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THE COSMOS TODAY AND TOMORROW

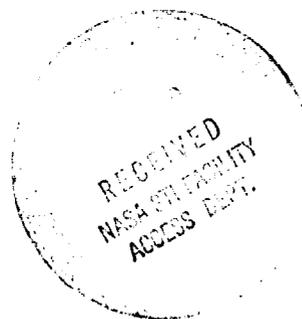
E. Guseva

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The Cosmos Today and Tomorrow

Space flights today and the prospects for the future--these are the subjects of T.V. Mashkovich's book "Tested on Oneself".* It is a documentary book which in the popular-scientific genre recounts the story of the difficult work of scientists, engineers, doctors and researchers. In other words, it tells of those who are creating and testing complicated space technology and who are preparing for the flights of astronauts.

The journey into space begins on earth. The author invites the reader to embark upon an unusual cosmic campaign. Many undoubtedly remember the graphic description of weightlessness by Tsiolkovsky: "Anything which wasn't fastened to the rocket flew from its place and hung in the air without touching anything else; and if by chance they touched they would still exert no pressure on each other or on the support. We too did not touch the floor and assumed any position or direction: we stood on the floor, on the ceiling, or on the wall; we stood perpendicularly or inclined; we floated in the middle of the spaceship like fish, but effortlessly, and touching nothing."

But still, why does man lose his orientation in space, why does he perceive neither an up nor a down? What is the cause of this? To these and many other questions aviation medicine gives answers. T. V. Mashkevich tells of the pioneers in this field of study, of academician L.A. Orbel, of professors V.V. Strel'tsov and M.P. Brestkin. In the forefront of the field of space medicine, one of the first scholars was a young military doctor, O.G. Gazenko, who is now the director of the leading institute of medical and biological problems of the Ministry of Health Sciences of the USSR, and a member of the USSR's Academy of Sciences.

Sciences

In recent years, under the direction of O.G. Gazenko, several

fundamental investigations have been conducted in the field of aviation and cosmic medicine. "Today" says Oleg Georgiyevich "the question of whether or not man will ever land on Mars does not exist for me. I simply do not see any reason why he can not be there. That is, there may be restrictions... well, let's say there are financial or temporal restrictions, but as far as the possibility goes, I see no obstacles...."

Space may enhance not only the scientific life of people, but also their everyday life, and this book provides an interesting and entertaining narration of this fact.

* Russian title: "Ispytano na Sebe".