

# Abstracts

*Michael Schmidt-Neke*

## **Albania's Parliamentary Elections 2021: Edi Rama's Socialists maintain their absolute majority**

After 2017, Prime Minister Edi Rama ruled Albania with an absolute majority of his Socialist Party (PS). Political infighting went to extremes during the past four years, culminating in the collective resignation of most opposition members of parliament. A severe institutional conflict emerged between Rama and President Ilir Meta due to unsolved problems of the checks and balances in the 1998 constitution.

With 48.7 percent and 74 out of 140 seats won, Rama is the first prime minister to win a third term. Meta's LSI party suffered a crushing defeat, and a combined centre-right list of the Democratic Party (PD) and 12 minor parties made only modest gains. The PD members confirmed Lulzim Basha as party leader.

Albania still waits for the beginning of negotiations on joining the EU. This is a common goal of all parties but it suffers from shortcomings of Albania's social and political realities, as well as from the internal problems of the EU and its member states.

*Vesna Goldsworthy*

## **Mutual Exotization: Europe and the Balkans** **Interview with Belfjore Qose and Christian Voß**

Vesna Goldsworthy is currently professor of creative writing at the University of Exeter and the University of East Anglia. Her first book was "Inventing Ruritania. The Imperialism of the Imagination" (1998) in which she applies the constructivist and orientalist paradigm to Southeast Europe and depicts Balkan stereotypes in Western European travel writings and popular culture since the myth of Dracula. A dense summary of this reference work can be found in the anthology "The Balkans and the borders in the head" edited mostly in German in 2004 by Karl Kaser in the Austrian Wieser encyclopedia. Only from the very title an attentive reader could understand twenty years ago that Goldsworthy is way too good and too creative for a "normal academic", so she switched to literature.

Her memoir "Chernobyl Strawberries" from 2005 tells the story of her childhood and youth in Yugoslav Serbia. The German translation with the title "Heimweh nach Nirgendwo" was highly praised by Elke Heidenreich who after her career as a cabaret artist became popular as a book reviewer on TV and radio and was widely received. Goldsworthy's poetry in "The Angel of Salonika" and her recent novels such as "Gorsky" and "Monsieur Ka" transpose her personal experience of migration, acculturation and intercultural perception and misunderstandings to London during the Cold War and the East-West bloc confrontation.

In her forthcoming novel "Iron Curtain", she describes an East-West love affair of a privileged red princess in a Soviet satellite state in the 1980s and Iason, a gifted young Anglo-Irish poet on the make.

In 2021 Vesna Goldsworthy has been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in London.

*Juliana Roth*

## **The Banality of Everyday Racism**

The essay addresses the current rise of racism in Germany. Four important reasons for the emergence of racist attitudes are mentioned: the colonial heritage, the right wing political and social shift, the pandemic environment and ongoing migration. Since racism in Germany is a very emotional topic and a social taboo, open discussions about it are inhibited by Angst of social ostracism.

The essay proposes a different strategy: addressing everyday racism in a neutral and analytical way, other than the polemic and divisive tone of today's debate. The expressions of racism have changed over time. From colonial times up to the 1970s they were explicit and loud, after that they became hidden and implicit. Today we witness the return of the open and often aggressive racism of the past. New forms of racism have emerged, for example ethnic and cultural ones.

This essay holds the view that there is a psychological similarity between learning how to be an antiracist and the learning of intercultural competence.

*Daniela Gress*

## **Antigypsyism: Approaches to the Study of Prejudices, Exclusion and Persecution of Sinti and Roma in Germany**

Antigypsyism research examines the causes, forms, functions and consequences of a specific form of racism. The phenomenon of Antigypsyism has existed in Europe since the end of the Middle Ages and has influenced the perception and social situation of Sinti and Roma up to the present day. For decades, overcoming discrimination against Europe's largest and most marginalized minority groups has not been on the political agenda. It was not until the early 1980s that the Federal Republic of Germany began to deal with the National Socialist genocide of Sinti and Roma. The conditions for academic research and thus also for establishing the research field of Antigypsyism were set by the people affected. The article provides an overview of scientific and civil-society responses to this politically highly relevant topic.

*Lale Akgün*

## **Racism against People with Turkish Family Background in Germany**

Almost three million people live in Germany who themselves or their families come from Turkey. Turks are thus the largest ethnic minority in Germany. Although immigration began 60 years ago and people of Turkish origin are found in all social groups, they are still the preferred victims of discrimination and racism.

In Germany, “the Turk” generally stands for the “foreigner”. With prejudices and clichés, the majority of society works off this constructed image of “the Turk”. Over the decades, racism has changed from the “völkisch” mindset, as it was still evident in the Heidelberg Manifesto, to cultural racism. In Germany racism manifests itself individually, structurally, and in quite a few cases ends in violence and murder. But as the global change from fairly homogeneous societies to multi-cultural and multi-religious ones is also evident in Germany, this country must finally face up to the question of racism, even if much too late.