

SÜDOSTEUROPA

Mitteilungen

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Main Focus: Media and Politics Schwerpunkt: Medien und Politik

Iva Mrvová / Martin Turček

In the Heart of Europe: The Murder of the Slovak Journalist Ján Kuciak

Miranda Patručić

The Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project in the Western Balkans

Thomas Brey

Russische Medienmacht und Revisionismus in Serbien



Gudrun Steinacker

Der Westbalkan und die EU-Erweiterung: Fiktion und Wirklichkeit

Yaşar Aydın

Die Parlaments- und Präsidentschaftswahlen in der Türkei im Juni 2018

Ioannis Zelepos

Griechenland als „Orient im Okzident“

Daniel Göler / Dhimitër Doka

Albania as a Laboratory for Tourism Development

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SÜDOSTEUROPA Mitteilungen

Analysen / Positionen / Essays

Main Focus: Media and Politics / Schwerpunkt: Medien und Politik

- 6 *Iva Mrvová / Martin Turček*
In the Heart of Europe: The Murder of the Slovak Journalist Ján Kuciak
-
- 18 *Miranda Patručić*
The Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project in the Western Balkans
-
- 26 *Thomas Brey*
Russische Medienmacht und Revisionismus in Serbien
-
- 42 *Gudrun Steinacker*
Der Westbalkan und die EU-Erweiterung: Fiktion und Wirklichkeit
-
- 54 *Yaşar Aydın*
Die Parlaments- und Präsidentschaftswahlen in der Türkei im Juni 2018
-
- 72 *Ioannis Zelepos*
Griechenland als „Orient im Okzident“ – Zum ideengeschichtlichen Hintergrund eines Stereotyps
-
- 88 *Daniel Göler / Dhimitër Doka*
Tourism and Transition in the Western Balkans – Albania as a Laboratory for Tourism Development

Berichte

- 99-107 Öffentliche Jahreshauptversammlung der Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft 2018 – Journalismus und Medienfreiheit im Fokus. Berlin, 10. Februar 2018
- 108-114 Die Lage der Medien in Südosteuropa – 15. Frankfurter Medienrechtstage 2018 und Neueröffnung der SOG-Zweigstelle Frankfurt (Oder). Frankfurt (Oder), 26./27. Juni 2018
- 114-116 Tourism and Transition. Jahrestagung des AK-Tourismusforschung mit Schwerpunkt Südosteuropa. München, 17./18. Mai 2018
- 116-118 Leitungswechsel bei der Zweigstelle Jena der Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft. Jena, 12. Juni 2018

119 Rezensionen

- G. Papakonstantinou: Game Over – Griechenland in der Krise. Der Insiderbericht (Übersetzung aus dem Englischen von J. Bastian) S. Lange / Z. Nechev / F. Trauner (Eds.): Resilience in the Western Balkans S. Flere / R. Klanjšek: Da li je Jugoslavija morala da umire – ... ili kako su etničke elite kontinuitetom svojih svada dovele do neizbežnog kraha SFRJ [Musste Jugoslawien sterben – ... oder wie die ethnischen Eliten durch ihre andauernden Konflikte den unausweichlichen Zerfall der SFRJ verursachten] M. Fink: Srebrenica – Chronologie eines Völkermords oder: Was geschah mit Mirnes Osmanović? D. Mihailović: Wie ein Fleck zurückblieb. Erzählungen – Leben (aus dem Serbischen von R. Hodel)

Sehr geehrte Leserin, sehr geehrter Leser,

Journalisten, die in ihren Artikeln Rechtsbrüche und kriminelle Machenschaften der Macht-Eliten in ihrem Land offenlegen, bezahlen ihren Mut oft genug mit dem Leben. Dies gilt leider mit zunehmender Häufigkeit auch für die Länder Ostmittel- und Südosteuropas. Im Februar 2018 wurden in der Slowakei der junge investigative Journalist Ján Kuciak und seine Verlobte heimtückisch erschossen. Zum Auftakt unseres Themen-Schwerpunkts „Medien und Politik“ würdigen Iva Mrvová und Martin Turček die Persönlichkeit und professionelle Arbeit ihres ehemaligen Kollegen beim slowakischen Online-Portal ‚Aktuality.sk‘. Sie gehen der Frage nach, inwiefern der Mord und die folgenden Proteste die slowakische Gesellschaft verändert haben. Dokumentiert werden am Ende des Beitrags Teile aus Kuciaks letztem unvollendetem Artikel über Korruption und mafiöse Verflechtungen in der Slowakei, welcher Kuciak wohl zum Verhängnis wurde. Später avancierte das Stück zum meist gelesenen Text in der Geschichte des slowakischen Journalismus.

In einem weiteren Beitrag zum Schwerpunkt berichtet die investigative Journalistin und regionale Redakteurin vom ‚Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project‘ (OCCRP), Miranda Patručić, über ihre Arbeit u.a. in den Balkanstaaten. Die Recherchen deckten immer wieder notorische Missstände auf und bewiesen z.B., dass Montenegro ein Staat sei, in dem Regierungsvertreter gemeinsame Sache mit dem organisierten Verbrechen machten. In Serbien seien führende Politiker in umfangreiche Korruptionsskandale verwickelt. Zugleich stünde gerade in diesen Ländern die Pressefreiheit massiv unter Druck. Hier leiste das OCCRP wichtige Arbeit, u.a. durch seine Enthüllungen (z.B. im Rahmen der so genannten Panama Papers) sowie umfangreiches Training von Journalisten.

Thomas Brey widmet sich den Medien in Serbien und dem Phänomen einer zunehmenden Penetration der Medienlandschaft durch Russland und seine Quasi-Nachrichtenagenturen und Staatsmedien. In Serbien nimmt Russland offensichtlich zunehmenden Einfluss auf die Interpretation innen- und geopolitischer Entwicklungen. So befördere der russische Einfluss anti-europäische Werte und nationale Dispute zwischen Nachbarstaaten.

Weitere Beiträge in diesem Heft befassen sich mit anderen wichtigen Fragestellungen zu Südosteuropa. Gudrun Steinacker stellt die Struktur und Logik der EU-Erweiterungspolitik auf dem westlichen Balkan mit ihrem neoliberalen Ansatz grundsätzlich in Frage. So reagiere man auf richtig erkannte tiefgreifende Missstände weiterhin mit technokratischen Maßnahmen.

In Ergänzung des Türkei-Schwerpunkts von SOM-Heft 03-2018 analysiert Yaşar Aydın die Ergebnisse der türkischen Parlaments- und Präsidentschaftswahlen im Juni 2018 vor allem in Bezug auf ihr Zustandekommen und das Abschneiden der einzelnen Parteien bzw. Parteien-

bündnisse. Die Ergebnisse seien, so Aydın, im wesentlichen Abbild einer polarisierten sozialen Struktur und kultureller sowie sozio-ökonomischer Bruchlinien in der Türkei.

„Mentalität“ und „politische Kultur“ seien oft bemühte Kategorien, wenn es um die Schilderung der Krise in Griechenland und ihre (ungenügende) Bewältigung ginge, so unser Autor Ioannis Zelepos. Zelepos entlarvt das verbreitete „kulturessenzialistische Denkmodell“ und seine Betrachtung von Hellas als „Orient im Okzident“ als ein Stereotyp, das es dringend zu überwinden gilt.

Daniel Göler und Dhimitër Doka schließlich widmen sich der Frage nach einer nachhaltigen Strategie für den Fremdenverkehr in Albanien. Nachdem das Land in der Konkurrenz der Anbieter von Produkten des Sommer(massen)tourismus letztlich nicht konkurrenzfähig sein könne, liege die Zukunft eher in der Entwicklung eines qualitativ hochwertigen Kulturtourismus, so der Rat der Autoren.

Wir wünschen Ihnen eine aufschlussreiche und anregende Lektüre

Ihr Redaktionsteam

Hansjörg Brey

Claudia Hopf

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Main Focus: Media and Politics

Iva Mrvová / Martin Turček

In the Heart of Europe: The Murder of the Slovak Journalist Ján Kuciak

The article describes the events following the murder of the Slovak investigative journalist Ján Kuciak and his fiancée Martina Kušnírová in February 2018. The text highlights the personality and work of a talented journalist and his last article about the Italian Mafia operating in Slovakia.

Kuciak's investigation identified links between people who worked with the Italian Mafia and employees of the Government Office of the Slovak Republic. After his murder, the biggest public protests since the 'Velvet revolution' (1989) followed. The political situation in Slovakia has changed since Kuciak's murder; several officials resigned.

Corruption in Slovakia proves itself to be deeply rooted. It will depend on the Slovak public and the pressure it can muster whether Slovakia will continue the work of Ján Kuciak and 'Aktuality.sk'.

At the end of the article, excerpts of Ján Kuciak's last written story on Slovak corruption are documented.

Miranda Patručić

The Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project in the Western Balkans

The Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) was established in 2005 in response to the reality that criminals working in complex networks are moving faster than law enforcement across borders, thus evading detection. Through mentorship, security training, and by providing international editors and research resources, OCCRP is developing a cadre of investigative reporters in countries around the world. Despite distance and different languages, the journalists connected by OCCRP coordinate reporting efforts, follow money trails, track leads, undertake surveillance and compare notes regardless of national borders. In this way relationships and connections between criminals and top government officials that might have stayed hidden are being unearthed.

As the Western Balkan countries seek EU membership, OCCRP's investigations in the region are providing evidence that these countries have serious problems which need to be addressed. People linked to criminals or even criminals themselves hold political posts and are protected. Montenegro has become a state where government representatives work alongside organized crime, while Serbia's leading politicians have been implicated in high-profile corruption scandals. In recent years, a sharp decline in press freedom has obstructed journalists' work in the Balkans. They have found themselves the subject of smear campaigns, threats and law suits orchestrated by the targets of their anti-corruption investigations.

Thomas Brey

Russian Media Power and Revisionism in Serbia

In the ex-Yugoslav states, the revision of their own history and populism are gaining new momentum. At the same time, Russia has penetrated deeply into the Serbian media landscape with its quasi-news agencies and state media.

In many Serbian media Moscow is succeeding in defining the interpretation of domestic political and geopolitical developments. The EU must witness how more and more anti-European values and national disputes between neighboring countries in Southeast Europe are being fueled by Russia's influence.

The spearhead of Russian propaganda activities is the state agency Sputnik with its offers in multiple languages. The article analyses the impact of Sputnik's influence on the domestic and foreign policy of Serbia and its neighbors.

Gudrun Steinacker

The Western Balkans and EU Enlargement: Fiction and Reality

In February 2018, the EU Commission released a communication regarding enlargement of the EU in the Western Balkans. This "credible enlargement perspective for an enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans" is supposed to bring the Western Balkan region back on the top of the EU agenda. The implementation is foreseen with the help of six flagship initiatives. But what is actually new in this EU proposal?

Very little indeed. The EU Commission rightly analyzed the present situation as characterized by back sliding, even with elements of state capture. It proposed to improve the situation through cooperation with the kleptocratic and increasingly authoritarian elites of the Western Balkan countries that want to join the EU.

Furthermore, ever more funds and experts are being provided.

But without civil society representatives and NGOs as a partner no progress will be possible. It will also be necessary that the EU starts to question neoliberal transformation as such. It is questionable whether the Western Balkan countries will ever be capable of transforming into democratic states with a sustainable development if things continue the way they are.

Yaşar Aydın

Parliamentary and Presidential Elections in Turkey in June 2018

The outcome of the Turkish presidential and parliamentary elections on 24 June 2018 was a surprise in Turkey and Germany. Signs of a financial crisis, anti-democratic authoritarianism in domestic affairs, setbacks in foreign policy as well as a strong mobilization of the secular-left CHP were important factors. Equally, the energetic and passionate campaigning of CHP's presidential candidate Muharrem İnce and the euphoria in parts of the society raised hopes for a change of power. But in the end Erdoğan and the AKP prevailed yet again.

The double elections in June 2018 reflected Turkey's polarized social structure, the overlap of cultural and socio-economic fault lines and the influence of sub-collective identities and affiliations on citizens' voting behavior. They also showed the weaknesses and dissatisfaction of the opposition in Turkey as well as a stagnation of the AKP. However, the ruling party is not without an alternative among conservative national segments of the population. Fragmentation is a significant trend of the Turkish party system. With the double elections in June 2018, Turkey was reshaped into a presidential system which strengthens executive authority to the disadvantage of legislative and judiciary powers.

Ioannis Zelepos

Greece as "Orient in the Occident"

On the Historical Background of a Stereotype

The completion of the third financial assistance program in the summer of 2018 doesn't yet mark the end of the Greek debt crisis. But it may provide the beginning of a new phase that can turn out less dramatic than the previous ones. Thus an opportunity for a retrospective is available: How has the European and especially the German public perceived the crisis in the past years? A phase that was dominated, more than in any other former program country of the Eurozone, by culturalist interpretations.

References to factors such as the "Greek mentality" and "political culture", though plausible in principle, often relied on biased and even stereotypical historical images. The paper undertakes a critical discussion of culturalist stereotypes about Greece by exploring their ideological roots and confronting them with historical information which, despite being well-known in specialized scholarship, remained largely neglected in the broader public discourse. The critical discussion of stereotypes doesn't aim at downplaying the peculiarities of modern Greek history and culture. On the contrary it pleads for a more substantial examination in order to get a better understanding of a crisis that continues to concern Greece as well as the EU.

Daniel Göler / Dhimitër Doka

Tourism and Transition in the Western Balkans

Albania as a Laboratory for Tourism Development

The article on the transformation path of tourism in Albania is based on an extensive data analysis combined with many years of field observation. Relevant developments

and trends regarding demand and supply as well as influences of destination management are systematically analyzed. Finally, the current status is evaluated in an AMSWOT profile.

The aim of the article is to critically examine past and future development paths of Albania and its impact. The significance of tourism on the economy and the labor market in Albania is high. Summer tourism underwent a dynamic growth in the first decade after the Millennium but seems to enter a phase of saturation and possibly stagnation. The question of future consolidation, rejuvenation or decline will depend on strategic destination management. A qualitative update seems to be an overdue necessity for the Albanian tourism sector.