

The reception of Kant's doctrine of postulates in Russia

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Abstract

The article concerns the reception of practical philosophy of Kant in general and the doctrine of the postulates of the practical reason in particular in Russia in the 18th and the first half of the 19th century. Author analyzes the views on Kant's philosophy of the most representative Russian thinkers and attempts to answer the question why the way practical philosophy of Kant and his postulates of the existence of God and immortality of soul were interpreted in Russia was rather negative and hostile.

Key words

Kant, practical philosophy, argument, postulate, God, soul, immortality, existence, morality, humanity.

The attitude towards the philosophy of Kant in Russia in the 18th and the first half of the 19th centuries was complicated and controversial. An opinion prevails that Kant was shown (and considered) as a “devil” or a “tempter”.¹ Such an attitude is first of all proclaimed by Pavel Florensky (1881–1937), who accused Kant's philosophy and its author of various sins and of “being sly” as the main of them (Florensky 2004, p. 103).² Such names as Andrei Bely, Nikolai Fyodorov, Lev Shestov and others are also often mentioned in this connection. But limiting the reception of the philosophy of Kant in Russia only to the imputations of “devilry” would also not be quite correct, as, besides the hostile attacks

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¹ One of the clearest examples of this point of view is the article of Anatoly Akhutin, see: Akhutin, A. V. (1990, pp. 51-69).

² All quotations from the Russian authors are cited in the author's own translation.

towards the philosophy of Kant, which were not always justified, at the same time we also find a range of calm judgments, even sometimes noticing a positive side of his critical works.³ Nevertheless, the former point of view is more justifiable, since even the thinker who thought positively of the philosophy of Kant found much more disadvantages than advantages there. Still, we should not see in the initially nearly universal critique of Kant's views on religion and theology any differential characteristics of a specifically Russian way of reception and interpretation of Kant. The same situation we observe in other countries in the world. It is true not only for the Slavic nations, which share similar mentality and characteristic features of historical development with Russia,⁴ but also for the West European nations.⁵ Only Kant's motherland, Germany, can count as an exception here. But also in regard to this country the exception is very relative: despite the fact that there were quite many positive judgments of Kant's point of view on the arguments for the existence of God and on religion and theology in general, there were still many more negative and hostile ones.

The fact that the ethical and religious thought of the Königsberg thinker found the widest response possible in Russia is undeniable, and that can be marked as a characteristic feature of the Russian way of interpretation of Kant. In contrast, Kant's theoretical philosophy drew less interest of Russian thinkers and philosophers. Even if the discussions of the speculative problems took place in Russia, they were possible in the first place because of their great importance for the moral doctrine of Kant. That is why we agree with A. Krouglov in his view that Kant's transcendental philosophy was considered in Russia at first in the light of ethics and religion.⁶ These questions especially excited orthodox thinkers, but they were actively discussed at the universities as well. And if the ethical system of Kant based on duty and not on affective inclinations, sometimes met approval, inferring the religion from the morality and reducing both the existence of God and the immortality of soul to postulates of practical reason generally met a distinctly negative response. Pushing this view to the extreme led to accusing the philosophy of Kant of undermining the base of religion and morality, while Kant himself was represented as an atheist and man-hater. It should be noticed, however, that not all Russian thinkers were interested in the problem of postulates in Kant's practical thought. That is why the review of the ways of reception of Kant's practical postulates cannot be considered a representation of the reception of Kant's practical philosophy in general. This article aims

³ Here we cannot forget Leo Tolstoy who regarded Kant as a great religious teacher. See Tolstoy, L. N. (1937, p. 51).

⁴ See more on the reception of the philosophy of Kant in Slavic countries in: Sirovátka, J. (2004, S. 651-661); Harassek, St. (1916); Kaczmarek, St. (1961); Andrzejewski, B. (1978, S. 183-193); Shalkevich, V. F., Letchilin, A. A. (2005); Shalkevich, V. F., Letchilin, A. A. (2006); Kupś, T. (ed.) (2014–2015) and other.

⁵ See on the reception of Kant's views in West European countries in: Fischer, N. (hrsg.) (2005); Ferrari, J. (2005, p. 69-80); Holzhey, H. (2007, S. 57-74); Hinske, N. (2003, S. 279-294) and other.

⁶ See Krouglov, A. N. (2009, p. 490).

rather at presenting only the main trends and characteristics of how the philosophy of Kant was interpreted in Russia and for this reason the below presented overview will contain only the most representative figures in this regard and cannot claim to draw a full picture.

The first critic of Kant's philosophy in Russia, professor of Kazan University Alexander Stepanovich Lubkin (1770/71–1815) criticized the Königsberg philosopher for his inferring the religion from the morality and claimed that the one “who separates morality from religion or who derives religion from morality itself, undermines openly or insidiously, intentionally or unintentionally, both morality and religion, schemes against human community life and against humanity itself” (Lubkin 2005, p. 18). He saw a danger of undermining the religion and morality in the foundations of the moral religion, proposed by Kant, which in Lubkin's opinion do not stand the criticism, including “the weakest argument convincing of the existence of God”. Lubkin means Kant's postulate of the existence of God. Moreover, Lubkin believes that this postulate in Kant's system serves only to remunerate the virtuous and thus, “both God and the best world exist according to this system not independently, but only as a means” (Ibid. p. 14). Consequently Lubkin states that Kant “wanted to destroy all things creating nothing”, (Ibid. p. 15). “in his *Antinomies of pure reason* he spared nothing in order to muddle as much as possible all the usual arguments for the existence of God and in this way to deprive them of their appropriate force of argument”, (Ibid. p. 17). instead of them he presented “not more that the moral argument – a seeming argument, something what only looks like an argument, which can be interpreted in whatever way according to one's the liking” (Ibid. p. 15). Lubkin concludes that it was not possible to expect anything else of a “hidden atheist, rejecting in his heart both the existence of God and the existence of law, but not wanting to reveal himself as such” (Ibid).

Ivan Mikhailovich Skvortsov (1795–1863), a professor of Kiev Theological Academy, took a more moderate stand on the practical philosophy of Kant. In his dissertation devoted to *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* he notices the advantages and strengths of Kant's point of view including his profound respect for the moral law. But in general Skvortsov's writing considering the philosophy of Kant is very critical. It's main vice Skvortsov saw in “one-sidedness”:

The main disadvantage both of his philosophy as a whole and the religion is one-sidedness. Kant sees only the moral side of a human being, as if forgetting that a human being has not only will but also reason, feelings and animal nature. This one-sidedness forces him to value all the most important truths which are found in our reason or in the revelation only in respect to their morality and to search only a moral sense and meaning in everything (Skvortsov 2003, p. 162).

We see a striking similarity between Skvortsov and Lubkin in their interpretations of Kant's postulates of the existence of God. Together with Lubkin, Skvortsov also reduces the necessity of the existence of God by Kant only to supplying human happiness:

Moral admonition has need in the existence of God not for itself, but merely for our happiness, said Kant. But such notion of God is beneath God; such moral admonition which has no need in God is egoistic and simply false (Skvortsov 2003, p. 129).

We also find accusations of this kind in the works of Sylvester Sylvestrovich Gogotsky (1813–1889). In his opinion, “the consequences of the doctrine of Kant, in many respects high and important, are egoism and a cause for arbitrariness” (Gogotsky 1847, p. 66). And further:

Kant's proud, one-sided notion of the law and morality deprives us of the lively feeling of our unity with the supreme source of life, a feeling inseparable from the true cognition of the law and morality (Gogotsky 1847, p. 67).

Gogotsky detects the ground for this delusion in rationalism (Gogotsky 1847, p. 67-68) and Kant's wrong understanding of the correlation between the finite and the infinite, which has an effect on Kant's theory of transcendental ideas:

All the contradictions, with which Kant surrounded these ideas, originate in the wrong understanding of the way by which the ideas of the All-Perfectest being, of the immortality of our soul, of the disunity of the world and the essence of God and of the providence of God appear and become rooted in us. As Kant could imagine the appearance of these ideas in no other way but with the help of conclusions (paralogisms), and as conclusions come from the data, the limited things of the visible world, it is natural that their assertion could not be achieved without contradictions, since the idea of the infinite can in the same way not be deduced from the contemplation of the limited appearances of the world without leap as the infinite itself does not come from the limited (Gogotsky 1857, p. 569).

The staunchest accuser of Kant for atheism was perhaps archbishop Nikanor (1827–1890). On the pages of his writing *Critique on the Critique of pure reason by Kant* it is always repeated that Kant reduced God to a mere transcendental idea, a pure concept, a thinkable thing and even worse than a thinkable thing – an ideal. Yet, an ideal by Kant is “something quite bad, quite unreliable”.⁷ At the root of all Kant's arguments for the existence of God lies

our mere notion, creation of our thinking, thinkable form, empty phantom, our mere idea and this idea is false, is a mistake, a deception, a lie ... Something to which we have no right and even cannot suppose a possibility of such essence (Brovkovich 1888, p. 385).

Still, much more reserved views on the subject can be found expressed as well, most notably by Rozhdestvensky and Golubinsky. In addition to the high academic style of their critical analysis, uncorrupted by attacks on the personality of Kant, both thinkers

⁷ Nikanor, archbishop (Brovkovich 1888, p. 378).

displayed profound knowledge of the philosophy of Kant. Their writings are full of quotations from the critical works of the Königsberg philosopher himself. And these are not only the quotations from the *Critique of Pure Reason* but also from the *Critique of Practical Reason* and the *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*.

Nikolai Pavlovich Rozhdestvensky (1840–1882), a graduate and later a professor of Saint-Petersburg Theology Academy, was one of the most distinguished minds of his time. His main academic work was a two-volume edition of *Christian Apologetics*, based on his own university lectures and published shortly after his death. Many pages of this work are devoted to the analysis of the critical philosophy of Kant. Here Rozhdestvensky succeeds not only to thoroughly present and explain the main ideas of the philosophy of Kant, but also to provide a range of essential commentaries demonstrating his profound knowledge and good understanding both of Kant's critical philosophy and philosophical situation in the Western Europe in the 18th century in general. At the same time, his review of the main theological discussions of Kant's views on religion during Kant's life and shortly after his death⁸ is still relevant for Russian research literature and can be useful in studies about reception of Kant's ideas by theologians today as well as earlier.

Analyzing the postulates of the existence of God and the immortality of soul Rozhdestvensky correctly characterizes the path of argumentation of Kant which led him to postulate these two ideas. It is in the nature of the practical reason to seek the maximum realization of the idea of the highest good, which consists of two elements – virtue and happiness. While a human being is able to attain virtue, the attainment of happiness harmonizing with virtue is beyond the possibilities of a human being. That is why we need to postulate the Supreme Essence, that is, God, who would be able to bring into accordance the virtue of a human being and the happiness which he claims. Thus, the postulate of the existence of God is based on the demand of practical reason to establish a harmony between the morality and the physical world, and the postulate of the immortality of soul is based on incapacity of a human being to attain absolute virtue within one life.⁹ In spite of the fact that Rozhdestvensky highlights the problem of rewarding in the analysis of Kant's postulate doctrine, he believes that it is not quite correct to accuse Kant of a deviation from his own claimed autonomy of the will:

Did Kant, a famous critic of pure reason, rigorist, who struggled for the defense of 'categorical imperative', unconditional dictate of duty, for the defense of the autonomy of the moral will and the selfless service to duty, in the construction of his moral proof for the existence of God actually so come out of his role, that he admitted such rough selfish motives, narrow eudemonism and egoism and on these rough motives he grounded his whole proof? It is *a priori* hard to agree with that, and this opinion cannot be justified with the impartial consideration of the essence of his argument (Rozhdestvensky 1884, p. 366).

⁸ See Rozhdestvensky, N. P. (1884, pp. 91-95).

⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 88-89.

By Rozhdestvensky's own account the reason for the accusations of this sort lies in the misunderstanding of the essence of Kant's argumentation for the postulates. With his postulates Kant does not declare the idea of a personal, individual reward for each human being, and thus it is not correct in this case to speak of any touch of selfish motives in the determination of the will. The introduction of the idea of the highest good brings radical changes into the postulation of the existence of God and the immortality of soul and deprives us of a possibility to accuse Kant of adding any heteronomy to the determination of the will:

The point is that Kant does not base his proof on the idea of external reward to a human being for his virtue, but rather on a more general idea of the necessity of complete realization of the moral law (Rozhdestvensky 1884, p. 366).

At the same time Rozhdestvensky refuses to see the merit of Kant in inventing this kind of argument. The idea of the necessity of a fair reward in morality is a "common human belief" (Rozhdestvensky 1884, p. 369). Besides, the moral argument was formulated even before Kant (Rozhdestvensky 1884, p. 360). The originality of Kant's argument lies in the fact that Kant extended the form of the moral argument which was used before from only the evidence of the immortality of soul to the evidence of the existence of God:

It would not be superfluous to notice that the moral proof in such a form was usually classified before Kant among the proofs for the truth of the immortality of soul and the future retribution, and was not used specifically to demonstrate the truth of the existence of God. Kant was the first to use this form of moral proof to argue the truth of the existence of God and that is why he is considered to be its inventor, although not quite in the strict sense (Rozhdestvensky 1884, p. 361).

In his general analysis of the value of the moral argument proposed by Kant, Rozhdestvensky concludes that the moral argument surpasses all the other proofs in its force and vitality, but it loses to them in its objective validity, as it turns only to the human being with his needs while the other kinds of proofs (cosmological and teleological) cover a wider sphere of life than the moral one (Rozhdestvensky 1884, p. 369). That is why analyzing the influence of Kant on the later development of theology Rozhdestvensky accuses him in one-sidedness, just as Gogotsky and Skvortsov did, but in a slightly different sense. In spite of this he also marks the advantages of Kant's critic of dogmatism:

The philosophy of Kant caused the weakening of the influence of one-sided formalism and dogmatism of Wolff's philosophy on the Western theology. At the same time Kant caused a different one-sidedness to prevail in the sphere of the Western theology – the one-sidedness of dry moralism (Rozhdestvensky 1884, p. 94).

Kant tried to construct his theology on the sole base of the moral argument, which was in principle impossible, that is why the attempts of his followers also turned out to be fruitless and were like “walking on one foot”.¹⁰

Rozhdestvensky gives a very interesting explanation of such a violent and not always justified critique of Kant crashing down on him on all sides. To a large extent it was caused by Kant’s irreconcilable criticizing all the other kinds of proofs for the existence of God, which accordingly aroused a response in anti-critique. Moreover, the moral argument of Kant did not suit either believers or unbelievers. Believers cannot forgive Kant for the fact he turned invalid all the other proofs of the existence of God, “on the truth of which many great philosophers insisted” (Rozhdestvensky 1884, p. 364). as well as his ambitious claim to put only one argument of his own against all of them. Atheists were very disappointed, because after his brilliant critique of all the proofs of the existence of God Kant not only did not reject the existence of God as such, but also proposed a new argument of his own. That was the reason why “the new atheism aimed all the arrows at the proof of Kant in order to weaken it and, if possible, to destroy its ground” (Ibid.). Rozhdestvensky does not pass in silence the quite positive, though rare, appraisal of the views of Kant on theology and religion. Not only does he state this flagrant difference in judgments, but also tries to explain it in the way the writings of Kant themselves caused it, namely, the difference between the conclusions on the future and destiny of the theology in the first and the second *Critique*. The results of the *Critique of pure reason* are absolutely negative since the cognition of God is claimed here as impossible for a human being and so theology as a science is also considered to be impossible, while in the *Critique of practical reason* Kant tries to give “a firmer and more steadfast foundation for faith than that which the theoretical reason gives” (Ibid., p. 88) and therefore declares a new type of theology. Rozhdestvensky himself believes that even after Kant it has sense to be engaged in theology and to deal with the other kinds of proofs of the existence of God besides the moral one, as they are not deprived of scientific strength:

Kant has only proven that those arguments do not have the importance which was attributed to them by the scholastics in the Middle Ages and by some philosophers not long before Kant himself; that means, he has proven they do not possess such a degree of evidence as distinguishes, for example, a mathematical proof (Ibid., p. 323).

Another very interesting and no less valuable consideration of the ethical and theological views of Kant we find in the works of the professor of Moscow Theology Academy,

¹⁰ *Ibidem*. Rozhdestvensky thought that such a theological trend as neologism goes back exactly to Kant’s philosophy (Ibid., p. 95). But this point of view cannot hold, as we find representatives of “neologism” long before Kant or at least long before his main critical writings, among them such thinkers as I.F.W. Jerusalem (1709–1798) and H.S. Reimarus (1694–1768). Very closely to “neologism” were also the views of J.J. Spalding (1714–1804).

Fyodor Alexandrovich Golubinsky (1797–1854). Our main difficulty is that he did not leave any published works, so we have to make use only of the notes of his lectures. Even on the base of these lectures alone it is easy to notice that Golubinsky had a profound knowledge of the critical philosophy of Kant and understood it well. Just as Rozhdestvensky, Golubinsky emphasized that it was wrong to attribute to Kant the intention to add the selfish motives into the ethical system:

It would not be just to accuse Kant of the fact that while presenting the ethic-theological argument he teaches selfishness and inspires to search for an award. He himself teaches clearly in many places of his writings that one must execute the duty for duty itself, have a respect for the law for the law itself (Golubinsky 1884c, p. 71).

And together with Rozhdestvensky he thought that the thing which was meant there was the idea of the highest good introduced by Kant into the argumentation for the necessity of the existence of God:

Kant did not suggest that a human being, when acting morally, would always have a reward on his mind, would be guided by the thought that God in future will join the virtue and the well-deserved happiness; Kant revealed the common truth that in the moral kingdom there must be a recompense ... Thus, according to the teachings of Kant, a need in the highest good does not get humiliated by selfishness; he takes into consideration not a recompense for me in person, but for all in general, worthy of all truly virtuous men in general (Golubinsky 1884c, p. 71).

It can be said that Golubinsky highly values the “ethic-theological argument” of Kant, thinking that it would be valid as a particular proof. Yet, he emphasized that the argument of Kant is specifically particular and must be considered as such and not as the principal one. Therefore, the main point of critique is as usual the one-sidedness of the philosophy of Kant: he deals with only two needs of a human being, though essential ones, that is, the need of the purest morality and of the happiness proportionate to it. As the true distinction of the highest good must satisfy all needs of a human being, that means it must also comprise the need of the cognition of truth, or the need in “true enlightenment”, in “growing wise in mind” (Golubinsky 1884c, p. 71).

Despite the similarity in the principal positions, in general Golubinsky viewed the practical philosophy of Kant in a more critical way than Rozhdestvensky. He did not agree with the views of Kant on the correlation between morality and religion, suggesting that it is not morality that must serve as the basis for the cognition of God, but quite the contrary (Ibid., p. 12). Although he called Kant a “thoughtful philosopher” who “determined with a strict exactness that what his predecessors could not clearly think of” (Ibid., p. 3), but he did not recognize his great achievements in theology (Ibid., p. 11). Kant destroyed cognition in general and together with it that kind of cognition which is obtained with faith (Ibid., p. 8). That is why the main conclusion of Golubinsky looks discouraging: “Kant destroyed everything and created and built nothing” (Ibid., p. 65).

It would not be superfluous to attach here also the opinion of Evgeny Nikolayevich Trubetskoy (1863–1920). In his work *Metaphysical Presuppositions of the Cognition* he criticized the thesis of Kant about the regulative use of the ideas of pure reason including the idea of God. Scrutinizing the use of the idea of God in the sphere of theoretical reason for the investigation of the natural regularities, Trubetskoy concluded that Kant contradicted himself in this respect, as while on the one hand he recognized the illusiveness of these ideas, on the other hand he insisted on the necessity of accepting them. Regulative use of the ideas means we consider them as true following our interest, but actually it does not matter for us whether they are true or false. But if it does not matter whether they are true or false and we can either reject or accept them, it turns out that there is no sense in accepting the idea of God, since for natural science the opposite view is much more useful, according to which God does not exist and all events have scientific explanations. If we are nevertheless forced to accept this idea, it means that it does matter for us. The particularity of Kant's idea of pure reason reveals itself in the fact that in order to use these ideas even in immanent way we must suppose that there is something real outside the limits of our experience that corresponds to them. In other words, "Only such a principle, which has the unconditional reliability in itself and thus possesses the constitutive importance, can be a regulative and leading source of knowledge" (Trubetskoy 1917, p. 201). The general conclusion of Trubetskoy about the practical philosophy of Kant runs as follows: "One can believe or not believe in God, affirm or reject Him, but a relative affirmation of Him is an evident and absolutely useless nonsense" (Ibid., p. 200) And although Trubetskoy comes to this conclusion regarding the postulation of God in the sphere of theoretical reason, it may be extended to all its appearances in the sphere of practical reason too.

At the same time we should mention that in Russia there existed some positive reaction to the critique of Kant of all the traditional proofs of the existence of God and his attempt to replace them all with his own postulate. One of the examples of this approach to Kant is Vladimir Sergeyevich Solovyov (1853–1900). The great Russian philosopher appraised the high philosophy of Kant, though he did not think Kant was right in all his conclusions. In particular, in his article which he wrote for *Brockhaus and Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary* he stated:

The importance of Kant is overestimated when we see in his theory not a rearrangement and deepening of the essential problems of philosophy, but their best and nearly finite solution. Such a completing role belongs to Kant only in the sphere of ethics (exactly in its 'pure', or formal, part), in other parts of philosophy Kant can be granted the honor of a great stimulus, but not a resolver of the most important questions (Solovyov 1895, p. 321).

If in the ethics Solovyov found certain disadvantages in the philosophy of Kant, though rather in the theoretical foundation of some theses (in particular, Solovyov was not content with Kant's explanation of the relation between the empirical and metaphysical freedom),

regarding Kant's critique of the proofs of the existence of God Solovyov expressed a very high opinion of the point of view of Kant and thought that there Kant contributed significantly to the development of theology:

With his dialectic consideration of the old dogmatic metaphysics he freed the human mind from the rough and unworthy notions of the soul, the world and God and thus aroused a need for a more satisfying foundation for our faiths; particularly with his critique of pseudo-rational scholastics in the sphere of theology he did a favour to the true religion, which to a large extent redeems the one-sidedness of his own moral-rational interpretation of religious factors (Solovyov 1895, p. 337).

Despite the fact that this response to the practical philosophy of Kant is so positive, the general attitude towards Kant was rather fiercely critical. The majority of Russian thinkers had a very negative position towards Kant's introducing God as a practical postulate into the moral philosophy. Kant was accused both of depriving a human being of a direct connection to the Highest Essence and of the immediate feeling of this connection, and of producing a moral argument, the weakest of all possible proofs, instead of all the proofs of the existence of God. The thesis of Kant that the postulate of the existence of God serves as a motivational force, without which a human being cannot exist as a moral essence (and perhaps cannot exist at all) was inevitably interpreted as an extreme form of utilitarianism and as an attempt to transform God into a means to achieve one's own selfish objectives, that is, to achieve happiness. Is it possible to find an explanation for this nearly universal rejection of Kant's thought in Russia and existence of such a view in Western Europe?

One of the possible explanations could be mistakes in the translations of Kant's writings into Russian. In the earlier translations both of the first two *Critiques* and of *Prolegomena* the term used was "postulate"¹¹. To answer the above raised question we should therefore now turn to the history of this notion in Russia, where the term "postulate" was first of all used in its mathematical and logical meaning. In the textbooks for logic in the 18th – beginning of the 19th centuries we find without difficulty the definition of this term traditional for that time. It is given according to the Wolffian understanding, which is not surprising if we consider how authoritative Christian Wolff and his philosophical system were at the Russian Universities at the time. Thus, already Dmitry Sergeevich Anichkov, the first Russian professor of philosophy at Moscow University noticed in his writing *Theoretical and Practical Arithmetic, for the Use and Application by the Youth, Collected from Different Authors* (1764): "Postulates (demands) are such sentences which show the possibility of a thing and assert that it can be made in this way" (Anichkov 1764, p. 5).

¹¹ See, for example, the translations of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 265: Kant, I. (1867, p. 198); Kant, I. (1902, p. 191); Kant, I. (1907, p. 159); Kant, I. (1915, p. 159). The translation of *Prolegomena*, A 86 s.: Kant, I. (1893, p. 74). The translation of Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason*, A 238 s.: Kant, I. (1897, p. 158).

Similar definitions we find also in other textbooks, such as of Y.P. Kozelsky, I.S. Rizhsky, A.S. Lubkin and so on¹². Still, in all these cases we see nothing else but a mere copy of the Wolffian definition (Wolff 1716, p. 1086).

Even in these authors' own writings on metaphysics or in textbooks with their own commentaries touching upon many other questions we find no critical remarks on postulates. Likewise, we find no mentioning of Wolff's attempts to introduce the postulates into his moral philosophy or of the critique of Wolff's way of interpretation of this term on the side of his compatriots such as Ch. A. Crusius (1715–1775) or J. H. Lambert (1728–1777). Neither do we see any remarks on reinterpretation of this notion in the theoretical and practical philosophy of Kant. In this connection it would be interesting to mention one more textbook of logic of the time, written by a professor of the Saint-Petersburg University, Peter Dmitriyevich Lodi (1764–1829), *Logical Admonitions Leading to Cognition and Distinction of the True from the False* (1815). This work is especially notable for the fact that its author apparently had a very good knowledge of Kant's own writings. In general Lodi treats the philosophy of the Königsberg thinker quite skeptically. Thus, he criticizes Kant's division of judgments according to the modality by claiming that there are in fact more kinds of judgments according to the modality than were presented by Kant. Based on this fact, we can judge that Lodi was quite well versed in the *Critique of pure reason* in general and in the chapter devoted to the principles of understanding in particular. Nevertheless, in the analysis of the question of what the postulates of pure reason are the Russian logician stays within the limits of the traditional Wolffian position: "A practical sentence which is unprovable or does not require any proof is called a demand (postulatum), the realization of which is supposed" (Lodi 1815, p. 225). Again, such a definition does not say a word about the specific transformation of this term in Kant's *Critique*.

In my opinion, the universal rejection of the practical philosophy of Kant can be explained with the help of the conclusion that the problematic of the postulates was altogether alien to Russian philosophers and thinkers. They were not interested in searching for the principles, the right choice of which could be a guaranty for the reliability of the philosophical system built on their base, while for the Western Europe postulate was one of the principal kinds of sentence in their attempts to balance the reliability of the philosophical and the mathematical cognition.¹³ In contrast, in Russia perhaps even an artificial mathematization, especially in such a sphere as morality, was an additional factor scaring off the Russian thinker and confirming the unjustified reproaches of dryness and formalism. Yet, all this testifies once again that Russia was never an unreflecting follower

¹² See more on this in: Krysh-top, L. E. (2009, pp. 73-80).

¹³ At the same time the process of interpretation and assimilation of the term *postulate* is strongly connected to the more general process of the formation of the scientific method, scientific language and of science proper in Russia in 18th century. On the formation of the language of scientific concepts see: Kuznetsova, N. (1998, p. 61-66).

of Europe, but rather a student assimilating only those ideas which found a living response in the mysterious Russian soul.

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