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Andreas Ernst

Kosovo: Divide et libera!

Bartering Trade as for the Kosovo Question – a Proposal

The forming of Serbia's new pro-European government in July 2008 has marked a milestone in the transformation of the country since 2000, more so, as it was formed with the support of the (unreformed) Socialist Party of the late Milosevic era. The leaders of this party – crude opportunists, interested in power not principles – rightly concluded, that a majority of the Serbian society has definitely chosen EU-integration and is sick and tired of experiments leading into isolation.

But the optimistic picture of Serbia is overshadowed by the unsettled issue of Kosovo: Not only is Kosovo a potential stumbling block for Serbia's political and economical development. More important: The master plan, imposed by the West, has serious shortcomings threatening the development of the young republic. Kosovo is a "fuzzy state", with unclear borders (Serbia still controls the North and partly the enclaves), too many jurisdictions and too many international actors with unclear mandates.

Instead of closing the eyes and meddling through, three facts should be acknowledged: 1. The Serbian populated areas will not integrate into Kosovo at reasonable costs. 2. The new Republic of Kosovo cannot be a true multi-ethnic state. 3. The protectorate (regardless if led by UN or EU) will rather hamper than develop Kosovo's emerging democracy.

Therefore a barter is proposed: Prishtina abandons the Serbian populated areas and is compensated by the abolishment of the protectorate thus losing some (theoretical) sovereignty but winning real sovereignty in the Albanian populated areas. Such a deal must be alleviated with EU's support for "member-state building" for the two republics.

Sabine Willenberg

Does Kosovo Put the Balkans in New Order?

Serbia's Neighbors and the Recognition of Kosovo

On 17 February 2008 the Kosovo Assembly, supported by parts of the International Community, declared the independence of the former Serbian province – and left the neighbors of Serbia resp. Kosovo with the decision on recognition or *non*-recognition of Kosovo as an independent state. The decision means an enormous challenge to the neighbors – having to concern, juggle and balance varied, partly existential

issues: (1) their domestic structures and the interests of their constitutive nations and minorities as well as (2) their foreign political position, values and preferences such as their relationship towards the EU and Serbia as well as their role in Southeast Europe.

So far five of Serbia's resp. Kosovo's neighbors have recognized Kosovo as an independent state, two declared not to do so and two more are undecided.

Although the worst case spill-over scenario with secessions and interstate clashes didn't occur, "*lex Kosovo*" and the forced decision on recognition or *non*-recognition left its mark on the fragile Southeast European regional order: (1) within the neighboring states internal destabilizing effects, (2) between the states wounded relations with Serbia and more difficult conditions for regional cooperation, (3) within Serbia again the feeling of isolation and not being understood and (4) for the EU a questionable implementation of its regional approach to the Balkans.

Melani Barlai / Florian Hartleb

Hungarian Populism and Right-Wing Extremism

A Pleading for the Study of Individual Cases

The article advocates a stronger study of individual cases using Hungary as an example. Comparative studies for the Eastern Central European regions so far could not explain satisfactorily why populism and right-wing extremism arise after a completed transformation.

In Hungary such critical phenomena could be observed especially after the violent demonstrations in October 2006. In August 2007 the Hungarian Guards developed from the extreme right-wing Jobbik party, openly resuming the fascism of the time between the wars. The Hungarian right-wing extremism seems to shape a new social movement. Hate against Roma people, anti-Semitism and chauvinistic attitudes have a strong position among society. The Hungarian party system shows strongly polarising features, as both big parties are deeply hostile to each other. Especially the Fidesz party resorts to populism since the defeat in the 2002 elections and softens the borders between democracy and right-wing extremism.

The manifold reasons for populism and right-wing extremism in Hungary are both due to historical as well as political-economic and socio-cultural factors. The explanation of the temporary "post-EU accession syndrome" is too weak as regards the historical spectre of populism and right-wing extremism. Although there is no alternative to liberal democracy in Hungary, this is not an all-clear situation at present.

Ilona Tomova

Social Exclusion of Roma in Post-Socialism: A Bulgarian Case Study

The transition from command to market economy in Bulgaria happened as a crisis much deeper and prolonged than the Great Depression. Only a couple of indicators are enough to describe its depth and duration: the real GDP per capita reached the level from 1989 only in 2007; the real wages in 2007 constituted 61.3 % of those in

1989; the employment rate in 2007 was 20 % lower than in 1989 (in 2001 only 39 % of the Bulgarians aged 16-60 were employed).

The burdens of the economic crisis had the worst effect on Roma – the second biggest ethnic minority group in Bulgaria. The paper explores the dynamics of social exclusion and impoverishment of this ethnic group. It identifies a number of domestic reasons for Roma social exclusion: the strong negative stereotypes against them, that took the form of ethnic discrimination during the crisis; the lack of public awareness and support and the lack of political will for Roma integration; very low (and worsening) educational level of the vast majority of the Roma, making their integration in the labour market extremely difficult.

Ali Ayata

Turkey as Partner of European Foreign Policy in the Middle East

The article analyses Turkey's geopolitical as well as political contribution to the European Union. It is Turkey that will enable the European Union to reach a strong global position, due to its geopolitical location between Asia, Europe and the Middle East. Turkey is one of the most important partners for the EU, and the EU could improve its position in the Near and Middle East because of Turkey's cultural identity and potential.

The EU – that recently has taken a secluded position, didn't show much initiative in the trouble spots of the world and seems to have abandoned its particular ideas – could also increase its influence with Turkey's contribution in the Middle East. After all, Turkish and European interest and priorities in the Middle East are identical. Both long for stability, peace and a solution of the current crises. Finally, their long-term objectives are identical: the application of soft-power, conflict resolution through dialogue instead of military force.