

Summary

This 150th *NZ* issue is an anniversary one. The journal was first launched in 1998, in a completely different Russia – and in a completely different world. Back then, the journal had a different subtitle, too, “Essays on the Morals of a Cultural Community”, which accurately summed up its agenda at the time. *NZ* came into being as a “critical essayistic supplement to *The New Literary Observer*”, and the format of the publication was defined as “thin illustrated journal”.

Nowadays, *NZ* (whose subtitle, “Debates over Politics and Culture”, emerged in 2001) is not at all thin and hardly essayistic (not to mention the complete disappearance of literary criticism from its pages). Illustrations, when they do occur, are included for a very specific purpose: namely, to illustrate the theses that are put forward, analysed and discussed in the academic articles making up the vast majority of the published materials. Thematically, *NZ* today is a journal devoted to social, historical and cultural anthropology (and history proper, to an extent), to social and political sciences. Its agenda is not limited to the functioning of the “cultural community” represented by the Russian intelligentsia – although, of course, it remains one of the important recurring themes. Last but not least, these days *NZ* is a journal about the whole world, which includes Russia, rather than about Russia, which in itself is the whole world. Over the last 25 years, *NZ* has come a very long

way and undergone drastic changes – but these changes have corresponded to the transformation of Russia and the world, as well as the transformation of the academic and cultural community that produces knowledge and engages in reflection on current and historical processes.

The issue opens with an introductory editorial discussing the history of *NZ* in the context of the changes that have taken place since 1998, both in Russia and the rest of the world. The editorial team considers the continuity of this transformation to be the key to the continuity of the journal itself. At the end of this introduction, entitled “25 Years Later,” is stated that if “we try to analyse this situation in a broader, global context, we will see that what has happened to the Russian state and society is far from unique. The brave new world of right-wing and all other sorts of radicalism, ‘digital dictatorship’, nationalist frenzy, conservative resentment, and endless armed conflicts, both civil and international, took shape back then, in the 1990s, a few years after the end of the Cold War and after, as it seemed at the time, the absolute triumph of the ‘open society’. 9/11 and the 21st century happened after the ‘end of history’, declared when the Soviet project had run its course”.

The 150th *NZ* issue is a testament to the journal’s 25 years’ worth of transformation. It is – with the exception of a few texts – a thematic issue. Its theme can be identified as “Utopias of the Space Age”, after the title of Denis Sivkov’s article (“*Utopias of the Space Age, or Why*



Do We Want to Go to Space?”) that introduces two collections of materials in this issue compiled by the author. The first block called “A COSMIC FUTURE IN THE SOVIET PAST”. Sivkov’s introductory text is followed by the article, whose author, the anthropologist Elena Malaya, outlines the history of the theme of outer space as reflected in a rather common practice of the post-war Soviet period – the burying of the so-called “time capsules”. The significance of outer space in Soviet everyday life is further reflected upon by Daria Radchenko in her article “*Sputnik on the New Year Tree: Soviet New Year between Ideology and Family Memory*”. The first block of materials in issue 150 of the journal wraps up with a long interview with the American historian of Soviet science and space exploration Slava Gerovitch, who was interviewed by Denis Sivkov.

The second thematic selection is called “SPACE: VERSIONS OF EXPLORATION”. The first article here provides a brief outline of the cultural and social anthropology of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods in the history of the Baikonur Cosmodrome (located on the territory of modern-day Kazakhstan). This text, written by the Kazakhstan researchers Kulshat Medeuova and Ulbolsyn Sandybayeva, is entitled “*Narratives about Baikonur: The City and the Cosmodrome*”. Another version of space exploration – this time a non-professional, private kind – is addressed by Denis Sivkov in his article “*Outer Space at Home for Amateurs*”. Lastly, Evgenia Gorbanenko brings up the sub-

ject of religious, “Orthodox space exploration” – a practice that has become quite influential in modern Russia – in her article “*Christian Procession in Orbit: Churching Science and the Planet*”.

The NEW BOOKS section includes three reviews that are thematically adjoined to the two “space-related” blocks of materials. Denis Sivkov appraises Fred Scharmen’s book “*Space Forces: A Critical History of Life in Outer Space*”, Kirill Petrov evaluates the collective work “*Astrobiology: Science, Ethics, and Public Policy*”, and Samson Liberman comments on the Russian translation of the book by the Hong Kong philosopher of science Yuk Hui, a voluminous essay called “*The Question Concerning Technology in China*”. In this context, we can also mention Egor Muleev’s article about the history of gliding in the USSR and post-Soviet Russia (“*Centenary of Domestic Gliding: Self-Organization as Restoration*”), which, while not about space, is also devoted to the topic of mastering the sky – and mastering it on a personal, amateur level at that.

The 150th NZ issue, as usual, contains new instalments of Alexei Levinson’s regular column SOCIOLOGICAL LYRICS and Alexander Pisarev’s RUSSIAN INTELLECTUAL JOURNALS REVIEW. The issue wraps up with the NEW BOOKS section, which this time turned out rather sizeable. In addition to the texts already mentioned above, we can single out Denis Shalaginov’s detailed review of a book by the British philosopher Tim Ingold, “*Imagining for Real: Essays on Creation, Attention and Correspondence*”.

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