



## Eurozine Review

*Le Monde diplomatique* (Berlin) tours colourful Alexandria; *L'Homme* assesses gender politics in East and West; *Transit* maps out the emergence of the modern Ukraine; *Dialogi* looks at love, eroticism, and masochism; *Revista Critica* gives peace a chance; and *Kritika & Kontext* puts together a liberal dream team.

### Le Monde diplomatique (Berlin) 7/2005



Israeli author Amos Elon, in the July issue of *Le Monde diplomatique* (Berlin), leads us into the colourful world of Alexandria, a city which since antiquity has been the incarnation of multiculturalism. The New York of the ancients, it was — like Manhattan — surrounded by water and designed with a grid-like street plan. As in New York, different ethnicities, languages, cultures, and religions met here until the middle of the twentieth century. Even before Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD, the largest Jewish diaspora existed in Alexandria. On the trail of E.M. Forster, Lawrence Durrell, and Konstantinos Kavafis, Elon explores the yearning for a non-existent Alexandria, which today is a crowded and run-down Mediterranean city.

A dossier focuses on the more current and less romantic happenings in the Near East, where there has yet to be a Damascus spring in Syria. Here, as in many countries in the region, democratic structures and civil rights are in a bad way, [finds](#) Gilbert Achcar (University of Paris). This, despite polls showing that democracy is highly valued in the Arabian countries. Ahmad Salamatian, a commentator on Iranian affairs and a former deputy of the central city of Esfahan, looks behind the terrifying vision of a Shiite power that, allegedly or actually, is in league with former enemies — a vision generated predominantly in American strategy think tanks.

Also to look out for: four articles dealing with work conditions in a globalized world. And honorary president of Attac France and Director General of *Le Monde diplomatique*, Bernard Cassen, develops a "Plan B" for Europe. The recent referenda, he writes, are not responsible for the crisis in the European integration process; they have only brought it to the fore. A way out of the current dead end will only be possible after clarifying the democratic premises. Issues such as defining the "borders" of the European Union, or the different ways of belonging to Europe, must be debated "from below".

The [full table of contents](#) of *Le Monde diplomatique* (Berlin) 7/2005.

## L'Homme 1/2005



The first encounters between western feminism and her sister in eastern Europe after the fall of communism led to irritation and resentment rather than productive understanding. It was supposed that, in order to boost the political relevance of feminism, women from the former socialist countries needed only to join forces with western feminists — this turned out to be wrong. The new issue of the Austrian *L'Homme* — a journal for feminist history — asks whether this appraisal of the early 1990s is still valid. How do the younger generations from the East and the West assess the relevance of gender politics?

The articles in *L'Homme* provide answers from different contexts and experiences, and represent the manifold perspectives and positions as well as the asynchrony of political processes. Anja Weckwert, educated in West Germany, shows that in all areas of social organization, but especially in work and in relationships, one still encounters differences pertaining to sex. On the other hand, theory tends not to take up the issue of gender difference any more. In an empirical study on the so-called "Haecksen", a women's group of the Chaos Computer Club, she examines how young women distance themselves from a quarrelsome feminism and at the same time pursue feminist goals.

Intellectual subversion is at the core of Ralitsa Muharska's contribution. The Bulgarian feminist–poststructuralist philosopher explains the communication problems within the feminist East–West dialogue through power relations, which at the same time she is able to parody. Given the negative image of feminism as a western import in her country, mockery and bitterness resonate in her article. Distancing herself is also a way of breaking through the silence, or rather the lack of understanding, in the dialogue between eastern and western feminism.

Finally, Susan Zimmermann examines the effects of the promotion of women's projects or women's studies in higher education in post–socialist conditions. As a colourful addendum, she interviews Svetlana Shakirova, a philosopher and activist from Kazakhstan.

The [full table of contents](#) of *L'Homme* 1/2005.

## Transit 29 (2005)



In a special focus on Ukraine, Vienna–based journal *Transit* discusses whether the Orange Revolution heralds a new series of regime changes in the region, comparable with the Velvet Revolution in central Europe in 1989.

Timothy Garton Ash (Oxford) and Timothy Snyder (Yale) locate the changes in the country in a resurgence of a civil society whose roots in private ownership, the universities, and the Church were eradicated during sixty years of Soviet occupation. While the authors are in no doubt that "the Orange Revolution was not made in Washington", they consider the implications of the "interference" of US watchdog NGOs in the "domestic affairs" of Ukraine, calling for a debate on "soft intervention" such as already exists on military intervention.

In "Re: Birth of Ukraine", historian Yaroslav Hrytsak argues that the Ukrainian diaspora in western Europe and the US has enabled comparisons with western democracies that have undermined the old system. Ukraine, he argues, could become a link in a transatlantic chain of peace that extends to Moldavia, Belarus, and even Russia. And Harvard historian Roman Szporluk [highlights](#) "the western dimension" in the making of the modern Ukraine, arguing that its national identity was formed through confrontation with Poland and Russia.

This year's agenda of the G8 summit in Gleneagles revealed that the wealthy countries can no longer suppress the issue of social inequality, a problem not only of justice, but also of democratic stability. The second half of the issue, entitled "Dimensions of inequality", is guest-edited by Cornelia Klinger and Gudrun-Axeli Knapp. Their thesis is that social inequality is neither a temporary phenomenon, nor a repairable anomaly of modern society: that society not only requires and propagates inequality, but also gives rise to and deepens it.

Their essay "Axes of inequality, axes of difference" is an attempt to redress the discrepancy between the public explosiveness of issues of inequality and its unsatisfactory theoretical handling. Further articles in this section include Saskia Sassen: "Europe: Continent of immigration"; Susanne Baer: "Gender and the dogmatism of fundamental rights. Freedom, equality, and human value in European constitutional law"; and Vlasta Jalusic: "Is the social question making a comeback? The development of inequality and exclusion in post-socialism".

This issue also features photographs by Mircea Stanescu, editor of *Euphorion* literary magazine in Sibiu, Romania: ironic representations of the post-socialist everyday, exploring the subversive power of graffiti and the unintended ironies of home-made signposts.

The [full table of contents](#) of *Transit 29* (2005).

### Dialogi 7–8/2005



Modern art criticism, erotica in literature, and the "Exodos" theatre festival in Ljubljana are at the centre of this month's issue of Slovenian cultural journal *Dialogi*. In his editorial, theatre critic Primoz Jesenko laments that fewer and fewer cultural publications of quality exist. Cultural critics who think independently and give honest opinions are constantly discredited, and artists are always complaining about the poor standard of current critiques.

In an essay full of illustrations by Bruno Schulz, publicist and translator Jasa Drnovsek looks at how Richard von Krafft-Ebing, Sigmund Freud, Karen Horney, and Theodore Reik interpret masochism in their works. "I refuse to live in the world as ordinary women. To enter ordinary relationships," wrote Anaïs Nin on 25 March 1933 in *Incest: From a journal of love*. Mojca Tirs looks at pornography and love in Nin's literature, and discusses how statements such as this show how Nin explored her sexuality in her journals and novels.

The 11th annual "Exodos" theatre festival in Ljubljana opened in May this year with *The Busker's Opera*, an adaptation of John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*, directed by Canadian stage and film director, designer, playwright, and performer Robert Lepage. Theatre critic Ana Perne looks back on the festival's

events.

Other articles: With the reorganization of the Maribor Pedagogical Faculty, *Dialogi* asks if the new Academy of Art is necessary in Maribor, and how it will be different from those already established in Ljubljana and Graz. Also in Maribor, *Dialogi* contributor Nenad Jelesijevic asks city officials if they would be willing to allow artists to pay symbolic rent for empty premises in an attempt to solve urban decay.

The [full table of contents](#) of *Dialogi* 7–8/2005.

### Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais 71 (2005)



Portuguese journal *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais* dedicates its June issue to confrontations with Peace Studies. Originally a critical discipline, Peace Studies has been co-opted by international relations, argue José Manuel Pureza (coordinator of the Peace Studies Unit, Coimbra) and Teresa Cravo (Coimbra, Bradford). The result is that only those peace solutions that conform with the reconstruction processes taking place in contemporary postwar nations such as Afghanistan and Iraq are considered. In order to regain its critical edge, Peace Studies must create solutions for sustainable peace, and restate its own foundations as critique.

In a philosophical vein, Vicent Martinez Guzman (Unesco chairholder for the philosophy of peace, Castellon) argues that humankind organizes itself in ways that are both destructive and constructive. Our relationships may be violent or environmentally degrading; equally, they may be caring and value sustainability. The philosophical challenge of Peace Studies is to establish the principles of humankind's peace-making skills.

A major pacification process was set in motion in Europe in the 1950s; nevertheless, it was only with the fall of the Berlin Wall that publications began to appear analyzing the basis of this achievement. The insights into postwar regional contexts are becoming obsolete in the face of a European system tending towards integration. Rodrigo Tavares (Department of Peace and Development Research, University of Gothenburg) introduces a new interpretative framework based on the idea of Regional Peace and Security Complexes.

Elsewhere in this issue: Tatiana Moura considers <sup>3</sup>Newest wars, newest peaces<sup>2</sup>, where a new type of organized violence develops at the micro level, but is manifested at the global level; and Elisio Estanque discusses labour and social inequality in contemporary societies altered by transnational forces, and the implications for Portuguese trade unionism.

The [full table of contents](#) of *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais* 71 (2005).

### Kritika & Kontext 1/2005



Slovakian journal *Kritika & Kontext* publishes a special issue dedicated to liberalism. In an in-depth editorial entitled "Public disagreement: The greatest contribution of liberal politics", Samuel Abraham *argues* that liberalism is not, as is often maintained, responsible for the crises of the modern era; rather it is liberalism

that mends these crises.

However, Abraham observes that "the universal ethos of liberal ideas seems to have given way to the harsh reality of its limited applicability". Richard Rorty, in an interview with Egon Gal (University of Bratislava), controversially [states](#): "It may be that the intractable disparity between North and South will make it impossible for liberals to remain internationalists; they may have to abandon their hopes of bringing the ideals of Enlightenment Europe to the world as a whole" — a disclosure Abraham considers "important and at the same time disturbing".

The greatest threat to liberalism, Abraham argues, comes not from self-interested politicians but from apathetic citizens. Under plausible conditions, these people are susceptible to ethnic, religious, or other forms of fundamentalism. Liberalism, he says, is a system able to reconcile the tensions between the individual and society, a function otherwise served by radical ideologies.

The discussion continues in a question and answer section (soon to be published in Eurozine) with Richard Rorty (Philosopher, Stanford University), Bela Egyed (Philosopher, Carleton University, Ottawa), Russell Jacoby (Philosopher, UCLA), and John Hall (Sociologist, McGill University, Montreal). Authors translated into Slovakian include John Gray, Jürgen Habermas, John Dewey, and John Rawls, along with Montesquieu, Mill, and Descartes.

The [full table of contents](#) of *Kritika & Kontext* 67 (2005).

*This is just a selection of the more than 50 Eurozine partners published in 32 countries. For current tables of contents, self-descriptions, and subscription and contact details of all Eurozine partners, please see the [partner section](#).*

---

Published 2005-07-26  
Original in English  
© Eurozine