INTRODUCTION: THE PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY OF KARL CHRISTIAN FRIEDRICH KRAUSE

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Abstract. Karl Christian Friedrich Krause (1781–1832) left an impressive oeuvre consisting of 256 books and articles, covering numerous branches of philosophy, the humanities, and science.[1] His *Urbild der Menschheit*, his *Vorlesungen über das System der Philosophie* and his *Vorlesungen über die Grundwahrheiten der Wissenschaft* are of particular pertinence for philosophers today.

I. KRAUSE'S COSMOPOLITAN PANENTHEISM: A BRIEF SYNOPSIS

Krause developed an impressive and explicitly panentheistic system of philosophy which, through transcendental-phenomenological reflections on the nature of the ego, ascertains God as the one infinite and unconditioned principle of being and knowing, and, on this premise, establishes humanity, nature, and reason as essential categories of said Absolute.[2] God thus becomes

1 See: E. M. Ureña and E. Fuchs, "Einführung in das Gesamtwerk", in Karl Christian Friedrich Krause. *Band 1: Entwurf des Systems der Philosophie*, ed. T. Bach and O. Breidbach (frommann-holzboog, 2007) .

2 In fact, it was Karl Christian Friedrich Krause who introduced the term "panentheism" as a neologism to distinguish his system of philosophy from both pantheism and classical theism. See, for instance, K.C.F. Krause, *Der zur Gewissheit der Gotteserkenntnis als des höchsten Wissenschaftsprinzips emporleitende Theil der Philosophie* (Tempsky, 1869), 313. Thus, it is historically inadequate when Hegel and Schelling are identified as the fathers of modern panentheism. John W. Cooper, *Panentheism. The Other God of the Philosophers. From Plato to the Present* (Baker Academic, 2006), 118 for example, writes: "Schelling and Hegel are the patriarchs of contemporary panentheism because they are the first to affirm that God, though eternal in essence, develops in existence by involving himself in the world and the world in himself. […] Both Schelling and Hegel therefore distinguish God's essence from his existence and imply duality in the divine nature: God is eternal and temporal, potential and actual, infinite and finite, immutable yet developing. […] In parallel ways, Schelling and Hegel both influence subsequent philosophy significantly." Systematically, Krause should

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the single, proper object of philosophy-as-science, which cannot be proven to exist, but can be intuited with immediate certainty. Science (*Wissenschaft*) becomes philosophical theology, and philosophical theology becomes panentheism.[3] To justify such panentheism as a system of philosophy, Krause employs two methods: on the one hand, the analytic ascent, which through transcendental and phenomenological reflections leads the human mind up to the intuition of God or "Essence";[4] on the other hand, the synthetic descent, which, starting from the immediately certain intuition of God or "Essence", seeks to explicate the categories of science, according to which everything is determined in its being, knowing, and being known.[5]

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have been mentioned at this point, since, unlike Schelling, he actually carried out a system of panentheism and, in contrast to Hegel, also described it as such *expressis verbis*. Cooper, *Panentheism. The Other God of the Philosophers. From Plato to the Present*, 122 goes on to say: "Although Schelling and Hegel better articulated the philosophical intuitions that Krause expressed, he certainly deserves recognition for coining the term panentheism." That Schelling and Hegel better articulated Krause's intuitions can only be asserted by comparing Krause with Schelling and Hegel. Unfortunately, such a study is still amiss.

3 Krause's "chief principle thus is that all science rests upon the intuition of an infinite substance, which intuition cannot be proven according to the principle of sufficient reason but can only be shown as present in the human mind. All that is, is this substance and is in this substance, and all scientific knowledge must also be grounded in that intuition, and through it." K.C.F. Krause, *Der Briefwechsel Karl Christian Friedrich Krauses: Zur Würdigung seines Lebens und Wirkens. Aus dem handschriftlichen Nachlass* (Otto Schulze, 1903), 362.

4 As Krause, *Der zur Gewissheit der Gotteserkenntnis als des höchsten Wissenschaftsprinzips emporleitende Theil der Philosophie*, 20 states: "The analytical part is not implicit in all sorts of hypotheses, and in desultory reasoning, but it grasps the first certainty of the consciousness of spirit. And all prerequisites, all hypotheses, all unauthorized ruminations, are kept from the analytic way. There is also no question of what we feel, believe, think, wish, hope, but only of what we already know."

5 As K.C.F. Krause, *Abriss des Systems der Philosophie* (Otto Schulze, 1886), 4 says: "The second main part of the system of science then forms in, and through, the fundamental intuition of the principle, that is, in and through the intuition of the principle of all special, conditioned, sciences the system of science as an organism." Cf. Benedikt P. Göcke, *Alles in Gott? Zur Aktualität des Panentheismus Karl Christian Friedrich Krauses* (Friedrich Pustet, 2012), Benedikt P. Göcke, *The Panentheism of Karl Christian Friedrich Krause. From Transcendental Philosophy to Metaphysics* (Peter Lang, 2018), and Benedikt P. Göcke, "Essential Features of Karl Christian Friedrich Krause's Idealistic Panentheism", in *Handbook on Idealism and Immaterialism*, ed. Benedikt P. Göcke and Joshua Farris (Routledge, 2021) for a detailed analysis of Krause's panentheism and its relevance for recent debates in metaphysics, the philosophy of mind, and the philosophy of religion.

Krause's panentheism is, however, not merely an exercise in theoretical reasoning. It has far-reaching practical implications for the life of the individual and for society as a whole: From the knowledge of God and the recognition of the truth of panentheism grows the realization that each individual entity deserves respect, love, and help in order to realize their respective essences because, ultimately, each of these entities is part of God Himself.[6] Because, according to Krause, "history is the one life of God" (Krause 1871: 439), we should act so that "humanity, reason and nature, and all that is in them and lives and happens in the presence of God is treated actually as a part of God Himself" (Krause 1871: 443). That is, each and every entity qua participation in the divine Being is understood to possess an absolute right to realize its eternal essence in the history of the world.

Based on his panentheistic system, Krause would, in the early 1800s, develop an explicit ecological ethics for nature and animals, which grants suitably qualified rights to nature and animals, because they are, in effect, as much part of the essence of the Absolute as we are.[7] Furthermore, Krause could argue for the absolute rights of children (they have, for example, a right to education and upbringing) and show that every human being qua human being and thus qua participation in the essence of God, independently of their biological sex or origin, must be attributed the same rights. For instance, in contrast to many of his colleagues, it was clear to Krause that: "Man and woman are equally essential to

6 As Krause argues: "Because all of them surround you and are equal to you in and through the Essence of God, every little thing in its own way and in concord with all beings is well and good. All beings proclaim God and his eternal love" K.C.F. Krause, "Gebote der Menschheit an jeden einzelnen Menschen. Erläutert durch ein Lehrfragstück.", in *Neue Zeit*, Vol. 5., Prag Tempsky, 458.

7 As P. Landau, "Karl Christian Friedrich Krauses Rechtsphilosophie", in *Karl Christian Friedrich Krause (1781–1832). Studien zu seiner Philosophie und zum Krausismo*, ed. K.-M. Kodalle (Felix Meiner, 1985), 87 states: "It belongs to the peculiarities of Krause's […] doctrine that it is not anthropocentrically oriented, the law ultimately founded in God must not only consider the purposes of man. Metaphysically, Krause did not proceed from the subordination of nature to the spirit like Hegel, but both were for him 'equally essential basic beings." Cf. also P. Landau, "Karl Christian Friedrich Krause und Christian Wolff. Zu den Wurzeln des „Krausismo" im deutschen Naturrecht", in *Rechtsentstehung und Rechtskultur. Heinrich Scholler zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. L. Philipps and R. Wittmann (Decker & Müller, 1991); P. Landau, *Stufen der Gerechtigkeit. Zur Rechtsphilosophie von Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz und Karl Christian Friedrich Krause* (Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1995). For a systematic survey of Krause's ecological ethics see Claus Dierksmeier: „Krause on Animal Rights and Ecological Sustainability", in: *Rechtsphilosophie — Zeitschrift für die Grundlagen des Rechts*, 1/2020, 5–19.

humankind, thus women are in no respect subordinate to men. The woman is in all matters of the spirit and the mind and the body so capable, so original a part of human destiny, as the man" (Krause 1811: 131).[8]

In regards to humanity as whole, Krause derives the following ethical and deeply cosmopolitan commandment:

> What is the one commandment of humanity? That mankind becomes wholly human; that is, that they realize their whole eternal essence in time; or, that they fulfill their eternal essence. That humanity is accomplished, like one undivided and united being, and lives their inner and outer life in body and spirit; all men and women, children, adults and old people, all individual people and all societies, all families, friends, free societies, villages, tribes and nations; and that all those people live in good harmony, united with nature and reason, and thus supremely united with God. (Krause 1871: 436).

According to practical reason, then, the goal of human history is to realize what Krause called the "human alliance" (*Menschheitbund*, *civitas perfecta*), the Kingdom of Heavens, on Earth, because only this state

> is the state of humanity that is properly lawlike [and in line with the divine Being Himself]; it is that complete determination and realization of each individual and social life which is completely determined by the whole of the inner and outer conditions of a free life according to reason.' (Krause 1828: 7)

Consequently, the aim of Krause's ethics is to reach a state in which

> the self and the society create a harmonious One, reflecting the idea of God. One that is a matched, healthy, powerful and beautiful whole through purification, formation and perfection of mankind; so that every person and every human society, existing within and because of the unity of nature and reason, lives for themselves and for others, and that they give themselves to the goodness, freedom, guidance, education and perfection, so that finally all individuals in humanity achieve maturity, that there will be no more condescending but instead everyone is connected with everything and

8 As C. Dierksmeier, "Karl Christian Friedrich und das ‚gute Recht'" 85 (1) (1999) states it: "Krause defines human beings as beings who are completely equal in their sexual, racial, and national references, who deserve the highest and unconditional respect. The unconditionality of this 'human dignity' manifests itself also and especially in people who cannot vouch for the realization of their right to justice: Embryos, disabled, old. The legal basis of human dignity is not man's power of disposal; it can neither be acquired nor abandoned." See also: C. Dierksmeier, *Der absolute Grund des Rechts. Karl Christian Friedrich Krause in Auseinandersetzung mit Fichte und Schelling* (frommann-holzboog, 2003).

everyone exists in a divine freedom and thus shows the very image of good and godlike life of humankind. (Krause 1871: 559).

II. SUMMARIES OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS

Immanuel Hermann Fichte and Nicolai Hartmann regarded Krause as one of the leading minds of German Idealism and named him in the same breath as Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel;[9] and although Krause's philosophy also assured classical German philosophy an enormous historic impact — as translations of Krause's early work by Julián Sanz del Río proved quintessential to Spanish and Latin American modernity[10] —, Krause is hardly extant in current philosophical and theological debates. This is regrettable, since Krause's work was in many ways ahead of its time and can justly be seen today as a paragon of contributions from German Idealism with lasting systematic relevance for contemporary philosophical, political, and theological debates.

Due to the organic character of Krause's cosmopolitan panentheism, Krause's theoretical and practical philosophy are intrinsically connected, as are his philosophy of religion, on the one hand, and his metaphysics, logic, ethics, and aesthetics, on the other. The reason is that, according to Krause,

9 Immanuel Hermann Fichte, for example, received "manifold stimulation from Krause. The impression he received from Krause's basic ideas was early and strong. At the beginning of his effectiveness, he mentioned Krause as an immediate precursor of his own philosophizing, and until the end he pointed to him as the philosopher whose work, correcting Hegel's point of view, reaches into the present", A. Hartmann, "Der Spätidealismus in seinen Anfängen. Über die Philosophie Karl Christian Friedrich Krauses" 19 (1) (1944): 41.

10 Spanish translations of Krause's early publications that sketch the foundations of a panentheistic social philosophy, were, through the work of Julián Sanz del Río, essential sources contributing to Spanish and Latin American modernity. Cf. Ureña, E. M., (1988), "El fraude de Sanz del Río o la verdad sobre su `Ideal de la Humanidad`" en: *Pensamiento. Revista de Investigación e Información Filosófica*, núm. 173, vol. 44, 25–47; Ureña E. M., Fernández Fernández, J. L., Seidel, J., (1997), El «Ideal de la Humanidad» de Sanz del Río y su original alemán. Textos comparados con una introducción, Madrid, Colección del Instituto de Investigación sobre Liberalismo, Krausismo y Masonería (LKM), Universidad Pontificia Comillas. See also S. Wollgast, "Karl Christian Friedrich Krause. Anmerkungen zu Leben und Werk", no. 129 (5) (1990); J. Lopez-Morillas, *The Krausist Movement and ideological change in Spain* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1981); Arnulf Zweig, "Karl Christian Friedrich Krause", in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. P. Edwards (The Macmillan Company & The Free Press, 1967), 365 Neil McInnes, "Spanish Philosophy", in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. P. Edwards (The Macmillan Company & The Free Press, 1967), 514.

a distinguishing feature of his system of philosophy is that there is a "unity according to which all scientific knowledge is a single truth" (Krause 1869: 7). The contributions to follow mirror this organic unity of Krause's cosmopolitan panentheism and touch on matters which today would be classified as belonging to different philosophical disciplines, but which, in Krause's cosmopolitan panentheism, belong together and constitute the organic character of his system of philosophy.

To engage in transcendental reflection on the ego, according to Krause, is the proper starting point in justifying his cosmopolitan panentheism. *Rueda Garrido*, in his article "The Embodied and Embedded Self in Krause's *Analytische Philosophie* as Translated and Explained by the Spanish Krausists" expounds Krause's analysis of the self both in his *Analytische Philosophie* and in his *Vorlesungen über die Psychische Anthropologie*. Garrido proceeds through an analysis of Krause through the texts that the Spanish Krausists translated and discussed to disseminate Krause's ideas in dialogue with the philosophies of the time. In his exposition and examination of the doctrine of the self, Garrido primarily analyzes the aspect of embeddedness in a particular existence through its embodiment and argues that these are aspects with which Krausism can still illuminate the debate about human subjectivity.

Ricardo Burgos's paper "Intimacy with God: K. Ch. Fr. Krause´s Philosophy of Religion", deals with the concept of religiousness and religion in the context of Krause's panentheist metaphysics, understood as a life of union, as intimacy of and with God. An evolutionary review of this conception of religion is undertaken throughout Krause's work, and the program of a philosophy of religion is traced, which, besides a metaphysical and anthropological substantiation, would address an understanding of the history of religions and especially of Christianity, proposing a vision of reciprocal illumination between religion, knowledge, feeling and morality, as well as the possibility of an appealing notion of religious freedom, the hallmark of Krausism in its historical development.

Against this background, the following two contributions deal with ethical implications of Krause's cosmopolitan panentheism and state their relevance for recent debates on animal and human rights. In his "Karl Christian Friedrich Krause on Animal Rights", *Dieter Birnbacher* concentrates on the conception of animal rights entailed by Krause's cosmopolitan panentheism. Birnbacher argues that Krause's panentheism not only was the first system of

philosophy that explicitly recognized animal rights on a genuine philosophical level, but that Krause's theory of animal rights even must be considered "a truly revolutionary and pathbreaking achievement," (67) which, although also confronted with some problems in respect to the specification of the particular rights of animals, "has perhaps never been more up to date" (64).

Claus Dierksmeier, in his "Krause's Ethics as a Precursor to Capability Theory", argues that there are striking parallels between current capability theories and Krause's moral philosophy. Dierksmeier reconstructs central arguments of Krause's ethics and correlates them with passages from the works of Martha Nussbaum, showing that such similarities extend not only to what, substantially, is being professed in either philosophy but also, procedurally, to the question of how the respective moral conclusions are reached. As Dierksmeier states: "'To each according to their dignity, and from each according to their capability — with this formular one could not only sum up the core ethical tenets of Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen but also those of Karl Christian Friedrich Krause." (83).

The next two papers deal with Krause's methodological approach deployed in the overall justification of his panentheistic system of philosophy: *Peter Rohs*, in his "Remarks on the Conceptions of Philosophical Method of Schelling, Hegel, and Krause", compares some of the commonalities and particularities to be found in the philosophical methodologies and approaches of Krause and his colleagues Schelling and Hegel. Rohs argues that the distinguishing feature of Krause's philosophical system not only consists in the fact that "Krause thinks of God above all as ground — a ground of all being and all knowledge" (119), but, in contradistinction to Schelling and Hegel, also in the fact that Krause deploys a specific philosophical methodology to construct his cosmopolitan panentheism: According to Rohs, it is a peculiarity of Krause's philosophy that in the development of his system Krause "relies on the trinity of intuition, deduction, and construction." Both these features of Krause's philosophy, according to Rohs, turn it into an interesting and worthwhile alternative to Schelling's and Hegel's respective philosophical approaches.

Combinatorics is at the heart of Krause's panentheism: In large part, Krause's system of philosophy is devoted to spelling out the logical implications and combinations of the divine categories apprehended in the intuition of God or Essence. *Uwe Meixner*, in his paper "K. C. F. Krause: The Combinatorian as Logician", therefore concentrates on Krause's combinatorics. Meixner

argues that at a time when logic was at a very low point in its evolution as a discipline, Karl Christian Friedrich Krause was among the few philosophers who not only respected logic but also made a non-negligible contribution to the field. In fact, following Meixner, today's "Venn-diagrams" should really be called "Krause-diagrams"; moreover, he argues that Krause's true innovation concerns logical form, rather than content; his innovation of logical form is the completely symbolic, completely formalized representation of judgments.

Ruben Schneider, in his paper "Panentheism and the Combinatorics of the Determinations of the Absolute. A Comparison between K. C. F. Krause and G. W. F. Hegel", picks up and elaborates on the topics mentioned in the papers by Rohs and Meixner. Schneider argues that Krause and Hegel are two representatives of German Idealism, both of whom developed impressive category systems. At the core of both systems, according to Schneider, is the question of the relation of the Absolute to its determinations and the determinations of finite beings. Schneider argues that both idealists try to deduce their respective category systems from the immediacy of the Absolute: Both use combinatorial methods to get from known to new categories or constellations in the system, which then unfold in the world (in creation, in world history, etc.). Through a comparison of the two systems of categories, Schneider argues for the thesis that Krause rather than Hegel should be considered the paramount panentheist of his time and era.

In the final paper "Panentheism and the 'Most Nonsensical Superstition' of Polytheism: A Critical Examination of K. C. F. Krause's Reception of Vedānta and Hindu Religion", *Swami Medhananda* brings Krause's panentheism into dialogue with Indian philosophy. Swami Medhananda first shows that Krause found deep conceptual parallels between his panentheistic system and the philosophy of Vedānta before he critically examines Krause's understanding of Vedānta and popular Hindu religion. Swami Medhananda argues that while Krause was correct in viewing the mystical panentheistic doctrine of Vedānta as a precursor to his own philosophy, he was also frequently misled by unreliable translations and secondary texts. Krause, it is suggested, was mistaken in characterizing the Hindu practice of image worship as "polytheism" and "idolatry", which is why, from a Vedāntic standpoint, Krause's denial of the divinity of Jesus is inconsistent with his own panentheistic metaphysics.

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