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***Reflections by John Paul II and Benedict XVI
towards the European Union***

Žygimantas Pavilionis

John Paul II and Benedict XVI have brought Catholic Church back to international arena after the shock of Enlightenment in XVII century. They had an important impact on reemergence of united Europe by the end of XX century.

Unfortunately in the beginning of XXI century modern functionalist European Union symbolically rejected any reference to its Christian roots, unveiling deep moral drama of current establishment of the European Union. The European Union has lost its meta-political level, its spiritual vision, its mission, at the same time it has lost the link to human dignity, to the spiritual mission of its own citizen and their nations. By rejecting the reference to Christian roots the European Union has rejected its own future.

***How to do Research in International Relations
'Constructively': Analysis of the Main Philosophical
Assumptions and Theoretical Principles***

Dovilė Jakniūnaitė, Evaldas Nekrašas

One of the biggest critiques for the constructivism in international relations discipline is the accusations of abstractiveness and having little substantive to say when talking about world politics. The article asserts that construc-

tivism is not the typical theory of international relations or foreign policy analysis. Constructivism in the discipline is what every constructivist researcher makes of it, using a few fundamental statements about the analysis of social reality. In order to show how the constructivist international relations researchers apply the fundamental principles of the constructivist analysis of social reality to form their models of analysis, firstly, the article explains the metatheoretical assumptions of constructivism and the main problems that emerge trying to apply them in empirical research. Secondly, analysing three fundamental statements of metatheoretical constructivism (on intersubjective construction of meanings, relationship of ideas and materiality, and mutual constitutive relation of structure and agency) it is demonstrated how they are transformed and applied in more particular theoretical and empirical works of international politics. In the end several recommendations are provided on the main principles of constructivist research in international relations.

***Politics and investor confidence:
the Baltic states during the crisis***

Vytautas Kuokštis

The paper seeks to explain the differences as to how successfully the three Baltic countries managed the economic crisis between 2008 and the first half of 2010. More specifically, it analyzes investors' confidence, Estonia being the most successful country in this regard, Latvia the least (the only country that applied for aid from the International Monetary Fund), while Lithuania staying in between. The paper aims to take into account the differences (and similarities) between the Baltic countries as well as emphasize the importance of political-institutional factors in explaining investors' confidence. The importance of investors' confidence as is discussed and different ways of measuring it are reviewed. Moreover, the relevance of political-institutional factors in explaining investors' confidence is established from the theoretical point of view. Based on existing literature, a number of explanatory factors are distinguished, namely electoral processes, non-electoral pressures on

government, government stability as well as the quality of informal institutions. The paper argues that Latvia was indeed in a significantly worse situation in terms of economic pre-crisis vulnerabilities than Lithuania and Estonia, both of which had certain, albeit different, economic advantages. The main difference between Lithuania and Estonia emerges comparing political-institutional, rather than purely economic, factors: Estonia was better placed in terms of electoral cycles, the extent of non-electoral pressures, and – most importantly – better institutions (governance quality, corruption level, trust in political institutions). Both Latvia and Lithuania found themselves in a significantly worse situation regarding political-institutional factors.

***The political programme of the global jihadist movement:
between dreams and reality***

Egidijus Gailiūnas

This article deals with a phenomenon of the ‘global jihadist movement’. The article seeks to look into jihadists’ political programme. The main aim of the article is to find out how successful jihadists are in implementing their political programme. The article says that main goals that jihadists have in their political programme are only rhetoric. However, jihadists still have at least theoretical possibilities to achieve their openly state goals.

EU and Russia: What “and” means?

Raimundas Lopata

In the article, the EU and Russia relations are analyzed as paying specific attention to the conceptual and practical weight provided for the conjunction “and” when EU–Russia relations are interpreted and practically constructed in the West. The answer which is in common use – these relations are intellectually based and practically shaped according the engagement doctrine – is known well. However, the common answer does not eliminate

the problem why the perspective of the practical application of engagement toward Russia is still under dispute in the West?

The article proceeds to revealing the specifics of the Western attitudes in regard to engagement with Russia and their correlation with the cultural-political identities of engagement's participants.

The conjunction "and" emphasizing the EU–Russia relations is interpreted in three ways: optimistically, equably and skeptically. The diversity of interpretations is stimulating by the nodus of factors (history, values and pragmatic interests) which is still affects the EU and Russia relations as well as different attitudes toward the perspectives of co-operation in the future. The very important source of the diversity is the difference in disparity of position regarding the geopolitical development of Eurasia.

The article ends with the conclusion that the direction of the EU and Russia engagement will be strongly influenced by the reciprocal attempts to define their own cultural-political identities.