

The Moon, of course, has been known since prehistoric times. It is the second brightest object in the sky after the Sun.

Shocked by a Red Moon

October 4, 1957, saw the dawn of the space age. As the wire report from Moscow stated, "Russia announced today it has sent the world's first artificial moon streaking around the globe 560 miles (900 kilometres) out in space." It was the height of the Cold War; the world was electrified. In fact



- Some Western experts said the satellite couldn't be seen from Earth
 - It was visible as a dull-red orbiting dot,
 - but was often confused with its brighter launch rocket);

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- It would last for years in orbit
 - It lasted 92 days
- It was spying on and mapping the Earth
 - It couldn't do either
- Space travel by humans was still a long way off
 - It was only three years away



The Moon was first visited by the Soviet spacecraft Luna 2 in 1959. It is the only extraterrestrial body to have been visited by humans.

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Obviously nothing much has changed in fifty years; you can't believe nothing you hear in October.