

Ivan Krastev
Powerless
Europe

David G. Victor
Climate
Plan B

Timothy Snyder
History of the
Bloodlands

Roger Cohen
Reality Check
Middle East

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Editorial

Kopftuchdebatte, Streit um Kruzifixe in Schulen, Auseinandersetzungen um den Bau einer Moschee am Ground Zero. Die Religion ist zurück auf der Bühne der säkularen Gesellschaft und wird vom Publikum vor allem in Form von Kontroversen wahrgenommen. Prozesse der kulturellen Globalisierung und transnationalen Migration haben in den letzten Jahren die religiöse Vielfalt im Westen rasant ansteigen lassen und damit auch das Konfliktpotential zwischen Gläubigen, Andersgläubigen und Nichtgläubigen. Ist Religion im 21. Jahrhundert zu einer Bedrohung für die soziale Solidarität geworden? Oder kann sie auch helfen, Gräben zu überbrücken? Gleich zwei internationale Veranstaltungen des iwm beschäftigten sich mit diesen Fragen, eine Debatte in Mailand und eine Konferenz in Wien (S. 7 / 9). Geprägt waren beide von den Überlegungen des kanadischen Philosophen Charles Taylor, der am iwm zu „Religion und Säkularismus“ forscht. Der spaltenden Demagogie einer sich derzeit formierenden Internationale der Islamgegner hält er entgegen, dass es gerade die religiöse Diversität sei, aus der sich Solidarität speisen kann, sofern Dialog und wechselseitiges Verständnis an die Stelle von Konfrontation und Abschottung treten (S. 8).

Dialog ist auch der Schlüssel zu einem anderen Konflikt. *New York Times* Kolumnist Roger Cohen verbreitete beim Fellows’ Meeting Hoffnung auf einen Neuanfang in Nahost: „Erzählen Sie mir nicht, dass Israelis und Palästinenser niemals Frieden schließen und Iraner und Amerikaner einander niemals die Hände reichen können.“ Es sei möglich, und gerade die Geschichte Europas zeige, dass Feindschaften überwunden werden können. Wie, lesen Sie auf Seite 21.

Dialog kann manchmal statt der Lösung aber auch das Problem sein, zumindest dann, wenn zuviele Diskussionspartner an ihm beteiligt sind. Ein Beispiel dafür war die letzte Klimakonferenz in Kopenhagen. David G. Victor plädiert daher für Vereinbarungen zwischen einzelnen Staaten, denn wie so oft bei Umweltthemen gelte auch in der Klimapolitik: small is beautiful. Essays zum Thema Klimawandel auf den Seiten 15 und 16.

Kurz vor Redaktionsschluss erreichte uns die traurige Nachricht, dass Tony Judt, langjähriger Permanent Fellow des iwm, in New York verstorben ist. In einem sehr persönlichen Nachruf auf Seite 3 nimmt Timothy Snyder Abschied von diesem brillianten Historiker. Wir werden Tony vermissen – nicht nur als außergewöhnlichen Intellektuellen, sondern auch als einen wunderbaren Freund.

Sven Hartwig

Disputes about the Muslim headscarf and about crucifixes in classrooms, the Ground Zero mosque debate—religion is back on the scene of secular society, where it is perceived primarily as a form of public controversy. Cultural globalization and transnational migration have increased religious diversity in the West and raised the potential for tension and conflict between different religious as well as non-religious groups. Has religion become a threat to social solidarity in the 21st century? Or can it also build bridges? These questions were at the heart of a public debate in Milan and an international conference in Vienna, organized by the iwm (see pages 7 and 9). Both events were heavily influenced by the thought of Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor, who directs the Institute’s research focus on “Religion and Secularism”. Taylor counters the demagogic and divisive slogans of an emergent international Islamophobia by arguing that religious diversity in particular can be a valuable source of solidarity—if dialogue and mutual understanding take the place of confrontation and self-segregation (see page 8).

Dialogue is also the key to the solution of another conflict. At this year’s Fellows’ Meeting, *New York Times* columnist Roger Cohen delivered a speech in which he expressed his certainty that there is hope for peace in the Middle East: “Don’t tell me that Israelis and Palestinians can never make peace or that Iranians and Americans can never join hands.” It is possible, he claimed; as Europe’s cruel history teaches us, enmities can be overcome. In Cohen’s essay on page 21 you can read how.

In cases where too many people are participating, however, dialogue sometimes seems to be not the solution but the problem. The latest climate talks in Copenhagen were a good example of this. That is why David G. Victor calls for more agreements between individual states: in climate politics, as so often in environmentalism, “small is beautiful”. You can find essays on the politics of climate change on pages 15 and 16.

When this issue went to print, we received the sad news that Tony Judt had died in New York. He had been a Permanent Fellow of the iwm for many years. In a very personal obituary on page 3, Timothy Snyder bids farewell to this brilliant historian. Tony will be missed—not only as a formidable contributor to today’s intellectual landscape but also as a close friend.

Sven Hartwig

Eine intellektuelle Reise

VON TIMOTHY SNYDER

*“Tony accepted the irreducible variety within history, seeking to embrace difference within an account that was harmonious, convincing, and true”, Timothy Snyder writes on the work of historian Tony Judt. On August 6, 2010, Tony Judt died in New York at the age of 62. He was a Permanent Fellow of the IWM and, between 1993 and 1998, director of its research focus “Rethinking Post-War Europe” (see next page). This work marked not only a paradigm shift in contemporary history but also laid the ground for his magnum opus **Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945**. Tony will be missed—not only as an outstanding scholar and public intellectual but also as a mentor and friend.*



Photo: IWM

Als ich Tony Judt vor zwanzig Jahren zum ersten Mal begegnete, war er gerade auf dem Weg zum Zug. Anstatt wegzufahren, aß er jedoch mit zwei Studenten der Brown University in Providence zu Mittag. Behutsam gab er den beiden jungen Männern, die zwischen Journalismus und Geschichte schwankten, Karrieretipps. Ich möchte natürlich nicht behaupten, dass jeder, der jemals mit Tony gegessen hat, entweder Historiker wurde, so wie ich, oder den Pulitzer-Preis gewann, so wie Gareth Cook. Vielmehr geht es mir um den außergewöhnlich großzügigen Umgang, den Tony mit seiner Zeit pflegte – insbesondere wenn es um junge Menschen ging. Auf eine kurze Bitte um Rat erhielt man mitunter eine mehrseitige, sorgfältig ausgearbeitete Antwort. Tony schrieb Dutzende von Empfehlungsschreiben für Leute, die formal nicht einmal seine Studenten waren, und organisierte Konferenzen, auf denen jüngere mit etablierteren Wissenschaftlern zusammentrafen. In seinem Remarque Institute an der New York University war Leistung ein deutlich wichtigeres Aufnahmekriterium als Ruhm.

Man kann in Tony Judt im Verlaufe seines Lebens eigentlich zwei Historiker sehen: zunächst einen aus der Arbeiterklasse stammenden Marxisten mit englisch-jüdischem Hintergrund, der seine Ausbildung in Cambridge und an der École Normale in Paris absolvierte und vier hervorragende Bücher über die französische Linke verfasst hat; später dann einen großen New Yorker Gelehrten, der neben einer fulminanten Geschichte Nachkriegseuropas auch bemerkenswert klare Studien über einige führende europäische Intellektuelle geschrie-

ben hat, darunter Albert Camus und Leszek Kołakowski. Das Bindeglied zwischen diesen beiden Stadien war *Past Imperfect*, Tonys eloquente Kritik der Pariser intellektuellen Politik nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg, die 1992 erschien. Auf den ersten Blick war dieses Buch eine genaue Untersuchung des Kommunismus von Jean-Paul Sartre und des politischen Narzissmus der Rive Gauche-Intellektuellen, die den Stalinismus feierten, aber die Augen vor seinen Folgen in Osteuropa verschlossen. Auf einer tieferen Ebene war das Buch die Abkehr eines französischen Marxisten von seiner eigenen Tradition.

Tony hat sein erstes Buch, *La reconstruction du parti socialiste, 1921–1926*, auf Französisch verfasst. Ein französischer Kritiker stellte treffend fest, dass *Past Imperfect* sich lese wie die Auseinandersetzung eines lebenden französischen Intellektuellen mit seinen toten Kollegen. Im Grunde war dieses Buch Tonys erster Versuch einer Geschichtsphilosophie, die den Untergang des Marxismus und der anderen großen politischen und intellektuellen Systeme des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts überleben sollte. Als er sich von den französischen Marxisten distanzierte, widerstand er der Versuchung, den Marxismus durch eine andere Quelle intellektueller Autorität zu ersetzen. Während andere Intellektuelle seiner Generation den Marxismus gegen etwas Anderes austauschten, das wie sein Gegenteil erschien – etwa den Markt – verwarf Tony den Gedanken, dass dem historischen Wandel eine einzige Erklärung zugrunde liegen könnte.

Past Imperfect war möglich, weil Tony in den 1980er Jahren eine Art mentale Reise durch Osteuropa unternommen hatte – ganz entgegen dem Trend seines Berufsstandes,

der ungeachtet der Umwälzungen in Osteuropa westlich orientiert blieb, und im Gegensatz zur Geschichte seiner Familie, die das Russische Reich in Richtung Westen verlassen hatte. Diese intellektuelle Reise war fruchtbarer, wenn auch weniger dramatisch als Tonys Begegnungen mit dem jüdischen Staat. Sein jugendlicher Zionismus war eine halbherzige Rebellion gegen seine Eltern, die

Tony nutzte seine furchtbare Krankheit dazu, seine wenigen intellektuellen Grenzen zu überschreiten

wollten, dass er in England studierte; seine spätere Kritik an Israel war, unter anderem, auch eine Art Selbstkritik. Interessanter hingegen war, wie er um die Mitte seines Lebens am intellektuellen Geschehen Osteuropas teilnahm, was seinen Bruch mit dem Marxismus beschleunigte und ihm eine umfassendere Sichtweise auf den Kontinent ermöglichte. Tony war 1948 geboren und gehörte somit derselben Generation an wie die rebellischen polnischen Intellektuellen, viele von ihnen ebenfalls jüdischer Abstammung, die geschlagen, eingesperrt und 1968 als Opfer einer antisemitischen Kampagne aus dem kommunistischen Polen vertrieben wurden. Einige dieser Menschen – vor allem Jan Gross, Irena Grudzińska-Gross und Barbara Toruńczyk – freundeten sich in

den 1980er Jahren mit ihm an, wodurch ihre Geschichte in einem entscheidenden Sinn auch zu seiner Geschichte wurde.

1968 war Tony noch Zionist und Marxist. Seine polnischen Freunde waren nie Zionisten gewesen (obwohl sie vom kommunistischen Regime als solche bezeichnet wurden), und sie hatten ihre intellektuelle Abkehr vom Marxismus deutlich vor ihm begonnen. 1968, im Alter von 20 Jahren, nahm Tony an Studentendemonstrationen in Paris, London und Cambridge teil. Nach einer Antikriegsdemonstration in Cambridge trabte er ins King's College zurück, plauderte auf dem Weg mit einem Polizisten, und hoffte, noch vor der Essensglocke den Speisesaal zu erreichen. Zwei Jahrzehnte später, mit nunmehr vierzig Jahren, sah Tony, wie sehr sich diese Situation von der in Warschau unterschied, wo die Polizei Schlagstöcke einsetzte. Die Erfahrungen seiner osteuropäischen Freunde begannen, seine eigenen zu überlagern und halfen ihm, sein Verständnis des Nachkriegseuropas zu vertiefen. Angesichts der Tatsache, dass der Vater seines Vaters in Warschau zur Welt gekommen war und dass im Warschauer Ghetto auch Mitglieder der Familie Judt lebten, vermochte sich Tony vorzustellen, dass auch sein Leben so hätte verlaufen können wie das seiner Freunde. In den 1980er Jahren lehrte Tony in Oxford, ebenso wie der polnische Philosoph Leszek Kołakowski, der 1968 zur intellektuellen Inspirationsquelle für die Studenten seines Landes geworden war. Über Kołakowskis Meisterwerk, *Die Hauptströmungen des Marxismus*, das wie kein anderes Buch den Glauben an den Marxismus erschütterte, hat Tony 2006 im *New York Review of Books* einen brillanten Essay geschrieben.¹

Nach dem Ende des Glaubens an umfassende Erklärungen zogen sich viele Historiker in hochspezialisierte Gebiete zurück. Tony hingegen wählte, als er sich in den 1990er Jahren darauf vorbereitete, *Postwar* zu schreiben, einen schwierigeren Weg. Ähnlich wie Isaiah Berlin, ein weiterer in Oxford tätiger, einflussreicher Zeitgenosse, erkannte auch er die der Geschichte innewohnende, irreduzible Vielfalt an und versuchte, dieser Vielfalt in einer überzeugenden, in sich stimmigen und wahren Darstellung gerecht zu werden. Tony brachte nicht nur Ost- und Westeuropa zusammen, sondern auch Skandinavien und den Mittelmeerraum. Er schrieb gleichermaßen kompe-

tent über Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft, Politik und Kultur. Spezialgebieten zollte er Respekt, indem er ihre immense Literatur bewältigte und sie auf elegante Weise in seiner Darstellung zusammenführte.

Tony war ein Kosmopolit, und doch verbarg sich hinter den Sprachen, die er beherrschte, und seinem stupenden Wissen ein gewisses Unbehagen. Als der ehemalige Chef des DDR-Auslandsnachrichtendienstes, Markus Wolf, ihn einmal auf einer Konferenz in Berlin nicht ohne Arglist bat, eine Frage auf Deutsch zu wiederholen, kam Tony dieser Bitte mit einer für ihn untypischen Zögerlichkeit nach. Nachdem ich einen Großteil der vergangenen zwei Jahre auf die Arbeit an seiner Biographie verwandt habe, glaube ich nun den ersten Satz zu kennen, den Tony je auf Deutsch gesprochen hat. Es war 1960, als er, gerade zwölf Jahre alt, und seine Eltern auf dem Weg in den Sommerurlaub eine Nacht in Deutschland verbringen mussten. Seine Familie bestand väterlicherseits aus osteuropäischen Juden, die sich in Belgien niedergelassen hatten. Viele von ihnen wurden im Holocaust ermordet. Tony selbst erhielt seinen Namen im Angedenken an Toni Avegael, eine in Auschwitz umgekommene Cousine seines Vaters. Tonys Vater brachte es nicht über sich, mit den Deutschen an der Hotelrezeption zu sprechen, weshalb er seinen Sohn anwies zu sagen: „Mein Vater will eine Dusche“. In seiner Erziehung war der Holocaust, so Tony in der Biographie, überall und nirgends, ungreifbar wie ein Dunstschleier.

Dasselbe Bild trifft auf die Präsenz und die Abwesenheit des Holocaust in Tonys Geschichtsschreibung zu. Alle seine frühen Bücher über die französische Linke stellten, und sei es nur implizit, die Frage: Musste das geschehen? Hätte anstelle des Nationalsozialismus nicht auch der Sozialismus obsiegen können? Hätte nicht auch Frankreich anstelle Deutschlands die Oberhand gewinnen können? War eine aufgeklärte Politik nicht dennoch möglich? Selbst in *Past Imperfect* hatte Tony nur wenig über die französische Erfahrung der deutschen Besetzung und über die Verbrechen von Vichy zu sagen. In *Postwar* sparte er den Holocaust mehr oder weniger aus der Geschichte aus; in seiner Konklusion kommentierte er mehr das Gedenken an den Holocaust, als dass er sich auf das Ereignis

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nis selbst konzentriert hätte. Ähnlich wie viele andere Historiker seiner Generation schrieb auch Tony eine Zeit lang so, als glaube er, man könne die großen Themen der intellektuellen und politischen Geschichte des letzten Jahrhunderts losgelöst vom Holocaust behandeln. Zuletzt wurde ihm aber klar, dass sich der Massenmord an den europäischen Juden jeder Darstellung dieser Geschichte unabweisbar aufdrängt. Als seine tödliche Krankheit ausbrach, bereitete er sich gerade darauf vor, eine intellektuelle Geschichte des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts zu schreiben, die dessen zentraler Tragödie Rechnung tragen sollte. Erst ganz am Ende schloss Tony den Kreis mit dem Buch, das er in der kurzen verbleibenden Zeit verfasste.

Tony nutzte seine furchtbare Krankheit dazu, seine wenigen intellektuellen Grenzen zu überschreiten. Als 2008 ALS diagnostiziert wurde, hatte Tony einen Lehrstuhl inne,

leitete ein Institut und war ein anerkannter Historiker und öffentlicher Intellektueller. All dies hatte er auf seine eigene Weise erreicht. Er rebellierte, wann es ihm gefiel, und gegen wen es ihm gefiel und definierte sich stets als Außenseiter. Mein Eindruck ist, dass seine Krankheit die Unterscheidung zwischen Insider und Outsider, die Tonys gesamtes Leben geprägt hatte, weniger wichtig erscheinen ließ. Seit er in seinem eigenen Körper gefangen war, kam er mehr aus sich heraus, als er es je zuvor getan hatte. Er hatte seine private Seite immer eher verborgen und achtete zudem seit einer früheren Krebserkrankung sehr auf seine äußere Erscheinung; nun aber legte er sowohl seinen körperlichen Verfall als auch seine komplizierte Biographie bloß.

Ende 2008 willigte Tony ein, mit meiner Hilfe ein umfangreiches Buch über sein Leben und das Geistesleben des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts zu verfassen. Dieses Werk, das die zentralen Strömungen im Den-

ken des vergangenen Jahrhunderts reflektiert, offenbart, wie ich finde, lebendiger als alles, was Tony zuvor schrieb, sein enormes Wissen. Beim Schreiben verband sich Tonys großer Stolz mit seiner ebenso großen Bescheidenheit. Als wir nach sechs Monaten unsere Gespräche abschließen konnten, begann er, auch wieder selbständig zu arbeiten; er diktierte kurze Essays, die er im *New York Review of Books* veröffentlichte. Am 19. Oktober hielt er an der New York University eine Vorlesung über die Sozialdemokratie, die er dann schnell zu dem Buch *Ill Fares the Land* ausarbeitete. Wir schlossen *Thinking the Twentieth Century* im Juli 2010 ab, wenige Wochen vor seinem Tod.

Als ich Tony zuletzt schrieb, kurz vor seinem Tod, war ich gerade von einem Ausflug mit dem Zug von Wien nach Krems zurückgekehrt. Tony erzählte mir, dass er einmal die gleiche Reise mit einem seiner Söhne unternommen habe,

und so schrieben wir uns E-Mails über Zugreisen mit kleinen Jungen entlang der Donau. Mit *Thinking the Twentieth Century* hat Tony eines der beiden Buchprojekte verwirklicht, die ihm besonders am Herzen lagen. Das zweite, *Locomotion*, drehte sich um das Reisen mit dem Zug. Gerade weil er sich seiner jüdischen Kindheit in London auf unsentimentale Weise erinnerte, empfand er große Nostalgie für britische Züge. Die Schule, die er als Junge besuchte, lag zwischen den Bahngleisen, die von der Victoria Station und der Waterloo Station kamen und zu einer imaginären Flucht einluden. Als er ein Teenager war, nahm er gerne sein Fahrrad, setzte sich in einen Zug irgendwohin und verbrachte den Tag mit Erkundungen. Damals dachte er, er laufe weg; doch mit der Zeit verstand er, dass er gemeinsam mit anderen reiste. Die Eisenbahn schien ihm eine glückliche Metapher für den Wohlfahrtsstaat: Die individuelle Dienstleistung, die sie dem Reisenden bietet,

macht diesem zugleich bewusst, dass er Teil einer Gesellschaft ist.

Tony erzählte mir, dass seine Krankheit ihn auch deswegen traurig mache, weil er nie wieder auf einem Bahnsteig würde stehen können – mit ungewissem Ziel, aber mit der Gewissheit, vorwärts zu kommen. Doch selbst als er sich nicht mehr rühren konnte, war Tony doch ständig in Bewegung: durch eine beispiellose Bibliothek erinnerten Bücher eilend, um dann nach Aussichtspunkten auf ein bewundernswertes Leben zu suchen. Er machte dabei stets die Grenzen der anderen sichtbar, und ging doch immer mit gutem Beispiel voran, indem er seine eigenen überwand. <

Aus dem Englischen von Dirk Hofmann

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¹ „Goodbye to All That?“, in: *The New York Review of Books*, 53/14, September 21, 2006; dt. Fassung in: *Transit* 34/2008.

Rethinking Post-War Europe

BY TONY JUDT

It used to be easy to write contemporary European history. World War II came to an end in 1945, and with it there ended a 30-year crisis in European life. From 1913 to 1945 relations between and within European states suffered traumatic change. Revolutions—radical and reactionary—shifted power away from the old ruling elites. Massive upheaval and collapse within the capitalistic economy brought an end to the stability of 19th-century life and introduced radical changes in social relations. Violence in every sphere—war, civil war, domestic instability, state violence against opponents—became endemic. All of this, so the story ran, came to a head in the appalling experience of WW II, itself symbolized by the policies and practices of a genocidal state at the heart of Europe.

In the conventional story as thus told, everything changed after 1945. The rapid shift of allegiance, from the anti-Nazi alliance to the opposing blocs of the Cold War, institutionalized the military division of Europe to the point where, 40 years after the death of Hitler, this division of the continent seemed part of the natural order of things. In Eastern Europe, Soviet hegemony seemed to be the logical product of the upheavals of the first half of the century, while in Western Europe progressive moves toward economic and political union and the two decades of post-war prosperity appeared to have resolved definitively the problems that had looked so insoluble before 1939. European history, in short, had come to an end and this was all to the good.

In order for history to resolve itself in this convenient way, it was necessary for memory to conform.

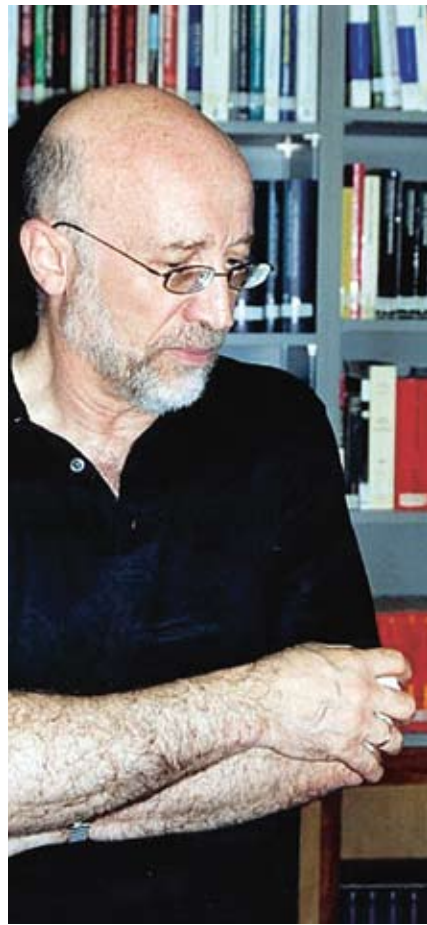


Photo: IWM

gether. Furthermore, most such histories began in 1945, as though the desire on the part of many Europeans to begin afresh in 1945 could also be treated as a rational objective perspective upon their history. Even where the war itself was incorporated into accounts of the reconstruction of Europe in its aftermath, that war was normally understood as a prelude; the moment of utter collapse preceding rebirth. The very suggestion that the war might not in certain important ways have ended, or that its aftermath could yet prove fragile or temporary, was unwelcome and usually unrecognized.

In the course of the last decade all of this has changed, in ways which now make the post-war historiography of Europe curiously outdated almost before the ink has dried. Not

only do we now pay much more attention to questions about political justice, collective memory, the grey zone between resistance and collaboration, the long term social and political consequences of war etc., but we are also and as a result much more sensitive to different chronological perspectives. It is no longer self-evident that European history can be divided into convenient blocks: pre-1913, 1913–1945, post-1945. The decade 1938–1948 in Central and Eastern Europe at least has a historical logic of its own, in the sense that much of what we think of as the important features of Nazi domination began before the outbreak of

war between Germany and Poland, and did not end until long after the fall of Hitler.

Similarly, the decade 1945–1956 might usefully be understood now as “postwar” in the sense that the unresolved business of the war itself—with respect to economic damage, social disruption, political score settling etc., was still the dominant feature. And analogously, the turning point of 1989/90 reveals how much of the unfinished business of the pre-1945 era remains, indeed, unfinished in former Yugoslavia, most obviously, but elsewhere as well. We are now also able to see, in a way which we preferred to ignore before 1989, just how fragile the West European post-war settlement truly was—prosperity and economic unity, to be sure, but both of them fragile and in the case of prosperity at least, not destined to endure indefinitely. None of this suggests that East and West European history have now converged, nor does it require of us as historians that we insist upon a common history from 1945 onwards, where clearly the paths of the two halves of the continent forcefully diverged. Nonetheless, the time for rethinking the whole history of 20th century Europe, and especially the post-war era, is clearly upon us.

We are a very long way from being able to propose a tidy alternative narrative to replace the story with which we grew up. At the present moment, it seems to me that the most important goal is to train a new generation of historians of Europe, freed from old constraints, old habits, old sources. Although this new generation of historians will inevitably and properly consist of people who work on separate national histories, the most important question

that they will learn to ask is this: how was it elsewhere? Or rather: how distinctive or peculiar are the history of my country / my period / my subjects? With such questions constantly in mind, we shall in time bridge not only the divide between Eastern and Western Europe, or the divide between pre- and post-1945, but also the most damaging chasm of all. This is the canyon of ignorance between national histories that works against the emergence of any new common understanding of the shared European past. In time, we may hope for a new account of the recent European past that is both faithful to the distinctive stories of separate countries and regions, while fully grasping the ways in which they share certain common pasts.

Just what this new history will look like is unclear. We cannot say with any certainty even of what its chronology will consist. The questions which occupy us just now will not always be at the center of our attention. European history, even in our era, does not consist only of collaboration, resistance, mass murder, retribution, political justice and the memory of all of these. But until we have successfully incorporated these and related questions into our understanding of the recent European past we shall not be able to move on. The history of Europe from 1945 to the present begins with this rethinking of the war and its consequences, and we are still at the beginning. <

This is an abridged version of “Europas Nachkriegsgeschichte neu denken” which was first published in *Transit* (15/1999) and is now available on our website in English and German: www.iwm.at/transit_online

Europe: A Retired Power

BY IVAN KRASTEV

Europe has become a spent geopolitical force, embracing its decline, writes Bulgarian political scientist Ivan Krastev about the shifting role of the Old Continent in the multipolar world order. Krastev has recently been appointed as a Permanent Fellow at the IWM, where he will strengthen the Institute's research on European politics in the global age.

As it stands now, Europe has lost its self-confidence, its energy and its hopes that the next century will be the “European century.” From Beijing to Washington—and even in Brussels itself—the Old Continent is widely viewed as a spent geopolitical force, as a great place to live but not a great place to dream. While America is fighting “declinism” as its worst enemy, Europe has decided to embrace it. In fact, these days the European Union is less a declining power than a “retired power”—wise but inactive, prosperous but elastically accommodating.

The irony is that all this comes at the very moment when Europeans have good reason to believe that they were right in their criticism of both the Anglo-Saxon economic model and America's unipolar dream-world. The perversity of the situation is that the European model has fallen victim not to its failure but to its success. At present, the European economy is the biggest in the world. The euro will survive the Greek crisis and probably emerge the stronger for it. European companies are doing better than many dared hope some years ago. The European welfare state has demonstrated its resilience even in times of global economic crisis. And while public opinion is divided, to all appearances America is trending European in the Age of Obama rather more than Europe is trending American.

Paradoxically, however, the financial crisis and its aftermath, instead of demonstrating the superiority of the European socio-economic model, has turned into a profound crisis of the European Union's political self-confidence. The crisis of the euro unravelled a dramatic clash: In order to sustain its economic model the EU needs more political integration, but virtually all European publics are hostile to any move toward a more federal Europe.

Diverse factors have contributed to Europe's sour mood, the most important being demography, democracy, loss of geopolitical importance and a lack of leadership.

Demographic reality, in particular, plays a critical role in explaining Europe's fears about the future. Europe's population is aging, its support ratio is shrinking, and the new generation of workers isn't large enough to restore the balance. The data projections tell us that the median age in Europe will increase to 52.3 years in 2050 from 37.7 years in 2003, while the median age for Americans in 2050 will be only 35.4 years. Europe's share of global GDP is



Ivan Krastev

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Photo: Teresa E. Zolt / momentfang.com

thus liable to shrink in the decades to come, for immigration is unlikely to provide Europe with a solution for its demographic weakness. European publics are frightened by any prospect of growing immigration; indeed, Europe's failure to integrate the fast-growing number of second- and third-generation European-born “immigrants” lies at the core of Europe's newly felt insecurity. Europe's economics demands more immigrants than Europe's politics is ready to tolerate.

Europe's democracy, in turn, which is of far more recent vintage in most of the continent than present citizens would prefer to recall, was conditioned on ethnically homogeneous societies and well-functioning welfare states. Both condi-

Europe's loss of geopolitical centrality also helps explain its change of heart. The reason is not simply that European powers are not major actors on the international scene; that has been true for decades. What is new is that Europe no longer projects itself into where the action is taking place. Contrary to its behavior in the 1990s, the EU today is a risk-averse, neither-here-nor-there power. It has been paralyzed by a deficit of solidarity, imagination and sound leadership.

The emergence of a more multipolar world has had unexpected consequences for Europe's worldview as well. Despite Europe's sharp criticism of America's recent unipolar delusion, in reality a world order built on seemingly unassailable American

as one among states, a transformation that perfectly suited European interests. In the new post-American world, however, the international stage will likely be dominated by 19th-century-minded powers whose fundamental assumptions are alien to the Brussels consensus. The incipient renormalization of international politics away from the dreams of liberal-international idealists and back to that of tragedy-aware realists has turned Europe's advantages into vulnerabilities. The “demilitarization of Europe” as US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates recently put it, “has gone from a blessing in the 20th century to an impediment to achieving real security and lasting peace in the 21st.”

Finally, the European Union has also been hard hit by a change in ideological fashions. Over the past decade, European public opinion assumed that globalization would hasten the decline of states as key international actors and nationalism as a seminal political motivator. In other words, Europeans tended to read their own happy experience of overcoming ethnic nationalism and political theology as signaling a universal trend. But what until just yesterday seemed universally applicable in the European experience begins to look exceptional today. Even a passing glance at China, India and Russia, not to speak of the vast reaches of the Muslim world, makes clear that both ethnic nationalism and religion remain major ideological driving forces shaping global politics. Postmodern post-nationalism and secularism are making Europe different from the rest of the world, not making the rest of the world more like Europe. The world is becoming more capitalist, it is true, and

in that sense more Western. But this does not necessarily mean that the world is becoming more democratic or more social-democratic. In the world's rising ideological cycle liberalism will be in retreat. Indeed, ethnic nationalism and religion are not only ever more present in the non-European world; they are also more present within Europe itself. Brussels as the capital of the European Union is very different in spirit from Brussels as the capital of Belgium. The former is in love with diversity and multiculturalism; the latter is witnessing the rise of symbolic politics and the return of the ghost of ethnically driven partition.

In short, the ideological and geopolitical impact of the current economic crisis has affected Europe much more than America. The crisis has put post-national politics on trial. It has evoked collective national experiences and revived national narratives long thought shut up in metaphorical archives. At the heart of Europe's loss of ambition is the fact that the EU succeeded in creating an institutional identity but not the political identity that needs to be at its heart. The crisis of the euro has revealed a dramatic lack of solidarity in Europe. Recently many have been asking, “Will the Germans who are so reluctant to bail out the Greeks be ready to die for the Poles? Do Greeks who have been lying to their European partners for years have any moral right to appeal to Europeans' sense of solidarity?”

It is still too early to write Europe off. Being a retired power is Europe's choice for now, not necessarily its ultimate fate. But the European model we knew—meaning not just the framework of social democracy but the political-ideological teleology that went with it—is no more. <

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*The European model has fallen victim
not to its failure but to its success*

tions are now under intense pressure, leading European elites increasingly to fear the return of identity politics. Extreme parties are invading the political mainstream, and some of the current majority groups are frightened by the decline—real or imaginary—of their influence and power. According to a 2008 report of the British government, white people are less likely to feel they can influence decisions affecting their country. Threatened majorities—majorities that display social psychological characteristics normally attributed to minority groups—are the new political force in many European democracies.

power was most hospitable to the European project. It was America's global hegemony that enabled the European Union to emerge on the world stage as an attractive power in the first place. American hegemony made room for the Union to experiment with being an unconventional, non-nation-state actor and freed it to concentrate on its internal scope and institutional architecture. America's security umbrella allowed the EU to become a global power without needing to become a military power. The liberal American order, as it evolved into the 1980s and beyond, turned the world into a competition among companies as much

Russia: Lost in Transition

BY LEONID KOSALS

A specter is haunting Russia—the specter of ideocracy. State authorities have installed a system of ideological control which seems reminiscent of communist times. The revival of a “Soviet Union light” blocks liberal and economic reforms, says Leonid Kosals, who is a contributor to the new IWM research project CAPITO.



Photo: Ingo Bernhardt / Photography.com

Despite the many variations between the economic institutions in the countries of the former “Soviet space”, structurally their economic systems are more or less similar. This conclusion can be drawn by examining, for example, data contained in the Transition Reports published by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The former communist countries have carried out privatization, established the conversion of the local currencies, introduced free trade, and so on. For instance, Hungary and Estonia received a grade of 4.33 in “price liberalization”, while Russia and Kazakhstan obtained 4.0 (out of 5, grade 1 indicating a total lack of transition). Moreover, during the past decade these grades have remained constant. At first glance, in other words, these countries appear to be mature market economies with some similarities and some differences. The situation in “Old Europe” is allegedly analogous: here, too, differences exist between developed market economies, for example between Greece and Germany, yet nobody doubts that both belong to the European Union and enjoy a common economic space.

Nevertheless, we find that the diversity among market economies in transition countries is far greater than among countries in the highly regulated EU. According to the “GEM 2009 Global Report”, the rate of early-stage entrepreneurial activity in Hungary is 9.1 percent among the adult population, while the established ownership business rate is 6.7 percent; in Russia these figures are 3.9 percent and 2.3 percent, respectively. The principal economic

actors in Russia, as well as in most of the countries that belonged to the USSR (excluding the Baltic States) and some Eastern European states, are big post-Soviet conglomerates: state- or semi-state bodies closely and informally connected with government cronies. The business environment in

over, conditions for socioeconomic development are much worse.

Behind this variation of trends are ideological shifts that create a distortion of the economic system. This distortion is caused by the following mechanism: ideological drift

The large shadow economy and corruption have become systemic features of most states of the former USSR

the former Soviet countries is unfavorable for small organizations; they cannot survive under state and criminal pressures and are marginalized and shifted to unprofitable sectors of the economy.

This business-hostile environment is exacerbated by numerous informal networks and rules that dominate the formal regulations. The large shadow economy and corruption have become systemic features of most states of the former USSR and of some Eastern European states, while in others they are still social diseases that can nevertheless be controlled by society. A World Bank report has pointed out that in Hungary the shadow economy's proportion to the GDP increased between 1999 and 2007 from 24.8 to 26.4 percent, while in Russia during the same period it increased from 45.1 to 52 percent. Finally, there is a lower level of economic freedom and a higher level of monopolism in the former Soviet countries. More-

over, conditions for socioeconomic development are much worse. Behind this variation of trends are ideological shifts that create a distortion of the economic system. This distortion is caused by the following mechanism: ideological drift to etatism and nationalism strengthens certain elites affiliated with these views, which include personal accumulation of economic wealth and greater control over policy-making. They promote further changes of ideology that provide them with more favorable conditions, and so on. The result is the emergence of a contradiction between economic and political systems. The economy, structurally a market system, clashes with a political system that blocks its effective operation. Inadequate policy-making results in recurring local economic crises, which in turn provide the foundation for further systemic crisis in both politics and the economy. We can clearly witness this mechanism in the Russian case.¹

Since the end of the 1990s, incremental public disappointment in liberal reforms has been accompanied by a growth of everyday nationalism and a retreat from civil liberties. The media was the first to feel

this, with television and newspapers being requisitioned by authorities at the beginning of the 2000s. The media provided a springboard for mass state propaganda focused on several simple doctrines: Russia has many enemies (above all the US and the West in general); to defend the country it is necessary to re-establish power over former Soviet republics and to restore the organic integrity of the historical “Greater Russia” or “Empire”; state control of the economy is the essential feature of Russia's uniqueness and the main tool for providing stability and prosperity. This created a drift in public opinion. In 1994, according to statistics of the Levada Centre, 41 percent of people thought that Russia had external enemies and 22 percent asserted that it did not. In 2008, these figures were 68 percent and 14 percent, respectively (the remainder of those polled had no clear opinion). On the other hand, the Russian ruling class had and has no intent to withdraw the country from global markets, to ban private property or to erect a new Iron Curtain.

Because of this contradictory approach, the creation of “ideocratic” state institutions has been slow and inconsistent. However during the 2000s these were gradually established. They include a special body of laws accepted by Parliament, including the “Law on the Counteraction of Extremist Activities” (2006). Special “E-Centers” responsible for the fight against extremism have been created within the Ministry of Police, in place of the departments formerly responsible for fighting organized crime. There is a wide spectrum of tools for the—compared to China—relatively soft ideological control over the Russian Internet. These include measures such as the criminal prosecution of bloggers charged with extremism or the abuse of the

police; the promotion of pro-government propaganda websites; and even teams of anonymous people pushing “state interests” in Internet chat rooms and political forums. The ideocratic state has formal and informal dimensions. These range from the actions of the law enforcement agencies (mostly criminal charges against political and cultural “extremists”, human rights activists, “scientists-spies”, etc.) to direct unconventional violence against people in conflict with the authorities. The latter is usually carried out by pro-Kremlin youth movements. Internal ideological control is supplemented with bodies for foreign propaganda. The most significant of these is the “Commission on Forming Russia's International Image”, which coordinates media aimed at a foreign public.

The new ideocratic system bears similarities to as well as differences from old Soviet ideological practices. The main likeness is that both exercise a powerful control over people's minds. The current system blocks the emergence of autonomous actors in every sector of society. It tries to nip these in the bud rather than to establish total control over individuals, which would be costly and inefficient in the era of globalization. Another strong likeness, of course, is the unfavorable climate for investment and innovation. Unlike in the purely ideological Soviet system contemporary ideology is influenced by the private economic interests of certain groups within the authorities. The main weakness of this new ideocratic machine, compared to the Soviet period, is the vagueness of its goals and the unattractiveness of what it offers. Re-establishing the power of the Soviet Union is a non-tradable good in the international market of intellectual products.

Fortunately, this machinery has not emerged in every post-Soviet country. The EU has played a very important role in the protection of the economic system from ideological distortion. This has manifested itself both in Europeanization (above all, the dissemination of basic European values) and in the hindrance of potentially destructive groups in the local elites of some post-communist countries. <

¹ See Kosals, L., “Russia's New Ideocratic State?”, in: *Global Brief*, November 1/2009.

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CAPITO

Understanding Nascent Capitalism in Eastern Europe

CAPITO is a research project carried out within the framework of the IWM focus “Cultures and Institutions in Central and Eastern Europe”. It aims at comparing the emerging capitalist regimes in six countries of Eastern Europe and is intended to identify the origins of institutional change in the economies of the region, as well as to define the real types of nascent capitalism in an East-East and an East-West comparison. The research period started in April 2010 and will end in September 2011, with a conference and the publication of a volume containing country studies and an international comparison. The project is supported by a grant of the Jubiläumsfonds of the Austrian National Bank.

Respecting the Others

BY ANTONIO CARIOTI

Religion has returned to secular society and Europe has become a marketplace of religious beliefs. At a debate in Milan on June 8, Giuliano Amato, Adam Michnik, Giovanni Reale and Charles Taylor discussed approaches to the new religious diversity beyond fears of Islamization and Christian fundamentalism. “Religion in the Public Sphere” was the first event in a series of public debates on European topics in the run-up to the Polish EU presidency in 2011. Berlin, Vienna and Wrocław will be next.

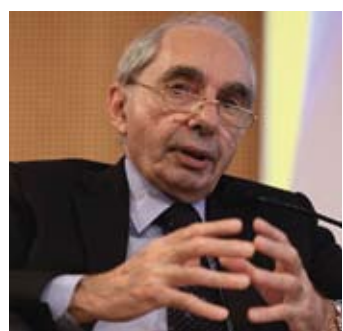


From left: G. Amato, G. Reale, K. Michalski, A. Melloni, A. Michnik, C. Taylor

capable of producing anti-Christian philosophers such as Voltaire and Friedrich Nietzsche.”

Moreover, Amato pointed out that “the idea of confining religious sentiments to the realm of mere spirituality, without any role in the public sphere, is contradicted by the facts. Considering the marked pluralism of faiths and ethical convictions, the challenge is rather to regain the capacity to learn from the other, which has been the most notable feature of European tradition.” This notion fitted with Taylor’s idea that a pluralist society “is driven by several motors that have to keep running all at the same time. Neither can it reject any of its various religious traditions nor the contribution of secular humanism. The important thing is that there is mutual respect, which should be cultivated through dialogue.”

In the old days, things were simpler, in Italy and in most of Europe. Only Christianity, in its various forms, was present on the continent, apart from Jewish minority settlements. The main task was thus to manage relations between the state and the church, or per-



The challenge is to regain the capacity to learn from the other

Giuliano Amato

haps a number of churches. Today, however, we are confronted with intense secularization, massive immigration from Africa and Asia, and an abundance of bioethical problems. The issue of the relationship between politics and religion has become quite confused.

To unravel the problem, the Foundation Corriere della Sera and the Institute for Human Sciences (IWM) in Vienna brought together a number of competent voices. Organized under the auspices of the Polish Ministry of Culture, the de-

bate—entitled “Religion in the Public Sphere”—was chaired by a major figure from the *Corriere*, Alberto Melloni. It was held in the newspaper’s Sala Buzzati in Milan on June 8 and constitutes the first step of a program that will culminate in a large conference on European culture in Wrocław in September 2011, coinciding with the Polish presidency of the EU. It would hardly have been possible to choose a more topical subject than this, which attracted not only an attentive and involved audience but also many diplomats from the most diverse countries (from Spain to Armenia to Japan).

It was not by chance that the President of RCS Media Group, Piergaetano Marchetti, used the expression “crucial knot” when he opened the meeting. For it may be that European cultural identity ends up defining itself primarily against certain people, tending to exclude those who are different. This is a fear expressed by Giuliano Amato, President of the Encyclopaedia Treccani, who warned that the resulting tensions might irreparably tear apart the fabric of the democratic commonwealth.

In such a context, religion is a valuable resource for reinforcing social cohesion, observed Krzysztof Michalski, Rector of the IWM. However, it must not be considered the norm to which society as a whole has to conform. This would involve serious risks, as is demonstrated by the Polish example, which Adam Michnik, the former dissident and current publisher of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, the most important daily newspaper from Warsaw, described in detail. “At the time of the communist

dictatorship, the Catholic Church was a positive ‘sign of contradiction,’” Michnik recalled, “a refuge for the human dignity offended by the regime. But in recent years, the bishops have adopted a tone of aggressive insistence. Thus, they are creating a climate of ideological



The intolerant conformism of Radio Maryja is gaining the upper hand over the positive legacy of John Paul II

Adam Michnik

compulsion towards those who do not share their positions. The intolerant conformism of Radio Maryja is gaining the upper hand over the positive legacy of John Paul II. And this is rather worrying, because the future of Poland is inextricably intertwined with the further evolution of its church.”

Of course, religious fundamentalism is not the only danger. There are also the excesses of individualism, against which Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor warned: “A society becomes unmanageable without a certain degree of mutual solidarity among people. If, for instance, a whole stratum of the population is excluded from essential services like the provision of health care, this will upset the whole fabric of society.” An equally serious mistake, according to another thinker, Giovanni Reale, is disregard for cultural tradition: “European civilization has an obvious Christian slant. It is staggering that people wanted to deny this fact in the EU constitutional treaty. As the great Anglo-American poet Thomas S. Eliot said, only a Christian culture was

Put this way, things appear to be rather simple. However, as Adam Michnik objected, there are often interlocutors who stigmatize those who do not subscribe to their certainties, which they affirm at all costs. In other, less dramatic, cases, the dialogue remains, as Reale observed, “sterile and superficial, as though the people conversing were deaf.” But maybe the greatest threat is ignorance, Amato suggested: “All too often, we judge others through the lens of our own prejudices, perhaps following the simplifications produced by the media.” If today’s culture has a mission, it consists precisely in explaining the fact that the world is complicated. And it is bound to become ever more complicated. ◀

From: *Corriere della Sera*, June 9, 2010.
Translated by Manuel Tröster. You can watch a video of the debate on our website: www.iwm.at > Mediathek

European Debate Religion in the Public Sphere Milan, June 8

Giuliano Amato
President of the Encyclopaedia Treccani; former Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior of Italy

Adam Michnik
Publisher of the Polish daily newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza*

Giovanni Reale
Professor of Ancient Philosophy, Vita-Salute San Raffaele University Milan

Charles Taylor
Professor em. of Philosophy, McGill University Montréal; IWM Permanent Fellow

Chairs:

Alberto Melloni
Professor of History, University of Modena-Reggio Emilia; Director of the Foundation for Religious Sciences John XXIII

Krzysztof Michalski
Professor of Philosophy at Warsaw and Boston Universities; Rector of the IWM

Organization: Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, Fondazione Corriere della Sera, IWM. Media partner: *biweekly.pl*, *Corriere della Sera*, *Der Standard*, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *wyborcza.pl*, *Welt Group*. Cooperation partner: Polish National Audiovisual Institute. Supporter: Orange, tp, Energa

Solidarity in a Pluralist Age

BY CHARLES TAYLOR

Atheists need to talk to believers, believers need to talk to atheists and the religions need to talk to each other. Dialogue is the key to solidarity in the multi-faith societies in the 21st century. Charles Taylor's plea for mutual understanding at the debate in Milan.



Photo: IWM

Let us look at solidarity, and in particular: the possibility of the failure of solidarity. Solidarity is absolutely essential to democratic societies; otherwise, they begin to fall apart. They cannot function beyond a certain level of mutual distrust or a sense of being abandoned by others. So what is the threat to solidarity? Some think that it is the development of a more and more individualistic outlook on life. I think that is part of it, but there is another threat to solidarity, which is tightly linked to a diminishing sense of common identity. Think of some of the most successful welfare states of Europe, for example in Scandinavia. It is no accident that, for a long time, they were carried by populations that were ethnically very homogeneous. People had the sense that they could understand those with whom they were having solidarity: "They're people just like me, they're people I feel a close link with." So, the challenge for all our societies is how to maintain the same intensity of solidarity when populations are diversifying.

There are two ways you can go. One is to hark back to older modes of solidarity. Take the case of France. What makes French identity is *laïcité*: "We have these Muslims coming in and they don't understand our *laïcité*, and we have to somehow build a dam against them." That way of trying to shore up solidarity is disastrous because you are not creating solidarity among the people who are actually there, who are actually citizens. The other way is to redefine

identity, and I think that is where all democratic societies are today. They are faced with the challenge of redefining their identity in dialogue with elements some of which are external, some of which are internal. Think how powerful feminist movements have been in Eu-

So it seems to me we have this great task before us to calm the cultural fears of our traditions being undermined; to look at, and reach out to, the people who are coming in; to find a way of recreating our political ethic around this very important kernel, which includes human

*The understanding of the other
is absolutely integral to our survival
as democracies*

rope in the last thirty years. These are not people who came from outside, but people who did not in some ways have full citizenship, who demanded it, and who redefined things in order to obtain it.

It is a kind of paradox if you think that you can save Europe by narrowing Europe. The French writer Rémi Brague once commented that the peculiarity of Europe lies in the fact that it is the only great civilization that has understood itself from the beginning as being secondary. It arises in the Renaissance with the idea that there is another source in the Ancients that we have to live up to. This is not the way of Chinese society, or of Indian society. It is something very peculiar to Europe. The sense that we have something to learn from outside is integral to the European genius.

rights, equality, non-discrimination, and democracy. If we succeed in doing so, we can create a sense that we belong together even though the reasons each one of us may subscribe to this will be different. Some will cite the right to life because they are Christians and they say that humans are made in the image of God; others will speak like Kant about the rational agency of human beings being something worthy of infinite respect. And there will be other definitions. The idea that a modern democratic society could run and hold together around this ethic on a single, profound justification is a very deep illusion. In other words, we have to think of our Western societies not simply as Christian societies. We have to move beyond that and see the actual challenge to our solidarity, and see that this has to be grounded on a plurality of possible bases and

foundations. In other words, the understanding of the other and talking to the other is absolutely integral to our survival as democracies.

There is another threat to solidarity in many Western countries, which is the challenge of increasing individualism, of increasing focus on economic prosperity, on one's own ambitions. It is horrifying to me to see the debate in the US over healthcare, because of the utter lack of a sense of solidarity of so many people. You tell them that there are 40 million people without healthcare and they say, "well... so?" If that is your reaction you have lost the very basis of what a modern democratic society is. So how do we, in the face of this kind of individuation, recreate a sense of solidarity? Again, this cannot be restored simply by insisting on one particular philosophy or one particular religion. The sense of solidarity in a society can only be sustained if all the different spiritual families that make up that society find it in them to recreate their sense of dedication to it: if the Christians see that as central to their Christianity, if the Muslims see that as central to their Islam, if the various kinds of lay philosophies see that as central to their philosophy.

Here is where I would make a very strong plea for the recognition of the importance of religion. Religion provides a very profound and powerful base of solidarity, and *laïc* philosophers or *laïc* politicians who would like to marginalize religion are making a big mistake, even as they would if they tried to marginalize atheistic or unbelieving philosophies. We are societies that, in our tremendous diversity, are powered by a great many different engines of commitment to our common ethic, and we cannot afford to switch off any of these engines. All these together are what keep our societies going as viable, equal, democratic, and solidary societies.

Now this is very hard for Europeans and those developments out of Europe, among which I include myself as a Canadian. Historically, the political ethic of confessional societies has been grounded in a single, basic foundation. In the European case, the Christian foundation. Various kinds of *laïque* societies have tried to invent themselves out of the ruins of that, and they made the same mistake in another way. A certain kind of Jacobinism said that we must have only one philosophy. It would no longer be the Christian one, but rather the *laïque* philosophy of the Enlightenment, and that must be the

common accepted grounds. Nobody must threaten that. It is an attempt to grasp the idea of a civil religion: an idea put forth by none less than Jean Jacques Rousseau. Well, we can no longer have a civil religion. We cannot have a civil religion around God; we cannot have it around *laïcité* and the rights of man, we cannot have a civil religion around any particular view. We are in uncharted territory. We face a challenge unheard of in human history, which is to have a powerful political ethic of solidarity self-consciously grounded on very different views.

This can only succeed if we vigorously exchange with each other in order to create a kind of mutual respect for these different views, which otherwise disappears. I am horrified to see in our societies the advancing force of Islamophobia, which attempts to take the extremely complex and varied history of Islam and reduce it to a few simple slogans. That kind of utterly ignorant stupidity—there's no better word for it—is not only a crime against truth, against the spirit: it is also a dagger pointed at the heart of our modern democratic societies. But that goes for any kind of utterly dismissive view of the other. Atheists need to talk to believers and believers need to talk to atheists. They are only going to come to understand what their own philosophy is about if they do that, but let us leave that aside as a necessary spiritual exercise. This kind of exchange is crucial for the health of the kind of society I am describing. It is one with a strong political ethic, self-consciously based on very different foundations; we will only hold together if we talk to each other with openness, with frankness, and with a certain sense, precisely, of solidarity. This, I think, is what we are forced to do. It is not what we would like to do. It is not what we ever did do. If we keep looking back to our Christian roots and, as it were, stoking them up, it will not work. You cannot live on your Christian roots. You can only live on your ability to recreate this ethic and this solidarity from all the different roots. That is the challenge we all face. ◀

Charles Taylor is Professor emeritus at McGill University, Montréal and Permanent Fellow at the IWM where he heads the research focus "Religion and Secularism". He was awarded the 2007 Templeton Prize and the 2008 Kyoto Prize for his lifetime achievement in the humanities and social sciences. His most recent publication is *A Secular Age* (2007), which was lately translated into German entitled *Ein säkulares Zeitalter*.

Secularism in Global Perspective

BY LOIS LEE

The worldwide resurgence of religions has challenged contemporary conceptions of the secular. What if secularity is not a corollary of modernity? What if Islam and democracy are in fact compatible? What if the future model of a secular state is not America or France, but India? The second “Modes of Secularism and Religious Responses” conference (June 10–12), chaired by Charles Taylor, moved beyond the myths and constraints of mainstream secularization theory.

Religion occupies a unique place in our understanding of modern society and nation-statehood. Having played a particular role in the formation of the European nation-state system itself, religion has had the dubious privilege of being considered somehow unlike other kinds of social practice and organisation, at once special and especially dangerous. Real modernity must be democratic, runs the logic; and real democracy must be secular.

While religious experience and practice seemed to be declining in many parts of the world, this vision was untroubled. Today, however, it has become commonplace to recognize the vitality of religion—and, what is more, its vitality in precisely those democratic contexts that it was once considered to be anathema to. The impact of this shift is hard to overstate. It amounts to a dethroning of one of the longest-held and deepest-seated aspects of modern understandings and identities. It has led to one of the profoundest shifts in general and academic thought about what modernity means and how it can be conducted most progressively.

A shift of this magnitude does not occur overnight and the project of unpacking and articulating this shift is ongoing. The IWM’s “Modes of Secularism” conference series, which is chaired by Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor, is a significant contribution to this process and to its continuing momentum. The first meeting in 2009 worked to better articulate the challenge to classical secularization theory and to the concept of “secularism” itself, seen less and less as a neutral meta-category and more and more as a substantive and political object towards which religions are making a number of responses.

Seeking to continue this project of articulation, the 2010 meeting turned its attentions to secularism in global perspective. The idea of secularism has its roots in Western experience and intellectual traditions, but has nevertheless travelled widely, sometimes with colonialists but often by virtue of being, as Chris Hann put it, “a good idea.” The aim here was to scrutinize how its success as a global concept might have masked empirical complexities—complexities which might, in turn, be beneficial to this moment of re-conceptualising secularism and the relationship between religion and modernity in general.

The conference opened with a

discussion of the Indian case and that country’s experience of developing a secular framework from and for religious and political traditions that are quite different from Western ones. Indeed, Dipesh Chakrabarty began the conference with the suggestion that Indian history challenges Western conceptions at their core: given that India became “modern” without them, do we need the concepts of “modernity” and “secularism” at all?

Taking up the India-West comparison, Sudipta Kaviraj made a more particular but powerful argument for a methodological turn in the study of secularism. Instead of taking European secularism as a starting point and measure of secularisms elsewhere, Kaviraj argued, we need to take other starting points—such as India—and build models of secularism, bottom-up, from rich, local empirical knowledge of these cases and compare these more models on equal terms. Such an approach would resist the intellectual imperialism of traditional thinking about modernity and secularism, and recognize the complexity of secularisms-in-practice. It would help open our eyes to, for example, the relevance of imperial rather than nation-state models in Indian politics, and of communitarian rather than individuated products of secularism. Kaviraj’s discussion also encouraged a more intersectional analytical approach to secularism, one in which the modern and secular would be understood as dimensions, rather than containers, of social life, enabling us to see how these dimensions are mutually and continuously reformed in relationship with other dimensions of social life—local practices, say, or socio-economic positions.

José Casanova turned the focus to China, with a discussion of how the category of “religion” has been understood and applied in its history. The Chinese case was used to enrich his argument that definitions of “religion” and “secularism” cannot be decontextualized, that they can only be understood via ethnographic analyses of the work such terms are doing in local context. Alfred C. Stepan also looked to Asian cultures to explore the relationship between religion and modernity, and the usefulness of “secularism” for describing the ideal relationship between them. He wanted to emphasize the number of democratic Muslim-majority countries that exist and are emerging around the world. Not arguing for any special relationship between Islam and democracy (he noted particularly undemocrat-

ic traditions in many Arab Muslim states), still his contribution gave momentum to arguments against the idea that Islam and democracy are incompatible and to arguments for the decoupling of non-religiosity and democratic governance.

Turkey provided another important empirical case. Nilüfer Göle, one of the leading authorities on Turkish

Western secularism, he said, we need to deconstruct the idea of “Christian Europe”: we need, in general, to always keep in mind that Christianity comes, to use Webb Keane’s summary, in more than two flavors. Returning to the endlessly fascinating Turkish case—which sits at the fault-lines of so many phenomena central to religion and secularism

ticular, has been involved in the generation of new forms of cultural materialisation, and heavily implicated in the development of modern communications methods and technologies, closed the conference and brought the discussion full circle: if, as Martin said, sociology (in particular) has been obsessed with Protestant routes to secularity, the



Photos: IWM

Dilip Gaonkar



Nilüfer Göle

secularism, emphasized the historical contingency of secularism projects, which, in the Turkish case, have been coterminous with projects of state-building. Despite similarities with European secularization in this regard, Veena Das emphasized the complexity of comparison, pointing out that, as in India, empire rather than nation-state is an increasingly important reference point for Turkish secularism. Such contributions developed Casanova’s critique of secularism as an ideology which constructs and contains something it calls “religion”, and towards a broader awareness that “secularism” is likewise a constructed category.

Global comparison must include the “Christian West” and several contributors argued that the Weberian, Protestant-focused analysis of classical secularization theory was as problematic for understanding its home setting as it is for understanding non-Western settings. David Martin, for example, highlighted the exclusion of the Counter-Reformation from the history of European secularization, and Chakrabarty underlined Taylor’s recognition of Catholicism as well as Protestantism in his seminal analysis, *A Secular Age*.

Hann took this post-Protestantized approach further, by emphasizing the role of Eastern Orthodox Christianity as a significant force in Europe and European history—particularly in work considering post-socialist experience. Before we can make a link between Christianity and

debates—Hann reminded us of the significance of Eastern Orthodoxy to Ottoman history.

A final blow to the Weberian conception of secularism came in a last session dealing with the relationship between Christianity and secularism. Here, Weber’s idea of Protestantism as a secularizing force was upset with discussion of how Protestantism has thrived in modernity, even as it has helped propel its course. Michael Warner’s rich account of how Evangelism, in par-

work here suggested that this obsession has denied the significance not only of non-Western experiences, not only of Catholic and Eastern Orthodox secularities, not only of non-religious—namely, socialist—modernizations: it has also, in fact, denied the significance of Protestant routes to new—and modern—religiosities. <

Read also the new issue of Transit, which focuses on the topic of religion and secularism (see page 20).

Program

Panel Discussion: Religion and Violence

Veena Das, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore
Faisal Devji, Oxford University
Dilip Gaonkar, Northwestern University, Evanston
Chair: **Charles Taylor**, McGill University, Montréal; Permanent Fellow, IWM

Session I: Analogues of Secularization and Associated Religious Developments Outside the West

Dipesh Chakrabarty, University of Chicago; Visiting Fellow, IWM
Chris Hann, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle
Sudipta Kaviraj, Columbia University, New York; Visiting Fellow, IWM
Chair: **Charles Taylor**

Session II: Comparative Regimes of Secularism

Rajeev Bhargava, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi

José Casanova, Georgetown University, Washington D.C.
Alfred C. Stepan, Columbia University, New York
Chair: **Nilüfer Göle**, Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS), Paris

Session III: Defining and Re-defining Secularity and the Secular

Detlef Pollack, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster
David Martin, London School of Economics
Chair: **Charles Taylor**

Session IV: Christianity, Modernity and the Secular

Webb Keane, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
Michael Warner, Yale University, New Haven
Chair: **Elizabeth Shakman Hurd**, Northwestern University, Evanston; Guest, IWM

The conference was generously supported by Institut Français, Renner Institut and Die Presse.

Analoguees of Secularity

BY SUDIPTA KAVIRAJ

To assess the claims of secularization of the world, we need to place similar narratives of secularity in other cultures beside the Western one, argues Sudipta Kaviraj.

In the modern world, Charles Taylor suggested once, we have no choice but to live theoretically. At least one suggestion contained in this complex and significant insight, is that in the modern world reigning theories of history power-

suggests that even after disenchantment, the question of belief remains open. A second feature of Taylor's intervention is his explicit statement that his story is the story of Latin Christendom, of the modern West, and that to assess the claims of sec-

the place of a secular state in a society that remains deeply religious; and scholars pointed out the difficulty of applying straightforwardly the ideas of secularization theory to the Indian case. Taylor's book expands the debate by suggesting that the theory has problems in describing and explaining the historical facts not only in India, but even in the West. If the existing theory, which social scientists tend to take for granted, is faulty in understanding its cognitive centre, the history of the West, it follows that we require a fundamental re-thinking of the theories of secularization.

Analyzed closely, the conventional theory appears to contain two types of defects. The first is simply a tendency to leap to generalizations from a limited number of examples. It usually goes through two inappropriate extrapolations: from a trend noted in the history of a few, "highly developed" societies—like England and Germany—it extrapolated it to

entists took for granted. While the standard expectation that the growth of a capitalist economy and continuance of democratic politics would lead to an overall decline of religion remained a kind of inertial commonsense of public debates, an increasingly sharp critique was articulated by authors like Ashis Nandy and T. N. Madan, who questioned the prospects of a secular state desired by a modernist elite in a society which remained deeply religious.

The first argument about Indian difference stems from theories of multiple modernity: if modernity is a composite process, as I argue elsewhere, and the specific sequencing of the constituent processes of modernity determine its overall structure and character, the trajectory of modernity in India is bound to be significantly different from the Western ones. Besides, clearly modernity works on the forces and materials from the previous history of a society. It appears now, through

affiliation to communities would fade and leave behind disembodied individuals eager to fit into the modern economy and its accompanying associational sociological structures. Evidence from Indian modernity reveals a more complex process: strong tendencies towards individuation emerged amongst some segments of the modernist elites, but on the other hand, modern state processes released powerful impulses for a re-invention of religious communities as collective actors on the stage of representative politics. This second trend counteracted and complicated the effects of the first one. Historically, instead of declining or disappearing altogether, religious groups were fundamentally transformed into new types of communities which were abstract, agentive and global, creating the conditions of production of typical forms of modern hatred. Contrary to the misleadingly benign picture offered by conventional thinking,



Sudipta Kaviraj



Michael Warner



Webb Keane

Photos: IWM

fully affect our actions by moulding our expectations about the future. These "theoretical" visions of history are immensely powerful, despite the fact that their picture of the past is highly selective, their sense of the present usually chaotic and of the future entirely speculative. Debates about theory are not matters that affect only the reclusive inhabitants of academia, but have a considerable effect on the public cultures of modern societies. This is why the sense that there is something seriously wrong with the standard theory of secularization—the theory that thinks about the place of religion in the fast changing world of modernity—is of enormous public significance.

Taylor's recent work, *A Secular Age*, has contributed powerfully to the new debate about secularization theory by not merely contributing an innovative argument about what he calls the "immanent frame" and its intellectual effects on modern culture, but by changing the nature of the debate itself, by giving a new kind of coherence to the critical questioning regarding the nature, extent and possible direction of secularity. Two of its arguments are particularly notable. After a magisterial historical description of secularization in the West, it contends that secularization theory has been hasty and mistaken on a fundamental point—in believing that once the arguments about the "immanent frame" are forcefully advanced by the modern scientific culture, people who accept it have no choice except disbelief. Taylor

ularization of the world, we need to place similar narratives of secularity in other world cultures beside the Western one. He does not expect his readings to be right about cultures he does not analyze, and rejects the powerful but implausible idea that European history shows to all other waiting civilizations the story of their future.

By secularity, Rajeev Bhargava has suggested, scholars often refer to two entirely different things: first, ethical secularism, the process of a decline of religion in cultures of

the rest of Western societies, and elevated that into an "historical trend". Then, more inappropriately, it moved from that thin and lopsided evidence to conclude that what "was true of the West" must also be true of other cultures in future. Thus the difference between societies—the fact that some trends had occurred in a cluster of societies and emphatically *had not happened* in others, is altered interpretatively by a small but highly significant change: by suggesting that the fact that these trends had not occurred in other societies merely showed that they *had not yet*

new historical research, that just before the coming of the Western impact on Indian society through colonialism, there was a period of rapid and significant social change which needs to be re-thought. It is particularly important to analyze the ways in which pre-modern Indian states responded to the insistent problem of great diversity of faiths among their subjects. The Mughal state in particular—from the mid 16th to the mid-18th century—fashioned rules of accommodation between religious communities which appear to show an institutional design entirely opposite to the Westphalian settlement in Europe. In an important sense, this crucial difference might have something to do with the difference between an *empire-state* in India, and the emerging *nation-states* in Europe. The first form is politically absolutist, but accepts the fact of religious diversity of its subjects; the nation-state becomes less authoritarian with time, but is based on a stronger connection between the state and a culturally homogenized people. Empires might be more oppressive, but also more tolerant; modern nation-states might be less oppressive, but less tolerant of cultural diversity.

Once modernity arrives through the mediation of colonial power, its effects remain contradictory. In mainstream social theory, anchored in the experience of the West, an excessive and exclusive emphasis is placed on the process of individuation. Analysts assumed too easily that with the coming of modernity

modernity produced a political universe fraught with contradictory impulses which require a registration in a more complex theory.

Taylor's work has produced a rare impetus for critical re-thinking about the fundamentals of modern social theory about secularization. It invites us to try to compare the historical trajectories of secularity in different world cultures. The Indian trajectory offers a particularly interesting comparison with secularization in Latin Christianity, because it offers examples of different solutions to similar problems, and at times different long-term tendencies. And thinking closely about Indian history would force us to reexamine and perhaps revise some of the major beliefs that work as presuppositions in modern social science. It might prove particularly helpful in getting rid of two deep biases in social science thinking—of expecting endless repetitions of Western history, leading to the implication that non-Western history does not need careful scrutiny; and the second, of the idea of the effortless benignness of modernity, so that we expect that the modernity will always produce institutions superior to pre-modern ones, and we should not subject them to constant critical examination. ◀

Sudipta Kaviraj is Professor of Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures at Columbia University, New York, and was a Visiting Fellow at the IWM from May to August 2010. His latest book is *The Imaginary Institution of India*.

Conventional theory claims that what was true of the West must also be true of other cultures in future

modern societies; second, political secularism which refers to the devices by means of which states seek to reduce conflict between religious groups. His distinction implies that if secularism is seen in the second sense—as political secularism—then, it is possible to argue that there are many interesting historical trajectories of political secularity in different regions and cultures of the world—in ancient India, in medieval Mughal empire, in Ottoman Turkey—all of which have to be compared with Western modernity. In India, an intense debate has taken place about

happened. All social scientists needed to do was to practice an elegant form of waiting. For a long time, the cast of this theory discouraged scholars from investigating seriously the historically specific trajectories of the modern in non-Western cultures.

In Indian social science, this received theory came under increasing questioning since the 1980s. With the rise of Hindu nationalist forces in Indian politics, some sociologists expressed skepticism about the tranquil lines of development social sci-

Are We Living in a Secular Age?

Buchpräsentation und Podiumsdiskussion mit **Charles Taylor** und **Kardinal Schönborn**, 9. Juni



Charles Taylor (links), Kardinal Schönborn

Was es nur christliche Demut oder hoffte Kardinal Christoph Schönborn wirklich auf wertvolle Ratschläge? Als er am Mittwochabend am IWM den kanadischen Philosophen Charles Taylor traf, glich das Gespräch der zwei mehr einer Fragestunde: „Wo sehen Sie die Quel-

len für eine religiöse Erneuerung? Wie schätzen Sie die Perspektiven für die Religion in Europa ein, speziell für die Kirche?“, fragte der Kardinal. Warum sollte ein Philosoph darüber Auskunft geben können? Weil er wie kein anderer den Weg des Westens in die Säkularisierung

studiert hat. Taylors Antwort ließ an Klarheit nichts zu wünschen übrig: Die Abkehr der Menschen von den religiösen Institutionen sei eine Reaktion auf die Verengung dessen, was Religiosität bedeute. In der Geschichte der katholischen Kirche seit dem Mittelalter seien immer mehr

Praktiken und Formen von Religiosität ausgeschlossen worden, z. B. indem sie als „Magie“ und „Aberglaube“ verdammt wurden. „Das hat Kollateralschäden für die Spiritualität des Menschen.“ In seinem Opus magnum „Ein säkulares Zeitalter“ nennt Taylor sechs bedeutende Errungenschaften, die das Christentum der westlichen Gesellschaft gebracht hätte, so das positive Verhältnis zum Körper und zu Gefühlen oder die Bedeutung des Individuums. „Viele dieser Dinge haben die Menschen verinnerlicht, finden sie aber nicht in der Kirche“, beklagte Schönborn. „Sie glauben, dass diese Errungenschaften gegen die Kirche erfolgten.“ Warum? Taylor: „Viele dieser Dinge gingen verloren, nicht nur im Prozess der Säkularisierung, sondern auch in der Kirche selbst. Denken wir an den Körper – die Kirche hat heute eine extrem regulierte Ethik, sie identifiziert sich sehr mit den extremen Regeln und wird immer strenger.“ „Sucher“ ist ein zentrales Wort in Taylors Buch. Immer mehr Menschen sind ihm zufolge auf der Suche, zugleich aber allergisch gegen vorproduzierte Antwort-

ten. „Die entscheidende Frage wird sein: Was macht die Kirche mit diesen Suchern?“, sagte Taylor. „Es ist schmerzhaft für mich, dass die Sucher ihre Heimat nicht in der Kirche finden, was umso erstaunlicher ist, als die Kirche in den Anfängen die Heimat einer so vielfältigen Spiritualität war. Wie konnte die Kirche so eng werden?“ Eine Korrektur folgte: „Die Kirche“ stimme nicht. „Das, was von oben kommt, das Magisterium ist das Problem. Was wir brauchen, ist eine Dezentralisierung.“ Und der Kardinal? Schien schweigend zuzustimmen. ◀

Die Presse, 11. 6. 2010

In Kooperation mit Suhrkamp Verlag und Die Presse

Charles Taylor, Professor em. für Philosophie, McGill University, Montréal; Permanent Fellow, IWM. Taylors Buch *Ein säkulares Zeitalter* ist 2009 im Suhrkamp Verlag erschienen.

Christoph Kardinal Schönborn, katholischer Theologe und Erzbischof von Wien.

Moderation:

Michael Prüller, stv. Chefredakteur, Die Presse

Krzysztof Michalski, Rektor des IWM

Does French Laïcité Respect Individual Freedom?

Monthly Lecture: **Patrick Weil**, April 8



Photo: Philipp Steinkeller

Patrick Weil is Director of Research at CNRS, at the Center for the Social History of the 20th century, University of Paris 1. In 2008 he published *How to Be French. Nationality in the Making since 1789*.

The widely held view of French *laïcité* is that it is illiberal, state-centric, and too restrictive of religious identities. In his lecture, Patrick Weil offered criticisms of this common stance. Drawing heavily on his experience as a member of the 2004 committee that suggested—among other things—the banning of conspicuous religious symbols in French public schools, Weil emphasized that French *laïcité* is in fact consistent with religious freedoms. He defended the law arguing that it had been an unavoidable decision. In his view, *laïcité* has been liberal from its conception in 1905. Drawing attention to the changes in the religious landscape in France, Weil pointed out that France today is home to the largest Catholic, Atheist, Buddhist, Jewish, and Muslim communities in Europe. One of the challenges

facing the French system is to adapt to this new landscape, acknowledging that many in France are fearful of this idea. Challenging the popular view, Weil contended that French *laïcité* is not inimical, but rather completely neutral toward religion. The survival of a space in which different beliefs could co-exist was dependent on this neutrality, he argued. Participation in this neutral space obliges every individual in France to cross borders that they might otherwise have encapsulated themselves in, a fact to be welcomed. For Weil, it is exactly this neutral space that explains why, in recent public opinion polls, French religious communities appear successfully to co-exist with other communities, both religious and secular. ◀

Ahmet S. Tekelioğlu

Ein Kapitel deutscher Filmgeschichte

Monatsvortrag: **Peter Demetz**, 11. Mai

Veit Harlans *Die Goldene Stadt* (1942) ist der meistgesehene und finanziell erfolgreichste Film Nazideutschlands. Es ist die Geschichte einer Deutschen, die die elterliche Scholle verlässt und in Prag eine Romanze mit einem Tschechen eingeht. Sie wird schwanger, erfährt die Kälte des verständnislosen Vaters und bereitet ihrem Leben ein Ende. Peter Demetz zeigte in seinem Vortrag, dass die Darstellung der Beziehung von Deutschen und Tschechen zwar der NS-Propaganda folgt, in diesem Film die Grenzfälle zwischen dem Feindbild des Fremden und den Deutschen aber weit weniger scharf gezeichnet sind als etwa in Harlans antisemitischen Film *Jud Süß*. Zudem liegt ein klarer Akzent auf der persönlichen Ebene der Charaktere, auf dem privaten Glück und der Tragödie der handelnden Personen. Dies mag den fulminanten Erfolg des Films erklären. Demetz beleuchtete auch die Entstehungsgeschichte des Films, die die engen Spielräume von Filmschaffenden im Nationalsozialismus deutlich macht. Bis zur fertigen UFA Produktion durchläuft das Werk einen mehrstufigen Bearbeitungsprozess, in den nicht zuletzt der selbsternannte „Schirmherr des deutschen Films“, Reichspropagandaminister Joseph Goebbels, selbst eingreift. Ihm ist das Drehbuch des Dramaturgen Alfred Braun nicht dramatisch genug. Das glückliche Ende muss nach dem Willen Goebbels' in ein tragisches Pathos verwandelt werden: Die lebensmüde Tochter wird nicht gerettet – wie ursprünglich vorgesehen – und wählt denselben Freitod wie ihre Mutter im Moor. Daraufhin trocknet ein deutscher Ingenieur die Sumpflandschaft aus und auf dem Totenbett der tragischen Heldin wagt, passend zur Blut-und-Boden-Ideologie der Nazis, der goldene Weizen. ◀

Leo Schlöndorff

Peter Demetz lehrte bis zu seiner Emeritierung deutsche und vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft an der Yale University.

Globalization and Global Warming

Monthly Lecture: **Dipesh Chakrabarty**, June 15



Photo: IWM

In the last few decades, terms such as *greenhouse gas*, *climate change*, and *carbon emissions* have become increasingly familiar. Nevertheless, climate change remains an abstract idea for many: inferences about the practical consequences

Dipesh Chakrabarty is Professor of History, South Asian Languages and Civilizations and the College at the University of Chicago, and was Visiting Fellow at the IWM in June and July 2010.

of climate change have often been avoided. Global warming also has an impact on various academic disciplines belonging to the “humanities”. In his lecture the historian Dipesh Chakrabarty pointed out the difficulties and the traps of playing with the notion of anthropogenic global warming in the context of historiography. He touched on the ideas of climate scientists, representatives of the “climate justice” position, the

UN Climate Change Conference, and political statements by developed and developing nations. Seeking to diversify the debate, Chakrabarty not only illustrated the difficulty of reaching conclusions, but also showed that climate change is neither strictly a matter for science nor for the social sciences. The fact that human beings bear responsibility for the mutation of nature necessitates seeing humans as a species—or

better, a nonhuman-human, a geophysical force. Compared to conventional accounts of human history, this seems outrageous. Chakrabarty leaves us with the possibility of there being more than one concept of history, and more than one image of the human being. ◀

Mirjam Garscha

See also Chakrabarty's contribution on page 15

Trauma and Miracles

Book Presentation with **Diana Ivanova** and **Babak Salari**, April 13



Photo: Babak Salari

Northwestern Bulgaria is the poorest region in the European Union and is going through several crises simultaneously—the absence of women (who have left to work abroad as carers for the elderly), the loneliness of the men left behind, the abandonment of children, and the general crises of villages and small towns that have ceased to be seen as places offering a future for people. It is this quiet layering of trauma upon trauma that drew the attention of Diana Ivanova and photographer Babak Salari to their subject. Their interest is rooted in their own life experiences. After many conversations, Salari and Ivanova wanted to find out what was happening to the oldest people in the region, nowadays its biggest age group. They are also the “last guardians”—a gener-

ation that has lived through at least two social breakdowns: that of the traditional village following the communist land collectivization in the 1950s, and that of communism itself in 1989. In the summer of 2008, they travelled to nine northwestern Bulgarian villages to take photographs and talk to people. The result was more than 50 portraits and 2000 images, produced for the documentary project “Trauma and Miracles”. Salari and Ivanova presented the project at the IWM accompanied by an exhibition of selected pictures. <

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Diana Ivanova is a Bulgarian journalist, writer and manager of New Culture Foundation. She was Milena Jesenská Fellow at the IWM in 2005.

Babak Salari is a photographer and lecturer in photography who lives and works in Montréal.

The New Politics of Climate Change

Series: Climate Politics and International Solidarity with **David G. Victor**, June 24



Photo: IWM

A lot of time has been wasted and not much has been done”. David G. Victor took a firm stand: the lesson to be learnt from the failure of the Copenhagen Summit is that a fundamentally different approach is needed to face the challenge of climate change. The strategy to achieve universal agreements on binding treaties is based on the illusory concept of a world government that would be able to articulate a general will. The institutional toolkit of the international community must be replaced by more flexible and effective approaches. Victor suggested adopting the strategies of economic cooperation in order to overcome the outdated mindset of “conventional wisdom”. Instead of relying on the legitimacy of agreements that are ratified by a large number of countries, a core group

of seriously committed members should take the initiative. In Victor’s concept, mutual trust and reliability replace the belief in legally binding laws and timetables. The latter are basically inefficient, because national governments either refuse to ratify them, or break the treaty, in the pursuit of their own countries’ interests. Both Victor and the commentator on his lecture, Alexander Van der Bellen, agreed that whatever happens, we will face substantial changes in climate that will force us to act. Therefor, we will be better prepared if we give up the illusion of universal agreements and approach the reality of climate change in a more pragmatic fashion. <

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In cooperation with
Grüne Bildungswerkstatt

See also Victor’s contribution
on page 16

David G. Victor, Professor at the School of International Relations and Pacific Studies, University of California. His new book *Global Warming Gridlock* is forthcoming.

Comment: **Alexander Van der Bellen**, Member of the Austrian Parliament and Spokesperson of the Austrian Green Party for International Developments and Foreign Policy.

Ambiguität und Engagement

Reihe: Kunst – Gesellschaft – Politik mit **Verena Krieger**, 20. Mai

Seit der Renaissance treten in den bildenden Künsten, einhergehend mit ihrer Autonomisierung, Elemente des Rätselhaften und Uneindeutigen in Erscheinung, und spätestens seit dem ausgehenden 18. Jahrhundert wird Ambiguität als Grundcharakteristikum des Ästhetischen theoretisiert. In der modernen Kunsttheorie von Kant bis Adorno, von Novalis bis Eco, von Nietzsche bis Rancière gelten Offenheit, Rätselhaftigkeit und Uneindeutigkeit als essentiell für die Kunst. In erstaunlicher Kontinuität bis in die Gegenwart werden eindeutige Parteinahme oder plakative Aussagen als unkünstlerisch verurteilt, während Indifferenz und Ambivalenz als genuin künstlerisch erscheinen.

Wie aber verhält sich dieses moderne Paradigma der Ambiguität zu einer anderen Hervorbringung der Moderne – der politisch engagierten Kunst? Setzt Engagement nicht Eindeutigkeit voraus? Verena Krieger zeigte in ihrem Vortrag an zahlreichen Beispielen, dass Uneindeutigkeit der Kunst und politische Kritik kein Widerspruch sein müssen. Strategien der Verkomplizierung, die im Betrachter eine intensive Deutungsarbeit und damit Auseinandersetzung mit dem Betrachteten evozieren, die als radikale Affirmation getarnte Subversion, wie bei Christoph Schlingensiefels Container-Aktion „Ausländer raus!“ bei den Wiener Festwochen im Jahr 2000, oder die Methode der „indifferenten Mi-

mesis“ sind zeitgenössische Antworten der politischen Kunst auf den „Aufstieg der Ambiguität zum Signum des Ästhetischen.“ Erst wenn die Veruneindeutigung des Eindeutigen mit einer Verweigerung jeglicher Parteinahme einhergeht, wenn Fragen nach Schuld und Unrecht nicht mehr gestellt werden, wenn also Hinnahme statt Engagement im Vordergrund steht, dann, so Krieger, entpolitisiert sich Kunst und ist nur noch bloße Ästhetik. <

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In Kooperation mit dem
Renner Institut

Verena Krieger ist Professorin für Kunstgeschichte an der Universität für Angewandte Kunst in Wien. Zuletzt publizierte sie *Ambiguität in der Kunst*.

The Balkans Between Cliché and the European Future

Vorlesung zum Gedächtnis an Christine von Kohl mit **Maria Todorova**, 27. Mai

Der Balkan ist noch längst nicht in Europa angekommen. Zwar ist mit Bulgarien und Rumänien ein Teil dessen, was geographisch als Balkan bezeichnet wird, inzwischen in die EU integriert. Aber für Albanien und die Nachfolgestaaten Jugoslawiens scheint der Weg noch lang. Die Historikerin Maria Todorova fragte in ihrem an die im letzten Jahr verstorbene Balkanexpertin und Menschenrechtlerin Christine von Kohl erinnernden Vortrag, nach den Gründen für die Distanz Europas zu diesem Teil seiner selbst. Eine selektive Wahrnehmung der europäischen Geschichte und ein von Stereotypen geprägter Diskurs über den Balkan als eine rückständige, kriegerische und „kulturell andersartige“ Region seien hauptverantwortlich für die ablehnende Haltung Westeuropas. Dieser „Balkanismus“, betonte Todorova, sei Teil einer seit Jahrhunderten sich vollziehenden diskursiven Errichtung von Dichotomien zwischen dem so genannten



Photo: IWM

Osten und dem so genannten Westen. Deutsche Reise-Schriftsteller versuchten seit dem 15. Jahrhundert mit geographischen Methoden Europa zu definieren. Die wohl wichtigste Persönlichkeit in diesem Zusammenhang ist Pius der Zweite. Seine Arbeit beeinflusste Generationen von ihm nachfolgenden Gelehrten. Er verfocht in seinem Werk die mannigfachen Unterschiede zwischen Asien und Europa, das er als christliche Einheit definierte. „Wir leben noch heute mit den Folgen seines Vermächtnisses“, sagte Todorova mit Blick auf den umstritte-

nen EU-Beitritt der Türkei. Was zu Europa zählt und was nicht, ist jedenfalls das Resultat eines komplexen Wechselspiels von unzähligen historischen Ereignissen, Traditionen und Vermächtnissen – und wird immer wieder aufs Neue verhandelt. Entscheidend dabei ist, wer die Definitionsmacht ausübt. Der Balkan sei von jeher von außen definiert worden. Das, so Todorova, müsse sich ändern, damit auch der Balkan endlich vom Rand in die Mitte Europas rücken kann. <

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Maria Todorova ist Professorin für Geschichte an der University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. Zusammen mit Zsuzsa Gille hat sie kürzlich den Band *Post-communist Nostalgia* herausgegeben.

Eine Initiative der Nachlassverwalter von Christine von Kohl, Herbert Maurer und Vedran Dzihic, in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Center for European Integration Strategies (CEIS) und dem Magistrat der Stadt Wien.

Modernities Europe and Its Nations Revisited

Junior Visiting Fellows' Conference, June 17

At the end of each semester, the Junior Visiting Fellows present the results of their research at the Institute. The conference held on June 17 dealt with the boundaries and representations of multiple modernities. Cutting across the various thematic panels, many of the papers looked at the complex and sometimes contradictory ways in which religious, ethnic, and cultural identities are affirmed and contested. Major themes included the articulation and interplay of national and European perspectives, overt and subtle forms of inclusion and exclusion, and representations of the male and female as well as of the dead body. <

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Junior Visiting Fellows' Conference Program

- Panel 1:**
Religion and Secularism
- Lois Lee**
Faith / Non-Faith Dialogue. Writing Non-Religion into Secular, Pluralist Society
- Sorin Gog**
Religious Education as a Counter-Secularization Strategy in Contemporary Romania
- Leo Schlöndorff**
The End of the World as We Know It. The Transformation of Apocalypse in a Secular Society
- Panel 2:**
Acts of Presence and Representation
- Andrea Thuma**
Hannah Arendt and the Public Space
- Katharina Steidl**
Traces of / by Nature. August Strindberg's Photographic Experiments of the 1890's
- Leonardo Schiocchet**
Refugee Lives. Ritual and Belonging in Two Palestinian Refugee Camps in Lebanon
- Panel 3:**
Belonging and Boundaries
- Maren Behrensen**
Intersex and Sports. The End of Gender Segregation?
- Elitza Stanoeva**
The Dead Body of the Leader as an Organizing Principle of Socialist Public Space
- Ahmet S. Tekelioğlu**
Being European / Being Muslim. International Relations and Contending Forms of Muslim Presence in the West
- Panel 4:**
Europe—Then and Now
- Antonio Ferrara**
Beyond Ethnic Cleansing. Forced Migrations in Modern European History
- Grzegorz Krzywiec**
Polish Anti-Semitism? The Last European Closet, Cultural Code, or Social Problem?
- Vessela Hristova**
Food Regulation in the EU. Between Market Integration and National Diversity

The proceedings of all Junior Visiting Fellows' Conferences are available on the IWM website. Please refer to www.iwm.at > Publications > Junior Visiting Fellows' Conferences

Tischner Debate in Warsaw, May 17



Rafał Dutkiewicz

Ascribe all the worst things to the neighboring countries, malign them, mock them, reproach them for all their historical and all their imaginary faults, ascribe to them nothing but evil intentions." This is what the Polish writer Jerzy Pilch proposes as one of his "seven commandments of the true European." In times of crisis, the quality of a relationship is on trial—that holds not only for love affairs but also for the project of the European integration. Given that the success story of the Euro-



Joschka Fischer

pean Union relies first and foremost on its effective economic integration, the global financial crisis poses a real challenge to the European project. "Without the euro there will be no European Union. Can we manage to unite our interests?" asked Germany's former vice chancellor and foreign minister Joschka Fischer at the nineteenth Tischner Debate, which took place at the University of Warsaw in May. "I am a radical pro-European, but the quality of the Union leadership is relatively low", said the



Jerzy Pilch

Mayor of Wrocław, Rafał Dutkiewicz. "Quite often, when we go to Brussels counting on something exciting, we find rain. Only crises are capable of bringing about greater integration." But will the crisis be severe enough to encourage the European member states to go beyond their national interests and act in concert? Or is it the time for a re-strengthening of national sovereignty? "The process of building European unity must rely on realities, on nation-states," claimed the Polish historian

Photos: Warsaw University

Aleksander Hall. "Substituting intergovernmental cooperation with supranational institutions is in my view dangerous." It will be a crucial task for the European Union to meet these challenges, and although the question of how to align national interests with the idea of European integration remains, Jerzy Pilch reminds us "that the true European differs from the false one, or the merely untrue one, by knowing the answer to every question." <

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Tischner Debate XIX Europe and Its Nations

Introduction:
Joschka Fischer, former German Vice Chancellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs

Participants:
Rafał Dutkiewicz, Mayor of Wrocław
Aleksander Hall, historian and minister in the government of Tadeusz Mazowiecki
Jerzy Pilch, Polish writer and journalist

Chairs:
Marcin Król, Warsaw University
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Unaufhebbare Gewalt?

Konferenz „Phänomenologie und Gewalt“, 29. / 30. April

Die Frage nach dem Umgang mit Gewalt und den damit verbundenen Aporien war Thema der dritten Konferenz des Forschungsprojekts „Die vielen Gesichter der Gewalt“. Da es keinen definitiven und reinen Gegenbegriff zur Gewalt gibt, da vielmehr alles, was gegen die Gewalt in Anschlag gebracht wird, selbst von dieser infiziert ist, gilt es, so der Tenor der Konferenz, von einer Unaufhebbarkeit von Gewalt auszugehen. Das bedeutet nicht Fatalismus, wohl aber eine kritische Wendung gegen die Selbstgerech-

tigkeit jener Rationalitätskonzeptionen, die eine Aufhebung der Gewalt in Rechtsverhältnissen, Verfahrensweisen oder Kommunikation unterstellen, im Gegenzug die Gewaltsamkeit dieser Prozesse jedoch allzu schnell ausblenden. Gegen jede „Endlösung“ der Gewalt sei folglich eine empirisch ernüchterte „Suche nach Spielräumen geringerer Gewalt“ (Burkhard Liebsch) zu setzen. Eine Suche, die voraussetze, dass man sich Klarheit auch über jene Gewaltverhältnisse verschafft, in denen Gewalt scheinbar nur noch

um ihrer Beseitigung bzw. Verhinderung willen ausgeübt wird. Diese Einsichten treffen sich mit der These des Gesamtprojekts, dass es keine „sinnlose Gewalt“ gibt, sondern, dass Gewalt selbst dann, wenn sie ihren instrumentellen Charakter ablegt und reiner Selbstzweck zu werden scheint, als relationales Geschehen zu analysieren bleibt. Gegenüber einem die Gewaltdiskussion immer noch weithin prägenden Primat physischer Gewalt, einem damit verbundenen interaktionistischen Reduktionismus und ihrer Ausrichtung auf Ursachenanalytik versuchten die Referent/innen verschiedenen Formen der Gewalt in ihrer Verhältnishaftigkeit auf die Spur zu kommen und zu zeigen, wie der Umgang mit Gewalt – v. a. in Form einer sich legitim dünkenden „Gegen-Gewalt“ – selbst der Gewaltsamkeit nicht entkommen kann. <

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Was als Gewalt zählt

Eröffnungsvortrag zur Konferenz „Phänomenologie und Gewalt“: Burkhard Liebsch, 29. April



Photo: IWM

Burkhard Liebsch ist Professor für Philosophie an der Universität Leipzig. In Kürze erscheint sein neues Buch *Renaissance des Menschen? Zum polemologisch-anthropologischen Diskurs der Gegenwart*.

Was soll als Gewalt zählen? Burkhard Liebsch beschäftigte sich in seinem Vortrag mit der analytischen Einhegung des Gewaltbegriffs und der konstitutiven Funktion des Diskurses über Gewalt für den gesellschaftlichen Umgang mit Gewalt. Der Gewaltdiskurs trage sowohl zur gesellschaftlichen Sensibilisierung als auch zur Entgrenzung des Begriffs bei – denn klare Grenzziehungen würden die Aufdeckung vormaligen „unsichtbarer Gewaltformen“ einschränken. So gelten Rücksichtslosigkeit, Kränkung und Schweigen heute als gewaltsame

Erfahrungen. Doch dürfen die Ausweitung und Subtilität des Gewaltbegriffs nicht zur Normalisierung von Gewalt beitragen, denn „man bedient sich der Gewalt mit um so weniger Skrupeln, als sie, wie man sagt, den Dingen innewohnt“ (Merleau-Ponty). Die Aufgabe des Diskurses bestünde unter diesen Umständen darin, Gewalt so zum Vorschein und zur Sprache zu bringen, dass Handlungsspielräume eröffnet werden, ohne die Gewaltsamkeit menschlichen Zusammenlebens als unvermeidlich zu bestätigen. Der Gewaltdiskurs sollte daher, so Liebsch, Wege aufzeigen, wie der Zwiespalt zwischen dem normativen Anspruch der Gewaltfreiheit einerseits und der Realität andererseits überbrückt werden kann. <

Andrea Thuma

The bonfire of the universities
Analysis of the crisis of the university by
Nina Powers,
Ioana Bot,
Gesine Schwan
and many others
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Feministische Aufklärung

VON GUDRUN-AXELI KNAPP

Die Dialektik feministischer Kritik, die Paradoxien und nicht-intendierten Nebenfolgen feministischen Handelns, kurz: Die andere Seite der Erfolge des Feminismus der vergangenen vierzig Jahre waren das Thema des Workshops „Re-Visionen der Kritik“, der vom 5. bis 7. März am IWM stattfand.

Eine Situationsbeschreibung des Feminismus im deutschen Sprachraum, darum ging es auf einem Workshop im März am IWM. Den Tenor der Bestandsaufnahmen zu unterschiedlichen Feldern feministischer Analyse und Praxis brachte die Grazer Soziologin Angelika Wetterer auf den Punkt, die vom „erfolgreichen Scheitern“ feministischer Kritik sprach. Diese doppeldeutige Formulierung öffnet den Blick sowohl auf Formen des „Scheiterns“ durch Erfolg als auch auf die produktiven Wirkungen eines Scheiterns vorgängiger Formen der Kritik. Beide Aspekte wurden auf dem Workshop ausgelotet mit dem Interesse, Konturen und Desiderate einer Gegenwartsanalyse zu bestimmen, die den Widersprüchen und Ungleichzeitigkeiten gesellschaftlicher Transformationsprozesse und den veränderten Rahmenbedingungen feministischer Kritik gerecht werden kann.

Ausgangspunkt des von Silvia Kontos und Gudrun-Axeli Knapp konzipierten Workshops war die Beobachtung einer merklichen Verschiebung der Perspektiven und der Terminologie der Gesellschafts- und Kulturanalyse. Solche Verschiebungen, so die Annahme, verdanken sich in der Regel nicht allein der Sachlogik innerwissenschaftlicher Lern- und Abarbeitungsprozesse, sie verweisen auch auf veränderte Macht-, Opportunitäts-, und Konkurrenzverhältnisse in Wissenschaft und Gesellschaft, in denen bestimmte Begriffe, indem sie als „überholt“ markiert werden, außer Konjunktur geraten. Veränderungen im Vokabular der Gesellschafts- und Kulturanalyse können jedoch auch Indikatoren dafür sein, dass sich die gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse so verändert haben, dass die überkommenen Begriffe zu ihrem Begreifen nicht mehr taugen. Deutungswissenschaften, die auf den alten Kategorien, den bisherigen Praxis- und Kritikformen beharren, ohne sie im Licht veränderter Konstellationen zu re-vidieren, droht ein „Wirklichkeitsverlust“ (Oskar Negt). Re-Visionen bezeichnen deswegen eine dreifache Möglichkeit der Reflexion: Rücksicht nehmen, d. h. die Tragfähigkeit des Überkommenen noch einmal zu durchdenken; es zu verwerfen, wenn es an Erklärungskraft verloren hat; oder etwas Zukunftsfähiges zu entwerfen – eine Revision mit der Betonung auf *vision*. Welches sind die nicht gewollten und paradoxen Wirkungen feministischer Kritik, die in verschiedenen Feldern zu registrieren sind? Lassen sich die Umrisse einer feministischen Aufklärung und emanzipatorischen Politik beschreiben,



Von links:
Isabell Lorey,
Katharina Pühl,
Barbara Duden

die die Reflexion auf ihr rückläufiges Moment, ihre „andere Seite“ in sich aufgenommen hat? Verschieben sich gegenwärtig die Bezugstraditionen feministischer Theorie und warum? Das waren die zentralen Fragen, mit denen sich der Workshop auseinandersetzte.

Ein wichtiger Problemkomplex, der sich durch die verschiedenen Themenbereiche hindurchzog, war die Frage nach der ambivalenten „Mainstreamisierung“ des von der Frauenforschung produzierten Wissens und die Leichtigkeit seiner Einbindung in neoliberale Logiken, deren Gründe weitgehend unerforscht sind. Wie konnte es zu der zunehmenden Reduzierung von Gleichheit auf Gleichstellung kommen? Welches waren die gesellschaftlichen, politischen, institutionellen und wissenschaftlichen Rahmenbedingungen dafür? Hingewiesen wurde auf die Diskrepanz zwischen der Omnipräsenz der Gender-Thematik auf der institutionellen Ebene und der fortbestehenden Marginalisierung von Genderforschung als Wissenschaftsströmung im deutschen Sprachraum. Die institutionelle Omnipräsenz, so eine in der Diskussion geäußerte These, sei die Bedingung der Möglichkeit opportunistischer Formen der Marginalisierung wie der Anerkennung in bestimmten Feldern. Allerdings sei genauer darauf zu achten „als was“ Gender sichtbar ist, denn die Sichtbarkeit habe neue Formen angenommen. Widerständigkeit sei unter den Bedingungen der Vermarktlichung



im Wissenschaftssystem darauf angewiesen, sich durch Marktlogiken zu entwickeln. Dies betreffe auch den Gender- und Diversity-Diskurs, dessen Feld produktiv besetzt werden sollte, anstatt sich davon zu distanzieren. Auch Verschiebungen innerhalb der feministischen Theorie wurden in diesem Zusammenhang ausführlich erörtert. Von was sprechen wir heute, wenn von „Geschlecht als sozialer Strukturkategorie“ die Rede ist, wie ist es um die feministische Kapitalismuskritik bestellt, in welchem Verhältnis steht sie zur Gesellschaftstheorie oder zu Theorien der Moderne und was bedeutet der Wegfall des realsozialistischen „Vergleichssystems“ und damit des „Systemvergleichs“ für den feministischen Blick auf die Transformationen der Gegenwartsgesellschaft? Eine hitzige Diskussion entwickelte sich um die Einschätzung des status quo bzw. aktueller Veränderungen der Zweigeschlechtlichkeit und deren Implikationen sowohl für gesellschaftliche Reproduktionsverhältnisse als auch für feministische Gesellschaftsanalyse und -theorie.

Zu einer vorübergehenden Irritation kam es, als Cornelia Klinger, unterstützt von anderen Vertreterinnen der ersten Generation feministischer Wissenschaftlerinnen, sich für eine Wiederaufnahme der Patriarchalismusanalyse aussprach, die Ute Gerhard einmal als „unerledigtes Projekt“ bezeichnet hat. Bei diesem Plädoyer ging es jedoch keineswegs um die Wiederbelebung eines wissenschaftlich untauglichen



Photos: Karina Seefeld

„Kampfbegriffs“ der Frauenbewegung, sondern um eine begriffliche und materiale Auseinandersetzung mit dem historischen Formwandel patriarchaler bzw. andrarchischer Herrschaft unter Bedingungen gesamtgesellschaftlichen Wandels und mit dem Fortleben von Hierarchisierungen zwischen den Geschlechtern unter den Bedingungen formalrechtlicher Gleichstellung und rhetorischer Modernisierung. Das Fehlen einer angemessen differenzierten Begrifflichkeit zur Bezeichnung der Persistenz von Diskriminierung, Deklassierung und Machtdisparitäten zwischen den Geschlechtern führe zu Sprachlosigkeit und leiste der gesellschaftlichen De-Thematisierung der Problematik Vorschub.

Einvernehmen gab es hingegen bezogen auf zwei Beobachtungen: 1) Feministische Kritik erzielte in den vergangenen Jahren weitgehende praktische Wirkung in dem Maße, in dem sie „anschlussfähig“ blieb an etablierte politisch-kulturelle Artikulationsformen und inhaltliche Rahmungen. Die Dialektik einer Wirkung durch Anpassung besteht darin, dass die ursprünglichen Kritikimpulse in diesem Prozess bis zur Unkenntlichkeit verwandelt werden und sogar in das Gegenteil des Intendierten umschlagen können. Da feministische Kritik nicht auf Wirksamwerden-Wollen verzichten kann, gehört eine vorbehaltlose Analyse und Kritik der Erfolgsbedingungen zu den Elementen ihrer Selbsterhaltung. 2) Das analytische Potential feministischer Theorie wuchs in den

vergangenen dreißig Jahren in dem Maße, in dem Wissenschaftlerinnen den Boden erschütterten, auf dem sie standen und sich über die blinden Flecke Rechenschaft ablegten, von denen aus sie sahen, was sie sahen. Im Mittelpunkt dieser Entwicklung steht die Auseinandersetzung mit den aporetischen Voraussetzungen des Feminismus: der Unverzichtbarkeit und der Unmöglichkeit einer politischen und epistemischen Referenz auf „Frauen“, auf ein „Wir“, in dessen Namen Kritik geübt wird. „Frauen“ sind zugleich die Akteurinnen, die Adressatinnen, die Gegenstände, die regulative Idee und die „imagined community“ des Feminismus – aber sie sind in Verhältnissen von Differenz und Ungleichheit untereinander positioniert, die es ebenso ernst zu nehmen gilt wie das, was sie verbindet. Dass man die Lebensverhältnisse von Frauen weder begreifen noch politisch verändern kann, wenn man ausschließlich die Kategorie „Geschlecht“ in den Blick nimmt, gehört zu den zentralen Einsichten der feministischen Grundlagenkritik. Was von den Medien als Anzeichen des „Endes des Feminismus“ behauptet wurde, ist aus der Sicht der in Wien versammelten Expertinnen Resultat und Voraussetzung seiner Vitalität. Allerdings, und auch dies gehört zu der „Zwischenbilanz“, sind im Zuge dieser Entwicklung, auch wichtige Ansätze und Konzepte des älteren Feminismus verabschiedet oder nicht weiter entwickelt worden, derer eine feministische Kritik gegenwärtiger Verhältnisse bedarf. ◀

Re-Visionen der Kritik – Aspekte einer Dialektik feministischer Aufklärung

Teilnehmerinnen:

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Mechthild Bereswill, Kassel
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Irene Dölling, Potsdam
Barbara Duden, Hannover
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Climate Makes History

BY DIPESH CHAKRABARTY

Does climate change change history? Yes, it does, writes Dipesh Chakrabarty. Global warming has revealed humankind as a geophysical force and nature, in turn, to be a socio-historical agent. The basic distinction between natural and human history thus collapses.

In order to see why global climate change changes history, we need to think beyond the so-called “climate justice” position. The “climate justice” position is one which holds that the crisis of climate change—I call it a “crisis” for the phenomenon does have the potential to introduce some very long-term and unpleasant changes in human history—is mainly the work of the developed nations, and that they should bear the expenses for mitigating its effect while developing nations, led by China and India, should have the freedom to put economic growth ahead of everything else. In many ways, this is not an unjust claim. There is no question that the per-capita figures for the emission of greenhouse gases (GHG) show that the richer nations have in the past benefited disproportionately from the slack that nature would cut us as we pursued the benefits of industrial and post-industrial civilizations. It surely does not lie in the mouth of the rich to tell the poor to reduce consumption or their emissions of GHG when they themselves should share the bigger part of the blame for leading the world up the historical path that has landed us in our present situation.

This “climate justice” position was elaborated in a United Nations publication called *World Economic and Social Survey 2009: Promoting Development and Saving the Planet* that was published as part of the preparation for Copenhagen. The spirit of this document was captured in what Sha Zukung, the UN Under-Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs, said in his preface: “The climate crisis is the result of the very uneven pattern of economic development that evolved over the past two centuries, which allowed today’s rich countries to attain their current levels of income, in part through not having to account for the environmental damage now threatening the lives and livelihoods of others.” The argument was not that the developing countries should not do their bit for mitigation of the effects of climate change but that it was mainly the responsibility of the richer nations to pay for cleaning up the mess. The origins of this stance—the talk of “shared but differentiated responsibility” that marked the Kyoto Protocol and all that followed—go back to a booklet published in 1991 by two respected Indian environmentalists: Sunita Narain and the late Anil Agarwal. The very title of their publication revealed the historical stance that was built into their position: global warming was simply yet another



Photo: Sae Kit Poon / iStockphoto

instance of Western imperialism itself based on an unsustainable pattern of capitalist development. The booklet was called: *Global Warming in an Unequal World: A Case of Environmental Colonialism*.

Let me put to one side the argument about whether or not capitalism itself can ever be a sustainable system of production of wealth and services for all human beings. But let me say why I find the familiar narrative of Western imperialism necessary but not sufficient for the purpose of comprehending the current crisis. It is true that much of the current crisis may be seen as an unintended effect of the kind of industrial civilizations that Western

ers” and the past “populators” (if I could coin a word) in accounting for the current crisis and the shapes it may take in the near future. It is clear that the huge leaps in population figures that both India and China have seen since the end of Second World War cannot be blamed on the “logic of capitalism” in any straightforward way.

There are two other reasons why familiar narratives of European or Western imperial history or even simply the history of capitalist growth, while necessary, are no longer sufficient for enabling us to grasp the challenge that the crisis of global warming or climate change

tures of humans in different places, many climate scientists are now arguing the reverse: that humans have become the makers of climatic change, that climate in fact depends on us. Collectively, given our technologies and numbers, we, the human species, act on the planet as a geophysical force!

One lesson from paleoclimatologists’ narrative is that in order to deal with human history today, we need to think on scales of time that only natural historians dealt with before. This is so for two reasons. Firstly, one has to know the previous history of this planet’s warming and cooling in order to be reasonably certain that the present warming is anthropogenic. And, secondly, the effects of present climate change—not a one-event phenomenon, rather a cascade of developments—will last for a period that is much longer than what humans usually can care for or imagine. The story is indicated in the subtitle of David Archer’s book *The Long Thaw: How Humans are Changing the Next 100,000 Years of Earth’s Climate*. This is not a scale of time that we can visualize or (in a hermeneutic sense) understand. This has implications for human history that, as a subject, connects past and futures to the ever-vanishing present precisely through the operation of hermeneutic “understanding.” Historians are not used to dealing with time-scales that we cannot bring imaginatively into the realm of our “experience.”

The second challenge is the way climate scientists visualize the nature of human agency when they say human beings today act like a geophysical force on the planet. Historians and social scientists in general

think of human / nature relationship through the images of subjects and objects or, as in environmental history or in many branches of philosophical thinking, they critique and problematize the positing of a subject-object relationship between humans and nature. Besides, historical writing in the last several decades has been profoundly propelled by human ideas about intra-human justice that some of us now even wish to extend to non-human entities such as plants, animals, rocks, and water-bodies and so on. All this is to some extent based on a critique of the human (subject) / nature (object) division on which so much of European political thought depends. But to say that humans have become a “geophysical force” on this planet is to get out of the subject / object dichotomy altogether. A force is neither a subject nor an object. It is simply the capacity to do things. And force is blind to questions of justice, either between humans or between humans and non-humans. I do not deny the importance, in human terms, of projects of justice; it is impossible to think of a human society in which people have no sense of what is just or unjust. That is why the “climate justice” position is necessary: we cannot avoid it. But the climate crisis may indicate yet another development in our history: that as a geophysical force, we now wield a different kind of agency as well—one that takes us beyond the subject / object dichotomy, beyond all views that see the human as ontologically endowed beings, beyond questions of justice and human experience. To incorporate this agency into our telling of the human story we will need to develop multiple-track narratives so that the story of the ontologically-endowed, justice-driven human can be told alongside the other agency that we also are—a species that has now acquired the potency of a geophysical force, and thus is blind, at this level, to its own perennial concerns with justice that otherwise forms the staple of humanist narratives. ◀

The history of capitalist growth, while necessary, is no longer sufficient

nations modeled themselves on and promoted through the world. But the per-capita figures (of GHG emissions) rolled out by the “climate justice” proponents hide a real elephant in the room that few want to acknowledge and discuss: the huge surge in population growth from about the end of the Second World War, and most of this in developing countries. Developed countries have generally seen falling, even negative, rates of population growth. Since population is already a major factor determining total GHG emissions by humanity and one that puts India and China in the same club as the other polluting nations, we need to think about both the past “pollut-

poses to our imagination of human pasts and futures. To understand why these narratives are not adequate, we need to turn to another kind of human history: the history that paleoclimatologists write. Their books are no longer, strictly speaking, “natural” history. They write “human” history, a history of global warming from which the question of human agency cannot ever be separated. The latter is indeed the idea we express when we say the present phase of climate change is anthropogenic in nature. This development itself has an element of irony about it. If once intellectuals like Montesquieu taught us to think the climatic variations explained the variations between cul-

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Too Big to Succeed

BY DAVID G. VICTOR

Climate change conferences like Copenhagen are facing a big problem: their own bigness. Instead of roping together 192 nations and getting them to agree, we should be setting up more bilateral talks. Small is beautiful, argues David G. Victor, because the fewer countries present, the better the chances that they actually reach an agreement.

In the late 1980s the United Nations began the first round of formal talks on global warming. Over the subsequent two decades the scientific understanding of climate change has improved and public awareness of the problem has spread widely. Those are encouraging trends. But the diplomacy seems to be headed in the opposite direction. Early diplomatic efforts easily produced new treaties, such as the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. Those treaties were easy to agree upon yet had almost no impact on the emissions that cause global warming. As governments have tried to tighten the screws and get more serious, disagreements have proliferated and diplomacy has ended in gridlock. My argument is that the lack of progress on global warming stems not just from the complexity and difficulty of the problem, which are fundamental attributes that are hard to change, but also from the failure to adopt a workable policy strategy, which is something that governments can change. Making that change will require governments, firms, and NGOs that are most keen to make a dent in global warming to rethink almost every chestnut of conventional wisdom.

International coordination on global warming has become stuck in gridlock in part because policy debates are steeped in a series of myths. These myths allow policy makers to pretend that the CO₂ problem is easier to solve than it really is. They perpetuate the belief that if only societies had “political will” or “ambition” they could tighten their belt straps and get on with the task. The problem is not just political will. It is the visions that people have about how policy works.

One is the “scientists’ myth,” which is the view that scientific research can determine the safe level of global warming. Once scientists have drawn red lines of safety then everyone else in society optimizes to meet that global goal. The reality is that nobody knows how much warming is safe, and what society expects from science is far beyond what reasonable scientists can actually deliver. One consequence is that the science around global warming looks a lot more chaotic and plagued by disagreement than is really true. The climate system is intrinsically complex and does not lend itself to simple red lines; “safety” is a product of circumstances. The result is an obsession with false and unachievable goals. Over the last decade



Photo: UN Climate Talks / Flickr

many scientists and governments have set the goal of limiting warming to 2 degrees, which has now become the benchmark for progress on global warming talks. Two degrees is attractive because it is a simple number, but it bears no relation-

to the Copenhagen conference are the pinnacle of the diplomats myth, and when they fail, the diplomatic community does not shift course but merely redoubles their efforts to find universal, binding law. The reality is that universal treaties are the worst

really knows exactly what it will be willing and able to implement. The closest analogies are with international trade and the model I offer draws heavily from the experience with the GATT and WTO.

Analysts often call this strategy for getting started with cooperation a “club.” Deals created in this small group would concentrate benefits on other club members—for example, a climate change deal might include preferential market access for low-carbon technologies and lucrative special linkages between emission trading systems in exchange for tighter caps on emissions. Such club approaches often fare better than larger negotiations when dealing with problems, such as global warming, that are plagued by the tendency of governments to offer only the lowest common denominator. Clubs make it easier to craft contingent deals and channel more benefits to other members of the club, which creates stronger incentives for the deals to hold.

The logic of clubs underpins many efforts and proposals in recent years to focus on warming policy in forums that are smaller and more nimble than the UN. Those include the G20, the “Environmental 8,” the Major Economies Forum (MEF), and similar ideas. These are all good ideas; what is missing is an investment in real cooperation through these small forums that will generate benefits and incentives for still more cooperation. I am cautiously optimistic that such approaches will regain favor in the wake of the troubles at Copenhagen, but I am not blind to the power of conventional wisdom. The conventional wisdoms that have created gridlock on global warming remain firmly in place and are hard to shake.

Clubs are a way to get started, but they are not the final word. Eventually the clubs must expand. But the advantage of starting with a club is

*Global agreements make it easier
for governments to hide behind the
lowest common denominator*

ship to emission controls that most governments will actually adopt. Serious policies to control emissions will emerge “bottom-up” with each nation learning what it can and will implement at home. Just as countries learn how to control emissions they will also look at the science and determine the level of warming they can stomach. It is highly unlikely that countries will arrive at the same answers. The “scientists’ myth” needs puncturing because it creates a false vision for the policy process—one that starts with global goals and works backwards to national efforts. When pollutants such as CO₂ are the concern, real policy works in the opposite direction. It starts with what nations are willing and able to implement.

Other myths also divert resources. One is the “diplomat’s myth,” which imagines that progress toward solving problems of international cooperation hinges on the negotiation of universal, legally binding agreements that national governments then implement back at home. The “scientists’ myth” starts with scientific goals and works backwards to national policy. The “diplomat’s myth” starts with binding international law and makes the same backward conclusion. Events like the Copen-

way to get started on serious emission controls. Global agreements make it easier for governments to hide behind the lowest common denominator. Again, binding treaties work well only when governments know what they are willing and able to implement.

We need to clear away these false models of the policy process and focus on what really works. My starting point for an alternative is one central insight: effective international agreements on climate change will need to offer governments the flexibility to adopt highly diverse policy strategies. Instead of universal treaties, I suggest that cooperation should begin with much smaller groups. It should begin with non-binding agreements that are more flexible. And it should focus on policies that governments control rather than trying to set emission targets and timetables since emission levels are fickle and beyond government control. Cooperation challenges of this type are rare in international environmental diplomacy, but they are much more common in economic coordination where governments often try to coordinate their policies in a context where no government

that the smaller setting makes it easier to set the right norms and general rules to govern that expansion. In practice, this will be a lot easier than it seems because international emission trading can be a powerful force working in the same direction. With the right policies, the international trade in emission credits creates a mechanism for assigning prices to efforts. It rewards countries with strict policies by giving higher prices to their emission credits. Over the history of the GATT / WTO, the most powerful mechanism for compliance was the knowledge that if one country reneged on its promises, others could easily retaliate by targeting trade sanctions and removing privileges to punish the deviant. With the right pricing policies, emission trading could provide the same kinds of incentives.

The central diplomatic task is getting countries to make reliable promises about what they can and will implement and then getting all nations to expand their promises as they learn what their trading partners will do. This exactly describes the process of negotiating trade agreements. It is the only way to get serious about global warming. Alas, it is likely to be slow and cumbersome, which means that even in good faith quite a lot of warming is in store.

The old politics of global warming were deceptively easy. Governments could make promises that they kept when convenient and ignored when not. They focused on cooperation that was mostly symbolic and did not have a real impact on emissions. The new politics will be a lot harder because more will be at stake. Serious policies will be costly. Contingent commitments will be needed; governments will make those promises with a close eye on whether other governments are making credible commitments as well. Politically, these serious tasks will be much harder to manage. Progress will be slow. But progress has been almost nonexistent so far—this year marks the 20th anniversary of sustained UN diplomacy on global warming with very little that is practical to show for two decades of work. I will be happy with slow and serious progress rather than gridlock. ◀

You can read an extended version of this article in Tr@nsit_online: www.iwm.at/transit_online

David G. Victor is Professor at the School of International Relations and Pacific Studies, University of California. His new book *Global Warming Gridlock: Creating More Effective Strategies for Protecting the Planet*, published by Cambridge UP, is forthcoming.

Europe's Killing Fields

BY TIMOTHY SNYDER

Auschwitz and the Gulag were not the only sites of horror in the twentieth century. In a zone of death between Berlin and Moscow the Nazi and Soviet regimes starved, shot and gassed some fourteen million people. These were the bloodlands—today's Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, western Russia and the eastern Baltic coast. In his new book, an outcome of the IWM research focus "United Europe—Divided Memory", Timothy Snyder rewrites the history of political mass murder.

In the middle of Europe in the middle of the twentieth century, the Nazi and Soviet regimes murdered some fourteen million people. The place where all of the victims died, the bloodlands, extends from central Poland to western Russia, through Ukraine, Belarus, and the Baltic States. During the consolidation of National Socialism and Stalinism (1933–1938), the joint German-Soviet occupation of Poland (1939–1941) and then the German-Soviet war (1941–1945), mass violence of a sort never before seen in history was visited upon these places. The victims were chiefly Jews, Belarusians, Ukrainians, Poles, Russians, and Balts, the peoples native to these lands. The fourteen million were murdered over the course of only twelve years, between 1933 and 1945, while both Hitler and Stalin were in power. Though their homelands became battlefields midway through this period, these people were all victims of murderous policy rather than casualties of war. The Second World War was the most lethal conflict in history, and about half of the soldiers who perished on all of its battlefields all the world over died here, in this same region, in the bloodlands. Not a single one of the fourteen million murdered was a soldier on active duty. Most were women, children, and the aged; none were bearing weapons; many had been stripped of their possessions, or even of their clothes.

Auschwitz is the most familiar killing site of the bloodlands. Today Auschwitz stands for the Holocaust, and the Holocaust for the evil of a century. Yet the people registered as laborers at Auschwitz had a chance of surviving: thanks to the memoirs and novels written by survivors, its name is known. Far more Jews, most of them Polish Jews, were gassed in other German death factories where almost everyone died, and whose names are less often recalled: Treblinka, Chełmno, Sobibór, Bełżec. Still more Jews, Polish or Soviet or Baltic Jews, were shot over ditches and pits. Most of these Jews died near where they had lived, in occupied Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and the Soviet Union. The Germans brought Jews from elsewhere to the bloodlands to be killed. Jews arrived by train to Auschwitz from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, France, the Netherlands, Greece, Belgium, Yugoslavia, Italy, and Norway. German Jews were deported to the cities of the bloodlands, to Łódź or Kaunas or Minsk or Warsaw, before being shot or gassed.

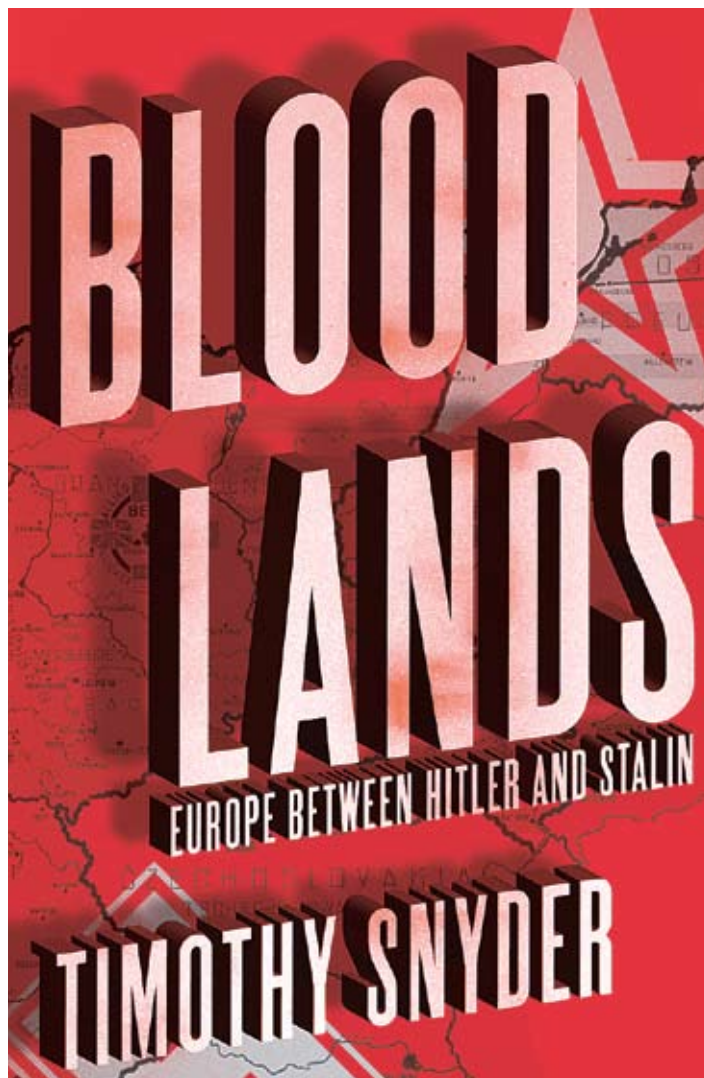


Photo: Basic Books

The Holocaust overshadows German plans that envisioned even more killing. Hitler wanted not only to eradicate the Jews; he wanted also to destroy Poland and the Soviet Union as states, exterminate their ruling classes, and kill tens of millions of Slavs (Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians, Poles). If the German war against the USSR had gone as planned, thirty million civilians

The Soviet Union defeated Nazi Germany on the eastern front in the Second World War, thereby earning Stalin the gratitude of millions and a crucial part in the establishment of the postwar order in Europe. Yet Stalin's own record of mass murder was almost as imposing as Hitler's. Indeed, in times of peace it was incomparably worse. In the name of defending and modernizing the So-

The Holocaust overshadows German plans that envisioned even more killing

would have been starved in its first winter, and tens of millions more expelled, killed, assimilated, or enslaved. Though these plans were never realized, they provided the moral premises of German occupation policy in the East. The Germans murdered about as many non-Jews as Jews during the war, chiefly by starving Soviet prisoners of war (more than three million) and residents of besieged cities (more than a million) or by shooting civilians in "reprisals" (the better part of a million, chiefly Belarusians and Poles).

viet Union, Stalin oversaw the starvation of millions and the shooting of three quarters of a million people in the 1930s. Stalin killed his own citizens no less efficiently than Hitler killed the citizens of other countries. Of the fourteen million people deliberately murdered in the bloodlands between 1933 and 1945, a third belong in the Soviet account.

Bloodlands is a history of political mass murder. The fourteen million were always victims of a Soviet or Nazi killing policy, often of

an interaction between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, but never casualties of the war between them. A quarter of them were killed before the Second World War even began. A further two hundred thousand died between 1939 and 1941, while Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union were not only at peace, but allies. The deaths of the fourteen million were sometimes projected in economic plans, or hastened by economic considerations, but were not caused by economic necessity in any strict sense. Stalin knew what would happen when he seized food from the starving peasants of Ukraine in 1933, just as Hitler knew what could be expected when he deprived Soviet prisoners of war food eight years later. In both cases, more than three million people died. The hundreds of thousands of Soviet peasants and workers shot during Great Terror in 1937 and 1938 were victims of express directives of Stalin, just as the millions of Jews shot and gassed between 1941 and 1945 were victims of an explicit policy of Hitler.

The very worst of the killing began when Hitler betrayed Stalin and German forces crossed into the recently-enlarged Soviet Union in June 1941. Although the Second World War began in September 1939 with the joint German-Soviet invasion of Poland, its bloody essence was the German-Soviet conflict that began with that second eastern invasion. In Soviet Ukraine, Soviet Belarus, and the Leningrad district, lands where the Stalinist regime had starved and shot some four million people in the previous eight years, German forces managed to starve and shoot even more in half the time. Right after the invasion, the Wehrmacht began to starve its Soviet prisoners, and special task forces called Einsatzgruppen began to shoot political enemies and Jews. Along with German Order Police, the Waffen-SS, and the Wehrmacht, and with the participation of local auxiliary police and militias, the Einsatzgruppen began that summer to eliminate Jewish communities as such.

The bloodlands were where most of Europe's Jews lived, where Hitler and Stalin's imperial plans overlapped, where the Wehrmacht and the Red Army fought, and where the Soviet NKVD and the German SS concentrated their forces. Most killing sites were in the bloodlands: in the political geography of the 1930s and early 1940s, this meant Poland, the Baltic States, Soviet Belarus, Soviet Ukraine, and the western fringe of Soviet Russia. Stalin's crimes are often associ-

ated with Russia, and Hitler's with Germany. But the deadliest part of the Soviet Union was its non-Russian periphery, and Nazis generally killed beyond Germany. The horror of the twentieth century is thought to be located in the camps. But the concentration camps are not where most of the victims of National Socialism and Stalinism died. These are the misunderstandings that prevent us from perceiving the horror of the twentieth century.

The German and Soviet concentration camps surround the bloodlands, from both east and west, disguising the pure black with their shades of grey. At the end of the Second World War, American and British forces liberated German concentration camps such as Belsen and Dachau, but the western allies liberated *none* of the death facilities. The Germans carried out all of their major killing policies on lands subsequently occupied by the Soviets. The Red Army liberated Auschwitz, and it liberated the sites of Treblinka, Sobibór, Bełżec, Chełmno and Majdanek as well. American and British forces reached *none* of the bloodlands and saw *none* of the major killing sites. It is not just that American and British forces saw none of the places where the Soviets killed, leaving the crimes of Stalinism to be documented after the end of the Cold War and the opening of the archives. It is that they never saw the places where the Germans killed, meaning that understanding of Hitler's crimes has taken just as long. The photographs and films of German concentration camps were the closest that most westerners ever came to perceiving the mass killing. Horrible though these images were, they were only hints of the history of the bloodlands. They are not the whole story; sadly, they are not even an introduction. ◀

From the book Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin, by Timothy Snyder. Reprinted by arrangement with Basic Books, a member of The Perseus Books Group. Copyright © 2010.

Timothy Snyder is Professor for East European Political History at Yale University and Permanent Fellow of the IWM. His book *The Red Prince* was recently published in German entitled *Der König der Ukraine: Die geheimen Leben des Wilhelm von Habsburg*. *Bloodlands* will be out in October 2010.

The Forgotten Religion

BY LOIS LEE

The study of religion cannot only be about religion. Just as gender studies include research on women and men alike, religious studies must deal also with the beliefs of those who don't believe.

Although it is often reduced to its most visible form, rationalist atheism, non-religion describes a range of perspectives. More widely understood, it describes the positions, perspectives and practices of vast swathes of Europe (and elsewhere)—the details of which should be essential to any understanding of European cultures and diversity, but are only just beginning to be treated as such.

To give a scale of the problem, statistical data provide a useful starting point. In famously “secular” countries, like Sweden, Norway and Denmark, over 70 percent are non-religious. In many other countries, it is barely less: over 60 percent in Hungary, the Netherlands, Britain and others. Even in less secularized Catholic countries, non-religion is statistically significant, with 11 percent in Poland, 30 in Italy and 46 percent in Portugal. Whilst the numbers of self-classifying atheists remain marginal in almost all European countries, these data reflect the widespread of non-religiosity understood in more general terms. These general terms view non-religion as all those positions which take religion as their *primary* reference point (unlike alternative spiritualities, for example, which are identified first by their own autonomous principles and practices) but which are considered to be other than religious. The definition is inclusive, therefore, of atheism and agnosticism, but also of non-religious secularism, religious indifference and, indeed, a potential host of other outlooks: after atheism, agnosticism and religious indifference have been counted, most statistics leave a large portion of the non-religious unaccounted for.

Understood thus, the non-religious number into the hundreds of millions, in Europe alone. Yet the topic had attracted no more than a handful of social scientific treatments before the turn of the twenty-first century and remains of marginal interest in many quarters. Ultimately, non-religion has been just another casualty of the dominating Enlightenment view of modernity. In this, modernity is seen to be unitary, inevitable and involving the steady rationalization of peoples and thought. The decline of religion was its corollary—and the incumbent rationality, being intrinsically logical and acultural, was not seen to require any explanation or exploration. Whilst this classical view has by now been challenged on many fronts, these critiques have in fact taken modernization theory on its own terms in one important respect. They have argued, amongst other things, that



Photo: Jon Werth / British Humanist Association / atheistbus.org.uk

religion is less vulnerable than anticipated, and that it is potentially more rational than thought—but, in taking a defence of religion as their line of opposition, these critiques fail to disrupt the idea that religion is the sole issue at stake. Religion remains the oddity that needs to be explained. A small but growing number of non-religion scholars are making a different kind of argument against this. We argue that, just as gender studies do not concern only women but men too, racial studies not only non-whites but

eties should be addressing.

One significant issue is dialogue between faith and non-faith groups. The secularization framework foresaw a move from a world dominated by isolated religious identities to one dominated by isolated post-religious identities. In contrast, taking the idea of non-religion seriously involves taking seriously the idea that religious and non-religious communities co-exist and are likely to co-exist indefinitely. The co-existence of such positions may not have been important in more compartmental-

not permissible follow from this. At the same time, however, we should not forget that this view also allows us to identify religion as a diverse, rich, communitarian, meaningful and, therefore, positive social phenomenon, and one that can be protected in policy and law just as it can be constrained by them. In contrast, the potential for non-religious cosmologies and practices to enrich human life—our self-understandings, interaction with others, aesthetic and emotional experiences—is denied, as is the right for non-religious views to be defended, explicitly, in legislation. The current conditions therefore give both sides legitimate cause for grievance and impair attempts to facilitate more positive relationships between them.

Given the lack of empirical research and theoretical discussion, an account of non-religion today necessarily involves more questions than answers. But these are interesting and urgent questions, impacting upon all human science disciplines.

Cognitive anthropologists and psychologists, for example, have begun to notice that their work on the cognitive conditions for theism is incomplete unless they consider likewise the cognitive conditions of non-theism. In social anthropology and sociology, the exploration of symbolic and communal aspects of non-religious life stand to provide important insights into the nature of symbolism and community in human life in general, as well as open to scrutiny the classical theory that such phenomena have a particular relationship with religion. For students of politics and international relations, questions relate to the relationship between non-religious

perspectives and political secularism, liberalism and democracy—the same questions, in fact, that are currently being asked of religion. And, in religious studies in general, the study of non-religion is important to fundamental questions pertaining to the nature of religion itself, following the question, “what, if anything, makes non-religion *not* religious?” Or, to put it less positively, “why is non-religion distinguished from religion, in what circumstances and by whom?”

Answers to such questions are of practical significance. They will impact upon people's understandings of self and other, and on their activism for certain political and other normative projects. Given the importance of inter and intra-cultural dialogue in diverse, pluralist societies, the existence of a large, silent majority—as the non-religious are, especially in Europe—is a problem. Initial findings from my own research, for example, indicate that different non-religious groups perceive religiosity in different ways. This, and work like it, demonstrate that, in a discursive arena dominated by antagonisms, explicit and substantive recognition of non-religions as participants in “religious” conversations is necessary to facilitate real and productive dialogue. <

The non-religious number into the hundreds of millions, in Europe alone

whites, and so on, the study of religion cannot only be about religion. This might sound like a contradiction in terms, but the straight-jacketing of our conceptual language is merely an expression of the prevalent idea that religion is unique: we are so accustomed to an idea of religion as singular and without substantive alternative that we have yet to develop a more generalized concept for these perspectives, one which would include the religious, spiritual and non-religious in the way that “gender”, for example, includes men, women, intersex and transgendered positions.

This issue is not purely academic. It is not merely a matter of improving social scientific categories. In fact, the tradition of taking non-religion as a non-entity allows us to gloss over some significant social issues that diverse and pluralist soci-

alized traditional societies, but, in a globally communicative world, religious and non-religious positions are rarely isolated from one another. Instead, interactions between them have become important in our national and international politics, civil society and personal relationships. In such circumstances, mutual appreciation, tolerance and understanding are options, as are opposition, fear and misunderstanding. Neutrality, post-religiosity, or some other non-position is not.

Secondly, our current view of non-religiosity and religiosity is, as I have already suggested, normative and can be repressive to both. On the one hand, viewing religion as a something and non-religion as a nothing, is related to the idea that religion is strange and problematic whereas non-religion is normal and benign. Prescriptions about what kinds of religiosity are and are

Lois Lee is founding director of the Non-religion and Secularity Research Network, a doctoral candidate in sociology at Cambridge University, and was a Junior Visiting Fellow at the IWM from March to June 2010. More information about non-religion research can be found at www.nsrn.co.uk.

Fellows and Guests 04–08 2010

Erika Abrams
Paul Celan Visiting Fellow
(July–December 2010)

Freelance translator, Paris

Jan Patočka: Aristote, ses devanciers, ses successeurs. Etudes d'histoire de la philosophie d'Aristote à Hegel
(Czech > French)

Patryk Babiracki
Józef Tischner Fellow
(August–December 2010)

Assistant Professor of History, University of Texas-Arlington

Staging the Empire: Soviet-Polish Cultural Initiatives in Propaganda, Science and the Arts, 1943–1957

Maren Behrensen
Junior Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in Philosophy, Boston University

Justifying Exclusion—Political Membership and the Nation-State

Christine Blättler
Lise Meitner Visiting Fellow
(August 2009–July 2011)

Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Potsdam; FWF-project leader

The Phantasmagoria as a Focus of Modernity; Genealogy and Function of a Philosophical Concept

Sanja Bojanic
Paul Celan Visiting Fellow
(July–December 2010)

Freelance translator, Belgrade

Luce Irigaray: Speculum de l'autre femme
(French > Serbian)

Tamara Caraus
Guest (April–May 2010)

Research associate, Department of Philosophy, Olomouc University

Jan Patočka's Idea of Europe and the Post-European Age

Dipesh Chakrabarty
Visiting Fellow
(June–July 2010)

Lawrence A. Kimpton Distinguished Service Professor of History and South Asian Studies, University of Chicago

An Indian History of Historical Distance / Climate Change and Conflicting Visions of Human History

Antonio Ferrara
Junior Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Culture della materia, University of Naples “Federico II”

Europeans in the GULAG—Europeans Against the GULAG: The “Strangers” in the Soviet Camps and David Rousset's “Commission Internationale contre le régime concentrationnaire”

Bogdan Ghiu
Paul Celan Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Freelance translator, Bucharest

Pierre Bourdieu: Langage et pouvoir symbolique
(French > Romanian)

Sorin Gog
Junior Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Assistant Professor of Sociology, Babes-Bolyai University Cluj

The Europeanisation of Eastern Christianity: Secularisation in Post-socialist Romania and Bulgaria

Vessela Hristova
Robert Bosch Junior Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in Political Science, Harvard University

Accommodating National Diversity in the Integration Process of the European Union

Kristof Jacobs
Guest (August 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in Political Science, Radboud University Nijmegen

Who is Behind the Steering Wheel? Democratic Reforms in Austria, Belgium, and the Netherlands

Sudipta Kaviraj
Visiting Fellow
(May–August 2010)

Head of the Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures Department, Columbia University, New York

Intellectual Change in Religious Thought in Bengal in the 19th and 20th Centuries

Grzegorz Krzywiak
Bronisław Geremek Fellow
(September 2009–June 2010)

Adjunct /Research Associate of History, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw

Vienna's Impact on Polish Modern Antisemitism, 1883–1938

Hiroaki Kuromiya
Visiting Fellow
(September 2009–June 2010)

Professor of History, Indiana University, Bloomington

Europe, the Soviet Union and Asia

Lois Lee
Junior Visiting Fellow
(March–June 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in Sociology, University of Cambridge

Religion in Relief. What Non-Religion and Not Religion Tell Us About Religion and the Secular Age

Susanne Lettow
Visiting Fellow
(March 2008–February 2011)

Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Paderborn; FWF-project leader

The Symbolic Power of Biology: Articulations of Biological Knowledge in Naturphilosophie around 1800

Sushila Mesquita
Guest (July–August 2010)

Doktorandin der Philosophie, Universität Wien

Ban Marriage! Ambivalenzen der Normalisierung aus queer-feministischer Perspektive

Dragan Prole
Paul Celan Visiting Fellow
(April–June 2010)

Assistant Professor of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad

Edmund Husserl: Erste Philosophie I. Kritische Ideengeschichte
(Deutsch > Serbisch)

Andrew Roberts
Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Assistant Professor of Political Science, Northwestern University, Evanston

Does Social Inequality Lead to Political Inequality in Postcommunist Europe?

Leonardo Schiocchet
Junior Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in Socio-Cultural Anthropology, Boston University

Being Palestinian Refugee in Lebanon: Social Referents, Ritual Tempo and Belonging in a Christian and a Muslim Palestinian Refugee Camp

Leo Schlöndorff
Junior Visiting Fellow
(April–September 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in Philosophy and German Philology, University of Vienna; ÖAW DOC-Team Stipendiary

Modern and Postmodern Apocalypse in Fiction and Science

Elizabeth Shakman-Hurd
Guest (June 2010)

Assistant Professor of Political Science, Northwestern University, Evanston

Law, Religion, and International Politics after the Critique of Secularization

Marci Shore
Visiting Fellow
(August 2009–August 2010)

Assistant Professor of History, Yale University

The Self Laid Bare: Phenomenology, Structuralism, and other Cosmopolitan Encounters

Kornelia Slavova
Paul Celan Visiting Fellow
(July–September 2010)

Associate Professor of American Studies, St. Kliment Ohridski University, Sofia

Donna L. Dickenson: Body Shopping. Converting Body Parts to Profit
(English > Bulgarian)

Eliitza Stanoeva
Paul Celan Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in History, Humboldt University Berlin

Saskia Sassen: The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo
(English > Bulgarian)

Michael Staudigl
Visiting Fellow (November 2007–October 2010)

Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Vienna; FWF-project leader

The Many Faces of Violence: Toward an Integrative Phenomenological Conception

Katharina Steidl
Junior Visiting Fellow
(April–September 2010)

Doktorandin der Kunstgeschichte, Akademie der Bildenden Künste Wien; ÖAW DOC-Stipendiatin

Bilder des Schattens. Fotogramme zwischen Zufall, Berührung und Imagination

Ahmet S. Tekelioğlu
Junior Visiting Fellow
(January–June 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in Political Science, Boston University

International Politics of Umma in a Secular Europe? The Impact of Culturalist Arguments

Andrea Thuma
Junior Visiting Fellow
(March–August 2010)

Doktorandin der Politikwissenschaft, Universität Salzburg; ÖAW DOC-Stipendiatin

“Von dem Wunsch, die Welt bewohnbar zu machen...”: Hannah Arendt, globale Verantwortung und der öffentliche Raum

Alina Vaisfeld
Guest (April–May 2010)

Ph.D. candidate in Philosophy, New School for Social Research, New York

The Subject as Movement: The Relation between Self and World in Husserl, Heidegger, and Patočka

Sara Zorandy
Paul Celan Visiting Fellow
(July–September 2010)

Freelance translator-interpreter, Budapest

Meir Avraham Munk: History of My Life
(Hungarian > English)

Congratulations!

Sarah Wildman won the 2010 Peter R. Weitz Prize for journalistic excellence on European topics. The prize was awarded for her investigation on the world's largest Holocaust archive, the International Tracing Service in Germany. She contributes, among others, to *PoliticsDaily.com*, *The New York Times*, *Slate*, and the *Guardian*. Sarah was a Milena Jesenská Fellow at the IWM in 2006, writing on minority identities in Europe.

The IWM celebrated **János Mátyás Kovács'** 60th birthday on August 11. János has been Permanent Fellow since 1991 and director of the Institute's research focus “Cultures and Institutions in Central and Eastern Europe”, which analyzes the political economy of new capitalism and the economic cultures in the region. We learned from János that the proper Hungarian birthday congratulation is “bis hundert-zwanzig”—and that's what we wish him, too!

George Soros, Chairman of the Soros Fund Management and founder of The Open Society Institute, also celebrated his birthday: he turned 80 in August. Soros is closely connected to the Institute as a Member of its Board of Patrons and as a speaker at various events like the Jan Patočka Memorial Lecture in 1995 and 2005 or the first Burgtheater Debate “The World Disorder and the Role of Europe” in 2008. We wish him all the best!

A Warm Welcome

Peter Forstmoser has been appointed member of the Financial Control Commission of the IWM. He is Professor em. for Private, Business and Capital Markets Law at the University of Zurich, Honorary Professor of Beijing Normal University and attorney at law at Niederer, Kraft & Frey Ltd., an international law firm in Zurich. We are very pleased that he accepted our invitation. Professor Forstmoser succeeds Dr. **Gertrude Brinek**, who was recently nominated by the Federal President as a member of the Austrian Ombudsman Board. We would like to thank her for the excellent advice she had provided us with for many years!

Anna Müller, who completed her internship at the IWM in July, has now joined the Institute's staff as a project assistant. Anna studied Applied Cultural Sciences in Germany and Slovenia and will support the public relations and event management sections. Welcome on board!

We also welcome **Maximilian Wollner** and **Christina Fürst**. They will join the team of the IWM as interns for three months. Max holds a diploma in Political Sciences and is currently studying Philosophy at the University of Vienna. Christina is studying Political Sciences at the University of Vienna.

You can find the Travels & Talks on our website: www.iwm.at > Fellows

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ONLINE



New contributions

Jennifer L. Hochschild (Harvard University)
How Did the 2008 Economic Crisis Affect Social and Political Solidarity in Europe?

Katherine Newman (The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore)
Obama and the Crisis: What Does the Future Hold?

David G. Victor (University of California, San Diego)
The New Politics of Climate Change

Kristina Stoeckl (University of Rome “Tor Vergata”)
Welche politische Philosophie für die postsäkulare Gesellschaft?

Maria Todorova (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)
The Balkans Between Cliché and European Future

www.iwm.at/transit_online.htm

Publications of Fellows and Guests

Nelly Bekus
Milena Jesenská Fellow
in 2003

Struggle over Identity. The Official and the Alternative "Belarusianness", Budapest / New York: CEU Press, 2010

Slavica Jakelic
Junior Visiting Fellow
in 2002

Collectivistic Religions. Religion, Choice, and Identity in Late Modernity, Farnham: Ashgate, 2010

Cornelia Klinger
Permanent Fellow

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Katharina Steidl
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Charles Taylor
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Tatiana Zhurzhenko
Junior Visiting Fellow
in 2001

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Transit 39 (Sommer 2010), **Den Säkularismus neu denken** *Religion und Politik in Zeiten der Globalisierung*

Es ist noch nicht lange her, dass die Säkularisierung als unvermeidliche Begleiterscheinung westlicher Modernisierung betrachtet wurde. Gegenwärtig scheint es jedoch, als hätte der Alte Kontinent einen Sonderweg eingeschlagen, während ringsherum die Religion unter den Bedingungen der Modernisierung keineswegs abstirbt, sondern gedeiht. Es scheint also an der Zeit, Säkularismus zu überdenken – sowohl, um der wachsenden Vielfalt unserer Gesellschaften gerecht zu werden, als auch, um unser westliches Selbstverständnis kritisch zu überprüfen.

Die Beiträge dieses Heftes können gelesen werden als ein Plädoyer für einen reflektierten Säkularismus, der aus den Erfahrungen sowohl der eigenen Geschichte als auch der anderer Gesellschaften lernt, einen Säkularismus, der auf der Trennung von Staat und Religion beharrt, nicht aber die Ausgrenzung der Religion betreibt und seine historischen Wurzeln offenlegt. Untersucht werden auch die Antworten der Religionen auf die Säkularisierung sowie Säkularismusmodelle anderer politischer Kulturen, die ein neues Licht auf die westlichen Traditionen der Differenzierung von Religiösem und Politischem werfen.

Mit Beiträgen von: Jean Baubérot, Rajeev Bhargava, Craig Calhoun, José Casanova, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Faisal Devji, Souleymane B. Diagne, David Martin, Tariq Modood, und Charles Taylor. Die Fotografien des Heftes stammen von Marika Asatiani.

Jan Patočka
Ketzerische Essays zur Philosophie der Geschichte



Frankfurt / M.: Suhrkamp, 2010

Jan Patočka (1907–1977) ist einer der wichtigsten Vertreter der tschechischen Philosophie des 20. Jahrhunderts. Als Schüler von Husserl und Heidegger verband er das phänomenologische Denken in neuer Weise mit der Reflexion über Politik und Geschichte. Seine legendären Prager Untergrundseminare und sein Engagement in der „Charta 77“ machten ihn zu einer intellektuellen und moralischen Autorität. Das IWM widmet sich seit seiner Gründung der Erschließung und Publikation des Werks dieses vielschichtigen Philosophen in einem Forschungsschwerpunkt, in dessen Rahmen Sandra Lehmann eine Neuübersetzung seines letzten Buches erstellt hat. In den *Ketzerischen Essays* hat Patočkas politisches und geschichtsphilosophisches Denken seinen prägnantesten Ausdruck gefunden. In der Zeit der „Normalisierung“ nach der

Niederschlagung des Prager Frühlings denkt er über Europa als widersprüchliches, stets gefährdetes und niemals abschließbares Projekt nach – ein noch zu entdeckendes Denken, dessen Bedeutung für das Selbstverständnis Europas erst heute sichtbar wird.

IWM Junior Visiting Fellows' Conferences

Vol. 27: Brian Marrin / Katrin Hammerstein (eds.) **Perspectives on Memory and Identity**

Ohne Erinnerung keine Identität. Soziale Bewegungen, Organisationen, Nationen oder suprastaatliche Einheiten wie die Europäische Union – sie alle greifen auf historische Narrative, Gründungsmythen und zentrale Ereignisse der Vergangenheit zurück, um zu charakterisieren, wer sie sind und wie sie sich selbst sehen. Doch auch umgekehrt gilt: Identitäten färben die Erinnerung. Gemeinschaften sind stets „erfundene“ Gemeinschaften, die in ihren Identitätskonstruktionen selektiv und pragmatisch auf die Geschichte zugreifen. Vergangene Geschehnisse werden vergessen, verdrängt, verdreht. Der in der Reihe „Junior Visiting Fellows' Conferences“ erschienene Band *Perspectives on Memory and Identity* geht diesem Wechselspiel von Identitätsbildung und Erinnerungs-

politik anhand bekannter wie auch wenig bekannter Fallbeispiele nach.

Mit Beiträgen von: Katrin Hammerstein, Asim Jusic, Andreea Maieran, Paulina Napierala, Avraham Rot, Ewa Rzanna

Der Band steht auf unserer Website zum Download zur Verfügung: www.iwm.at > Publications

Paul Celan
Translation Program

Andras Barabas
Paul Celan Visiting Fellow
(April–June 2006)

Ernest Gellner: A nemzetek és a nacionalizmus (Nations and Nationalism), Budapest: Magvető, 2010

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Paul Celan Visiting Fellow
(December 2009–February 2010)

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Anna Novokhatkova
Paul Celan Visiting Fellow
(April–June 2008)

Elie Kedourie: Nationalism Moscow: Aletheia Istoricheskaja, 2010



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Vanquishing History

BY ROGER COHEN

A cruel history can be overcome. Israelis and Palestinians can make peace, Iranians and Americans can join hands.

Roger Cohen, who delivered this year's speech at the IWM Fellows' Meeting, feels confident: There is reason for hope in the Middle East.



Photo: Joel Carillet / istockphoto

I have spent a life crossing lines, traversing the mirror, gazing at the same picture from different angles. The journalist is a stranger, a restless stranger, always crossing to the other side, always leaving settled people wondering. Why, they ask, are you going over the lines toward danger? Why do you choose such a lonely existence? In search of understanding, you say, and they shake their heads. Understanding does not a family feed.

But it is critical. Blindness leads nowhere. In his poem “State of Siege,” Mahmoud Darwish, the late Palestinian poet, wrote, “Me or him / That’s how war starts. But it ends in an awkward silence / Me and him.” We are still waiting for the Holy Land’s “me” and “him” to see each other in the mirror, acknowledge each other’s being. Nationalist narratives diverge, trapping Israelis and Palestinians in the past, leaving them competing over victimhood rather than conceiving a future. Good things happen when victims move on: look at Mandela. Or Adam Michnik, the Polish dissident six times jailed by the Communists, who once told me: “Anyone who has suffered that humiliation, at some level, wants revenge. I know all the lies. I saw people being killed. But I also know that revanchism is never ending. And my obsession has been that we should have a revolution that does not resemble the French or Russian, but rather the American, in the sense that it be for something, not against something. A revolution for a constitution, not a paradise. An anti-utopian revolution. Because utopias lead to the guillotine and the gulag.” Dreams and illusions have

proved fecund midwives of bloodshed in the Middle East.

Today it is quiet in Tel Aviv and, on the West Bank, it is quiet in Ramallah. Cafes are full, stores are busy. People are tired of fighting for now. But of course the towns, while not far from each other, are separated by Israel’s wall-fence, a line of fracture, a symbol of failure. At the entrance to Ramallah there is a sign that reads: “No entry for Israelis. Entry forbidden by Israeli law.” Narratives cannot begin to intersect when

fuse for a bomb, be shaped for maximum explosive effect.

From eastern Turkey to the Balkans, from Israel-Palestine to Afghanistan, we see peoples struggling to escape from pasts that are tenacious because they are disputed. Memory can be close to madness, the shriek of peoples snared by giant tentacles, a recurrent vertigo. To escape this vertigo, I still believe it is necessary to have what Martha Gellhorn called “the view from the ground.” Our online world offers many mira-

*History illuminates,
yes, but it also entraps*

peoples cannot see each other. Just consider the story of the post-war years in Europe and how this city, Vienna, has morphed over 21 years from intrigue-filled eastern outpost of the West to central point of a Europe whole and free. It takes time to redraw the maps in people’s minds, turn distance into proximity, the edge into the hub, Bulgaria from a nest of cold-war warriors into a comely neighbor, the unknown into the familiar. But the process, once started, can prove inexorable.

Crossing lines has made me suspicious of memory, wary of the past. History illuminates, yes, but it also entraps. History, the scientific pursuit of truth, is the surest of foundations; yet it remains elusive on contested land. Enemy imperatives demand that memory, like the

cles, but on the whole the Web tends to cement prejudices rather than challenge them. People flock to the sites that shout the certitudes they already embrace. For all the power of Twitter, and the new hybrid journalism that builds on images and impressions of citizen reporters, a void is left when the foreign press is banished, as it was in Iran after the tumultuous election last year. It is a very bad thing that no Israeli journalist is allowed into Gaza. It is a bad thing that Iranian journalists find it almost impossible to get visas for the United States.

On my return from Iran, where I had seen millions of proud Iranians arise to claim their stolen votes, I wrote: “Journalism is a matter of gravity. It’s more fashionable to denigrate than praise the media these days. In the 24 / 7 howl of partisan

pontification, and the scarcely less constant death-knell din surrounding the press, a basic truth gets lost: that to be a journalist is to bear witness. The rest is no more than ornamentation.”

To bear witness means being there – and that’s not free. No search engine gives you the smell of a crime, the tremor in the air, the eyes that smolder, or the cadence of a scream. No news aggregator tells of the ravaged city exhaling in the dusk, nor summons the defiant cries that rise into the night. No miracle of technology renders the lip-drying taste of fear. No algorithm captures the hush of dignity, nor evokes the adrenal-rush of courage coalescing, nor traces the fresh raw line of a welt... I have been thinking about the responsibility of bearing witness. It can be singular, still. Interconnection is not presence.

But interconnection lies at heart of our zeitgeist, a fact of which President Barack Obama is intimately aware. In my own country, the United States, memory disturbs one international relationship above all: the Iranian. I have watched over the past months as Obama has sought to overcome the American-Iranian psychosis, a 31-year impasse that casts a shadow over the world. A young president of partly Muslim descent bearing the holiest of Shia names—Hussein—has tried to say, yes, we have done terrible things to each other, but it is time to move on: beyond the CIA role in the 1953 coup that toppled Iran’s democratically elected Mohammad Mosaddegh; beyond revolutionary Iran’s seizure of US hostages in 1979; be-

yond American support for Saddam Hussein in the devastating Iran-Iraq war; beyond former President Bush’s 2002 “Axis-of-Evil” speech (a low point in US diplomacy); beyond President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s odious outbursts. It is time for reason, Obama has suggested, the reason that dulls passions.

He has been rebuffed. The old stereotypes persist. “Death to America,” intoned every Friday with all the impact of muzak in an elevator, remains the sterile refrain of the Islamic Republic. As one State Department official, John Limbert, a former US hostage, has put it, Americans tend to view Iranians as “devious, mendacious, fanatical, violent and incomprehensible.” Iranians tend to view Americans as “belligerent, sanctimonious, godless, immoral, materialistic, calculating bullying, exploitive, arrogant and meddling.” Frustration builds.

On my first of two visits to Iran last year, in February, I tried to break these barriers and give voice to the various facets of an ancient land and culture. Any monolithic view of Iran is wrong. I described the Islamic Republic as “a society whose ultimate bond is fear,” where “disappearance into some unmarked room is always possible.” I said the Islamic Republic was “an un-free society with a keen, intermittently brutal apparatus of repression.” At the same time I argued that the Islamic Republic fell short of totalitarianism—a totalitarian state requires the complete subservience of the individual to the state and tolerates only one party to which all institutions are subordinated—and I attacked the caricature of

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Iran as some Nazi-like embodiment of evil made up of bearded Mullahs with their fingers ever twitching on a putative nuclear button. I tried to get into the psychology of young Iranians marked by the Iran-Iraq war of their youth and their parents' revolutionary disappointment—a sophisticated and cautious psychology little inclined toward violence (the mayhem of Iraq and Afghanistan are just next door). I spoke of a country drawn to the West, frustrated by Iran's pariah status. I argued strongly for American engagement on the basis that it would bolster a young generation's reformist quest and that axis-of-evil us grandstanding had failed. I asked whether the existence of a 25,000-strong Jewish community in Iran—the largest (along with Turkey's) in the Muslim Middle East—should be weighed against the Holocaust denial and quixotic threats to Israel of its President in assessing whether pragmatism or adventurism better characterize the Islamic Republic and its opaque array of rulers. The Revolution, after all, has survived 31 years—not an outcome that was inevitable in 1979, nor an outcome unrelated to a prudent elasticity. In short, I asked Americans to set aside tired thinking and look at the Islamic Republic anew.

I did not expect everyone to agree with me, of course, but nor did I expect this: "Roger Cohen is a Jewish apologist for an anti-Semitic regime and he should be reminded often that he has debased himself" (Jeffrey Goldberg, *The Atlantic*); "Cohen strikes me as one of those highly assimilated British Jews—yes, he came here and converted to being an American—who are made more than a bit nervous by Jews who have real Jewish commitments" (Marty Peretz, *The New Republic*). Gary Rosenblatt in the *Jewish Week* put it this way: Cohen has become our "Media Enemy No. 1."

There is always a lot invested in frozen images—"Mad Mullah" and "Great Satan"—"Palestinian terrorist" and "Zionist-settler murderer"—and the extremes shout their fundamentalist views loudest. Dislodging caricatures is hard work and reason does not easily dislodge ideas whose genesis was not reasonable. The mythical-religious loathes debate. It loathes nuance.

Still, the world has too much at stake in the Middle East to abandon the maddening quest for middle ground. I see three possible reasons for hope.

The first is the Palestinian Prime Minister, Salaam Fayyad, 58, a small, precise, us-educated man with a very ordered mind. I spoke to him recently for 90 minutes in Ramallah. He builds long, intricate sentences with an academic bent and is given to words like "axiomatic" or "purview." He worked at the World Bank before the West Bank, a radical change of scenery. He's hardly a political firebrand. Armed struggle has never been his thing. But right now he is a man with a mission.

That mission is a two-year program, begun in August 2009, to

ready Palestine for statehood by the second half of 2011. It represents a break with past Palestinian failure in that it espouses non-violence—"an ironclad commitment, not a seasonal thing," he told me—and is focused on prosaic stuff like building institutions (police, schools, a justice system, roads and an economy) rather than exalted proclamations. I like the prosaic in lands ravaged by war. The program has secured explicit backing from the United States, Russia, the European Union and the United

lost six decades ago. "This is about our right to life as a free people with dignity on this land—meaning, so that I'm not misunderstood, the land occupied by Israel in 1967," Fayyad told me. "Every day we do work consistent with that to create the sense of a state growing. Bad things happen every day but you're bound to have a lucky bounce and we have to be ready for it."

Outside his office in Ramallah, and elsewhere in the West Bank, the fruits of that work are apparent. Pal-



Roger Cohen

Photo: IWM

Nations which recently called for "a settlement, negotiated between the parties within 24 months, that ends the occupation which began in 1967 and results in the emergence of an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with Israel."

The world's 24 months and Fayyad's do not exactly overlap but they are close enough for the intent to be clear. Fayyad has strong backing

estonian Authority police are everywhere in their crisp uniforms, tension is low and the economy, fueled by massive injections of European aid, grew 7 percent last year. Israel's presence remains overwhelming—the checkpoints, the snaking wall-fence, the settler-only highways—but Fayyad's state building is pushing into whatever space is available, like unlikely blooms pushing through cracks in concrete.

lackeys" like the Shah in Iran or assorted generals in Pakistan. Decades have since passed but the West's initial dismay has scarcely abated. It has reacted to Islam's political and ideological appeal with a large measure of incomprehension, imagining some secular victory one day over forces of darkness. Of course the stupid Holocaust denial and unacceptable annihilationist threats of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad give

The West and the Islamic World have learned the cost of the chasm between them

from Obama. Next year, before the us presidential campaign really kicks in, will be crunch time. Can Fayyad's program, which is advancing, and political negotiations, which are not, be made to coincide? I don't know, but I'm sure Fayyad is the best hope for Palestine in a very long time. Why? Because he's taking the highway out from victimhood and the paralyzing claims of the past. "Let us not allow ourselves the luxury of acting as victims forever," he told me. "This is a case of two opposed historical narratives. And if this is going to direct traffic on the future, we are not going too far. It's time to get on with it and end this conflict. Let's move on. Let's really look forward."

The easy argument against him is that he's isolated politically, opposed by Hamas in Gaza and regarded with suspicion by the Fatah old guard in the West Bank. The argument for him is that he's getting things done, improving people's lives, and Palestinians are tired of going nowhere as they repeat lines about olive groves

Would Palestinians, if talks fail, unilaterally declare independence in 2011—an idea Fayyad has on occasion seemed to intimate? "This is not about declarations of statehood," he told me. "This is not about proclamations of a state. It is about getting ready for one. Ours is a healthy unilateralism. Contrast that, if you will, with Israeli settlement activity." He continued: "This is not about going it alone; this is about going together holding hands with everybody, including Israelis."

Palestinians holding hands with Israelis? It sounds far-fetched, but I believe in the momentum of deeds. The United States and the West have been sobered by two wars—in Iraq and Afghanistan—and that is my second reason for guarded optimism. The West and the Islamic World have learned the cost of the chasm between them. Not for nothing has Obama made outreach to Muslims the centerpiece of his foreign policy.

comfort to the civilization-versus-barbarism refrain. But such binary thinking is wholly inadequate. After all, a broad reformist democratic movement in Iran is now taking to the streets with the scarcely anti-religious cry of "God is great."

Mir Hussein Moussavi, the opposition leader, and the millions of young protesters behind him provide an important glimpse of a third path between political Islam and secularism, one that might give real meaning to the phrase Islamic Republic. The Revolution set out to achieve such a balance but was usurped: the temporal absolutism of the Shah gave way to theocratic absolutism. But its ideals are not dead, even if the Green Movement has been pushed underground by post-electoral brutality. Moussavi has denounced both those like Ahmadinejad who view Islamic governance as some "tyranny of the rightful" and those who view Islam as "an obstacle for the realization of Republicanism." Similar ideas have gained a foothold in Turkey in re-

cent years. It is in such hybrid notions that possible paths out of the global secular-religious, Western-Islamic divide lurk. In societies from the Gulf to Lebanon to Egypt, I see pluralism edging forward, with difficulty, but some insistence.

Iran's society is in fact at a very distant remove from zealotry, whatever the ranting of Ahmadinejad. In the end the best antidote to the appeal of Islamism as a political philosophy may be living it in practice, which is what Iran has done for 31 years. It leads the way in this regard while the Waziristan fanatics of Al Qaeda dream on about some reconstituted Caliphate. Given that any outright victory of Western liberalism or secularism over political Islam in the Middle East seems unthinkable to me, post-revolutionary Iran is instructive. If Iran could be summoned from its isolation on the basis of compromise—a confounding task—its contribution to bridging the chasm between Islam and the West could be seminal.

It is time to retire the stale slogans of a bygone era. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel has given this summary of the central struggle of our age: "It pits civilization against barbarism, the 21st century against the 9th century, those who sanctify life against those who glorify death." That's facile, resonant—and unhelpful. Israel, the most vibrant, creative and open society in the Middle East, is a small country whose neighbors are enemies or cold bystanders. But these enemies are not living in the 9th century. They are living in an increasingly sophisticated world of multiple news networks and online communication channels. Nor are they recreating anything resembling the Third Reich. The Holocaust represented a quintessence of evil. But it happened 65 years ago. Its perpetrators are dead or dying. A Holocaust prism may be distorting. Israel, with its 80 to 200 never-acknowledged nuclear weapons, embraces eternal victimhood at its peril. "Never again" is a necessary but altogether inadequate way of dealing with Iran and a modern Middle East where the elusive quest for some accommodation between religion and modernism is shared by all the major protagonists, Arab, Persian or Jew.

It is time also for the Islamic Republic of Iran to follow China's example of 1972 in adapting to survive. Perhaps Ayatollah Khomeini, like Mao in Deng Xiaoping's famous formula, was 70 percent right—and some brave Iranian leader could say that. He would thereby open the way for one of the Middle East's most hopeful societies to move forward.

It is also time for the United States—and especially the Congress—to set aside one-sided thinking on Israel-Palestine. Uncritical support of Israel is not in Israel's interest. It makes no sense for the United States to pursue a two-state solution while helping fund the settlements that occupy the space in which Palestine must emerge. Obama has been right to be firm on this issue, even at the price of fierce domestic criticism and Israeli dismay. The United States must be an honest broker, not Isra-

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Face to Face

BY KRZYSZTOF MICHALSKI

In the wilderness, among us, and in our mistakes he sought his God, and he sought our God.

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of Józef Tischner's death.



Every death is a scandal,” wrote the French-Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas, who was so important to Tischner. How well I understand this remark now that Józef is gone. How painfully I felt it when he suddenly departed this life, unexpectedly, though after a long illness, and though we all knew it was going to happen sooner or later. From the moment he died, a new era began, so radically different from everything before it; the expectations, hopes, fears and careful foresight that had filled every moment of life shared with him were cruelly ripped apart, crumpled up and thrown away. In a flash the world became radically different. It hurts so much, with an acute pain which penetrates every corner of this new awareness, this new state of remembrance.

I wish I could introduce him to those of you who didn't know him. His presence changed any room he entered, brought a new cohesion and a new, added persuasiveness to his thoughts. There would have to be a lot of bad will and extreme dullness of spirit to fail to feel the strength emanating from Józef, which opened the eyes and hearts of others, brought out the best in them and warmed the soul.

How often, working in the same building, I would go to his room just to sit near him, and by doing so regain my enthusiasm, which had got lost somewhere, discover the human side in some nasty moron who had put me into a rage, or just raise my spirits. Once I was with Tischner

in a city that was foreign to both of us, where we spent a few days waiting for someone. As we had nothing in particular to do, we roamed the unfamiliar streets, talking about this and that to pass the time—and

one except us Poles, made a deep impression on the German, French or American intellectuals whom I met with him—even on people who had never seen either a Catholic or the Tatra Mountains before, and who had

telling stories about his imaginary neighbor, Franz Wurm—meant far more as well. Thanks to it, those of us who were lucky enough to meet him were given an added opportunity to discover the beauty of life,

When I come face to face with another person, life holds its breath for an infinitesimal fraction of a second

I emerged feeling like a new man, with a powerful, fresh dose of good cheer, energy, and optimism. Nothing out of the ordinary had happened, yet that is one of the finest memories of my life.

Nor will I ever forget the scene I once witnessed at the Vatican's Bronze Gate; on our way to dine with the Pope we met a very large group of Poles, people from Silesia, emerging from an audience. Seeing Tischner, the Silesians immediately surrounded him, asking him questions, touching him and expressing their appreciation in one way or another. Almost every one of them was beaming from ear to ear, and one woman said to her friend: “Look, Wacek, two birds with one stone!” I often witnessed similar scenes with foreigners too—even when communication seemed difficult, because there was no common language, common experience or common cultural background. How often the priest from Podhale, so deeply involved in issues that were of no interest to any-

no idea about the trials of the Polish nation. And not just intellectuals either. Whenever Tischner came to the institute where I work in Vienna, it was a holiday for everyone: for the receptionist, who was a bit too fond of a drink (and has since left us), the Austrian administrator, the stridently left-wing German feminist, the moderate and rather conservative Hungarian economist, my assistant at that time from deepest, thoroughly Catholic Tyrol and many others. Józef utterly won over my assistant, who sometimes helped him too, with a request not to wake him from his postprandial snooze on any condition, “unless they do away with celibacy, then instantly!”

I am describing all this not just to demonstrate that Tischner was a kind, amusing and clever man. Indeed, he was all those things, but his presence—regardless whether he was talking about the “phenomenology of the spirit”, or putting his audience into fits of laughter by

the sweet flavor of the world; thanks to it we could see sunlight in places where we had expected to find only dust and dirt. It allowed us to feel the effect of goodness when none of us could have anticipated it. Tischner helped us to open ourselves to the world, which above all means to understand other people, and by that token he mobilized us all to keep on breaking free of the captivity of ossified ideas, long ingrown habits and deeply hidden prejudices. He helped us to be free.

In my opinion, that is also the crux of his philosophical views (views that were all the more convincing thanks to who he was), according to which concepts, ideas, habits, traditions and institutions take on significance—and by that token become good or bad—only in the course of my relations with others, only in the course of relationships between people. When I come face to face with another person, life holds its breath for an infinitesimal fraction of a second; all meanings under-

go momentary suspension, to settle back down again when that moment passes – and everything will be as before, or, who knows, completely different. The presence of another person is an infinite challenge, said Tischner. Infinite, and thus unlimited by any already familiar conditions or pre-set meaning. It is here, in this presence, in the face of another person, that God lies hidden, he said. And if so, then each of us is infinitely free, for good and evil; if so, then each encounter with another person places me at boundless risk and gives me a unique opportunity, an opportunity for anything. By his presence, which brought and combined with his words, Tischner helped us to look for God in the one place where we could find Him: in the face and deeds of another person. Not in theses, theorems, dogmas or institutions. Of course, those are necessary too, maybe even essential. But God comes to us in the form of a person. Tischner helped us to recognize Him in that very spot, hidden in the shouting of hypocrites, in seemingly complex philosophical concepts, or in funny and strangely beautiful stories about the neighbors from his native village.

How much and what a wide range of people Tischner was able to move and convince! I first met him many years ago; at the time I was writing a doctoral thesis on Heidegger at a university that had been stripped of real professors. Bronisław Baczko, Leszek Kołakowski, and Krzysz-

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el's lawyer if peace negotiations are to progress. More and more American Jews are realizing this, even if the old guard is well-funded, loud and relentless.

Finally, it is time for the Congress to adopt sobriety on Iran. Shiite Iran is not the enemy that threatens America; Sunni, jihadist Al Qaeda is—in Yemen, Pakistan or Nigeria. Whether Iran really wants a bomb is still unclear. Whether Al Qaeda wants to attack America is not unclear. Certainly Iran wants the technological knowledge, the break-out capacity. But the regime is conservative; the supreme leader, Ali Khamenei, is the “Guardian of the Revolution.” He’s in the preservation business—and he knows the cost of actually building a device could well be destruction. Deterrence can work, war would be a disaster. The more isolated Iran is, the easier repression becomes. New sanctions—and the Congress has recently used words like “crippling,” “crushing,” and “overwhelming,” to describe them—will not cripple or crush or overwhelm Tehran. They will further enrich the Revolutionary Guards who control the trafficking that circumvents the sanctions. Iran and the United States are very familiar with the sterility of confrontation. Every attempt—every attempt—should be made to find a path around it. There is still time.

My third reason for optimism is Obama himself. There is something of the journalist in him. He likes to cross barriers to further understanding. His whole life story has been about that. He likes gazing at the same picture from different angles. He has used his own remarkable story to restore the mythology of American possibility.

Here is the President in Cairo on June 4, 2009, reaching out to a skeptical Muslim world: “The inter-

warming through nuclear proliferation to Israel-Palestine—requires a concerted response. “No one nation can or should try to dominate another nation,” he has said. This is a relatively new language for an American president. The notion of the United States as an exceptional power and a beacon for mankind



Photo: Berna Namgulu / istockphoto

has resided at the core of the heroic American narrative. From Lincoln through Wilson to Reagan and Bush, the lexicon of American-inspired redemption and salvation has been recurrent. At the heart of American exceptionalism lies a messianic streak, the belief in a country with a global calling to uplift. Obama represents a departure from this tradition. Tom Paine once said, “The cause of America is in great measure the cause of all mankind.” Obama tends to shun such resounding exhortations, even avoiding the Clinton-era casting of the United States as “the indispensable nation.” He admits American failings. While the President does not quite posit that America is just one nation among many, he does say clearly that the United States alone cannot solve the problems of the world. Nor can those problems be solved in America’s image for, while us values can inspire by example—“We must be vigilant in upholding the values our troops defend because there is no force in the world more powerful than the example of America”—they cannot

ian refugees since 1948, more than 4 million of them, according to UN figures. If there is a more depressing statistic in the world, I’m not aware of it. This has to stop. Israelis and Arabs must assume their responsibilities—a favorite Obama word.

Some will say there is too much accumulated hatred, too much blood. But look at the Franco-German or German-Polish post-war stories and now look at the glimmerings between Poland and Russia, with Putin at Katyn. Scarcely any nation has suffered as Poland since 1939, carved up by the Hitler-Stalin nonaggression pact, transformed by the Nazis into the epicenter of its program to annihilate European Jewry, land of Auschwitz and Majdanek, killing field for millions of Christian Poles and millions of Polish Jews, brave home to the Warsaw Uprising, Soviet pawn, lonely Solidarity-led leader of post-Yalta Europe’s fight for freedom, a place where, as one of its great poets, Wisława Szymborska, wrote, “History counts its skeletons in round numbers”—20,000 of them at Katyn alone. It is this Poland that is now at peace with its neighbors and stable. It is this Poland that has joined Germany in the European Union. It is this Poland that has just seen the very symbols of its tumultuous history (including the Gdansk dock worker Anna Walentynowicz and former president in exile Ryszard Kaczorowski) go down in a Soviet-made jet and responded with dignity, according to the rule of law.

So do not tell me that cruel history cannot be overcome. Do not tell me that Israelis and Palestinians can never make peace or that Iranians and Americans can never join hands. Do not tell me that the people in the streets of Bangkok and Bishkek and Tehran dream in vain of freedom and stability. Do not tell me that lies can stand forever. It is possible to reach the other shore, to take down walls, to break the stereotypes, to shatter history’s chains and to move forward. The living, who are the minority, a mere 6.7 billion on a fragile planet, honor the majority, who are the numberless dead, by learning from them but refusing their tyranny.

It is this above all that I have learned from a life of crossing lines. Youth is innocent, wherever it is, and must not be blighted by the arid gyre of the feud. Like Hafez, the great Iranian poet, I believe in the miracle of renewal, Hafez who wrote:

*Although I am old, you hug me
Tight one night
So I arise young again
At dawn from your side.*

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tof Pomian had been expelled from it shortly before then as Jews and liberals, and none of the remaining academics knew a thing about the subject of my work. Someone told me there was a priest in Krakow who knew something about it. So off I went to Krakow. I arrived a little early, and as it was a Sunday, I went to the nearby church. There was my priest, celebrating mass for some pre-school children. They were listening in fascination—and soon so was I, remembering the deadly boredom of the compulsory Sunday mass when I was a child. After mass Father Tischner took me to his home where we had a discussion about Heidegger that lasted for several hours and that, hungry for this sort of conversation, I found very exciting. How many philosophers know how to stir the enthusiasm of pre-school children? How many preachers are capable of proving to a young philosophy researcher, convinced he has all the answers, that he doesn’t yet know everything?

And so it went on: a superb lecture on Hegel in Vienna, well remembered to this day by colleagues of mine who are completely indifferent to religion, a fascinating debate in Heidelberg with one of the greatest scholars of his time, Gershom Scholem, on the Book of Genesis. How many of these events there were! And then there were those wonderful television programs about the catechism, or about the cardinal sins, which had a mass audience. Of course not all Tischner’s lectures were outstandingly brilliant, not all the debates were fascinating, and not all the television programs were superb—but how many of them were!

The ability to move the heart of a pre-school child as a matter of course earned Tischner the mistrust of some of his philosopher colleagues, who in the heat (or maybe I should say the routine) of distinguishing the “transcendent” from the “transcendental” and finding 150 different meanings of the verb “to exist” had forgotten that philosophical concepts are like withered leaves, and that they do not mean a thing unless they take on a life within interpersonal relationships. The liberating force of Tischner’s presence often prompted the ill will of some of his colleagues in the priesthood who clung tightly to their established notions and institutions, as if afraid to stand alone, naked, without the defense of words and authorities, face to face with another person. Tischner had no such fear. Boundless trust in God of a kind not accessible to so many of us gave him an unshakeable calm, the courage necessary to go out into the world, beyond the confines of familiar, home ground, to all those pre-school children, drunkards, atheists, philosophers infected with Cartesian ideas and post-modernism, and tax collectors. No, he did not drive us all back into the corral of orthodox views and correct behavior. Here too, in the wilderness, among us, in our faces, in our mistakes he sought his God, and he sought our God.

Tischner was (how painful that past tense is, like a sudden, cold stab

in the left side)—Tischner was always a thoroughly Catholic priest, when he laughed, and when he philosophized. He was also a Pole through and through, unreservedly. He never really left Podhale, not even when he and I were walking about fine foreign cities together. Yet there was nothing provincial about him. Just as he was able to open up a friend, a listener, one of his students or parishioners to other people, so too he applied himself, more firmly than others, to removing the prejudices, resentments and reactions of the collective soul that prevented the communities in which he lived—the Church, the Poles, or the *górale*, meaning the Polish Highlanders—from coexisting with others openly, with interest and respect, and yet without losing what was their own. How much he gave as a result to the Polish Church as it fought against the temptation of fear and hatred of others, how much he gave to the collective Polish imagination, poisoned by years of captivity. And how much he gave to his own native Highlanders, by turning them into an art form (if only in *A Goral History of Philosophy*).

Tischner was like a deep breath of fresh air—as much at the dinner table as at the seminar, as much for the people he met as for the institutions where he took part.

What are we going to do without you, Józef? I know, I know, I learned from you that the death of someone close to you is an added challenge, an extra obligation: someone who is no longer there, who no longer has their own voice, so you have to speak for him, and in his name too. Which does not mean that you have to put up monuments, name streets and airports after him, or found museums. No, above all we should try to keep up that magnanimity, retain that breadth of soul, not lose that wind of the spirit, so much of which entered our mutual relations thanks to that priest from Łopuszna. We should keep on making the effort of liberty again and again. Except that without you, Józef, it will be much harder.

I know, I know you would not like the fact that I am weeping as I write. Goodness—as I learned from you—has nothing in common with sentimentality. The sweetness of the world does not taste of cake; it also includes the bitterness of failure, anxiety about the future, awareness of the inevitability of errors and evil done to others. And trust, and hope, in spite of all. Can I possibly find it without your help? I do not know, but I shall try. I learned from you that I should try. And when my courage abandons me, when I lose heart for the umpteenth time, when cold, slimy doubt creeps into my mind again, or sheer despair, I shall think of you. And that will help. <

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Europe teaches us that even the bitterest enmities are not eternal

ests we share as human beings are far more powerful than the forces that drive us apart. Now part of this conviction is rooted in my own experience. I’m a Christian, but my father came from a Kenyan family that includes generations of Muslims. As a boy, I spent several years in Indonesia and heard the call of the azaan at the break of dawn and at the fall of dusk.” The Obama story is disarming: he speaks, through his very hybrid Kenyan-Indonesian experience, of a globalized world in flux. He looks more like the guy at the local bodega than the guy on dollar bills. As he noted in his Inaugural on January 21, 2009, “A man whose father less than 60 years ago might not have been served in a local restaurant now stands before you to take a most sacred oath.” Much more than an all-powerful America, Obama sees the constraints of interconnection and proceeds on the basis that every major problem—from global

be imposed wholesale on a diverse world. Obama is in many respects a fierce realist onto whom great idealism has been projected. And, as his health care victory showed, he’s a man prepared to fight hard to deliver.

We need precisely this combination of fierce realism and stubborn idealism. Middle Eastern peace must become our non-negotiable demand. As Obama and General Petraeus have observed of late, America pays a price in blood and treasure when conflict festers in the Holy Land. So does Europe. Palestinian suffering and statelessness is a potent terror-recruitment tool.

It is easy to despair when conflicts seem irreconcilable, but Europe teaches us that even the bitterest enmities are not eternal. Look at the number of refugees settled in Europe since 1945 and compare that with the ballooning number of Palestin-