



Eurozine Review

Lateral pays the price of independence; *Esprit* proposes new approaches to caring; *Index on Censorship* records the reinvention of Russia; *L'Homme* introduces Whiteness Studies; *springerin* reveals collective amnesia in the culture industry; *Passage* puts the local back into cosmopolitanism; *Ji* looks at Ukraine's geopolitical alternatives; *Neprikosnovennij Zapas* takes 1905 out of 1917's shadow; *Nova Istra* hails the Japanization of the West; and *Le Monde diplomatique* (Berlin) meets Club Med's ideal natives.

Lateral 133 (1/2006)



At the beginning of its thirteenth year, Barcelona-based *Lateral* has published what appears to be its final issue. The reasons for this are not made explicit by the editors, but are not hard to guess. In the editorial, editor-in-chief Robert Juan-Cantavella [states](#) that, with its demise, *Lateral* is just "fulfilling the ultimate destiny of any independent cultural journal worthy of that name, perhaps even the highest of its functions: to disappear". The founder and director Mihály Dés [writes](#) in his column, "The final word (this time it's true!)", that "there are always more reasons for closing a cultural publication than for striving to keep it alive". And he takes pride in the ascertainment that "while twelve years of *Lateral* have not left their mark on the epoch, the epoch — governed by a mixture of exhibitionist and industrial culture — has not left its mark on *Lateral*".

The current and final issue of *Lateral* ([fully available online](#)) features Santiago Rodríguez Guerrero-Strachan, who [uses](#) the controversial acceptance speech by Nobel Prize winner Harold Pinter as a starting point to reflect on the topic of "Theatre and politics". In a polemical interview, Catalan philosopher Eduardo Subirats [unfolds](#) the conception of a "critical theory" while taking issue with the Spanish cultural establishment: "The Spanish Academy is incapable of dialogue." And with "Five visions of empire before and after the catastrophe", Juan Francisco Ferré [offers](#) an overview of the last few decades of the North American novel. The rest of the issue contains the usual broad range of topics and themes: from literature and music to comic books and documentary film, we can see how much will be lacking once *Lateral* is gone.

Slightly comforting is Juan-Cantavella's explicit safeguarding of "the right of resurrection", which gives us hope that *Lateral* may soon be with us again. Mihály Dés raises our spirits with the help of a few lines by Cuban poet Virgílio Piñera:

But this is only a pause in the path of our lives

Soon we will be conversing again
Not on top of the ruins, but of our memories.

The [full table of contents](#) of *Lateral* 133 (1/2006).

Esprit 1/2006



In April 2005, Chinese journalist Shi Tao was sentenced to ten years imprisonment for "divulging state secrets abroad". Shi had forwarded to a foreign news website an email from the Chinese Communist party ordering journalists not to write about the fifteenth anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre. On 7 September, press freedom watchdog "Reporters without Borders" revealed that Yahoo! had provided the Chinese authorities with the details needed to identify and convict him.

Chinese dissident Liu Xiaboo uses the pages of *Esprit* to address "An open letter to Jerry Yang, president of Yahoo!, about the Shi Tao affair". Liu accuses Yang, an American with Chinese roots, of complacency: "The Chinese dictatorship obtains political cooperation with foreign companies in exchange for guaranteeing their commercial interests", he writes. "Out of sheer commercial interest, the great societies throughout the world submit to despotism [...] making a mockery of human rights and commercial ethics in order to break into the Chinese market."

Also in this issue: a feature on "The new figures of care" — articles offering new approaches to the carer–patient relationship. Sociologist Virginie Pirard calls for a "Non–virtuous pragmatism" — a way to think about caring that bypasses altruism; philosopher Fabienne Brugère asks whether care must be feminine; novelist Guillaume Le Blanc discusses "Psychic life and illness", considering the patient's experience of vulnerability; and philosopher Frédéric Worms looks at care relations in a context of growing medical knowledge and ecological and ethical uncertainty.

The [full table of contents](#) of *Esprit* 1/2006.

Index on Censorship 4/2005



On 10 November 1995, Nigerian activist Ken Saro Wiwa was murdered by the Nigerian government, who resented his organizing of Ogoni resistance to the destruction and exploitation of their land by the oil giant Shell. In an open letter to his dead father, Ken Wiwa writes that not much has changed ten years on. Despite claims that Saro Wiwa's death changed corporate culture, Shell has yet to conduct an environmental audit in the region. Moreover, the Ogoni inhabitants remain impoverished and crimes against them unaccounted for.

"The brazenness of your death tempered the advance and spawned a new guilt industry — Corporate Social Responsibility", writes Wiwa. "The notion that left to their own devices corporations will act as good citizens is an interesting one, not least because while CSR was being loudly trumpeted, expensively advertised, propped up by an artifice of voluntary codes and offered as a sop to its critics, corporations were busy showing their true hand by working through

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations, trying to install the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) and, subsequently, through the undemocratic offices of the WTO."

Index exposes double standards elsewhere: witness US policy in Uzbekistan, says Michael Andersen, a journalist with expertise in Central Asia. On 13 May 2005, between 500 and 1000 primarily peaceful demonstrators were killed in Andijan by the Uzbek military. After initially siding with the Karimov regime, the US government condemned the massacre following pressure from the international community. Two months later, the US was evicted from its military base in the country. But until that point, as Andersen documents, the Bush Administration had consistently played down reports of human rights abuses by the Karimov regime, in order to free up the US\$ 80 million of aid that ensured Uzbekistan remained inside in the "War on terror".

Featured this issue: "Reinventing Russia" — essays and interviews, reportage and fiction paint a picture of contemporary Russia. Moscow editor Masha Lipman despairs of the cynicism and distrust that paralyzes political activism; British historian Catherine Merridale welcomes the new-found power of the Russian woman's purse; Alexei Simonov, free-speech campaigner, surveys the diversity of the national media; ex-convict Grigori Pasko advises a first-timer on surviving in prison; and author Zinovy Zinik writes a bizarre paean to Lenin.

Also to look out for: literature from Chechnya; AC Grayling on why the UK bill against incitement to religious hatred must be opposed; Nicola Bruch on the definition of genocide and the Armenian question; and Clive Stafford Smith on the case of Sami al Hajj, the Al Jazeera journalist imprisoned in Guantanamo Bay.

The [full table of contents](#) of *Index on Censorship* 4/2005.

L'Homme 2/2005



Inspired by Anglo-American "Critical Whiteness Studies", academic research on whiteness has also gained ground in European countries. Research in this field has developed as the global migration movements in recent years have moved the "Third World", so far comfortably situated in the "South", right into the middle of the global city. Migrants, refugees, "nomadic subjects", and "Third World intellectuals" articulate themselves in the "West", the "North", in the "First World", and challenge dominant "white" narratives.

Studies in whiteness in Europe tend to be interdisciplinary and include a feminist focus. The Austrian journal for feminist history, *L'Homme*, presents, next to a large number of reviews of recent books on whiteness, a very readable collection of articles on the subject.

Natasha Distiller and Meg Samuelson, both of Cape Town University, look into the image assigned to the first black woman to marry a white man from the Dutch East India Company in pre- and post-apartheid South Africa. Krotoa-Eva, as the interpreter "hovering between two worlds" was named, "has been publicly reclaimed by the 'new' South Africa as the autochthonous mother who grants her white descendants a 'legitimate' presence in Africa."

This attitude, write Distiller and Samuelson, tends to overlook that an important part of South African history is slave history, thus silencing the "realities of black women's experiences of (sexual) coercion" in a racially-structured world.

In an interview, South African photographer Michelle Booth stresses that "Whiteness — as a system of power relations — remains invisible to those who are white." Consequently, white privilege is largely taken for granted. In her artistic work, she makes visible this "non-fractured comfort zone", with the intention of breaking it up.

Exemplifying this phenomenon is Eske Wollrad's (University of Oldenburg) experience in founding a "Centre for Whiteness and Gender" in Germany. At a workshop in 2003 to introduce Critical Whiteness Studies in Berlin, black participants pointed to the difference in the way blacks and whites deal with whiteness. Whereas whites in a racist society may choose whether to concern themselves with questions of whiteness, blacks do not have this choice. They are confronted with white dominance every day. The black participants left the workshop in rage, demanding that black perspectives be integrated into the centre and its research. Critical Whiteness Studies, Wollrad concludes, if done by whites in an uncritical way, may contribute to the perpetuation of white dominance. Too bad, the black participants left without putting their advice into effect.

The [full table of contents](#) of *L'Homme* 2/2005.

springerin 4/2005–1/2006



It has become popular to celebrate and publicly commemorate distinctive dates in history with a variety of cultural activities. The Austrian art journal *springerin* looks into this inflation of commemorative events, and the contribution to them by the cultural scene, and finds a fair amount of suppression and exclusion going on. This is not necessarily due to an intentional loss of memory, the editors write; however, the effects come close. The articles collected in the most recent issue of *springerin* all deal in one way or another with these buried parts of history/memory.

Süreyyya Evren, Sibel Yardimci, and Pelin Tan highlight different aspects of the 9th Istanbul Biennale, where the main theme was Istanbul itself. Evren, a writer focusing on Turkish post-structuralist anarchism, criticizes the fact that most contemporary Turkish artists work regularly for art shows and events abroad, whereas in Turkey itself they do not have a comparable space and receive little attention. Yardimci investigates whether the Biennale's move from the old part of Istanbul to Beyoglu, or Pera, "the other part", has really been a step towards "the other side" — be it the other side of the city centre, the other side of state ideology, or the other side of the cultural canon. And sociologist and art historian Tan introduces Karl-Heinz Klopff's contribution to the Biennale, "Mind the Steps", illuminating the complex and chaotic structure of Istanbul.

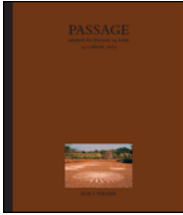
A conversation with Russian artist Dmitri Gutov sheds light on the work and influence of the Marxist philosopher Michail Lifschitz (1905–1983). Gutov, an important contemporary artist in Russia himself, is highly sceptical of

contemporary art. His main interest lies in the Marxist aesthetic of the 1930s. Together with his colleague, artist and curator Konstanti Bokhorov, Gutov founded the "Lifschitz Institute" in 1994, which devotes itself to an ardent anti-modernism.

Also to look out for: a conversation with Tariq Ali on body counts, media politics, forms of protest, and amnesia during the Iraq war.

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Passage 54 (2005)



Asked if, after forty years in French exile, she had lost her roots, Gertrude Stein answered with another question: "What good are roots if you can't take them with you?"

Throughout recent literary history, the search for roots has often been regarded as both aesthetically uninteresting and politically dangerous. The twentieth-century modernism that Gertrude Stein represents searched for expressions of change and chance. The next, post-modernist generation went even further in praising mobility, making the ceaseless traveller the model of the contemporary "nomadic subject".

Ideologically suspect kitsch or naive and nostalgic denial of modernity — is that all there is to "roots-based" literature? Danish literary journal *Passage* takes a closer look at literature occupied with roots and localities, and the outcome is not so clear. Many of the contributors show that it is more difficult than one might think to draw the line between "avant-garde" and "regionalism", "modernity" and "anti-modernity", "urban" and "provincial".

In this respect, the title of literary scholar Mads Rosendahl Thomsen's article is programmatic: "Cosmopolitical regionalism". Rosendahl Thomsen uses Jorge Luis Borges's attempts to formulate a cosmopolitical poetics that does not exclude the national, also drawing on the art theory of Pierre Bourdieu to show the importance of local and regional elements for literature, including those works that place themselves in an international tradition.

Also to look out for: Anne Wedell-Weddelsborg on literature searching for roots in China; Ann Langwadt on magic realism as cosmopolitical regionalism in South African writer Zake Mdas's novel *The Heart of Redness*; and Peter Mortensen on "agrarian modernism" in the US.

The issue is illustrated with pertinent images by British artist Richard Long: experimental constructions of place and mobility, of the local and the cosmopolitical.

The [full table of contents](#) of *Passage* 54 (2005).

Ji 33 (2005)



Under Leonid Kuchma, Ukraine had no geopolitical strategy of its own, and could not intervene in European and regional politics. Sandwiched between the enlarging EU and a still dominant Russia, the country was doomed to remain one of the "grey zones" of the European continent. The Orange Revolution of 2005 seems to have changed this unfavourable symbolic geography — finally Ukraine is seen as a European nation. But has it also made Ukraine an agent of European politics and opened new geopolitical alternatives for the country? asks Ukrainian magazine *Ji*.

Alongside "classics", such as Halford John MacKinder and Immanuel Wallerstein, "*Ji*" brings articles that are in the centre of debate all over Europe into the Ukrainian discussion: Georg Vobruba and Carl Heinz Bohrer on internal tensions in the enlarged EU; Emmanuel Todd on European–American contradictions; and Alain Badiou and Etienne Balibar on the European Constitution. Despite their diversity, all articles underline the "return of geopolitics" to international relations, the rediscovery of national interests, the competition between global players, and what constitutes legitimate national egoism.

The "return of geopolitics" in Ukraine after the Orange Revolution has to be seen against this background. Ukrainian political scientists assess perspectives and alternatives for Ukraine in the globalized world, where political isolation becomes increasingly dangerous. As in the past, Ukraine finds itself caught between the US, the EU, and Russia, its main task being, according to *Ji* editor-in-chief Taras Wozniak, to win space for political manoeuvring.

Andriy Kyrchiv and Petro Chernyk offer a detailed analysis of the Ukrainian geopolitical situation, while Anatolij Pavlenko argues in favour of a mid-term military neutrality as an alternative to Nato membership. And Serhiy Blavatskyj's "Geopolitical transformations of energy policy" is especially interesting in the light of the recent gas conflict with Russia.

The [full table of contents](#) of *Ji* 33 (2005).

Neprikosnovennij Zapas (NZ) 44 (6/2005)



To mark the 100th anniversary of Russia's first nationwide political revolution in 1905, *NZ* looks at how 1917 has come to overshadow the events that gave birth to Russia's first constitution, led to the first elected parliament, and created a legal, multi-party system.

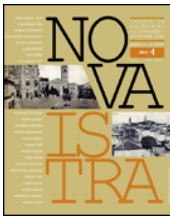
"One hundred years of what?" ask historians Maria Feretti, Alexander Shubin, and Abraham Ascher. Feretti asks why both major political camps in contemporary Russia — the liberals and the nationalists — have chosen to forget 1905. Shubin compares the 1905 revolution to other revolutions in world history and argues that it was an "intermediate revolution" in that it challenged the ruling group's authority without divesting it of its political power. And Ascher, the foremost Western historian of 1905, proposes a "broadly liberal" interpretation that acknowledges the significance of 1905 in its own right.

Elsewhere in the issue: Jutta Scherrer, historian at the EHESS in Paris, finds "A revolution without revolutionaries" in her study of the depiction of 1905 in contemporary school textbooks. She shows that with the demise of the official Soviet interpretation, which made much of 1905 appear as a dress rehearsal for 1917, most textbook authors no longer find it necessary to deal with the first revolution in any detail. The link between the upheaval of 1905 and the formation of Russian parties is obscured, and socialist figures are mostly left out of the picture.

On academics and 1905: Anatoly Ivanov writes about "Russian academics in the mirror of the First Russian Revolution", focusing on their role in the creation of Russia's first underground liberal organizations and, later, political parties. Looking at the contemporary situation, Alexander Dmitriev asks why academics have failed to raise their voices forcefully in Russian politics, finding that Russian academia as it exists today is a child of the Soviet era, and bureaucratic games and financial schemes are so dominant that they leave very little room for innovation or the emergence of a civic consciousness.

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Nova Istra 4/2005



"The interaction between Japan and the world does not end in the barbarization of Japan", wrote the French Hegelian Alexandre Kojève, "but rather in the 'Japanization' of the Western world". In this issue of *Nova Istra*, Croatian philosopher [Zarko Paic](#) pits Kojève against Avishai Margalit and Ian Buruma in his article, "The errors of occidentalism".

"The Western world has been 'Japanized' in that it has recognized the inadequacy of its own substantial nature", writes Paic. "The New Age, as a syncretic structure of new religious inclinations of the processed East, is a response to the occidentalist critique."

A selection of translations includes "Angel and demon", by Italian intellectual Massimo Cacciari, and a study of German avant-garde poet Hugo Ball, here presented as a religious writer. The fiction section brings its readers young Croatian writer Ivana Sojat, along with translations of Polish futurist Aleksander Wat, fragments from a novel by Chilean author Diego Munoz Valenzuela, poetry by the Latvian Leons Briedis, and stories by young Danish author Naja Maria Aidt.

And not least: documentary photos showing the bombing of Pula towards the end of WWII, during which the strategic port was caught in a destructive tug-o-war between the Germans and the Allies.

The [full table of contents](#) of *Nova Istra* 4/2005.

Le Monde diplomatique (Berlin) 1/2006



Club Med promises "antidotes to civilization", places where you can "get away from it all". But at what price? asks Swedish journalist [Peter Lagerquist](#) in the latest *Le Monde diplomatique* (Berlin). Lagerquist looks at Club Arviz on Israel's north coast, opened in 1962 on former Palestinian territory, and one of the only beaches leased to non-Jews and closed to the general public.

Arviz's popularity grew in the 1980s: with 14 000 guests every season it became "the place where everyone got along; always offering new beginnings". As Club Med Israel's marketing manager, Sabine Sitruk, describes it, "Everybody had a first love in Arziv or met their husband in Arziv. It's the same when I talk to people who are 30 years old or 65 years old. It's like Arziv was the Genesis."

But what about the former residents of the village? Kamil Sa'adi, whose family fled to Lebanon after being evicted by the Israeli army in 1948, has had no luck in attempts to gain back his family's land. "To allow the property of families like theirs to be expropriated", says Lagerquist, "the Israeli Knesset in 1950 enacted a law designating all such stragglers as 'present absentees'. Legally, if not physically, effaced, they were transmuted into ideal Club Med natives: people who are there, but not inconveniently so."

Also of note: the speech given by German philosopher [Ernst Tugendhat](#) upon receiving the Meister Eckhart Prize in Berlin on 5 December 2005. Tugendhat looks at the anthropological roots of mysticism and religion: "What intrinsic part of human life underlies the need for religion; and what leads people time and again to mysticism?"

On the former Yugoslavia: two articles by Catherine Samary present the EU's relationship to the Balkan countries ten years after the Dayton Peace Accords.

The [full table of contents](#) of *Le Monde diplomatique* (Berlin) 1/2006.

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