

This text analyses motives and conditions of an emergence of a hero cult of Yuri Alekseyevich Gagarin and specifics of heroism which forms an entirely new category in the hero typology in the Soviet Union. The changes of the cult are documented based on an analysis of his media image in periodicals, photographs and literature from the 1960's until today (based on materials published on the occasion of the anniversary every ten years, ie. in 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2007). General conclusions are made which are shown to be characteristic of those periods. The word image is very important as the work is focused on analysis of the public image of his personality not on his real story which is hidden under layers of interpretations of realities and legends and we can be only guessing it based on various witness accounts and memories. His publicly presented (media) image is the only undoubtable source which we can reliably work with.