

RUSSIAN COSMISM

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Born in 1949 in Belarus, Frater Vladimir Koptelov finished high school in Tomsk, in Western Siberia. He entered the Tomsk Pedagogical University, specializing in French, and later studied language at the Sorbonne University in Paris. In 1972 he taught at the University of Tomsk. In 1974 he relocated to Mali in Africa where he taught at Russian high schools in the cities of Bamako and Markala.

Upon returning to Russia, Frater Koptelov worked as a French teacher at the University of Simferopol, the capital city of the Republic of Crimea. In 1983 he defended his doctoral thesis on the theme, “The Birth and Development of Mali’s French Literature.”

In 1992 Frater Koptelov became a member of AMORC. He then prepared its resurgence in Russia and was appointed Director of the Russian Jurisdiction. He has completely devoted himself to working for the Order since 1998.



Dear Fratres and Sorores, I would like to tell you about the phenomenon which, in scientific literature, is defined as “Russian Cosmism.”

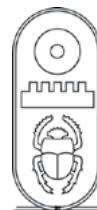
Spiritual foundations of the Universe are undeniable for us, as the followers of the Rosicrucian studies. But we know as well that the Cosmic is sending its vibrations to all people, even to those who may never have heard about such a philosophy. Inspired by Universal Consciousness, they start their own quest, which may be called “scientific,” “philosophical,” or “cultural,”



and sooner or later, they approach the Light shared by all people. This reflects the principle of Universal Evolution. For Rosicrucians, it is very interesting to explore the phenomenon of Russian Cosmism, notable in the spiritual life of Russia for the last two centuries.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, science was absolutely materialistic and rationalistic, and it was unable to open the mysteries it faced without addressing spiritual and irrational categories.

Russian Cosmism, as a scientific, philosophical, religious, and cultural phenomenon, was formed in the second half of the nineteenth century. This notion implies a particular vision of the Universe and of a human being in their unity. It implies the relationship between the microcosm of a human and the macrocosm of nature. Such a vision of



the world is particular to any culture, but we consider Russian Cosmism as a part of the world culture. Such a world outlook is based on the natural unity of human beings, humanity, and the Universe in their *moral relationship to the act of creation*.

There are three main trends in Russian Cosmism, namely, philosophical-religious, literary-artistic, and scientific. The ideas of Cosmism in the natural sciences were developed by V. Vernadsky, K. Tsiolkovsky, and A. Chizhevsky. The philosophical-religious trend includes the concept of the All-unity formulated by V. Solovyov, S. Bulgakov and L. Karsavin. The literary-artistic direction reflects the search for connections between the truth and the meaning of human existence. Here one should mention such classic Cosmists as V. Odoyevski and N. Roerich, and such literary figures as V. Bryusov, K. Balmont, A. Beliy, V. Khlebnikov, A. Platonov, and N. Zabolotsky, who were the representatives of symbolism.

The Cosmists of the scientific trend arrived at the necessity of creating a new vision of the world. Their idea is that the conscious activity of people is not excluded by the laws of nature but is presupposed by them. They state that a human being, as a thinking creature, has an impact on nature not from the outside, but from the inside.

A modest teacher and a prominent scientist, K. Tsiolkovsky wrote: “The imperfection of Earth and humanity is simply the result of their youth... It is most probable that the will of the Cosmos will show up in all the splendor of the supreme intelligence on Earth as well. The perfect state of Earth will continue for a very long time in the future by contrast with its present sorrowful situation. And then, in happiness and bliss, a supreme human descendant will say: ‘The will of

the Cosmos manifests itself as the will of the wisest and almighty being... The Universe is arranged in such a way that it and all its parts in the form of blissful living beings are immortal. There is no beginning and no end to the Universe, and similarly, there is no beginning and no end to life and its bliss. We prove that the will of the Universe is beautiful, because we see nothing but goodness, intelligence, and perfection in the overall picture of the Cosmos...”

Tsiolkovsky considers the atom as a living and immortal particle that travels from one organism to another. Therefore, he believed that death is an illusion of selfish human emotionalism. All his writings were focused on the same aim: “to prove that the Cosmos contains only joy, contentment, perfection, and truth. It is the closeness of Earth that blinds us.” He also wrote that after billions of years, matter would become pure intelligence and would transform into the state of radiation of the highest order. This intelligence (or matter) would have total knowledge and no desires. That is, it would be the state of consciousness that the human mind perceives as the divine prerogative. The Cosmos will turn into a great perfection... After the transformation into the radiant form of an elevated level, humanity will become immortal in terms of time and infinite in terms of space. “I think,” he said, “that at the present time, such a kind of humanity—in the form of radiation—cannot be comprehended by anyone.”

Academician V. Vernadsky moved beyond the geocentric understanding of the natural sciences. He defined the biosphere as a planetary and cosmic phenomenon. According to him, this fragile and unstable covering of the planet multiplies the process of its development because this covering is able to absorb and convert the

energy of outer space, especially, of solar radiation. The appearance of humans, the carrier of consciousness and intelligence, has greatly boosted all developmental processes on Earth. Eventually, people will turn into the major transforming force. Therefore, sooner or later, the biosphere will transform into the sphere of intelligence—the *noosphere*. According to Vernadsky, the noosphere tends to expand becoming a special structural element of the Cosmos. Hence, the main idea of the concept of the noosphere is the need for harmonization of the relationship between humans and nature.

The philosophical-religious trend in Russian Cosmism is represented by V. Solovyov, Florensky, Karsavin, Bulgakov, and by Helen and Nicholas Roerich. This trend was not uniform, but the primary idea was to find means for unity between humans and the world on a spiritual basis. The origin of such a worldview has its roots in ancient philosophy. According to V. Solovyov, the All-embracing unity does not exclude multiplicity but comprises it. He associates it with Sophia, the Wisdom of God. Later, Florensky called it the “Wisdom of the Cosmos,” and now it is referred to as the Divine Intelligence.

P. Florensky, a prominent mathematician and philosopher of the twentieth century, believed that *Logos* is the beginning of ectropy that opposes the second law of thermodynamics, or the law of entropy that reduces potentials to zero. He wrote, “Culture means a conscious struggle with the global equalization. The aim of culture is to isolate and increase the potential difference in all the areas. This is the condition of life as opposed to equality, that is, to death.” Here we can see a confirmation of the Rosicrucian concepts of the positive and negative potentials of various phenomena, but especially of Vitality, which is a precondition of life itself.

Russian Cosmism cannot be understood without exploring the spiritual heritage of H. and N. Roerich. In their philosophical system, they define a human’s place in the evolution of the Cosmos and the role of the Cosmos in human evolution. The inner world of a human is the object of cosmic significance, since any movement of the soul can change the outside world. Therefore, not only human acts, but also human thoughts are of great importance. Thus, it becomes necessary to follow the ideals of moral integrity and purity, the ideals of absolute honesty and humanism. Only in this case will harmonization of relationship with the Cosmos become possible.

Scientists, philosophers, and writers who present Russian Cosmism created the basis of a remarkable phenomenon of the contemporary spiritual life—the cosmic religious sentiment. It indicates the need to improve the inner world and the spirit of human beings in order to obtain a perfect harmony with nature and the Cosmic. It is the Human Mind that is responsible for this task. This is a literal reproduction of the Rosicrucian concept of Spiritual Evolution. Cosmism proves that when humans continue their search with perseverance and sincerity, then, sooner or later, they arrive at the spiritual understanding of the world.

The Cosmic inspires people through various ways, intuitive or rational, and depending on this, we consider ourselves mystics or rationalists, believers or researchers. But having received this inspiration, we realize that the Light towards which humanity is aspiring is not far away. It is close to us because it is everywhere, and we just need to be brave enough to open our eyes.

