

↳ 2000 AND
200

SEICHE



Bank of Russia banknotes of 2017 with a denomination of 2000 rubles and 200 rubles

In October 12, 2017, two banknotes with a new denomination of 2000 and 200 rubles were introduced into the monetary system of the Russian Federation. Recent symbols combining geography, culture, and technology were put into use on the daily practice of cash circulation among the inhabitants of the country.

The 2000-ruble note was the first and only one to show exclusively infrastructural projects of the state. They included the Russky (Russian) bridge, the world's longest cable-stayed bridge in Vladivostok opened in 2012, and the Vostochny cosmodrome (Eastern Spaceport), launched in 2016, all located in the Far East of the country. Earth, space, and sea were symbolically captured by the logistic state systems.

Both sides of the more commonly used 200-ruble note were conversely dedicated to the history of the Crimean Peninsula, which was for the first time annexed by the Russian Empire in 1783. The banknote depicted the Monument to the Sunken Ships commemorating the sacrificial sinking of Russian ships in order to block the entrance for enemy into the city of Sevastopol in 1854–55 during the Crimean War, as well as the architectural ruins of Chersonesos—an ancient Greek colony, turned into the Russian State Historical and Architectural Museum-Reserve.

After the Ukrainian-Russian conflict in 2014, the Republic of Crimea and the federal city of Sevastopol being de facto federal subjects of the Russian Federation, both form a 'special payment zone' where a range of international payment systems are not supported. Recently issued banknotes have become vital instruments for quotidian financial interactions between residents as well as for Russia's control over the peninsula, which shares the Black Sea with Turkey along with Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, and Ukraine.¹

1 This essay was written in April 2021. In mid-2022, after the start of the Russian state's fully-fledged military invasion and aggression towards Ukraine, we are seeing how Russian militarism continues to colonize both space and infrastructure, as well as historical and cultural codes, consistently turning the occupied territories of Ukraine first into ruins, and then into controlled territories through tactics such as the introduction of the ruble.

About the author

Seiche. Redefining sovereignty through systems synchronization—a research project initiated as part of Strelka's The New Normal educational program—looks at the waves of globalization that have shaped and reshaped political, social, and economic paradigms over the past century, and redefined our understanding of national sovereignty. Project Team: Mikhail Anisimov, Tomas Clavijo, Yulia Gromova, Katya Sivers.