

Summary

The practicalities of preparing the 142nd *NZ* issue meant that it was put together before February 24th, 2022. However, that does not make its contents outdated – far from it. Instead, the articles included here have acquired new overtones in the present-day context. War has always been part of our world’s intellectual agenda, and today’s events only confirm that the most important elements of this agenda are interrelated.

This issue opens with our regular column POLITICAL IMAGINARY, in which Alexander Kustarev discusses *“Climate Change and the Nation State”*, a new book by the British journalist and political commentator Anatol Lieven. To consolidate humankind’s efforts aimed at stopping climate change, Lieven proposes enlightened “liberal nationalism”.

The theme of political and even ideological mobilisation in the fight against natural catastrophes – in particular the present-day COVID-19 pandemic – is developed in the section “AGAINST VACCINES, AGAINST THE STATE: THE ANTI-VACCINE MOVEMENT IN EUROPE”. It consists of four parts. In the introduction, Nikolai Mitrokhin, who edited the section, surveys the main characteristics of the public reaction to vaccination against COVID-19 and anti-pandemic restrictions; a reaction seen as part of the “culture of mistrust” widespread in the world today. He also suggests that this movement can be defined as “social”. Dmitry Dubrovsky sketches Russia’s anti-vaccine movement,

considering its links to practitioners of “alternative medicine”, as well as to far-right nationalists and proponents of conspiracy theories. Evgeny Kazakov and Maria Kugel discuss the same subject with the use of, respectively, German and Latvian examples.

Another key theme of this *NZ* issue is the relationship between historical consistency (whatever it might mean) and contingency, the latter related to the activities of individuals or groups questioning the former. This topical section opens with an article by the French philosopher Louis Pierre Althusser, *“The Errors of Classical Economics: An Outline for a Concept of Historical Time”*, translated into Russian for the first time. Anna Egorova talks about contingency using as an example the notion of class in *“Contingency as a Condition for the Possibility of a Class”*. Andrei Oleynikov continues the problem of historical time, brought up by Althusser, in *“The Future in the Present”*. Timur Atnashev considers the persistent the “right” vs. the “left” divide, a fundamental principle of political thought and practice, as one whose basis is quite uncertain and quite changeable, depending as it does on the given historical situation (*“After the Progress. How to Understand the Political Spectrum «Left – Right» in the Era of Contingency”*). The section concludes with Zinaida Chekantsova’s article *“History and Change: Thinking Together with Koselleck”*, which traces the development of the notion of contingency in the context of the work of the German historian Reinhart Koselleck.

The historiographic theme – beginning with notions of the relationship between so-called “reality” and “writing about history” – is expounded in the section “THE PRACTICAL PAST, THE HISTORICAL TRUTH AND THE JUDGEMENT OF HISTORY: AROUND HAYDEN WHITE’S BOOK”, it focuses on the first Russian translation of “*The Practical Past*” by the American historian. We publish an extract from the book, soon to come out with New Literary Observer (NLO), and a report of a round-table discussion between Andrei Oleynikov, Mikhail Velizhev, Ilya Budrait-skis and Igor Kobylin, NZ editor who put together this section and the preceding one. The participants talked about the relationship between White’s approach and that of his opponent, the modern classic of historiography Carlo Ginzburg, whose “*The Judge and the Historian: Marginal Notes and a Late-Twentieth-Century Miscarriage of Justice*” was recently published in Russian by NLO.

Another topic of the issue, closely linked to the preceding ones, abandons theories and turns to *politisation prac-*

tices affecting those spheres of social and state life that tend not to be immediately related to politics. “POLITISATION PRACTICES” comprises two articles. The first, “*Fighting Extremism in Russia: An Outsider’s View*” by Otto Luchterhandt, a professor of law at the University of Hamburg, is a detailed analysis of Russian legislation on “extremism”, which has been tightened to the limit in the recent years. Danila Krasnov in “*Political Repressions and Political Science*” offers a brief description of the way political repressions are interpreted in contemporary political science.

Also in this NZ issue are a long essay by Igor Smirnov on the notion and role of tradition in the formation of politico-cultural and ideological constructs of modernity and postmodernity (“*What Tradition Is*”), and the latest instalment of Alexey Levinson’s column SOCIOLOGICAL LYRICS. The issue ends with a NEW BOOKS section, which includes Anton Syutkin’s piece on François Dosse’s book “*Gilles Deleuze et Félix Guattari: biographie croisée*”.

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