

Margot Stańczyk-Minkiewicz
Europe - Together or Separately?

Distinctness and diversity of perspectives, lack of a unified, precise strategy of action and conflicts between the governments of particular countries are factors responsible for the fact that the condition of Europe on the international arena is seen as unstable. This is directly reflected in the level of security and will affect the position of the Old Continent in the future. Those countries which have taken upon themselves the task of creating a new European order often vary in their particular beliefs and preferences. On the one hand there is an assumption of codependence and integration of European countries, which is treated as a guarantee of their development and security, whereas on the other hand more and more often a process of regionalization can be noticed. The contradictoriness of unification results from a lack of one universal conception of a "United Continent". The author of the article seeks to answer the question which vision - unification or regionalization - is better for the development of contemporary Europe. However, does political strategy today make it at all possible to give a univocal answer?

Janusz J. Węc
System Reform of the European Union in the Treaty of Lisbon

The article deals with the reform of the European Union system in the Lisbon Treaty of 13 December 2007. Analysis is limited to the so-called horizontal changes, also known as structural changes, i.e. those which are significant for the whole EU. Changes in the institutional system, internal market, space of liberty, security and justice, as well as changes in the common foreign policy and security policy of the EU have been left out of considerations. The author therefore focuses on the following issues: transformation of the European Union into a uniform international organization; expansion of the EU's axiology; establishing of division of competence between the EU and its member states; systematization and simplification of the catalogue of legal acts and legal procedures; modification of the democratic procedures of the EU; strengthening of the position of national parliaments in the legislative process; procedures of revisions of treaties and changes in the functioning of closer cooperation.

Łukasz Bartkowiak
Legal-International Subjectivity of the European Community and the European Union

The legal-international subjectivity of united Europe had for many years remained a legally unresolved problem. When the European Union was created by force of the Treaty of Maastricht, only its first pillar, the European Community, possessed legal personality. The other two pillars that make up the Union implemented their policies through international cooperation. A lack of the subjectivity of those two pillars resulted in the fact that the European Union did not enjoy an adequate legal mandate on the international arena. Its legal subjectivity was only regulated by the Treaty of Lisbon, which granted the European Union its legal personality.

Wanda Pełka
Innovativeness of the Member States of the European Union

The aim of the article is to identify the current trends in the process of convergence of the member states of the EU within the sphere of innovativeness and to trace the directions of

European policy supporting innovative development towards securing stable economic growth. The above formulated aim is achieved by presenting arguments for the significance of technical progress and innovation to economic growth from the perspective of the major trends in economic thought. On the basis of such data as the level of innovativeness of European economy, and the size and structure of expenditures on research and development it is possible to verify the thesis that the ensuring of a stable economic growth and obtaining competition advantage by the member states of the EU depends on an increase in expenditure on research and development as well as on the development of systems of education.

Joanna Cieślińska
Black Sea Synergy

Expansion of the European Union in 2004 made it necessary for the European Communities to develop relations with their new eastern neighbors. This became one of the direct reasons of creating the European Neighbourhood Policy, which was to prevent the emergence of new lines of division in Europe and lead to surrounding the EU with the so-called circle of friends. A proposition for the Black Sea area directed towards promoting stability, peace and security in the region, environment protection as well as infrastructure and the building of bonds between Europe, the Near East and regions of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea is an initiative known as the Black Sea Synergy, modeled on the Northern (remaining outside the European Neighbourhood Policy) and Mediterranean Dimensions. However, many countries in the region express anxiety that the Synergy is an attempt to substitute EU enlargement policy with cooperation frameworks alternative to membership. Such doubts have been mostly voiced by Turkey because of the German authorship of the Black Sea Synergy, Germany being the strongest opponent of Turkey's membership in the EU. Debate on the status of the Synergy within the European Neighbourhood Policy is an outcome of controversies and competition between initiatives for the development of the Eastern and Southern Dimension of the ENP.

Marcin Dębicki
Slovenia - The EU-Balkan Bridge

The article attempts to characterize the socio-cultural specificity of Slovenia. Attention has been drawn to the coexistence of selected elements that apparently influence the shape of the contemporary identity of the inhabitants of this small country, such as the Habsburg and Yugoslavian legacy or successes in the process of European integration. Separate reflection has been devoted to reasons of a lack of interest in Slovenia among Poles despite relatively close geographical distance between the two countries. The results of research on Poles' attitude to Slovenians have also been analyzed and the emergent picture is complemented by results of a mini-survey on the image of Slovenia among university students.

Wojciech Szczepański
Kosovo (An Outline of Political and Social History)

The text presents the social and political history of Kosovo from the moment of pivotal system changes in the Yugoslavia of Tito (the 1970s) onwards. Among others, the following problems are tackled: centuries-old conflicts between the most populous nations inhabiting the land, i.e. Albanians and Serbs (special attention being paid to tensions in the 19th and 20th centuries) and the evolution of the status of Kosovo in the 20th century in the states of Serbia (1912-1918) and Yugoslavia. The following major issues are highlighted: a) transformations of the

demographic and ethnic structure of Kosovo; b) legitimization by Albanians and Serbs of their right to a political domination in Kosovo based on myths of their ancient origin and earlier presence on the disputed territories (Albanians), and the medieval "golden age" of their statehood, of which the disputed territory was the political and spiritual centre (Serbs); c) the socio-political circumstances of the functioning of communities of Kosovo Albanians and Serbs in the Osman and Yugoslavian states. One of the main factors responsible for generating a spectrum of conflicts in Kosovo over the centuries, most importantly a permanent, multi-level Albanian-Serbian confrontation are, according to the author, differences in the social and political status of the inhabitants of this province, depending on their religious and/or ethnic affinity. The different status of Muslims (a majority of Albanians and all the Turks inhabiting Kosovo) and Christians (mostly Serbs) had already been decreed by Osman laws, and some Serbian and Yugoslavian regulations and political praxis in force until mid-1970s endorsed the unequal treatment of Kosovo Serbs and other inhabitants of Kosovo (especially Albanians, who were often subjected to repressive policies).

Elżbieta Pałka

Situation of Churches and Religious Associations in the Czech Republic and Slovakia after 1989. Similarities and Differences

The article characterizes the situation of Churches and religious associations in the Czech Republic and Slovakia after 1989. Along with the onset of transformations of the political system, previously marginalized and persecuted religious associations obtained the possibility of a free development and independence from state authorities, while their members were guaranteed religious liberties. Following the division of the Czechoslovak state into two independent republics - Czech and Slovak - Churches and religious associations have enjoyed freedom, conditions have also been created for development of their activity, religious as well as charitable, cultural, educational, etc. Appropriate legal regulations have also been introduced. However, many problems still remain unsolved, above all the problem of financing the Churches, and in the case of the Czech Republic also the restitution of Church property and the concordate. The situation of religious associations in those countries is also influenced by a change of attitudes toward religion. The highly secularized Czech society shows a well-advanced indifference to religious matters, whereas in Slovakia the Church enjoys social trust and believers make up a large section of the society.

Radosław Zenderowski

Religion and Slovak National Identity

The article seeks to answer the question of the role and significance of religion in constructing contemporary Slovak national identity. In his attempted answer, the author describes the relations between religion and the nation, and religion and nationalism in Central-Eastern Europe. He then reflects on the issue of the place of Christianity within the public sphere as an object of political debate in Slovakia after 1989. The answer to the problem is sought by analyzing both the public discourse in Slovakia after 1989 and by referring to the symbolic sphere (the symbolism of currency, national feasts and public places).

Maria Józefowicz

Collective Memory in Constructing a New Identity of Spaniards

The article shows the significance of collective memory in shaping Spanish national identity

and presents the functioning of historical memory in socio-political space and culture. During the process of democratization, memory was a factor stimulating the peaceful character of changes then ongoing in Spain. In time its condition underwent major adjustments, passing through subsequent stages that corresponded with the current socio-political circumstances. The article analyzes the controversies that had accumulated around historical memory and are connected with the revision of history, including the civil war (1936-1939) followed by the institution of dictatorship by general Francisco Franco and the democratic transformation after the dictator's death in 1975. Gradually, it has become possible to view the past with relative calm and to undertake attempts at defining it. In culture, alternative forms of settling accounts with the past were sought. Artistic production, such as, among others, national songs and feature films restore memory, shape new forms of its development and compensate for the lack of possibilities of speaking openly about history and for the shortcomings of language.

Grzegorz Nycz

American Policy of Supporting Democracy in Eastern Europe in the Years 1989-1991

The administration of George Bush Senior strove to influence the democratic changes in the countries of the disintegrating Eastern bloc in accordance with its own interests connected with building a new system of security created by Washington, based on Euroatlantic structures and the conception of political-economic transformation of the Soviet Union and its satellites. Propagation of democracy, a political conception initiated by Ronald Reagan, employed propaganda, economic and political instruments as well as means within the scope of foreign aid in order to support anti-communist opposition and interfere in processes of system reforms in the Eastern bloc. In the discussed period, a gradual evolution of American policy can be observed, consisting in a separation of policy toward the Soviet Union from relations with its hitherto satellites. This policy of "democratic differentiation" favored countries with the fastest rate of liberal transformations. Its instrument was foreign aid, provided among others on the basis of the Support for Eastern European Democracy Act (SEED) by agendas of the American administration - Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), National Fund for Democracy (NED) and non-government organizations.

Marek Rewizorski

Competition and Cooperation between the USA and the EU on the WTO Forum

Relations between the USA and the EU as members of the World Trade Organization are function of trade disputes and cooperation. The role of the WTO in dealing with trade conflicts between the USA and the EU consists in inducing both sides to respect the resolutions issued by the Dispute Settlement Body and the Appellate Body, which are internal elements of the organizational structure of this institution. In turn cooperation between the USA and the EU on the WTO forum manifests itself in developing and adjusting aspects of transatlantic dialogue to trade standards introduced by the WTO and in presenting a common stand during trade negotiations with developing countries. Both cooperation and competition between the above mentioned actors of international economic relations is necessary to maintain not only the current round of trade negotiations of the WTO launched at Doha in 2001, but also a plurilateral trade system.

Natalia Kohtamäki

Transborder Cooperation in the Upper Rhine Region

The last forty years were a period when mechanisms of transborder cooperation in the Upper Rhine region were formed. The troubled past of the French-Swiss-German border territory no longer blocks the way of partners across the Rhine to seek practical solutions to problems in the life of the inhabitants of those areas. From the perspective of Paris or Berlin, the Upper Rhine region is not infrequently seen to be peripheral and unimportant, but in fact it lies in the centre of Europe and is one of the richest areas in the European Union. Opportunities that follow from such a location motivate local communities to tighten mutual ties and develop various forms of cooperation (e.g. the RegioTriRhena Council, the Upper Rhine Conference, Trilateral Congresses, the Upper Rhine Eurodistricts). Many of those are pioneering initiatives that serve as models for other European border regions.