

# SOCIO-PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ESOTERIC PICTURE OF THE WORLD

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**ABSTRACT.** Socio-cultural changes taking place around the world require the study the trends in the philosophical of the world. Advances in science and technology have made it possible for humanity to discover aspects of the scientific landscape that are unknown to mankind. From time immemorial, esotericism has been viewed as a mysterious, unique form of knowledge that stands alongside scientific, religious, and everyday forms of knowledge. The emergence of esoteric knowledge and teachings on the world stage as a result of the crisis of socio-cultural life, the deformation of society in the spiritual and cultural sphere, the development of esoteric ideas after the crisis of traditional religious teachings can be the basis for scientific research.

**KEYWORDS:** esotericism, socio-philosophical analysis, philosophy, social consciousness, thinking, natural sciences, knowledge, hermetic philosophy, eastern and western esoteric traditions.

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## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The purpose of this study is to study the relationship between esotericism and the scientific picture of the world and a philosophical and methodological analysis of the secrets of ancient hermetism and the development of modern esotericism. The methodological basis of this analysis was provided by general scientific methods such as theoretical and logical and systems analysis, historical and comparative analysis. An important contribution to the historical and literary foundations of the research are the works of Osho, Trimengem, Ghosh, Krishnamurti, O.A. Ivanova, Goodrick-Clark, F. Yeitz, E Torchinov, N.A. Shermukhamedova, Sh. Kakhkharova and many others. In the course of this study, the author carefully analyzes esotericism as an ancient form of non-scientific knowledge, where

intuition and traditionalism are related. In addition, the esoterical doctrines of the West and East are analyzed via dialectical method.

## INTRODUCTION

It is clear from the development of philosophical thought that esoteric knowledge is a science that has been covered and hidden since the time of the ancient Egyptians. Early esoteric ideas were manifested in various forms and shapes in various rituals and customs that originated in Ancient Egypt, India, Greece, and Rome. There is important historical evidence that the first esoteric schools operated in ancient Egypt in the 8th-10th millennia BC. During this period, esotericism advanced generalized philosophical views about the world (and the place of man in it). Esotericism is shaped as a doctrine that allows one to understand the inner nature of things and events and their hidden interrelationships. In ancient Egyptian esotericism, important ideas are put forward that prove that all things and events in existence began with reason and love.<sup>1</sup>

The division of esotericism into a specific field of knowledge and its view as an important component of the sciences, especially the science of philosophy, became apparent in the late twentieth century. This is because attention is paid to the emergence and spread of esoteric knowledge in society, the social determination of knowledge, the forms of its transmission and storage, as well as the social conditioning of different types of thinking in different periods. However, in the study of esotericism as a socio-cultural phenomenon, it is of practical importance to analyze its role in the cognitive process as a more important factor in the choice of this methodology. With the ascend of Christianity on the historical stage, the relationship between science and esotericism did not decline, but began to intensify. When Christian writers such as Augustine, Lactantius, and others wrote about the "wisdom of the word," they realized that it contained, first of all, a complex of scientific, religious, philosophical, and esoteric ideas, and that it was contrary to Christianity. Thus, until the New Age, science was interpreted as a verbal worldview. It is only by the eighteenth century that we can observe attempts to separate science as an independent cultural component. Some authors associate the term "esotericism" with ancient theology. For example, researcher V.V. Vinokurov connects the term esoteric with the division of drama on religious themes into internal and external. At the same time, he believes that the so-called esoteric-religious teachings are available only to a narrow circle of people. From

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<sup>1</sup>Эзотеризм // Энциклопедия. -Мн. ,2002. - С. 971-972.

this point of view, in the teachings of ancient authors, esotericism appears as an inner, mysterious, hidden world.

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## **RESULTS**

The main result of the work is to determine the place of the esoteric worldview in philosophy and science and the main feature of interdisciplinary research. The peak of this trend is characterized by the emergence of the direction of positivism in philosophy. The connection between science and esotericism is in line with the periods of the birth and subsequent development of European science. Science originated in ancient Greece with rational foundations, methods convinced by experimental means. Early thinkers were not concerned with distinguishing between scientific research, philosophical studies, and the teachings of esotericism. This can be clearly seen, for example, in the activities of Pythagoras, Neopythagoreans and Neoplatonists.

## **DISCUSSION**

In general, one of the commonalities for esotericism in all regions is the phenomenon of revealing this secret knowledge and treating it as a practical activity. This phenomenon is, or rather was, very common in India. From the point of view of initiating secret (Vedic) knowledge, three of the Indian quartet caste system (Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Shudras) have the opportunity to formally gain esoteric knowledge, and the representatives of these castes perform the ritual of purification (upanayana) from childhood. By being born twice, these three layers are markedly different from those born once. Furthermore, the esotericism of these two births is one-sided and imperfect, because, first of all, the "introduction to the Vedas" occurs when a person reaches puberty and not according to his own will, but according to family, lineage and caste.

Therefore, the main essence in Indian esotericism is the search for elements of initiation among adult individuals. In part, we come across information about this in the Upanishads, and these sources speak of the lack of “external” knowledge on the way to attaining the higher Atman. For example, in Chandogya-upanishada (Chapter VII), Narad, who has gone through all the stages of esoteric knowledge but has not been able to assimilate Atman knowledge, says: "Teacher, I know that this knowledge is just empty words and I have no knowledge of Atman."<sup>2</sup>The "Master" here was the wise Sanatkumara, who knew Atman (he was considered an atmavit). Although they are both related to Vedic wisdom, there is a clear spiritual difference between them. Therefore, the doctrine of the Upanishads, which is considered esoteric in nature, embodies esoteric mystical knowledge not only for its secrecy and mystery, but also because it is too deep and hidden for understanding without the necessary mental preparation. On the other hand, it is also an esoteric stage, consisting of the acquisition of Vedic sciences and knowledge before the stage of practical preparation, which is an important part of the process of understanding reality.

An approximate new wave of Indian esoteric teachings dates back to the early twentieth century. It was during this period that the esoteric views of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, Krishnamurti, Chandra Mohan Djein (Osho) and others became popular and spread. It is obvious that the representatives of the Indian esoteric world have esoteric groups that study these texts and carry out their activities, they also try to lead an esoteric lifestyle. But this way of life could not be called esotericism itself, but a copy of it. Not only esoteric texts, but also the personal life paths of esotericists draw special attention.

Ramakrishna, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, Krishnamurti, etc., were individuals with a broad outlook, worthy of their chosen way of life. They used fantastic, inhuman abilities to change their bodies and minds, describing their experiences, their “esoteric states,” and their worlds. Their masterpieces of traditional European culture - competition, personality, intelligence, serious criticism, the fact that their way of life does not depend on cultural traditions, their ability to reorganize their lives, souls, bodies and rebuild their lives independently are appreciated. Moreover, some of these ideals and the fantasy of the worlds have been preserved, and the withdrawal of the esoteric from the worries of daily life has also been preserved.

It was during this period that it became clear that at the center of the esoteric world lay the image of the supernatural. Indeed, for example, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh

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<sup>2</sup>Қаранг: Чхандогъя-упанишада // Упанишады. В 3-х кн. Кн. 3. М., 1992. 119-с.

called people who have traversed the esoteric path from beginning to end “Gnostic beings,” and by merging them with the Universe, they can practically achieve eternity, turning pain and suffering into endless pleasure. True, in the meantime, the image is also quite distorted. Among other esotericists, Krishnamurti, unique, humane, by all dimensions - he was a shining expression of esoteric genius.

The reality mastered by Krishnamurti, in addition to being esoteric, had a completely personal and distinctive psychological appearance. According to his personal circumstances and worldviews, Krishnamurti sought to have a real reality that carried with him the category of freedom, individual consciousness, light, ideal (justice, beauty, truth, spirituality, etc.) as its essential aspect.

In our opinion, it is not possible to elaborate on Indian esotericism, which in itself exhibits a deep and multifaceted feature. In general, however, esotericism is of great importance in Indian religious and philosophical systems, and it mainly covers practical aspects. The development of esotericism in India, on the other hand, is associated with the deviation of the ancient Indian Vedic religion along with the search for ways to increase the effectiveness of sacrificial rites. Vedic esotericism, embedded in the Akhtarvaveda and the Upanishads, merged with local mystical-magical practices, resulting in various forms of esotericism in a relatively advanced form, which are evident within the Tantric schools.

The esoteric image of the world has an epistemological meaning in the understanding, knowledge, and activity of the very essence of human existence. In turn, this naturally expresses the importance of studying esoteric culture, the esoteric landscape of the world, as well as the study of the place and role of the human factor in the esoteric space. At the same time, it determines the formation, functioning and functioning of esoteric teachings in the consciousness of modern society and in the experience of social life.

We can see the balance in the scientific and esoteric landscape of the world aimed at understanding existence. This is because all views on the basis of theoretical and ideological approaches to existence are covered and classified according to their nature.

At the same time, the esoteric nature of the views of the representatives of medieval Eastern philosophy and the teachings of mysticism has a deep meaning. Of particular importance is Abu Nasr al-Farabi's classification of being and his approach to the question of esoteric being. Pharoah also calls the essence of the esoteric being "the verbal mind." But here the concept of "mind" does not mean human logical thinking, or even theoretical thinking. In Pharoah, the meaning of this concept is in harmony with the ideas of the Pythagoreans, Plato, Neoplatonists, and other similar esotericists of the Universe that there is a great conscious will of

the whole being. In other words, in all esoteric views, it is said that the most fundamental knowledge, the most perfect knowledge, lies the most fundamental basis of existence. Therefore, we are not mistaken in calling the science of mysticism esoteric knowledge. Its mystery is characterized not only by the fact that it is beyond the bounds of reason, but also by the fact that it is deliberately kept secret and requires a great deal of effort to achieve.

Indeed, various ways and means aimed at understanding the essence of esoteric science in the universe have also been interpreted separately by mystics. In particular, it consists of exercises and efforts to achieve the highest inner goal of Muhammad al-Ghazali, which is based on moral purification and human perfection.<sup>3</sup> It is the belief that the highest truth can be attained by relying on the divine spirit. It should be noted that the esoteric views that emerged in connection with the development of mythological, religious, philosophical and secular thinking in Eastern philosophy later took precedence in the formation of exoteric and esoteric knowledge in Islamic philosophy. In Islamic philosophy and other similar Eastern philosophical teachings, the idea that all mankind can and must achieve perfection is put forward. At the same time, the basic philosophical idea is that through esoteric knowledge, the whole of humanity, at least a large part of it, has reached the stage of perfection. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the essence of such oriental esoteric thinking, we must pay special attention to two main things. First, there is no consensus, even among the views of Eastern philosophers, on the question of the need for all mankind to attain perfection. Second, it is important to understand the deep meaning of the achievements in mysticism, especially in the Naqshbandi sect, which is the deep root of Islamic spiritual culture in Central Asia.

The main goal of mystical esotericism is to develop towards Allah on the basis of liberation from the low self, and it requires purification, intensity, radiance, and the perfection of your existing spiritual and moral qualities. Spiritual life gives you the power to manifest God; it develops each person until his or her character is fully revealed and able to express himself or herself as much as possible.

It is safe to say that mystics are representatives of esotericism in Islam. However, the ideas of esotericism, as noted in the above paragraph, have long been the basis of specific mythological, religious and philosophical teachings in Eastern and Western philosophy. For example, esotericism and its unique idea of "self-knowledge" had a very high place in ancient Greek philosophy. This position was

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<sup>3</sup> Абу Ҳомид Ғаззолий. Ихёу улумид-дин. Илм китоби. – Т.: Моварауннаҳр, 2003. 144 б.

stated by the "Seven Wise Men" at the entrance to the pyramid of the goddess Apollo in Greece, where the call "Man know thyself" was written, and later Socrates always emphasized this call. Plato, a disciple of Socrates, is also known and famous for his examples of following this call.

The relationship between esotericism and psychology in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries can be explored in more detail in the monograph "Science for the Soul"<sup>4</sup> by German researchers K. Trailer and H. Wolfram's "Science Scholars: Psychological Research and Parapsychology in Germany from 1870 to 1939".<sup>5</sup>In general, in the practice of the study of esotericism in the field of natural sciences, it was necessary to determine whether the objective effect on the human body actually exists or not at all. As a result, science has tried to justify this proportion and difference.

Esotericism is seen as an alternative to the humanitarian approach, primarily as an important cultural phenomenon. In doing so, he taught religion, art, and so on. side by side with. In this field, the scientific hypotheses of research on the physical interdependence, the truthfulness or falsity of the teachings of esotericism, fall spontaneously to a secondary level, or leave no place for them. The basis of this approach is the historical aspects, the criteria for evaluating esotericism from a historical point of view. Therefore, the importance of the historical approach in the study of esotericism is emphasized by prominent representatives of the academic study of esotericism N. Goodrick-Clark, V. Hanegraaf.

The influence of social and psychological conditions on the growth of interest in esoteric teachings in the social space and the increase in the amount of differentiation of sciences is widely studied.

The growing and intensifying interest in esotericism has given rise to various esoteric views on the spiritual existence of man as a specific part of culture. In turn, the cultural factor plays an important role in the institutionalization of such esoteric teachings. After all, while any social institution performs certain functions, its existence depends on the level of need for these functions by society<sup>6</sup>. Another important aspect when studying the reasons for the growing interest in esotericism is, first of all, to identify the functions performed by a particular group of esoteric knowledge in the social structure. Some authors associate esotericism with ancient theology. For example, researcher VV Vinokurov connects the term esoteric with the division of drama on religious themes into internal and external. At the same

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<sup>4</sup>Treitel C. A science for the Soul: Occultism and the Genesis of the German Modern. Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 2004. –366. p.

<sup>5</sup>Wolffram H. The Stepchildren of Science: Psychical Research and Parapsychology in Germany, c. 1870-1939. – Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2009. 342. – p.

<sup>6</sup>Парсонс Т. О социальных системах. – Москва, 2002. 104. с.

time, he believes that the so-called esoteric religious teachings are available only to a narrow circle of people<sup>7</sup>. Because, in essence, esoteric knowledge, according to the nature of antiquity, was considered as knowledge that belongs only to the "chosen".

Researcher N. Goodrick-Clark makes the following observations on esotericism: "In defining the concept of esotericism from a behavioral and cultural point of view, we have transferred it from the philosophical and spiritual inner world to the category of reflective (involuntary) culture."<sup>8</sup>. N. Goodrick-Clark argues that simplification of esotericism should be avoided through this.

The importance of esoteric views in the development of philosophical knowledge is manifested primarily in the theoretical and methodological basis. In spiritism, for example, the use of concrete, order-based issues in the nineteenth century became an important factor in the view that research was an occult emergency. In particular, the science of psychology, with its solid experimental base, has sought to integrate into the natural sciences. At the same time, the research of esotericism has been carried out without any doubt, in a natural direction, and through the emerging psychology.

In addition to internal causes (crisis of worldview), external factors also influence the growth of interest in esotericism. An example is the translation of the hermetic corpus during the Renaissance. In the 21st century, Hindu religious texts have led to an increase in interest in such external factors as esotericism. In this, along with orientalists, esoteric scholars - E.P. Blavatsky, A.P. Sinnet, E.I. and N.K. It is worth noting the interest of the Roerichs.

Underlying the connection between esotericism and philosophy is the rational measurement of esoteric teachings. Esoteric teachings are universal in nature. At the same time, esoteric teachings impose specific ethical requirements. This requires that every follower of esotericism, ideally, have their own experience of gnosis. This experience is formed as a result of various esoteric experiences (rituals, rituals, meditation, etc.).

We can also observe the connection between science and esoteric interests in the work of the famous physicist V. Pauli. W. Pauli's work is strongly influenced by K. G. Jung<sup>9</sup>. Today, we can see among scientists people trying to combine the knowledge of science in their field with esotericism. In 1975, F. Capra published a program manual called "Dao of Physics". In it, the author concludes: "The development of Western science can be seen as interesting in the course of

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<sup>7</sup> Винокуров В.В. Фигура круга в эзотерических учениях. – Москва, 2008.. 66. с

<sup>8</sup> Goodrick-Clarke N. The Western Esoteric Traditions. 13. p.

<sup>9</sup> Каранг: Линдорф Д. Юнг и Паули. – Москва, 2013. –282. с.



observing evolution. Western science, which has chosen the path of rationalism, will eventually abandon mystical foundations and sources, and will further alienate our worldview from the worldview in the Far East.

We can clearly see that the main features of the philosophical analysis of the esoteric landscape of the world have been manifested in different approaches in different periods and regions. As a result of the analysis of the theoretical and methodological bases of the doctrines related to the esoteric landscape of the world, we can see that the content of esoteric knowledge is directly related to the scientific and non-scientific development of society. The emergence and development of scientific knowledge in the ancient world and in the Middle Ages, the emergence and development of classical science, non-classical science, post-classical science, in turn, changes in the scientific landscape of the world and ideas that complement knowledge, without limiting the scope of research for human scientific activity. expanding. As a result of such changes, a range of studies related to esotericism and the status of esoteric knowledge has been formed.

Issues related to the modern esoteric worldview and the interdependence, connections and relationships of science are extremely difficult issues in the history of Western civilization. Although many opinions have been expressed on this subject, it should be noted that no definite, clear definition of the interrelationship of these two spheres of Western culture has been developed to date. There are two different answer options to this question: either they can be interpreted as two completely opposite areas of Western culture, or, conversely, as integral parts of a particular holistic cultural phenomenon that is very close to each other. We can evaluate other options in this regard as types of the same two different views above.

Esotericism is a specific aspect of intellectual freedom or realization of thought as the search for and systematization of the ideal being and the realization of one's own path to perfection, where everyone has the right to spiritual creation, to the free expression of their views. This right is not limited to the norm of socio-ideological prohibition. If this phenomenon did not exist, it would be necessary to create this field of transcendental (beyond the bounds of human thought) research in which everyone tries to express their concern about the current state of the world and find ways to overcome it individually. In other words, it is a field of spiritual free activity of man similar to that which exists in art. There are masters of their profession, that is, professionals, and at the same time there are a large number of innate talents without diplomas, who perform their own dances and sing their own songs. The diversity and diversity of the "repertoire" is explained by this fact. It can't be banned, it's very difficult to regulate, and it's easy to explain.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the forms of esotericism, like religion, were considered as forms of "belief in divinity" and were equated on this basis. Eventually, this approach was severely criticized by the general public, particularly the Russian-speaking academic community. This is due to the fact that mysticism is closer to religion, and also because it relies on the experience of ideas outside the "universe", it embodies the basic features of esotericism and does not tend to go beyond the boundaries of its natural truth.

In this regard, in particular, the Russian researcher E. Torchinov in his book "World Religions: Cross-Border Experience" sees magic and sorcery through "belief in divinity" and emphasizes: "First, no religion" believes in divinity. "Second, the concepts of divinity and fiction are not mutually exclusive even in the interpretation of the former, and third, magic is neither a belief in divinity nor a miracle"<sup>10</sup>. In conclusion, E. Torchinov concludes: "Religion and magic are completely different activities, which, in turn, can be associated with the relationship between religion and science only in some dubious sense."<sup>11</sup>. This is in essence similar to the hypothesis put forward by Versluis. That is, witchcraft can be seen as cosmological gnosis (related to the universe, the natural world). At the same time, E. Torchinov puts forward a certain similarity between science and magic. The notion that magic is linked to the history of science is found in the works of many researchers. The field of esotericism is connected with religion by mysticism, and with science - by magic. This can also be seen from the fact that the history of European science has a strong connection with the teachings of esotericism.

In addition to the works devoted to the research of J. Bruno, Francis Yates created works containing a number of other esoteric doctrines. Among them is the work "Rosenkreitsercha Marifat". This interpretation proves that esotericism played a key role in the emergence of modern European rationalism. This will inspire many researchers, inspired by F. Yates' research, to approach the subject more carefully. As a result, many new studies explore the effects of esotericism on New Age philosophy and science.

We can also observe the connection between science and esoteric interests in the work of the famous physicist V. Pauli. W. Pauli's work is strongly influenced by K. G. Jung<sup>12</sup>. Today, we can see among scientists people trying to combine the knowledge of science in their field with esotericism. In 1975, F. Capra published a

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<sup>10</sup>Торчинов Е. Религии мира: опыт запредельного. Психотехника и трансперсональные состояния. – СПб, 2005. – 64 с.

<sup>11</sup>Торчинов Е. Религии мира: опыт запредельного. Психотехника и трансперсональные состояния. – СПб, 2005. – 64 с.

<sup>12</sup>Каранг: Линддорф Д. Юнг и Паули. – Москва, 2013. – 282-р.

program manual called "Physics Daosi". In it, the author concludes: "The development of Western science can be seen as interesting in the observation of evolution. Western science, which has chosen the path of rationalism, will eventually abandon mystical foundations and sources, and will further alienate our worldview from the worldview in the Far East. However, in the last stages of its development, Western science came out of its shell and began to return to the teachings of Eastern and ancient Greek philosophers.<sup>13</sup> This conclusion should be supported by various examples. Eastern and Western ways of thinking have always demanded each other.

In general, esotericism calls for the acceptance of many things as beliefs as a natural reality. Its essence lies in relying on myths and legends, testimonies in historical stories, thus filling the ranks of its adherents.

NA Shermukhamedova expresses the esoteric nature of the universe as follows: The magic of all pagan nations is based on this very view. This suggestive element is still very powerful, especially in medicine. The problems of suggestion and hypnosis are actively discussed in scientific circles. At the same time, the use of similarly powerful means of influence outside the scope of official authority is declared to be devoid of any significance or power.<sup>14</sup>

The direction of positivism, in its essence, argues that the natural sciences do not need any philosophical foundations. Accordingly, the solution of every problem that is important and necessary for human life will of course be substantiated by the natural sciences. However, not all scholars have followed this interpretation. In this way, the features of the worldview associated with esotericism have been preserved in most of them. Examples are U.Crooks, K.F.Tsellner, V.Ostwald, V.Reich, K.E.Tsiolkovsky, V.Pauli, K.G.Yung, who belong to the XIX-XX centuries. While each of these scholars made significant contributions to science within their respective fields, the ideas of esotericism served as a unique worldview for each of their scientific activities.

## **Conclusion**

First, philosophy is a rational form of worldview, so it feels irrational knowledge in knowing the world. Esotericism explores being in a way that is higher than emotion. It should be noted that the esoteric view of the world is not only the basis of the theoretical sciences, but also important in the system of social relations.

Second, by determining the status of esoteric teachings on the world stage, it is of interdisciplinary importance to demonstrate the relevance of these ideas to

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<sup>13</sup>Капра Ф. Дао физики. – СПб, 1994. – 14-15 с.

<sup>14</sup>Шермухамедова Н.А. Фан фалсафаси. – Т., Ношир. 2013. 191-193 б

scientific realities and to study them philosophically in depth. This, in turn, provides ample opportunity for a systematic analysis of the dependence of occultism, spiritualism, and mysticism on esoteric cognition. It should be noted that different strata of society have the opportunity to choose a specific expression of esotericism. Intellectuals seek psychophysiological convenience and study it from an axiological-technological point of view. The rest of the population assimilates some of its elements. Esotericism, in its high stage of development, encompasses the social aspects of occultism: medical magic, love magic, the art of logic, astrology, and so on.

Third, the genesis and developmental trends of the esoteric landscape of the world have their own objective reasons. It is primarily the product of the elite part of society's desire to create unconventional forms of spiritual and ideological influence on other people, to have invisible power, to have a unique empirical experience, to use ancient closed knowledge and traditions. Secondly, the most important elements of esotericism are closed knowledge and a mechanism of "vitality" based on irrational methods of knowledge and allowing spiritual students to adapt to new historical conditions. For this reason, the social dimension of esotericism implies the performance of a number of specific functions. These include: ideological, compensatory, communicative, regulatory, cultural transmission and social management, ideological support, and so on.

Fourth, the place and role of esotericism in the life of society is characterized by the extent to which it affects politics, art, religion, and philosophy, which are an important part of any cultural value system, and the attractiveness of supernatural ideas on the most important issues of human life. The existence of fundamental ideas and closed rules in esotericism, which ensure the spiritual stability of human life, and their universal character, is also a priority in the development of modern philosophical research in this area.