

A b s t r a c t s

Kai-Olaf Lang

Lurch to the Right

The 2010 Parliamentary Elections in Hungary

In the April 2010 parliamentary elections, Hungary's political landscape was ploughed over. The Socialists suffered a debacle; their opponents from the Hungarian Civic Union were given a majority sufficient to amend the constitution. The liberals have failed; there is now a nationalist party in parliament. Viktor Orbán, the new prime minister, promises reconciliation. Whether his national project is aimed at all of the people in Hungary or excludes dissenters will have to be proven.

Karin Bachmann

Seismograph Hungary?

The Political Right, the Elections und the Consequences

The April 2010 parliamentary elections in Hungary resulted in a lurch to the right. The rightwing-conservative Fidesz won more than two-thirds of the seats. Third-strongest party was the rightwing, radical Jobbik. Fidesz does not need the rightwing radicals to govern; nonetheless, it is not clearly setting itself apart from them. The new prime minister, Viktor Orbán must banish the spirits that he has so far tolerated.

Laszlo Kornitzer

"Their Program is Called Destructiveness"

On Hungary's Right and Political Culture

The electoral success of the nationalist-chauvinist party Jobbik is a warning signal. Instead of distancing itself from Jobbik's actions and paramilitary henchmen Magyar Gárda, the rightwing, conservative Civic

Union (Fidesz) under Viktor Orbán has brought itself into line with the rightwing extremists. Racist and anti-Semitic ideas are circulating. World-famous intellectuals, such as Imre Kertész, Péter Nádas, György Konrád, Péter Esterházy, are pilloried as “false Hungary.” Because the rightwing lacks a concept for the future, it falls back on the values and traditions of the prewar era: fascist Hungary. The new government is stirring fears among its neighbours with its policy on Hungarians abroad as well.

Volker Weichsel

Spectacularly Unspectacular

The 2010 Parliamentary Elections in the Czech Republic

The victor in the elections to the Czech Chamber of Deputies is democracy. The voters have punished the established parties, without bringing populists to power. The majority situation is quite clear for the first time in a long while. That promises more stability and transparency. Programmatically, all signs point to continuity. In European policy, no flights of fancy are to be expected; in economic policy, austerity is the order of the day.

Justyna Schulz

Peripheral Capitalism

Poland's Dependency on Capital Imports

Poland is dependent on capital imports. Domestic capital cannot be formed, because legal regulation of the assets market is poor. Poland missed its chance to create real owners during privatisation. Furthermore, Poland's national bank is pursuing an incorrect policy. This represents a heavy burden. Twenty years of transformation have allowed a peripheral capitalism to come into being. In the international division of labour, Poland, like the other countries of East-Central Europe, is first and foremost a market and a reservoir of cheap workers, because the capital needed for self-sustaining development is lacking.

Katharina Bluhm, Vera Trappmann
Capitalism in East-Central Europe

Variants and External Influences: A Critique of the Literature

Political economy analyses capitalism in East-Central Europe with two approaches. Using the first approach, it looks into the institutional varieties of market economies that have come into being in the past 20 years and places the countries on a continuum from liberal to co-ordinated. In this way, differences between national economies are brought to light. The other approach examines similarities. It stresses the enormous significance of the European Union, as well as transnational companies, and identifies a particular “dependent” or “peripheral” capitalism in East-Central Europe. Both approaches have their strengths and weaknesses. What is needed is a synthesis.

Nik Hynek, Vít Strítecký
Adieu, Missile Defence?

Security Policy Thinking in Poland and the Czech Republic

The United States dealt Polish and Czech security policy experts a hard blow in autumn 2009. U.S. President Barack Obama declared plans for the deployment of a missile defence system outdated. With that, he ended for the time being a debate that expressed in exemplary fashion the similarities and differences in security policy thinking in Poland and the Czech Republic. In Poland, a broad consensus on missile defence held sway, and Warsaw resolutely backed bilateral negotiations with the United States. Prague, where sceptics existed even in the government, wanted to let NATO take part in talks.

Margarete Klein
First Successes, Many Hurdles

Russia's Military Reform

After the war with Georgia, Russia started a new military reform project. It represented a serious effort to transform the obsolete mass mobilisation army into a modern deployable army. The first successes are to be detected, but there are still many hurdles to overcome.

Financial resources are lacking, the arms industry suffers from a standstill in innovation, and the demographic crisis is reinforcing the recruitment problem. In addition, there is resistance to the reform within the military. Unlike the situation under Russian President Dmitrii Medvedev's predecessors, the country's political and top military leadership this time has the will to lead the reform to a successful end.

Aschot L. Manutscharjan

Rapprochement without Reconciliation

Movement in Armenian-Turkish Relations

The 2009 Armenian-Turkish protocols on the establishment of diplomatic relations and the opening of borders could mean a new start in the historically burdened bilateral relations between these two peoples. But the old matters of dispute stand in the way of ratification and real rapprochement. Erivan insists that Turkey recognize the genocide against the Armenians in 1915–1923. Ankara continues to demand that Armenia withdraw its troops from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, a Turkish ally. That the protocol was signed at all is owed to Turkey's interest in establishing itself as a regional power and Armenia's need extricate itself from dependency on its strategic partner Russia.

Aser Babajew

Turkish-Armenian Thaw

Implications for the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

In October 2009, Turkey and Armenia signed an agreement on the establishment of diplomatic relations and the opening of borders. The borders were closed in 1993, when the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict escalated into a war between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Now there exists a chance of resolving the conflict peacefully. Were Armenia, under pressure from Turkey and the West, to partially evacuate the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan might possibly be prepared to renounce violence. If there is no progress in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Turkish-Armenian rapprochement could conversely also lead to an increase in tensions in the southern Caucasus.

Karlheinz Kasper
Forward to Retro-Culture!

Russian Literature and the Literature Prizes for 2009

Never before, as in 2009, have Russia's literary competitions so fully disappointed expectations that highly esteemed, artistic works on relevant, present-day issues would be recognized. The National'nyi Bestseller was awarded a novel that was composed "solidly and realistically in the style of Soviet literature." As *Bol'shaia Kniga*, a work was chosen that stirs memories of three generations of the Soviet elite. The *Russkii Buker* went to a barely read author who praised three "holy Russian women" of the Soviet era as bearers of "historical memory." By contrast, conflict-laden critiques of society found no mercy among jurors. On the eve of the 65th anniversary of Soviet victory in the Second World War, the most decorated part of Russian literature gives the impression of a nostalgia hungry, patriotically gilded retro-culture.