

CONTENTS

3 PREFACE

ILLIBERAL TENDENCIES

- 4 Vedran Džihčić, Nicolas Hayoz
Questioning Democracy and Liberalism in the Eastern Part of Europe
- 9 Anton Shekhovtsov
The No Longer Silent Counter-Revolution
- 11 Vlastimil Havlík
Populism and Political Entrepreneurs in the Czech Republic
- 14 Magdalena Solska
Ambivalent "Good Change" in Poland
- 16 Grigorij Mesežnikov
The Extreme Right Challenge to Slovak Democracy
- 18 Zoltán Kiszelly
Hungary's Illiberal State: Model or Pariah?
- 20 Senada Šelo Šabić
Croatia's Experience with Liberal Democracy
- 22 Jasmin Mujanović
Fractured Authoritarianism in Bosnia-Herzegovina
- 24 Jovana Marović
The Thin Line Between the Party and the State in Montenegro
- 26 Marko Vujačić
Serbia: The State Besieged, Society in Distress
- 29 Arben Hajrullahu
Kosovo between Unsolved Problems and Ideas of Liberalism
- 31 Dane Taleski u. a.
Maintaining a Hybrid Regime: The Case of Macedonia
- 33 Cengiz Günay
The Authoritarian Turn in Turkey and the Weakness of the Authoritarian System
- 36 Natalia Timuş
Moldova's Democratic Decay
- 38 Olexij Haran, Mariia Zolkina
After Euromaidan: Democratic Elections vs. Personalised Parties and Informal Practices
- 41 Giga Zedania
Democracy and Liberalism in Georgia: Uneasy Ties
- 43 Natasha Wunsch
Democratic Backsliding: The End of EU Transformative Power?

LITERATURE

- 45 Sabine Witt
Nationalistische Intellektuelle in der Slowakei 1918–1945
Paul W. Werth
The Tsar's Foreign Faiths

PROJECT REPORT

- 46 Regula Spalinger u. a.
Helping People to Help Themselves: Social Centres in the Urals

**Dear Reader,**

In his speech on the state of the European Union on 14 September, President of the EU Commission Jean-Claude Juncker spoke of an "existential crisis" with regard to the refugee crisis, mass unemployment in South-eastern Europe, the terrorist threat and the Brexit vote. Three days later, at an informal special summit in Bratislava, the 27 EU heads of government (excluding Great Britain) passed a reform agenda in which they agreed on the smallest common denominators regarding issues of security and border protection.

A more comprehensive approach to dealing with the crisis had already been formulated by Hungary's premier Viktor Orbán and the chairman of the Polish governing party Jarosław Kaczyński in early September. They consider the cause of the "crisis of the European conscious" to lie primarily in the dissolution of national and religious identities, which they regard as being compounded by the refugee crisis. The model of dealing with the refugees with "flexible solidarity" presented by Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic at the special summit in Bratislava must thus be seen in the context of Kaczyński's and Orbán's idea of a "cultural counter-revolution".

Is a spectre haunting Europe once more? National-conservative politicians' demand that Europe refuse to relinquish its cultural wealth and national differences would appear quite legitimate if it did not go hand in hand with the dismantling of democratic principles and increasingly authoritarian tendencies. These developments (not only) in Central and Eastern Europe require a differentiating approach however. Hence political and sociological analysis must give consideration to the socio-cultural situation specific to individual countries in order to meet the challenges in each of the newest EU member states, the current candidates for accession and the other neighbouring countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe – flexibly and with solidarity – and in order to be able to adapt existing strategies of transformation and integration. This task is taken up by the participants of an international workshop organised by the "Academic Swiss Caucasus Net" (ASCN) on the subject of "Illiberal and Authoritarian Tendencies in Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe" from 13–15 October in Munich. In the present issue, authors from the countries concerned present their findings and theses so far. Here we would like to express our thanks to the coordinators of the ASCN for their smooth cooperation and generous financial support and to translator and proofreader John Heath for his assistance in preparing the present English edition.

Regula Zwahlen