

Abstracts

Vladimir Papernyj

Belief and truth

André Gide and Lion Feuchtwanger in Moscow

In its early days, the young Soviet Union exerted a fascination over countless Western intellectuals. They came to the country in droves to see at first hand the experiment in violently transforming an entire society. Lion Feuchtwanger and André Gide both had the luxury of travelling there with the benefit of generous financial advances— but the impressions they had when they arrived could hardly be more different. Their travel reports from the 1930s are in a sense paradigmatic for Western judgements of Russia: they are not only affected by the individuality of the observer, but also by the ambivalence of the observed.

Dorothea Redepenning

Russian Material, European Style

A dialogue of cultures in music

A glance through the annals of Russian art music through its history, focussing on selected examples, brings to light many diverse aspects of intercultural dialogue. In the 18th century, this can be seen in the position given to Italian music, which was ranked as highly in Petersburg as anywhere else in Europe. In the course of the 19th century, a particular musical style developed which both Russians and foreigners held to be "Russian". Though the material and subject was borrowed from folk music, the procedure was thoroughly European.

Boris Dubin

Crowds and Power

Literature and the Book Trade in Russia

The last twelve years have seen profound changes in Russian society. The book market has been fully privatized, and neither literature nor the reading public is homogeneous any more. The function of the printed word has changed. Mass culture is being produced, but at the same time some publications with a very small circulation are publishing work of high quality. The intelligentsia no longer plays its former role as the most progressive part of society.

Birgit Menzel

A view through a German telescope

Russian literary criticism in transformation

The commercialisation of literature and culture is not the only reason why the foundations of literary criticism in Russia have been shaken to the core, nor is it the only reason for the passing of its traditional publication media. Facing a diversity perceived as chaotic and threatening, literary criticism has undergone a crisis affecting values and orientation, both moral and aesthetic. In addition, it has become caught up in scandals and competitiveness. Despite many positive approaches, literary criticism in Russia is not yet ready to meet the challenges posed by the new literature and the new reality.

Oleg Charchordin, Larisa Ivanova-Veën

Novgorod as *res publica*

The Great Bridge over the river Volkhov in the Republic of Novgorod (1134–1470) was one of the *res publica* that made Novgorod into a republic. The bridge as it appears in the chronicles and icons brings together the divine and the mortal, nature and politics. The joint actions of the citizens of Novgorod, which made the city great, were directed towards the bridge and found their place on it. The Old Russian republican city of Novgorod thus reveals the importance of the material components of the phenomenon of *res publica*.

Kirill Levinson

The Premodern German City

Historical knowledge requires the overcoming of space and time. We must ascertain what existed in former times. Intercultural knowledge poses further challenges to the historian; semantics and etymology are obstacles to the exchange of experience. The fates of individual human beings enable us to recognize political connections and to become aware of shared factors that make cultural borders irrelevant. The article shows the historian at work as he walks around Augsburg and deciphers the early modern city.

Vladimir Gel'man

Reform retour

Is Russia's Local Government About to Disappear?

Local government is a recent phenomenon in Russia; it has only been recognized in the constitution for the last ten years. The weak consolidation of democracy and a very low income from local taxation have in practice restricted the autonomy of local government. The practice of shifting federal competences onto the municipalities without providing them with the necessary resources has made things even more difficult. The reform of the federal system and a reform of local government were intended to provide a remedy, but the draft law reflects the spirit of the times. In addition to a recentralization of political power, the draft involves a return to the Soviet understanding of local politics as the last link in a chain of administrative commands, and to a system of financing via subsidies paid from the centre. There is therefore more at stake than the fate of local government.

Ivan Sablin

Mariinskii Theatre – the second

The discontinuities of globalization and the simultaneity of the non-simultaneous can be seen in their most distinctive forms in the plan for the reconstruction of the Mariinskii Theatre in Saint Petersburg. There are suspicions that an international competition designed to bring the best of global architectural practice to Russia is being judged according to quite different criteria by bureaucrats in Saint Petersburg and Moscow. What appears in the USA as postmodern deconstruction, and fits into the context of architectural history, makes its appearance in Russia as modernist radicalism.

Arkadij Bartov

The Myth of St. Petersburg

Postmodernism is usually understood as the formation of communicative information nets in which images, pictures, signs and ideas are more visual, tangible and real than the things they denote or reflect. Essentially, such a formation of artificial reality has long been a prerogative of Russian history, though less so in the Soviet and post-Soviet eras. The simulation of all the achievements of European civilization, which found its acme in the foundation and development of St. Petersburg, turned out to be very productive in Russia. The celebrations for the 300th anniversary of St. Petersburg vividly demonstrated how the simulation of reality becomes the measure of hyperrealism.

Boris Groys

The City in the Age of Touristic Reproduction

The original idea of the city was isolation, within which the city constantly destroys itself and is repeatedly renewed. This idea of the city is now outdated. It was superseded by a conservative tourism, which created monuments for eternity by means of contemplation. Global integration is now placing the city in a geographical context once again. Postmodern, total tourism homogenizes cities. They are reproduced across the world. Utopia is now located in the future, not in the city. In future, the cosmos will be the new utopos.

Robert Argenbright

Making Space for the New Middle Class

Moscow's Third Transport Ring

The best way of defining Moscow's new middle class is in relation to consumerism and to its obsession with the automobile. New spaces are being opened up to gratify these desires. The largest building project undertaken since the end of the USSR is Moscow's third transport ring, a turning point in the history of the city. However, this project will not provide a long-term solution to the city's traffic problems. The plan is very expensive and will have a negative effect on the environment and the appearance of the city. Because it reduces the amount of public space available, it also endangers civil society. If Moscow continues down this road, there is a danger that this state-sponsored obsession with the automobile will consolidate injustice and divide Moscow.

Isolde Brade, Robert Rudolph

Moscow's Periphery

Transformation and Global Integration

During the 1990s, the city of Moscow and the Moscow region experienced a marked process of spatial differentiation and polarization. In the city centre and the neighbouring districts, there came into existence an internationally oriented business infrastructure, new office space, and commercial streets, together with areas devoted to the sale of expensive consumer goods. Outside this privileged space was an urban periphery characterized by various forms of decline. At some points, however, small businesses also established themselves here. Only since gradual economic consolidation began at the end of the 1990s has it been possible to observe the development of large-scale retail outlets and leisure facilities, such that Moscow's outskirts are coming to resemble the peripheries of large cities elsewhere in the world.

Karl Schlögel

Moscow and Berlin in the 20th Century

Two Cities and Their Fates

Moscow now has 12 million inhabitants, and Berlin 3.5 million; the two cities can look back on a century in which they developed dramatically. There are many similarities, but even more differences. Both cities have, in quite different ways, been marked by the excessive dynamics and the unfolding of violence that characterized the 20th century. Both went through a period in which they were no longer counted among the great cities of the world, and both are now regaining that status and redefining their role.

Klaus Müller

The Europeanization of Russia

One road to globalized modernity

The debate on where Europe's external borders lie has been rekindled by the extension of the EU eastwards. Indeed, the fact that the transformation of post-communist societies has not run completely in parallel has led to a new dividing line, between those candidates which have successfully campaigned for entry into the EU, and the only partially successful states of the former Soviet Union. However, the particular problems facing the easternmost reform states, and particularly Russia, do not make it justifiable to question whether Russia belongs to Europe – a Europe over whose boundaries the EU does not have sole jurisdiction.

Otto Luchterhandt

Russia in Europe – the Institutional Dimension

During the final years of the Soviet Union, and especially during perestroika, the OSCE and the Council of Europe were extremely important for Russia's political and institutional integration into European structures. Although Russia drew closer to Europe's system of values in this period, human rights violations are still widespread in the country and the rule of law is not yet firmly established. Russia's future lies in cooperation with, but not membership of, the EU.

Andrej Zacharov

A Traditional Novelty

Federalism in Russia and the Europe

If one searches for features common to Russia and the European Union, their federal orders spring to mind. In historical terms, this is a novelty for both Russia and Europe. In addition, the realization of the federal idea is taking place in similar ways. In each case it is a matter of building federalism from above, either in a planned way as in the case of the EU or chaotically and spontaneously as in Russia. Russia's path to a federal order was a process of trial and error, but the lessons learned have a wider application.

Sergej Filatov

Christianity as the Foundation of Europe's Values?

On the Russian Orthodox Church's Social Doctrine

After the conversion of Rus' to Christianity, the Orthodox Church remained for a time in close contact with Latin Christendom. However, as the Russian state and church were fused together during the 15th and 16th centuries, the church turned more and more into an ideological pillar supporting a conception of the state that was alien to West European traditions and an anti-western policy. Even in the Soviet Union, this tradition was revived in the late 1930s. The Russian Orthodox Church has remained, right up to the present day, a stronghold of hostility to all kinds of western thought - including conservative Catholic thought. One expression of this tradition can be seen in the Social Doctrine drawn up by the church in 2000. Russia will only become part of Europe when the Russian Orthodox Church recognizes that it is part of European civilization.

Nadežda Arbatova

Cooperation or Integration?

Russia and *Greater Europe*

There are serious shortcomings in the EU's new strategy towards its eastern neighbours. The space to the east of the EU is treated as a single unit, though Russia is seen to occupy a special position because its resources are important for Europe as a whole. Nor is European security conceivable without Russia. The existing strategic declarations of Russia and the EU no longer have any substance. If Russia's democracy is to develop successfully, it is vital that the country be tied into international structures. The best option would be a Special Association agreement between the Russian Federation and the EU.

Vjačeslav Morozov

In Search of Europe

Political Discourse in Russia

The discussion in Russia about the country's place in and relationship with Europe is a contradictory one. "Europe" and "the West" are the main points of reference. In political discourse a belief that Russia belongs to "Europe" is frequently expressed, whereas "the West" has negative connotations. In addition, a distinction is drawn between a "true" and a "false" Europe; this "false" Europe is closely associated with NATO and the Baltic states. "Russia in Europe" depends primarily on the self-understanding of the society of the Russian Federation. Even though Russia's "identity crisis", which was a matter of foreign policy, has been overcome under Putin, Russia's perception of its relations with its neighbours is determined primarily by developments in domestic politics.

Alexej Levinson

Evroz

Russia's political class is debating the question of a closer relationship with the European Union. What is the position of the population as a whole, which is often said to be much more sceptical about Russia's Europeanization than the elite? Opinion polls show that although only a minority of Russians feel that they are Europeans in emotional terms, there is a significant majority which considers itself rationally to be European. A variety of different "Russian" paths of development are still seen as attractive, but most Russians consider that the country's future lies in a western-type democratic state.

Roland Götz

Light and shade

The energy partnership between Russia and the EU

The economic cooperation between Russia and the EU has received significant impetuses from both private companies and governmental bodies. Due to incompatible targets, the integration of Russia into the European economic zone will however not be possible in the short to medium term. The EU currently harbours unrealistic expectations as regards energy relationships. The Russian gas industry can only continue to meet the current scope of delivery as long as consumption within Russia itself does not increase. This makes it necessary to abandon price regulation by the state. The structure of the exchange of goods between the EU and Russia currently bears all the hallmarks of a colonial relationship, but an intelligent economic policy would make it possible to avoid the disadvantages associated with this. Russia's integration into Europe necessitates an open economy model.

Tobias Münchmeyer

Russia's nuclear prostitution

Providing fuel, accepting fuel rods

Russia supplies mineral oil and natural gas to the world's markets, and pays a high ecological price as a result. It would appear that the Russian government views the acceptance of ecological risks as something of a market niche within the international division of labour. This became particularly clear with the decision to accept atomic waste imports, against the wishes of the population.

Igor' Knjazev

Siberia – Russia – Europe

Kto kogo? Or, Who is Slowing Things Down?

Because of what is seen as its "Asiatic mentality" and economic backwardness, Siberia is thought to be acting as a brake on Russia's integration into Europe. In fact, Siberia also has a liberal tradition, and there is no reason why the economic problems should not be overcome. More than anything, these problems reflect the policy of the centre in Moscow, which is oriented in an unbalanced way towards the exploitation of the region's raw materials. As Russia and Europe draw closer together, an opportunity is opening up for Siberia: as integration proceeds, the centre will have to delegate competences to lower levels, for example in the areas of migration and economic policy. In addition, Siberia could build up horizontal relations with the regions of Europe [and Russia]. In this way, Siberia would become a locomotive rather than a brake.

Svetlana Pogorel'skaja

Searching the New

A Survey of German Newspapers and Journals in 2003

The attacks on the USA and Vladimir Putin's assumption of office caused changes in German coverage of Russia. Relations based on partnership replaced transformation as the main topic. In the course of "war on terror", the war in Chechnya was pushed off the front pages. In daily and weekly newspapers tendentious reflexes are appearing, but academic journals are analyzing the problems now on the agenda. Kaliningrad is one of the main issues being addressed. As always, a great deal of attention is being paid to the ideologized question of how far Russia can be considered part of Europe.