

## KANT'S COPERNICAN TURN IN KUDRYAVTSEV- PLATONOV'S SYSTEM OF TRANSCENDENTAL MONISM<sup>1</sup>

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*Kudryavtsev-Platonov is an outstanding representative of Russian ecclesiastical-academic philosophy, who stands out from his colleagues in that he often refers to Kantian philosophy in his works. There is no doubt that the formation of his epistemological conception was influenced by the Kantian Copernican turn, but what exactly this influence consisted in has not yet been investigated. To answer this question I first determine under what circumstances Kudryavtsev's acquaintance with Kant's epistemology occurred. In particular, I analyzed Kudryavtsev's previously unpublished manuscript materials for lectures on metaphysics and the history of New Philosophy from the early period of his teaching career at the Moscow Theological Academy. One may conclude from this that the Russian philosopher was more likely to have been exposed to the ideas of Kantian philosophy through interpreters, who popularized Kant's philosophy, as well as through historical-philosophical literature and critical writings of later Kantians. I then conduct a comparative analysis between Kudryavtsev's transcendental monism and Kant's doctrine of space, time and categories of understanding. As a result, I show that Kant's Copernican turn is one of the key principles in Kudryavtsev's transcendental monism, but not the only one. In particular, Kudryavtsev utilized Kant's concepts of apriorism and subjectivity of cognitive forms, whereby he concentrated on the philosophical ideas of F.A. Trendelenburg and W.T. Krug's transcendental syntheticism in mind.*

**Keywords:** *Philosophy, Kudryavtsev, Kant, Transcendental Monism, Trendelenburg, Krug*

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*Kudryavtsev-Platonov es un destacado representante de la filosofía eclesiástico-académica rusa, que se distingue de sus colegas por referirse con frecuencia a la filosofía kantiana en sus obras. No cabe duda de que la formación de su concepción epistemológica estuvo influida por el giro copernicano kantiano, pero aún no se ha investigado en detalle en qué consistió exactamente esta influencia. Para responder a esta cuestión, primero determino en qué circunstancias tuvo lugar el encuentro de Kudryavtsev con la epistemología de Kant. En particular, analizo materiales manuscritos inéditos de Kudryavtsev empeados en sus conferencias sobre metafísica y la historia de la nueva filosofía, pertenecientes al periodo inicial de su carrera docente en la Academia Teológica de Moscú. De ello se puede concluir que el filósofo ruso probablemente tuvo acceso a las ideas de la filosofía kantiana a través de intérpretes que popularizaron la obra de Kant, así como mediante literatura histórico-filosófica y escritos críticos de los kantianos posteriores. Posteriormente, realizo un análisis comparativo entre el monismo trascendental de Kudryavtsev y la doctrina kantiana del espacio, el tiempo y las categorías del entendimiento. Como resultado, demuestro que el giro copernicano kantiano constituye uno de los principios clave en el monismo trascendental de Kudryavtsev, aunque no el único. En particular, Kudryavtsev integró los conceptos kantianos de apriorismo y subjetividad de las formas cognitivas, considerando además las ideas filosóficas del sintetismo trascendental de F.A. Trendelenburg y W.T. Krug.*

**Palabras clave:** *Filosofía; Kudryavtsev, Kant, monismo trascendental, Trendelenburg, Krug*

## 1. Introduction

Kant's influence on Russian ecclesiastical-academic philosophy is still little researched. During the Soviet period there was virtually no such research, and in the post-Soviet period in Russia the first studies devoted to this issue were published in a collection of articles entitled *Kant's Philosophy in Russia* (1994). Fifteen years later, the first fundamental work on the subject appeared – Aleksey Krouglov's monograph, *Kant's Philosophy in Russia at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries* (2009; reprinted with corrections and additions: Kaliningrad, 2024). Outside Russia, the monographs, *Kant e l'ortodossia russa* (2017) von Vera Pozzi, and Thomas Nemeth's *Philosophy in Imperial Russia's Theological Academies* (2023) have recently been published. These studies allow us to assess the extent of the influence of Kantian philosophy on the Russian intellectual tradition and set the direction for further research. But at the same time, these works are by nature an overview and do not delve into the specific issues of Kant's influence on this or that Russian thinker.

Viktor Kudryavtsev-Platonov (hereafter Kudryavtsev) is one of the most prominent representatives of Russian ecclesiastical-academic philosophy. The study of his concept began in the 1890s, but until now there are few works devoted to the specific influence on him of Kantian philosophy in general and his theoretical philosophy in particular. The study of this subject is not unimportant for several reasons. Firstly, Kudryavtsev taught at the Moscow Theological Academy (hereafter MTA) for almost 40 years (1854–1891). It is difficult to overestimate the influence he had on the students of the MTA. These subsequently held not only teaching positions in various ecclesiastical but also in secular educational institutions, as well as senior leadership positions in the Russian Orthodox Church and in the civil service. Secondly, his philosophy represents one example of the synthesis of Christian philosophy with German philosophy, in particular with the theoretical philosophy of Kant, which allows today for a dialogue between contemporary Orthodox theologians and Kant. Third, from a historical and philosophical perspective, Kudryavtsev acts as a forerunner of more famous Russian philosophers such as Vladimir Solovyov, Sergey Bulgakov, Nikolai Berdyaev, Pavel Florensky, Sergey Trubetskoy, Evgeny Trubetskoy, and others.

The core of Kudryavtsev's philosophy is the concept of transcendental monism. The name itself already evokes associations with Kant's transcendental idealism. The Russian Kant scholar, A.N. Krouglov, has put forward an important suggestion according to which the source for Kudryavtsev's interpretation of the "transcendental" is the transcendental syntheticism of Wilhelm Traugott Krug (Krouglov, 2009, p. 482-483). This, in turn, points to the connection of Kudryavtsev's transcendental monism with the Kantian theoretical and cognitive tradition. But what is the nature of this connection? It remains to be clarified how exactly Kant's Copernican turn influenced Kudryavtsev's philosophical views. For this purpose, it is necessary first to establish the circumstances of Kudryavtsev's acquaintance with Kant's philosophy by analyzing the unpublished manuscripts of the Russian philosopher.

Then to make a comparative analysis of Kudryavtsev's epistemology, in which the concept of transcendental monism is formulated, and Kant's theoretical philosophy.

## 2. Circumstances of Kudryavtsev's Acquaintance with Kantian Philosophy

Kudryavtsev was a student of the MTA where, among other things, he studied philosophy under his teacher and predecessor in the Department of Logic and Metaphysics, Fyodor A. Golubinsky. Golubinsky himself was to some extent influenced by Kantian ideas (Rozhin, 2021), which partly explains Kudryavtsev's interest in Kant. A direct acquaintance with Kantian philosophy probably took place long before Kudryavtsev began teaching at the Department of Logic and Metaphysics of the MTA, but the first factual evidence can only be found in manuscript materials for his lectures. In 1854 he began lecturing on metaphysics and the history of ancient philosophy, and somewhat later on a course on the history of New Philosophy from Kant to Hegel (Anonym, 1905, p. 16). For these lecture courses the Russian philosopher prepared outlines, two of which will be considered further on: the outline on metaphysics, consisting of two manuscripts, (Kudryavtsev, 1854; 1854/1856/1874) and a part of the outline on the history of New Philosophy (Kudryavtsev, 1858).

The outline on metaphysics was intended for the autumn term of 1854 and was designed for 20 lectures. The first four lectures contain an introductory part devoted to a general characterization of the current state of philosophy in Russia and in Germany (Kudryavtsev, 1854, fol. 1-8). Kudryavtsev defines philosophy as "the science of the ideally real, permanent, necessary, general, true being of objects, which constitutes the beginning, essence, and goal of their being" (*ibid.*, fol. 17), and metaphysics as "the science of the Absolute and its manifestations in the real world" (*ibid.*, fol. 18).

Of the greatest interest in the first four lectures on metaphysics is the analysis of philosophical dogmatism, common sense, scepticism, criticism, and the relationship between the real and the ideal, not so much on the side of content, but rather on the side of sources for the above analysis. In the margins Kudryavtsev occasionally refers to Krug's *Fundamentalphilosophie* (*ibid.*, fol. 20, 24, 25, 28, 29) and to his second volume, *System der theoretischen Philosophie* (*ibid.*, fol. 34).

Krug, who at one time succeeded Kant in the chair of logic and metaphysics at the University of Königsberg, is also a little-studied figure today. It is known that Krug was a student of one of Kant's followers, Karl Leongard Rheingold, and is also related to the Kantian school of logic (Krouglov, 2016, pp. 441-442; Lapointe, 2018, pp. 20-22). One of the researchers of Krug's philosophy, Adolf Kemper, notes that understanding Krug's philosophy depends on understanding his *Fundamentalphilosophie* (Kemper, 1988, pp. 59-60). Thus it is necessary to elaborate on the central concept of this work, namely the concept of transcendental syntheticism, which answers the question: how do the real and the ideal relate to one another? According to Krug, they should be regarded as originally given and related to each other and the derivation of one from the other be considered as

impossible. This connection is labelled by the philosopher as ‘syntheticism,’ which he calls transcendental because it is an original fact of consciousness and as such is inexplicable and incomprehensible (Krug, 1803, p. 129). Krug argues that there is neither transcendental realism nor transcendental idealism because both, taken by themselves, are transcendent, but there is only transcendental syntheticism. In formal terms, that is, with regard to the method of philosophizing, syntheticism is criticism (*ibid.*, pp. 130-132).

Transcendental syntheticism finds proper the natural and necessary threefold conviction inherent in every man in his right mind of the existence of himself, of the existence of other things outside himself, and of the existence of a commonality between himself and these things – and maintains that these convictions cannot be substantiated by the proofs of philosophical reason, but that they are nevertheless realized as unquestionable because they are primordial (*ibid.*, p. 138; my translation – D.R.).<sup>2</sup>

Regarding the relationship between Krug’s philosophical attitudes and Kant’s, Krug himself believed that he was fairly accurate in his confession of the Kantian doctrine, although he thought it wrong to call Kant’s system transcendental idealism (Krug, 1802, p. 108; Kemper, 1988, p. 111).

In his metaphysics outline, Kudryavtsev outlines precisely Krug’s views from *Fundamentalphilosophie* concerning transcendental syntheticism. The Russian philosopher writes that philosophical syntheticism has as its initial foundation the fact of self-consciousness as the beginning of all cognition. This beginning reveals three fundamental, unchanging beliefs in the existence of our I, not-I and the relations between I and not-I (Kudryavtsev, 1854, fol. 32). Kudryavtsev would later develop this thought of Krug’s in his concept of transcendental monism (Kudryavtsev, 1914b, pp. 98-99).

The next part of Kudryavtsev’s lectures on metaphysics focuses on a step-by-step analysis of the three cognitive faculties: sensible, rational, and reasoning. It should be noted that the division of cognitive faculty into these three abilities here comes most likely from Kant, and the idea of a step-by-step analysis of these abilities was not without influence from the composition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (see Rozhin, 2023, pp. 49-59). At the same time, the formulation of epistemological tasks precisely as analyses of each individual cognitive ability refers to Krug’s *System der theoretischen Philosophie* (Krug, 1830, pp. 33-34).

Another source of Kudryavtsev’s interest in the Kantian epistemology was Friedrich Adolf Trendelenburg’s *Logical Investigations*, where one of the central concepts is the category of motion, which is defined as the original for subjective and objective forms of sensibility: space

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. „Der transzendente Synthetismus erkennt die jedem Menschen von gesundem Verstande natürliche und notwendige dreifache Überzeugung von seinem eignen Sein, von dem Sein anderer Dinge außer ihm, und von der zwischen ihm und diesen Dingen stattfindenden Gemeinschaft als gültig an und behauptet, dass diese Überzeugungen gar nicht durch Beweise von der philosophierenden Vernunft erst zu begründen, aber nichts desto weniger unumstößlich gewiss sind, weil sie ursprünglich sind.“

and time (Trendelenburg, 1862b, pp. 490-491). In the second part of his lectures on metaphysics, the Russian philosopher, concerning the doctrine of the categories of pure understanding, refers three times to the above work by Trendelenburg (Kudryavtsev, 1854/1856/1874, fol. 22, 26, 35). In his later printed works Kudryavtsev also refers to the *Logical Investigations*, making remarks on Hegel's dialectic (Kudryavtsev, 1905, p. 201; 1914a, p. 47, 63; 1914d, pp. 142-150), on the possibility of applying the categories of understanding to God (Kudryavtsev, 1914d, p. 170), and criticizing the Kantian system of categories (*ibid.*, p. 110).

It is known that Trendelenburg himself was in opposition to Kantian philosophy but, at the same time, he became one of the forerunners of neo-Kantianism (see Dmitrieva, 2007, pp. 47-53; Kallio, 2018, pp. 73-74). An analysis of the content of the *Logical Investigations* shows that Trendelenburg clearly drew on the ideas of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, but at the same time deviated rather strongly from Kant's transcendental idealism on a number of issues (Rozhin, 2023, p. 49). In particular, this concerns Trendelenburg's doctrine of space, time and categories of understanding. Kant, as is known, called them *a priori* forms of cognition, which have only subjective character (B 66; Kant, 1998, p. 171), but Trendelenburg could not fully agree with this because this position casts doubt on the reliability of empirical sciences (Trendelenburg, 1862a, p. 158). Trendelenburg saw a way out of this difficulty in recognizing space, time and categories of understanding as not only subjective but also objective, which is possible through the category of motion (Trendelenburg, 1862a, pp. 166-167, 368).

Finally, Kudryavtsev's awareness of Kantian philosophy is revealed through an analysis of his lectures on the history of New Philosophy, devoted to the main ideas of Kant, I.G. Herder, F.G. Jacobi and J.G. Fries. Here Kudryavtsev recounts the main ideas from the *Critique of Pure Reason* (Kudryavtsev, 1858, fol. 12-28), *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* (*ibid.*, fol. 28-37), *Critique of Practical Reason* (*ibid.*, fol. 37-43), *Critique of Judgement* (*ibid.*, fol. 43-51), and *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* (*ibid.*, fol. 51-64), drawing on the following popular manuals, expositions and reviews: *Handbuch der allgemeinen Geschichte der Philosophie für alle wissenschaftlich Gebildete* by E.C.G. Reinhold, *Versuch einer wissenschaftlichen Darstellung der Geschichte der neuern Philosophie* by J.E. Erdmann, *Versuch einer fasslichen Darstellung der wichtigsten Wahrheiten der neuern Philosophie für Uneingeweihte* by J.G.C.C. Kiesewetter, and probably<sup>3</sup> also, *Genetische Geschichte der Philosophie seit Kant* by Carl Fortlage (*ibid.*, fol. 2), *Geschichte der Naturphilosophie von Bacon bis auf unsere Zeit* by J. Schaller (*ibid.*, fol. 28), *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie und einer kritischen Literatur derselben* by J.G. Buhle (*ibid.*, fol. 36).

As for direct references to Kant's own works, there are few in the lecture materials: Kudryavtsev refers to the 2nd edition of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (Kudryavtsev, 1854/1856/1874, fol. 15) and to the German edition of Kant's *Prolegomena* (*ibid.*, fol. 35-36).

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3 In the text of the manuscript, only the surname is given without the title of the work.

### 3. Traces of the Kantian Copernican Turn in Kudryavtsev's Transcendental Monism

#### 3.1. Kudryavtsev's Conception of Transcendental Monism

The materials of the lectures and the reflections on cognition set out in them formed the basis for the works *Metaphysical Analysis of Empirical Cognition* (1886), *Space and time* (1886-1887), *Metaphysical Analysis of Rational Cognition* (1887–1888) and *Metaphysical Analysis of Ideal Cognition* (1888–1889), which Kudryavtsev completed and published only 30 years later. The Russian philosopher formulates the concept of transcendental monism in *Metaphysical Analysis of Empirical Cognition* in an attempt to solve the problem of the interaction between thinking and being, or – in his terminology – between the ideal and the real.

Kudryavtsev reveals his concept in the following statements. The representation of the external world is formed of two elements: subjective, belonging to the cognizing subject, and objective, originating from objects external to the cognizing subject. On the basis of this distinction Kudryavtsev draws several conclusions: a) we do not possess objective sensible cognition, since it contains a subjective element; b) in the process of cognition of the external world we deal not with things in themselves, but with their phenomena (Kudryavtsev, 1914b, p. 83–84); c) our representation of a particular object is not a representation of the actual object, but a subjective representation, located in us and having a permanent existence for us (*ibid.*, p. 96).

The distinction of two heterogeneous elements in the image of the external world requires the investigation of their ontological foundations. For the subjective element it is the inner, spiritual, immaterial being, while for the objective element it is the external, sensible, material being (*ibid.*, p. 102). Actually, the immaterial subject directly given to everyone is the I to whom something is (*ibid.*, p. 116). With regard to the I, Kudryavtsev remarks that psychical phenomena are produced not by the organism itself, but by a beginning independent of it that causes them, our independent I (*ibid.*, p. 123). If the immaterial subject, i.e. the representing self, is given directly to everyone, there is much less reason to speak of the belonging of the objective element to material being, the direct givenness of which must still be proved. The question therefore arises: what is the cause of the phenomena of our self? Here there can be two answers: either the cause of phenomena is our self, or something independent of our self (*ibid.*, p. 116). The Russian philosopher shows that the cause of phenomena is something independent of our self, namely material being (*ibid.*, p. 137).

The recognition of two separate elements, independent immaterial being and material being, gives rise to ontological, or substantive, dualism, which also implies the heterogeneity of the properties manifested by the self-conscious self and the physical properties of the objects of the external world affecting the self-conscious self. The heterogeneity, mentioned here, of consciousness and the material world independent of it calls into question the possibility of cognition as such, since substances, being opposite, cannot act on each other. However, as it becomes clear from Kudryavtsev's reasoning, this opposite or heterogeneity does not have an absolute character. On the contrary, there is something in common

between the spiritual and physical worlds, namely that they both represent limited, contingent being. The limitation of both the first and the second kind of being is expressed in the forms of space and time, which, according to Kudryavtsev, are inherent in both material and immaterial being. It is space and time, being the link between the spiritual and physical worlds, that can explain the interaction between our self and the external world. At the same time, the Russian philosopher suggests the existence of a more “intimate inner connection” between the spiritual and the material. He proposes to get beyond the philosophical model of opposing the material and the spiritual as two completely incompatible kinds of being and assumes that the same being underlies both (*ibid.*, p. 141-144).

Kudryavtsev introduces the notion of a “creative cause”, under which he understands the highest Being, i.e. God, whose recognition will make it possible, on the one hand, to overcome the dualism of consciousness and matter and, on the other hand, to explain their difference as God’s internal self-limitation (*ibid.*, p. 185). In this way Kudryavtsev seems to overcome substance dualism and outlines ways of resolving the problem of the interaction of the mental and the physical, and, accordingly, approaches the explanation of the possibility of cognition.

Kudryavtsev’s concept of transcendental monism is specific in that it establishes a unity of being in which the spiritual and physical sides are distinguished through the explanation of the possibility of knowledge itself. In other words, it is the specificity of human cognition that requires the recognition of two real kinds of being, which agree with human experience and whose correspondence to each other can be explained only through the concept of an intelligent and omnipotent Being – God. Here we have the influence of Spinoza, of whose views Kudryavtsev was aware. Moreover, this influence may have been exercised through Trendelenburg (see Beiser, 2013). Nevertheless, the question of the perception of Spinoza’s philosophical ideas in Kudryavtsev’s works requires a separate study.

Similarities between Kant’s transcendental idealism and Kudryavtsev’s transcendental monism are found in the distinction of subjective and objective elements in cognition. Both philosophers conclude that we do not know things in themselves, but only their appearances. As the basis for the subjective element of cognition, both philosophers assume an immaterial subject, i.e. the self, and for the objective element, material existence, the latter taken by itself being independent of our self. The connection between the immaterial subject and material being arises through the effect of material things on the immaterial subject through sensibility. One of the arguments in favour of the independence of external material objects from our self-consciousness is considered by both philosophers to be the impossibility of explaining the concrete representations that arise in the self-consciousness. That the Russian philosopher was familiar with this idea of Kant’s is confirmed by his words:

Kant does not reject such a [direct] way of assuring the truth of being, when, distinguishing between two elements of knowledge, objective and subjective, he says that the



matter of thinking is derived from the object; therefore the certainty of the existence of objects outside us is based on impressions of them received through the medium of the senses. The reality of the existence of empirical objects is thus also asserted by him on the consciousness of the action of these objects on us (Kudryavtsev, 1914e, p. 250).

At the same time, transcendental monism is quite close to Krug's transcendental syntheticism, discussed above, and Trendelenburg's reflections on the unconditional, which "philosophical abstraction calls absolute, and more living faith calls directly God" (Trendelenburg, 1862b, p. 425). According to Trendelenburg, the idea of God lies at the foundation of being and thinking, and through this idea the unity of the real and the ideal is always sought (Trendelenburg, 1862b, pp. 468-469).

Apart from the very distinction of objective and subjective elements in cognition, Kudryavtsev and Kant are brought together by the concept of apriorism, which explains the peculiarities of subjective forms of cognition. In empirical cognition, the Russian philosopher considers space and time to be such forms.

### 3.2. *Kudryavtsev's Theory of Space and Time*

The Russian philosopher builds his own theory of space and time in an extramural discussion with Kant and with the so-called supporters of the subjective theory of space and time.

Kudryavtsev began this discussion as early as his outlines for his lectures on metaphysics, dating from 1854, 1856 and 1874. Here Kudryavtsev directly criticizes Kant's epistemology, calling it 'subjective idealism'. In particular, he notes that Kantian subjective idealism contradicts consciousness and leads to scepticism. Kudryavtsev sees one of Kant's mistakes in the incorrectness of his conclusion about the inconsistency of the subjective element in our cognition with reality; in fact, according to the Russian philosopher, the recognition of the reality of a thing in itself and its actions on our mind leads to the conclusion about the possibility of its cognition. Kudryavtsev also argues that Kant's distinction between the thing-in-itself and the phenomenon contradicts his epistemology (Kudryavtsev, 1854/1856/1874, fol. 2).

Then the Russian philosopher analyses different views on space and time, where he singles out the subjective view to which Kant's doctrine belongs. Here Kudryavtsev mentions that Kant's ideas of space and time do not come from external objects, but belong to our cognitive ability, they are not abstract concepts, but forms of sensible perception *a priori*, having the properties of infinity, invariability and necessity. In doing so, Kudryavtsev immediately notes the incorrectness of Kant's conclusion about the exclusively subjective meaning of space and time, arguing that they are forms of sensible being and limited cognition. Space and time, belonging to the sphere of the real and, at the same time, to the sphere of the subjective, have a common beginning – movement or changeability. At the same time, space and time as subjective forms do not originate from external experience,

i.e. they are *a priori* (*ibid.*, fol. 4). Kudryavtsev also mentions Kant in relation to reasoning categories (*ibid.*, fol. 5, 15).

As we see, on the one hand, Kudryavtsev agrees with Kant that space and time appear as forms of sensible representation and have the following characteristics: 1) they belong to the cognitive faculty; 2) they do not come from experience, i.e. they are *a priori*; 3) they have the character of universality and necessity; 4) they are not discursive concepts, but are contemplations; 5) finally, they constitute the condition of the possibility of experience (Kudryavtsev, 1914c, p. 223-224). On the other hand, Kudryavtsev, unlike Kant, does not conclude from the non-empirical character of space and time that they have no real significance in the objects of experience (*ibid.*, p. 236-238). In support of the objective significance of space and time, the Russian philosopher makes two arguments. Firstly, the philosopher points out that “spatio-temporal definitions [...] if they were only subjective forms of cognition, [they] would have to be imposed by our mind on all representations without exception” (*ibid.*, p. 241-243), which is not true. Second, Kudryavtsev draws attention to the agreement of reality independently of us with the *a priori* cognition of its spatial and temporal properties (*ibid.*, p. 243-244).

Asserting that space and time belong to the subject and object simultaneously, Kudryavtsev points out the difference between space and time as forms of cognition and space and time as real properties of being. Thus, space and time as forms of cognition are given in the mind in an ideal form, whereas in external manifestations they only approach this form (*ibid.*, p. 244). The Russian philosopher defines real space and time as forms of limited existence (*ibid.*, p. 257-258), which in reality cannot be infinite. At the same time, the sign of infinity can be attributed to space and time as cognitive forms (*ibid.*, p. 268-269).

In comparison with the Kantian theory of space and time, Kudryavtsev agrees with its metaphysical component, namely the Kantian definition of space and time as *a priori* forms, and at the same time rejects its transcendental dimension – the conclusions about the only subjective character of space and time: “... it is not in the weakness of the basic propositions or premises that we should look for the weakness of Kant’s theory of space and time, but in the conclusion drawn from these premises...” (*ibid.*, p. 236). At the same time, Kudryavtsev himself sees no contradiction in accepting one part of Kant’s theory and simultaneously denying another, in particular he writes:

Kant, as we have seen, presented quite thorough proofs that the views of space and time can neither come directly from experience, nor be concepts abstracted from empirical representations [...]. Then, in the characteristic features of these views, – their universality, necessity and infinity, he rightly saw an indication that the concepts of them are not of empirical origin, since in experience we do not see anything universal, necessary or infinite [...]. If Kant’s further conclusion that, being of non-empirical origin, space and time have no empirical reality in themselves and are only subjective forms of our

cognition, turned out to be untenable and does not follow strictly logically from his own theory, this does not weaken in any way the validity of the premises from which such an incorrect conclusion was drawn – the doctrine of the *a priori* notions of space and time (*ibid.*, p. 274-275).<sup>4</sup>

### 3.3. Kudryavtsev's Doctrine of Categories

With regard to the categories of understanding Kudryavtsev also believes that they are *a priori*, respectively, independent of experience, but manifested in experience and on the occasion of experience. Categories of understanding, according to Kudryavtsev, by themselves cannot give knowledge about anything, because “human cognition is the result of the interaction of two factors: the cogniser and the cognised, the independent activity, according to known laws, of the reason<sup>5</sup> and the objects perceived by the soul, to which this activity extends. The absence of one of these factors would make cognition itself impossible” (Kudryavtsev, 1914d, p. 157).

The source of all categories, Kudryavtsev writes, is self-consciousness (*ibid.*, p. 158). Analyzing self-consciousness, according to the philosopher, one can derive the categories of quantity, quality and relation (*ibid.*, p. 161). Categories, according to Kudryavtsev, being subjective *a priori* concepts of understanding, also have an objective meaning, which is confirmed by the coincidence of the concepts of being, formed by our understanding independently of experience, with actual being and the justification of these concepts in experience. Actually, taking only the subjective meaning of categories, it is impossible, according to the Russian philosopher, to explain the coincidence of the laws of rational cognition with empirical laws. Hence Kudryavtsev concludes: “categories determine not only thinking, but also being,” thanks to which true cognition as the agreement of thought with reality becomes possible (*ibid.*, p. 121-123). Thus, recognizing the objective character of pure categories, Kudryavtsev argues that they are not only forms of cognition, but also forms of being itself. At the same time, the scope of application of categories of understanding is not limited to the sphere of experience, but also includes the sphere of super-experiential being. The right of such an application of categories to being arises from the very nature of categories as “unconditionally universal and necessary” (*ibid.*, p. 171).

Kudryavtsev's disagreement with Kant mainly concerns the question of the significance of categories. According to Kant, categories are *a priori* concepts of understanding and at the same time conditions of the possibility of experience, from which the German philosopher concludes that they are only subjective in nature; accordingly, Kant limits the scope of application of categories to appearances alone (B146-148; Kant, 1998, p. 254-255).

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4 It seems that Kudryavtsev, following Trendelenburg, draws attention to the problem of Kant's neglected alternative of recognizing objective signification for *a priori* forms of cognition. For more details on the neglected alternative see e.g. Bird, 2006; Kanterian, 2013; Specht, 2014.

5 Meaning the understanding.

Kudryavtsev distinguishes two elements in Kant's doctrine of the significance of categories: the basic proposition and the consequence of this proposition. By the main proposition the Russian philosopher understands Kant's assertion that categories do not come from experience, i.e. they are *a priori* concepts. By the consequence he understands the conclusion about their exclusively subjective significance. Regarding the main point, Kudryavtsev is in complete agreement with Kant; moreover, he sees the merit of the German philosopher in pointing out such properties of categories as universality and necessity, as well as the fact that they do not come from experience (Kudryavtsev, 1914d, pp. 112-113).

As for the consequence of the above position, Kant believes that categories have only subjective significance, which means that nothing actually corresponds to them. Hence, according to Kudryavtsev, the German philosopher reveals a tendency to define nature as a totality of phenomena systematized by us, rather than a reflection of its actual being in our consciousness. But this conclusion, notes the Russian philosopher, Kant does not make, remaining on the position that we do not know whether anything real outside of us corresponds to the categories. This, Kudryavtsev writes, does not exclude the fact that the laws of our cognition, imposed on phenomena, may converge with the actual laws of being things in themselves. But Kant, the Russian philosopher continues, maintains that our cognition does not correspond to reality, and that the categories and *a priori* laws of reason have no significance except as a formal one. Kudryavtsev here points out Kant's inconsistency, which is expressed in the fact that, on the one hand, the German philosopher affirms the incognisability of things in themselves, on the other hand, he states the inconsistency of the laws of our cognition with the laws of the actual being of things. In favour of the recognition that the laws of our cognition correspond to the laws of the actual being of things, according to Kudryavtsev, is "external necessity", forcing thinking to recognize that things are in fact as they are cognized by us through categories. Consequently, we find in things the same categorical properties that we have in our understanding. Kudryavtsev believes that because of the said coercivity, Kant allows contradictions in his own philosophy. In particular Kant, admitting things unknown to us in ourselves as the source of the matter of cognition, i.e. sensations, contradicts his doctrine of the subjective meaning of categories, since he transfers categories to that being which, according to Kant, is not subject to the laws of understanding (*ibid.*, pp. 117-120).

In particular, Kudryavtsev writes that understanding connects the subject-independent matter of sensation, which Kant calls "multifarious", by means of the forms of cognition belonging to it. Asserting this, Kant, the Russian philosopher continues, must consider the categories as real definitions of being: "allowing the multifarious as a real being, as the basis of the subjective states of our mind, we must allow that it is defined by almost all of Kant's categories" (*ibid.*, p. 120). Moreover, Kudryavtsev points to that problem of Kant's theoretical philosophy, which is labelled as the problem of 'noumenal affection' (see Hogan, 2009; Stang, 2013; Howell, 2017; Chaly, 2017; Katrechko 2021). The Russian philosopher states the

essence of this problem as follows: Kant argues that the multifariousness of impressions has as its cause things in themselves, i.e. noumenal being. But to things in themselves, according to Kant's views, the categories of pure understanding cannot be applied, and, accordingly, the category of cause cannot be applied to things in themselves. The category of cause can only be applied to our representations of things in themselves.

Kudryavtsev proposes to solve this difficulty of Kantian philosophy by recognizing categories not only as subjective forms of cognitive activity, but also as real definitions of being. Categories here act as "general and unifying links" between our cognitive abilities and existence independent of us. The proof of this connection, writes Kudryavtsev, is the coincidence of categories as *a priori* subjective forms of cognition with real being. But, the Russian philosopher notes, due to the fact that categories as *a priori* forms are universal and necessary, experience cannot give "direct positive proof" of the truth of those concepts and statements that are based on categories. Experience gives this proof in a negative way, i.e. it does not give a single case of inconsistency between categories as subjective forms of cognition and actual being (Kudryavtsev, 1914d, pp. 121-122).

Presented in general terms, Kudryavtsev's views on space, time and categories of understanding clearly show that in a number of provisions of his epistemology he relies on Kantian transcendental idealism, or rather, on a modified Kantian concept of apriorism. But was this modification original?

It has already been discussed above that the perception of Kantian ideas in Kudryavtsev's philosophy in his early years of teaching was influenced by Krug and Trendelenburg. But Krug's adherence to the Kantian understanding of the transcendental character of subjective forms of cognition is revealed in the *System der theoretischen Philosophie*. In §21 of the *System*, Krug, pointing to space and time as the original forms of contemplation, notes that they are (1) pure representations, or representations *a priori*; (2) sensible representations, or contemplations; and (3) universal and necessary representations (Krug, 1830, pp. 48-49). In the third note to the above paragraph Krug notes that representations of space and time possess transcendental ideality and empirical reality, i.e.

that although they are something only subjective, as soon as one abstracts from the fact that objects are given to the soul as appearances of the external and internal sense, yet in relation to such objects they must be given an objective significance – further, that those representations are only sensible, i.e. accessible to the external and internal powers of perception, but are not applicable to supersensible, i.e. only mind-representable entities, and that they cannot therefore be regarded as definitions of things-in-themselves, but only as definitions of things that appear [...] (*ibid.*, p. 52).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Eben so richtig ist aber auch die Behauptung, dass den Vorstellungen des Raums und der Zeit transzendente Idealität und empirische Realität zukomme d. h. dass sie zwar etwas lediglich Subjektives seien, sobald man davon abstrahire,

When comparing the theoretical and cognitive attitudes of Trendelenburg and Kudryavtsev, it turns out that both philosophers, accepting the metaphysical explanation of *a priori* forms of cognition, insist on their objective meaning, i.e. their belonging to the objective world (see Rozhin, 2023). This coincidence, taking into account Kudryavtsev's references to Trendelenburg, may be an argument in favour of the Russian philosopher's reading Kant through the prism of Trendelenburg's ideas, taking into account the latter's criticism of the Kantian position, at the same time supplementing his concept of transcendental monism with intuitions from Krug's transcendental syntheticism.

## Conclusions

The circumstances of Kudryavtsev's acquaintance in the early years of his professional life at the MTA suggest that he may have been introduced to Kantian ideas through popularizer-interpreters, historical-philosophical literature, and the critical writings of late Kantians such as Krug and neo-Kantian forerunners such as Trendelenburg. At the least, they were the ones who had a significant influence on him. But along with this influence, important elements of the Kantian Copernican turn, namely the concepts of Kantian apriorism and the subjectivity of cognitive forms, entered his philosophical views in a modified form. The essence of the modification itself consists in the fact that, following Trendelenburg, Kudryavtsev makes one very significant amendment: such forms of cognition as space, time and categories of understanding have not only subjective but also objective character. At the same time, Kudryavtsev seeks to solve the problem of substance dualism on the basis of Krug's transcendental syntheticism, modified with the idea of the absolute ground of synthesis.

As a result, it can be argued that Kant's Copernican turn has become an integral part of Kudryavtsev's transcendental monism. The latter, then, is indeed an example of the synthesis of Russian religious philosophy and Kantian theoretical philosophy, and can be the basis for further interaction between contemporary theological thought and the legacy of Kant's Copernican Turn.

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dass dem Gemüthe Gegenstände als Erscheinungen des äussern und innern Sinnes gegeben seien, in Beziehung auf dergleichen Gegenstände aber ihnen objektive Gültigkeit beigelegt werden müsse – ferner dass jene Vorstellungen nur auf sinnliche d. h. dem äussern und innern Wahrnehmungsvermögen zugängliche, aber nicht auf übersinnliche d. h. durch blosser Vernunft vorstellbare Wesen anwendbar, und dass sie daher auch nicht als Bestimmungen der Dinge an sich, sondern bloss als Bestimmungen der erscheinenden Dinge anzusehen seien (§. 13. nebst den Anmm.).

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