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The »war on terror« is an ambiguous call to arms. It is evidently about to change the world at least as much – albeit in a quite different way – as all-out terror itself has done. The apparently almost unrestricted internet eavesdropping programs run by American and British secret services have drastically transformed global online communications. Once the great hope for democratic civic participation, internet communications almost overnight have become a tool that allows the state to exercise unprecedented control over its citizens. Yet those who eavesdrop have themselves managed to evade public supervision. In future contacts between the United States and the E.U., the latter will and must insist that the most obvious abuses be curbed and that surveillance rules be brought into line with the higher-order value of civic freedom. The European understanding of liberty will not tolerate anything less. What is at stake here is the pursuit of security for the sake of freedom, not against it.

In the fifth year of a crisis that has jeopardized its very existence, Europe is tiptoeing along the edge of the abyss. As yet there is no sign of the requisite bold steps forward that might bring a resolution. Mario Telò, an Italian intellectual and renowned expert on European affairs, has given us a remarkable essay in which he urges Germans openly to assume a leadership role in the E.U. In that case Germany would also have to embrace the appropriate accountability to Europe as a whole for what it does and fails to do. His proposal merits a renewed debate.

In addition, this volume will shine a spotlight on certain key countries in Asia, the rising star of the global arena. To be precise, the focus will be on East and Southeast Asia, where the dynamics of change are most impressive or where political events are most likely to baffle outside observers unless they are elucidated by experts. For various reasons the first circumstance best fits the cases of Myanmar and Indonesia, which have both undergone breathtaking transformations toward greater democracy. The latter applies in quite different ways to the People's Republic of China and North Korea. As one of our authors shows, it is especially difficult to understand North Korea's politics without some insight into its recent history; yet, the global public is barely aware of even the most essential points of that history.

Thomas Meyer
Editor-in-Chief and Co-Publisher

Christoph Zöpel

»Freedom from Want«

Is it possible to feed a global population of nine billion?

How can we provide enough food for all the people across the globe? In seeking approaches that might help answer this crucial question for the future, one quickly encounters the underlying problem: distribution. We can only come to grips with the latter through an integrated global social welfare state.

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Since the early years of the twentieth century, global society has targeted world hunger or nutrition as one of its key spheres of activity. The International Agricultural Institute was founded in Rome back in 1905 as an early warning system to identify trends in the global market for agricultural products. Its mission was nationalistic: to anticipate and avoid developments that might adversely affect domestic producers and consumers. The limited capacity of nation-states to make agricultural policy was clear enough, but national selfishness had still not been overcome. After the Second World War, U.S. President Roosevelt upgraded global nutrition policy into a matter of universal human rights. Hoping to apply »freedom from want« – one of his »four freedoms« – on a global scale, he convened a United Nations conference in May, 1943 to consider issues of nutrition and agriculture. As a result, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was established in October, 1945, still ten days before the United Nations' Charter went into effect. The following October its Economic and Social Council established the U.N. Population Commission. Simul-taneously, the scientific community, supported by private donors, began to look for ways to augment agricultural productivity, which eventually led to a manifold increase in yields-per-hectare of corn, wheat, and rice. Because so many people had died during World War II, the increase in global population was still not regarded as a problem. Up until the end of the 1950s, the world's population grew at a moderate rate. Between 1950 and 1960 it increased from 2.5 billion to 3 billion, and then in the next decade it rose to 3.7 billion, an annual rate of growth of 2.1%. By the late 1960s, scientific discussions and global political efforts were underway to determine how the world's growing population could be fed.

Those discussions, as well as the practical steps that actually have been taken up to the present day, can be summarized in a few points. Global nutrition or world hunger is a function of the relationship between increasing global population and the Earth's carrying capacity, which is affected by water and climate. The strategies being considered in the fight against world hunger focus either on limiting population growth or expanding the amount of arable land. However, one has to draw some distinctions within these basic factors. The fertility of the soil is a function of technical progress, while the overall nutrition of the world's population hinges on the distribution of food. Although we usually underestimate the role of technical progress, the distribution of food remains the crucial challenge we face in preventing hunger. It

depends on the global economic and political order. Competition among nation-states as well as among business enterprises can lead to regional famines. Large countries like China and India are in a better position to prevent hunger than are smaller, less developed countries. Looking ahead to the first half of the twenty-first century, one can predict that the Earth's carrying capacity, enhanced by scientific innovations, will suffice to feed today's seven billion people and the (perhaps) nine billion who will inhabit the planet in the mid-twenty-first century. The responsibility for preventing famines rests with the global political system, the U.N. and its affiliates, as well as with its member-states, which zealously guard their sovereignty. Jointly, they have plenty of financial resources as well as ample knowledge of what regulations are needed to keep private market interests in check.

Discussions and actual developments may be reconstructed from a variety of perspectives. In 1968 two highly important books appeared that exemplify divergent approaches: Paul Ehrlich's *The Population Bomb* and – from the Association of German Scientists – *The Global Food Crisis, or: Is a Global Hunger Catastrophe Inevitable?* Ehrlich's argument was that there are too many people; he predicted that enormous famines would afflict humanity by the Seventies. His solutions followed a two-track strategy: bring the world's population under control quickly, and drastically increase food production. Both strategies were pursued, and although global population did continue to rise as predicted, hunger did not increase on a global scale. The Association of German Scientists identified the global food problem then as what it still is: a problem of distribution. Having recognized the true origin of the problem, they offered proposals that included both family planning and measures to improve food security. Among the latter are industrialization, infrastructure ex-

pansion, educational policy, and nutrition counseling. However, they believed that such steps would have to be preceded by significant changes in the social structure of international cooperation as well as cutbacks in weapons expenditures, so that those programs could be adequately financed. The timeliness of both the science and the U.N. system was confirmed when, in 1969, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) was founded as an adjunct to the UNDP (United Nations Development Program).

The book, *The Limits to Growth* by Dennis Meadows, *et al.* came out in 1972. The authors used systems theory to analyze the emergence of global society and the issues of population growth and nutrition that accompanied its rise. They showed that there was a relationship of circular interdependence at work among three factors: human numbers, food production, and the impact of humanity on the environment. The Meadows' general finding was that birth rates were declining slightly, but that death rates were falling even more quickly, a ratio that turned out to be crucial in accounting for population growth. Under such circumstances, regulation of the number of births, as was then being done in China, would not be necessary.

As early as the 1980s it was clear that the battle against hunger was achieving some successes. Particularly in India and China, one could observe an increase in the ratio of food production to population growth. However, the ratio was lagging in Africa, the Middle East, the Soviet Union, and North America. After 1990 there was some improvement in the capabilities of the U.N. system as evidenced by the World Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1991 and the World Food Summit of 1996. On the other hand, uncontrolled liberalization of agricultural and land markets intensified distribution problems, while the WTO's negotiation rounds have failed to find any solutions to the conflicts of interest in-

herent in global agricultural trade.

There is no question that fertility has been in decline since the 1980s. The rise in global population thus evidently reflects rising life expectancy. The Revision of the U.N.'s 2012 World Population Prospects report shows that the average fertility rate between 1975 and 1980 was around 3.85 children per mother, but that, between 2010 and 2015, this average will fall to 2.45 children. Forecasts for the period 2095-2100 indicate a fertility rate of fewer than two children per mother. Between 2000 and 2005, life expectancy reached 67.1 years; it is forecast to hit 70.0 between 2010 and 2015 and 81.8 by 2100. Based on these figures we can project a global population of 8.08 billion people by 2025, 9.55 billion by 2050 and 10.85 billion by 2100. Variations on those statistics that assume a fertility rate of 0.5 children more or fewer change the 2050 projections by 1.3 billion, to a high of 10.9 or a low of 8.3 billion people. Jörgen Randers, in his report to the Club of Rome entitled »2052,« considers the lower figure to be the most likely outcome. He assumes that the number of children per woman will approach 1.0; hence, global population will decrease. Randers expects a maximum population of 8.1 billion by the beginning of the 2040s.

Both projections entail two dramatic shifts in worldwide social development linked to the aging of the world's population and the growth in productivity of the agricultural sector: the end of the traditional large family and rapid urbanization.

By 2050 the share of the global population over 60 will have increased from 13.4 to 25.3 %, while the share of the population under age 14 will have dropped from 26.2 to 21.3 %. Assuming that women will then have on average only 2.24 children, demographic realities will continue to diminish the number of large families in which children take care of their parents, primarily in the informal economy. Thus, a trend that has necessitated the establishment of state-run social security systems in the more highly developed countries since the end of the nineteenth century will have made similar arrangements necessary.

Advances in productivity, including those in the agricultural economy, lead to a reduction in the number of workers needed in that sector. In the more advanced countries the agricultural sector now absorbs fewer than 5 % of the working-age population, whereas in less developed countries, especially India, up to 2/3 of available workers are still in demand to perform agricultural labor. They populate the rural areas, and most still live in abject poverty. Structural changes in the economy as well as the sheer destitution of the rural population make migration to the cities their only way out. However, to look at urbanization as an undesirable development is inhumane; besides, the urban concentration of ecological problems poses challenges we are capable of solving. But there is still the problem of how to feed the newly arrived city-dwellers, two-thirds of whom work in the service sector. In this case, forms of urban agriculture can be counted on to contribute to their subsistence.

The development of agricultural production

Advances in the productivity of the agricultural sector have expanded the Earth's carrying capacity, although not without secondary ecological damage. In the future, increases in productivity will have to be accompanied by efforts to minimize ecological harm. However, it will be difficult to achieve those increases without innovations in genetic engineering. Finally, changes in eating habits, especially in the more developed countries, would make an obvious contribution.

There is also a connection between our food preferences and overuse of fresh wa-

ter resources. On a global scale, drinking and sanitary water are not in short supply; nevertheless, we still must ensure that the supplies we do possess are distributed equitably. Drinking water of a quality that does not pose health risks must be made available to everyone at an affordable price, a goal that still remains elusive. There are immense problems of distribution involved, which may be aggravated by geographical disparities. One technical solution would be the desalination of sea water, although the high cost of that process remains a serious obstacle retarding its wider use. In the Middle East, both Israel and the Gulf States have managed to overcome that obstacle. Agriculture currently accounts for 70 % of fresh water consumption, with half of that amount going to animal husbandry. If we were willing to shift our diets toward greater reliance on vegetables, that alone would reduce global water consumption considerably.

Global nutrition policy and the dilemmas of distribution

Hunger is first of all a consequence of poverty, and poverty is still rampant in rural areas, particularly in Africa. There it has been worsened by violent conflicts and wars, often instigated by global corporations seeking to secure their interests in raw material sources. Then too, hunger results when inadequate education stands in the way of a more rapid reduction in population growth. When the transfer of scientific knowledge – the engine of productivity gains – stagnates, that also becomes an impediment in the way of relieving hunger. In addition, hunger is the outcome of diverse climatic conditions. Nature has privileged the temperate zones while discriminating against the subtropical and tropical regions. One consequence of this climatic disparity is that people in the less-favored zones seek to escape their

hunger by emigrating. Their movements do not pose significant problems for countries with vast territories such as Russia, China, Canada, the U.S., Australia, and Brazil. But smaller countries must find ways to facilitate and regulate the flow of migrants on a global level.

All of the necessary strategies for solving the problems of distribution would work optimally if there were a world social welfare state, i.e., if global society were integrated. Such a step implies that all people could claim a human right to adequate nutrition as the bedrock of their social security, and that the state must guarantee that this right is respected. That is the only way possible to insure that no human being goes hungry. The normative foundations of the right to food and the state's role in securing it can be found in several U.N. documents: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (the »Social« Pact) of 1966; and the Conventions of the International Labor Organization (ILO). The Social Pact is a part of peremptory international law that guarantees »freedom from want.« It also takes into account the fact that not all states are in a position to create and secure the social arrangements that would provide such a guarantee. Therefore, Part II, Article 2 provides that: »Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to take steps, individually and *through international assistance and co-operation*, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Covenant by all appropriate means...« The relevant norms of international law were made more concrete in the *Social Protection Floor-Initiative* of the ILO, which represents an effort to attain global social integration. It is intended to facilitate access to social transfers and social services, including those that affect water and food. ■

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A False Sense of Security: Conceptual Confusion

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The »War on Terror« has distorted the crucial concepts surrounding the idea of security so thoroughly that it is becoming more and more difficult even to describe in plain language what the war implicitly threatens: human rights – which, paradoxically, the War on Terror was supposed to safeguard – and the dangers to which they are exposed in the internet age. But how can there be a well-ordered state, if the concepts needed to establish it have been thrown into confusion? Germany's Minister of the Interior, Hans-Peter Friedrich, embarrassed himself by attributing to irrational anti-Americanism any and all criticisms of the global U.S. infringements on the internet almost as soon as those became publicly known. Upon returning home from his pseudo-talks in Washington, Friedrich declared »security« to be a higher-order right that trumps all others, including freedom. He probably thought that anyone who controlled this higher-order right could then decide which aspects of freedom to retain and which ones to sacrifice-even though freedom belongs among the fundamental, inalienable human rights. Up until now such a sweeping notion of security has been the exclusive stock-in-trade of avowed autocrats, who cynically believe that human rights are little more than a trick used by the West to dominate the rest. But for a democratic country committed to the rule of law, that

kind of thinking is devastating, especially when it is justified by people who conceal their intentions behind the façade of the law-governed state. To resist the misuse of concepts, three clarifications are in order. First, when state authorities are allowed to define (in secret, I might add) what security is, what must be done to protect it, and what fundamental human rights it leaves intact, then those rights lose not only their specific, intrinsic moral-legal worth, but their very meaning. The perversion of security into a super-right shakes the foundations of a law-governed state, especially in cases where this is done under the pretext of safeguarding the rule of law itself.

Second, Friedrich's talk of a higher-order fundamental right of security is, at bottom, a return to the kind of thinking that characterized the old-fashioned German authoritarian state. It is based on a misunderstanding of the principles that determine the rank-ordering of freedom and security. Moreover, it represents a step backward from John Locke, who originated the idea of the modern law-governed state, to Thomas Hobbes, the theorist of the absolutist state as a bulwark against the war of all against all. However, in contrast to freedom and the true fundamental rights derived from it, »security« is an instrumental value, not an absolute one. It is designed to protect something that has intrinsic value, namely freedom. The relative value of security gets perverted into a substantial threat as soon as it is made to usurp or even exceed the priority of the truly fundamental rights. In that case there is no longer any way to set effective limits to the state's discretion in doing whatever it sees fit to maintain security, the content of which it defines by and for itself. Third, communicative freedom is the basis of all

freedom, because self-determination in life and citizenship is only possible when communication with others is »free of domination.« When secret agencies covertly compile complete files of our communications data, conceal from us the fact that they have the information, use it against us to serve purposes to which we have not consented, combine it in arbitrary ways with their own and others' data, all this does not constitute merely a »certain risk« to freedom; it damages the latter's very foundations. It is absurd to imagine that the preservation of our liberties requires nothing less than their gradual liquidation. To make sure that the language of freedom is not sacrificed gradually to security in this false sense of the term, the first thing that must be done is to clarify the relevant concepts. ■

Mario Telò

The Case for Responsible German Hegemony in Europe

Can the current severe crisis in Europe evolve into a »useful« crisis that might pave the way for a more efficient European Union endowed with greater legitimacy? Our author believes that such an outcome is indeed possible, but only under one condition: the country that is demographically and economically the strongest also should become the E.U.'s most politically powerful member.

Hegemony has nothing to do with the notion of a »German Empire« depicted by Ulrich Beck. Strictly speaking, such an empire cannot even exist within a multilateral system, which is based on the validity of generally recognized norms of behavior and on the principle of what J. G. Ruggie calls »diffuse reciprocity.« Multilateral systems thus function quite differently from rigid bilateral hierarchies with their »ad hoc« rules. The E.U. is a system founded upon deepened multilateralism, since – besides its multilateral institutions (such as the Council of the European Union and the European Council) – it also participates in supranational institutions.

The media's use of the term »hegemony« bears a remarkable resemblance to its use by Mao Zedong in 1965, when he applied it to the Soviet Union. At the time, the concept was synonymous with military supremacy. But hegemony does not necessarily imply either material or economic or even military predominance.

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There are two schools of thought that have contributed to the elucidation of the notion of hegemony, neither of which equates it with supremacy. The first of these is the Canadian school of international relations, which has been influenced by the ideas of Antonio Gramsci. Robert Cox and Steven Gill maintain that a hegemonic power is capable of dominating the spheres of ideas, culture, and collective conceptions of life, and persuading other countries and individuals to accept them as well. The second school of thought is based on liberal institutionalism. Apart from Charles Kindelberger, who studied British hegemony, its

most prominent spokesman is Robert Keohane. This school holds that a hegemonic power is supposed to produce collective or »common« goods for the entire community of nations. In Keohane's view, we have been living in a post-hegemonic world for several decades now. However, that does not prevent countries from exercising a benevolent and constructive hegemony at the regional level. And this is precisely the setting within which there is an opportunity to establish responsible German hegemony in Europe. But what sorts of collective goods can Germany provide for its European neighbors? In this context Peer Steinbrück pointed to the prospect of a »Marshall Plan for southern Europe.« Like the original Marshall Plan of the post-WW II era, this is an excellent idea, both politically and economically. From an economic point of view, it has been proven that rekindling growth on Europe's southern flank would boost economic recovery in both Germany and the rest of Europe (more than 60 % of all exports from the E.U.'s – formerly – 27 member-states are destined for the European market). So we should dare to do far more than was promised in June at the Berlin Conference on Youth Unemployment. In tandem with that plan, European institutions should be strengthened so as to rival those created at Bretton Woods in 1944. Innovations should include a bank for currency reserves intended as a European institution of last resort, a European version of the IMF, and coordination of national macroeconomic policies. The ultimate aim should be to establish a political union of a kind that has never existed before.

A dangerous divide

Is it realistic to expect progress in that direction? At this point, the external conditions affecting reform are being influenced more powerfully than in the past by a French-Italian debate over the future of the European Union. This discussion is urgently needed, because, for a variety of reasons, previous efforts to save the euro have risked bringing about the paralysis and demise of Europe and the E.U. Those efforts are destroying the foundations of legitimacy that the Union (still) enjoys in the eyes of E.U. citizens in both northern and southern Europe. In the South, rampant Euro-skepticism is directed against »German-imposed austerity policies« and »the lack of solidarity« exhibited by Germany. By the same token, even in northern Europe a populist groundswell is building, the advocates of which have turned against people they believe have encouraged »Federal Chancellor Merkel's excessive solidarity and generosity« (among others, these populist groups include the »Alternative for Germany,« the »True Finns,« and »The Dutch Right«).

If one considers the statistical evidence on its merits, it is hard to dismiss the arguments made by either faction out of hand. However, the perceptions, suspicions, images, and discourses expressed by both sides have implications that go beyond statistical data alone. The danger is that these subjective factors might have consequences out of all proportion to any realistic assessment of the situation. It is therefore urgently necessary to respond to this ominous split between the North and the South in Europe and the catastrophic outcome it might precipitate.

On May 16, French President François Hollande proposed the creation of a European Political Union, to be effected within two years. The plan is centered on two goals: stimulating job-creation for young people and instituting a European economic government. Hollande's proposal was greeted enthusiastically in Germany, Belgium, and Italy. In line with Italy's Euro-federalist tradition, the new Italian foreign minister, Emma Bonino, gave the plan a warm reception. She represents one of the most

pro-European governments in the history of Italy's Second Republic (the government of Enrico Letta). It is quite a paradox that this government was formed in the wake of one of the most Euro-skeptical elections ever held in Italy (Beppo Grillo and Silvio Berlusconi, on the left and right, respectively, had campaigned against the euro and the »German« E.U.). Spurning the policy of small steps, Bonino reiterated the federalists' traditional call for the creation of a United States of Europe, a federal Union, and a European budget equivalent to 5 % of GDP! However, her government's plan does not match up point for point with the project that Hollande has in mind, so there is room for continuing discussions, which could be enlivened by input from Germany, Belgium, and other countries. Thus, for example, the Belgian Prime Minister, Elio Di Rupo, has proposed that the hard core of the Euro-group should be strengthened politically, but that the United Kingdom should be left out.

In this way Italy has breathed new life into the initiative for European federalism and won over some important allies in the European Parliament: the faction around Guy Verhofstadt, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, and Sylvie Goulard. In addition, the engagement of a member-state with Europe's third largest economy was naturally bound to revive the initiative in the European Council. But is this a trustworthy initiative? How can it be defended credibly by a government that is also supported by Silvio Berlusconi in the Italian parliament? Research suggests two explanations. For one thing, we must bear in mind the historic weight of the consensus on issues of European policy that emerged during the entire First Italian Republic. That consensus was symbolized by the meeting between Aldo Moro and Enrico Berlinguer, as well as by the pro-European referendum held in 1989. For another, one can simply underscore the »self-evident need for a Europe-friendly attitude« and

the fact that there is simply no nationalistic alternative at all (Great Britain being the only country that clings to the illusion that it could go it alone and still prevail in globalized economic competition).

A scheme of coordination

Be that as it may, the balance of power is shifting within the European Council in any case, and that gives the German initiative a unique opportunity. Germany and Italy, North and South, could give a real boost to Hollande's project and enhance its credibility. By so doing, they would help achieve long-awaited progress toward further integration. But what should the model be and what kind of legitimacy would it have?

Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament, has called for progress on two fronts: efficiency and legitimacy. In the case of the latter, we must distinguish two distinct forms of legitimacy. One type is acquired by the benefits that are conferred on the citizens; the other arises through their active participation in events that shape their lives. But the European Union needs an innovative model for its institutions. The E.U. is neither an unfinished version of the United States of America, nor a nascent state. It is rather a regional construct composed of neighboring states and transnational networks.

Two other regional alliances of neighboring countries took advantage of exceptionally harsh economic crises in 1997 and 1999 to make real progress toward economic and political integration: the Common Market of South America (Mercosud) and the Association of Southeast Asian States (ASEAN). For example, in 2000 an ASEAN-plus-three meeting took place (which included China, Japan, and South Korea in addition to the regular members) that instituted a regional monetary fund.

Crises are always accompanied by opportunities; hence the right approach is not to demonize intergovernmental cooperation, but to reform it.

Of course, Europe's situation is different, because its supranational institutions exert a crucial influence on cooperation among governments. No one should rule out the possibility that progress will emerge from new forms of governance that link the advantages of cooperation among states in the Council to contributions from the Commission. The goal here is to strike out along a third way that avoids ideological trench warfare. One aspect of that approach, for example, involves the »Union Method,« which is being applied already in the context of the »European Semester for the Coordination of Economic Policy.« This new method of economic steering provides that the member states should submit their annual draft budget plans first to the Commission and then to the Council for debate, before they send them on to their national parliaments for review. The point is to correct a flaw in the Maastricht Treaty: namely, the asymmetry between the currency union and the economic union. There can be no functional economic and currency union without a stronger convergence among national budgetary policies and without multilateral oversight of all economic policy decisions that have impacts on other member-states as well as on the E.U.'s internal market. That is a step in the direction of economic government. The position of High Representative of the Economic Union should be created at some later time. It would be entrusted with the task of insuring the smooth operation of this process over the long term and ensuring that it worked efficiently. The scheme of »coordinating« national economic policy-making is thus distinct not only from simple intergovernmental cooperation, but also from the traditional community method.

Involving the electorates

But the only way all this is going to succeed is if we find a way to engage voters in the individual countries in this dynamic, path-breaking process. For that reason we must build a prominent political dimension into the European system as it undergoes reform. In other words, it is essential to »politicize« the European elections coming up in 2014. The Treaty of Lisbon authorizes the European Parliament to elect the President of the Commission. This power offers European parties, especially the European People's Party and the delegations of the Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, a unique opportunity to name their respective candidates for the Chair of the Commission, at the latest after their January Party Congresses (for example, Martin Schulz versus José Manuel Barroso?). In this way there would then be two candidates and two economic policy programs for the new and strengthened economic government.

The election campaign should be a battle between two camps that makes it possible to mobilize adherents from both the bourgeois-conservative and leftist sides of the political spectrum. The idea here is to mobilize the electorate and thus increase voter participation rates, which were distressingly low in 2009, with fewer than 50 % of eligible voters casting a ballot. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to believe that, in the aftermath of the parliamentary elections, Europe could be led by a homogeneous government from either of the two camps. It is hard to take seriously any mechanism of governance for Europe that would be identical with the domestic arrangements in the member-states, i.e., one in which the party or parties that held a majority in parliament would then name a »homogeneous« government composed only of members of the victorious party or coalition. In light of those considerations, the Commission will have

to be composed of a transnational coalition that bridges political differences. Nevertheless, the electoral campaign preceding the 2014 elections can elucidate the economic policy goals of the new Commission President, while infusing new movement into ossified structures and helping to legitimize the development of a political union.

Thus, a benevolent German hegemony would be founded upon two pillars: first, a »Marshall Plan« especially designed to aid unemployed young people; and, second, a new kind of political union that could overcome the traditional chasm between the federalists on one hand, and the advocates of a true union of European states, on the other.

Should the world fear hegemony of this kind? In all probability it would be a power that would be used to promote peace and international cooperation, that is, civil power of the kind that Willy Brandt once spoke. An E.U. on this model not only would be able to negotiate compromises between the North and the South, but also would be a proving ground for democratic renewal, a common energy and environmental policy, and the politics of a new world order.

(Translated from French by Pascal Heinsohn). ∎

Thomas Heberer

Don't Expect Political Reforms in China

China in the wake of the latest Party Congress

It is vitally important for China's new party and state leadership to address the country's daunting social and ecological problems and to rein in corruption. The selection procedures for filling the highest offices in China are arranged in such a way that radical reformers are excluded from the very outset, while time-tested »problem solvers« who will work within the system are promoted. Nevertheless, a political liberalization of the country for the sake of social progress is indispensable in the long run.

In November, 2012, the Party Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) elected new leadership. In February of this year the National People's Congress followed suit, choosing new leaders for the Chinese state as well. It had been common knowledge for some time that Xi Jinping, the son of a Party veteran who died in 2002, would become General Secretary of the CCP, Chair of the Military Affairs Commission, and President of the People's Republic, and that Li Keqiang would become Prime Minister. Both men had been elevated into the Standing Committee of the Politburo at the previous Party Congress

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so that they could prepare to assume their new leadership responsibilities.

The year 2012 was overshadowed by numerous scandals. In February, the Party Secretary of Chongqing and Politburo member, Bo Xilai, was removed from pow-

er. After his police chief took refuge in the U.S. consulate in the provincial capital of Chengdu, it emerged that Bo's wife had poisoned a foreign businessman in the wake of an altercation about transfers of private funds into accounts overseas. She was eventually convicted and sentenced to life in prison. Bo was stripped of all his offices on charges of corruption and misuse of power and expelled from the Communist Party. He is still awaiting trial.

The »Bo Xilai Affair« can also be interpreted as an internal Communist Party power struggle. Bo devised his »Chongqing model« almost as a populist alternative to the policies of the leadership in Beijing. While the orthodox policies had successfully combatted mafia-like organizations and introduced new kinds of social security systems, Bo's counter-model favored the state sector of the economy over the private, urged a more nationalist orientation in policymaking, glorified Mao's »red culture,« and sought to annul almost every legal regulation. One might characterize it as an expression of neo-traditional authoritarianism. Thus, Bo's model, on which the Chinese »new left« had pinned its hopes, really stood for a conservative change of direction in the country's politics.

The old guard produced mixed results

Ling Jihua, a close confidant of former party chief Hu Jintao and a man being groomed for a post on the Standing Committee of the Politburo, had to resign from his position once it came to light that his son had been killed in a traffic accident in his million-dollar Ferrari. In the car were two half-naked female escorts, who were both severely injured but survived the crash. State security authorities had tried for months to cover up the incident.

And in October, 2012, the *New York Times* reported that the family of Prime Minister Wen Jiabao had amassed a fortune of US $ 2.7 billion during his tenure in office.

The old leadership circle, which had to be replaced by a new generation of leaders at the end of its ten-year term of office, failed to initiate any substantial political reforms. Nevertheless, their decade at the helm had produced quite a few successes. China rose to become the world's second largest industrial power, gained international stature, introduced social security systems for peasants, and achieved greater integration between urban and rural land use. They worked to reduce poverty still more, improved the country's infrastructure through an extensive program which helped China to overcome the effects of the global financial crisis relatively quickly, and successfully combatted the authoritarian populism of the »new left.«

Nevertheless, they have bequeathed to the new leadership a daunting set of problems: huge income disparities in the country's population, especially between urban and rural China; a high level of systematic corruption as well as environmental devastation; the imperative of structural political reform; a discrepancy between, on one hand, the existence of laws covering many fields and, on the other, the lack of any serious effort to enforce them.

It would be a mistake to expect the new leadership to enact any major reform schemes such as the establishment of the rule of law independent of party meddling, a separation of powers, or constitutional government. New personalities are selected for leadership positions on the basis of a certain experiential background, such as success in previous posts and in handling tasks in different regions and policy areas. But they are also chosen because they are expected to maintain continuity in policymaking and accept the fundamental consensus concerning China's transformational project. Charismatic leaders are not de-

sired, because the previous leaders want to prevent from the outset any slide toward authoritarian structures as well as the dominance of individual figures or attempts at systemic change, which could have unforeseeable consequences for the country. The goal is to maintain collective rather than individualized leadership. Enormous social and economic dislocations are bound to occur in the wake of the ongoing process of transformation in China. Consequently, political renovations on a grand scale are seen as a danger to the country's stability. Those are the parameters within which the new generation of leaders will have to attempt to tackle core social and structural problems. Among other things, they will be called upon to reorient the country's growth model away from exports and toward the domestic market and especially greater domestic consumption. Furthermore, they will want to promote industries that produce higher-value goods as well as to expand the service sector. They will endeavor to achieve parallel advances in both economic growth and social justice. The latter objective should be attained by instituting various programs for the socially vulnerable and by dismantling income disparities through a fairer tax system. Besides these desiderata, the new leadership will confront a range of other issues: the abolition of privileges for state-owned enterprises; the free convertibility of China's currency; and the opening of capital markets to foreign and/or private financial institutions. These are just a few of the challenges that await them.

In terms of foreign policy, especially in the economic sphere, it is important that the new leadership should possess greater international experience than its predecessor did, a qualification that could be vital in inducing China to become more deeply involved in international processes. The new leaders have also promised to maintain continuity in running a mode-

rate foreign policy and to liberalize foreign trade policies.

To sum up, the new Chinese leadership is likely to assign a higher priority to solving outstanding economic and social problems than to political reforms. In addition, it will try to improve governance, mainly through enhanced political regulation. Some issues now being discussed in this context include: greater transparency in the state and party apparatuses, deeper engagement of the populace in oversight of the bureaucracy, public disclosure of the incomes of top officials, and enforcement of laws already on the books.

In March of 2012, a program to »reduce social injustice« went into effect after eight years of debate. Among other things it provides for an increase in the minimum wage, the expansion of social security systems, various measures to improve rural land use, and tax reforms aimed at redistributing income.

A new slogan: the »Chinese Dream«

Since Imperial times every new ruler of China has chosen a motto for his tenure in office. This tradition has continued even in the People's Republic of China down to this day. For example, in 2002 the slogan coined by the previous party boss, Jiang Zemin, known as »The Three Represents,« was incorporated into Party statutes. The basic argument implicit in the slogan was that the CCP no longer represents classes, but instead the entire Chinese nation; hence, it has transformed itself from a class party into a party of the entire people. Hu Jintao then developed the paradigm of a »scientific concept of development,« which called for a more sustainable process of modernization. Toward the end of 2012 China's party chief, Xi Jinping, chose the »Chinese Dream« as a new slogan implying that national renewal would hap-

pen in tandem with greater happiness and prosperity for the people.

There is no doubt that the process of transformation has caused enormous social dislocations. That is the reason why the new leadership must also confront the tasks of cushioning its impacts upon the socially vulnerable while seeking to redistribute income. These measures are urgently needed, because otherwise the gulf between rich and poor, the true source of social tensions, will probably increase still more. Nevertheless, gradual political reforms are still indispensable in the long run for the sake of further social and political progress. The reform project would

make sure that existing laws were properly enforced and civil rights protected, that a new social consensus was reached, and that new forms of social and general conflict management were adopted, all to prevent China's social strata from drifting even further apart. The entire population is waiting and hoping for further structural reforms. China's development over the coming decades will be decisively influenced by the leadership's efforts to strike a balance between gradual structural and institutional renovation, on one hand, and the maintenance of social stability, on the other. ■

Eun Jeung Lee

The Enigma of North Korea

Since the collapse of the Eastern Bloc in the early nineties, the Korean peninsula has repeatedly undergone a crisis cycle marked by »increasing tension – compromise – sanctions – increasing tension.« The most recent repetition of this cycle happened earlier this year. What is driving North Korea to stage these ritual confrontations again and again, even though they win no friends and tend to isolate the country even more? To understand the inner logic of North Korea's behavior, one first must come to grips with the causes of the Korean problem. The perpetually recurring crises actually arise from structural problems that have a long pre-history.

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The Korean issue cannot be viewed in isolation from the Cold War and the collapse of the Eastern Bloc. As a part of the latter, North Korea had a secure position on the international stage. That sense of security benefited the country, because it

had been completely destroyed and traumatized by the American bombing campaign during the Korean War (1950-1953). The war had a variety of psychological consequences on the peninsula. In South Korea, anticommunism was adopted as a state ideology and from that time forward has shaped the country's political and social life. Meanwhile, the North turned America into the image of a bogeyman, one that has become the most crucial element in its ideological struggles and propaganda. North Korea only managed to survive the war on account of the support it received from the Soviet Union and the People's

Republic of China, and indeed remained dependent on those powers for its subsequent rapid reconstruction.

The shield of the Cold War and the accompanying ideological and military confrontation that allowed North Korea to develop its economy fairly successfully over the next three decades or so started to disintegrate, beginning in 1972 when Nixon's trip to Beijing inaugurated a normalization of relations between the USA and China. It became even more tattered when, a few years later, the Soviet Union embarked upon a process of economic and political reform.

In China reform policies began as early as 1978 under Deng Xiaoping. The resumption of diplomatic relations with the United States followed one year later. Then in 1985 Michael Gorbachev started to reform the Soviet Union through his policies of perestroika and glasnost. Those shifts in the economic and geopolitical environment of North Korea changed its situation fundamentally. However, Kim Il Sung, North Korea's founder, was unwilling to initiate political and economic reforms in his own country. Instead he criticized them and announced that North Korea would bring about the »final victory of socialism,« albeit a socialism »with Korean characteristics.« North Korea had already made similar intentions known once before, at the end of the 1950s when relations between the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union began to sour. At that time North Korea refused to take sides and announced that it would choose an »independent« path. The North was in a position to make that choice, because – unlike the German Democratic Republic – it had neither Soviet nor Chinese troops stationed on its territory.

On the other hand Kim Il Sung did have to respond to these geostrategic shifts. Accordingly he proposed negotiations in 1984 that would eventually lead North and South Korea as well as the United States

simultaneously to sign a non-aggression pact and a peace treaty between the North and the U.S. To underscore his willingness to negotiate, he announced disarmament measures in 1987 and again in 1990. Paralleling the North's initiatives, the South Korean government under President Roh Tae Woo proclaimed its intention to pursue a »Northern policy« of detente. These initiatives resulted in the signing of two agreements between North and South Korea: the »Foundational Treaty« of 1991 and the »Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula« in 1992.

However, the South's interest in its Northern policy took second place behind its desire to normalize relations with the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union. Toward that end, South Korea granted the USSR credits in the amount of US $ 3 billion. Then, in 1990, the two countries agreed to establish diplomatic relations. A similar treaty between South Korea and the People's Republic of China was concluded in 1992.

Two sides of the same coin

Faced with these developments North Korea did not have many options left. One of these would be to seek to establish diplomatic relations with the United States and Japan. That would enable it to create a new balance of power due to the intersecting mutual recognitions, and thus protect itself from unwanted interventions and encroachments by the great powers active in the region. Another option would be for the North to strengthen its position by acquiring nuclear weapons. Initially, Kim Il Sung pursued the first option. Early in 1992, during interviews with the *Asahi Shimbun* and (twice) the *Washington Times,* he expressed the wish to establish diplomatic relations with the U.S. However, once China and the Soviet Union had granted dip-

lomatic recognition to South Korea, he lost important leverage in his negotiations with the United States and Japan.

The United States no longer could see any need to grant North Korea diplomatic recognition after the Soviet Union's collapse and the establishment of diplomatic recognition between China and South Korea. Instead, the U.S. became more and more preoccupied with the issue of North Korea's nuclear weapons. This was the issue that also torpedoed negotiations between the North and Japan in 1992 concerning the establishment of diplomatic relations, since Japan linked the latter to concessions on security matters, i.e., the atomic weapons program.

Since that time, the nuclear program has become the linchpin of the »North Korea problem,« and as such it is now the North's most important negotiating tool. In this way the nuclear program and the peace treaty (or the security guarantee for the North Korean regime that goes along with it) have become two sides of the same coin. The pattern of negotiations over the last twenty years obeys this logic: While North Korea attempts to compel the United States to negotiate about the peace treaty by using the nuclear program as leverage, Washington insists that it will only talk to the North once it has abandoned its nuclear program.

North Korea has enjoyed a great deal of success using this strategy to force the U.S. and other countries to the negotiating table. Thus, for example, the first nuclear crisis in 1994 led to the Geneva Agreement, in which the U.S. and its allies promised to supply the North with a light-water reactor as well as crude oil. But they did not adhere to the deal, and as a result the Geneva Agreement became little more than waste paper. Since then numerous negotiations have taken place, which have led to the signing of various agreements and declarations. North and South Korea even held summit meetings in 2000 and 2007.

However, the promises made at those meetings hardly ever were kept. For that reason, North Korea continues to make threats concerning its nuclear program, and the United States continues to count on the effects of economic sanctions. In fact, China undermines the latter, because it wants to avoid at any price chaotic conditions with unforeseeable consequences in a neighboring country and the possible presence of American troops on its border. In light of these circumstances, the crisis rituals may be repeated in the future – at any rate as long as the chess board on which they are played out does not get destroyed.

Nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula: not a new problem

The nuclear program is evidently the key to the Korean issue. Yet that conclusion does not hold true merely for the 1990s; it was also the case during the Korean War era from 1950-1953. Right after the war broke out on June 25, 1950, the use of atomic bombs was being weighed in Washington. The decision was made to avoid their use, but only because decision-makers believed that victory was assured even without them. Early in 1951, when Chinese volunteers and regular soldiers began to drive back U.S.-led forces, which had advanced to the Chinese border without a U.N. mandate, American policymakers again considered using nuclear weapons. On November 30, 1950, President Harry S. Truman declared at a press conference that the United States would use all necessary weapons in the Korean War, including atomic bombs. It proved to be a stroke of good fortune for the Korean peninsula and China that, in the wake of the firing of General Douglas MacArthur, Truman's decision was never carried out. The latter intended to use some 30-50 atomic bombs to draw a »cobalt belt« across the Korean

peninsula. Truman is alleged to have signed the order to bomb targets in North Korea and northern China on April 6, 1951, shortly before MacArthur was relieved of duty. Even after the armistice agreement of July 27, 1953, was signed, the United States continued to play its »nuclear card« whenever it seemed strategically useful to do so.

Kim Il Sung is supposed to have expressed his concern over American atomic bombs stockpiled in South Korea to East German Communist Party chief Erich Honecker, when the latter visited North Korea in October, 1986. There were some 100 nuclear weapons stationed in South Korea, he alleged, and if the United States used just two of them against North Korea, it could devastate the entire country.

North Korea had started to develop its own nuclear program as early as the 1950s. The training of nuclear technicians in the Soviet Union began in 1956. A treaty of cooperation in the field of nuclear technology was signed with the Soviet Union in 1959, and the research reactor in Yongbyon was operational by the mid-1960s. The Soviet Union also backed North Korea's continuing development of its nuclear program as well as the construction of the Yongbyon reactor complex during the Seventies and Eighties. The plutonium needed to make North Korea's atomic bombs was produced from spent fuel rods taken from a second reactor that was brought online in 1980.

North Korea signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1985; however it has repeatedly refused to permit inspections of its facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEO) as provided in the treaty, because it fears Washington would exploit the inspections to gain unfair advantages. Early in 1994 tensions between the United States and North Korea had increased to the point that they almost led to war. At the time North Korea found itself in an especially difficult situation, since the country now lacked a protective ally due to the collapse of the Soviet Union. Moreover, trade with the Comecon (the socialist countries' trading bloc) had ended, which threatened North Korea's food and energy imports. As if that were not enough, Kim Il Sung died. In spite of all these setbacks, North Korea continued to expand its nuclear program, which its leadership regarded as the only trump card the North possessed in its game with the United States.

The 2013 Crisis and its Resolution

One important difference between the nuclear crises of 1994 and 2013 lies in the fact that all parties now acknowledge the existence of North Korean nuclear weapons as more than a mere possibility, even though few are willing to recognize the North as a nuclear-armed nation. In light of all the pre-history and the renunciation by the North of the NPT in 2003, this is certainly not an unproblematic issue. At any rate it is clear enough that North Korea will not under any circumstances give up its nuclear program as long as the country's existential security has not been guaranteed through a peace treaty with the United States. In the last analysis that is one reason why some people are asking whether there is any serious alternative to the peace treaty demanded by North Korea if one hopes to insure peace and stability both on the Korean peninsula and throughout East Asia. Is it really justifiable for the U.S. and South Korea to reject North Korea's demands for reasons that ultimately seem to involve considerations of domestic policy?

The new president of South Korea, Park Geun-Hye, clarified her position when she visited the U.S. in May, 2013. She based it on the premise of »guilt and expiation« (»crime and punishment« would be a closer approximation to the Korean expression):

North Korea must pay a price for every kind of provocation. She asks all neighboring countries that feel allegiance to South Korea to use every means in their power to compel North Korea to open up and change, leaving no latitude for any kind of alternative. At the same time she hopes to inaugurate a »confidence-building process« on the Korean peninsula, which would insure that the North would receive humanitarian aid regardless of the political tensions that might exist at any given time. She would also like to transform the line of demarcation between the two countries (the DMZ) into a symbol of peace and mutual trust on the Korean peninsula. It remains unclear how far wishes like this one can be reconciled with the logic of »guilt and expiation.« It is hardly to be expected that this path that will lead to progress en route to a solution of the Korean question.

The former South Korean foreign minister Yoon Young-Gwan recently wrote that it is no simple task for the world to confront North Korea's saber rattling, even though it is coming from an extremely impoverished and effectively defeated country. What is needed is a figure like Prince Metternich, who succeeded after the Napoleonic Wars in establishing a new European order, or the far-sightedness of a John F. Kennedy, who transformed the Cuban crisis into status quo politics, thereby defusing the East-West conflict. Metternich did not humiliate defeated France or force it into a corner where it would sulk. Kennedy too refused to humiliate the Soviet Union or to vanquish it once and for all. He also was prepared secretly to withdraw American missiles from Turkey and Italy in exchange for the withdrawal of Soviet missiles from Cuba. By virtue of his pragmatism Kennedy managed to prevent a Third World War, which seemed all too likely. By contrast, the victorious allied powers after the First World War did humiliate a defeated Germany and sought to weaken it permanently through harsh peace terms. The outcome is well known.

Where North Korea is concerned, equivalent political wisdom is evidently lacking. What would have happened, wonders Yoon Young-Gwan, if the North Korea problem had been approached with the prudence of a Metternich or a Kennedy? Little is to be expected from a policy that is calibrated for the short term and based on ad hoc reactions. It is high time to come up with sound and lasting solutions, especially since the perceived value of North Korea's »nuclear card« is likely to increase in the wake of more nuclear testing, which can be expected, and improved missile technology. It would be desirable if the United States, South Korea, and Japan would look beyond their interest in exploiting the Korean situation to score domestic political points, and give some thought to the long-term goals of their policies toward North Korea. ■

Henning Effner

Myanmar's Reform Process: A Work in Progress

Myanmar is currently going through a rapid process of political and economic transformation that scarcely anyone would have thought possible even a few years ago. The reforms, which the government under Thein Sein, has pushed forward at an accelerated pace, deserve high marks if one considers them as a whole. Yet many stumbling blocks remain on the road to a democratic society.

The shift began with the parliamentary elections of November, 2010, which were certainly neither free nor fair, but did usher in the end of the country's fifty-year military dictatorship and the beginning of the reform process. Shortly after he took office in early 2011, Myanmar's new president surprised the international community by announcing a series of reform measures. Political prisoners were released and the dialogue with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi was resumed. The Nobel Peace Prize recipient was released from house arrest, and her party – the National League for Democracy (NLD) – was legalized. Moreover, in 2011 the government launched a renewed peace initiative designed to end decades-long conflicts with armed resistance groups from ethnic minority communities.

In 2012 the government maintained a steady reform course: a new law was passed guaranteeing the right of assembly, and thus allowing peaceful demonstrations for the first time. Rigid prior censorship of the press was relaxed, while internet websites operated by exiles abroad, off limits to citizens of Myanmar for years, were unblocked. In April, 2012 a new labor law went into effect that allowed the formation of unions for the first time since the military seized power in 1962. Another milestone in the reform process was reached in the by-elections for parliament in which the NLD, led by Aung San Suu Kyi, won an overwhelming electoral victory, capturing 43 of 45 contested seats. Although the parliament is still dominated by retired mili-

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tary officers, it is evolving more and more into a counterweight to the executive and a forum for open, often contentious debates. Important economic reforms were also initiated during 2012: foreign trade was liberalized; the system of foreign currency exchange was standardized; a new law on investment was passed; and the reform of the financial sector was undertaken. The first fruits of the economic opening are already evident: foreign investment is on the rise and the tourism sector is experiencing a rapid upsurge.

Thein Sein's policy of opening up Myanmar has met with universal approval around the globe. In response, the EU decided in April, 2012 to suspend sanctions against the country for one year. Then, in April of this year, EU sanctions were lifted completely, except for a continuing weapons embargo. Meanwhile, the United States has also largely relaxed its sanctions regime and deepened its diplomatic ties with Myanmar. In November of 2012, Barack Obama became the first sitting U.S. president to visit the country. President Thein Sein reciprocated with a trip to Washington in May of this year, the first visit by a Burmese head of state to the U.S. in nearly

fifty years. Thus, in just two years President Thein Sein has succeeded in ending the isolation of his once-ostracized country.

Myanmar is still in the early stages of a long process

In spite of the successes achieved and the remarkably quick tempo of the reform process, enormous challenges still lie ahead for Myanmar, and the road toward a democratic society will be long. The country's political institutions still lack legitimacy, because they have not emerged from free and fair elections. The parliament is dominated by the USDP (Union Solidarity and Development Party), whose members are mostly representatives of the previous military government. There are no signs yet of an independent judiciary, nor have any attempts been made to reform the corrupt public administration. The political legacy of five decades of military rule still weighs heavily on the country. Authoritarian structures are so deeply entrenched in Myanmar's society that it will take time to establish democratic values and decision-making procedures.

The thorny path to a permanent peace

The economic reforms introduced in the past few years certainly have unleashed an economic boom, but so far it has been confined mostly to metropolitan Yangon. By contrast, in the rural areas where more than 75 % of the population still lives, little has changed. Furthermore, as liberalization proceeds, it lays bare the deep wounds left by the authoritarian past. Many unresolved social conflicts that were suppressed forcibly during the military dictatorship are now emerging into the light of day. There have been numerous demonstrations against illegal land sei-

zures, inhumane working conditions, and the devastating consequences of major energy and infrastructure projects. These protests suggest that people are no longer willing to acquiesce in injustices without a murmur of dissent. So the question becomes all the more urgent: How can economic development be pursued in the future in more socially just and inclusive ways?

Settling the decades-long conflicts between the central government and the ethnic minorities (who constitute around 40 % of the country's population) will be by far the biggest challenge for Myanmar's reformist leadership. The peace initiative launched by the government back in 2011 already has a series of accomplishments to its credit. During 2012, cease-fire agreements were signed with nearly all the resistance groups. Yet there were also some bitter setbacks, especially in the Kachin state, located in the north of Myanmar, where fighting between the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) and the military escalated during 2012. As part of a large-scale offensive, the air force bombed positions held by the rebel organization. Consequently, more than 100,000 people had to flee the conflict zones. It was not until early this year that some progress was made in negotiations between the government and the KIO. Last June those talks finally produced a concrete result: a temporary cease-fire.

There is still a long way to go before a comprehensive peace treaty and a lasting political solution to these conflicts can be achieved. In the final analysis, the ethnic minorities are demanding constitutional amendments that would create federal structures granting them greater regional autonomy and a larger role in political decision-making. Moreover, they are also asking for their fair share of the profits from raw materials extracted in the territories where they live. To be sure, the government has declared its willingness in prin-

ciple to negotiate about these issues. But it is still not clear what a political solution might look like.

Religious conflicts have been reignited

In addition to the long-simmering ethnic conflicts, the processes of liberalization and the opening of economy and society have also rekindled long-suppressed religious conflicts. Thus, in 2012 there were repeated violent clashes between the Muslim Rohingyas and the Buddhist Rakhine (Arakanese) people, an ethnic group living in western Myanmar near the border with Bangladesh. More than 150 died during the fighting, while tens of thousands, most of them Rohingyas, were forced to flee and have been living in temporary refugee camps ever since.

The government's treatment of the Muslim minority has provoked international criticism. Human rights organizations charged the government with having done too little to stop the violence against the Rohingyas.

The Myanmar government does not recognize the Rohingyas as an indigenous national minority; instead it sees them as illegal immigrants who have entered the Rakhine state of western Myanmar from neighboring Bangladesh. Even though many Rohingyas have lived in Myanmar for generations, they have been denied citizenship there. Among the Buddhist majority in the country's population, antipathy toward the Rohingyas is widespread. It became evident again earlier this year that the antagonism between Buddhists and Muslims harbored considerable potential for conflict, as assaults on Muslims began to take place in other parts of the country as well. In these cases the violence was fomented mostly by radical Buddhist monks, whose goal is to expel the Muslim minorities from Myanmar.

These intra-state conflicts will have to be settled if there is going to be further progress toward democratization. This is particularly so because the military's dominant role in the political system is closely connected to the persistence of ethnic conflict. Traditionally, the military has believed that its chief task is to prevent the breakup of this multi-ethnic state. As long as the ethnic conflicts remain unresolved, it is hardly likely that the military will relinquish its pre-eminence.

The military remains the country's most powerful institution

As before, the military retains a veto power, and its political influence is assured by certain provisions of constitutional law. A quarter of the seats in parliament are reserved for representatives of the military. Constitutional amendments require a supermajority of 75 %, which means they are impossible without the military's concurrence. Furthermore, the supreme commander of the armed forces names several ministers, including those for defense and interior. The military does support the reform policies of President Thein Sein, yet it is not fully committed to them. And it is subject to civilian control only to a certain extent. Human rights violations perpetrated by members of the armed forces continue, especially in the territories of ethnic minorities. Clearly, then, it is urgently necessary to revise the internal structures of the armed forces and engage the military more deeply in the process of reform.

Until recently the reform process in Myanmar was a »revolution from above,« initiated by the military, which selected Thein Sein as president in 2011 – a man who himself had served as a general under the military government. But once the new government took office, the reform process began to develop a dynamic of its own

and went far beyond anything that the former military dictator, Than Shwe, might have had in mind originally when he talked about »disciplined democracy.« Thein Sein is largely responsible for this turn of events, since his courageous reform measures ultimately convinced even Aung San Suu Kyi to support the course he had set. Since their first meeting in August, 2011, the two of them have developed a form of cooperation based on mutual trust, which has perhaps been the most important basis for the success of the reform process so far. But it is still an open question whether this cooperation will continue after the 2015 elections.

The parliamentary elections scheduled for that year could turn out to be a critical point in the process of reform. The NLD's overwhelming win in the 2012 by-elections to parliament made it obvious that Aung San Suu Kyi has strong backing among the populace. Given her enormous popularity, one should assume that the NLD will score a clear electoral victory in 2015 as long as the elections are conducted fairly and freely. In that case parliamentary majorities would shift drastically in favor of the NLD. It is not yet clear whether the current political leadership and the military are ready to accept this. They worry that they will lose control of the reform process should the NLD seize the reins of power.

Aung San Suu Kyi is aware of this difficulty. That is why she is seeking a rapprochement with the military. Besides, without the military's acquiescence she could not even be elected president. According to the constitution, people whose family members hold citizenship in a foreign country, or have held it in the past, are not eligible to be president in Myanmar. Aung San Suu Kyi was formerly married to a foreign national; hence, she is not eligible for the state presidency. It would take a constitutional amendment to reverse that prohibition, and that could only be approved by parliament if the military agrees

to it. Aung San Suu Kyi is already pushing for such an amendment; however, it is not yet clear whether it could be passed before the 2015 elections. Presumably, the military and the USDP would only go along if such an amendment were part of a broader political settlement that would insure that their interests would be protected even if the NLD took power. It is still not obvious what such a deal might look like. Nevertheless, it appears that discussions are already taking place within the NLD about the possibility of forming a coalition government with the USDP after the elections of 2015. These are positive signs, which suggest that the necessary political compromises are possible. ∎

Matthias Heise

Islam meets Democracy: the Case of Indonesia

Indonesia is the largest country in the world with both a democratic constitution and a society thoroughly shaped by Islam. The following essay profiles some of the ways in which those two factors have been conjoined and where the difficulties may still lie.

On a purely theoretical plane – and thus beyond all prejudices – Islam and democracy are compatible. On one side we have a form of political authority, on the other, an exegesis of faith which can be counted among the world's three great monotheistic religions. In principle, any form of rule should be able to combine freely with a multitude of different faiths. Christian as well as Islamic communities hearken back to a canon of values that can go hand in hand with charismatic authority (in Max Weber's sense) or with legal, collective forms of rule, such as democracy. But, as everyone knows, all theory would be gray if one could not find a real-life example by means of which to illustrate the relationship between Islam and democracy. The chosen example is Indonesia, the world's largest country decisively shaped by Islam, with approximately 250 million inhabitants, and one that enjoys a democratic constitution.

The young Indonesian Republic experienced a democratic renaissance in the aftermath of the systemic upheavals of 1998. Democracy is not a foreign word in Indonesia. On the contrary, when it looks back into its past, the country finds democratic experiences. The latter include both the nation's political culture and tolerant attitude toward religious diversity as well as the historical experiences it has accumulated since achieving its independence from the Netherlands in 1949. Indonesia's »founding fathers,« Sukarno and Hatta, established a political system that, in its early years, made a serious and successful effort to resist the influence of non-secular

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Muslim endeavors. That system was based on an ideological foundation known as *pancasila* (five principles) that maintained a relatively neutral position vis-à-vis the country's religious diversity.

The goal of *pancasila* was to forge national unity from the many different ethnic groups, nationalities, religions, and cultures of the archipelago, yet without ignoring the diversity of Indonesia (the island nation includes more than 350 national groups). Nevertheless, only five religions were granted official recognition at the birth of the regime: Islam, Christianity, including both Protestant and Catholic confessions, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Confucianism was added to the list by President Abdurrahman Wahid in 1998. *Pancasila* prohibits the establishment of any state religion, no matter what its orientation, in the first item of its credo. Instead it postulates only belief in the one true God. After the demise of the authoritarian Suharto regime in 1998, Islamic forces wanted to proclaim Islam as the state religion through a constitutional amendment, but those efforts came to naught.

To suppress religious freedom would fly in the face of the constitution and the plurality and liberality (!) of Indonesian

society that is inseparable from it. This argument was made even by Muslim intellectuals, including the country's former President, Wahid. And the anthropologist Robert W. Hefner underscores the fact that ideas of democracy, civil society, pluralism, and the rule of law have not enjoyed so much support from so many intellectuals anywhere in the Muslim world as they have in Indonesia, from the representatives of (civil) Indonesian Islam. It is not a trivial matter in this context that the fourth principle in Indonesia's state ideology intends to give democracy a solid underpinning. In this respect the ideology can be traced back to two Muslim practices: *mufakat* (consensus) and *musyawarah* (consultation, entrusted to parliamentary representatives). Both principles – religious pluralism and democracy – enabled the critics of the authoritarian Suharto regime in the Nineties to legitimate the pro-democracy movement and the defense of pluralism.

What makes Indonesia so special is the support for democracy provided by Islamic groups during the country's transformation process. It is hard to ignore the pro-democracy influence of two groups in particular: the Islamic organization Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) previously led by Walid, and the Muhammadiyah. These are the two largest Muslim organizations in Indonesia with a combined membership of around 60 million. The NU categorically rejects interpretations of the Koran that call for the establishment of a caliphate or a system of Islamic law (Sharia). It is therefore strictly opposed to associations such as the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. The Muhammadiyah rejects radical and violent versions of Islam and emphasizes the conscience of the individual, with which every human being is endowed from birth and in which God's voice is expressed (»vox populi vox dei«). Thus, every individual can and must be involved in public decisions. If a consensus is lacking, that involvement may take the form of a vote. For

these reasons, mainstream Indonesian Islam is certainly compatible with democracy. If one believes the scholar and journalist Adam Schwarz, such pro-democracy leanings may link up with Javanese tradition, which allegedly rejects ideas of moral superiority and intolerant exclusivism.

The anti-democratic side

On the other hand it is impossible to deny the existence of Islamist (i.e., anti-democratic) forces in Indonesia. Those who preach the unity of Islam and politics pursue their goal in various ways. The terrorist attacks on the tourists' favorite island, Bali (in 2002 and 2005) and on the Marriot and Ritz Carlton hotels in Jakarta (in 2009) speak for themselves. Such events teach us to take a more subtle approach to Islam in Indonesia and put into focus the radical, anti-democratic side. Here it is worth mentioning both the Indonesian subsidiary of the Southeast-Asian organization Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and the Front Pembela Islam (FPI or Islamic Defense Front). So far these groups have not received much backing from the Indonesian people, but during the transitional phase they were favored by some elements of the political establishment. It is true that Suharto did take small steps to liberalize sectors of the economy and domains of political life. After thirty years as regent he was not too worried about a complete loss of power. Yet in addition to this shrewdly calculated liberalization, Suharto also sought allies among the radical Islamic organizations as a counterweight to the increasingly bold bids for power made by the military and pro-democracy forces. Even today a legacy of mistrust for radical groups lingers on account of this unholy alliance. In addition, Suharto detached the state ideology of *pancasila* from its neutral origins and refashioned it into a doctrine intended to stabilize political

authority by emphasizing the principle of the unity between rulers and ruled. Large-scale protests launched by a self-confident civil society and stoked by the harsh side-effects of the Asian crisis of 1997 initially called for a revision of the constitution. But by 1998 they had paved the way into the post-Suharto era for a system that was already becoming de facto democratic. Indonesians refer to this transition as the r*eformasi*. The demands for democracy give evidence that the civilian population already possessed a strong awareness of civic values. The r*eformasi* also reinforces the expectation that political Islam would not do well in a libe-ralized system in which political parties were allowed to compete for support. Yet one should not imagine that the idea of merging Islam and politics has been laid to rest once and for all. It is not an irreversible element of the constitution, since radical currents of Islam persist in calling for a change of course.

The example of Indonesia thus reveals in fascinating ways how Islam and democracy might dovetail with one another. On the other hand, the Indonesian case, testing as it does the compatibility of Islam and democracy, should not mislead us into overlooking the universal aspects of democracy. All too often both »Western« scholars and Asian politicians have claimed that Asian democracies should and could not follow the so-called Western canon, allegedly because they are grounded on originally »Asian« values (though there is little clarity about exactly what these are supposed to be). At one time this argument allowed Suharto to justify an authoritarian political system by using a distorted notion of democracy that ended up damaging its reputation. Still, campaigning for the full development of democracy in Asia remains a worthwhile endeavor, which always has to be adjusted to the concrete case, both theoretically and practically. ■

Paul Pasch
A Failed State?
The hard road ahead for Bosnia and Herzegovina

Far from advancing the processes of pacification and democratization, the post-war constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina has actually hampered both, largely because it clings to the old Yugoslavian model of distributing resources according to ethnic criteria. Today, the country is a dysfunctional state with elites who are unwilling to compromise and a devastated economy. Ethnic criteria of fairness in distribution need to be abandoned in favor of a principle of justice based on individual rights and merit.

Almost two decades after the end of the brutal Balkan War, the international community still practically governs many aspects of politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The international community would like to withdraw and turn over responsibility for the country to local political elites. However, this would be a mistake, as

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demonstrated by the political paralysis that has prevailed since 2010 and especially by the ongoing crisis of government in the Federation since June, 2012. Both show that the constitution as currently designed does not allow for proper governance.

In fact, the international community still remains deeply engaged in the country, as it has been for some time. The High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, governing with a mandate from the U.N. Security Council, is supposed to monitor the implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords. The Special Envoy of the European Union (EUSR) represents the E.U. in civil affairs. The Military Unit of the European Union (EUFOR) handles military issues. The European Police Mission (EUPM) coordinates police matters. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) deals with international security issues and provides support for the rebuilding of a pacified post-war society. Besides these bodies, the international community is represented in the form of certain other U.N. institutions and international aid organizations.

However, after the new Balkan strategy was approved in 2011, the E.U. has seemed to back away from its commitments. Led by the German government, the international community appears to be dead set on withdrawing despite the increasing potential for conflict. Because its domestic resources are shrinking, the community is preparing to shirk its responsibilities and leave the fragile Balkan entity to its own devices.

The crippling legacy of the Tito era

To fathom these problems it is necessary to recall how the multi-ethnic Yugoslav state used to work. In Tito's day access to power, jobs, state funds – really, just about all resources that were not distributed via the market – was allocated on the basis of each ethnic group's percentage of the total population. In this way resources were supposed to be allotted in the fairest way possible and such that no ethnic group would be at a disadvantage. However, this arrangement had one glaring weakness: it forced people to rally behind an ethnic group rather than opt for a shared civic identity and membership that transcended ethnic boundaries. That system also discouraged – and still does – interethnic marriages and associations. Instead, demographic rivalries among the ethnic groups flared up all too easily, as they tried to boost the share of their own group in the overall population. Thus, Tito-era practices sustained and potentially intensified existing antagonisms, causing society to splinter along ethnic lines. The whole system worked only as long as there was a single source of authority that dominated everything, but that was seen as impartial and able to achieve a balance among ethnic interests. Tito and his apparatus (including especially the multi-ethnic army) constituted just such a central, authoritative institution able to operate »above« the collision of ethnic interests. They arbitrated – or issued authoritarian fiats for – all of the inevitable conflicts among ethnic groups. For a long time this approach worked well.

But after Tito died and the authoritative center collapsed in the wake of communism's demise, the federally organized People's Republic began to disintegrate. Slobodan Milošević manipulated the system so as to elevate Serbian interests above those of other ethnic groups. Those associations, which had been perpetuated and catered to for so many years, inevitably evolved into competing power centers that made sweeping claims upon the resources of the state as a whole. Their squabbles eventually resulted in a competition for all the goods under the state's control, but one that was decided on exclusively

ethnic grounds. In spite of the intercultural experiences they had accumulated, the Yugoslav people were soon forced to opt for one or another of the ethnic groups, since these controlled everything and claimed to be the only institutions capable of representing citizens' interests. There was less and less leeway for people to operate »in between« ethnic divisions. At that point, the disintegration of the multiethnic state was a foregone conclusion.

In the war that broke out in the early 1990s, Bosnia and Herzegovina was squeezed between the warring Serbs and Croats. Both nations laid claim to its territory. In 1992 Serbia established a puppet »Republic of the Serbian People in Bosnia-Herzegovina« complete with a parliament that it had selected. To resist such pressures, the Croatian and Bosniak Muslim population held a referendum on March 1, 1992, in which a large majority of the local population expressed its wish that Bosnia-Herzegovina should remain an independent country. Soon afterward, pitched battles erupted in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which gradually evolved into a war among Bosnian Croats, Bosniak Muslims, and Bosnian Serbs. It proved to be a particularly savage, unrestrained, and protracted conflict featuring genocidal massacres, concentration camps, mass rapes, devastation, »ethnic cleansing« across vast stretches of territory, and artillery barrages aimed at one-time bastions of civilization like Sarajevo. Ironically, the latter had been a cosmopolitan, multicultural city that held the Winter Olympics in 1984 with the acclaim and participation of the whole world.

In November, 1995, the Dayton Peace Accords put an end to this dreadful war. But the agreement only worked because the feuding ethnic groups were practically frozen in place, still holding the positions that they had fought to gain. The country was divided into a Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and a Republika Srpska.

Both were formally placed under the same roof: the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The latter was supposed to determine what the common interests were, how best to achieve them, and how to make them trump special interests. But in fact the country was divided among the three constituent national groupings: Bosnian Serbs, Bosnian Croats, and Bosniak Muslims. As in the Tito era, the constitution provided that each ethnic group should have access to jobs, resources, and influence in proportion to its share of the overall population. This arrangement gave rise to perpetual haggling for positions and sinecures, accompanied by intrigues, obstructionism, and mutual recriminations. Rather than encouraging shared interests, this system fostered an ever-increasing potential for conflict.

Unsuccessful pacification

The Dayton Peace Accords were designed to allow the authorities established by the international community, noted above, to regulate and arbitrate these inevitable conflicts. In this sense the constitution prescribed by the Dayton Accords reproduces the basic structure of the former Yugoslavia. There is an authoritarian central institution to arbitrate conflicts of interest without being too deeply enmeshed in them, while resources are distributed according to criteria of fairness to each ethnic group. This design does not permit any true solution, or genuine progress. The economic indicators speak for themselves: Bosnia and Herzegovina remains one of the poorest countries on Europe's periphery. With 3.9 million inhabitants it has a GDP of just 12.3 billion euros, a per capita income of 3,154 euros, and an unemployment rate of 44.3 %. At the same time, hopes for the »great alternative« – closer ties to the E.U. – are fading. Because of the interest gridlock, promised reforms

to bring the country closer to the E.U. legal system have not materialized. Given the situation that now prevails, a kind of permanent »blame game,« people are becoming ever more receptive to ethnonationalist rhetoric. Thus, in the October, 2012 elections, the most bellicose parties were again the clear winners: those led by Radovan Karadzic, Franco Tudjman, and Alija Izetbegovic.

The chaos is worsening, as evidenced by two phenomena: the constant demands made by the rump republic, Republika Srpska, to dissolve the overarching state, and the crisis of government in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina that has been festering since June, 2012. Both illustrate the problem of the flawed constitutional design bestowed on Bosnia and Herzegovina by the international community which has pacified the country at the expense of effective governance. The outcome: 18 years after the end of the bloody clashes among Bosnian Orthodox Serbs, Bosnian Catholic Croats, and the Muslim Bosniaks, the traces of a war that brought ethnic cleansing to entire regions are still clearly discernible. As in the past, the short-term fears and needs of the three national groupings determine day-to-day politics. The pacification and democratization of the country have ended in failure.

The failure of local elites

One thing is clear and unambiguous: The chief obstacle in the way of transforming Bosnia and Herzegovina's postwar society into a state structure fit for entry into the E.U. is its present constitution. The latter, an add-on to the Dayton peace Accords of 1995, was a successful tool in ending the war. Nevertheless, the perpetual crisis of government demonstrates that the constitution is blocking the emergence and articulation of interests that could transcend ethnic pork-barrel politics. As things now stand, the country cannot meet the challenges that would accompany its sought-after membership in NATO and the E.U. That is the reason why the Treaty of Stabilization and Association with the E.U., agreed upon in 2008, and the prospect of NATO membership, offered in 2012, have not gone into effect.

There is a consensus among the population, the political elites, and the international community that the only way for the country to escape the blind alley it has reached is to amend the constitution; however, the political will to implement a program of revisions is lacking. Local political elites have learned that the Dayton constitution enables them to take »maximalist« positions in behalf of their respective ethnic groups. Under the pretext of defending »national« responsibilities, all sides reject compromises, because they are confident that international society will straighten everything out. The High Representative and – since the summer of 2011 – increasingly the E.U.'s Special Envoy assume the task of finding compromises.

In the wake of a new Balkan strategy approved by the E.U. in 2011, which limited the authority of the High Representative, the international community has increasingly tried to engage the country's people and political elites to become the driving force behind necessary amendments and reforms. The magic formula is now »local ownership.« But because the constitution is designed to accommodate ethnic criteria of fairness, local ownership means mutual obstruction. That is the reason why appropriate reforms of state institutions (for example the establishment of an independent supreme court or limitations upon the ethnic veto) have not been forthcoming. The result is the political paralysis that has lasted since October, 2010.

Until the principle of ethnic justice anchored in the constitution has been supplanted by a universalistic criterion of

justice based on human rights, the only solution left is the Yugoslavian one inherited from Tito's undisputed authority: The institutions set up by the international community have to take rigorous authoritarian measures and impose solutions. This dilemma implies that the international community again must assume the unique leadership role assigned to it in the constitution and take charge of the reform process.

If one heeds the historical analogy, the apparently liberal approach of making local people personally responsible for reform is equivalent to what happened in the wake of Tito's death: the collapse and failure of the central authority that arbitrated disputes. The outcome of that collapse was the war of each ethnic group against all the others. It would be frivolous and irresponsible to repeat that mistake. This is even more evident when one consults some of the relevant studies, such as those done by the Democratization Policy Council and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, which confirm that the potential for violence is high on account of the ongoing political paralysis.

Instead, the institutions authorized by the international community should initiate a process of reform following a steady, step-by-step approach. More and more institutions need to be created that compel participants to place common interests and goals in the foreground. Accordingly, the first and most important step in this process would be to harmonize the constitution with the European Convention on the Protection of Human Rights. Such a reform would set in motion a crucial paradigm shift away from ethnic criteria of justice. Fairness would then be judged by the extent to which human rights are upheld for all members of society in an individual rather than group (ethnic) sense. That could be the foundation upon which reconciliation among national groups and human beings might take place. ∎

Jürgen Kocka
Judging the Past and Critiquing the Present

Thinking the Twentieth Century, a Dialogue between Tony Judt and Timothy Snyder

»The time has come to write about more than just the things one understands; it is just as important, if not more so, to write about things one cares about.« These are the words of Tony Judt, the English-American historian and intellectual who passed away in 2010 and left to posterity a record of his life, his work, and his wide-ranging reflections on the past and present in *Thinking the Twentieth Century*. The book took shape in the course of months-long, systematic conversations in 2009 between Judt and his much younger friend and colleague, Timothy Snyder, a historian

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of Eastern Europe. During this entire time Judt was suffering from ALS, a progressive disease of the nervous system which left him increasingly paralyzed and ultimately unable to move at all, yet still fully capable

of thinking and using his vocal chords. Those conversations are reproduced in this volume and supplemented by autobiographical and reflective passages added by Judt. The finished product combines historical judgments with a critique of the present age, erudition with polemics.

The history of the Jews forms a central thread in this fabric of reminiscences, ideas, and interpretations. Born in 1948, Judt was the offspring of a Jewish family with roots in Eastern Europe that had suffered persecutions during the 19th and 20th centuries. Snyder, for his part, had become well known in academic circles for his book, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin,* a story of suffering and crimes committed in East-Central Europe under the rule of both dictators. Judt and Snyder elucidate the crucial role played by Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe in shaping Vienna's version of the modern era around 1900. They show that the Hapsburg Empire was fairly congenial to the Jews, and point out that the post-1918 breakthrough of the democratic nation-state in Central and Eastern Europe ultimately had a negative impact on the circumstances of their lives. Judt tells of his youthful enthusiasm for Zionism and his identification with an idealized image of the state of Israel. However, starting in the late 1960s he became disenchanted with the Jewish state and distanced himself from it. His criticism of Israel's current policies is unusually harsh, especially in respect to that country's strategy of obsessively instrumentalizing the memory of the Holocaust in order to shore up its own identity and advance its interests. Judt taught at both British and American universities. His research was devoted mainly to French history. But by the 1980s he had discovered East-Central Europe for himself and approached it with great sympathy. The two authors clarify the special kind of liberalism with social-democratic overtones that Central-European dissidents who spurned

Soviet Marxism introduced into European intellectual life before and after the demise of communism. Leszek Kolakowski, whom Judt admired, deeply influenced the latter's understanding of Marxism.

Judt's attitude toward Marxism originally was informed by the views of his radical-socialist yet anti-Stalinist parents. While most people interested in the history of the French left wanted to study the Communists, Judt chose the Socialists for his research. One can read his sweeping and brilliant attack against (nearly) every kind of social history (»A Clown in Regal Purple,« 1979) as a milestone in his retreat from Marxist interpretations. He was eventually drawn to the study of Western-European intellectuals in the twentieth century, because nothing interested him more than the question of why so many of them lionized Soviet communism in spite of its inhuman crimes. He also found it puzzling that, even after the defeat of fascism in 1945, numerous intellectuals were either hesitant or slow to break with it. He took them rigorously to task, but he also sought to understand them. In a conversation with Snyder, he charged Eric Hobsbawm with having written encomiums and apologies for the German Democratic Republic and East Berlin. He attacks Brecht's poem »To Posterity« as a justification of present crimes in the name of future progress. Both charges are much exaggerated.

At the same time Judt is quite emphatic in thinking of himself as belonging to the left and championing social democracy. The book features a vehement critique of neo-liberalism, a settling of accounts with growing inequality in the United States, and a resolute brief in favor of the necessity of the social welfare state. Some of these appraisals are strikingly apt: e.g., his judgment that capitalism is incapable of creating or even preserving the social conditions that it requires for its own survival; his identification of gambling as the prin-

ciple at the heart of financial capitalism; his plea that we recognize anew the »social« principle inherent in society; and his broadside against the cult of privatization and in favor of the relevance of public goods. Judt in his persona as a historian of ideas approaches the history of neoliberalism through the familiar contrast between the doctrines of Keynes and Hayek. He attributes Hayek's radical, market-based rejection of the social welfare state to his interwar experiences in authoritarian Austria and with Viennese municipal socialism – an original but debatable point of view.

Democracy's uncertain future

Popular historical syntheses consistently paint a dismal picture of the 20th century with its wars, persecutions, and barbarous acts. One sees this tendency, for example, in Hobsbawn's account of the *Age of Extremes* and in Mark Mazower's book, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century.* Judt and Snyder say nothing to contradict such assessments, but they do add much that is important and stress different aspects of the contemporary scene. For example, they emphasize the remarkable improvements that the last century brought about in people's everyday lives. They remind the reader that for many decades the chief antagonists were communism and fascism, not totalitarianism and democracy. They argue that it was »one of the truly unexpected developments of the century« that the democratic, constitutional state with social-welfare policies emerged victorious. That is true, even though its victory is incomplete and it faces an uncertain future, as both authors are aware.

Thinking the Twentieth Century – this retrospective remains remarkably provincial. The authors' twentieth century took place exclusively in Europe and the United States. They pay no attention to impe-

rialism, decolonization, and globalization. Nor do they inquire into the internal unity, boundaries, or gaps in that century. Since they are drawing up a balance sheet of one man's life and works, why do we not find even the slightest hint of self-criticism? Because they are always in search of a memorable *mot juste,* their text exaggerates its points time and again. What is more, there is no lack of errors and distortions, as when they equate Stresemann's foreign policy with that of the Nazis.

Still, the book is an impressive testament to the intellectual inquiries of two professional historians who play the larger role of intellectuals by making arguments that transcend the narrow boundaries of their respective specialties. This is the case not only for Judt, who explicitly cast himself as a public intellectual and only secondarily as »an academic.« Snyder, who made his mark in quite different ways, has little trouble keeping up with Judt. He turns out to be a brilliant conversationalist who inspires Judt but is not afraid to correct the latter's judgments gently. The two authors are on the same wavelength and fundamentally agree on their principles. They demonstrate how a person can use historical knowledge to assess the present, and why someone who wishes to understand and explain the present, and have an impact on public life should be fascinated by history. It is rare for trained historians to bring off the balancing act between a specialist's competence in his/her chosen field and the discourse of a committed intellectual as explicitly, self-consciously, and thoroughly as Judt and Snyder do. In that respect, Thinking the Twentieth Century is an exemplary book.

Tony Judt/Timothy Snyder, Thinking the Twentieth Century. Penguin Books, New York, Reprint Edition, 2013, 432 pages (paperback), $ 12.78. ∎

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