

A b s t r a c t s

Mykola Riabchuk

Ukraine at the crossroads:

can a state based on blackmail be reformed?

Three elements characterize the authoritarian form of rule that has established itself in Ukraine: there is widespread corruption, the secret services play a central role, and the law is applied selectively. The power clique surrounding President Kuchma was prepared to go as far as electoral fraud. The prospects of reform and democracy would seem to be slim. However, as the examples of Serbia and Georgia have shown, political change is possible. In order for it to come about, internal and external conditions must be met: civil society must exert pressure from within, and the international community must do the same from the outside. The protests against the electoral fraud, and the international reaction, provide grounds for hope that Ukraine now stands on the threshold of a more just political system.

Gerhard Simon

A new start in Ukraine:

from indecisiveness to the orange revolution

In November and December 2004, Ukraine experienced a colossal political upheaval. The nation and civil society have found themselves. The country has changed, and has caught up with the events that transformed East Central Europe in 1989. The Kuchma regime, which had tried to cling to power with the help of electoral fraud, was forced to step down by a peaceful mass mobilization. What were the preconditions of the orange revolution, and what does Ukraine's future now look like? There are many conflicts in the country, but it is not divided into two parts.

Kerstin Zimmer

Coal, clans, and power:

the political anatomy of the Donetsk region

The attempt to manipulate the 2004 presidential election in Ukraine drew the outside world's attention to the Russian-speaking southeast of the country. The voters and networks of the Donetsk coalfield formed the power base of the unsuccessful presidential candidate, Viktor Yanukovich. A particularly important role is

played by the Donetsk region, where Yanukovich was governor. This is the home of the "Donetsk clan", an integrated political-economic network well-versed in specific techniques for the exercise of power. These mechanisms are well suited to power strategies such as electoral fraud.

Winfried Schneider-Deters

The EU's Ukraine policy: a critical assessment

The EU has excluded Ukraine from its eastward enlargement, and so must share the responsibility for that country's delayed democratization. But even after the victory of the democratic revolution on 26 December 2004, which showed that Ukraine has caught up with the democratic movement of 1989, the EU is still – without giving a reason – refusing to offer Ukraine any prospect of membership. It seems, therefore, that the EU's Ukraine policy amounts to a tacit acceptance of Moscow's claim that Ukraine belongs to its sphere of influence.

Sabine Fischer

Russia and the Ukrainian election: miscalculation or neo-imperial impulse?

Russia suffered a dual defeat in its policy towards the presidential election in Ukraine: Moscow's attempt to install its preferred candidate as president in Kyiv failed, and its actions in Ukraine led to conflict with Russia's western partners, especially the EU. In view of the changes that have taken place in Russian foreign policy since 2000, this position seems irrational. The roots of this irrationality are to be found in misperceptions and in changes to decisionmaking processes under the "Putin system".

Astrid Sahn

Before and after the elections: is Belarus becoming more isolated?

In October 2003, in spite of western protests and without explicit support from Russia, the Belarusian president successfully carried out a constitutional referendum, which was held at the same time as parliamentary elections. In this way he gave himself the option of standing in the next presidential election for a third term of office. The opposition continues to be excluded from Belarus's political institutions. For the time being, the regime seems to be strong enough to cope with its growing international isolation and to prevent a repetition of recent events in Ukraine. At the same time, the cracks in the foundations of Lukashenka's legitimacy are becoming increasingly visible.

Grigorii Pas'ko

The spy who wasn't a spy: the conviction of Sutyagin is not the end of the case

The physicist and historian Igor' Sutyagin has been in prison since 1999. As a researcher at the US Institute, he worked on questions related to Russia's nuclear armaments and nonproliferation. In the summer of 2004 Sutyagin was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment for alleged espionage. The author of this article, Grigorii Pas'ko, was himself imprisoned as a "spy". He argues that the charges brought against Sutyagin were inventions of the FSB, the Russian secret service. Pas'ko reconstructs the case and its legal weaknesses, and argues that it conforms to the pattern of political developments in Russia under Putin: the Sutyagin case is part of an authoritarian rollback process, in which the advances made by society during the period of perestroika are being reversed.

Andrei Piontkovskii

Russia and the fourth world war: a rather different chessboard

The fundamentalist Islamist international has unleashed the fourth world war. Its main enemy is the West, but Russia too has become a target. For propaganda purposes, the war in Chechnya was presented as a struggle against international terrorism. Now Russian propagandists are suffering the consequences of this move. But instead of forming an alliance with the Chechen separatists against the Islamist internationalists, Russian foreign policy is trying to pull off a further, even more dangerous trick. It is claiming that the Islamists are no more than henchmen of the West, and that the main enemy is to be found in Washington. One can already see on the horizon the consequences of this isolationist scenario, in the shape of an American-Chinese-Arab multipolarity. Russia, reduced to its Slavic heartland, is attempting to break the dominance of this multipolarity by moving closer to the EU.

Karlheinz Kasper

A loss of identity: the marginalization of the intelligentsia in the contemporary Russian novel

Since the second half of the 1990s, Russian authors have been paying more attention to a topic which well-known writers of the Soviet era were unable to deal with satisfactorily; these Soviet authors included Maxim Gorky (*Zhizn' Klime Samgina*, 1925/36), Alexei Tolstoy (*Khozhenie po mukam*, 1920/41), and Leonid Leonov (*Piramida*, 1979/94). Time and again, Russian authors have explored the question of the intelligentsia's social status, societal role, and identity. After the end of the Soviet Union and the associated intellectual challenges in all areas of life, this subject was extremely topical. A number of authors have made new attempts to address the question: novels by Lyudmila Petrushevskaya (*Nomer Odin, ili V sadakh drugikh vozmozhnostei*) and Andrei Turgenev (*Mesyats Arkashon*) are of particular interest because of their complex narrative structures.