

# Preface

Karl Christian Friedrich Krause left an impressive oeuvre consisting of 256 books and articles, covering most branches of philosophy, the humanities, and science (cf. Ureña 2007: xv).<sup>1</sup> His *Vorlesungen über das System der Philosophie* and his *Vorlesungen über die Grundwahrheiten der Wissenschaft* are his most important books for philosophy. Through Julián Sanz del Río he has gained considerable popularity in Spain and Latin-America, where his philosophy goes by the name ‘Krausismo’ and he is sometimes claimed as the greatest German idealist.<sup>2</sup>

In recent Anglo-Saxon philosophy, he is known mainly for devising the term ‘pantheism’.<sup>3</sup> Understanding of Krause is impressionistic, contains mistakes, and is incomplete. For example, it is said that his philosophy is ‘mystical and spiritualistic’ (Zweig 1967: 363), that he was ‘an obscure [...] figure’ (McInnes 1967: 514) who ‘expressed himself in an artificial and often unfathomable vocabulary which included [...] monstrous neologisms

- 
- 1 Throughout this book the following rule applies with regard to quotations: if the quoted passage is originally in German, then an English translation will normally be provided, while the reference will be to the German original.
  - 2 Cf. Zweig (1967: 365): ‘Krause’s philosophy, while not very influential in Germany, found considerable support in Spain, where, for a time, “Krausism” flourished. This was largely due to the efforts of Julian Sanz del Rio, the minister of culture, who visited Germany and Belgium in 1844 and came into contact with a number of Krause’s disciples, notably Heinrich Ahrens in Brussels and Hermann von Leonhardi in Heidelberg.’ Cf. also McInnes (1967: 514): ‘Spanish Krausism was less a philosophy than a cult, a rationalist religion that can be regarded as a forerunner of the Modernist movement in Catholicism. Its adherents behaved like members of Freemasonry, and it is doubtful whether many of them understood Sanz del Rio’s obscure books on his even more obscure master [Krause].’
  - 3 Cf. Cooper (2006: 26): ‘Pantheism literally means ‘all-in-God-ism’. This is the Greek-English translation of the German term *Allingottlehre*, ‘the doctrine that all is in god.’ It was coined by Karl Krause (1781–1832), a contemporary of Schleiermacher, Schelling, and Hegel, to distinguish his own theology from both classical theism and pantheism.’ Cf. also Gregersen (2004: 27/8): ‘The very term ‘pantheism’ was coined as late as 1829 by the post-Kantian philosopher and mystic Karl Christian Friedrich Krause (1781–1832)’. Cf. also Hartshorne (1987: 168) and Palmquist (2008: 19).

[...] which are untranslatable into German, let alone English' (Zweig 1967: 363). It is said that he was 'under the influence [...] of Schelling' (Zweig 1967: 363) and 'a student of Hegel' (Hartshorne 1987: 169).

However, it is straightforwardly false that Krause was a student of Hegel or that, apart from his first years as a student in Jena, he was under the influence of Schelling. Hegel and Krause have been colleagues for some time in Jena, lecturing at the same time. As Krause (1890: 16) states: 'Fries and Hegel knew me personally, and I lectured simultaneously with them in Jena in the years 1802–1804'. And although Krause attended some of Schelling's lectures he did not like either them or Schelling much: 'I like Schlegel very much, but not Schelling' (Krause 1903: 7) and 'in [Schelling's] philosophy of nature I find propositions, which I already discovered for myself, following Fichte's system' (Krause 1903: 11). Furthermore, it is inadequate to characterize his philosophy as mystical or obscure. One might wonder how such statements could be justified, given that there are no English translations of Krause's relevant works, and even the German works are hardly ever cited.<sup>4</sup> It is true that Krause's philosophy is demanding due to the style of his writing and the neologisms he introduced, but so are Hegel and Heidegger.

Krause saw himself, like many of his colleagues, as the real successor of Kant. As Krause (1890: 143/144) states: 'I can actually be regarded as Kant's first successor, but I was so original, self-sufficient without intending it; that what appears as a continuation of Kant, was already the main thing I completed in 1803. This was before I was able to completely look at the relation of my own research and work to the Kantian, because I had then read and thought through Kant's writings only very little. Rather, the main teachings of my system, completed in the years 1805 and 1806, were the key to the Kantian quest and made it possible for me to understand and appreciate the Kantian project from the highest standpoint.'

The key and main teaching of Krause is that the theory of categories should be understood not as a system of pure concepts of the understanding, which can be applied only to temporal individuals, but as a system of ideas

---

4 According to Ureña (2007: lxx) there are only two translations of Krause's work into English. The first one is *The Ideal of Humanity and Universal Federation. A Contribution to Social Philosophy*, ed. W. Hastie (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1900). The second one is *The Family: A Pansophic Ideal*. (Willits: Calif, 1933).

of reason, which Krause develops in the form of panentheism. According to Krause: ‘Kant considered the categories merely as finite concepts of the understanding, and they can only be considered as applicable to temporal sense perception. Therefore, he says explicitly that they are not rational concepts of ideas of reason [*Vernunftbegriffe der Vernunftideen*], because, rather, an idea of reason is an infinitely extended category’ (Krause 1869: 228). However, on Krause’s view, nothing counts against the proposition that the categories are, *pace* Kant, ideas of reason, and he seeks to show that we apply the categories both to the finite temporal given, and to the infinite unconditioned. Because, in his view, Krause is able to show that, through the intuition of the essence and existence of God, the ideas of reason turn out to denote, or even be, properties of the divine unity, he therefore thinks he has achieved the most important task of philosophy as defined by Kant: “Whether the ideas of reason behave towards the categories (his highest concepts of the understanding) as the categories to sensibility” [...] I have now solved this problem raised by Kant, without my knowing, at the time, that Kant posed this problem; and it was by using Kant’s critical method in a completely independent way, in the course of my own philosophical research. My lectures on the system of philosophy include the complete development of the doctrine [*Organismus*] of the categories as unconditional, and infinite, divine, essentialities [*Wesenheiten*], or as attributes of God’ (Krause 1889: 312).

According to Krause, his panentheistic system of philosophy, in effect, provides the understanding of the possibility of Being and knowing, taking into account the interrelations of the transcendental and transcendent categories. Krause’s system is concerned with the understanding of reality, as such, from the unity of its ultimate ground and highest principle: Whoever knows God knows the unity of the categories of Being and knowing in their origin, and thereby knows that God is the necessary and sufficient condition for both our knowledge of reality, and the very fact that the world is and exists as it does.

Precisely because of this, Krause perceived his own system of philosophy as a successful combination of Platonic metaphysics and Kantian transcendental philosophy: Krause’s panentheism provides a metaphysical theory about the fundamental structure of empirical reality in terms of reality’s ultimate cause or highest principle based on reflections on the transcendental constitution

of the ego, that is, based on reflections on the conditions for the possibility that the ego perceives empirical reality as it does. As Krause states: ‘We are convinced that in our system, the principles of which have been repeatedly described by us, and the partial execution of which we have published in a series of works, the task of scientific research and scientific education [*Wissenschaftsforschung und Wissenschaftsbildung*], in its main points, is satisfactorily carried out. For, inasmuch as the recognition and acknowledgment of the principle of science is gained by the analytic-subjective self-knowledge of the mind, the whole structure of science can be pictured in law-like and organic progress. And so the task of Socrates and Plato, as well as Kant, Fichte, and Schelling, is generally solved’ (Krause 1889a: 478).<sup>5</sup>

In what follows, I will concentrate on the justification and clarification of Krause’s pantheistic philosophy of science that arguable stands at the centre of Krause’s philosophy. After a brief biographical note on Krause’s life I will first elaborate Krause’s pantheism in Chapters 2–9 before I turn to Krause’s influence on Schopenhauer in Chapter 10. Chapters 11–14 analyse the importance of Krause’s system of philosophy for recent debates in the philosophy of religion, philosophy of science, and philosophy of mind. As we will see, Krause is still a valuable source of insight for recent philosophical debates.

I am most grateful to Professor Stephen Priest of the University of Oxford for his enormous help with the translation. Without his philosophical acumen and linguistic sensitivity, Krause’s sometimes idiosyncratic way of philosophizing would have remained untranslated. I am further grateful to Samuel Hughes of the University of Cambridge, who critically read the penultimate version, and to Siegfried Pfliegerl. Any remaining mistakes are, of course, my own.

---

5 Furthermore, as Krause (1890: 13) says: ‘Because my system, throughout, from its very first seed, is cultivated in independent, self-sufficient, research, and in the formation of the pure and fully grasped principle of science, it has not departed from this, and could not depart from this, to approximate to some other philosophical system, or unite itself to already existing conflicting systems. But, among other old tasks, that of liberating Platonism and Aristotelianism from their one-sidedness, and unifying them by means of their opposing essentials has also come to pass, as the main thing; but as far as that task has its meaning as a repetition of the Kantian task but at a higher level, and as the dissolution of the latter.’