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Bosnische Tragödie und kirchliche Versöhnungsarbeit

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Editorial

Sehr geehrte Leserin, sehr geehrter Leser,

die „Kosovo-Troika“ hat soeben ihre Bemühungen um eine Verhandlungslösung für den künftigen Status des Kosovo für endgültig gescheitert erklärt. Die Führung der Kosovo-Albaner wird in naher Zukunft die Unabhängigkeit der früheren serbischen Provinz erklären – offen ist die Frage des genauen Zeitpunkts und vor allem der sich aus einem solchen Schritt in der Region ergebenden Reaktionen. Dass die Unabhängigkeitserklärung zu potenziellen „Domino-Effekten“ und einer Destabilisierung der Region führen kann, das befürchten neben den Regierenden in Belgrad und Moskau auch westliche Experten.

Durch die Unabhängigkeit des Kosovo könnte etwa die innere Krise der Föderation Bosnien-Herzegowina gefährliche Sprengkraft entfalten, so die Politikwissenschaftlerin Sabine Willenberg in ihrer Analyse der serbisch-bosnischen Beziehungen. Andererseits gibt es nach der Einschätzung des FAZ-Korrespondenten Michael Martens auch bei einer sorgfältigen Abwägung aller Gegenargumente keine Alternative zu einer raschen Selbstständigkeit des Kosovo. So könnte die bosnische Republika Srpska nach Ansicht des Autors schon deshalb keinen eigenen (ethnisch definierten) Anspruch auf Sezession ableiten, weil auf ihrem Territorium eine serbische Bevölkerungsmehrheit erst durch die gewaltsame Vertreibung von Nicht-Serben entstanden ist.

Bei aller Besorgnis in Bezug auf die Vorgänge um das Kosovo ruhen die Hoffnungen darauf, dass Vernunft und Besonnenheit obsiegen werden. Skeptiker mag vielleicht die Feststellung etwas beruhigen, dass sich Teile des westlichen Balkans auf einem überwiegend erfolgreichen und stabilen Weg befinden. Zu diesem Schluss kommen die Analysen zweier Ökonomen – Siniša Kušić zum EU-Kurs Kroatiens und Kirk Mildner zur Wirtschaftsentwicklung im (erst 2006 unabhängig gewordenen) Montenegro.

Auf EU-Neumitgliedern wie Bulgarien lastet auch heute noch schwer das Erbe der kommunistischen Vergangenheit. Gernot Erler sieht die Vollendung der noch überfälligen Reformen unter anderem durch den aktuellen Aufschwung nationalistischer und populistischer Bewegungen (als Erscheinungsformen eines „Post-Beitrittssyndroms“) gefährdet. Eine allenfalls halbherzige Entschlossenheit zur Vergangenheitsbewältigung diagnostiziert Diljana Lambreva in ihrem Beitrag zum Umgang mit den Akten der kommunistischen Staatssicherheit in Bulgarien.

Ein Schwerpunkt zu Fragen der Religion rundet diese Doppelausgabe der Südosteuropa Mitteilungen ab (Analysen/Positionen, Dokumentation, Rezensionen). Die Autoren Werner Kremm, Fabian Schmidt, Ludwig Steindorff und Miljenko Aničić werfen – mit jeweils sehr verschiedenen Ausgangspositionen – Schlaglichter auf den Zusammenhang von Religion und

Ethnizität und auf die gesellschaftliche Rolle von Konfessionen und Glaubensgemeinschaften in den Ländern Rumänien, Albanien und Bosnien-Herzegowina. Auch in diesen Beiträgen spielt die Bewältigung der Vergangenheit eine zentrale Rolle.

Wir wünschen unseren Lesern eine aufschlussreiche Lektüre und vor allem ein gutes und erfolgreiches Jahr 2008.

Ihre Redaktion

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Sabine Willenberg

The Relations between Serbia and Bosnia & Herzegovina through the “Burning Glass Kosovo”

On 19 October 2007, the High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Mirolsav Lajcak, decided to change the role of procedures of the BiH-Council of Ministers. As a reaction hereto Serbia's Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica for the first time openly associated the Kosovo question with the matter of the Republika Srpska. He considered the support of separatist Bosnian Serbs in the case of Kosovo's independence – heavily opposed by the Croatian and Bosnian members of the BiH-presidency.

The article examines the question whether this diplomatic crisis will in the long-term affect the interstate relations between Serbia and BiH which had – following a rapid normalization after 2000 – already been quite well institutionalized. It argues, that verbal confrontation is nothing new in that relationship. What makes it different and a potential danger for the region is the simultaneousness of the internal crisis in BiH and the imminent decision on Kosovo's status and thus a Serbia occupied and dominated by its nation-preserving policy. Based on the Dayton Peace Agreement BiH is committed to strong entities, weak state-level structures and with those strong relations of its nations to the neighbors and weak state-level foreign policy. The best-case scenario is that the relations stay what they have been so far: abnormal normalized relations.

Michael Martens

Notes on Kosovo, Karl Marx and the Logic of Changing the Yoke

The speech delivered at the opening of an academic conference dedicated to the influence of the European Union and its accession policy argues that there are no feasible alternatives to an independent state of Kosovo. The author tries to make his point by refuting the most popular arguments that are usually brought forward against independence, reasoning that neither the so called “domino-effect” nor legal aspects (integrity of state-borders vs. right to self-determination, Badinter-Commission, Yugoslav constitution of 1974) are convincing reasons against the independence of Kosovo. An independent Kosovo endangers the stability of the region less than a Kosovo kept in its current unclear status.

Some of the author's main arguments are: The secessionist movements in other parts of the world will follow their agenda regardless of the status of Kosovo. Kosovo

should have received the status of a seventh Yugoslav republic already back in 1974, when the new constitution of Yugoslavia was proclaimed. Comparisons to the Republika Srpska are idle, as a Serbian majority in this part of Bosnia did not exist prior to the war of the 1990s and was achieved only through expulsions and genocide of non-Serbs. Kosovo's independence is only the culmination of a development that started with the incorporation of Kosovo into the Serbian state after the Balkan wars. Serbia is politically not willing and economically not able to retain its sovereignty over Kosovo.

Kirk Mildner

Montenegro: between "Casino Royal" and Sustainable Economic Development

Since its independence in June 2006, Montenegro has made considerable progress to turn into the "Monaco of the Adriatic". The strong growth of the economy is fuelled by a boom in construction and tourism. Government budgets are largely balanced, inflation is low and FDI is pouring into the country. Privatisation, in particular in banking and tourism, contributes to sustainable growth. However, serious challenges lie ahead of Montenegro. The lack of modern transport and municipal infrastructure is apparent. Energy sector reform has to be continued and investment in new generating capacities has to be facilitated. The administrative capacity of public institutions is limited and has to be improved. In order to ensure sustainable growth in tourism, new hotel infrastructure has to be developed, existing capacities have to be upgraded and environmental standards have to be respected.

Siniša Kušić

Croatia's Way to the EU: Challenges and Prospects

The German Presidency in the first half of 2007 brought the EU back on the track. The adoption of the Berlin Declaration and the agreement on treaty reform means that the EU's capability of acting will be guaranteed long-term and all preconditions have been created to ensure further enlargement of the Union. Good news for Croatia – since October 2005 in negotiations with the EU – and the prospects to become the 28th member of the Union, although the way to full membership remains challenging. But what exactly are the advantages of EU membership for Croatia and the prospects after integration?

Gernot Erler

Bulgaria Has Come to Full Legal Age – Notes of a Companion

The text illustrates the speech of the author during a ceremony when he was awarded the doctor honoris causa by the University of National and World Economics in Sofia on 16 November 2007. Since the breakdown of the Communist system people in Bulgaria have been subject

to a tremendous acceleration of social change and transformation of all rules and circumstances of life. For the individual, the emerging integration perspective of the EU did not put an end to the insecurity and loss of orientation caused by the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact.

Following the “European path”, competition and privatization in Bulgaria were often connected with the creation of wealth without effort, the provocative demonstration of luxury, the emergence of criminal economic structures and corrupt administrations. Society has therefore been deeply polarized while any notion of solidarity was lost. In Bulgaria, like in other New Member States, populism has received a tremendous upsurge and growing support from the voters after EU accession in 2007. Populist movements are permissive to nationalist tendencies and hostile to minorities.

Yet, Bulgaria has the potential to overcome the existing weaknesses and the country will eventually play a constructive role within the EU and gain its recognition as a stable and reliable partner. As an example, Bulgaria can play a highly positive role in the European Neighborhood Policy with the Black Sea region.

Diljana Lambreva

Secret Service Documents and Failed Policy in Bulgaria’s Coming to Terms with the Past

Eighteen years after the political change, the handling of documents of the Communist Security Service in Bulgaria has not yet been completely settled. The article lights up the long and tedious process of opening the files by going into details concerning the features of totalitarianism and the successful integration of its representatives in the post-totalitarian Bulgarian society. Protagonists of the former secret services and the Communist Party authorities who restrain the legislative power horizontally, and those who intrude the vertical dimension of the ruling and the ruled, disturb the required efficiency for decision as regards the policy of coming to terms with the past. Seemingly preservers of the old patterns of political and social culture of communism, they actually prevent the development of a critical and civic culture.

Werner Kremm

The Summer of the Patriarch – Questions, Changes and Prospects in the Romanian-Orthodox Church of Today

The summer of 2007 was a decisive period for the main church of Romania, the Romanian-Orthodox Church. On the one hand, Patriarch Teoctist died, on the other hand the general interest in the election of a successor revealed many open questions as regards the church. These problems are manifold and partly even complicated for the new Patriarch Daniel (born in 1951), who has acquired a reputation of open-mindedness and willingness to open up the church, but also of being a successful manager.

The paper tries to give a survey on the problems of a strong and self-confident church in the new EU member state Romania, often willing to interfere dogmatically and not always pro-European in public affairs and debates, but seldom ready to

provide a deep and clear insight into its inner life.

With the accession of Romania and Bulgaria there are now three member states in the EU – together with Greece – having a majority of Orthodox population. Wrongly the question of their religious autocephaly is hardly perceived, although the ideology of the Orthodox churches in some aspects collides with the rules of the EU, such as emphasis on national aspects, attitude towards homosexuality and the situation of women.

<p>Fabian Schmidt Religion in Albania</p>
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Among the Balkan countries Albania has a unique position, as far as the division between state and religion is concerned. There is probably hardly any other country in Europe in which religious communities exercise less influence on day-to-day politics in Europe. The reason can not only be found in the harsh repression of religious communities under communist ruler Enver Hoxha after 1967, but also in the coexistence of three main religious communities since the late middle ages: The Catholic and Orthodox Christians and Muslims. Furthermore a deeply rooted tradition of syncretism has resulted in religious bridge-building throughout the centuries. And finally religion was not suited as a mobilizing force during the national awakening in the 19th and early 20th century.

<p>Ludwig Steindorff Religion and Nation Building: The Case of the Bosniacs (Muslims), Croats and Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina</p>
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In a process from the middle of the 19th until the middle of the 20th century the large traditional religious groups of the Ottoman period in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Muslims, Catholics and Orthodox – were transformed into communities which were defined as nations without changing their size. The delimitation of the confessions became the national one as well. As elsewhere in East Central and South Eastern Europe the sacred has increasingly been „nationalized“-since the 1980s.

The Bosnian war 1992-1995 certainly was not a religious war, but a war for religious symbols which were interpreted as national symbols. At present, numerous newly erected sacral buildings serve to symbolize the own nation as well. The different and controverse visions of national history are one of the obstacles to the successful integration of the contemporary state. Despite all difficulties it should be a goal of European policy to maintain and to stabilize the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. People should learn that the affirmation of different religions respectively nations on the one hand and the regional identity and loyalty to the common state on the other hand don't exclude each other.

Miljenko Aničić

The Bosnian Tragedy and the Reconciliation Work of the Church

In former Yugoslavia, ethnic differences have developed into an exclusive mentality, acknowledging only the innate ethnic, religious or cultural group and excluding others. The idea of a “Greater Serbia” has been the most vigorous, yet not the only, development in that respect. The great powers, or the international community respectively, have often reinforced ethnic separation and radical ideologies through their unanimous, sometimes cynical and arrogant approach towards the Balkan region.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Catholic Church had many times raised its voice in favor of human rights and respect of human dignity since the outbreak of the war – irrespective of the ethnic background. Although, especially in the Republika Srpska, many Catholics have been expelled or killed and many religious places destroyed, the Catholic Church has reached out its hand for reconciliation, cooperation and dialogue with the Serbian Orthodox and the Islamic communities alike.

Reconciliation work of the Catholic Church today includes many activities like humanitarian aid, education of children and adults. They all apply to people of different ethnic background thus contributing to diminish interethnic hatred and intolerance.