

## KOZEL'SKII'S PHILOSOPHY TEXTBOOK

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It is certainly a great encouragement to study the writings of an author who is said to be “one of the most prominent ideologues of the Russian enlightenment”,<sup>1</sup> whose *Philosophical propositions* is “one of the most significant monuments of the Russian enlightenment philosophy of the eighteenth century”<sup>2</sup> and the design of theoretical philosophy offered in this book is done for the first time in the world and is “a new and progressive statement in philosophical thought of the eighteenth century”.<sup>3</sup>

Jakov Pavlovich Kozel'skii (ca. 1727 – after 1793) studied in the Kiev academy and in the school run by the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences. Later he served in a military which included teaching in an artillery and engineering school where he wrote two textbooks, *Arithmetic propositions* (1764)<sup>4</sup> and *Mechanical propositions* (1764 and 1787).<sup>5</sup> Because of

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<sup>1</sup> Ю. Я. Коган, *Просветитель XVIII века Я. П. Козельский*, М., Изд. АН СССР, 1958, с. 31.

<sup>2</sup> К. Исупов, И. Савкин (ред.), *Русская философия собственности (XVIII-XX вв.)*, СПб., СП Ганза, 1993, с. 9; the book should have “a prominent position among literary monuments” of the age, adds Kogan (*Просветитель XVIII века Я. П. Козельский*, cit., с. 58) which is repeated by Bak in his review of Kogan's book: И. С. Бак, *Книга о выдающемся русском просветителе*, “Вопросы философии”, 1959, 8, с. 126. More decisively, Kuliabko claims that the book “has already taken a prominent position among literary monuments of progressive philosophical and social thought of the second half of the eighteenth century”: Е. С. Кулябко, *Замечательные питомцы Академического университета*, Л., Наука, 1977, с. 92. Interesting is the almost identical wording of these appraisals.

<sup>3</sup> В. А. Демичев, *Я. П. Козельский о предмете философии и классификации наук*, “Вопросы философии”, 1958, 4, с. 135.

<sup>4</sup> *Arithmetic propositions* is a low key textbook that covers integers, fractions, propor-

health reasons, he was released from the service with the rank of captain and became a civil servant.<sup>6</sup> He published several translations accompanied by his prefaces and comments; another textbook, *Philosophical propositions* (1768); and, after a long silence, *Arguments of two Indians, Kalan and Ibrahim, about human cognition* (1788).<sup>7</sup>

In the dedication to *Philosophical propositions* Kozel'skii wrote that although he did not learn philosophy from anyone, his work was but a collection of extracts from some philosophical books of "truths useful for humankind" along with truths of his own that were "learned from infall-

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tions, quadratic and cubic equations, and logarithms. It is also application oriented, in fact, very utilitarian. As he states in the preface, he excluded from his discussion some material that cannot be applied in real life and thus it is useless to waste time to cover it, В. Е. Прудников, *Русские педагоги-математики XVIII-XIX веков*, М., Государственное учебно-педагогическое издательство Министерства просвещения РСФСР 1956, сс. 125-26, 128. He also castigates Bernoulli in the preface to his *Philosophical propositions* for his discussion of curves that cannot be applied anywhere thereby uselessly wasting his intellectual faculties (416). Apparently, Kozel'skii's had little appreciation for basic research. The name of Kozel'skii is briefly mentioned by А. П. Юшкевич, *История математики в России до 1917 года*, М., Наука, сс. 78-79, without even mentioning his mathematics textbook.

<sup>5</sup> *Mechanical propositions* is another low key, application oriented textbook without the use of differential and integral calculus. In fact, Kozel'skii's command of calculus was wanting, В. Н. Чиненова, *Яков Козельский и его "Механические предложения..."*, in О. М. Боголюбов (ред.), *Институт математики. Нариси розвитку: збірник наукових праць*, Київ, Інститут математики НАН України, 1997, сс. 225-243.

<sup>6</sup> There is a debate about whether Kozel'skii participated as a delegate in a Senate committee in 1767-1768 during which he expressed his views on social issues as maintained, e.g., by И. Бак, *Я. П. Козельский (философские, общественно-политические и экономические воззрения)*, "Вопросы истории", 1947, 1, с. 84, or whether this was another Kozel'skii. There were apparently three brothers, two Jakovs and Stepan (Ю. Я. Коган, *Просветитель XVIII века Я. П. Козельский*, cit., с. 60-63), although there is even a claim that all three brothers were named Jakov: С. В. Папаригопуло, *О двух Я. П. Козельских*, "Вопросы истории" 1954, 8, с. 111.

<sup>7</sup> The *Arguments* were apparently coauthored by the physician М. Maksimovich-Ambodik who published the book under a different title in the same year, И. Бак, *Я. П. Козельский (философские, общественно-политические и экономические воззрения)*, cit., с. 87; Ю. Я. Коган, *Просветитель XVIII века Я. П. Козельский*, cit., 67-69.

ible experience” (411),<sup>8</sup> which is not a particularly auspicious beginning. Philosophy, as we read in the preface, is really important not as the foundation to all other sciences, but as the way of finding happiness (*blagopolu-čie*) defined as a constant satisfaction for which all people strive but only a few enjoy (412). Kozel'skii approvingly referred to Rousseau's view that it would be more beneficial for humankind to be ignorant of science and live instead in happiness in a natural state, since unhappiness is the result of eating the forbidden fruit, i.e., “the clear knowledge of good and evil”. However, an attempt to return to such a natural state is unrealistic in our age since “if any nation contemplated not expanding knowledge, then other learned nations in a short time and great appetite would eat it” (414). This pretty much sets the tone of the book. Kozel'skii's primary interest was in man's happiness and the ways of recovering it, philosophy being only a tool enabling such recovery. Therefore, we can expect that the more philosophy is detached from practical life, the less interesting it is for Kozel'skii. And, in fact, this is what happens in his presentation of philosophy.

### Philosophy

For Kozel'skii, philosophy is “the science of the investigation of causes of truths” where truths are understood as objects and actions (427), although later, he included also sentences and accepted the classical definition of truth (441).<sup>9</sup> From the outset, he befuddled the issue by using the philosophical (true sentence) and nonphilosophical (true gold) notion of truth. This unfortunately, happens more than once in his book.

According to Kozel'skii, science is the justified knowledge of truth, that is, the ability of reason to prove everything that is accepted or rejected (427) in terms – which are taken to be understood – of causal rela-

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<sup>8</sup> References are made to the anthology that includes Kozel'skii's work, И. Я. Щипанов (ред.), *Избранные произведения русских мыслителей второй половины XVIII века*, М., Государственное издательство политической литературы, 1952, т. 1, in particular *Философические предложения*, сс. 411-551; *Рассуждения двух индийцев Калана и Ибрагима о человеческом познании* (excerpts), сс. 552-620.

<sup>9</sup> At one point, truth is defined as “when someone makes a statement that agrees with his thought” (496). But what if the thought is erroneous?

tions; philosophy becomes the search for valid causes of what is, in particular, human action. Although philosophy “includes all sciences”,<sup>10</sup> it remains only “the general knowledge about human things and actions” (428). Thereby, all sciences are included within philosophy and, at the same time, they are excluded. The tenor of the book indicates that Kozel’skii leaned toward the latter,<sup>11</sup> with the former statement making the bow toward a current, Wolffian understanding of philosophy.<sup>12</sup> However, to avoid a contradiction in his treatment of the philosophy vs. sciences problem, it is helpful to recall a statement he made in the first sentence of the preface, which states that philosophy “deserves particular attention not for its inclusion of the foundation for all other sciences but for its rules for searching for happiness” (412), which may mean that philosophy is important because of its investigation concerning human happiness but that the foundations of other sciences are included in it as well, although they are of secondary interest for us. If so, Kozel’skii may have indirectly referred to Descartes’ famous tree simile, in which metaphysics is the roots, physics is the trunk, and all other sciences are the branches (preface to the first edition of *Principles of philosophy*). Philosophy does not include the sciences, at least natural sciences (although, it includes what will later be termed sociology and political science), however, it provides tools for investigation made in particular sciences; and thus the sciences do not become disconnected from philosophy. The sciences have relative independence from it, but the independence is not and cannot be complete.

In the spirit of the age, defined in particular by French eighteenth century philosophy, and by the spirit of engineering and science, experience and palpability were the ways of acquiring truth. Therefore, Kozel’skii saw little use in some traditionally philosophical areas and simply excluded them from his analyses. In particular, since “we cannot derive principal and undisputed knowledge about the correspondence between the

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<sup>10</sup> As also stated in *Arguments of two Indians*, “philosophy generally includes all sciences” (568).

<sup>11</sup> He explicitly excluded physics from philosophy with the feeble argument that physics by itself is very wide area of knowledge (417).

<sup>12</sup> F. Ch. Baumeister, *Institutiones philosophiae rationalis methodo Wolffii conscriptae*, Wittenberg, Ahlfeld, 1735 [repr.: Hildesheim, Olms, 1989], p. 30.

soul and the body neither from experience nor from reasoning”, Kozel'skii literally dropped the subject and expressed his astonishment that anyone would or did write about it (417). Also, philosophers disputed the problem of the attributes of God, but, according to Kozel'skii, they should stop doing this, since this exceeded the powers of human reason. “Sacred scripture teaches us about God's supreme wisdom, unlimited omnipotence, eternity of being, inaccessibility to the senses, immensity and just will, that is, His disposition to act with benevolence, to be just and separate from all evil, [which all are] inaccessible to the human mind, which is enough for us, and an attempt to [know] more about what is incomprehensible by our minds seems inappropriate” (417). In a way, Kozel'skii heeded here the apophatic theology of Orthodoxy which teaches that the essence of God cannot be known to the human mind; however, having stated that, the Orthodox theologians investigate divine hypostases and divine economy. The revealed truths were also excluded quite early from philosophy in Western thought, as, for example, the scholastics of the *viae modernae*.

There are some benefits of philosophy. First, it “leads man from the knowledge of wisely made creations to the knowledge of God, teaches him to acknowledge the being, greatness, supreme wisdom, and omnipotence of God” (425-426), a statement, in which Kozel'skii implicitly referred to the proof from design commonly used in his age and, somewhat incongruously, to God's attributes that are taught not by Scriptures but by the book of nature. Apparently, nature has something to teach man in theological matters. This is useful to man and thus it is not inappropriate to investigate the attributes of God if only in conjunction with their relevance to created things – and relevance of created things to these attributes, as well. However, this benefit of philosophy is hardly utilized by Kozel'skii in his book. Second, philosophy directs man toward virtue “at which the almighty Creator looks more kindly than at all the gifts and offerings” (426). In this tacit reference to the Scriptures, Kozel'skii recognized the religious significance of virtue, however, in his book we learn nothing about why God should be concerned with virtue above anything else, since that would require making direct references to God's attributes. Third, philosophy directs the passions of the youth toward the general good. Fourth, it gives a mature man strength to maintain a virtuous life. Fifth, it consoles the old and compels him to look at the passing world

with indifference. Sixth, it consoles the unhappy and brings hope for better times. Seventh, philosophy teaches the happy man how to use rationally what he has. “In a word, it gives man all possible good means to acquire happiness” (426). Needless to say, Kozel’skii was not the first in his desire to bring happiness to humans; various philosophical proposals have been made including Plato’s Callipolis and Magnesia, Aristotle, the Stoics, the Epicureans, and, closer to Kozel’skii, Rousseau, “a man worthy of immortality” (418).

Traditionally, philosophy has been divided into the theoretical and the practical, and Kozel’skii followed this division, devoting far more attention to the latter than to the former. While theoretical philosophy is concerned with knowing truths that serve in knowing morality, practical philosophy prescribes the rules of moral conduct based on knowledge of what morality is (428).

#### Theoretical philosophy

Theoretical philosophy is divided into logic and metaphysics. Logic is concerned with three powers of the mind. The first is the power of using senses that produces “a sensation or concept” of an object in the mind (429). The second is the power of judgment that combines together or separates concepts. In an explicit reference to Helvétius, Kozel’skii claimed that sentences, which are results of judgment, cannot be reduced to sensations: “by distinguishing them from concepts it is better to see different activities of the powers of the human soul” (436). He seemed to have weakened Helvétius’ extreme sensualism (“juger n’est jamais que sentir”, *De l’esprit* 1.1.1) by not reducing the power of judgment to the power of sensation, but it is unclear whether he would have accepted the statement that *jugement n’est jamais que sensation*. “All cognition begins with sensations” (446), therefore, it is conceivable that sensations can awaken knowledge that is dormant in the soul (cf. Plato). But even without accepting anamnesis, it is possible that judgments are based on sensations and also include something which is irreducible to sensations alone. However, Kozel’skii left the reader only with the curt statement that judgment had to be distinguished from sensation.

The third power of the soul is reasoning “which from two propositions derives the third” (428). This definition limits reasoning to the use of syll-

ogisms, since even the Stoics could derive one sentence from only one sentence, e.g.,  $p \wedge q \rightarrow p$ ,  $p \rightarrow q \vee p$ ,  $\sim\sim p \rightarrow p$ . He mentioned the fact that except for syllogisms, there are other reasoning methods, but they are of little value and of no use, and their application can even bring ridicule and confusion (439), which is a remarkably shortsighted statement by an author who also wrote a mathematics textbook.

How can the three powers of mind be applied? Kozel'skii included a chapter on the subject, but it was limited to a list of definitions, so we learn what is a proof (the connection between valid statements, 442), an axiom, a theorem, a problem to be solved, a discussion; and we learn that there are theoretical and practical statements (443), dogmatic and historical books (445), but with these definitions his investigation of logic ends. Because logic includes epistemology, a discussion could be expected of how it is possible to build concepts from sensations alone, and what the origin of logic rules is: do they come from sensations? If not, are they inborn? It can be claimed that if rules are not inborn, at least the cognitive mechanism is inborn; therefore, indirectly, that part of knowledge is inborn as well. However, Kozel'skii was silent on the issue.

Metaphysics, the science of general concepts, includes ontology, the science of objects in general (446), an object being what is possible and "possible is what does not include a contradiction" (447). The principle of non-contradiction is thus the basis of ontology, which is a common, but not universally accepted assumption, such as in paraconsistency which relinquishes this principle in favor of the unlimited omnipotence of God (investigated already in the Middle Ages, but later also in Russia by Florensky and Shestov). Kozel'skii used the example of a squared circle as a non-object. However, is Pegasus an object? Is there a contradiction in the concept of a winged horse? If not, the object exists if only in the mind. Could not a squared circle also exist in the mind? Maybe it could exist there, outside of physical reality, just as some images created by Escher cannot be created in three dimensions but can be represented in two dimensions. Maybe the problem is not so impractical, even from Kozel'skii's perspective: can anyone be good and bad at the same time? How could moral rules be used in that case? Instead, the reader gets a long array of definitions. Here is a typical example:

150. The limit or the boundary of an object I call nonexistence of its further substantiality. 151. An extension I call the determination of the limit of an object. 152.

Space considered in separation from bodies is simply nothing, and when considered in bodies, it is the limit. 153. The place of an object is a particular way of its being together with other [objects]. 154. Time is called the continuation in the sequence of one object after another. 155. The figure is nothing else than the limit of extension. 156. When between different transformations of an object we determine one of these transformations, then this will be the state of the object (450)

and so on and so forth. Occasionally between such definitions Kozel'skii injected some remarks indicating what his views were. Matter, he wrote, is "that of what each object is composed" (449); however, he agreed with Voltaire in that "human reason cannot investigate the inner nature of matter" (450) without justifying his view. Could it be that this nature depends on a supranatural agent, and because the agent is supranatural, the concept of causality or any scientific investigation cannot be applied to it? With this specification of the limitation of human reason, Kozel'skii seems to have pointed to the traditional view of the creation of the world. If only we had known the divine mind, we would have known the reason for creation, and, with it, the underlying supranatural principle of matter, its inner nature. This nature remains impenetrable to the human mind; therefore, the certainty of science rests on uncertainty, and even more, on the unknowableness of the nature of matter that makes up the natural objects investigated by science. In other words, the certainty of science ultimately rests on faith. Moreover, the nature of an object is its force, and a natural explanation of a phenomenon should be made in terms of this force (452). This does not rule out, says Kozel'skii, the possibility of a supernatural force or the possibility of a miracle.<sup>13</sup> By definition, the cause of a supernatural event is unknown (453) and thus goes beyond the limit of science, and in particular, of philosophy. Again, Kozel'skii brought the reader tantalizingly close to the edges of the comprehensible and pronounced philosophical defeat in even asking questions about the beyond.

Continuing his metaphysical discussion, Kozel'skii presented the problem of the soul (or the spirit) which is an entity endowed with will and

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<sup>13</sup> Which belies the statement that he was "one of the first thinkers of the Russian enlightenment who definitively formulated the construction of secular-enlightenment metaphysics in which the being of the world and its development takes place in accordance to immutable laws and free from interference of a transcendental force": Ю. А. Бубнов, *Метафизика русского просвещения*, Воронеж, Изд. Госуд. Ун-та, 2003, с. 179.



reason (458). He, again, recognized the existence of God by stating that human souls are finite and God is an infinite soul. Of course, there arises the problem of the nature of the soul and, in the case of a dualist solution, the mind-body problem. Kozel'skii already dismissed the problem in the preface by stating that in respect to the relation of soul and body, we have no incontrovertible experience and cannot have such knowledge through reasoning; therefore, he did not enter into the discussion of the topic and, as already mentioned, expressed an astonishment that anyone did or could (417). It seems that, rather, astonishment could be expressed as to why such an important philosophical question was not discussed in a philosophy book. Also, the problem of immortality of the soul is never mentioned.<sup>14</sup> Instead, the reader gets a long list of superfluous definitions of the different feelings and passions that characterize the soul (or, rather, its will):

194. Joy is the higher level of pleasure. 195. The opposite of joy is sorrow, which is nothing else but the higher level of sadness. 196. Love is nothing else but the desire of happiness. 197. Love of oneself is called self-love. 198. Love bears regret which is sadness because of someone's unhappiness. 199. Hatred is the desire of unhappiness. 200. Hatred bears jealousy which is nothing else but sadness because of someone's happiness [...] (455).

Reason is the ability of the soul to see truths clearly (457, 461). We learn about things through sensations produced by senses which are "windows and doors of the soul, through which the view of natural objects enters the soul" (458). The soul and body constitute a union so that when the body experiences some change in its sensory organ, the soul produces for itself a representation of this change (458).

Is the soul of a different nature than the body? The body is something palpable (452), and, presumably, the soul is not, hence, it is not a body. But air is hardly palpable, and the consistency of the soul can be much more tenuous than that of the air, thereby becoming an aethereal body (cf. 611). Furthermore, the world, he claimed, is "the content of all created things" (451), thus, we may assume, that human souls, as created, are part of the world. A step could be made to say that the soul is a natural body.

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<sup>14</sup> In *Arguments of two Indians* a passing remark appears that metempsychosis is "an absurd opinion" (593), which is hardly a satisfactory presentation of the problem of eschatology.

But also, a step in different direction could be made by stressing the inability of the palpable, natural bodies to will and think. Clearly, there is dualism concerning the body and soul in Kozel'skii's system; however, the nature of the dualism is not addressed. There is a strong tendency to naturalize the soul. Philosophy concentrates on it, or rather, on its moral life, and is interested in determining moral laws, laws that can causally influence the state of the soul, i.e., the behavior of man. Could philosophy deal with causality if it were, well, out of this world? This is not impossible, even in Kozel'skii's system in which philosophy deals with causes, since no limitation was made to use solely natural causes.

#### Practical philosophy

The second division of philosophy is practical or moral philosophy, the science of searching for happiness (462), which includes two branches, jurisprudence, "the knowledge of all possible laws" (463), and politics.

In presenting jurisprudence, Kozel'skii began with a rather confusing distinction between the law (*pravo, ius*), which is based on justice and the norm or rule (*zakon, lex*) which does not have to be so based (464). He seems to have simply identified the law and justice, which is defined as the basis of any good or indifferent conduct. He offered an example of the law of love of one's neighbor and the law of feeding oneself to maintain one's life: "such a law I call divine, since it is made by God Himself", and is eternal, necessary, and immutable. The law is divided into natural (to satisfy the natural needs of man), universal, national, and civil (464). Therefore, it appears that all laws are divine and immutable because they are just; and justice appears to have, for Kozel'skii, an eternal dimension. Justice does not change with time and place; it is absolute. What seems to be relative are rules. Rules should be derived from laws (466), but, apparently, there are rules that are based on injustice (464) and as such, of a purely human makeup. A rule directs human action by the fear of punishment or by the hope of reward (467). There are divine, natural, universal, and civil rules (466), and thus it appears that not all rules are divine.

Where do laws exist? In the divine mind? Kozel'skii stated that divine rules include the ten commandments (467); therefore, the Scriptures are not the law but a rule, i.e., they include rules that may not be based on justice; they are but a human reflection of the immutable law. Laws, there-

fore, must be ideals that do not exist in our world but are used to create rules to introduce an order in the world. How can one get into the mind of God in order to create the best rules possible? Kozel'skii did not raise the issue at all, another unsettling omission in his philosophy book.

Good deeds, stated Kozel'skii, are directed toward someone's happiness without the harm to others (469). Virtue is a tendency in man to observe justice (470). Man does not become virtuous at once; virtue has to be exercised. A means to virtue is the correct knowledge of good and evil and the following of good examples (470). Among one's duties, the most important is expressing gratitude to God for all His innumerable gifts, followed by the duty to one's soul: the duty to improve one's soul by expanding knowledge (472); next, the duty toward one's body, which concerns keeping good health (473); and, finally, the duty toward one's outward situation, i.e., possession, honor, and happiness (475). The discussion is limited to a list of definitions, so that the reader learns the meaning of gluttony, drunkenness ("intemperate desire to drink which tires out the head and makes man unable to perform his duties"), sobriety (474), and learns who is rich, of moderate means, of insufficient means, poor, and the like (475), who is modest, ambitious, gentle, proud (482), etc., etc. Incidentally, the duties toward God are not discussed at all. Yet they are moral duties they should be mentioned, unless they are considered to be so obvious that no discussion is needed. However, obviousness did not deter the author from defining soberness, drunkenness, etc.

A separate set of duties concerns other people and requires "that we help one another and do good" to one another, and, in a variation of the golden rule, Kozel'skii stated that "man should do to others what he should do to himself" (486). This area includes interaction in general, which leads to an array of definitions of theft, robbery, lying, etc. (477), and interaction in particular areas, such as commerce, with an inevitable set of definitions of money, price, selling, interest, etc. (495). Kozel'skii took issue with the principle of forgiveness. To him, forgiving a deliberate harm means leaving the perpetrator without guilt and crime; that is, it amounts to actually teaching him to do harm (490). When equating forgiveness with teaching evil, Kozel'skii forgot the role of conscience even in a perpetrator of a premeditated crime. He dutifully defined conscience and even conscience pricks ("regret caused by a deed done or not done", 471) and then made no use of the concept, unless it was assumed that these

pricks had no redeeming value. And, in fact, he seemed to have believed it when he stated that forgiveness had an edifying effect on those who never do or intend to do harm since others will only laugh at it (491), which only leaves first-time, unintentional offenders. Also, he castigated those who “say that if an enemy or even a robber assaults a man with the intention to kill him, then he should not kill the robber if it is possible to save his own life without killing him”, finding such a rule laughable and inappropriate (492-493). Why is it inappropriate? This is a conditional rule: saving the life of the enemy when saving one’s own is possible, otherwise the enemy should be extinguished. Presumably, the enemy could be brought to justice after his life was saved. Kozel’skii, however, advocated pulling the trigger even if it is not necessary and found a merciful solution unpalatable. It should not then be surprising to read his assessment that “from the rules described by philosophers who write about beneficence toward enemies and forgiveness of wrongs we can naturally conclude that they were invented by the happy people who always did harm to other people and themselves were never harmed by anyone” (494). The more one calls for mercy to others, the more one exposes his own evil. Some logic.

The second part of moral philosophy is politics, which “is the science of actualizing righteous plans with the most suitable and also most righteous means” (503). Jurisprudence teaches us to observe virtue, politics aims at preserving virtue and happiness; the former teaches how to be virtuous, the latter how to be and appear to be virtuous (503). Happiness is simply continuous satisfaction (504). To reach the state of happiness, one needs to know as much about one’s own qualities and qualities of people around, as about the virtue and reason that determine the way of conducting oneself among others (505). In his teaching of human qualities, Kozel’skii used the ancient division of people by their temperament into sanguinics, choleric, melancholics and phlegmatics, and stated, for instance, that phlegmatics were most prone to do good (506) and also observed that “beautiful people are for the most part not as virtuous as [those who are] not beautiful” (511).

Virtue is the preservation of justice, and reason is the clear understanding of truths (513). The deeds of a virtuous person are done with regard to the good of all people, i.e., these deeds are not only good but also just. A reasonable person is able to recognize something as good or bad not by

the fashion or opinion of others, but “by correct assurance from general principles of goodness or badness of things or actions” (513). Such a recognition appears to refer to immutable justice, i.e., to God’s law. How does a reasonable person gain this knowledge? Kozel’skii is of little help here. He stated that good was what serves our perfection (454), but perfection was only in God (423) and besides, Kozel’skii confessed that he did not understand the perfection of man and that he saw on earth only an approximation of perfection (422-433). That is, to know perfection, one has to know God, His perfections, His perfect attributes. Therefore, the knowledge of God appears to be an inescapable prerequisite of practical philosophy; and thus severing theology from philosophy should not be attempted unless it is explicitly assumed from the beginning which perfections, presumably known from revelation, can be used by a philosopher in a cogent analysis of ethics.

Kozel’skii accepted Rousseau’s theory of the social contract and stated that man in the transition from a natural state to a civil state took moral rules rather than natural impulses as guiding principles, favored reason over passions, abandoned natural impulses in favor of more elevated qualities (524), and began to grow spiritually and acquired and developed moral freedom whereby he ceased to be a slave of passions (525). The happiness of the entire nation is possible when every member relinquishes part of his own happiness, since “if everyone cedes one of his [desires] or a small part of all desires, then thereby they all without exception will be satisfied in almost all their desires and thus be happy” (526). It is not quite clear what the mechanism is here at work which brings happiness, as understood by Kozel’skii, by the very fact of relinquishing some of one’s own happiness. And yet the happiness of nations is defined as their having good mores and a desire to work (526), so it may appear that if individual good mores and willingness to work are well developed, nothing should be given up. The happiness of the whole would be the sum of individual happinesses.

Man left his natural state and developed spiritually. However, this is not a constant progression because the new, higher level can and is misused, bringing man to the state which is even lower than the natural (525). How is it possible that spiritual progress can take place and yet can bring society to a moral downfall? In the spirit of Rousseau, Kozel’skii seems to have answered – because of science, or rather, because reason tries to

have an upper hand. Reason by itself does not guarantee individual or social happiness. Reason has to be based on morality; that is, the rational dimension has to be guided by a moral dimension. Reason by itself introduces rules and laws which can be amoral, and although they introduce some social order, the order is not desirable. Morality should be a guiding force, or, as Kant at about the same time phrased it, practical reason has priority over theoretical reason. The cure? Basically, hard work.

“Bringing a big society to a state of happiness is a task, which does not depend on beneficial activity of nature but, quite the contrary, on long-term and hard work which at least, as it seems, is not without success” (539). The nation has to be polished (536). The best way to establish good morals in a nation and polish it is through the proper upbringing of children. The will should be molded first, then reason (532). The usual method of infusing the child with knowledge before moral rules is improper (533). Those, however, who are not amenable to the infusion of virtue should not be taught any knowledge regardless of the sharpness of their reason since “a simple thief causes someone damage, a learned one will not only be insufferable, but can entirely destroy him” (534).

Kozel’skii proposed a number of specific guidelines for an ideal society some very progressive – from hanging portraits of well-deserving people everywhere (535) to requiring that the differences in status among people should be small (534); forbidding superiors from humiliating subordinates (535); requiring that each man should have a job sufficient to support him and his family (536); that children of political leaders should go with others to public schools (538); a remarkable requirement of an eight-hour work day, six days a week (536); demanding moderation and condemning luxury (537-38).<sup>15</sup> That is, Kozel’skii demanded more democracy in society, more equality between citizens in terms of status and labor. These rules alone indicate that Kozel’skii could not have hoped for the improvement of the moral level in Russia without a major restructuring of society. Needless to say, he hardly could have expected a nod to this change from Catherine II and the nobility. He was relatively vague about the political system he would like to see in the future. Following

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<sup>15</sup> The condemnation of luxury is the major topic of *On the corruption of morals in Russia*, of Kozel’skii’s contemporary, Michail Shcherbatov.

Montesquieu and Rousseau, he listed four types of government, and defined the republican government as one based on virtue and in which “the common usefulness is the basis of all human virtues and legislation” (528).<sup>16</sup> His allegiance seems to have been on the side of republicanism when he stated that “no nation can be made virtuous in any other way than by uniting a particular usefulness for each man with common usefulness for all” (530). This was as openly as could have been stated in the autocratic system, where a dissenting political opinion could lead to the scaffold, to Siberia, or at least to jail (cf. later fate of Radishchev and Novikov). But Kozel'skii was not an all-out republican, not even a revolutionary. He was not principally against monarchy if the monarch was a wise ruler, although, he saw such an occurrence to be rare, almost “without an example” (524). In the preface to his translation of David Chiffin's book he discussed the Roman king Numa Pompilius as an example of a benevolent monarch, “a distinguished emperor of immortal remembrance”, Peter I and, of course, the current tsarina, Catherine II, “an incomparable monarch”, who “carries in her heart the image of divine justice” and “is guided by divine providence bringing with her the holiness of her laws”.<sup>17</sup>

#### A s s e s s m e n t

Kozel'skii's presentation of philosophy is largely disappointing. He presented an elaborate classification of parts of philosophy which is both confusing and serves ultimately little purpose.<sup>18</sup> For example, the problem of the soul was included in logic, metaphysics, and jurisprudence, but we

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. A. A. Златопольская, *Проблема общественного договора в зеркале русской мысли века Екатерины. Восприятие идей Руссо и Монтескье*, in Т. В. Артемьева, М. И. Микешин (ред.), *Международная конференция “Екатерина Великая: эпоха российской истории”: Тезисы докладов (Санкт-Петербург, 26-29 авг. 1996 г.)*, СПб., СПбНЦ, 1996, сс. 58-59.

<sup>17</sup> Я. П. Козельский [*Предисловие к переводу книги Шоффина “История славных государей и великих генералов...”*], in С. А. Покровский (ред.), *Юридические произведения прогрессивных русских мыслителей: вторая половина XVIII века*, М., Госуд. Изд. юридической литературы, 1959, сс. 307-311.

<sup>18</sup> A nice diagram of the classification is provided by Т. В. Артемьева, *История метафизики в России XVIII века*, СПб., Алетейя, 1996, с. 300.

learn surprisingly little about the soul itself and the nature of its cooperation with the body. Theoretical philosophy in Kozel'skii's presentation was limited to a list of definitions, many of them trivial, whereby he forgot his own admonition that "we should not think that all objects in the world can and should be defined" (435). The entire discussion of theoretical philosophy is inept and there is no use for it in his discussion of practical philosophy.<sup>19</sup> The theoretical philosophy is largely a trimmed version of the Wolffian presentation of it in that Kozel'skii excluded theology and large parts of philosophical psychology. What is left constitutes a disharmonious whole with missing parts, giving a distorted image of philosophical problems. His theoretical philosophy is a dilettantish work that could hardly be used as a textbook. His practical philosophy fares only slightly better by including several interesting observations, aphorisms, and advices, which, most of the time, are rather loosely connected with philosophy in general and could be made by any keen observer of the political and social life of the time.

Kozel'skii was insensitive to philosophical problems and, seeing a multitude of solutions to particular problems, simply rejected the problems from philosophy in a positivistic fashion. In particular, theology was rejected. However, a clear severance with theology was not accomplished. Kozel'skii was clearly a believer in the existence and power of God, and yet he could not decide whether he should refer to God in his philosophical discussions or not. Philosophy was to him an avenue leading to the knowledge of God and also, as stated in the *Arguments of two Indians*, the most important task for a citizen was the acknowledgment and honor of the supreme being (556).<sup>20</sup> But for a believer even in a distant, deistic God such references were sometimes unavoidable. God is the creator of all things and the problem of a primal, universal causality must be traced back to God. Kozel'skii tried to discuss the natural and social developments in the world as performed by natural and social forces alone, and

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<sup>19</sup> Therefore, when the editor of *Юридические произведения прогрессивных русских мыслителей: вторая половина XVIII века* decided not to include Kozel'skii's discussion of theoretical philosophy in his anthology, the reader will not notice anything missing.

<sup>20</sup> The other two duties are the recognition and honor of the supreme ruler and love of one's neighbor.



yet God appeared to be providential through miracles and His presence in history. And so, on the one hand, his discussion of the development of society indicated that God, in the spirit of deism, did not appear to have any influence on social progress. Significantly, Kozel'skii never mentioned the role of religion in this development<sup>21</sup> and if the rules of societal conduct were related to religion, they were not really discussed (cf. how little we learn from him about the nature of divine laws and rules). On the other hand, he mentioned the almighty God who allowed for some “useless transformations” in society since “He is an artist and we are His clay from which He according to His will makes vessels unto honor and dishonor” (528 with an allusion to Rom. 9:21). Also, as we read in his preface to Ludvig Holberg's Danish history, “if God's providence had not set some limits on human fury and rage, humankind would have perished long time ago”.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, as stated in the preface to Friedrich Moser's book, “God's providence for happiness of humankind put in the world supreme sovereigns” who “have authority given by God” to rule as it pleases them.<sup>23</sup>

Only in his last work, *Arguments of two Indians*, did Kozel'skii reveal himself as an author of some philosophical profundity. The book is fairly technical and limited in scope to physics and a philosophical discussion of contemporary problems related to inertia, gravity, motion and rest, properties of matter, and the like. The author, a scientist himself, felt at home with the subject, notwithstanding a somewhat unsettling statement that he did not know which of the current theories was correct (607). Out of the four books Kozel'skii wrote, *Arguments of two Indians* was his best, and *Philosophical propositions* was by far his least significant achievement. It is certainly not a “significant monument”. Instead, it is a commendable attempt by an author not quite skilled in philosophy and quite insensitive to its problems. But counting it among historical monuments is quite another matter (it is interesting that Gukovskii in his discussion of Kozel'skii's

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<sup>21</sup> Cf. Ю. Я. Коган, *Просветитель XVIII века Я. П. Козельский*, cit., с. 174.

<sup>22</sup> Я. П. Козельский, *Предисловие к переводу “Истории датской” Голберга*, in Щипанов, *Избранные произведения русских мыслителей второй половины XVIII века*, cit., с. 625.

<sup>23</sup> Я. П. Козельский, *Предисловие к переводу книги Мозера “Государь и министр”*, *Ibidem*, с. 641.

views quotes from Kozel'skii's prefaces to his translations, from *Arguments of two Indians*, mentions his two technical textbooks, but never even mentions the philosophy textbook).<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Г. А. Гуковский, *Очерки по истории русской литературы и общественной мысли XVIII века*, Л., Художественная литература, 1938, сс. 44-53.