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Staatendeutung

Osteuropa und seine Wissenschaft

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A b s t r a c t s

Hana Rydza

New faces, old problems

The parliamentary elections in Slovakia and their consequences

In the elections in Slovakia at the end of February 2020, the governing coalition led by the Social Democrat SMER party lost power, while the OĽANO anti-corruption movement won. OĽANO benefited most strongly from the shocked reaction among the population to the corruption and subversion of the rule of law that emerged during the investigation into the murder of the journalist Ján Kuciak. The government is now made up of four parties led by the anti-corruption activist Igor Matovič. Populist politicians will continue to dominate the parliament and government in the future. There will be no fundamental change of direction or new political culture in Slovakia.

Nikolay Mitrokhin

“Atheists of the Kyiv Patriarchate”

The question of the church in Ukraine after the Tomos

At the start of 2019, an orthodox national church was founded in Ukraine. However, this is no more than a state church organisation. The attempt to unify Ukraine by founding a new church has failed. The religious-nationalist policies pursued by President Poroshenko from the autumn of 2018 onwards have in fact led to new conflicts and a division of the country. Although the state discredited the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) as being loyal to Moscow and exerted pressure on it, only a small number of parishes joined the new church. Reports on alleged conversions, and opinion polls in particular, were instrumentalised for political purposes. It was only after Volodymyr Zelensky was elected that tensions were reduced to a certain degree. However, numerous conflicts remain unresolved, including disputes over church buildings that were forcibly seized or confiscated by local authorities without any legal grounds.

Andriy Portnov
The Holodomor as genocide
Historiographical and legal discussions

The famine of 1932/33 led to the death of millions of people in Ukraine. It is still a subject of controversy today whether the Holodomor can be classified as genocide. The use of the word “genocide” as defined by the UN Genocide Convention is a delicate matter. Above all, the question of whether evidence can be provided of the intention of the perpetrators leads to different interpretations. In light of the judgments by the International Courts of Justice regarding the mass murders in Rwanda and Srebrenica, the Holodomor is also in effect genocide.

Adam Bobryk
The shackles of history
Conflicts of remembrance in Lithuania

In Lithuania, the interpretation of the history of the 20th century has repeatedly been a source of tension. The memory of the suffering of the Lithuanian people under Soviet rule and the remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust also collide in public life. In 2019, the renaming of a street in Vilnius led to vehement protests in nationalist circles. For security reasons, the Jewish community then closed the only still active synagogue in Vilnius for several days. While this succeeded in drawing international attention to Lithuania, the rifts separating different parts of Lithuanian society from one another became even deeper.

Ulrich Schmid
Heidegger in Russia
Forms of reception and new developments

In the Soviet Union, Martin Heidegger was ostracised. His writings were not translated into Russian, and academic philosophers were forbidden from studying him. However, as early as the 1980s, an intense wave of appreciation for Heidegger took hold in Russia, where there was particular enthusiasm for the extended opportunities for expression provided by German existential philosophy. Today, most of the authors who draw on Heidegger’s work are of a conservative mindset. In the Russian history of philosophy, there are also numerous points of reference to Heidegger’s thought, particularly in the conceptualisation of the terms “being”, “language”, “people” and “God”.

Nicole Krome

Modernisation through state control?

Russia's hi-tech industry at a dead end

Russia's leadership wants to modernise the country's economy through centralisation. Entire industrial sectors have been merged into state corporations. The civil aviation sector is a good example of the failure of this project. In the UAC, the United Aircraft Corporation, no functional division of labour through the specialisation of individual works has developed. The integration of the entire corporation into the far larger state holding company Rostec, with hundreds of companies from a wide range of different sectors, only exacerbates the problem. Ideas for modernisation "from below" are smothered, while at the same time there is no technological innovation and no increase in added value. In the holding company, which is controlled by Sergei Chemezov, state modernisation programs are being systematically undermined. Chemezov, who is a close associate of President Putin, has positioned men from his network in key state posts. They siphon off the profits from state orders for fighter jets while the importance of Russia's civil aviation industry continues to decline on the global market.

Roland Götz

On the test stand

China and Russia: a statistical comparison

Russia is Lilliputian compared with China. The gross domestic product of the most economically powerful country in the world is six times higher than that of Russia. This chasm will widen further, since China's labour productivity continues to grow and its investment quota is double that of Russia. China not only produces the largest quantities of important raw materials and foodstuffs worldwide, but also the highest amount of industrial products. By contrast, the only areas where Russia overtakes China are agricultural products, mineral resources, iron and steel. When it comes to non-military industrial products, it falls well below its GDP ranking. While Russia's growth is currently already slow, the Chinese gross domestic product will continue to grow less strongly in future due to the decline in the potential labour force. In addition, greater importance will be given to environmental standards in both states.

Hans-Henning Schröder**Political consultancy and its limitations**

Lessons from three decades of research into Eastern Europe

In a complex world, politicians are in constant need of valid information and knowledge in order to identify problems, develop solutions and make decisions. During decision-making processes, politicians and civil servants draw on information provided by scientists and academics. However, the transfer of knowledge is a difficult process, and only succeeds under specific conditions. A subjective reflection, based on participant observation and personal experience, shows that the contribution made by academic political consultancy to German foreign policy vis-à-vis Russia is extremely limited, as demonstrated during the war in Chechnya, the eastward expansion of NATO, in debates about a modernisation partnership with Russia and a new security architecture in Europe. The principles that drive academic research and those who drive politics diverge too widely.

Andreas Heinemann-Grüder**Eastern European future research**

Knowledge as orientation and not as an accessory to politics

The war in Ukraine revealed a crisis of expertise that has still not been overcome. Eastern European studies should ask questions about social cohesion and the potential for conflict, about the dynamics of cultural processes and the way that regimes operate and function. It is an overriding topic of interest how political regimes stabilise and reproduce, how regimes and social actors regard each other and what power configurations emerge in international relations. New knowledge only becomes effective when it contributes to decision-making and when it is made known to the general public.

Alexander Libman**Crisis or flowering?**

Eastern European social sciences research

In the social sciences, Area Studies have become less important. However, this does not mean that social scientists reject regional research per se, particularly when it is based on accepted methods and theories. It depends on how the discipline views itself, and how it is organised internally, whether economists, political scientists and sociologists regard Area Studies as being useful. Illiberal tendencies, nationalism, the functioning and the stability of authoritarian regimes are also of relevance for the main disciplines. However, the increasing restrictions in the authoritarian systems in Eastern Europe make it harder to research these topics. The division of labour between academics from the east and west in Eastern European research is becoming almost impossible.