

Summary

The 156th *NZ* issue consists of three main thematic blocks of materials, as well as additional adjoining pieces and several stand-alone texts, all of them devoted to the political history and cultural anthropology of the 20th and 21st centuries.

The opening selection of articles focuses on one of the usual topics from the journal's research agenda – the theory and practice of federalism. This time, the subject of discussion are not *metamorphoses* but *pseudomorphoses* of federalism (this term is used in a broad, post-Spenglerian sense). *NZ* publishes an excerpt from “*Federal Government*” (1947) by the Australian constitutional historian and theorist Kenneth Wheare, which is a classic work in its field. The chapter translated for the 156th issue is called “*Federal Constitutions and Federal Governments*”; in it the author gives a brief outline of federal constitutions and practices of federalism, from the United States and Switzerland to Brazil and Stalin's version of Soviet federalism in the 1930s. In his own article, *NZ* editor Andrei Zakharov writes about the period of pseudo-federation in post-war Ethiopia, which in the 1950s and 1960s absorbed Eritrea using federalist rhetoric and various political and administrative instruments of federalism. The topic of Leonid Isaev and Anton Mardasov's article is separatism and federation; for the purposes of their analysis, the authors use the case of Chad.

The first thematic block is followed by the *NZ ARCHIVE* section, which contains

an excerpt from the undeservedly forgotten book by the Russian legal scholar and public figure Sergei Korf (1876–1924) entitled “*Federalism*” (1917). The author discusses various types of interstate formations and treaties, trying to prove that their emergence – and the accompanying depreciation of nation-state sovereignty – was a logical result of the entire course of the modern era.

The second thematic block of this *NZ* issue is devoted to a topic that in recent years has become popular among political philosophers and theorists, especially in Russia. This selection of articles is called “THEOLOGY AND MODERNITY: THE *KATECHON*, OBSESSION, AND SOCIALIST SPIRITUALITY”; its overarching theme is a late-modern rethinking of the relationship between man or the human society and history, a new and unexpected turn to theology among contemporary thinkers, and even an attempt to link current discussions about the future of socialist ideas and practices with “spirituality”. All this seems to be the result of a crisis of the two recently influential approaches: critical theory and deconstruction.

The selection opens with Sergei Koretko's article “*The Katechon and the Flickering Presentism of the 20th Century: Schmitt, Benjamin, Koselleck*”, where the topic at hand is analysed in the context of the theories of these three thinkers. Critique of radical theology is the focus of Dmitry Skorodumov's mini-treatise, at the beginning of which he asks (what we later realise to be a rhetorical question): “How is theophany possible today? The spirit of enlightenment, industrial production and cold rationalism of the



20th century – «a beast of a century» or «an era of mobilization» – seemed to have completely ousted any religious inclinations from the public consciousness, turning any miracle-like experiences into cultural marginalia that have virtually no bearing on «adult», rational affairs. There was no longer any place for the divine presence in the world of science and technology. The modern world is only interested in religion because it serves as a marker for keeping statistics and maintaining control – the intricacies of actual religious practices and their significance do not compel the minds of those possessed of instrumental rationality”. The block ends with Andrei Gelianov’s detailed (and critical) response to Graham Jones’s book *“Red Enlightenment: On Socialism, Science and Spirituality”*.

Maria Rachmaninova shares her critical analysis – that turns into scathing criticism – of the language, vocabulary and linguistic policies of late-stage capitalism in the essay entitled *“Scripted, Sickly Sweet and Machine-Cold: Linguistic Cocktails of the Artificial Intelligence Era”* (POLITICS OF CULTURE). In a sense, this text continues the theme introduced in the preceding section.

The third collection of materials in the 156th *NZ* issue is called “PROBLEMS OF HISTORICAL REPRESENTATION”, which echoes the discussions on presentism from the second thematic block mentioned above. This selection contains three articles devoted to specific cases of historical representation in the Russian culture and history of the interwar period, preceded by an introductory article by the compiler of the collection, Anatoly

Korchinsky (*“Historical Representation Revisited: Case Studies”*). Alexey Masalov interprets the classic text of Russian Futurism, Velimir Khlebnikov’s poem *“Ladomir”*, through the lens of Walter Benjamin’s essay *“On the Concept of History.”* Natalya Bakshaeva offers the readers an analysis of ego-documents (from personal diaries to visual propaganda and publications in the Soviet press) related to the history of the Bolshevo Commune for young offenders. Ivan Savushkin interprets the representation of pre-revolutionary Russia in the diaries of White émigrés (*“«Not That Russia»: The Apophatic Strategy of Representation in the Ego-Documents of the Russian Diaspora”*).

Among the remaining materials, we can single out another *NZ ARCHIVE* publication: excerpts from the book of travel essays *“Journeys to Palestine: 1925 and 1929”* by Abraham Cahan, a prominent figure in the Jewish socialist movement in the USA, the founder of the American Yiddish newspaper *“Forverts”*. Also noteworthy are the latest instalments of the regular columns by Alexei Levinson (*“Scary Holiday”* in Sociological Lyrics) and Tatiana Vorozheikina (THE REVERSE OF THE METHOD), who writes about Venezuela, which has entered a period of political unrest after the recent presidential election.

As usual, the 156th *NZ* issue wraps up with *RUSSIAN INTELLECTUAL JOURNALS REVIEW* by Alexander Pisarev and the *NEW BOOKS* section, that includes Oleg Lariov’s assessment of *“The Revolutionary Temper: Paris, 1748–1789”*, a new book by the American expert on the history of 18th-century France, Robert Darnton.