatization and stock exchange introduction), followed by a decade of reversal of the course by replacing sustainable export-led and investment-fueled growth with domestic-led growth.

The rise of populism on the political stage of Eastern Europe had its harmful effect on the Hungarian economic agenda by triggering a virtually populist fiscal policy that eliminated half of the tax base and doubled the country's deficit within one year. With that and the increasing trend towards borrowing as a “hangover effect” of the decades of socialism, the public debt of Hungary skyrocketed, reaching at the highest level among new EU members.

The ongoing world economic crisis placed the Hungarian economy in a dead-end situation in which the damaging procyclical econom-



Lajos Bokros is Member of the European Parliament and Professor of Economics and Public Policy at the CEU Budapest. He was the top candidate of the political party MDF in the 2010 Hungarian parliamentary elections.

ic policy of the previous years could not be countered by anticyclical measures, since under current conditions those would lead the country into a fiscal collapse. Ironically, as an alternative to the proliferating populist parties, the ultra right wing gained its momentum in the current state of economic hardship. As Bokros concluded, “democracy is a learning process” but until the elections in Hungary this April the question remains who is to learn their lessons—voters who grant their credit of loyalty to populist promises or politicians who continuously feed the “inflation of promises” in the “populist race of pre-election campaigns.” <

Elitza Stanoeva

Re-Visionen der Kritik

Workshop zur Dialektik feministischer Aufklärung, 5.–7. März

Das Vokabular und die Perspektiven der Gesellschafts- und Kulturanalyse haben sich in den letzten Jahren im feministischen Kontext merklich verändert. Terminologische Verschiebungen verdanken sich nicht allein der Sachlogik innerwissenschaftlicher Lernprozesse, sie verweisen auch auf veränderte Macht-, Opportunitäts- und Konkurrenzverhältnisse in Wissenschaft und Gesellschaft, in denen bestimmte Begriffe außer Konjunktur geraten. Verschiebungen im Vokabular sind jedoch auch Indikatoren dafür, dass sich die gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse verändert haben. Deutungswissenschaften, die auf den alten Kategorien beharren, droht damit ein Wirklichkeitsverlust. Die „Re-Visionen“ des Workshops bezeichnen eine dreifache Möglichkeit der Reflexion: Rücksicht nehmen, d.h. die Tragfähigkeit des Überkommenen noch einmal zu durchdenken; es zu verwerfen, wenn es an Erklärungskraft verloren hat; oder etwas Zukunftsfähiges zu entwerfen. Vor allem Letzteres erscheint voraussetzungsvoll. Denn angesichts der enger gewordenen Verschnürung von Möglichem und Wirklichem und der Ausbreitung von „Echowissenschaften“ (Negt), die nur noch das registrieren können, was der Fall ist, sind Aussichten über den status quo hinaus riskant. In der Gesellschafts- und Kulturanalyse fällt außerdem die zunehmende Verbreitung von Begriffen auf,

die den janusgesichtigen Zug gesellschaftlicher Entwicklungen betonen. Im zeitdiagnostischen Kontext betrifft dies besonders Prozesse der Individualisierung oder der Subjektivierung. In der feministischen Theoriediskussion werden verstärkt die Dialektik feministischer Aufklärung, die Paradoxien und nicht-intendierten Nebenfolgen feministischen Handelns zum Thema: die andere Seite der Erfolge feministischer Kritik der vergangenen 40 Jahre. Doch der Begriff Dialektik hält auch die Möglichkeit des „Aufhebens“ bereit: In ihrer Reformulierung unter veränderten gesellschaftlichen Bedingungen könnten die alten Impulse feministischer Kritik somit als Stachel bewahrt bleiben. <

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Participants

Brigitte Aulenbacher, Linz
Regina Becker-Schmidt, Hannover
Mechthild Bereswill, Kassel
Margit Brückner, Frankfurt a.M.
Irene Dölling, Potsdam
Christel Eckart, Kassel
Ute Gerhard, Frankfurt a.M.
Sabine Hark, Berlin
Karin Hausen, Berlin
Heike Kahlert, Rostock
Cornelia Klinger, Wien
Gudrun-Axeli Knapp, Hannover
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Ilse Lenz, Bochum
Isabell Lorey, Berlin
Helma Lutz, Frankfurt a.M.
Andrea Maihofer, Basel
Katharina Pühl, Berlin
Birgit Riegraf, Bielefeld
Birgit Sauer, Wien
Paula Villa, Hannover
Angelika Wetterer, Graz

Polen und Deutsche. Nach dem Gedenkjahr 2009

Monatsvortrag: **Włodimirz Borodziej**, 23. März

Das Jahr 2009 war nicht nur das Jahr der Krisen, sondern auch des Gedenkens. Die Europa so prägenden wie in ihrer Bedeutung so verschiedenen Jahre 1939 und 1989 standen im Zentrum des Erinnerens. Auch in Polen und Deutschland wurde der Jahrestage des Beginns des 2. Weltkriegs und des Falls des Eisernen Vorhangs gedacht. Trotz des gemeinsamen Gedenkens – so überschritt die deutsche Kanzlerin Angela Merkel bei den Feiern zum Mauerfall in Berlin zusammen mit Polens ehemaligem Präsidenten Lech Wałęsa den einstigen Grenzstreifen an der Bornholmer Straße – scheint



Włodimirz Borodziej ist Professor für Neuere Geschichte und Vizepräsident der Universität Warschau. In Kürze erscheint sein neues Buch „Schleichwege“: *Inoffizielle Begegnungen sozialistischer Staatsbürger zwischen 1956 und 1989* im Wiener Böhlau Verlag.

das Verhältnis von Deutschen und Polen bis heute nicht frei von Spannungen, wie mediale Auseinandersetzungen zum Beispiel zur Frage der Vertreibungen immer wieder deutlich machen. Das sei jedoch die Re-

alität der Massenmedien, und nicht die heutige Realität der deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen, zeigte sich Włodimirz Borodziej in seinem Vortrag überzeugt. Exemplarisch für diese sei vielmehr eine Ausstellung wie „Wahlpolen – deutschstämmige Familien in Warschau im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert“, die Anfang 2010 im Haus der Begegnungen mit der

Geschichte in Warschau präsentiert wurde und die schrittweise und freiwillige Assimilation Deutscher in Warschau sowie deren Leistungen für die Stadt nachzeichnet. Streitigkeiten wie jene um die Vertreibungen seien hingegen in beiden Ländern längst beigelegt, was sich auch an der Zusammenarbeit polnischer und deutscher Zeithistoriker dazu ablesen lasse. Aber, so Borodziej abschließend, die reibungslose Normalität zwischen Polen und Deutschen sei natürlich kein Thema für eine Schlagzeile in den Zeitungen diesseits oder jenseits der Oder. <

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Can He or Can't He?

Barack Obama's worldview is definitely different from that of his predecessors—but can he make a change in world politics? Yes, he can, says James Hoge: Obama has set the scene for a more multilateral and cooperative foreign policy. He might be able to, says Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, but up to now Obama has only changed America's image. No, he can't, says Aleksander Smolar: Obama is respected, but hardly anyone is following his lead. On February 18, they discussed "Obama and the New World Order" at this year's first Tischner Debate at Warsaw University.



Photo: Warsaw University

Setting the Scene

BY JAMES HOGE

Barack Obama has not changed the aims of US foreign policy or Washington's perception of international relations: that the world has to develop, become safer and more democratic, because a stable world is the best world possible for the majority of people. But the way in which Obama convinces us of this is different from the previous administration.

During his election campaign, Obama was energetically persuasive that America must be involved in finding solutions to the world's problems in a different way than has been attempted in the past eight years. He wants to see a return to multilateralism. He regards India and Brazil as rising powers and partners. Obama would like to shift the center of gravity in international cooperation from the G8 group of mainly highly-developed Western states to the broader mix of the G20, which is currently the best tool for solving the world's economic problems. He is pragmatic, he wants to get America included in talks between the world powers. He is creating an environment where we can communicate and do business despite the differences that divide us.

He has put forward a new understanding of security policy, broadening the narrow Cold War definition, which does not correspond to new global threats connected with poverty and terrorist or narcotics networks, for example. If in fighting a war on terror you put everything else on the back burner, you will get nowhere. Obama has not walked away from the war on terror as a problem of importance. Nor does he regard it as a matter for the intelligence service alone. We have to act with precision and we have already had some successes—al-Qaeda is much weaker nowadays.

Obama has made efforts to prevent the world from plunging into a second great depression. He has freed the Federal Reserve and the Treasury Department, and adopted a stimulus program that has guaranteed that we do not slide into an abyss.

He wanted to see an end to anti-Americanism. In the first year

of his presidency he traveled more than any other contemporary president. He took the initiative to make sure America is included in the system of international norms and institutions, such as the UN Human Rights Council. We are now greater supporters of the International Criminal Court than we have been in the past. We have outlawed torture and closed down the CIA's covert operations.

How does the United States look after a year of Obama's presidency? My aim is to show that his administration has been setting the scene for a play that is only just about to start. That the president has succeeded in doing this within a year is an enormous achievement. We can now start searching for solutions to global problems. ◀



Photo: Warsaw University

Change or Naivety?

BY WŁODZIMIERZ CIMOSZEWICZ

We have a year of Obama's presidency behind us, which in terms of solving global problems is almost no time at all. Obama began his term of office in circumstances that no one anticipated six months before the elections. The financial crisis overturned the order of priorities for the new administration, which had to assign hundreds of billions of dollars to saving the banks instead of fulfilling their election promises.

The crisis showed the inability of the United States to act independently, contrary to what the conservatives had been saying a few years earlier.

Obama's main election slogan, "Change," meant that he and his advisors believed that diplomacy and not military force must be the basic tool for solving problems. This assumed a demonstration of good will towards partners, not to say opponents, whom his predecessor had regarded as part of the "axis of evil."

The question arises whether Obama's gestures—his demonstrative readiness to talk to everyone—are the expression of the naivety of an inexperienced president. In any case, they have played an intrinsically positive role in shaping the image

of the US. The crucial problem in the way the international situation has developed in recent years—not just for America—has been the growth of anti-Americanism. Many people, especially in Europe, failed to perceive the importance of relations with America. Anti-Americanism limited the effectiveness of US policies. The country has changed its image to a friendlier one, one that refers to the tradition that sees the United States as a country of hope, with great ideas of importance for the whole world. This has colossal significance.

However, I do not fully understand Washington's foreign policy. Ever since the White House began applying various special solutions, it has been recruiting the president's plenipotentiaries to take on individual issues, limiting the authority of the Department of State. No one knows who prepares the draft decisions and to what extent foreign policy is coherent. Following numerous personnel changes at the Department of State, there is no single consistent level of expert knowledge on the individual parts of the world. An example of this was the phone call made on September 17 about the cancellation of the construction of the anti-missile shield in Poland.

I wonder how precise America's appraisal of the world's problems is; how much one issue takes precedence over another. A few months ago a group of illustrious personalities in this part of Europe submitted a letter to Washington, drawing attention to growing disappointment at a failure to perceive the problems of Central and Eastern Europe.

Recently an EU-USA summit was cancelled because Obama decided not to come. I entirely understand him; after adopting the Lisbon Treaty, Europe has not made use of the opportunity to create a unified leadership. Henry Kissinger's dream of a single telephone line connecting the United States and Europe has come true. However, the person answering at the European end is not an interlocutor but a switchboard operator who passes the call on to the individual capitals. Despite all the changes that are happening globally, one thing should be clear for Europe and the US: close cooperation is the most vital condition for effective management.

If American policy does not depart from this understanding of mutual relations, we will have sufficient cause for a positive assessment of the Obama administration. ◀



Photo: Warsaw University

Obama's Epistemological Revolution

BY ALEKSANDER SMOLAR

The key to understanding Obama's politics is to answer the question of what the United States is really capable of doing. How much depends on the will of a single man, and how much on the situation of the country and the world?

In a recent issue of *Foreign Affairs*, Polish-American political advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski drew up a list that shows how Obama's America has redefined its view of the world:

- Islam is not an enemy;
- the "global war on terror" does not define America's current role in the world;
- the US should be a mediator, not a front, in the quest for peace in the Middle East;
- the US should pursue negotiations with Iran over its nuclear arms program, and military confrontation with the Taliban should be part of a larger political undertaking—armed struggle should not be the only tool for political activity;
- the US should respect Latin America's sensitivities;

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Tischner Debate XVIII Obama and the New World Order

Introduction:

James Hoge,
Editor-in-Chief of *Foreign Affairs*

Participants:

Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz,
Head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland; former Polish Prime Minister

Aleksander Smolar,
Senior Researcher at CNRS, Paris

Chairs:

Marcin Król, Warsaw University
Krzysztof Michalski, IWM

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No Satisfaction Machines

BY IVAN KRASTEV

It is now difficult to imagine how radical the rupture was between the way Europeans thought about democracy before the fall of the Berlin Wall and how they thought about it afterwards. In the first Monthly Lecture of 2010 on “Democracy and Dissatisfaction” Ivan Krastev explained how the revolutions of 1989 as a collective European experience have remade Europe’s political culture.



Modern European history has been strongly shaped by a deeply rooted ambivalence towards democracy as a political regime. The revolutionary upheavals of the long nineteenth century (a century whose quietude is overrated in many conventional accounts) and the collapse of democracies during the interwar period made many Europeans skeptical about the merits of mass political participation. The short, unhappy life of Germany’s Weimar Republic and its tragic death—“part murder, part wasting sickness, part suicide,” in Peter Gay’s famous phrase—left a lasting imprint on European attitudes towards democracy. The association between Weimar democracy and the fascist violence that grew within it and that ultimately rose to power on Weimar’s carcass remained strong in the minds of many.

One cannot understand the political experience of twentieth-century Europe without grasping the fear of the revolutionary masses that underlay so much of that experience. “We tend to see revolution as in theory a movement to bring liberation,” wrote Raymond Aron in the 1970s. “But the revolutions of the twentieth century seem rather to promote servitude, or at least authoritarianism.” On the continent, liberalism and democracy did not go together. Liberals often found themselves waging a two-front struggle as they fought against both the proponents of authoritarian stability and the

advocates of radical (populist) democracy.

Even as “democracy” was Western Europe’s battle cry in its confrontation with Soviet communism, mistrust of democracy was part of the Cold War European consensus. Democracies were regarded as weak and unstable. They were ineffective in combating destructive enemies. They were too idealistic and too slow to act when it came to making tough decisions about the use of vi-

torical accident, a brief parenthesis that is closing before our eyes.” What made him so pessimistic was his conviction that democracy receives too little credit for its achievements and, at the same time, must pay an infinitely higher price for its failures and mistakes than its adversaries do for theirs. In short, on the very eve of the “velvet revolutions,” democratic regimes continued to be perceived as weak as inadvertently self-destructive, if not outright sui-

*What democracies do offer
dissatisfied citizens is the satisfaction
of having the right to do something
about their dissatisfaction*

olence. Democratic decision making was short-sighted, divisive, and prone to demagoguery and manipulation. Meritocracy, not democracy, was the ideal of Europe’s educated classes. Meritocracy and liberal rationalism—not democracy—lay at the foundations of the project of European integration.

In 1983—just six years before the Wall was torn down—Jean-François Revel articulated the fears of the Cold War generation when he wrote that “democracy may, after all, turn out to have been a his-

torical accident. It took the revolutions of 1989 to erase the Weimar experience. The night of November 9, 1989, when joyous crowds of Germans decisively breached the Berlin Wall, served at last to suppress memories of the November evening exactly 51 years earlier, when the atrocities of the Nazis’ anti-Semitic *Kristallnacht* alerted the world that the “wall” between civilization and barbarism was falling in the heart of Europe. In the mind of many Europeans, the revolutions of 1989 succeeded at last in reconciling the experience of revolution

with the ideal of liberal democracy. The revolutions of 1989 made manifest to Western Europeans the attractiveness of their own much-deprecated political model.

But by declaring democracy the normal state of society and restricting democratization to an imitation of the institutions and practices of developed democracies, Central Europe’s ideology of normality failed to give rein to the creative tensions that do so much to supply democracy with its flexibility and endurance. The tensions between democratic majoritarianism and liberal constitutionalism, for example, are not transitional “growing pains,” but lie at the very heart of democratic politics. These tensions cannot be wished away or simply resolved; instead, societies must learn to live with them and turn them to good use. Democracy is a federation whose constituent republics constantly squabble over and renegotiate their shared borders. Democracy is a self-correcting regime that is sustained by its own contradictions.

Democracy’s advantage over authoritarianism lies not in some inherent democratic ability to offer citizens instant gratification of their needs and desires, but rather in democracy’s superior institutional and intellectual readiness to cope with the dissatisfaction produced by its citizens’ choices. Whereas before 1989 democracies tended to take people’s dissatisfaction for granted,

the normality-obsessed democracies of post-1989 Europe tend to view such dissatisfaction as baffling and unintelligible.

In fact, it is democratic societies’ capacity to overcome their own failings and learn from experience that gives these societies their deepest and most durable appeal. By defining democracy as the natural state of society while limiting the sanctioned policy choices available to the public, the post-1989 consensus paradoxically undercut this very basic advantage of democratic regimes. Democracies are not and cannot be “satisfaction machines.” They do not produce good governance the way a baker turns out doughnuts. (Good governance is a welcome but far from inevitable product of democratic governance.) What democracies do offer dissatisfied citizens is the satisfaction of having the right to do something about their dissatisfaction. In this sense, doubts about democracy itself are critically necessary for democracy’s capacity to survive, for without dissatisfaction there is no learning from experience. Thus the most problematic aspect of 1989’s historical legacy may turn out to be its unrestrained enthusiasm for democracy. ◀

Ivan Krastev is Chair of the Board of the Centre for Liberal Strategies in Sofia and Editor-in-Chief of *Foreign Policy Bulgaria*. Currently he is Visiting Fellow at the IWM. You can read more by Ivan Krastev in his *World Affairs* blog “Footnote:” www.worldaffairsjournal.org/new/blogs/krastev

After Orange Ukraine

BY MYKOLA RIABCHUK

Ukraine is neither a “failed state” nor is its transition process a “success story.” It is a story of “muddling through,” writes Mykola Riabchuk. Still, even after the Orange Revolution, the leading class plays with the rules rather than by the rules. Viktor Yanukovych, who made a remarkable comeback in the recent elections, is not likely to change the game.



Photo: Adidal About-Chamat

The sarcastic formula “muddling through” to describe Ukraine’s post-communist transition was employed for the first time by Alexander Motyl in his 1997 article “Making Sense of Ukraine.”^[1] What he meant by his quip was the lack of coherent, consistent and comprehensive reforms in a country that, despite expectations, has certainly not become a success story of the post-communist transition. Viktor Yanukovych’s recent comeback as the new leader of Ukraine gives little cause for hope for any major reforms in politics or the economy, and even less so in the judiciary. Neither his previous record nor his first steps in office signal any desire, skill or will to do the homework the Europeans and pro-European Ukrainians would like to see gradually completed.

This does not mean, however, that he will abandon pro-European rhetoric and place his country in Moscow’s orbit. Such a move is neither in his personal interests nor in the interests of Ukrainian business and the political class. The main reason for this is not only the much higher attractiveness of the West, but also the very low attractiveness of the Kremlin (to put it mildly). However “pro-Russian” the leaders of neighboring countries are, sooner or later they come to understand that it is not enough. Moscow will never be satisfied with any concessions the Ukrainians make or friendship they offer, because Moscow does not

need friendship and partnership in the “near abroad.” It needs full obedience. This is why neither Voronin, nor Shevardnadze, nor Kuchma, nor even Lukashenka, despite their hopes and intentions, have been good enough for the Kremlin.

Most likely is that Yanukovych will pursue a Kuchma-style “multi-vector” policy internationally and a “Kuchma-lite” policy domestically. It will seem “lite” not because Yanukovych is any more committed to the rule of law, or any less in-

clined to authoritarianism, but because presidential authority is much weaker today than under Kuchma—due to the constitutional amendments made in 2004. Thus, for the time being, the Byzantine intrigues at the top are likely to continue and a dysfunctional democracy is likely to persist. Since this odd equilibrium cannot last forever, however, sooner or later we may expect either a sort of authoritarian consolidation, or democratic reform, the latter rather unlikely without personal and factional changes in the political scene.

Paradoxically, the majority of the Ukrainian political class and population at large seem to recognize that the vicious paradigm of social under-development and institutional dysfunction should be changed, and that the Hobbesian war of all-against-all should give way to the rule of law, social trust and responsibility. On the other hand, low social trust makes any changes difficult, since there is no consensus that can be translated into collective action. Any social agent who dares

to give up the old model of behavior and accept the new one, i.e. to play by the rules rather than with the rules, risks being the main loser if nobody follows suit. The situation resembles the final episode of Tarantino’s “Reservoir Dogs:” three gangsters keep their guns against each other’s heads and cannot put their weapons down, since the first to do so will perish.

An outsider with an even bigger gun might provide a solution. In political science this is called third-party enforcement. It was the EU that played such a role in the

equally fractious political environment of the central eastern European states, providing the local elites with strong incentives for consolidation and eventually carrying out the necessary guidance and arbitrage. In the post-communist Balkans, the EU was apparently not enough, which was why NATO help was needed. In the case of Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia, the West keeps a low profile while Russia is basically free to play its traditional role of spoiler.

Ukraine’s identity problems and societal divisions not only facilitate this spoiling activity, making the country vulnerable vis-à-vis external influences and manipulations. They complicate democratic transition in multiple ways. First, they lower social trust and undermine social cohesion; second, they secure the survival of bad politicians who otherwise would have been defeated in the next election, but instead are rescued by the electorate as “our bad guys;” and third, by the same token, they encourage the “siege mentality” and limit the scope and agenda of political and ideological discussions. Indeed, they “inject identity politics into everything, making compromise difficult.”^[2] They support quasi-war conditions that make sober decisions and reasonable behavior an onerous task.

This does not, of course, overshadow other factors of instability, such as personal rivalry, the incompetence and irresponsibility of politicians, the lack of civility of the business class, a weak rule of law and dysfunctional institutions, an illiberal political culture and an immature civil society. However, of all these factors, the identity split and societal divisions are the only ones that hamper the consolidation not only of democracy, but also of authoritarianism. The 2004 Orange Revolution was society’s response to the regime’s attempt to tighten the screws, to curtail civic freedoms and to firmly establish Russian-style “managed democracy.” It was an excellent opportunity to change the entire paradigm of development—if Ukrainian politicians had been more responsible, society more mature, and Western Europeans less parochial. If the miracle did not happen, at least it brought the country back onto the evolutionary track interrupted in 1999 by Leonid Kuchma, who manipulated elections and dispossessed Ukrainians of their legitimate political choice. Again, as throughout the 1990s, Ukrainians have the government they deserve, elected in free and fair elections, so that they can blame nobody but themselves for the choice. They have a highly com-

petitive and pluralistic political environment and a vibrant independent mass media—fairly rare things in the post-Soviet space.

Now, Ukrainians need to learn how to make the government competent, responsible, and accountable. They need to learn what Western European barons and oligarchs learned long ago: that politics is not a zero-sum game, that the winner does not take all, and that aims do not necessarily justify means. They need to learn how to decouple de-Sovietization from de-Russification in public discourse and policies, and how to overcome the contradiction between the need for reform and the need for consolidation.

It may take a lot of time and definitely effort. Actually, there are no examples of effective consolidation of democracy without external help, with the classic exceptions of the US and some Western European countries. But it took at least two centuries. Whether Ukraine has so much time, given the challenges it faces, is very doubtful. Whether the diffusion of Western ideas and practices, combined with the efforts of domestic actors, will bring radical change is also questionable. It is likely, however, that such efforts will, sooner or later, attract the attention of Westerners and cause them to adopt more favorable and engaged attitudes. They must understand that Ukraine is not a failed state, as Kremlin propagandists claim and dream about, but rather a “permanent entity, a state with legitimate interests [...] It might be easier to deal with Russia if Ukraine did not exist, but Ukraine does exist and will not go away.”^[3]

Two decades after Ukraine’s independence, the country’s choice is definitely not between being a “failed state” and a “success story,” but between being a “success story” and “muddling through” in the way that post-Soviet politicians, until now, do best. <

^[1] First published in Ukrainian in *Krytyka* (2/1997) and in English in the *Harriman Review* (Winter 1998).

^[2] Karatnycky, A. and Motyl, A., “The Key to Kiev,” in: *Foreign Affairs* 3/2009: 109.

^[3] *Ibid.*: 118.

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The Female Face of Revolution

BY HAIDEH DARAGAH

Women were on the frontline in the recent demonstrations in Iran. Yet their revolt against the Tehran regime was not only a result of the alleged fraud in the presidential elections, but of thirty years of suppression, humiliation and frustration.

The Freedom of Women is the Measure of Freedom in Every Society!" This was one of the slogans of Iranian women during the largest and the longest lasting protest demonstration of women in modern feminist history, thirty-one years ago on March 8, 1979. The demonstration, which lasted for six days, was entirely spontaneous. The night before, various groups of women had been engaged in last minute preparations for the first open celebration of the day, which for decades had been held on a small scale, and mostly in the home. It was started in the 1920s and 1930s by cells of women who ran women's magazines and who demanded education for girls.* On the evening news of March 7, the Ayatollah Khomeini, back from Paris after the February 11 uprising that had toppled the US-backed dictatorship of the Shah, had declared that women should go to work veiled—in his words, they should stop going to work "naked." His statement confirmed the misgivings harbored by many sectors of Iranian society, women in particular, towards the clerical leadership of the revolution. This declaration turned the celebrations of March 8 into a protest demonstration. This unique act of defiance is documented by the film *Year Zero*, made by the journalists of the Movement for Liberation of Women in France, and the book *Going to Iran* by the American feminist literary Kate Millet, who gave a lecture in Tehran in connection with one of the March 8 meetings. Other slogans included, "We Did Not Make A Revolution to Go Backwards," and "At the Dawn of Freedom, Women's Rights Are Missing." History shows that Iranian women sensed and stood up to the horrors of the Islamic state, based on Sharia law, before any other sector of Iranian society.

What followed is common knowledge. Khomeini had to back down, but the victory of Iranian women over the Islamic Republic waned with the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war. Khomeini called the war a blessing, the existence of an external enemy allowing the newly-installed government to strengthen its power base and to justify the consolidation of its organs of oppression. The attack on Kurdistan following demands for autonomy started immediately, while the universities were closed down to facilitate the Islamization of higher education and the purge of students and lecturers. Yellow, Islamic unions were set up to counter the nascent independent workers' organizations. As for women, compulsory veiling was



imposed, this time gradually, starting with the few female staff in the Iranian army, mostly office workers, and ending with women in all public places. Special "morality police forces" controlled the appearance and conduct of women at the entrance to and inside the workplace, and was authorized to arrest and punish women on the street, enforcing the veil in the most brutal of ways. These ranged from pinning the veil onto women's foreheads to rubbing powdered glass onto the lips of women found wearing lipstick. Legisla-

tion was passed to enforce the Sharia family code; this lowered the marriageable (and punishable) age of girls to nine and gave men the right to one-sided divorce, with the woman losing custody over her children. Polygamy for men was approved, allowing four permanent and an indefinite number of "temporary" wives. For the first time in Iranian history, "adultery" by women became punishable by stoning, with stones not too big to kill immediately and not too small not to kill. Women were legally declared semi-persons, with the state setting blood money (a com-

and in prisons. Neda Agha Soltan, whose picture recently appeared on a stamp issued by the Dutch government, was walking with her father when she was shot down. She was one of many women to have been punished for defying the rules of sexual segregation. One of the most striking features of the Iranian women's movement is the participation of men. Amir Aliyaghoob, a young male university student who two years ago received a one-year prison sentence for collecting signatures in favor of the abolition of discriminatory laws against women, said that this was a small price to pay for the principle of equality. In September 2009, the Islamic Republic tried to humiliate a male student activist by publishing a picture of him wearing a veil, claiming he had tried to escape in women's clothes after giving an anti-government talk. In response, thousands of men published pictures of themselves wearing veils, saying that they identified with the imprisoned student. Many captions to the pictures read: "I also am a woman!" Optimists believe that what has been going on in Iran since June 2009 is primarily a women's revolution. Whether or not this is true, the correlation between the freedom of women and the level of freedom in society has never been more emphatically proven than in Iran. Political Islam grew after the takeover of the Islamists in Iran in 1979. The success of the ongoing Iranian social movement might have implications for the entire Islamic world, and not only in relation to the situation of women. It could set an example to democratic movements and pose a threat to dictatorial regimes throughout Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. ◀

istence of the Islamic state. The resistance to the compulsory veil never stopped, ranging from leaving a streak of hair out of increasingly colorful head covers defying the prescribed colors of black, navy, brown and grey, to transforming the official loose Islamic overall and pants into tight, tasteful tops and trousers. Women flooded the universities and institutions of higher education and now constitute 63 per cent of all students; the state has introduced a quota system to bring more young men in. A campaign against discriminatory laws against women began in the wake of a street celebration on March 8, 2005. Women activists published a pamphlet pointing out how and where women's rights were being curbed, going from house to house and workplace to workplace explaining and asking for signatures, their goal being to get one million signatures. Women started up cultural centers and feminist libraries, as well as websites directed at women with access to computers. They debated feminist theory and women's rights internationally as well as in relation to the specific situation of Iran. Instead of the traditional, hierarchical form of organization, they devised a method of networking that made them less vulnerable and allowed local independence and creativity.

This method was adopted by the broader opposition to the regime in the post-2009 election demonstrations. Women played a decisive role in defying sexual apartheid by protesting alongside men and by confronting state violence on the streets

The success of the ongoing Iranian social movement might have implications for the entire Islamic world

thousands of women into prostitution. Today, in Tehran alone, a conservative estimate puts the number of prostitutes at three hundred thousand, the age range, according to the government's own estimate, starting at about twelve years old. The reaction of the Iranian women's movement, which first made its mark with the demonstrations on International Women's Day thirty-one years ago, to this state-instigated oppression of women has developed into a social force and a formidable threat to the very ex-

istence of the Islamic state. The resistance to the compulsory veil never stopped, ranging from leaving a streak of hair out of increasingly colorful head covers defying the prescribed colors of black, navy, brown and grey, to transforming the official loose Islamic overall and pants into tight, tasteful tops and trousers. Women flooded the universities and institutions of higher education and now constitute 63 per cent of all students; the state has introduced a quota system to bring more young men in. A campaign against discriminatory laws against women began in the wake of a street celebration on March 8, 2005. Women activists published a pamphlet pointing out how and where women's rights were being curbed, going from house to house and workplace to workplace explaining and asking for signatures, their goal being to get one million signatures. Women started up cultural centers and feminist libraries, as well as websites directed at women with access to computers. They debated feminist theory and women's rights internationally as well as in relation to the specific situation of Iran. Instead of the traditional, hierarchical form of organization, they devised a method of networking that made them less vulnerable and allowed local independence and creativity.

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* According to a report from the London Times in 1909, the demand for the right of women to vote and to be elected was proposed by a delegate to the first Iranian Constitutional Assembly, but was rejected and even wiped out of the minutes of the meeting by pressure from clerical participants.

Haideh Daragahi is an Iranian journalist and women's activist. She was a Professor of English Literature at Tehran University and left the country shortly after Khomeini took power. She has lived in Sweden since 1984 and was Guest at the IWM from January to March 2010.

Myths of Neutrality

BY ARNE RUTH

In Sweden and Switzerland, complicity in the Holocaust was for a long time ignored. It was only as a result of media attention from abroad that national myths of neutrality gave way to admissions of responsibility.



Photo: Linda & Colin McKie / iStockphoto

At the end of WWII, Sweden and Switzerland were accused of using their neutrality for enrichment and not, as they had maintained, as a way of defending universal values. Switzerland faced the particular charge of unconditionally accepting to keep looted gold from Germany in its banks.

While supposedly embracing the liberal universe at the national level, Sweden and Switzerland chose different roads. The latter, by remaining the center of financial transactions, presented itself as the guardian of the world's free market, which it had pretended to be against all odds during the war. Claiming special entitlement to another universal value, national sovereignty, Switzerland refused to enter the emerging structure of transnational bodies such as the United Nations. Its separateness apparently gave Switzerland a special role as the central venue for noncommittal international diplomacy. Sweden took the opposite road to universality: its foreign policy objectives were symbolically channeled through the UN and other new global structures.

In the post-war negotiations between the Allies and the Swiss government on the handling of German assets and looted gold, Swiss politicians defined the issue as a case of David versus Goliath, a struggle to uphold the sanctity of private property against infringements by the Great Powers. The irony of a singularly narrow-minded definition of Swiss national interest proclaiming

to be the embodiment of universal norms only became apparent to the world five decades later, when the World Jewish Congress and the Eizenstat report confronted the Swiss authorities on the matter of wartime Jewish property.

As for Sweden, after the war it had been easier to prod officials into admitting an element of guilt in the commerce with the Third Reich. Dean G. Acheson, US State Secretary from 1949 to 1953, reflected in his memoirs that "if the Swedes were stubborn, the Swiss were the cube of stubbornness." Facing the Nazi gold

renmatt and Max Frisch, continually used their talents to describe a counter-universe, an alternative to hypocrisy masquerading as objectivity. Frisch evoked a storm of protest with an article entitled "Unbewältigte schweizerische Vergangenheit" (Unresolved Swiss History), published in the weekly *Die Weltwoche* in March 1966. In it, he accused the younger generation of authors of failing to deal with the twelve years of Hitler's rule and brought the contemporary treatment of refugees into the discussion. He touched a national nerve. From then on, a small

Semitism and collaboration. These books share a basic understanding of what it was all about: invisible, multinational networks of influential people for whom trading with the Third Reich was, at least for a while, business as usual.

In Sweden, a general consensus, formed a year or two after the war and lasting until the late 1980s, limited the terms of national discussion on war issues. Unlike in Switzerland, the number of major literary works dealing with Sweden's moral responsibility during the war is very limited. Fiction dealing with the Holocaust experience was almost entirely written by Swedes with a Jewish background—Peter Weiss is the most significant example. The same holds true of historical research. The first book dealing with Sweden and its relation to the Holocaust was written by an American historian, Steven Koblik, and published in 1987. But it was the pamphlet by Swedish journalist Maria-Pia Boëthius, which appeared in 1989, that has started a process of revision of established positions. Boëthius strongly attacked the common sense among Swedish historians and was immediately called over-zealous. In the course of the 1990s, however, an interpretation of Swedish neutrality more in line with Boëthius' position began to emerge among historians. A significant sign of this change is that Professor emeritus Stig Ekman, who led a massive, government-funded research project on Sweden's war his-

The Nazi gold issue became a worldwide media controversy

question in the late 1990s, Swedish officials tried to avoid confrontation. With Prime Minister Göran Persson's initiation of a massive education project on the Holocaust at the end of the 1990s, Sweden, in the eyes of the world, was now dealing openly and conscientiously with moral issues.

But there are some interesting differences between the two countries in how the hidden elements in their history were treated at the public level in earlier decades. Switzerland's two most prominent post-war author-playwrights, Friedrich Dür-

stream of independent investigation was set in motion that turned into a flood of books in the late 1980s and early 1990s. This latter wave included historical research of great significance, such as Pierre Th. Braunschweig's *Geheimer Draht nach Berlin* (Secret Line to Berlin, 1989). Virtually everything that fed the frenzy about the gold transactions was described by the journalist Werner Rings in his book *Raubgold aus Deutschland* (Looted Gold from Germany, 1985). Rings also published a popular history of the war period that dealt explicitly with the controversial issues of refugee policy, anti-

tory in the 1970s, has openly regretted the lack of moral perspective in the definition of the subject: "Ultimately, indignation about Sweden's accommodation of Germany must be seen in the light of the fact of Swedish collaboration with the regime responsible for the Holocaust." Some fifty years after the Holocaust ended, young historians started to deal with how it affected Sweden. The fact that, for at least three decades, Swedish historians totally neglected the study of Holocaust issues is now itself a subject of analysis. This is an extraordinary case of insularity during a period in which the Holocaust was established internationally as a major field of contemporary history.

The Nazi gold issue rocked the boat in both countries and became a worldwide media controversy. It was effective because confrontation came from the outside: politicians in Sweden and Switzerland were forced by international pressure to face the issue. Cross-border discussion of the Holocaust has affected occupied countries as well. In general terms, post-war nationhood was built on myths of general resistance. In France, given the complicity of the Vichy government, the conflict between a heroic national mythology and the actual facts is evident. It took the effort of an American historian, Robert Paxton, to force the French establishment to start dealing with the past.

In my opinion, a meaningful citizenship in Europe must include the right and duty of everyone, regardless of nationality and background, to treat rights issues on a transnational basis. Provocation across borders is necessary to build an element of real universality into the European project. The comment by Swiss author Adolf Muschg in relation to the Nazi gold controversy catches the core of the matter: "It was long ago: now we are paying for the sleepless nights that we didn't have because of Auschwitz; now we are overtaken by all the concerns that never affected us in relation to the building of Europe, drowsing as we were in the sleep of the self-righteous, a state of mind where tears turned dry." <

Arne Ruth is an essayist and journalist. He is founding chairman of the Swedish Rushdie Committee, worked for the Swedish Radio and Television Corporation and served as Editor-in-Chief for culture at *Dagens Nyheter* until 1998. From January to March 2010 he was Milena Jesenská Fellow at the IWM.

Mao's Starving China

BY EWA RZANNA

It was not “three years of natural disasters” as officials claimed. The Great Chinese Famine was a truly man-made catastrophe. Up to 36 million people died of starvation as a result of Mao’s Great Leap Forward between 1958 and 1961. In a recent book, a retired Xinhua news agency journalist provides an in-depth analysis of the tragedy that is still a taboo in China.

Throughout the three and a half thousand years of its recorded history, the province of Henan has had more than its fair share of natural disasters. The proximity of the notoriously unpredictable Yellow River and the dependence on weather-sensitive crops to feed its vast farming population caused famine and plague occur with an almost “natural” regularity. Slack government or corruption would sometimes aggravate the consequences of natural catastrophes; rarely, however, could human action alone be blamed for their incidence. What distinguished the calamities that befell Henan in the second half of the 20th century was not only their high death toll, but also the fact that nothing other than human action was to blame for them.

This is the conclusion that can be drawn from the story told by Yang Jisheng, a retired Xinhua News Agency reporter, whose most recent book, *Tombstone. A History of the Great Famine in China in the 1960s*, opens with a section on Henan. This is an important book in many respects. First, it provides the most up-to-date (though, due to political constraints, still incomplete) account of the Great Famine in China, a little known and distressingly under-researched incident of mass starvation that occurred in the wake of the Great Leap Forward. The material presented in the book is based on ten years of extensive research, during which Yang studied documents in twelve provincial archives, conducted more than one hundred interviews, and consulted a substantial number of existing works on the subject by both Chinese and Western historians. However, his book’s merits not only derive from privileged access to the huge pool of data stored in Chinese archives and individual memories. What distinguishes *Tombstone* as a historical study is above all the author’s ability to put the meticulously recorded facts and figures in a broader context of provincial, national and even international politics, thus underscoring their intricate connections.

The province of Henan, which is among the most populous in China, covers a large swath of agricultural land on the southern bank of the Yellow River. Inhabited by ethnic Han Chinese, this predominantly rural, relatively poor region was traditionally a stronghold of the Communist Party. The prefecture of Xin Yang is located in the south of the province. At the end of the 1950s, Xin Yang was comprised of two cities, Xin Yang Shi and Zhu



Photo: Antonio D'Albore / Stockphoto

Ma Dian, and eighteen rural counties, which altogether covered an area of twenty-eight thousand square kilometers and were home to eight and a half million people. During the nine months between October 1959 and June 1960, this rustic part of the country became the scene of the infamous “Xin Yang Incident.” This innocuous name denotes the death by starvation of one million rural residents of the prefecture, approximately one third of all the lives claimed by the famine in the province of Henan. The official history of the Great Famine began here,

Peasants were left with grain supplies that would last them only four months

even though Xin Yang was neither the first, nor the only place where mass starvation occurred. Here, however, it received exposure for the first time.

Just a year and a half before, Xin Yang enjoyed a very different kind of notoriety. The first People’s Commune was established in Chayashan Village, Suiping County, on April 20, 1958, elevating Henan to the position of a nationwide leader in collectivization. Even if local cadres at first displayed a certain restraint in informing their superiors of improbably high crop yields, pressure from

above and the fierce rivalry between communes quickly made over-reporting a mandatory practice for everyone. Due to excellent weather conditions, the harvest in 1958 was good. The situation changed in 1959. There was not enough rain in the summer, crop yields were much lower, but grain quotas were higher than ever before. Although the prefecture cadres knew as early as June that the drought had diminished crops, their only reaction was to organize a political campaign run under the blatantly absurd slogan: “Severe drought, excellent crops.” The

province officials were aware of the imminent crisis in Xin Yang and for a while, encouraged by what seemed like wavering in Beijing’s stance on collectivization, debated politically acceptable ways of reducing the quotas imposed on the prefecture. However, when the news of the outcome of the Conference of Lushan—an informal meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in which the “successes” of the Great Leap Forward were discussed—reached the province in early August 1959, the Party leaders in Henan realized that they would have to surpass the grain acquisition goals set the pre-

vious year. Even though the grain production in Xin Yang decreased by 46.1 per cent compared to 1958, the local cadres reported crop yields ten times higher than those actually collected. As a result, peasants were left with grain supplies that would last them only four months. As early as October 1959, 3751 communal dining halls providing meals for 370,000 people closed due to lack of provisions.

Confronted with dramatic food shortages, the commune cadres launched a vigorous campaign against the alleged hiding of crops. It consisted of routine searches and confiscations, “struggle sessions” (a Maoist method to humiliate and persecute “class enemies”) and various forms of mental and physical torture. Yet however brutal, the campaign did not solve the basic problem. After dining halls in some parts of Xin Yang prefecture had stayed closed for eighty days, people began to die in great numbers. Not much was done to help them. It was only in the spring of 1960 that village leaders mobilized survivors to drag the corpses from the fields to large pits.

In terms of the number of victims, Huai Dian People’s Commune in Guang Shan County was the most affected. In the summer of 1959, the members of this commune reported a grain harvest of 23,050 tons. Actually, they collected only 5955 tons. As a consequence, the commune, which in the summer of 1959 numbered 36,691 peasants, lost 12,134

of its members by June 1960. Additionally, 381 commune members were accused of intentionally damaging the corpses of 134 people—a euphemism for cannibalism. Other communes in the area were hit almost as hard. An official report drafted in the spring of 1960 confirmed that from the previous October to April that year, 436,882 people in Xin Yang prefecture starved to death, at the same time admitting that the actual death toll was probably even higher.

Henan was one of twelve provinces hit particularly hard by the famine. The others were: Sichuan, Guizhou, Anhui, Shandong, Gansu, Qinghai, Yunnan, Guangxi, Hunan, Hubei and Liaoning. Serious incidences of starvation were also recorded in Jiangsu, Jilin, Guangdong, Zhejiang and Hebei. In temporal terms, too, the famine was a dispersed phenomenon. It first occurred in winter 1958, while the last recorded cases were in the late spring of 1961. The only province where the famine continued throughout the entire three-year period was Sichuan. This was also where the largest number of communities were affected, which helps explain why Sichuan’s death toll of 10–12 million was the highest in the country. Although lower in absolute terms, human losses in Gansu were even more acute, totaling one million in a 13 million province. On the other hand, what made the outbreak of hunger in Henan appear so drastic was its extreme concentration in time and space. The “Xin Yang Incident” concerned just four counties and claimed the lives of one million people in just six months. The total number of victims of the Great Famine is difficult to establish. Official estimates put the figure at 17 million, though Yang, after a thorough analysis of all available data, believes it was closer to 36 or 37 million. Hence the title of his book: *Tombstone*. ◀

Ewa Rzana holds a Ph.D. in Sociology and is enrolled in Far East Studies at Jagiellonian University, Cracow. She received scholarships by Taiwan National University and the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy. From September 2009 to February 2010 she was Junior Visiting Fellow at the IWM.

Fellows and Guests 01–03 2010

Paul Dragos Aligica

Robert Bosch Visiting Fellow
(October 2009–March 2010)

Senior Research Fellow, Faculty Fellow, James Buchanan Center for Political Economy, George Mason University, Arlington

From “South-Eastern Europe” to “The Black Sea Region.” A Study of Social and Institutional Construction of Economic Regionalization

Maren Behrensen

Junior Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in Philosophy, Boston University

Justifying Exclusion—Political Membership and the Nation-State

Joshua Berson

Junior Visiting Fellow
(October 2009–March 2010)

Historian and Anthropologist, Philadelphia

The Ethnographic Production of Cultural/Spiritual Value

Christine Blättler

Lise Meitner Visiting Fellow
(August 2009–July 2011)

Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Potsdam; FWF-project leader

The Phantasmagoria as a Focus of Modernity. Genealogy and Function of a Philosophical Concept

Mateusz Borowski

Paul Celan Visiting Fellow
(December 2009–February 2010)

Adjunct Professor of Drama, Jagiellonian University, Krakow

Judith Butler: Antigone's Claim. Kinship Between Life and Death (English > Polish)

Antonio Ferrara

Junior Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Culture della materia, University of Naples “Federico II”

Europeans in the GULAG—Europeans Against the GULAG: the “Strangers” in the Soviet Camps and David Rousset's “Commission Internationale contre le régime concentrationnaire” (CICRC)

Bogdan Ghiu

Paul Celan Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Freelance translator, Bucharest

Pierre Bourdieu: Langage et pouvoir symbolique (French > Romanian)

Sorin Gog

Junior Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Assistant Professor of Sociology, Babes-Bolyai University Cluj

The Europeanisation of Eastern Christianity: Secularisation in Post-Socialist Romania and Bulgaria

Katrin Hammerstein

Junior Visiting Fellow
(October 2009–March 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in History, Ruprecht-Karls-University Heidelberg

Shared Past—Divided Memory? National Socialism in Memory Discourses and Constructions of Identity in the Federal Republic of Germany, the GDR and Austria

Vessela Hristova

Robert Bosch Junior Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in Political Science, Harvard University

Accommodating National Diversity in the Integration Process of the European Union

Asim Jusic

Robert Bosch Junior Visiting Fellow
(October 2009–March 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in Comparative Constitutional Law, CEU, Budapest

Comparative Legal Regulation of Religious Institutions: a Behavioral Law and Economics Approach

Ivan Krastev

Robert Bosch Visiting Fellow
(May 2009–August 2010)

Chair of the Board, Centre for Liberal Strategies, Sofia

The BRIC-Hiker's Guide to the New World Order

Grzegorz Krzywiec

Bronislaw Geremek Fellow
(September 2009–June 2010)

Adjunct/Research Associate of History, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw

Vienna's Impact on Polish Modern Antisemitism, 1883–1938

Hiroaki Kuromiya

Visiting Fellow (September 2009–June 2010)

Professor of History, Indiana University, Bloomington

Europe, the Soviet Union and Asia

Lois Lee

Junior Visiting Fellow
(March–May 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in Sociology, University of Cambridge

Religion in Relief. What Non-Religion and Not Religion Tell Us About Religion, and the Secular Age

Susanne Lettow

Visiting Fellow (March 2008–February 2011)

Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Paderborn; FWF-project leader

The Symbolic Power of Biology: Articulations of Biological Knowledge in “Naturphilosophie” around 1800

Andrew Roberts

Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Assistant Professor of Political Science, Northwestern University, Evanston

Does Social Inequality Lead to Political Inequality in Postcommunist Europe?

Avraham Rot

Junior Visiting Fellow
(October 2009–March 2010)

MA student of Sociology of Knowledge, Hebrew University, Jerusalem

European Identity and the Function of Boredom

Arne Ruth

Milena Jesenska Visiting Fellow (January–March 2010)

Publicist and Journalist, Stockholm

The “Handwoerterbuch des Grenz- und Auslandsdeutschtums” (1933) and Academic Collaboration

Ewa Rzana

Junior Visiting Fellow
(September 2009–February 2010)

MA Student in Far East Studies, Jagiellonian University, Cracow

The Other Secularity

Leonardo Schiocchet

Junior Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in Socio-Cultural Anthropology, Boston University

Being Palestinian Refugee in Lebanon: Social Referents, Ritual Tempo and Belonging in a Christian and a Muslim Palestinian Refugee Camp

Leo Schlöndorff

Junior Visiting Fellow
(April–September 2010)

Doktorand der Philosophie und Deutschen Philologie, Universität Wien; ÖAW DOC-Team Stipendiat

Abendländische Apokalyptik. Historische, literarische und mediale Aneignungsprozesse eines religiösen Motivs

Marci Shore

Visiting Fellow (August 2009–August 2010)

Assistant Professor of History, Yale University

The Self Laid Bare: Phenomenology, Structuralism, and Other Cosmopolitan Encounters

Elitza Stanoeva

Paul Celan Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in History, Humboldt University Berlin

Saskia Sassen: The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo (English > Bulgarian)

Michael Staudigl

Visiting Fellow (November 2007–October 2010)

Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Vienna; FWF-project leader

The Many Faces of Violence: toward an Integrative Phenomenological Conception

Katharina Steidl

Junior Visiting Fellow
(April–September 2010)

Doktorandin der Kunstgeschichte, Akademie der Bildenden Künste Wien; ÖAW DOC-Stipendiatin

Bilder des Schattens. Fotogramme zwischen Zufall, Berührung und Imagination

Ahmet S. Tekelioglu

Junior Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in Political Science, Boston University

International Politics of Umma in a Secular Europe? The Impact of Culturalist Arguments

Andrea Thuma

Junior Visiting Fellow
(March–August 2010)

Doktorandin der Politikwissenschaft, Universität Salzburg; ÖAW DOC-Stipendiatin

“Von dem Wunsch, die Welt bewohnbar zu machen...”: Hannah Arendt, globale Verantwortung und der öffentliche Raum

Varia

Losses

On April 10 a Polish government aircraft crashed near the city of Smolensk, Russia. It was taking a Polish delegation to a commemoration for the thousands of Polish officers murdered by forces of the Soviet secret police (NKVD) in 1940.

All 96 people on board were killed.

Among them were two people associated with the IWM: the Polish President **Lech Kaczyński**, who, when still Mayor of Warsaw, supported the first series of the Jozef Tischner Debates, organized by the IWM in cooperation with the University of Warsaw. He also held a highly considered speech at an IWM conference in Vienna a few years ago. The second was **Tomasz Merta**, Poland's Deputy Minister of Culture and National Heritage.

We grieve for them.

Krzysztof Michalski

Tomasz Merta, a junior fellow of the Institute in 1996, was one of the 96 people who perished when the Polish presidential airplane crashed near Smolensk on April 10. Tomek was one of the leading conservative political thinkers and activists of his generation. As a deputy minister in two governments, he devoted himself to the creation and preservation of Poland's monuments. Tomek's many friends in Poland and abroad included several past and present fellows of the Institute. He will be much missed.

Timothy Snyder

After a long, but patiently enduring illness, **Anita de Jonge** passed away at the age of 52. At the IWM she was initially active as Assistant to the Rector and until 2004 as Event Manager. Her cheerfulness and confidence will be missed very much.

The IWM Team

You can find the Travels & Talks on our website: www.iwm.at > Fellows

Congratulations

Endre Bojtár, Professor of Literary History at the Institute for Literature, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, co-editor of the journal *2000*, and Member of the Jury of the IWM's Paul Celan translation program, celebrates his 70th birthday in May 2010. We wish him all the best. Read his portrait in *Transit online*, written by his late friend **Rudolf Stamm**, a former correspondent of the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*: www.iwm.at/transit_online.htm

In the context of the Great Day of the University of Innsbruck on June 12, **José Casanova** will be awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Theology. José Casanova is one of the world's top scholars in the sociology of religion. He is a Professor at the Department of Sociology at Georgetown University, where he heads the Berkley Center's Program on Globalization, Religion and the Secular. In 1996 José Casanova was a Visiting Fellow at the IWM and since then has remained closely connected to the Institute—as lecturer, conferee and author for *Transit* and *IWMpost*. Congratulations!

Announcement

In 2011, for the first time, applications will be invited for the **Hannes Androsch Prize**. It is awarded for a scientific contribution to the design of a social security system that can withstand the dual threat of demographic development and financial market risk. The closing date for entries is January 31, 2011. For more information please refer to: www.oew.ac.at/hannesandroschprize

Growth

Anna Müller and Mirjam Garscha will be completing their internships at the IWM in June. Anna Müller is studying cultural studies and moved temporarily from Hamburg to Vienna specifically for her internship. She is particularly active in the departments Event Management and Fellowship Coordination. Mirjam Garscha is studying comparative literature and is mainly assisting in PR and the library.

The QUING research team has grown. **Lisa Wewerka** will support the team around Mieke Verloo at the IWM as a Junior Researcher.

In spring the IWM was happy to welcome probably its youngest ever “Fellow!” **Kalev Tristan Snyder** was born on April 8, 2010 and since then has been a regular visitor to the Institute with his proud parents Marci Shore and Timothy Snyder. Many members of the Institute have been able to meet the young guest—and the IWM is busy working on a “Baby Visiting Fellowship” for little Kalev.

[Transit online](http://www.iwm.at/transit_online.htm)

www.iwm.at/transit_online.htm

The “Brave New World” After Communism 1989: Expectations in Comparison

Edited by Rainer Gries and János Mátyás Kovács

Much of the history of the 1989 revolutions has been lost or remained hidden until now. A good part of it, however, can be retrieved by reconstructing the expectations (both elite and popular) prevailing at the time.

With contributions by:

Thomas Ahbe, Yaroslav Hrytsak, Michal Kopeček, Irina Papkova, Dieter Segert, Pawel Spiewak, Hans J. Misselwitz, Edelbert Richter, Alexander von Plato, Rainer Gries, Roumen Avramov, András Bozóki, János Mátyás Kovács, Ivan Krastev, Mladen Lazić.

New: Tereza Novotna, *Reflections on the Peaceful Revolutions in Eastern Europe: How Berlin and Prague Celebrated the 20th Anniversary of 1989*

Publications of Fellows and Guests

Paul Dragos Aligica
Robert Bosch Visiting Fellow
(October 2009–March 2010)

Elinor Ostrom, Nobel Prize in Economics 2009, in: *Economic Affairs*, 31 (2010)

Christine Blättler
Lise Meitner Visiting Fellow
(August 2009–July 2011)

Versucher im zweifachen Sinn. Zu Nietzsches experimenteller Epistemologie, in: Michael Gamber, Martina Wernli und Jörg Zimmer (Hg.), *„Wir sind Experimente: wollen wir es auch sein!“ Experiment und Literatur II, 1790–1890*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2010

Hiroaki Kuromiya
Visiting Fellow
(September 2009–June 2010)

Between Warsaw and Tokyo: Polish-Japanese Intelligence Co-operation, 1904–1944 (in Polish), with Andrzej Pepłoński, Toruń: Adam Marszałek, 2009

Ukraine in the Time of the “Great Terror:” 1936–1938 (in Ukrainian), co-edited with Iuryi Shapoval, Kyiv: Lybid', 2010

Once more on Polish-Japanese Co-operation in the Promethean Movement (in Polish), with Paweł Libera and Andrzej Pepłoński, in: *Zeszyty historyczne*, 170 (2009)

Lois Lee
Junior Visiting Fellow
(March–May 2010)

Mysterious Rituals of the Atheists, with Stephen Bullivant, in: *The Age*, March 15, 2010

The Big Idea: Where Do Atheists Come From?, (with Stephen Bullivant, in: *New Scientist*, March 3, 2010

Krzysztof Michalski
Rector

Dobro w oczach Boga, in: *Gazeta Wyborcza*, March 20/21, 2010

AAA. Chcesz wiedzieć jak żyć? Nie dzwoń, in: *Gazeta Wyborcza*, March 25, 2010

Birgit Sauer
Senior Researcher,
QUING project (October 2006–March 2011)

„Geschlechterverhältnisse und Politik“, in: Bettina Lösch und Andreas Thimmel (Hg.), *Kritische Politische Bildung. Ein Handbuch*, Schwalbach/Ts.: Wochenschrift Verlag, 2010

„Engendering Poulantzas oder: Sinn und Zweck feministischer Anrufung materialistischer Staatstheorie“, mit Gundula Ludwig, in: Alex Demirovic, Stefan Adolphs, Serhat Karakayali (Hg.), *Das Staatsverständnis von Nicos Poulantzas. Der Staat als gesellschaftliches Verhältnis*, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2010

Timothy Snyder
Permanent Fellow

War and Communism: History and Memory, Special issue of *East European Politics & Societies*, Vol. 24/1 (2010)

Rudý kníže. Utajený život habsburského arcivévody, Czech translation of *The Red Prince*, Prague: Beta, 2010

Czerwony Książę, Polish translation of *The Red Prince*, Warsaw: Świat Książki, 2010

“European Romance,” on Thomas Kamusella, The Politics of Language and Nationalism in Modern Central Europe, in: *Times Literary Supplement*, February 26, 2010

Gogol Haunts the New Ukraine, in: *The New York Review of Books*, March 25, 2010

Elitza Stanoeva
Paul Celan Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Sofia, in: Emily G. Makas and Tanja D. Conley (eds.), *Capital Cities in the Aftermath of Empires. Planning Central and Southeastern Europe*. London: Routledge, 2010

Michael Staudigl
Visiting Fellow
(November 2007–October 2010)

Der lange Schatten verfehlter Begegnung. Interkulturalität und das Problem der Gewalt, (auf Japanisch), in: *Gendai shisou. Revue de la pensée d'aujourd'hui*, (i. E.)

Das gewalttätige Subjekt. Beitrag zu einer Phänomenologie der Gewalt, in: Matthias Flatscher und Sophie Loidolt (Hg.), *Das Fremde im Selbst. Transformationen der Phänomenologie*, Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2010

Transit 39 (Sommer 2010), **Den Säkularismus neu denken**

Religion und Politik in Zeiten der Globalisierung

Es ist noch nicht lange her, dass die Säkularisierung als unvermeidliche Begleiterscheinung westlicher Modernisierung betrachtet wurde. Gegenwärtig scheint es jedoch, als hätte der Alte Kontinent einen Sonderweg eingeschlagen, während ringsherum die Religion unter den Bedingungen der Modernisierung keineswegs absterbt, sondern gedeiht. Es scheint also an der Zeit, Säkularismus zu überdenken – sowohl, um der wachsenden Vielfalt unserer Gesellschaften gerecht zu werden, als auch, um unser westliches Selbstverständnis kritisch zu überprüfen.

Die Beiträge dieses Heftes können gelesen werden als ein Plädoyer für einen reflektierten Säkularismus, der aus den Erfahrungen sowohl der eigenen Geschichte als auch der anderer Gesellschaften lernt, einen Säkularismus, der auf der Trennung von Staat und Religion beharrt, nicht aber die Ausgrenzung der Religion betreibt und seine historischen Wurzeln offenlegt. Untersucht werden auch die Antworten der Religionen auf die Säkularisierung sowie Säkularismusmodelle

anderer politischer Kulturen, die ein neues Licht auf die westlichen Traditionen der Differenzierung von Religiösem und Politischem werfen.

Mit Beiträgen von: Jean Baubérot, Rajeev Bhargava, Craig Calhoun, José Casanova, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Faisal Devji, Souleymane B. Diagne, David Martin, Tariq Modood, und Charles Taylor. Die Fotografien des Heftes stammen von Marika Asatiani.

Krzysztof Michalski (ed.)
Rozmowy w Castel Gandolfo



2 vols., Warsaw / Cracow: Centrum Myśli Jana Pawła II – Wydawnictwo Znak, 2010

This collection presents the contributions to the eight Castel Gandolfo Colloquia organized from 1983 to

1998 by the IWM and held at the Pope's summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, hosted by John Paul II. The colloquia brought together members of the IWM's Academic Advisory Board with scholars from various disciplines in order to discuss key issues of our times. This Polish edition follows the original German edition of the *Castelgandolfo-Gespräche* edited by Krzysztof Michalski and published with Klett-Cotta (Stuttgart 1985–2000).

Contributors include: Hans-Georg Gadamer, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Józef Tischner, Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde, Charles Taylor, Emmanuel Levinas, Paul Ricoeur, Reinhart Koselleck, Leszek Kołakowski, Bernard Lewis, Ernest Gellner, Ralf Dahrendorf and Ronald Dworkin.

IWM Junior Visiting Fellows' Conferences

Vol. 27:
Brian Marrin / Katrin Hammerstein (eds.)
Perspectives on Memory and Identity

With contributions by: Katrin Hammerstein, Asim Jusic, Andreea Maieran, Paulina Napierala, Avraham Rot, Ewa Rzana

The volume can be downloaded from our website: www.iwm.at > Publications

EURIAS Fellowships 2011/12 Call for Applications

The EURIAS fellowship program is a joint initiative of 14 European Institutes for Advanced Study, including the IWM. It offers 10-month fellowships to both early-career and experienced researchers, mainly from the humanities and social sciences. EURIAS fellows will work on projects of their own choice within the research focuses of the participating Institutes. The scheme is co-financed by the European Commission under its Seventh Framework Programme.

For further details: www.iwm.at/fellowships.htm

The deadline for applications is September 10, 2010.

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Den Säkularismus neu denken
Religion und Politik
in Zeiten der Globalisierung

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Obama's Post-American World

BY ROBERT KAGAN

Robert Kagan discussed Obama's first year in office on stage at Vienna's Burgtheater stating anew his famous phrase that Europe is Venus and America is Mars. However, something has changed. America's supremacy is threatened and for Kagan Obama is the architect of the arising "post-American" world. But instead of managing American decline the new President should prevent it, argues the US political analyst.

President Obama's policies toward Afghanistan and Iran—or lack thereof—have received more attention than any other issue during his first year in office. And with good reason. An American defeat in Afghanistan would throw an already dangerous region further into turmoil and severely damage America's reputation for reliability around the world. Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons would bring about a substantial shift in the regional power balance against the United States and its allies, spark a new round of global proliferation, provide a significant boost to the forces of Islamic radicalism, and bring the United States that much further under the shadow of nuclear terrorism. If Obama's policies were to produce a geopolitical doubleheader—defeat in Afghanistan and a nuclear-armed Iran—his historical legacy could wind up being a good deal worse than that of his predecessor. If he manages to make progress in Afghanistan and finds some way to stop Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, he will be remembered for saving the world from a dire situation.

Less noticed amidst these crises, however, has been a broader shift in American foreign policy that could have equally great and possibly longer-lasting implications. The Obama presidency may mark the beginning of a new era in American foreign policy and be seen as the moment when the United States finally turned away from the grand strategy it adopted after World War II and assumed a different relationship to the rest of the world.

The old strategy, which survived for six decades, rested on three pillars: military and economic primacy, what Truman-era strategists called a "preponderance of power," especially in Europe and East Asia; a global network of formal military and political alliances, mostly though not exclusively with fellow democracies; and an open trading and financial system. The idea, as Averell Harriman explained back in 1947, was to create "a balance of power preponderantly in favor of the free countries." Nations outside the liberal order were to be checked and, in time, transformed, as George F. Kennan suggested in his Long Telegram and as Paul Nitze's famous strategy document, NSC-68, reiterated. The goal, expressed by Harry Truman in 1947, was first to strengthen "freedom-loving nations" and then to "create the conditions that will lead eventually to personal freedom and happiness for all mankind."



Photo: Philipp Steinkeller

It is often said that Bill Clinton was the first post-Cold War president, but in many ways the Clinton presidency was devoted to completing the mission set out by the architects of America's post-World War II strategy. The National Security Strategy Document of 1996, as Derek Chollet and James Goldgeier observe in *America Between the Wars*, used the words "democracy" or "democratic"

of attempting to perpetuate American primacy, they are seeking to manage what they regard as America's unavoidable decline relative to other great powers. They see themselves as the architects of the "post-American" world. Although they will not say so publicly, in private they are fairly open about their policy of managed decline. In dealings with China, especially, administra-

home and greater hegemony within their respective regions.

This accommodation in turn has required a certain distancing from the post-World War II allies. Increasing cooperation with the two great powers would be difficult if not impossible if the United States remained committed to the old alliances which were, after all, originally designed to contain them—NATO in the case of Russia, and, in the case of China, the bilateral alliances with Japan, Australia, South Korea, the Philippines, and the new strategic partnership with India. Despite paying lip service to "multilateralism," the Obama administration does not intend to build its foreign policy around these alliances, which some officials regard as relics of the Cold War. The administration seeks instead to create a new "international architecture" with a global consortium of powers—the G-20 world.

This might seem like realism to some, because accommodating allegedly stronger powers is a hallmark of realist foreign policy. Henry Kissinger practiced it in the years of Vietnam and détente, when the United States seemed weak and the Soviet Union strong. But there is also in this approach a remarkable idealism about the way the world works that Kissinger would never have en-

dorsed. The Obama administration's core assumption, oft-repeated by the president and his advisers, is that the great powers today share common interests. Relations among them need "no longer be seen as a zero-sum game," Obama has argued. The Obama doctrine is about "win-win" and "getting to 'yes.'" The new "mission" of the United States, according to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, is to be the great convener of nations, gathering the powers to further common interests and seek common solutions to the world's problems. It is on this basis that the administration has sought to "reset" relations with Russia, embark on a new policy of "strategic reassurance" with China, and in general seek what Clinton has called a "new era of engagement based on common interests, shared values, and mutual respect." Administration officials play down the idea that great powers have clashing interests that might hamper cooperation. This extends to the question of ideology, where the administration either denies or makes light of the possibility that autocratic powers may have fundamentally different perceptions of their interests than democracies.

The new American posture they propose is increasingly one of neutrality. In order to be the world's "convener," after all, the United States

The Obama doctrine is about "win-win" and "getting to 'yes'"

more than 130 times. As Clinton's term ended, American foreign policy rested on the same three pillars as in the days of Truman and Acheson: the primacy of America, now cast as the "indispensable nation;" an expanding alliance of democratic nations; and an open economic order operating in line with the "Washington consensus."

Obama and his foreign policy team have apparently rejected two of the main pillars of this post-World War II strategy. Instead

tion officials believe they are playing from a hopelessly weak hand. Instead of trying to reverse the decline of American power, however, they are reorienting American foreign policy to adjust to it.

The new strategy requires, in their view, accommodating the world's rising powers, principally China and Russia, rather than attempting to contain the ambitions of those powers. Their accommodation consists in granting China and Russia what rising powers always want: greater respect for their political systems at

cannot play favorites, either between allies and adversaries, or between democrats and tyrants. A common feature of the administration's first year, not surprisingly, has been the slighting of traditional allies in an effort to seek better ties and cooperation with erstwhile and future competitors or adversaries. In Europe, American relations with Poland and the Czech Republic, and by extension other Eastern European nations, suffered when the administration canceled a missile defense deployment in deference to Russian demands. In the Middle East, rela-

continue to press Russia and China for reform—which was part of the old post-World War II strategy, continued under post-Cold War administrations. The Obama administration's new approach raises the question of whether the United States will continue to favor democracies, including allied democracies, in their disputes with the great power autocracies, or whether the United States will now begin to adopt a more neutral posture in an effort to get to "yes" with the great autocratic powers. In this new mode, the United States may be unhinging itself from the alliance

er powers. During the Cold War, Obama officials argue, the United States used its power to take sides. Now the Obama administration seeks to be a friend to all. Obama's foreign policy increasingly seems to rest on the supposition that other nations will act on the basis of what they perceive to be the goodwill, good intentions, moral purity, and disinterestedness of the United States. If other nations have refused to cooperate with the United States, it is because they perceive the United States as somehow against them, which, of course, it was. Obama is working to change that perception. From the outreach to Iran and the Muslim world, to the call for the elimination of all nuclear weapons, to the desire for a "reset" in relations with Russia, the central point of Obama's diplomacy is that America is now different. It is better. It is no longer choosing sides. And, therefore, it is time for other nations to cooperate.

Obama believes that his own story is a powerful foreign policy tool in this regard, that drawing attention to what makes him different, not only from Bush but from all past American presidents, will lead the world to take a fresh look at America and its policies and make new diplomatic settlements possible. He hopes that by displaying earnestness to change American practices, he can build an image of greater moral purity, and that this in turn will produce diplomatic triumphs that have hitherto eluded us.

The last president who sincerely pursued this approach was Woodrow Wilson. He, too, believed that the display of evident goodwill and desire for peace, uncorrupted by the base motives of national interest or ambition, gave him the special moral authority to sway other nations. His gifts to persuade, however, proved ephemeral. Not only the nations of Europe but his own United States proved more self-interested and less amenable to moral appeals. We will see whether Obama fares better. But, so far, the signs are not promising.

Indeed, as one watches the Obama administration launch its "new era of engagement," one wonders whether the Obama team can ever acknowledge that it has failed. And if it does acknowledge it, what then? Will the administration then realize that the world cannot so easily be made anew, that the old challenges remain, and that the best strategy may be closer to that which was pursued by so many presidents of different political inclinations since World War II: America as the world's "indispensable nation?" The question then will be not how to manage American decline, but how to prevent it. <

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- the US needs to aim to reduce its nuclear arsenal and improve relations with Russia;
- China should be not just an economic partner but also a geopolitical one; and
- there is a need for a real transatlantic partnership.

This list shows how the political map as seen from the United States has changed, and that America is regaining contact with reality. This is Obama's epistemological revolution. Are he and his administration equal to it?

Early in the last century, Theodore Roosevelt said how a politician should proceed: "Speak softly and carry a big stick, and you'll go far." I'm afraid that while Obama speaks wonderfully, he only has a small stick. The US is deep in crisis. For all the President's vast personal authority, the power of the US has not increased much. It is jokingly said that today the so-called Washington consensus, which in the liberal 1990s defined how countries should develop, has been replaced by the Beijing consensus, which relies on Confucianism, authoritarian power and a rapid pace of economic development. The myth of the liberal economy has collapsed, and for a large part of the world China has become the model for development.

Obama has undertaken some highly ambitious initiatives, but has not been in a position to carry anything through. As Kissinger said of him, he is like a chess player who has started games on six different chessboards but has not finished a single one. This involves the issues of Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, the Middle East, and relations with China and Russia. In none of these games are the players showing any desire at all to proceed according to America's will.

Obama is respected, but no one is going in the direction indicated by him. This is also true of Europe's conduct in Afghanistan. One of the reasons why Obama did not come to the EU-USA summit was that he is disappointed with Europe. Only a few countries—including Poland—are ready to take part in military operations. No one knows if NATO will survive Afghanistan.

Nowadays, multilateralism manifests itself negatively. Positive multilateralism relies on states, especially

the biggest ones, taking decisions to solve the world's most basic problems. Currently we are observing mutual blockage. There are various names for this in the literature—people talk of "globo-sclerosis," "decision paralysis," and "a drifting world." America's influence in the world is limited, and during the financial crisis in particular we have a paradoxical situation in which China is financing American democracy, and the Americans are jointly complicit in maintaining the authoritarian system in China.

I am worried about the next few years of Obama's presidency. He is experiencing failures in domestic politics and his reaction—appeals to populism and protectionism—threatens international relations. He has put forward an initiative for new regulations for the banking system without consulting anyone about it. His spontaneous response to America's internal problems puts a question mark over relations with other states. <

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The administration has de-emphasized the importance of democracy in the hierarchy of American interests

tions with Israel have suffered as a result of the Obama administration's pressure on the question of settlements, which was aimed at gaining better cooperation from the Palestinians and their Arab supporters. In Asia, relations with India, Japan, and Taiwan have suffered as a result of the administration's accommodating policy of "strategic reassurance" to China. In Latin America, Obama's apparent desire to improve relations with Hugo Chávez's Venezuela and Raúl Castro's Cuba have created insecurity among close allies like Colombia and anti-Chávez forces in Honduras and elsewhere.

The problem is that while the administration may not believe great power relations need to be "zero-sum," the reality is that throughout the world's contested regions, an American tilt toward former adversaries unavoidably comes at the expense of friends. If an aggrieved Russia demands that the West respect a sphere of influence in its old imperial domain, there is no "win-win" solution. Either Russian influence grows, and the ability of neighboring powers to resist it weakens. Or Russian ambitions for a sphere of special interest are checked, and Russia is unhappy. In Asia, the United States is either going to continue playing the role of balancer against Chinese power, or it is not. And if it is not, then American alliances in the region must suffer.

For a United States bent on "problem solving" with Russia and China, the easiest solution may be to accede to their desires, compelling those in their presumed spheres of influence to accede as well. This cannot help but alter America's relations with its allies.

As it happens, the vast majority of those allies happen to be democracies, while the great powers being accommodated happen to be autocracies. The Obama administration's apparent eschewing of the democracy agenda is not just a matter of abandoning the allegedly idealistic notion of democracy promotion in failed or transition states. It is not choosing not to promote democracy in Egypt or Pakistan or Afghanistan. And it is not just about whether to

structures it had erected in the post-World War II strategy.

In fact, as part of its recalibration of American strategy, the Obama administration has inevitably de-emphasized the importance of democracy in the hierarchy of American interests. Most have assumed this is a reaction to George W. Bush's rhetorical support for democracy promotion, allegedly discredited by the Iraq War. This may be part of the explanation. But the Obama administration's de-emphasis of democracy should also be understood as the direct consequence of its new geopolitical strategy—a sign of America's new international neutrality.

As part of what the Obama administration calls the "new era of engagement," the United States has also moved toward a more disinterested posture in the struggle between autocratic governments and their political opponents. This has certainly been the case in Iran, where the Obama administration has gone out of its way to avoid doing anything that could be construed as sympathizing with the Iranian opposition against the autocratic clerical regime. Indeed, Obama's strategy toward Iran has placed the United States objectively on the side of the government's efforts to return to normalcy as quickly as possible, rather than in league with the opposition's efforts to prolong the crisis. Engagement with Tehran has meant a studious disengagement from the regime's opponents. The same has been true in its dealings with China. Only in the case of Russia has the administration continued to voice some support for civil opposition figures. But increasingly autocratic trends in Russia have not been allowed to get in the way of the "reset."

All of this might seem to have the flavor of a new realism in American foreign policy. But, again, Obama's approach derives from an idealistic premise: that the United States can approach the world as a disinterested promoter of the common good, that its interests do not clash with those of the other great powers, and that better relations can be had if the United States demonstrates its good intentions to oth-



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The event known as Katyn began when the Red Army invaded Poland, along with the Wehrmacht, in September 1939. The Soviets took thousands of Polish officers prisoner and held them in the ruins of Orthodox monasteries. When these men were allowed to leave the camps, 70 years ago in April 1940, they expected that they would be returning home. Instead, they were taken to Kharkiv, or Tver, or Katyn. Over the course of a few days, 21,892 of these prisoners were shot in the base of the skull. The executioners were NKVD men, state policemen acting on the order of Stalin. One of them later recalled: “There was a clack, and that was the end.”

Katyn was part of a pattern of Soviet policies directed against the Polish nation. For ten years, Poles within the Soviet Union had been targets of particular repression. In 1930, as the Soviet state began to take control of agriculture—“collectivization”—Poles were the first subjects of Soviet ethnic cleansing. They were dispatched from the western Soviet Union to Kazakhstan, where they died in the tens of thousands as collectivization produced famine. Tens of thousands more Poles died in Stalin’s deliberate starvation of Ukraine in 1932 and 1933. During Stalin’s Great Terror of 1937–1938, more than 100,000 people were shot as putative spies for Poland. The baseless rationale for these mass executions was that Poland was planning an aggressive war against the Soviet Union as an ally of Germany. But, of course, it was Stalin who allied with Hitler in 1939, allowing World War II to begin with their joint invasion of Poland. The Polish officers killed by the NKVD in Katyn had been fighting Nazi Germany.

While the Soviets held the Polish officers in custody, they permitted the men to write their families—so that the NKVD could collect addresses. After their executions, their families were deported to the taiga of Siberia or the steppe of Kazakhstan, where many thousands of them died. They were among the more than 300,000 Polish citizens deported by the Soviets during the first two years of World War II.

Katyn was the beginning of a regime of lies that prevailed in Poland for 50 years. After Hitler betrayed Stalin and the Germans invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, Poland and the Soviet Union became uneasy allies. Stalin released men from the Gulag and allowed them to fight in the west. (One of these was Ryszard Kaczorowski, who died in the plane crash near Smolensk on April 10 that killed 96 people, including Polish President Lech Kaczyński. Kaczorowski took part in the courageous charges on Monte Cassino in the Italian campaign.) But the Polish government-in-exile noticed that thousands of officers were missing. The Soviets denied all knowledge of their fate. When the Germans uncovered the NKVD shooting site at Katyn in April 1943, Stalin used the occasion to break diplomatic relations with the Polish government. If Poland did not accept the Soviet lie that this was a

Ghosts

BY TIMOTHY SNYDER

Could the Polish plane crash bury Stalinism forever?

In memory of Tomasz Merta (1965–2010)



Photo: Alan Merrigan / Stockphoto

German crime, Poles could expect the worst from Stalin. Washington and London urged the Poles to accept the untruth, which left them alone with the truth.

Once the Soviets defeated the Germans and installed their own government in postwar Poland, the lie about Katyn became the official history. The notion that the Germans rather than the Soviets had committed the crime was part of a larger story of the war, embraced in the communist world and also in the West, according to which the one aggressor and occupier had been Nazi Germany. The lie about Katyn was not only the propaganda keystone of communist control of Poland, it was essential to an entire scheme of history in which Soviet forces were liberators and nothing more.

After the war, Katyn was the main entry in the unwritten ency-

She was fired in August 1980, a few months short of the time when she would have been eligible for her pension. Her colleagues protested, beginning the shipyard strike that soon spread throughout the country. The Solidarity movement, born then, was a joint creation of workers and intellectuals, such as the young lawyer Lech Kaczyński. Along with his brother Jarosław, he was a close adviser to Lech Wałęsa, the leader of the Solidarity movement. He was still among its chief organizers in the late 1980s, when Solidarity seized the opportunity provided by Gorbachev for peaceful and democratic change.

During the decade that followed communism, the former Solidarity advisers divided among themselves and founded political parties. Lech Kaczyński was among those most concerned to make a clear break

and that truth was the key to international reconciliation. As president he was oversensitive and ineffective—but also stubbornly principled and entirely uncorrupt. When he embarked for Russia, he was seeking reconciliation on the basis of the truth about Katyn which Moscow itself has finally recognized.

In the era of Vladimir Putin, Russia’s official position about the crimes of Stalinism has been, more or less, “This is our history, we were the victims, and so we can be the judges.” This is not quite right, and, after the crash, this position will be harder to maintain. Russians suffered enormously under Stalin, but they suffered less than the peoples of the Soviet periphery: Kazakhs, Ukrainians, Chechens, Poles. Consider the Great Terror in Leningrad, which prompted the most memora-

Soviet regime rather than the Russian people, he has drawn a line between Stalinism and his own authority: a distinction he had previously been reluctant to make. And he reacted to the plane crash by choosing to call even more attention to the Katyn murders. Recently, Russian television broadcast a stirring film about Katyn by the Polish director Andrzej Wajda. Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev declared a national day of mourning. Ordinary Russians appeared with flowers, candles, and icons at the Polish embassy in Moscow and at the crash site at Smolensk. One Russian left a card asking for forgiveness for Katyn. Another left a line from a poem by the Polish poet Jan Twardowski: “Let us hurry to love people, they leave us so quickly.”

Russians are right to recall that the forests of Smolensk have seen other tragedies, and on a greater scale. Smolensk is the site of the last important battle the Wehrmacht won on its way to Moscow. One million Soviet soldiers died defending their capital city. Smolensk marks the outer reach of the Holocaust by bullets, whereby the Germans killed Jews in the east. By the time they revealed the burial site at Katyn, the Germans had left behind thousands of death pits of their own, full of the corpses of murdered Jews. Each of these events has its own scale, its own specific horrors. The particular cruelty of Katyn was the attempt to exterminate the intellectual leadership of a nation. These Polish officers were usually reserve officers, which meant they were men with university degrees. The victims at Katyn were botanists, agronomists, neurologists, lawyers, engineers, surgeons, poets. This is one of the reasons why the crash at Smolensk so pains Poles. It appears that once again the nation has been decapitated.

But this Polish elite, unlike any for two centuries, has left a healthy state and society to those who will follow. Although each of the victims is now missed and mourned, Polish politics can and will proceed without them. The truth about Katyn has now been accepted in Moscow and conveyed around the world. But, as Russian commentators have pointed out, no Russian politician has attended to the Russian victims of Stalinism the way that Kaczyński and others on that plane concerned themselves for its Polish victims. Putin and Medvedev now have an opening. They can guide Russia away from an official nostalgia for Stalin. Poles can help by recognizing and acknowledging that Katyn, despite its particular horror for the Polish nation, is but one of the crimes of the Stalinist era. The experience of Stalinism is, sadly, what Poles and Russians share. With these terrible deaths comes an opportunity to make better sense of a bitter past. ◀

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The truth about Katyn has now been accepted in Moscow and conveyed around the world

clopedias of Polish history that circulated during the decades of communism. More perhaps than any other event, Katyn generated the desire for what many in the Solidarity movement of the 1980s called truth. Most of the Polish dignitaries who died in the plane crash near Smolensk were heirs of Solidarity, and they were traveling to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of a crime whose history they have instead joined.

Anna Walentynowicz, who died in the crash, was a welder and crane operator at a shipyard in Gdańsk in communist Poland in the 1970s.

with the communist past, and bring to light the truth about Polish history. Elected mayor of Warsaw in 2002, he oversaw the construction of a museum of the Warsaw uprising, the struggle of the Polish Home Army against the German occupation of the capital. Elected president in 2005, he conducted a foreign policy that bordered on the self-righteous. He was often called a “nationalist,” but this does not quite meet the case. He was a kind of provincial universalist. He did not know foreign languages or much about the outside world, but he did believe that all nations needed to learn their own past

ble poem of the Russian twentieth century, Anna Akhmatova’s “Requiem.” Akhmatova recalled an “innocent Russia” writhing “beneath the bloody boots of the executioners, beneath the wheels of the black maris.” Innocent Russia was a multinational country, and Poles in her city were 30 times more likely to be shot than Russians.

The death of Lech Kaczyński in Russia may begin the Russian reckoning with Stalinism. Putin had already marked the change of course by agreeing to honor the anniversary of the Katyn massacre. By portraying Katyn as a crime committed by the

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