



## letters

### HATS OFF TO TIMUR KURAN

I read the interview with Timur Khan in Issue 13 of **east** with great interest. In a time in which the most frequently practiced sport in the world seems to be the race to line up behind one flag or another, the American professor's reflections stand out for their lucidity, balance and persuasiveness. Let's hope that his voice will not remain an isolated one and that many others in the West and the East will undertake the path of unprejudiced analysis, even if I must confess that I am totally sceptical in this regard.

**Giovanna Consoli**  
(Milan)

*Allow me to say, dear reader, that I share your views, not your scepticism. In reality, there are many Timur Khans in the U.S. and the rest of the world, even in Italy... The point is that, for a combination of reasons that it would be hard to analyse here, we tend today to reward the biggest talkers. This will pass. It has to. Your anger is already a symptom. We, as you see, try to do our modest bit by tracking down Timur Khans wherever they can be found.*

### PAMUK AND THE CONFLICT BETWEEN SECULARISM AND ISLAMISM

I recently finished reading *Snow*, one of Nobel Prize winner Orhan Pamuk's latest books. Leaving aside the literary worth of the book, which I am not in a position to comment upon, I was very struck by a political element that is not easily found in the vast range of contemporary publications on Turkey. I refer to the dialectic between the secularism of institutions and the active religiousness (Islamic, obviously) of the common people. *Snow* is a novel and it would undoubtedly be wrong to read it as a news report, but, as is often the case, it is artists who make us understand how things really stand through the use of hyperbolic language. In fact, the "surprise" victory of Erdogan's party at the last elections demonstrates that Islamism is far from dead in the country. I was, and still am, in favour of Turkey's entry into Europe, because I think its exclusion would be far more negative for the West. However, it is of little use to anyone, least of all the Turks, to sweep debatable or unpleasant aspects of reality under the carpet.

**Sauro Ferrari**  
(Turin)

### IF CHINA AND RUSSIA UNITE

Towards the end of March, some newspapers wrote, without giving it any particular importance, that between China and Russia a new era of relationships is dawning, an era marked by a collaboration and, perhaps, also by an anti-U.S. alliance. Apart from every consideration on the strabism of the Italian press, which often takes for real news our homemade tales and on the contrary hardly pays attention to the problems of the international scenery, I wonder what are the bases of the alliance and whether this can last in time. It's true that at the moment Vladimir Putin's relationships with both the U.S. and Europe are tense, as it is true that China has a real interest in establishing good relations with a country so rich in energy. This is clear to everyone. But in order to assert that a new anti-American axis is dawning it would take much more, a long-term political calculation taking in account a real break with Europe and the U.S.

**Biagio Lonardi**  
(Milano)

### ZAMBON'S REAL FIGURES

Due to an unfortunate computer error, the chart following the interview with Elena Zambon in Issue 13 of **east** was entirely unrelated to the Zambon Group. The figures in the chart actually refer to a company featured in the previous issue of the magazine. The Zambon Group figures follow: our apologies to Elena Zambon and our readers. This kind of error creeps into publications that are far more prestigious than ours, not that it is any excuse or consolation.

#### THE GROUP IN NUMBERS

<b>Created:</b>	1906
<b>Turnover 2005:</b>	480 million €
<b>Net profits 2005:</b>	23.3 million €
<b>Number of employees:</b>	about 2.300
<b>Countries of principle presence:</b>	Spain, France, Belgium, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Brazil, Colombia, China, Russia, India, Indonesia