

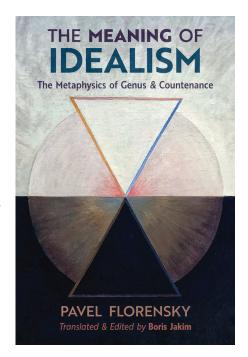
The Meaning of Idealism The Metaphysics of Genus and Countenance

PAVEL FLORENSKY

Translated by Boris Jakim

PAVEL FLORENSKY'S TREATMENT OF PLATONISM IN THE present work is one of the most important studies on this subject ever written. The great scholar of antiquity, Aleksei Losev, called *The Meaning of Idealism* the most profound work on Platonism and Idealism produced in the 20th century. It is a journey: from Plato and Aristotle to Neoplatonism, from Neoplatonism to Medieval theories of being and knowing, from these theories to Orthodox spirituality, from Orthodox spirituality to Vedic mysticism, from Vedic mysticism to astrology, from astrology to modern science—including relativity, the mathematical theory of invariants, and the multidimensional universe. In the course of this journey Florensky corroborates his theories with etymological discussions and analyses of modern art, including the works of Rodin and Picasso.

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Arguably the greatest Russian theologian of the early 20th century, **PAVEL FLORENSKY** (1882–1937) also did original work in such fields as liturgical aesthetics, iconographic theory, the philosophy of names, theoretical mathematics, and even electrical engineering. He became a Russian Orthodox priest in 1911, while remaining deeply involved with the cultural, artistic, and scientific developments of his time. Arrested by the Soviets in 1928, he returned to his scholarly activities until 1933, when he was sentenced to ten years of labor in Siberia. There he continued his scientific work and ministered to his fellow prisoners until his death four years later.