

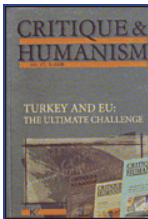


Eurozine Review

Plan B or not to be

Critique & Humanism takes a neighbourly view on Turkey; *dérive* doesn't play ball; *Reset* picks up the pieces after Veltroni's defeat; *Multitudes* joins the carnival; *The Hungarian Quarterly* finds the country in a gloomy mood; *Mittelweg 36* asks what's in a friendship; *Revista Crítica* reads epistemologies of the South; *Springerin* sees the provincial in the universal; *Kulturos barai* watches patriarchs fall; and *Cogito* casts a tragic hero for our times.

Critique & Humanism 27 (2008)



The ongoing trial where the Turkish ruling party AKP stands accused of undermining the country's secular constitution is certainly not helping Turkey's bid for EU membership. "The reaction in the EU to this court case was one of disbelief", said enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn recently. "Court cases to close down political parties are not normal in EU democracies."

As the discussion on Turkey and the EU continues, Bulgarian journal *Critique & Humanism* takes a closer look the arguments present in the debate.

"Bulgaria, an EU member for more than a year, does not have the right to watch from the sidelines", writes philosopher [Stilian Y. Yotov](#) in his [introduction](#). "Neither from the perspective of politicians nor from the forums of the public sphere."

Analyzing the Bulgarian political debate, [Antony Todorov](#) notes that, like in most other EU countries, "the dividing line between proponents and opponents is not identical to the dividing line between Left and Right". Nationalist Ataka and rightwing Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria have taken a firm stand against Turkey's accession, stressing the cultural and religious differences: Turkey is not fit to "become a lodger in the well-ordered Christian home of the Old Continent". But the other main rightwing party, the Union of Democratic Forces, describes Turkey as a loyal political ally that supported Bulgaria's bid for Nato membership, and that deserves to be rewarded.

Plan B: Even the staunchest advocates of Turkey's EU accession must consider alternatives to full membership. Yet what does "Plan B" — or "privileged partnership" — entail? If the enticement of full Union membership is removed, asks [Claus Leggewie](#) in a highly interesting but pessimistic [article](#), can the EU achieve its goals in Turkey, namely democratization and human rights reforms? This question is made all the more pressing by a renewed perception in Arab countries of "Ottoman" Turkey's belonging in the global Muslim community together with a surge of anti-western feeling.

Also: Murat Belge sees Turkey's external assets lead to internal tensions; Marina Liakova points out social interaction between Christians and Muslims; Darina Petrova analyzes the landslide victory of the AKP in the last elections; and German sociologist Jens Alber and historian Hans-Ulrich Wehler take stock of the basic arguments, the former being cautiously in favour, the latter firmly against Turkey's EU membership.

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dérive 32 (2008)



"It would, of course, have been possible to ignore the Euro 2008 entirely in order to proudly point out that *dérive* did not join in the lunacy. But one of the most striking developments of events such as the Football Championships is the takeover of the public and most central of spaces in the city, and this is something *dérive* simply cannot distance itself from", writes Cristoph Laimer in the editorial.

One of the main features of last month's football event in Austria and Switzerland was the creation of public viewing spaces; centrally situated areas equipped with large screens, various public facilities such as the sale of beer, and a high level of crowd control. Manfred Russo points out that this "Public Viewing" is based in the English expression for the public display of someone dead.

This demonstrates an interesting fact, namely that the Public Viewing zones of the Euro 2008 are directly connected with the public application of rituals that are the domain of the death cult. The remembrance of the dead is always a fundamental ritual for the establishment of a social synthesis and was also the motivation behind the big public displays put on by the National Socialists' commemoration of the fallen soldiers of WWI [...] which prepared the mood for a new world war.

These rituals, with their effective dimension of the collective public remembrance of the dead, are now applied by the world of sports in order to create a social synthesis of integration.

Post Katrina: New Orleans lies not only mostly below sea level, but it is still sinking. Since the 1980s, various plans for the preservation and rescue of the city have existed, but there has been no agreement about a final plan of action. The disastrous result was witnessed by the world when New Orleans was hit by hurricane Katrina and nearly 2000 people were killed and 204,000 homes were ruined. Martin Heintel and Helga Fasching outline a chaotic aftermath and cast doubt on the usefulness of the Bush administration's reliance on free market economy in times of trouble.

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Reset 107 (2008)



Reset dedicates its current issue to the defeat of Walter Veltroni's newly formed Democratic Party at the parliamentary elections in April. In an article on the predictable election catastrophe of the progressive forces in Sicily, Elisabetta Ambrosi reports that in the blocked political system on the island, decisive impulses from civil society can no longer be expected. In the productive north, meanwhile, diffuse fears enabled Berlusconi's landslide victory, writes Alessandro Lani.

The emotive fear of the Italian north is certainly not unconnected to the wholly material interests of thousands of small and medium-sized businesses in the era of globalization. With his idea of "fortress Europe", Berlusconi's finance minister Giulio Tremonti has conquered the hearts of the inhabitants of the Po Valley. Lani describes Tremonti's project as such: "No money flows from the fortress in the form of tax into the regions below the Po. And no unwanted guests crowd in from outside." Nevertheless, sociologist Guiseppa Berta, whom Lani cites, doubts that it can be implemented as a concrete government policy.

Between miracle and logos: In his book about St. Pio (a twentieth century cleric canonized after developing stigmata), historian Sergio Luzzatto talks about the "social construction of miracles". *Reset* asks him about the demand for the miraculous and its supply via a spiritual agency — the Church. "But the historian," insists Luzzatto in agnostic fashion, "cannot decide whether or not the miracles of Father Pio were true, because he can replace neither the believer nor the natural scientist."

Also to look out for: The American printed press might not be dead quite yet, but Eric Alterman writes an obituary to it anyway — and backs it up with figures; [Giancarlo Bosetti](#) considers the manipulation of news broadcasters in the era of terrorism; and Nando Sigona discusses Italy's latest hate figure: the Romanian Roma.

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Multitudes 33 (2008)



This year's nostalgia hasn't captured the spirit of May '68, writes editor [Yann Moulier Boutang](#) in *Multitudes*. That eventful month marked the "death of Lenin" — the end of grand narratives of historical change and class struggle. Before May '68, political struggles were battles against exploitation; now they would become battles for liberation.

But the true story of May '68 isn't as the beginning or end of a movement. It was a pause, a brief moment of creative chaos, a storm that came from nowhere and passed just as quickly. It was a time of imagination, subversion, insolence, the suspension of authority, and the triumph of the present over the past. For a brief moment Paris entered the upside-down world of the carnival.

Carnival: Rodrigo Guéron follows the carnival and the samba through the history and geography of Rio de Janeiro. One history shows the exploitation of the favela-dwelling communities which created the samba. Economically, they were robbed by record companies, which paid minimal prices for the music.

Aesthetically, the "tragic joy" was stripped from the samba to produce a tamed, "civilized" version for radio. Intellectually, praise for the "primitive, intuitive genius" of the music denied the rationality and the intellectual work of its creators.

Meanwhile, the samba has been a battle between communities and power. The first "samba schools" were a deliberate attempt to gain legitimacy for a subversive social movement. But as the carnival grew, the state turned it into a source of "national identity", an image of unity that papered over divisions and inequality in Rio. Yet even this co-option has given power to the "sambistas". "We are the true Brazil, the essence of the people", they claim. The samba remains a creative force, writes Guéron, its rhythms of resistance at the boundary between power and cliché.

Albert Camus: Fêted by magazines, read by Ségolène Royal and even George Bush: Albert Camus is in fashion. Yet his work remains as challenging to authority as ever, finds Laurent Bove. Writing in postwar France, Camus argued that the Nazi occupation was merely one facet of a deeper "terror" that still occupied people's minds. This terror lay in systems of state discipline, which stripped citizens of their humanity by judging them "not according to their dignity, but according to their usefulness".

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The Hungarian Quarterly 190 (2008)



In *The Hungarian Quarterly*, Elemér Hankiss indulges in some gloomy speculation: "What would happen if Hungary were to slip off the face of the earth?" According to a recent survey, a tenth of respondents said it would go unnoticed and a fifth said nobody would care. Asked how they saw their country ten years from now, nearly half said that it would be backward and impoverished and only a third that it would

become a successful European country.

Hungary's political elite, its intellectuals and its media bear enormous responsibility for this negativity. For the last 17 years, politicians have been unable to formulate a comprehensive and attractive image of the future — the image of a prospering and successful Hungary. [...] The media is finally making cautious forays into the thorny business of identifying problems. But it still has its work cut out to find and disseminate solutions, animate communities and foster autonomous, responsible citizens.

Magda Szabó in memoriam: The grande dame of Hungarian letters died on 19 November 2007 at the age of ninety. In an interview that took place in 1993 after Szabó won the Prix Fémina Étranger, she looks back on an international literary career that begun when the wife of a German translator smuggled a manuscript out of the country in the 1950s.

"Von Schüchting told me she had the means to get the manuscript to a childhood friend, an expert. 'May I ask what makes your friend an expert,' I enquired. 'Does he have a good knowledge of literature?' 'Well, some,' she replied. 'You may have heard of him: his name is Herman Hesse.' [...] Hesse

told the publisher Insel that if they were prepared to buy Mrs Szabó, they should buy her lock, stock and barrel, including her unwritten books. And that is what happened. It was unusual for a book from a socialist country to let fly at the class struggle, the peace priests and the denounced Calvinist church [...]. So the German publishers said: "This woman was made for us; she's as daring as the devil and incredibly impertinent."

Also to look out for: An interview with Liszt biographer Alan Walker: "Musical biography seems to be losing its literary roots, and I am rather sad about that. The typical biographer–musicologist today tends to think that the reader owes him his time — whereas he owes him nothing."

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Mittelweg 36 3/2008



Sociologist [Heinz Bude](#) opens *Mittelweg 36* focusing on the significance of friendship today. For Bude, friendship "represents a third way between freely chosen love and naturally existing heredity, between family and welfare state. Friendship is the escape for those who are lonely, [...] for those who cannot place their hopes in the family and can no longer trust the welfare state." This applies to elderly people in

particular, who must establish self–help networks when children cannot care for them. Here, friendship offers a way to attain independence, in order to give up the illusion of autarchy. "The subject of friendship is thus topical in a certain social–technical sense."

Bude suggests, however, that friendship remains a form of socialization characteristic of youth and related to the "wound of incompleteness". "It's as if the adolescent experience of friendship leaves behind an image of the true friend strong enough to break the supremacy of interest and usefulness." Enter the political aspect of friendship: "I demand acknowledgement, help, support, rights for my friend, whom I have met by chance and with whom I may not share the same sex, ethnicity, blood, or any kind of feeling." As such, friendship is "neither anti–statist nor anti–institutional", but, "in the collision of cultures, insists on the impossible possibility of politics."

Decentring the couple relationship: [Sasha Roseneil](#) approaches friendship via the "individualization thesis" of Beck, Giddens, Honneth and others. Questioned on their experience of receiving as well as giving care, Roseneil's interviewees spoke of the psychic conflict connected with the breakdown of an intimate relationship or other processes of social change such as geographical mobility, workplace conflict, or job loss. Roseneil notes a parallel discourse on the importance of friendship and a "decentring" of couple relationships. The disruption caused by the experience of divorce or the ending of a long–term cohabiting relationship "was seen as giving rise to a new orientation to relationships".

World society: The nation remains the accepted form of political organization in the "world society". Nevertheless, [writes Ulrich Bielefeld](#), nations are "post–sovereign" in that they are conscious of "the fiction of sovereignty" and admit that the nation constitutes "neither a group nor a community", nor "classes that form themselves as such". Hence, world society must be analyzed in view of the decline of the national community.

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Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais 80 (2008)



"One of the most powerful myths of the twentieth century was the notion that the elimination of colonial administrations amounted to the decolonization of the world", writes [Rámon Grosfoguel](#) in an issue of *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais* focusing on "epistemologies of the South". "Although colonial administrations have been almost entirely eradicated, [...] non-European people are still living under crude

Euro-American exploitation and domination." Herein lies the distinction between "colonialism" and "coloniality": "Coloniality allows us to understand the continuity of colonial forms [...] in the modern/colonial capitalist world-system."

The division between culture and political economy that still exists in post-colonial studies and political economy reproduces a particular form of coloniality, continues Grosfoguel. The culture vs. economy dichotomy is a "chicken-egg" dilemma and the construction of "autonomous" arenas of knowledge "a pernicious result of liberalism as a geoculture of the modern world-system". A decolonial perspective requires a broader canon of thought that would require taking seriously the epistemic insights of critical thinkers from the global South:

Instead of rejecting modernity to retreat into a fundamentalist absolutism, border epistemologies subsume/redefine the emancipatory rhetoric of modernity from the cosmologies and epistemologies of the subaltern, located in the oppressed and exploited side of the colonial difference, towards a decolonial liberation struggle for a world beyond eurocentered modernity.

Also: [Boaventura de Sousa Santos](#) writes that epistemologies of the South seek maximum inclusivity of types of knowledge and thus open up unsuspected intercommunication with western traditions marginalized by the nineteenth century canon on modern science. And Paulin Hountondji calls on African scholars to re-appropriate the knowledge collected on them over centuries to form an autonomous tradition of research that addresses questions posed by Africans themselves.

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Springer 2/2008



All big European thinkers were provincial-minded, finds Indian historian Dipesh Chakrabarti, co-founder of the Subaltern Studies Project. Talking about his book *Provincializing Europe* to author Catherine Halpern, he finds that "concepts of modernity claiming universal truth spread by Europe around the world during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were only partly universal; at the same time they were also provincial". Indians found European ideas useful, "they enriched our lives [...] but could not fully account for processes of modernity outside Europe." Paradoxically, "we need universal categories in

our thinking, but no concrete thinking is capable of embodying universality".

He illustrates his thesis with the example of a conversation between two individuals: "We never precondition an absolute and complete understanding

of what the other person says to move on with the conversation, but constantly negotiate differences to get a knowledge and an understanding of the other, which is always preliminary." In this way, "the universal should always be looked at as a hypothesis that may be corrected."

transmediale 08: The concept of conspiracy has been challenged since the emergence of the Internet, states Alessandro Ludovici. Emerging from elitist obscurity, it has become a democratic strategy used to resist seemingly unalterable social tendencies that evolve out of the new technological inventions. Several artists on the "transmediale 08" had ideas on how to use new technologies to fight against a reality that is shaped ever more by digitization. No matter if the result was a jacket that reacts to the intensity of WLAN by tightening to the point of suffocating its wearer, or electronic war against the Great Firewall of China: "Ideas grow out of a conspiracy against reality".

Amateurs: Author Vera Tollmann asks media-artists about their part in the world of You Tube — the artistic answer to the inflation of amateur-videos has not yet been found, she concludes.

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Kultūros barai 6/2008



Sarunas Nakas publishes a musical composition dedicated to the memory of [Bronys Savukynas](#), *Kultūros barai*'s late Editor-in-Chief, who died on 20 April. This is neither a requiem nor an epitaph, explains the composer. "This is a laconic sketch for a metaphoric portrait of Savukynas; a gesture of respect for a strong and lonely man who managed to unite an intellectual community almost impossible to

unite."

The fall of patriarchs: Eurozine's Editor-in-Chief [Carl Henrik Fredriksson](#) writes on the silence of Austrian intellectuals after Amstetten, where Josef F. imprisoned a secret incestuous family in his basement for nearly a quarter of a century:

Jelinek's 'Im Verlassenen' might be the beginning of the end of the tongue-tiedness that has suddenly struck Austrian intellectuals. Where one cannot speak, one must make art, literature, theatre. But art is not about what's real. Literature is its own reality. And even when the patriarchy has been undermined and the patriarchs are but a memory, horrible crimes will be committed. It does not explain the inexplicable. It does not explain the case of Josef F. And yet one has to speak. Of the fact that children must be allowed to question, not only behave and obey. Of the fact that Austria like most other European societies has failed to develop a post-patriarchal family culture. Of that one has to speak. Also in Austria.

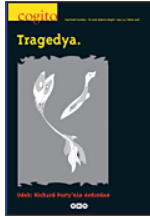
In an accompanying article, the editors of *Kultūros barai* use Fredriksson's piece to formulate an appeal to Lithuanian intellectuals to become less detached from what is going on in society and families. Sexual abuse of

children happens every day, also in Lithuania. Instead of waiting for a Lithuanian Amstetten, intellectuals must dare to address these horrors.

Also: Texts from the project "[Diagnosing the present](#)". This time: Béla Egyed on "[Nietzsche's anti-democratic liberalism](#)", György Tatar on "[Nietzsche and the death of God](#)"; and Mila Mineva on "[The national as an advertising repertoire](#)".

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Cogito (Turkey) 54 (2008)



In a themed section on tragedy, Turkish *Cogito* features several of the international classics on the topic: Roland Barthes on Racine, Northrop Frye on the "mythos of autumn", Maurice Blanchot on tragic thinking, and George Steiner on "the death of tragedy".

Why do tragic heroes continue to provoke our wonder? asks US philosopher [Bernard D. Freydberg](#) in a tortuous [essay](#) on Shakespeare's play and protagonist *Coriolanus*.

The hold of tragic heroes upon contemporary audiences and readers is no reactionary response to the drift of partiality in contemporary philosophy, nor is it a nostalgic return to a less complex and sophisticated era. Rather, the artistic creations that we call tragic heroes have the vital role for us twenty-first century human beings of providing the unity that is missing from our theoretical discourse. Oedipus and Coriolanus are figures who are one with themselves at all times. For us fragmented human beings, their aesthetic existence announces a condition that serves as both the greatest possibility and the greatest danger.

Since both Anglo-American, "analytic" philosophy and "continental" post-structuralism abstain from speaking about an "absolute" of any kind, art steps in and completes philosophy. Thus, tragic heroes, especially the ancient tragic heroes, "stand in for the missing foundation".

Even more than Sophocles's Oedipus, Shakespeare's hero Coriolanus speaks to us in an intimate voice, concludes Freydberg. "He is not an affirmative hero. Nor is he a 'negative' hero, whose journey enacts the meaninglessness of all life. There is neither fall nor deliverance, but for Coriolanus there is only the inexorable wheel of destiny. In this, he is both a traditional hero and a hero for our age."

Richard Rorty in memoriam: *Cogito* also publishes the [Kritika&Kontext](#) debate on "[Democracy and philosophy](#)" between [Richard Rorty](#) and [Béla Egyed](#) alongside [Jan Philipp Reemtsma's](#) [obituary](#), placing Rorty in a tradition of dissident philosophers.

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