

# Russian Philosophical Cosmology: One Step Backward and Two Steps Forward – Approaching the Universal Evolutionary Future

**Konstantin S. Khroutski**  
Novgorod State University  
Russia

*The natural sciences is right stating its truths,  
but is not right in relation the things which are passed over in silence.*

Karl-Friedrich Von Weizsacker

## Epistematic Versus Epistemic

During the Fifth Asian Bioethics Conference<sup>1</sup> in Tsukuba, Professor Hyakudai Sakamoto<sup>2</sup>, a leading Eastern expert in bioethics, while presenting his outlook for the future development of global bioethics, proclaimed the fundamental necessity of "a new humanism without human-centrism", as a overriding way in harmonizing (or, "bargaining") "every kind of antagonistic values on the Globe". In his exploration Prof. Sakamoto necessarily transcends the area of epistemic reasoning (the area of Western episteme<sup>3</sup> itself, inasmuch as he definitely rejects its cornerstone principles: anthropocentrism and rational foundation of ethics on the whole) and enters the emergent level of the epistematic creative work (by comparing the different epistemes or creating a new episteme).

It was the very same reason, why I had a difficulty to provide a clear short answer for Professor Sang-yong

Song<sup>4</sup>, who, during the ABC5 in Tsukuba and while debating my presentation of the original Cosmist philosophical system – *of subjective functionalist evolutionary universalism*<sup>5</sup>, posed a question about the plain definitions of my core notions – "cosmic" and "cosmist". The crux was that I used these notions precisely in the epistematic, but not in the accepted *epistemic* reasoning. The fact is that I have elaborated an original Cosmist episteme – an original system of fundamental principles, which strives to obtain the capability to generate (thus providing modern science with) the universal theory and methodology of comprehending the living world, primarily – the object of individual's health (the personalist wellness).

Generally, we treat "cosmos" and "cosmic" from the accepted standpoint of the science of physics – the science of matter and energy: "cosmos" is the universe in contrast to the earth alone, and "cosmic" – relates to the cosmos. In scientific relation, we usually mean (under

"cosmic") the data from the exploration of this extraterrestrial vastness (from astrology, cosmonautics, etc.) All this is absolutely normal. However, there is another standpoint on "cosmos" and "cosmic", which has the history for ages, may be since the beginning of human civilisation itself. Clearly expressed in the Eastern and Ancient philosophy, the *macrocosm/microcosm* principle has emerged and enriched human culture, by introducing the attitude and mentality of seeing reality as a whole and noticing patterns that are universal throughout all the levels of reality. This philosophical conception runs through ages and epochs, having reached the Russian culture and awoken Russian cosmological development, including Russian Cosmism.

In Russian cosmological tradition, the Eastern and Greek "man is a small cosmos" has acquired a great (in philosophical relation) "active-evolutionary personalist" significance – of a Cosmist agent, responsible both for her or his personal wellness (of *microcosm* – Humankind<sup>6</sup>), and for wellness of the entire Cosmos (*macrocosm*). Significantly, the Russian cosmological tradition (in its *cosmos-, person- and future-centric* integrity) was interrupted since the Bolshevik revolution in the 1917 year – suppressed by the proletarian dictatorship and the communist (Marxist) ideology. To my view, however, the world evolutionary<sup>7</sup> process evidently completes its successive ascending evolutionary circle and crosses, in our days, the point of the beginning of a new epoch of spiral ascent – of a new evolutionary era based on originally novel – universal – civilisatory<sup>8</sup> episteme. Inasmuch as Russian cosmological potentials, to my firm conviction, are of immense significance for the achievement of acceptable emergent future for everyone on Earth, I see the rationality to "make a step backward" – for learning the Russian cosmological fundamentals, and "two steps forward": the first – to master the absolutely necessary Western civilisatory fundamentals (I mean the substantial fundamentals, regardless of the form: Marxist, liberal, socialist, etc.<sup>9</sup>), but, all this, – for "the second step forward": To reach the evolutionary novel (emergent<sup>10</sup>) macro-level, based on original uni-

versal world-outlook system, which is equal and true for every living subject on Earth, including humankind first of all.

The same was with Western episteme – the basis of current Western and world civilization – in the middle of the Second millennium (A.D.) of world history. Particularly, I stress that Western episteme originally was *emergent*, – non-deductive from the cultural reality and the laws of Monarchic (I also call it Eastern) civilization. Nevertheless, although not derivable from the contemporary culture of Monarchic societies, Western episteme has come into the world by virtue of Western mentality – Western thinkers' philosophic breakthrough: by Rene Descartes, Francis Bacon, John Locke, Voltaire, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, John Dewey, and by many other. Evidently, precisely this Western episteme (as substance – the system of mental concepts) served as a basis for the creation of theoretical proposals and practical solutions – in building a new macro-evolutionary era: for constructing and erecting new (*democratic* – as opposed to monarchic, ruled by a sovereign) social systems, aimed at the industrialization and democratization of a society, with eventual globalization of socioeconomic interrelations. Thus, the macro-evolutionary impact of the Western episteme (on the world development) is clearly evident in the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, let it be in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as well (the century of terrible world wars and global confrontation), but not in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (in the macro-evolutionary aspect) – in no way! (This topic is discussed below). At present, to my firm belief, new (emergent) epistematic fundamentals are called for objectively – those, which might be efficacious in realization the healthy fitting true ontogenesis of a humankind and any other living subject on Earth, from a molecule – up to society, mankind and, ultimately, the whole evolutionary process of the life on Earth.

### What is the Point?

After such a complicated introduction, a reasonable question can arise: *What is the point*, meaning why is this argument important, what is its relevance? Therefore, in this next part I

## RUSSIAN PHILOSOPHICAL COSMOLOGY

clarify the significance of this argument, especially its relevance to discussion of the future. Substantially, the Russian outstanding philosopher (a philosophical cosmologist) Nicolai O. Lossky asserted: "Philosophy is a science and therefore, like every other science, it seeks to establish truths that have been strictly proved and are therefore binding for every thinking being and not only for a particular people or nation."<sup>11</sup> In the present, however, we really exist in the condition of global paradoxes in our knowledge about the world, first of all – concerning the scientific comprehension of humankind. In the first place, the so-called '*Anthropological Evolutionary Paradox*' – in relation to humankind: a person is a uterine element of the one common whole cosmic evolutionary process of the life on Earth (Process, briefly); however we deny the search for universal evolutionary knowledge and rely on the plural (different and often incompatible) sources of knowledge in defining man's nature: biological, sociological, psychological, etc.

At the same time, we have objectively and really (in front of our philosophical reflection) the series of indisputably evident, scientifically verified truths. The first: our living world is one universal whole – *fundamental universalism*. This truth is known at least since the discovery (in 1953) of the structure of DNA by Watson and Crick, which proves the unity of all life on Earth, and the genetic transmission of psychological character by DNA molecules. The second truth (in importance): the one whole universal process of the life on Earth (including humans and social organisations) has the *cosmic* origin. Really, in all cases, the energy needed for life on Earth is coming from cosmos (mainly, the Sun energy); likewise, all the matter of Earth has the cosmic origination – *fundamental cosmism*. The next and very important evidence: the cosmic universal process of the life on Earth (Process or Evolution, in my abbreviation) has the *fundamental macro-(emergent)evolutionary* essence: the origin of life, the origin of nucleus-bearing protozoa; the origin of sexually reproducing forms; the rise of sentient animals, with nervous systems and protobrain; the emergence of cogitative animals, namely humans;

further occurred the historical emergences of families, social bodies, communities, societies and civilisations; the next integrity naturally should be a whole mankind.

And what is more, *macroevolutionism* has the essence of *self(macro)evolutionism*. This is the basic point of the so-called Cosmist Dualism<sup>12</sup>, (1) that states the factual existence of the one cosmic universal evolutionary process of the life on Earth – Process (which is *a posteriori*, descriptive notion), (2) urges to its scientific exploration (by means, originally, of *a priori* revealing and explaining Process's universal laws), but, at the same time, (3) declares that cognition of the causes and mechanisms of Process's origin and the Evolution are beyond the scope of current scientific possibilities.<sup>13</sup> Substantially, however, Process is an autonomous subject: independently of our interpretation of its origin and causative mechanisms of development (God, Nature, Cosmos, Darwinian evolution, etc.), the final outcome of Earth's common evolutionary process – its current state – reveals the one wholeness (proved by natural sciences) and the universal functional interrelation of the entire number of Earth's living subjects (biological, ecological, social, personalist).

Process is a *self-(macro)evolable*<sup>14</sup> substance. Humankind is *self-(macro)evolable* substances as well. All the significant psychological theories prove this truth: in psychoanalysis – "instincts of libido"; in neo-behaviourism – "drives"; in humanistic psychology – the striving for wholeness or selfhood (Jung), or self-actualisation (Rogers, Maslow) – all these various, but in all instances the main instigative internal forces energize the behavior of a humankind throughout her or his life. I refer to W.E. Vinacke (1984): "the instigative forces especially characterize human beings... The terms most commonly used for this function are 'instinct', 'need', 'drive', and 'motive'. Whatever original drives there may be, evidently is accepted the basic principle: all the instigative forces primarily have the internal character."

From all this, *I thus argue*: If the life on Earth has the universal substance and the self-(macro)evolutionary essence, i.e. – is founded

on the principles of *universalism* and *self-(macro)evolutionism*, then the non-universal and/or non-(anti)macroevolutionary approach (with respect to living subjects) is ultimately inadmissible and impossible in philosophical and scientific relation – is anti-scientific (irrational, unnatural) in principle. At the same time, nevertheless, the accepted basic principle of contemporary philosophy and science is precisely presentism, i.e. – *anti-(macro)evolutionism*. (The principle of *presentism* is described, in the Cosmist context, as the standpoint of treating the world on Earth as substantially completed phenomenon – as life *in the present*, i.e. – denying emergent temporal horizons and prospects, but, on the contrary, – maintaining the core principle of continuity: of extension into the future of that which is "now", and which is already cognized and described). Significantly, the current *presentism* is totally shared (with very rare exceptions) among up-to-date philosophers, scientists, and cultural workers, what is one more bright expression of the dominating anti-(macro)evolutionism and, hence, – of the lack of a true *natural*, scientific (in the place of existing non-natural – *artificial*) approach to the comprehension of the evolvable life on Earth.

Furthermore, still these issues are not on the agenda of the world civilization. That is the reason, too, why the term *presentism* is unadopted (rejected) in the current scientific milieu, for it is not the object for exploration but something self-evident. As a result, (post)modern philosophy and science continue to uphold *unnatural – artificial* positions, which ultimately are false in scientific relation. Until now, drawing a conclusion, the global objective scientific issues – of the world life (planetary) *fundamental universalism*, *cosmism*, and *self-(macro)evolutionism* are being solved... by "denying the existence of these problems".

In the upshot, *the point is*: Our current philosophic and scientific world-viewing is very effective in adapting (responding to influences of the environment), cognizing, conquering and dominating over the (independently) evolvable world (Nature, Cosmos) on Earth; while the currently dominating scientific and philosophic proposals (deduced from the Western epis-

teme) are very ineffective in realising and building the emergent natural stratum (*macro-evolutionary stage*) – of the true wholesome acceptable future for every living subject on Earth, for a humankind first of all.

*The final determination*: A new systemic philosophy is needed to lay a foundation for a theory capable of reflecting the factual state of reality, which might organize a humankind and her or his life world within the inseparable and self-(macro)evolvable whole. The main point is that the standard Western dualism (Cartesian, first of all), positioning in polar opposition (to each other) mind and body, intellectual and material, man and world, – has become too narrow for the successful development of science (philosophy) and global culture in general. The new philosophic and methodological search should be, to my mind, *personcentric*, *healthcentric*, and of evolutionary (wholistic) *subject-subject* and *natural-natural* essence – versus the existing Western *anthropocentrism*, *presentism*, *adaptationism*, *pathocentrism*, and of the *subject-object* and *natural-artificial* patterns of the interrelations of humankind with the world.

## Russian Cosmological Potentials and Cosmist Episteme – a Vista for the Future Evolutionary Vigour

However, this is not my task, at this time, to expose the structure of the proposed Cosmist episteme and the derived theoretical and methodological basic principles (this is a vast material, which needs a space of an article, at least). But I see my chances, touching the *background/foreground* metaphor, in continuing the Russian cosmological story, which might be a "scaffolding" to wrap the Cosmist "stuff" around. Really, precisely 100 years ago, in the year 1905, prominent Russian scientist and philosopher Dmitriy I. Mendeleev<sup>15</sup> asserted: "Bringing together and integrating the sum of the present time and the past history impressions, it is possible, of course schematically, to express an idea that the peoples of Asia represent a kind of thesis, and Europeans – of antithesis, and that the synthesis is needed

## RUSSIAN PHILOSOPHICAL COSMOLOGY

which is still in deficiency... I assume that we, Russians, most of all have the inherent qualities of any kind for the achievement of this synthesis, though up to the present only the initial preparation to that is visible".

The core distinction of Russian epistemic cosmism is clearly seen in the assertion of a renowned Russian Cosmist – Nicolai G. Kholodny: "Humankind, despite the essential features of the vital environment created by him/herself, continues to remain an integral part of cosmos, completely subordinated to its laws. A person is not *above* the nature, but *inside* the nature". This judgment reflects a cornerstone of Cosmist episteme: Humankind is *within* (but *not without*) the cosmic evolutionary process of the life on Earth, hence, she or he is really *microcosm* (similarly to the views of Eastern or Ancient philosophers) but, distinctly, in Cosmist realm, – a person is the personality who is not only integrated, but, likewise, is the decisive element of *macrocosm* – Process (Evolution).

*Inferences:* A. We have, at least, the three distinctive functional macro-orders of man's being (functioning): (1) Homo Sapiens *animalis* (HSA) – the direct function of Biosphere (Nature); (2) Homo Sapiens *sapiens* (HSS) – the direct function of Society; (3) Homo Sapiens *cosmicus* (HSC) – the direct function of Process (Cosmos). B. Macro-evolutionary development (ontogenesis on the whole) of a subject and (her/his) emergent future wellness is possible primarily *from within* a subject (person), who, in turn, him/her/itself is basically positioned *within* Process (Evolution) – is an integrated functionalist (active) element of the one common Process, i.e. – humankind's (HSC, ultimately) ontogenetic wellness is substantially *subjective* and, hence, – *universal* in the Cosmist functionalist significance: through personalist perception and active realization of the inherent overriding functional belongingness to Process.

Eventually, aiming at the following development of the Russian cosmological potentials and definitely basing myself at the up-to-date stage of progress, I have elaborated my original Cosmist conception and am ready, in outcome, to substantiate the three contemporary macro-evolutionary dimensions of humankind in cos-

mos: (the First, Eastern) of the world Past and present (*Thesis*) – relying on the macro-episteme of *holistic centralized* (upon fundamental naturalism, or theocentrism, or metaphysical truths) world-viewing and the order of interrelations with the world; (the Second, Western) of the Present – (the modern Western dominating *AntiThesis*); of the episteme for *anthropocentric* and *de-centralised* (humanistic, democratic) reconstructing and dominating the world; and (the Third, proposed Cosmist) episteme of *universal* (wholistic) *personalist* (subjective functionalist evolutionary) world-viewing – the episteme for gradual rearranging and the ultimate achievement of the emergent (macro-evolutionary) true universal Future of everybody's individual wellness (*SynThesis*).

### Intermediate Conclusion

Not less than 95%, in my view, of modern scientific and philosophical world-viewing is based on the Western mentality – Western episteme (the product of Western philosophy itself). However, at present, Western philosophy has exhausted its *macro-evolutionary* potential – the ability to generate universal truths as *alétheia* – "the basic openness of a horizon". This is not merely mine, but the conclusion of the best Western thinkers themselves (Heidegger, Derrida, Rorty, Pellegrino, Vattimo and other) who uphold the thesis about "The end of philosophy in the age of democracy".

Therefore, if the modern traditional philosophy already and irrevocably associates with the forms of rational Western philosophy, the rationality is to introduce into the global practice the new trends of whole-organizing and (macro)evolutionary (thus – *natural*) exploration of the actual world, effecting the bases for true universal social (and wholesome personalist) life. Philosophical cosmology (or universal systemology, or cosmist personalism, or any other rational form of universal science) might realize such a trend. Herein, the crucial thing is that *cosmist episteme is the universal episteme – episteme, which serves to everyone, – to the whole evolvable living world on Earth.*

Substantially, my contemporary Cosmist

conception – of *subjective functionalist evolutionary universalism* – descends from the Russian (but not Soviet!), really unique philosophical tradition, capable of integration the studies simultaneously in cosmism (universalism), personalism, and futurism, ultimately aiming at the *active-evolutionary functionalist* position of humankind (a person) in cosmos. At least, in my strong opinion, there are no other comparable civilisatory potentials in the whole world. Therefore, I venture to argue that the acceptable (for every living subject, a person primarily) evolutionary Future on Earth is impossible without the mastering and maintaining of Russian cosmological intellectual means.

Precisely on the Russian cosmological – *epistematic* – basis, I have arrived at, in my theorizing, the fundamentals of the future universalist Bio-science – of Universal Functional Reductionism, CosmoBiotypology, and the Basic Cosmist Functionality of a man. However, this is the other story, and I hope – which might be prepared as an article for the Journal of Futures Studies.

### Correspondence

Dr. Konstantin S. Khroutski, PhD  
Dotsent at the Novgorod State University after  
Yaroslav-the-Wise  
A/B 123, PO-25, Novgorod Velikiy,  
173025 Russia.  
E-mail: hrucki@mail.ru  
hks@novsu.ac.ru

### Notes

1. ABC5, the conference of Asian Bioethics Association, held in Tsukuba, Japan, February 2004.
2. Professor Hyakudai Sakamoto is a founder of the Japanese Association of Bioethics in Tokyo in 1989 and, at present, an honorary Board member of Asian Bioethics Association.
3. The term "episteme" has been introduced by Michel Foucault in his work *The Order of Things* – to mean the regime of truth that upholds all the discourses of a particular epoch. However, soon after he abandoned the concept. Nevertheless, the conception of "episteme" has continued its autonomous life in the world-wide science – in the sense of interpreting a history as a series of "discontinuities", when each epoch has a certain global principle (episteme) of the organization of all manifestations of human life – the latent universal model (structure) of the construction of human culture and a civilization. The meanings of the notion "episteme" and the notion "paradigm" (Thomas Kuhn) are considered to be similar, but the significance of "episteme" is more general and broad (whereas Kuhn's paradigm is an all-encompassing collections of beliefs and assumptions which create scientific worldviews and practices, Foucault's episteme is not merely confined to science but to a wider range of discourse, thus all of science itself would fall under the episteme of the epoch). More often, at present, the use of the notion "episteme" implies the meaning of "western episteme". (The notion "episteme" is more known in the philosophy of science of French-speaking world).
4. Professor Sang-yong Song (South Korea) is a President of the Asian Bioethics Association, from mid-November 2004.
5. The main theses of my Cosmist theory are disclosed in the *Eubios Journal of Asian and International Bioethics* (accessible on-line, 2002-2005) and other publications of Eubios Ethics Institute, founded and directed by Prof. Darryl Macer; *Calicut Medical Journal* (2004); and in the other publications, including the conceptions of *Philosophical Cosmology* and the *Universalist Bio-Science* which were introduced in the *World Futures*, 2001, 57(3), and 2004, 60(8).
6. I use the term 'humankind' in the definition of 'human': man, *Homo sapiens*, human being, individual, person, etc. Likewise, the term 'man' is traditionally referred to the human race in general, or "mankind".
7. I deliberately use the term "evolutionary" instead of the usual "historical".
8. The term "civilisatory", from my Cosmist standpoint, likewise has a peculiar meaning – not merely "culturally advanced" (like "civilised"), but precisely indicating the relationship with civilization as an autonomous evolutionary subject. Thus, 'civilisatory' (adjective) means the relation to a civiliza-

..... **RUSSIAN PHILOSOPHICAL COSMOLOGY**

tion, i.e., signifying as a human society with its highly developed social organizations, as well the culturally inherent development of a nation (or region) – as the organism, which is viewed from the macro-evolutionary point of view, taking into account as much past and present, as the future civilized time of its 'ontogenetic' development.

9. For instance, from my Cosmist (evolutionary) point of view, contemporary People's Republic of China is a typical representative of Western civilization: Although conforming to the inherent (Eastern) world-viewing fundamentals, China generally aims at the realization of basically Western values – the industrialization and technological progress, as well as steadily deepening the democratization of society and ever-increasing people's well-being, etc. On the whole, evidently the entire world, at present, is pursuing the Western goals of evolutionary development.
10. In my reasoning, the notion "emergence" (and the term "emergent") substantially has the accepted meaning: the macroshift of a system that cannot be predicted or explained from antecedent conditions. [The term "macroshift" is introduced into the evolutionary thinking by Ervin Laszlo (in the 2001), who is widely regarded as the founder of systems philosophy and general evolution theory].
11. I am citing here the famous book by N.O. Lossky – "History of Russian Philosophy" (the section – "Characteristic Features of Russian Philosophy"), published in New York in the 1951, by the International Universities Press, Inc.
12. Which I introduced in the World Futures, 2001; and further developed in the Anthropology and Philosophy, 2004.
13. This directly means that Process's origin can be known (emergently) in the (not nearest) future, what is distinct from Tantric/Vedic (Indian) episteme, which states that rather mind is an object. On the whole, however, substantial cohesion might be noted between Cosmist and Indian epistemes, really as between Synthesis and Thesis. I have in view especially such Indian epistematic fundamentals as the belief in a supreme being of many forms and natures, the view that opposing theories are aspects of one eternal truth, the standpoint that education

comes from within, and the ultimate, for humankind, fulfilling a purpose of mastering the uniqueness of oneself and thus attaining oneness with the universe. Henceforth, in the light of synthesizing Cosmist episteme, we might see the (macro)evolutionary integration of the Indian (of Thesis) epistematic freedom (to achieve human universal uniqueness) – with the Western epistematic (of Antithesis) human liberation of basic needs, that opens up the possibilities for realization, in the future, the true leading (macro)evolutionary role of humankind (a person), by virtue of accomplishing the Cosmist rational – Basic Functionalist (her or his intentional and active) contribution to the wellness of Process, thus effecting the main mechanism of flourishing development of the one whole universal Evolution.

14. The term "evolable" is used in the meaning of "able to evolve – evolving".
15. Author of the periodic system of elements.

