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Author: Dr. Olesya Turkina  
Russian Federation

RUSSIAN KOSMOS: IMAGINARY SPACE FLIGHTS

**Abstract**

Olesya Turkina Russian Kosmos: Imaginary Space Flights

The talk will be dedicated to the ideas of interplanetary voyages represented in the philosophy, science-fiction literature and films made in Russia from the end of 19th century till 1960th. The Russian cosmos was not a metaphor, but new vision of the world. It enabled humans to first symbolically and then actually fly into Space. Russian cosmos was a dream of cohesive Universe which might be made fit for human habitation. This dream was realized in ideas of Russian cosmism, in Russian Avant-garde and in Soviet Space program directed to interplanetary flights and adaptation to extraterrestrial conditions.

The imaginary Space voyage starts with Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, known as the ‘father of Soviet cosmonautics’, along with the artists of the Russian avant-garde (Kazimir Malevish, Ilya Chashnik, Mikhail Matyushin. . . ) and science-fiction writers (Tsiolkovsky himself, Alexander Bogdanov, Alexey Belyaev. . . ). Kazimir Malevich wrote to Mikhail Matyushin in 1916 “My new painting does not belong to the Earth alone [ . . . ] Indeed, in man and his mind there is striving for space and an inclination to take off from the globe Earth”. Malevich’s “Supremus 56” composition (1916) is recognized by cosmonauts as embodiment of ISS today.

Space flights became the subject of popular science films at the very beginning of the era of practical space exploration. In 1933 Tsiolkovsky made an “Album of Cosmic Journey”, collection of drawings to the first Soviet Space film “Cosmic Journey” produced in 1935 by film director Vasily Zhuravlev. In the 1950-60th the director and documentary-maker Pavel Klushantsev created a new genre of science fiction documentary. His film ‘Road to the Stars’ (1957) had a triumphant success in the USSR and abroad. Stanley Kubrick has once revealed that Klyshantsev’s film pointed him to the zero-gravity effect and others technical innovations in representations of Space flights. In the 1960th Klushantsev made popular science films dedicated to the exploration of Moon and Mars.

The Soviet cosmonaut Alexei Leonov, who in 1965 became the first human to walk in space, sketched in colour pencil on paper unusual optical phenomena. He saw defined layers of colour in the Earth’s crepuscular horizon. Alexei Leonov is known as artist cosmonaut who produced a lot of pictures on the Space subject alone and together with Andrei Sokolov, science fiction artist. The tradition to embodied Space voyages continues till nowadays in photos made by cosmonauts Sergey Krikalev and Yrui Baturin.