

KLAUS KANNAPIN ... Will Seek Its Own Level

Using fantasy and satire, the author confronts a group of contemporary leading politicians from each of the parties represented in the German parliament, with the analysis and reflections of William Godwin (1756-1836), who »was always a thorn in the side of the powerful«. He does so with good reason: recently the philosopher of law, Hermann Klenner, published, for the first time, a complete German translation of Godwin's magnum opus »An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and its Influence on Modern Morals and Happiness« (1793).

FRIEDRICH W. SIXEL Isn't It High Time?

Knowledge, as Capital: Some Reflections

Western societies, the author says, were uniquely successful in mastering and controlling nature, but, it is now high time to take a completely new approach. Nature no longer tolerates our way of understanding and using it, and we – generally – see our problems with this process as being »environmental«. Doing so means parting from the »ludicrous« assumption that humanity stands above the rest of nature – and this is fatal. To ignore the primacy of nature means provoking nature's ultimate backlash.

THOMAS MARXHAUSEN Marx as an Opportunity

This is a reply to Katja Kipping's article »Is Marx a Must for the Left?« in UTOPIE kreativ No. 196 (February 2007). Marx is not a must, the author says, but an opportunity. He represents a source of knowledge, but the degree of motivation and in which direction depends on personal and social circumstances. He provides the opportunity to confront erroneous »certainties« with scepticism and for studying the dialectical method, which has offended those in power from the moment the certitude began to spread, that capitalism does not represent the end station of historical development.

HEIKO HILKER For a Better Political Culture of Information and Communication

Reflecting back on his engagement, at the beginning of the nineties, for the survival of the GDR's radio station »DT 64«, the author, who is now a member of the Saxonian parliament, critically assesses the relationship between politicians and mass media, the myopic political approach taken by politicians, the restrictions imposed on the mass media, lobbyism etc. He pleads for a code of conduct for politicians that would include commitments such as »Do not explain why something does not work, but demonstrate how the people can make it work.«

ILSE SCHIEL, WOLFGANG SCHIEL Man Instead of Class

This is a commentary on the book »The SED Party College – A Critical Review«, published in 2006 (in German). The authors, now in their eighties, had taught in this college during the fifties. They believe, contrary to the authors of the book, that the failure of socialism provides an opportunity for a new beginning, that would include the recuperation from a long and chronic illness – that of dogmatism, the suppression of free thought and the degeneration and de-humanization of practical application.

MARCUS HAWEL In Focus: The Mental State

An Attempt to Explain Israel to Us and Others from »Outside«

Against the backdrop of a growing anti-Semitism in Europe and in the Islamic world, the author reviews the traditional roots and new phenomena of anti-Semitism, pleads for the differentiated use of the terms Jewry, Zionism and Israel, which, in Germany are often used interchangeably. The author rejects all forms of anti-Semitism, critically discussing bigoted pro-Israeli or pro-Palestinian statements, analysing the Middle-East conflict while maintaining that a solution to this conflict can only be achieved through peaceful means and the acceptance of the vital interests of the contending sides.

WOLFRAM ADOLPHI Without the UN-Charter?

Remarks to Marcus Hawel's »In Focus: The Mental State«

After reading Hawel's discussion of the Middle-East conflict, the author was surprised not to find mention of the UN-Charter in the article. He reflects upon the history of this charter, reviews the reasons why the key powers of the Anti-Hitler-coalition had to establish such a complex regulation of international affairs and concludes that the charter should be seen as the most important instrument for attaining a durable peace in the region.

PETER ULRICH National Communism after Auschwitz – the GDR and the Jews

An Attempt at Drawing up a Balance Sheet

The author presents a broad review of articles published since 1990 concerning the politics of the GDR vis-à-vis Jews and Israel. He looks into what could be seen as the anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist heritage of the Communist Party, discusses whether anti-Semitism in the GDR was an element of the State's legitimising ideology or merely an occasional excess, that cannot be seen as fundamental. He also analyses policies such as the refusal of reparations and the refusal to revise the appraisal of the Shoah as well as the anti-Israel campaigns.