

CHAPTER FIVE

DMITRII IVANOVICH BOGDASHEVSKII (1861-1933): HIS HERMENEUTICAL APPROACH TO THE NEW TESTAMENT

The hermeneutical perspective of bible interpretation within the Russian Orthodox Church (as it was attested in its history) and hermeneutical implication of the anthropological theoretical construction formed the frame of reference that is vital in discerning the New Testament hermeneutics constructed by Bogdashevskii. Thus, the discussion turns to Bogdashevskii.

This chapter does not present a comprehensive study of Bogdashevskii as such. This chapter attempts to examine Bogdashevskii's career as an exegete of the New Testament. The investigation of his understanding of the New Testament interpretation and hermeneutics will serve as the test case study in the Russian Orthodox hermeneutics. A case study of Bogdashevskii's hermeneutics will be performed because it is advantageous to have a detailed study of one writer as an example of the hermeneutical trends attested in the Russian Orthodox Church. The focus on Bogdashevskii should help us understand how the Russian Orthodox hermeneutics cohere in one person's thoughts. Yet, as we have previously stated, Bogdashevskii is only contributory to the larger development of the Russian Orthodox hermeneutics (i.e. the location of the Russian Orthodox hermeneutics lies in the interaction of ideas of many).

Bogdashevskii is chosen for his significant contribution to the Russian Orthodox New Testament scholarship and for his priestly role in the life of the Russian Orthodox Church. For many years he was a professor of New Testament at Kiev Ecclesiastic Academy and later the Rector of Kiev's Academy. In recognition of his academic achievements and credentials all three Russian Orthodox Ecclesiastic Academies appointed him as a distinguished professor of the New Testament (Moscow Ecclesiastic Academy in 1914; St. Petersburg's and Kazan's Academies in 1915). What is more, Bogdashevskii represents more than just a tiny minority in the Russian Orthodox Church – its learned scholars. Bogdashevskii never isolated himself from the practical life of the Church. He was received into the priesthood of the Russian Orthodox Church and earned the high regard in both ecclesiastic and scholarly circles. These supportive factors prove Bogdashevskii to be a

legitimate target for a case study in the Russian Orthodox hermeneutics. Moreover, there is not a single book, dissertation, monograph or scholarly journal article devoted to Bogdashevskii's exegetical and homiletic material. Such deficiency gives the additional reason for a focused study devoted to Bogdashevskii.

While this chapter touches some aspects of Bogdashevskii's life, its main focus is the work of exegete he committed himself to during his years of lecturing at Kiev Ecclesiastic Academy. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to provide an exposition, analysis and interpretation of Dmitrii Bogdashevskii's hermeneutical approach¹ to the New Testament, primarily as expressed in his published works, though an examination of Philosophy, New Testament exegesis, and Christian ethics as the disciplines that witness closely to his hermeneutical procedures. The analysis of his philosophical ideas will serve as the gate to his worldview that controlled his exegetical decisions. In interpreting the New Testament, Bogdashevskii emphasized its ethics and in doing so he had to make the decisions preconditions by his hermeneutical approach, i.e. a set of the assumptions that controls the exegete in the process of interpreting biblical text.

This chapter is the first more detailed study of the biblical scholarship of Dmitrii Bogdashevskii as it finds expression in his published works.² It is here contended that: (1) Bogdashevskii's personal and educational background, his teaching career and ecclesiastic involvement afford data useful in interpreting and analyzing his thought; (2) a comprehension of Bogdashevskii's perspective on selected specific philosophical themes is requisite for a correct understanding of his work as the New Testament exegete; (3) Bogdashevskii's theological and methodological axiomatic assumptions constructs his theory of reading of the New Testament; and (4) the course of Bogdashevskii carrier and his published writings, taken together, as a whole, may be interpreted as consulting his New Testament hermeneutics.

¹ By hermeneutical approach we mean a set of the assumptions that controls the exegete in the process of interpreting biblical text. For our definition of hermeneutics see Chapter One, note 4.

² In the course of his life and career Bogdashevskii was received into the priesthood of the Russian Orthodox Church. Consequently, he signs his publications adjustably, namely: D. I. Bogdashevskii (from 1890), Protoerei Vasilii (from 1913), and Bishop Vasilii (from 1914). In referring to Bogdashevskii's publications we will maintain his choice of a signature.

5.1 The Life of Bogdashevskii

This section will examine the life and career of Dmitrii Bogdashevskii. We shall first set forth a biographical account of Bogdashevskii career (5.1.1). Included here is a description of his background and formal education, and a chronicle of his career ordered around his appointments. Then, we shall provide an overview of his contribution (5.1.2). Finally, we shall outline the historical setting of his life (5.1.3). Included here is a short description of a situation in Russian nation and Church.

5.1.1 The Biographical Details

Dmitrii Ivanovich Bogdashevskii was born in the Volyn' guberniia (province) in the Western region of the southern Russia (presently the Ukraine), on 19 October 1861.³ The atmosphere of traditional Orthodox Piety impregnated the household. Bogdashevskii's autobiographical remarks indicate that he cherished his childhood years.⁴ He grew up in a Church environment.

After completing his primary schooling, Bogdashevskii began this theological training first in the faculty of Volyn' Seminary and next at Kiev Ecclesiastic Academy. The theological and classical learning, especially literature and languages, were easy for him.⁵ In 1886, he graduated from Kiev Ecclesiastic Academy and was awarded the degree *Candidate of Theology*.

The Academy's professors were pleased with Bogdashevskii's academic achievements and he was invited to remain at the Academy for additional preparation to teach in the Department of History of Philosophy. From 1887 to 1890, he was lecturing at

³ The biographical information included in what follows is drawn from a number of brief notices, notably: B. Vorob'ev ed. *Za Khrista Postradavshie. Goneniia na Russkuiu Pravoslavnuu Tserkov': 1917-1956* [*The Suffered for Christ. The Oppressions on the Russian Orthodox Church: 1917-1956*] *Biographical Dictionary, Book One (A-K)* (M.: Orthodox St. Tikhonov Theological Institute, 1997), s.v. "Vasilii (Bogdashevskii Dmitrii Ivanovich), Archbishop," pp. 221-222; Z. "From the Academic Life," *TKDA* III (1914): 194ff [About Bogdashevskii's appointment as the Rector of Kiev Ecclesiastic Academy and his short biography]; "Bogdashevskii, D. I." in *Pravoslavnaia Bogoslovskaiia Entsiklopediia* [*The Orthodox Theological Encyclopaedia*] Vol. 2, 727-729.

⁴ D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Chtenie. Neskol'ko slov o teosofii," ["Lecture. Several Remarks on Theosophy,"] *TKDA* III, 11 (1912): 344.

⁵ Cf. *Idem*.

the Academy as the acting docent in the faculty of Philosophy. Soon, in 1890, he was appointed senior lecturer (Ru. – доцент) subsequently after being awarded a Master Degree⁶ for the Master thesis, the bulk of which was published in the Academy's scholarly journal (*Trudy Kievskoi Theological Academy*) in the form of a series of articles under the title *The False Teachers in the First Letter of John* [*Lzheuchiteli v Pervom Poslanii Sv. Apostola Ioanna*] *TKDA* (1890) 3: 483-520; 4: 674-713; 5: 60-91; 6: 280-305; 7: 408-441; 8: 545-564 (it was reprinted shortly afterwards under the title *The False Teachers Denounced in the First Letter of John* [*Lzheuchiteli Oblichayemye v Pervom Poslanii Ap. Ioanna*] (Kiev: 1890).

In 1897, Dmitrii Ivanovich voluntarily left the Department of History of Philosophy and joined the Sub-Faculty of the New Testament. This decision can be explained from Bogdashevskii's own conviction that in its essence the New Testament is "the most perfect philosophy, which gives solution to all the important problems of the [human] mind."⁷ Consequently, he dedicated the rest of his academic and pastoral life continually studying and preaching the New Testament.

In 1902, Bogdashevskii received a position of Professor Extraordinary of the New Testament. In two years, he was awarded a Doctoral degree in Theology for his doctoral thesis, which, again, was first published in the Academy's journal (1900-1904) and finally appeared in the form of monograph (1904).⁸

⁶ The Holy Synod awarded the degree on 17 November 1890 for the thesis submitted on 17 August 1889.

⁷ D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Sound Metaphysics," Book review of P. Linitiskii, *Guide to the Study of Philosophy* (Kharkov': 1893) in *TKDA* II (1898) 5: 125. Everyplace, he voiced that without the Church and faith, man cannot find a satisfactory answer for the basic philosophical questions: where are the people from and where they are going? Cf. Ibid., "Slovo. Pri vospominanii strastei Khristovykh (Luk. 23:21)," ["Sermon. In Remembrance of Christ's Suffering (Luk 23:21),"] *TKDA* II, 5 (1988): 56. Also, "In the faith in God and Lord Jesus Christ... in religion we will find calmness in everything that indeed disturb and concern us. Ibid., "Slovo. Pri vospominanii strastei Khristovykh: Gde naiti uspokoenie v postigaiushchikh nas smushcheniakh? (In. 14:1)," ["A Sermon. In Remembrance of Christ's Suffering: Where to find Peace for Our Doubts? (John 14:1),"] *TKDA* II, 5 (1891): 3-10. For the analogous argumentation see also his "Where to find Peace for Our Doubts? (John 14:1)," *TKDA* II, 5 (1891): 8-9; "Slovo. Pri vospominanii strastei Khristovykh: Protiv Izvrashcheniia L. Tolstovym Khristianstva," ["In remembrance of Christ's suffering: Against Tolstoy's perversion of Christianity,"] *TKDA* I, 4 (1982): 591.

⁸ For the set of articles see D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Poslanie Apostola Pavla k Efesianam," ["Paul's Letter to the Ephesians,"] *TKDA* (1900) 3: 435- 476; 6: 254-285; (1901) 2: 159-210; (1903) 2: 254-304; 4: 505-537; 6: 213-274; 10-12: 273-368; (1904) 1-9: 369-678. Also Ibid., *Poslanie k Efesianam: Isagogiko-Ekzegeticheskoe Issledovanie* [*The Letter to the Ephesians: An Isagogical-Exegetical Investigation*] (K.: 1904).

In 1905, he became the Supernumerary Ordinary Professor of Kiev Ecclesiastic Academy at the Department of the New Testament. Soon after (in 1909), the Holy Synod appointed Bogdashevskii to be the Inspector of Kiev Ecclesiastic Academy. With this post he accepted certain administrative responsibilities.

Being obstinate from marriage, Bogdashevskii, in 1910, was received into the priesthood of the Orthodox Church. He was ordained as a Priest (*Iereii*) and elevated to the Archpriest office (*Protoerei*). At this stage of his life, he acknowledged that both teaching and ecclesiastic service were going relatively smooth for him.⁹ On September 24, 1913, the Grace Flavian (Gorodetskii), the Metropolitan of Kiev and Galitsa, admitted Archpriest Bogdashevskii to the monastic vows and gave him the name *Vasilii*. Next month (on the 5th of October) he was elevated to the Archimandrite office.

After this moment, Bogdashevskii entered into a period of administrative responsibilities. First, in 1914, he became the Superior of Kiev's Btratsko-Bogoiavlenskii Monastery. Soon afterward, on July 29, 1914, just before the academic year started, the Holy Synod appointed Archimandrite Vasilii for the Rectoral office of Kiev Ecclesiastic Academy (He replaced Innokentii, Bishop of Kanev, who was transferred to the Episcopate of Vitebsk and Polotsk). Simultaneously with the position of the Rector, Archimandrite Vasilii was elevated to the Bishopric office (on August, 5th, 1914). The Grace Flavian (Gorodetskii) Metropolitan of Kiev and Galitsa, together with the other Russian Orthodox authorities, concentrated him as the Bishop of Kanev.

As the Rector of Kiev's Academy, Bogdashevskii enthusiastically emphasized the academic proficiency and breadth of theological knowledge. In his commencement ceremonial speech for the academic year 1916-1917, he said:

The academic knowledge is a great power... Only the enemies of the Church may suggest that the pastors should be humble dedicated readers [of the ecclesiastical literature]. The urgency of the Church life is complex; and, the various things are needed in order to get ready for making defense to everyone who asks us to give an account for the hope that is in us (1 Peter 3:15). The Church reform... demands the knowledgeable and well-grounded clergies... May the academic knowledge advance!¹⁰

⁹ D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Lecture. Several Remarks on Theosophy," ["Chtenie. Neskol'ko slov o teosofii,"] *TKDA* III, 11 (1912): 344.

¹⁰ Bishop Vasilii, "The Ceremonial Speech for Opening Academic Year 1916-1917 at Kiev Ecclesiastic Academy," *TKDA* III (1916): iv.

After the Red Revolution, in 1917, the Bolsheviks closed Kiev's Academy. In April 1923, Bishop Vasilii was arrested together with Mikhail (Ermakov) the Metropolitan of Kiev and Bishop Dimitrii (Verbitskii) and shortly imprisoned at Moscow Butyraskaia Prison. Consequently, he was sentenced for one year in exile (May 1923- August 1924) in the village Ishma, Komi (North-East of Sybirian District). In 1924, released from his banishment, Bogdashevskii returned to Kiev. In 1925, Bishop Vasilii was elevated to the Archbishopric office. He died on February 25, 1933, in Kiev.

5.1.2 His Contribution

Bogdashevskii writings include 10 books and monographs, more than 80 journal articles¹¹ and reviews.¹² He contributed to *Orthodox Theological Encyclopaedia* and translated the dogmatic writings of Tertullian.¹³ He has published in a variety of popular Orthodox media, frequently addressed professional association, learned societies and research institutes, often is invited to speak at different ceremonies, and regularly preached at the Btratsko-Bogoiavlenskii Monastery. It is rightly noted that Bogdashevskii distinguished himself with unusual productivity.¹⁴

The career of this ordained Orthodox priest mirrors the ambition and diversity of his publication. He has taught at Kiev Ecclesiastic Academy and has served as its Rector. For his achievements in teaching and researching, the Russian Orthodox ecclesiastic authorities honored Bogdashevskii. In recognition of his academic credentials all three Russian Orthodox Ecclesiastic Academies welcomed him as a distinguished professor of the New Testament by appointing him as a distinguished member of the Faculties of Moscow Ecclesiastic Academy (1914) and of St. Petersburg's Academy and of Kazan' (both in 1915).

Yet, apart from the reviews of his books and articles,¹⁵ there has been little scholarly attention to the work of Dmitrii Bogdashevskii. There are only passing references to him in

¹¹ Mainly in *Works of the Kiev Ecclesiastical Academy (TKDA)* published by the Kiev Ecclesiastical Academy.

¹² For a detailed chronology and documentation of his writings see *The Works of Archbishop Vasilii (D. I. Bogdashevskii, 1861-1933)* in BIBLIOGRAPHY.

¹³ Tertullian, *The Dogmatic Writings*, trans. by Bishop Vasilii (K.: 1915).

¹⁴ Cf. *Men'*, 280

¹⁵ E.g., Protoerei A. G. "Bishop Vasilii, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Kiev: 1915)," *TKDA* III (1915): 536-538; Z. "From the Academic Life," *TKDA* III (1914): 194ff; "Bogdashevskii," in *The Orthodox Theological Encyclopaedia* Vol. 2, pp. 727-729; M. Tareev, "On the Translation of John

scholarly writings and occasional biographical profiles.¹⁶ Despite his many publications and the esteem in which he was held in both ecclesiastic and scholarly circles, there is not a single book, dissertation, monograph or scholarly journal article devoted to Bogdashevskii's published work in whole or in part. On the one hand, the Red Revolution, in 1917, interrupted not only Bogdashevskii's accomplishments as the exegete and writer; but also almost put a stop to all religious reflective thinking. Without doubt, it resulted in deficiency of the studies devoted to Bogdashevskii's published works. The current circumstances of Russian Christianity, however, allow and stimulate for rethinking and reconsidering the Orthodox past. In this context we locate our interest in Bogdashevskii.

5.1.3 The Historical Setting of His Life

In order to indicate something of the change in climate in the Orthodox Church and the Russian State during Bogdashevskii's life, during the time he was growing in his theological consciousness to the end of his life, a few words of the Russian history of this period may be in order.¹⁷ This will indicate Bogdashevskii's time of history prescribed by the philosophy of historical investigation.

During years of his childhood, adolescent, and student life, the young Bogdashevskii experienced unquestioned and unquestioning religious domination. The majority of Orthodox churchmen accepted the great Tsarist autocracy, which ruled up until the middle years of the reign of Nikolas II. The Russian Empire, under the reign of Alexander II, was involved in domestic wars and partial reforms. When Serbia and Montenegro revolted against Turkey in 1876, Russia intervened on their behalf (Russo-Turkish War of 1877 and 1878). The essential failure of the war increased popular discontent with the government. A bomb

8:44," *Bogoslovskii Vestnik* II (1904): 141-161; M. Tareev, "The Response to Prof. D. I. Bogdashevskii," *Bogoslovskii Vestnik* III (1904): 209-212.

¹⁶ E.g., Protoerei B. Vorob'ev ed. *'Za Khrista Postradavshie. Gonenii na Russkuiu Pravoslavnuu Tserkov' (1917-1956) [The Suffered for Christ. The Oppressions on the Russian Orthodox Church 1917-1956] Biographical Dictionary, Book One (A-K)* (M.: Orthodox St. Tikhonov Theological Institute, 1997), s.v. "Vasilii (Bogdashevskii Dmitrii Ivanovich), Archbishop," pp. 221-222;

¹⁷ Among the many accounts of the immediately pre-Revolutionary periods, see J. S. Curtiss, *Church and State in Russia: The Last Years of the Empire 1900-1917* (New York, 1940); A. V. Kartashov, "Revoliutsiia i Sobor, 1917-1918 gg.," ["Revolution and Council,"] *Bogoslovskaiia mysl'* 4 (1944): 75-101; A. A. Bogolepov, "Church Reform in Russia 1905-1918," *SVTQ* 10 (1966): 12-66; G. Simon, "Church, State and Society," in G. Katkov et al. (eds.), *Russia Enters the Twentieth Century* (London 1971, 1973), 199-235; G. Freeze, *The Parish Clergy in Nineteenth Century Russian Crisis, Reform, Counter-Reform* (Princeton: 1983).

thrown by revolutionaries assassinated Alexander II in 1881. Alexander II's son, Alexander III, instituted rigid censorship and police supervision of intellectual and religious-educational activities. The Russification programs were forced upon the various racial minorities within the Empire. The oppression of Jews was particularly severe. Russian factory workers eagerly accepted revolutionary propaganda, and Marxist theories found many supporters.

At the same time, the Russian Church paid special attention to the development of religious education and missions in the provinces. Old churches were restored and new churches were built. If the beginning of the 19th century was marked by the work of brilliant theologians (Russian theologians also did much to develop such sciences as history, linguistics and Oriental studies), then the end of the 19th century was marked by harvesting the results of a religious-philosophical and intellectual advancement. In some cases, the Orthodox Church also began to persecute the heretics who deviated from orthodox doctrine or practice. The majority of books or sermons of this period opposed to the spreading of Protestantism in Russia. Printers were required to submit all manuscripts to the church authorities, and a work could be printed only after it had been approved. The Ecclesiastic Academies occasionally published lists of books that were not recommended for reading by the Russian Orthodox.

Nicholas II, the eldest son of Alexander III, ascended to the throne in 1894. He was regarded as a weak ruler, out of touch with his people, easily dominated by others, and a firm believer in the autocratic principles taught him by his father. Autocracy, oppression, and police control increased under Nicholas. They were met by an upsurge of terrorist acts. The Russian revolutionary leaders, including notably Vladimir Lenin, directed the Socialist movement. On January 22, 1905 thousands of persons marched to the Winter Palace to present their demands, but they were fired on by imperial troops. This massacre was the signal for a revolution. Strikes and riots began throughout the industrialized sections of Russia.

The outbreak of World War I in 1914 put a temporary halt to the revolutionary activities of the radicals. By the end of 1914 severe defeats had been inflicted on the Russian army, notably in East Prussia. The defeats increased in 1915. Except for temporary victories, the defeat began to assume the proportions of the Crimean and Japanese disasters. Moreover, repression and corruption in the government continued. The emperor Nicholas II, largely under the control of Grigorii Yefimovich Rasputin (1872-1916) was rumoured to have become the chief influence in the empire, controlling even military decisions. Revolutionary agitation increased, and in February 1917, riots began in Moscow. Demands for changes in the government finally resulted in the abdication of Nicholas II on March 15.

The abdications ended the Russian Empire. On the night of November 6, Red Guards duly occupied key sites in the capital and captured the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg.

Early in the 20th century the Russian Church began preparations for convening an All-Russian Council. But it was to be convened only after the 1917 Revolution. Among its major actions was the restoration of the patriarchal office in the Russian Church. The Council elected Metropolitan Tikhon of Moscow Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia (1917-1925). St. Tikhon of Moscow and exerted every effort to calm the destructive passions kindled up by the revolution. The Message of the Holy Council issued on 11 November 1917 says in particular:

Instead of a new social order promised by the false teachers we see a bloody strife among the builders, instead of peace and brotherhood among the peoples - a confusion of languages and a bitter hatred among brothers. People who have forgotten God are attacking one another like hungry wolves... Abandon the senseless and godless dream of the false teachers who call to realize universal brotherhood through universal strife! Come back to the way of Christ!

For Bolsheviks who came to power in 1917, the Russian Orthodox Church was an ideological enemy a priori. Since the Church has been an institutional part of tsarist Russia, it resolutely defended the old regime after the October revolution. This is why so many bishops, thousands of clergymen, monks, nuns, as well as, lay people were subjected to repression up to execution and murder. When in 1921-1922 the Soviet government demanded that church valuables be given in aid to the starving population because of the failure of crops in 1921 a fateful conflict erupted between the Church and the new authorities, which decided to use this situation to demolish the Church to the end.

The above outlined historical background is relevant to our task to examine Bogdashevskii's writings. His philosophical, exegetical and homiletic materials reflect the circumstances of the Russian people. Bogdashevskii was immediately concerned not only with what Scripture meant to its author and the original readers (i.e., the literal sense) and what it has to mean in subsequent ecclesiastical theological usage, but also what Scripture meant to the Russian people in his generation. This posed a religious question about the implication of Scripture for the life of the Orthodox faithful in Russia.

Bogdashevskii lived during the climax of time (the end of 19th century) and through the religious repression (initiated by Bolsheviks who came to power in 1917). His writings and sermons reflect Bogdashevskii's concerns for the Russian society. This will be clear in our arguments in the following sections (esp. dealing with his ethics). Thus, the discussion turns to Bogdashevskii.

5.2 Fundamental Philosophical Ideas

5.2.1 General Remarks

Bogdashevskii was introduced to the discipline of philosophy during his formal education at Kiev Ecclesiastic Academy. Throughout its history, this particular school of the Orthodox theological persuasion was inclined not only to focus on religious and moral education particularly related to the Russian Church, but also to cover the core curriculum of general interdisciplinary studies, among which philosophy was of particular significance. During the years 1830-36 Kiev's Academy, under the rectorship of Bishop Innokentii (1800-1857), experienced an important philosophical awakening. Following this period, it was understood that the Academy must teach this subject as a truly academic discipline and that it was to be offered to all perspective clergy of the Church on a respectable level of study.¹⁸ On the one hand, Orthodox dogmatics and Patristics defined the fundamental boundaries and paths of reflection; on the other hand, the rich philosophical tradition of the Western Europe permitted the selection from among various philosophical systems the themes for constructing Russian religious philosophy. Although the Kiev school, similar to other Orthodox Academies, offered philosophy in the light of Church doctrines and "in accord with the true reason of Holy Scripture,"¹⁹ it has also endorsed Plato as the teacher of 'a true philosophy,' and otherwise bore the influence from its inception of German metaphysics. The Church historian George Florovsky well specifies the character and consequence of philosophical studies in the Orthodox academies in the 19th century. He says:

[From the beginning], "the teachers and students [of the Orthodox schools], especially in Kiev, read a great deal, often from the modern philosophers... In the charter of the 1814 school reform, the seminaries are urged to familiarize their students with the disagreements among the most renowned philosophers in order to give them 'a conception of the true spirit of philosophy' and 'to train the pupils themselves for philosophical investigation and acquaint them with the best methods for such study'... Of course, the Academic Charter subordinated philosophy to revelation. 'Anything not in accord with the true reason of Holy Scripture is in essence falsehood and error and must be mercilessly refuted...; the philosophy teacher must be inwardly certain that neither he nor his students ever think they see the light of higher, true philosophy unless it be sought in the doctrines of Christianity. But the charter also recommended Plato as a teacher of 'true philosophy,' along with his followers in both ancient and modern times. And from the very beginning the greatest influence on academic instruction was modern German metaphysics... The

¹⁸ Cf. S. Askoshentsev, *Kiev's Academy* (K.: 1856), Vol. 2, 45-52.

¹⁹ Florovsky, *Ways: Two*, 5.

foundation for systematic philosophical culture were laid in the ecclesiastical schools... Russian love of wisdom [Ru.- *liubomudrie*] had its beginning precisely in the ecclesiastical schools.²⁰

While Bogdashevskii, as a student and later as a lecturer on the History of Philosophy at Kiev Ecclesiastic Academy, was growing in his philosophical consciousness, Russia was experiencing a genuine religious-philosophical awakening. The questions about social ethics and political philosophy, adequate knowledge and virtuous behavior, wisdom and power, religious and aesthetic values, ideas and ideals of human life - all of these were central themes of the philosophical discussions of the day. Bogdashevskii studied philosophy just after the time of the so-called "Great Reformers" - the time when "everyone in Russia wanted to recover their senses, began to think, read and study."²¹ In the concurrent philosophical environment, Bogdashevskii was encircled by an anti-historical utopianism; the fight between the "objectivity" of idealism and "subjectivism" or "dogmatism"; rampant interest in the philosophy of history and science; the ideas of unity of man with God, and the unity of the Church and the Russian nation; the tendencies to synthesize religion, scientific knowledge, and mystical experience toward the founding of a scientifically oriented thinking; etc.

As to the influences which are evident in Bogdashevskii's theoretical construction, it must be emphasized, foremost, that in his theoretical views [esp. in the problems of epistemology] he associated himself with Alexander Vvedenskii (1856-1925, Professor of philosophy at St. Petersburg University, from 1890) and also with the most important representative of Kiev's Orthodox philosophical school, Pamphil Yurkevich (1827-1874), who produced a profound critique of materialism and whose works prepared a decisive move from Kant's transcendental idealism to the direction of a metaphysical idealism in the spirit of Plato.²²

Turning to an analysis of Bogdashevskii's philosophical views, it must be noted that he himself never reduced his philosophical views to a system. In the bibliography of Bogdashevskii we do not find a finished philosophical system, but the makings for a system are nonetheless there. Bogdashevskii possessed a highly integrated nature, not surprisingly, strove for integration in the realm of ideas. Only the fact that he turned from pure philosophy

²⁰ Florovsky, *Ways: Two*, 4-9.

²¹ Cf. Florovsky, *Ways: Two*, 54.

²² On the philosophy of Yurkovskii see *Zen'kovskii*, vol. I, 313-315.

to exegetical-theological writings most probably prevented him in the end from systematizing his philosophical concepts. However, our purpose is not to try to offer a comprehensive account of Bogdashevskii's philosophical development; rather, the aim is to select for inquiry Bogdashevskii's philosophical fundamentals, not pedantically following the chronology of his creative energies, but at the same time never going beyond the limits of what can be found in Bogdashevskii himself. Let us turn to a study of his thought in relation to: (1) Platonism, Epistemology; (2) Kantianism; and Philosophy and Science.

5.2.2 First period in the development of Bogdashevskii's world-view (Platonism, Epistemology)

Bogdashevskii's initial interest in philosophy is expressing itself by the attraction he felt to the body of philosophical concepts developed by the Greeks, particularly during the flowering of Greek civilization between 600 BC and 200 BC. The appeal of the ancient world is not accidental. *First*, Greek philosophy forms the basis of all later philosophical speculations in the Western world to which 19th century Orthodox scholarship felt it must respond. *Second*, for 19th century Russians, "Greek philosophy answered to the spirit of [their] times."²³ *Third*, the intuitive hypotheses of the ancient Greeks foreshadowed many theories of modern science, and many of the moral ideas of Greek philosophers have been incorporated into Christian moral doctrine.

Bogdashevskii's attraction to Greek philosophy is mainly limited in to the domain of epistemology. In examining Greek philosophical problems, he accents how Greeks defined knowledge and its related concepts especially in regards to what they consider to be the sources and criteria of knowledge. In his exposition of Greek philosophy, Bogdashevskii attempts to make known (according to an ancient philosophy) the kinds of knowledge possible and the degree to which each is certain, as well as and the exact relation between the one who knows and the object known.

Hence, in his early essay of 1895-96, *On Sources for the Study of Socrates' Philosophy*²⁴, Bogdashevskii looks into the thinking of Socrates (c. 470-c. 399 BC). Because

²³ Florovsky, *Ways: Two*, 8.

²⁴ D. Bogdashevskii, "Istochniki dlia izucheniia Sokrata," ["On Sources for the Study of Socrates' Philosophy,"] *TKDA* 9 (1895):123-152; 8 (1896): 547-574; 6 (1897): 242-336; 7 (1897): 381-401.

the main aim of this essay was to outline and summarize the polemical literature on Socrates, Bogdashevskii's personal insights are very elementary and few in number. Nonetheless, there are three noticeable emphases in his analysis of Socrates' philosophical thought:

First, he underscores the validity of Socrates' particular emphasis on rational argument and his quest for general definitions. Since Socrates' effort to determine the conditions under which one is justified in passing conclusion is considerable, Bogdashevskii stresses the importance of logic in the development of rational argument. The theory of rational argumentation in Socrates, according to Bogdashevskii, resulted in a particular understanding of the relationship between the suppositions and the conclusion in an argument (*esp.* in the developed rules for correct syllogistic reasoning of Aristotle, 384-322 BC). In speaking about logic itself, Bogdashevskii is not sure whether or not the logical argumentation is of an inductive or deductive nature. On the one hand, the premises of a valid argument contain the conclusion, and thus the truth of the conclusion must follow from the truth of the premises with necessary certainty. On the other hand, Bogdashevskii believes that if the premises are evidence for the conclusion, the truth of the conclusion must be of a certain possibility.²⁵

Second, he notes that although Socrates profoundly affected the entire subsequent course of Western speculative thought, the characteristics of Socrates' philosophy are essentially ethical in outline and "positive for understanding how Christian ethic operates."²⁶ For Bogdashevskii, the basis of Socrates' teachings, the postulated and purely objective understandings of such concepts as justice, love, virtue, and self-knowledge form the grounds for ethical enlightenment. The normal state of any human being, argues Bogdashevskii, indicates that Socrates is right in suggesting that all vice is the result of ignorance and that those who know the right will act rightly.²⁷ It is knowledge that directs men to act in ethically apt ways. Bogdashevskii does admit, however, that knowledge is and of itself is no guarantee of high morals and does not reduce the possibility of immoral behavior by men.²⁸

²⁵ D. Bogdashevskii, "On Sources for the Study of Socrates' Philosophy," *TKDA* 8 (1896): 565-567

²⁶ D. Bogdashevskii, "On Sources for the Study of Socrates' Philosophy," *TKDA* 9 (1895): 146.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 148-150.

²⁸ *Cf. Ibid.*, 155.

Third, Bogdashevskii agrees with Socrates that wisdom consists of critical knowledge, and that autonomous wisdom is no wisdom at all. It would be tempting, he suggests, to argue, with Socrates that a true wisdom is one defined by a capability to know and to understand completely; and to distinguish humans as individuals who do not possess such levels of knowledge. However, the main point of epistemology, for Bogdashevskii, is not merely who has knowledge and how it becomes known, but “what kind of knowledge is factually obtainable for a human intellect alone and what kind of knowledge is not.”²⁹ Bogdashevskii concludes that for many things it is impossible for man to understand without enlightenment from a divine wisdom that extends the horizon thought for anyone searching to understand concepts of reality that differ from a simple material nature. This does not prevent us from voicing the suspicion that, along with Socrates, Bogdashevskii carries a quite similar implication for his theory of knowledge with its particular emphasis on rational argument. However, his insight into the concept of illumination *from outside*, especially in particular areas of knowledge (such as the knowledge of God), assumes that “the factor *from outside* (the Spirit of God, perhaps, is not out of sight) can intervene in the course of understanding of being which is not possible to grasp *from within*, even with the use of a logical argumentation.”³⁰

Bogdashevskii emphasizes the shortcomings of a purely logical argumentation by pointing to the Sophists (from Gr., *sophistes*, [σοφός, ἡ, ὄν]³¹) – a class of Greek philosophers and rhetoricians of Socrates’ day (the leading 5th century Sophists included Protagoras, Gorgias, Hippias of Elis, and Prodicus of Ceos). In Bogdashevskii’s exceedingly superficial summary and assessment of the Sophists, presented in his essay of 1897,³² it is noted that the Sophists popularized the ideas of various early philosophers; yet, based on their understanding of that prior philosophical thought, most of them concluded that truth and morality were essentially matters of opinion and persuasion. Thus, in their own teaching,

²⁹ D. Bogdashevskii, “On Sources for the Study of Socrates’ Philosophy,” *TKDA* 8 (1896): 570.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 567.

³¹ σοφός, ἡ, ὄν - (Pind., *Hdt.*; LXX; Ep. Arist., Philo, Joseph.)—1. *clever, skilful, experienced*; 2. *wise, learned* of human intelligence and education above the average, perh. related to philosophy (Pind. et al.; Jos., Bell. 6, 313). Bauer, Walter, Gingrich, F. Wilbur, and Danker, Frederick W., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) 1979.

³² D. Bogdashevskii, “Grecheskie Sofisty,” [“The Greek Sophists,”] *TKDA* 8 (1897): 455-493.

they tended to emphasize different forms of persuasive expression, such as the art of rhetoric, which provided men with skills useful for achieving success in life (particularly public life). Bogdashevskii stresses that the Sophists were popular for a time, especially in Athens; however, their skeptical views on absolute truth and morality eventually provoked sharp criticism. He says, "the Sophists challenged the knowledge of being and reduced wisdom to a power of speech which may be taught... they went down under the devastating criticism, for they misunderstood expressiveness and persuasiveness of language with the wisdom of reason and heart."³³ Bogdashevskii determines that the Sophists were of minor importance in the development of Western philosophical thought, because their practical insights for rhetoric and public education, although pragmatically effective, have been unsatisfactory in dealing with philosophical problems related to epistemology.³⁴ This last matter leads Bogdashevskii to object to two of the Sophists' critical ideas: (1) that nothing really exists, if anything did exist it could not be known; and if knowledge were possible, it could not be communicated; (2) that no person's opinion can be said to be more correct than that of another, because each in his own way is the sole judge of his or her own experience. Bogdashevskii, in contrast, concludes that knowledge is communicable and "it is possible to have exact and certain knowledge" and that "there is a judge above an individual point of view."³⁵ Thus, knowledge is obtainable; and there should be an outside arbiter who is supreme in so far as delineating what is right understanding.

Part of Bogdashevskii's purpose in extending the body of philosophical concepts on the theory of knowledge as developed by the Greeks was his attraction to Plato (428-347 BC), one of the most creative and influential thinkers in ancient Western philosophy. Bogdashevskii's interest in Plato was derived from the 19th century Russian religious-philosophical environment in which Plato was conceived as the Father of Philosophy.³⁶ Interest in Plato has been cultivated in academic circles at the end of the 19th c., because Vasilii N. Karpov [pupil of Kiev's academy and later Prof. of Philosophy in Kiev and St. Petersburg schools (1853-1900)] translated and published Plato's writings [Plato, *Collected*

³³ D. Bogdashevskii, "The Greek Sophists," *TKDA* 8 (1897): 491.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 482-83.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 492.

³⁶ Cf. "In Ancient time, divine Plato furnished the most developed philosophy and laid the foundation on which herein after the temple of a philosophical goddess was built." D. B. Veneviktinov, *Collected Works* (M.: 1934), 254. Many ancient Russian thinkers praised Plato; a pure philosophical estimate he received in 19th century Russia. For the first half of the century see esp., A.

works 6 vols. (SPb.: 1858-1879)].³⁷ Plato's concept of "harmonious mind-observant understanding" was commonly regarded as corresponding with the basic nature of the Eastern Church and Orthodoxy.³⁸ It was assumed that in the teaching of Plato "religion and philosophy are in the most intimate union."³⁹ Moreover, it was generally thought that Plato had been the frame of reference for the Eastern Church Fathers, while the philosophical systems of Aristotle (384-322 BC) had influenced the western Fathers.⁴⁰ Hence, in his 1897 essay "*Plato's Teaching of Knowledge*", Bogdashevskii discusses Plato's *theory of knowledge*.⁴¹ He explains this theory in close connection with another of Plato's theories - *the theory of forms*. He correctly finds that Plato's *Theory of Knowledge*, influenced by Socrates, suggests that knowledge is attainable and that it is characterized by two essential features: (1) knowledge must be certain and infallible; and (2) it must have as its object that which is genuinely real, as contrasted with that which is appearance only. Bogdashevskii agrees with Plato that true knowledge must be fixed, permanent, and unchanging; and, therefore, the real must be identified with the ideal realm of thing or being as opposed to the physical world of becoming. Together with Plato, Bogdashevskii rejects empiricism, the claim that all knowledge is derived from sense experience, for the propositions derived from sense experience have, at most, only a degree of probability. They are not certain, for they pertain to the changeable phenomena of the physical world. Consequently, Bogdashevskii agrees with Plato that the objects of sense experience are not proper objects of knowledge.

Bogdashevskii also maintains Plato's distinction between two levels of awareness: opinion and knowledge. For him, the claims or assertions about the physical or visible world, including both common sense observations and the propositions of science, are opinions only. Some of these opinions are well founded some are not; but none of them qualify as

I. Galich, *A History of philosophical systems* (SPb.: 1818); N. I. Nadezhin, "Plato..," *Vestnik Evropy* 5 (1830).

³⁷ Plato's element in Russian philosophy is presented by A. I. Abramov, "The Assessment of Plato's Philosophy in Russian Idealistic Philosophy," in *Plato and His Epoch* (M.: 1970).

³⁸ Acc. to A. I. Abramov, "Platonism," in *The Russian Philosophy* (M.: Nauka, 1995), 406.

³⁹ *A Jubilee Journal of Moscow Ecclesiastic Academy* (M.: Sergiev Pasad: 1915), Part. 1, 153, 193.

⁴⁰ For example, Kireevskii, in presenting his view of the dissimilarities between western and Russian rationale, suggested that they be seen in terms of the contrast between Plato's *inner self-knowledge* and Aristotle's *rational thinking*. Such a contrast, for Kireevskii, was primarily reflected in the Church Fathers. See. I. V. Kireevskii, *Collected Works* (M.: 1911), Vol. 1, 199.

⁴¹ D. Bogdashevskii, "Uchenie Platona o znanii," ["Plato's Teaching of Knowledge,"] *TKDA* III, 12 (1897): 557-579.

genuine knowledge. The higher level of awareness is knowledge, because reason, rather than sense experience, is involved in the understanding. Reason, properly exercised, results in intellectual insights that are certain, and the objects of these rational insights are the abiding universals, the eternal forms or substances that constitute the real world. Therefore, Bogdashevskii concludes, “to form the awareness about any subject or discipline means to know the subject thoroughly, to get to the bottom of its true nature, because the proper awareness of the subject concerns with what is essential (opposite to what is an accidental).”⁴² To attain to real knowledge, one must escape the bonds of the physical world of appearances in order to grasp the real world, the world of full and perfect being, the world of forms, which is the proper object of knowledge. Because Bogdashevskii accepts Plato’s conceptual reality of the world of forms, he links Plato’s *theory of knowledge* with his supplementary theory - the *theory of forms*. The later introduces a concept of reality that has a logically conceivable form, but does not in fact exist in the physical world of space and time. It exists as a changeless object in the world of forms or ideas, which can be known only by reason. These forms have greater reality than the objects in the physical world, both because of their perfection and stability and because they are models, resemblance to which gives ordinary physical objects whatever reality they have.

Since Plato tries to solve epistemological questions on the basis of abstract beings (forms) or abstract concepts, at first sight, it might seem surprising that Bogdashevskii looks to Plato for support of his own views on the philosophical problems surrounding the theory of knowledge. Yet, it is possible to view Bogdashevskii’s relationship to Plato’s philosophy in at least two ways, which are not necessarily incompatible with one another. *First*, noting that Plato conceived the forms to be arranged hierarchically (from the supreme form down to all the others) and that the highest form illuminates and explains the others, Bogdashevskii understands that a such structure of reality reveals an ultimate principle for explaining and interpreting the world in general. *Second*, in philosophical terms, Bogdashevskii finds Plato’s theory of forms to be essential for both an epistemological (theory of knowledge) and an ontological (theory of being) thesis. Therefore, any science, concludes Bogdashevskii, must be both synthetic and analytical. He says, “On the one hand it has to bond its ideas, pursue their unity and submit them to the highest kind [*i.e.* idea]; on the other hand, in order to encounter the highest diversity, [science] has always to distinguish its ideas - to proceed from plurality to unity through the intermediate classified meanings.”⁴³ The totality in the

⁴² D. Bogdashevskii, “Plato’s Teaching of Knowledge,” *TKDA* III, 12 (1897): 557.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 579.

discerned object can be obtained from the subservient elements of the whole. This, according to Bogdashevskii, pinpoints one of the most persistent problems of the understanding. On the one hand, one has, first, to arrive at the understanding of the whole in order to know the composites. On the other hand, however, the whole can be perceived only through its parts. Accordingly, if the abstract reasoning yields genuine knowledge, then reliance on elements of perception produces inconsistent opinions. Again, Bogdashevskii shows that the understanding, analogous to logical argumentation, is both of inductive and deductive nature.

Although Bogdashevskii presents a well-researched introduction to Plato's *theory of knowledge*, he makes no attempt to specify how this theory, tempered with his own insights, is specifically applicable to the science of biblical study or how it contributes to New Testament interpretation. The author's treatment of Plato, however, does construct the background of his own approach toward the issues of understanding. While we do not suggest that Bogdashevskii goes so far as to demonstrate the absolute validity of Greek philosophy, his writings, however, do go a long way toward removing the older traditional notion of subjectivity from the absolutist position of the Church tradition or doctrine in tracing the philosophical background to the discussion of objectivity in general science and to the role of reason in understanding. His attempts to overcome subjectivity, nevertheless, do not suggest a free and lawless state of mind. Quite to the contrary, Bogdashevskii urges that in exploring and interpreting physical reality, the mind should be inextricably bond up with the world on its highest reality. It is an important element in his hermeneutics. Later on we will see that Bogdashevskii's hermeneutics necessitate for the exegetes a religious world and connection with a divine agent of the highest religious reality (i.e. revelation) in order to understand the reality that has been revealed from above. In addition, Bogdashevskii leans towards the supremacy of opinion not in the individual point of view, but rather in the hierarchical wisdom that is above private mind.

5.2.3 Second period in the development of Bogdashevskii's world-view (Kantianism)

The most probing and lucid understanding of Bogdashevskii's philosophy may be drawn from his analysis and critique of Kant in his perceptive 1898 study, *Philosophy of Kant*.⁴⁴ In this study, Bogdashevskii concentrates on the critical features of Kant's philosophy, expounded in *Critique of Pure Reason*, *Critique of Practical Reason*, and *Critique of Judgement*. On the one hand, this reflective work of the "later" Bogdashevskii derives from his previous concern with both the nature of ultimate reality (*i.e.* metaphysics)⁴⁵ and the sources, criteria and kinds of possible knowledge (*i.e.* epistemology). On the other hand, Bogdashevskii's regard for Kant was influenced by the broad developments of Russian philosophical culture in the higher schools where the focus on Kant was widespread.⁴⁶ In the same vein as other Russian Orthodox philosophers, Bogdashevskii discusses Kant's philosophy predominantly in a spirit of slight reproach and as something in *contrast* to Western Christianity.⁴⁷ In his analysis of Kant, Bogdashevskii focuses mainly on Kant's theoretical construction, while deliberately straying away from discussing his transcendental methodology.⁴⁸ His main task is to present an overall exposition of Kant's philosophy, rather than to give a detailed critical analysis of its components.⁴⁹ Unfortunately, the merely formal overview of Kant's philosophy offers no way of determining

⁴⁴ D. Bogdashevskii, "Filosofiiia Kanta," ["Philosophy of Kant,"] *TKDA* (1898) 2: 181-203; 5:54-74; 6: 201-228; 7: 389-431; 9:24-68.

⁴⁵ His concern with describing the most general traits of reality may be established from two book reviews of 1892-93, *In the Defence of the Metaphysics of Mind and Sound Metaphysics*. D. Bogdashevskii, "In the Defence of the Metaphysics of Mind," Book review of N. G. Debol'skii, *Philosophy of the Phenomenal Formalism* (SPb.: 1892) in *TKDA* I (1892): 664-650; D. Bogdashevskii, "Sound Metaphysics," Book review of P. Linit'skii, *Guide to the Study of Philosophy* (Kharkov': 1893) in *TKDA* II (1898) 5:125-138.

⁴⁶ That Kant was regarded in Russia as an outstanding philosopher as early as the end of the 18th century is evident from the translations of various philosophical works of Kant during the years 1803-1807. For the specific influence of Kant on Russian philosophy at the very beginning of the 19th century, see *Zen'kovskii*, Vol. I, 106-107, 300-301, 677-705.

⁴⁷ Zen'kovskii rightly observes that such a pattern was characteristic of the whole of Russian philosophy at the time. "Material for this critique was frequently found in Western Christianity itself - in the Protestant thinkers and theologians against Catholicism, and in the Catholics against Protestantism." *Zen'kovskii*, Vol. I, 300.

⁴⁸ Cf. D. Bogdashevskii, "Philosophy of Kant," *TKDA* 5 (1898): 60.

⁴⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, "Philosophy of Kant," *TKDA* 9 (1898): 68, n. 66.

Bogdashevskii's own position. Still, several personal insights, supplied by Bogdashevskii, are noteworthy.

In discussing Kant's view that the mind furnishes the archetypal forms and categories (space, time, causality, substance, and relation) to its sensations, and that these categories are logically prior to experience, although manifested only in experience, Bogdashevskii concludes that "Kant's theory of space and time is the most significant, but also it is the most troublesome point in his theoretical system."⁵⁰ Bogdashevskii rejects the Kantinian assumption of the existence of *things in themselves*. He says:

According to Kant, it is impossible to say that time *is*, but one must emphasize that time *is for us*, or that we have an idea of time. Yet, the idea of time is existing in time, in time there is a display of the idea of time, etc., therefore time is something objective... [It] is hard to understand how Kant, on one hand, rejects the objectivity of space; and on the other hand, accepts the existence of an external world, the existence of material things. We can understand the later only in space; analytically, from the concept of material is deducing the concepts of complexity and of prolongation and, consequently, the concept of space. Without doubt, time and space are not some kind of categories, but they express the real relationships, and therefore they are real forms of being.⁵¹

So, Bogdashevskii's thought differs from that of Kant in that according to the former, one is not obliged, in a critically constructed and integrated world view, to admit that the archetypal forms and categories exist in themselves.

Further, for Bogdashevskii, it is possible that something exists apart from *us*, but until the grounds are discovered on the basis of which *a priori* concepts (such as time) may be extended beyond the limits of the phenomenal world, the choice of answers to the question of the existence or non-existence of things in themselves cannot be made by science with its

⁵⁰ D. Bogdashevskii, "Philosophy of Kant," *TKDA* 5 (1898): 70. In his analysis of Kant's understanding of time and space Bogdashevskii associated himself with Alexander Vvedenskii's interpretation of Kant. Cf. "Philosophy of Kant," *TKDA* 5 (1898): 71.

⁵¹ "По учению Канта нельзя сказать, что время *есть*, а нужно утверждать что, что время есть для нас, или что мы имеем представление времени. Но ведь, представление времени само совершается во времени, во времени происходит и представления времени и т.д., и значит время есть нечто объективное... Наконец, совершенно непонятно, каким образом, отрицая объективность пространства, Кант мог признавать существование внешнего мира, бытие материальных предметов. Мы можем понимать последнее только в пространстве; но понятия материальности чисто аналитически выводятся понятия сложности, протяженности, следовательно пространственности. Пространство и время не суть, без сомнения, какиянибудь сущности, но они выражают реальные отношения вещей, суть реальные формы конечного бытия." D. Bogdashevskii, "Philosophy of Kant," *TKDA* 5 (1898): 73-74

empirical experiments, but only by faith.⁵² Thus, one may say that Bogdashevskii admits three types of knowledge: (1) indisputable knowledge (based in *a priori* elements of faith); (2) *a posteriori* knowledge; (3) knowledge in the order of faith. Bogdashevskii is attentive to the argument by which Kant sought to fix the limits of human knowledge within the framework of experience and to demonstrate the inability of the human mind to penetrate beyond experience. Their logical priority to experience makes these categories or structural principles transcendental; they transcend all experience, both actual and possible. Although these principles determine all experience, they do not in any way affect the nature of things in themselves. The knowledge of which these principles are the necessary conditions must not be considered, therefore, as constituting a revelation of things as they are in themselves. This knowledge concerns things only insofar as they appear to human perception or as they can be apprehended by both faith and experiment.⁵³ In this way, Bogdashevskii argues, contra to Kant, that there is a real possibility of knowing God directly. His conception that faith is the basis of knowledge, a vital cognitive act in the recognition that anything is true corresponds to the main convictions of the Orthodox philosophers that: (1) our knowledge is given in faith as a total partaking of Divine Truth; (2) true knowledge can be fully grounded only in faith.⁵⁴

Although Bogdashevskii wrote no philosophical-ethical treatises as such, his exposition of Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* (*Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*) put forward an important component of his own theoretical system - critical ethics.⁵⁵ For Bogdashevskii, ethical problems are essential as integrating components of philosophy. After explicating Kant's principles of morality, Bogdashevskii frames the dilemma inherent within Kant's ethics and attempts to address several of his objections to Kant's ethical system. *First*, as he comments on the basic concept of obligation as the cornerstone of the deduction of natural rights in Kant, Bogdashevskii protests against the distinction between obligatory and willing in the concept of good. He says,

[Kant's conclusion is that] an act is required not because it is good, but it is good because it is prescribed; because it is ruled by obligation... It is impossible to agree with Kant on this point. Why Kant is reasoning that to start with the concept of *good* is to accept the concept of *good subject* as the foundation; i.e. to correspond the

⁵² Cf. D. Bogdashevskii, "Philosophy of Kant," *TKDA* 5 (1898): 73.

⁵³ Cf. *Ibid.*, 57-59.

⁵⁴ Cf. L. P. Karsavin, *O nachalakh [Concerning Principles]* (Paris: 1925), 68

⁵⁵ D. Bogdashevskii, "Philosophy of Kant," *TKDA* 9 (1898): 24-68.

material and egoistic character? The concepts of good and moral, obligatory and willing are the coordinate concepts and it is impossible to start with one without the other.⁵⁶

Second, although Bogdashevskii agrees with Kant that men have always conceived of a realm of obligation, involving moral appraisals, acting from duty and not from sensory motives alone, he is cautious in regard to how Kant seeks to reconcile science and religion in a world of two levels, one level comprising *noumena*, objects conceived by reason although not perceived by the senses, and the other comprising *phenomena*, things as they appear to the senses that are accessible to material study. Bogdashevskii's position is marked by legitimizing at its root the basis for epistemological distinction between theory of knowledge and the autonomy of moral impulses.

Third, Bogdashevskii questions Kant's carefully formulated view of morality as a doctrine of happiness. For him, because this view recognizes nothing but sensory motives, it can never get truly clear of sensory description in all its illusory transcendence of experience. What is beyond sense cannot be accepted without proper emphasis on "man's own moral impulses, often so opposite to sensory motives of happiness."⁵⁷

A fourth and final point on Kant's ethical construction, however, does not directly connect to ethics itself, but to Kant's proposed solution for the philosophical problems surrounding ethics in the theory of knowledge - in the sphere of knowing good and evil. On the one hand, Bogdashevskii agrees with Kant in maintaining that, because God, freedom, and human immortality are *noumenal* realities, these concepts are understood through moral faith rather than through scientific knowledge. He stresses that, Kant is right in emphasizing supremacy of practical mind over against theoretical mind.⁵⁸ Moreover, "The knowledge [of moral virtues] that is limited to mere experiment is non reliable, because there is something

⁵⁶ Кант настаивает: - "Поступок обязателен, не потому что он добр, а потому он добр, что обязателен, что его предписывает нравственный закон... Очевидно, с этим рассуждением Канта нельзя согласиться. Почему Канту представляется, что начинать с понятия *добраго* значит непременно поставить в основание понятие *добраго предмета*, т. е. сообщить нравственности материальный и потому эгоистический характер? Понятия *добраго* и *нравственно обязательного*, или *согласного с нравственным законом* - это понятия тождественные и нельзя начинать с одного, не имея в виду другого." D. Bogdashevskii, "Philosophy of Kant," *TKDA* 9 (1898): 45-46 (his italics).

⁵⁷ D. Bogdashevskii, "Philosophy of Kant," *TKDA* 9 (1898): 68.

⁵⁸ Cf. "Заслуживает, без сомнения, глубокого размышления тот основной вывод, к которому пришёл Кант в "Критике чистого разума". Имеем в виду так ясно выраженное им учение о примате разума практического над разумом теоретическим. Последний делает свое дело независимо от разума практического, не вторгаясь в его область, но он не может игнорировать его требований, а должен подчиниться ему." *Ibid.*, 68.

that is beyond such knowledge - the sphere of demand of practical reason, the sphere of moral faith to which *theoretical mind has to be subjected*.⁵⁹ On the other hand, Bogdashevskii argues that “Kant leaves out the point that knowledge is not duty, for the principles of knowledge act by themselves, yet to act morally is obligation.”⁶⁰ Later, when we will turn to his ethics it will be clear how Bogdashevskii’s views are reflected in his writings.

After examining Bogdashevskii’s critique of Kant, it seems as if his criticism is so far-reaching that to accept it is necessarily to reject Kant’s whole perspective. This is not the case, however. Bogdashevskii, together with Kant, renounces the idea that knowledge is not merely a reflection of human perceptions, but it is a representation of external reality. He also agrees with Kant in accepting the theory that knowledge of reality is derived from *a priori* principles, and not from experience alone. Moreover, he affirms Kant’s disapproval of the idea that although ultimate reality exists it is altogether inaccessible to human knowledge, which is necessarily subjective because it is confined to a state of mind. Besides, Bogdashevskii appraises Kantian dialectics:

In itself, the outcome of Kant’s critique is that one must fear neither materialism, naturalism nor atheism, for these are only theories; as all the theories of metaphysics they know no more than all the opposite directions. This result is very valuable.⁶¹

It is not necessary to catalogue further points at which Bogdashevskii considers Kant’s philosophy to be fruitful and constructive. Although none of the schools of Kantianism or Neo-Kantianism had a serious influence on Bogdashevskii; yet in his basic propositions he remains a faithful and rigorously consistent Kantian. This does not prevent us from voicing the belief that Bogdashevskii’s own theoretical construction carries a full understanding of Kant’s thought.

⁵⁹ Cf. “На одно, следовательно знание, - которое, как показала “Критика чистого разума”, ограничивается исключительно сферой опыта, - положиться нельзя, ибо есть нечто возвышающееся над знанием, - область требований практического разума, область моральной веры, *перед которою должен склониться теоретический разум*.” D. Bogdashevskii, “Philosophy of Kant,” *TKDA* (1898): 68 (my italics).

⁶⁰ “Но Кант опускает из виду, что познание есть не долг, принципы познания действуют сами собою, а поступать нравственно есть долг.” *Ibid.*, 67-68.

⁶¹ “Уже тот результат Кантовской критики, что нечего опасаться ни материализма, ни натурализма, ни атеизма, ибо все эти теории, как теории метафизические, знают не больше, чем и противоположные им направления, - уже этот один результат имеет немалую цену.” “Philosophy of Kant,” *TKDA* III (1898) 9: 426-427.

In an exposition of Bogdashevskii's philosophical views it is also important to consider his conception of philosophy and of the interrelationship of philosophy and science. This is one of the most basic and decisive points in his theoretical construction.

5.2.4 Third period in the development of Bogdashevskii's world-view (Philosophy and Science: The overcoming of the secular orientation)

Bogdashevskii's philosophical tendency gravitated not only toward an ancient Greek or the latest critical philosophy of Kant, but also toward the 19th century Russian philosophical trend of thought known as 'scientific philosophy'. This particular trend was preconditioned by the worship of science, especially dominant during the second half of the nineteenth century when a cult of scientific knowledge and the concomitant striving for a broad dissemination of the results of Russian science became the creed not only of scientists, but also of a wide circle of Russian society. Some Russian philosophers, especially Vladimir Lesevich (1837-1905)⁶² and Nikolai Grot (1852-1899),⁶³ called for the search for a "scientific philosophy." The distinguished Russian Orthodox philosopher and theologian Vasili Zen'kovskii (1881-1962) in his monumental work of 1948, *A History of Russian Philosophy*, offers a fair assessment of this trend among Russian philosophical circles:

[It] implies the search for a 'scientific philosophy', a philosophy based on science and often limited to a synthesis of scientific generalization. Indeed, there is more interest in a '*scientific world view*' than philosophy. A faith that all existence is scientifically comprehensible, and a worship of the methods and results of science, is the creative basis and unshakable foundation of these searchings.... The very term 'scientific philosophy' implies a conversion of philosophy into *an ancilla scientiae* and testifies to the impoverishment of philosophical sensitivity.... In all of the tendencies which gravitated toward a 'scientific philosophy' we find three essential features. To begin with, there is a faith that only scientific methods are capable of comprehending existence, a worship of scientific methods of thought and a naïve rationalism, i.e. an assumption that our thought 'corresponds' to the structure of being. On the other hand there is the conviction suggested by science that all knowledge is *relative*, in constant evolution and that 'absolute knowledge' is impossible, i.e. a conviction that all knowledge is historically conditioned. A third

⁶² See esp., Vladimir Lesevich, *Opyt kriticheskogo issledovaniia...* [*An Essay in the Critical Investigation of the basic Principles of Positive Philosophy*] (SPb.: 1877); *Ibid.*, *Pis'ma o nauchnoi filosofii* [*Letters on Scientific Philosophy*] (SPb.: 1878); *Ibid.*, *Chto takoe nauchnaia filosofia* [*What is a Scientific Philosophy*] (SPb.: 1981).

⁶³ See Nikolai Grot, *Otnoshenie Filosofii k nauke* [*The Relationship of Philosophy to Science*] (K.: 1883); *Ibid.*, *Napravlenie i zadachi moei filosofii* [*The Direction and Tasks of My Philosophy*] (M.: 1894)

characteristic of this tendency of thought is an antecedent rejection of all metaphysics.⁶⁴

These are the philosophical thoughts and assumptions that Bogdashevskii seeks to challenge in his essay of 1894, *O Vzaimnom Otnoshenii Filosofii i Estestvoznaniia* [*The Interrelationship of Philosophy and Science*]. The general tenor of his view of philosophy and of the interrelationship of philosophy and science throughout the discussion of these problems is exemplified by his remarks in the argument on natural science. Bogdashevskii seeks to reconstruct an understanding of philosophy from the viewpoint of its interrelationship with science. In response to the claim of Lesevich that philosophy is “a direct and immediate continuation of the development of scientific knowledge, the culmination of this development,”⁶⁵ Bogdashevskii offers the epistemological contra argument to the idea of fashioning philosophy as an “output” of science. He says:

Every positive science is a totality of all known knowledge, discovered on the ground of a learned and particular method. Yet, there is no positive science that is solving the most significant question - what is the knowledge in itself.... The questions about knowledge, its condition, scope and limitations, the questions of relation between knowledge and object - all these questions are beyond the sphere of natural science.... A pure science that lacks the investigation of its own cognitive abilities cannot be a capacious science and, therefore, a science will become a blind dogmatism without its own understanding.... In such case, philosophy is self-understanding of science, without which the later is simply non-substantiated. Thus, even because of this, philosophy has its own rights for self-existence.⁶⁶

Bogdashevskii's philosophical strategy demands that every particular scientific discipline has to accept the philosophical thought with the intent of considering exactly what a

⁶⁴ *Zen'kovskii*, vol. 2, 706-709 (his italics).

⁶⁵ Vladimir Lesevich, *An Essay in the Critical Investigation of the basic Principles of Positive Philosophy* (SPb.: 1877), 120.

⁶⁶ “Всякая положительная наука есть совокупность известных знаний, приобретенных по известному, определенному методу. Но ни одна положительная наука не решает существеннейшего, важнейшего вопроса: что такое самое знание.... Вопросы о знании, его условиях, нормах, пределах и границах, отношении знания к познаваемой действительности, - все эти вопросы выходят из сферы естественнонаучного знания.... [Н]аука не есть вполне сознательная наука, если отсутствует исследование самой умственной деятельности, которую она созидается. Тогда наука будет чисто догматическою наукою, не понимающею самой себя. ... Рассматривая с этой точки зрения философия есть самопознание науки, без которого последняя является необоснованною, и таким образом уже по тому одному философия получает право на самостоятельное существование.” D. I. Bogdashevskii, “O Vzaimnom Otnoshenii Filosofii i Estestvoznaniia,” [*The Interrelationship of Philosophy and Science*,”] *TKDA* III, 12 (1894): 530-531.

philosophical theory regards to the understanding of this particular science, for a science “does not exclude a theory of science and cannot rule out the theory about itself.”⁶⁷

After presenting positions of various kinds in regard to the superiority of natural science over philosophy, Bogdashevskii comments on the misunderstanding of philosophy and shows that its distinctive characteristics do not oppose the concepts of natural science, because both philosophy and science directly or indirectly assume the idea of a pure experiment:

On the basis of an experiment [*opyta*] alone, philosophy cannot be built up, because an experiment is always of a component and of a single character. Yet, on the other hand, speculation [*umozrenie*], separated from experiment, is absolutely fruitless. It is impossible to build up the theory of knowledge without an attention given to the real facts of thinking; it is impossible to create the ethics, by declining to consider the factual activities of will. The elements of the ideal and the reality of the subjective and objective have to be correspondent by subjoining and questioning each other. By no means, any kind of true philosophy should be at liberty to ignore the reaches of knowledge, fixed by empirical science, and the philosophy that contradicts to an experiment should be rejected. A philosopher takes an experimentative only as the basis; then he proceeds toward a super-experimentative...; from the established principles he reaches conclusion... by testing both principle and conclusion with the criteria of logical probability and improbability, of correspondence and disagreement... It is possible to argue against the premises or conclusions of the philosopher, but it is impossible to reject that he is operating in a pure empirical way.⁶⁸

As the qualifying phrases in the above quotations suggest, Bogdashevskii makes it clear that the important motif in which he specifies the relationship between science and philosophy is his assumption of a scientifically fashioned philosophical world-conception.

⁶⁷ “Наука, значит, взятая в своей целостности, не исключает особой теории науки, или науки о самой науке.” D. I. Bogdashevskii, “The Interrelationship of Philosophy and Science,” *TKDA* III, 12 (1894): 531.

⁶⁸ “...на одном опыте философия не может быть построена, ибо опыт всегда носит характер единичный, частный. Но, с другой стороны, умозрение, оторванное от почвы опыта, является совершенно бесплодным. Нельзя построить теорию познания без внимания к фактическим действиям мышления; нельзя создавать этику, отрешившись от фактических действий воли. Элемент идеальный и реальный, субъективный и объективный должны идти в философии рука об руку, восполняя и проверяя друг друга. Никакая истинная философия не может игнорировать богатыми сокровищами знания, доставляемого опытными науками, и та философия должна быть отвергнута, которая стоит в противоречии с опытом. Философ берет исходным пунктом опытное и идет к сверхопытному... проверяя как самый принцип, так и выводы из него не только их логическою мыслимостью, или не-мыслимостью, но и их согласием, или не-согласием.... Можно не соглашаться в данном случае с посылками и заключениями философа, но нельзя отрицать, что он идет чисто научным путём.” D. I. Bogdashevskii, “The Interrelationship of Philosophy and Science,” *TKDA* III, 12 (1894): 540-41.

Although he refuses to regard the difference between philosophy and science as relative and does not concern himself with distinguishing these two fields sharply,⁶⁹ Bogdashevskii emphasizes his support for a scientific world-view, where empirical experiment in the development of knowledge is meaningful. It is obvious, as he forms his concept of knowledge, that Bogdashevskii takes immanent material as his point of departure. The influence of Kant's epistemology at this point is unquestionable. Bogdashevskii's presupposition in which the independent characters of philosophy and science are exhibited, however, is that a 'pure science' or a 'pure experiment' alone cannot be employed for solving philosophical problems.⁷⁰ "The research and experiment serve only as helpful tools in any given process of comprehension; the idea or thought always should be prior to [the empirical investigation]."⁷¹ In this connection, it is extremely interesting to note how Bogdashevskii utilizes such a structure for comprehending the world. As an example, in his construction of ethics, Bogdashevskii emphasizes that all the components of valuation and ethical construction are not based on 'pure scientific' observations with respect to human activity, but are rooted in the understanding of a human soul as the creation of God, because the will of any individual is not the ultimate essence of being, but is something injected into his nature by God.⁷² This demands that the idea of God, and the idea of his intervention into the course of nature as the divine agency active in the creating of the human soul should not be overlooked, but should be accepted as the initial and authoritative ground for all scientific considerations of human behaviour. So, the truth concerning God becomes exceedingly valid and it should be taken as the foundation for any and all scientific research. This is *precisely* Bogdashevskii's point.

Bogdashevskii frequently turns to a treatment of the claims that all knowledge is relative and that a true scientific philosophy accepts the authenticity of knowledge only conditionally. The antithesis to the relativity of knowledge and the evolution of scientific concepts is of fundamental importance for Bogdashevskii. He attacks all attempts to dismiss the concept of unconditional or indubitably veridical knowledge and argues against the idea that only facts have unconditional significance. Bogdashevskii argues that if some events or phenomena suggest that the concept of an indubitably veridical knowledge is in error, then

⁶⁹ Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "The Interrelationship of Philosophy and Science," *TKDA* III, 12 (1894): 539.

⁷⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, 541.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 543.

⁷² Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Philosophy of Kant," *TKDA* (1898) 9: 34-36.

scientific evidence would still be needed to show that this is true. Thus, phenomenalism must be necessarily proven scientifically, but this “is possible only from the stand point of metaphysical theory.”⁷³ Bogdashevskii, on this point, of course, opposes Kant’s agnostic repudiation of the possibility of a strict knowledge of ultimate reality, but he maintains Kant’s view of the *a priori* character of the structural principles of any empirical knowledge. However, in the discussion of questions of knowledge and validity of facts, as the starting point, “one has not to take the structural principles of natural science, but of philosophy.”⁷⁴ Any affirmation, according to Bogdashevskii, deserves to be proven and on the bases of philosophical theories it is impossible to prove that knowledge is conditional over against the absolute significance of facts.

The most remarkable aspect of Bogdashevskii’s theoretical constructions is, of course, his break with exposition of a pure history of philosophy and his subsequent movement towards defining the limits of a secular ideology. The *theocentric* conception of the world which he professed, the living sense of the universal reason, the compatibility of genuine faith in the God-man with freedom of thought, and the interpretation of cosmological and anthropological themes in the light of these ideas - all turned Bogdashevskii’s consciousness toward the problematics of philosophy as related to religious life in Russia, especially to Russian secularism, which retained a specific religious psychology.⁷⁵

Following the common tendency of Orthodox philosophers and theologians to reorganize entire world-view into the spirit of Christianity, Bogdashevskii turned to a study of the philosophical concepts, which he found in the spiritual crisis of an outstanding philosophical figure Lev Tolstoy (1828-1910).⁷⁶

⁷³ D. I. Bogdashevskii, “The Interrelationship of Philosophy and Science,” *TKDA* III, 12 (1894): 535.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 537.

⁷⁵ Zen’kovskii gives an apt description of the phenomenon of Russian secularism during the second half of the 19th century. See *Zen’kovskii*, Vol. I. 376- 77.

⁷⁶ On Tolstoy’s philosophy and life see *O religii L. Tolstogo* [*On Tolstoy’s Religion*] (M.: 1912); D. Y. Kvitko, *Filosofia Tolstogo* [*Tolstoy’s Philosophy*] (M.: 1928); See *Zen’kovskii*, Vol. I 387-399; T. I. Polner, *Tolstoy and His Wife*, trans. N. Wreden (New York, 1945); E. J. Simmon, *Leo Tolstoy* (Boston, 1946); N. Berdiaev, “The Old Testament and the New Testament in the religious conscience of L. Tolstoy,” in his *Types of religious thought in Russia* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1989), 119-144; Y. Lur’e, *Posle L. Tostogo...* [*After Lev Tolstoy...*] (SPb.: 1993).

5.2.5 Conclusion

Bogdashevskii's main philosophical concern is to seek out an epistemological method that would emphasize the claims of a *theocentric* approach, that is, an approach which identifies truth with a wisdom sanctioned through divine or inward revelation. Only thus could one hope to avoid the excesses of a narrowly rationalist outlook closed to all sources of imaginative insight. With an eye open to the mind of the Church, he has sought to rethink the "ancient quarrel" between Christianity and philosophy, faith and reason, or creative intuition and enlightened self-critical understanding

The most significant way in which Bogdashevskii's philosophical perspective reveals itself is in his language about science and philosophy. In Bogdashevskii's philosophy, the alliance of science and faith is both possible and necessary. This well agrees with his account of theory of knowledge, perhaps more clearly shown than any other aspect of his thought. He says, "The most basic question of philosophy is epistemological, because any resolution, conceived for this question, will shape by itself the answers on the other philosophical questions."⁷⁷

Furthermore, his view of philosophy is coherent from the point of Orthodox doctrine. On the one hand, Bogdashevskii speaks about mutual harmony of philosophy (in the sense of love of wisdom) and Church teaching. In emphasizing the teaching of Christ as the most significant system of thought, he appeals for expansion of philosophical training of the Orthodox clergies:

The necessity of philosophical education [in Russia], undoubtedly, is very perceptible. As the best evidence for this serves is the reception of [negative] ideas ... The enthusiasm for these ideas would be impossible if for many the education of a whole world view was not a new thing, but was the soul that we have to make alive and to which we must direct all the particular types of knowledge. Yet, what should be laid down as the foundation in the development of a whole view about the world and life? Without doubt, it should be Christ's teaching, which is not only a superlative religion, but also it is the most perfect philosophy. Thus, Christianity gives solution to all the important problems of our mind....⁷⁸

On the other hand, Bogdashevskii, in his treatments of philosophical systems of different kinds, is extraordinarily uninvolved in building the argumentation of the problematic

⁷⁷ D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Sound Metaphysics," Book review of P. Linitkii, *Guide to the Study of Philosophy* (Kharkov': 1893) in *TKDA* II (1898) 5: 126.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 125.

questions of philosophy in the light of the Orthodox faith. There are, however, two exceptions. First, partly, perhaps, in the light of Kant's approach to ethics, Bogdashevskii equates his notion of ethics to a Christian concept of the divine imperative of the good. Second, in his epistemology, Bogdashevskii stresses that "the sphere of faith cannot be mixed with knowledge, these two should be differentiated," but not disassociated.⁷⁹ He argues:

In the sphere of faith the foremost importance has a historical experience, *i.e.* the universal voice of the Church; the science, however, is moving and advancing, in the first place, by the personal and particular experience. But in differentiating the sphere of faith from the knowledge, we unconditionally have no right to separate them, and moreover to oppose one to the other. Faith, in its practical character, has the element of knowledge, for the religious ideas give a theoretical view of world and life... For this reason, the unity of faith and knowledge is possible in so-called speculative theology where the religious concepts are explained rationally and/or restrained to the basics of mind's intelligence."⁸⁰

Nevertheless, in its ideology Bogdashevskii's theoretical construction is entirely based upon Christian faith in God⁸¹ but is permeated with a genuine enthusiasm for scientific investigation. In his approach one may find a very cautious, even a solicitous attitude toward areas which he places outside of Christian faith. This gives unquestionable value to his theories. Bogdashevskii's philosophical talent, however, lay primarily in the direction of making empirical reality philosophically intelligible. In doing so he never overcomes his Russian bias to view Western thought from a critical stand point. Nevertheless, in Bogdashevskii's philosophical erudition he boldly takes from other thinkers whatever he finds in them that seems correct, but without at all being eclectic.

Again, since Bogdashevskii's philosophical writings largely ignored the development of ecclesiastical consciousness in preserving a proper equilibrium between the divine and human principle of knowledge, it is not surprising that he gives no particular consideration to the Orthodox belief systems as the framework to his philosophy. In order to understand this paradox, we have to recall that in 1897 Bogdashevskii voluntarily left his career in the area of the history of philosophy and thereafter specialized in New Testament studies. This decision was the result of Bogdashevskii's own conviction that a biblical teaching of Christ is

⁷⁹ D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Sound Metaphysics", 126.

⁸⁰ D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Sound Metaphysics", 126.

⁸¹ Among the other Orthodox philosophers who agree with Bogdashevskii's position that without a foundation in faith philosophy is reduced to hypothetical knowledge, Karsavin argues, that if philosophy wishes to stay truly philosophic, philosophic knowledge "must be a handmaiden of theology." L. P. Karsavin, *O nachalakh [Concerning Principles]* (Paris: 1925), 88.

“ the most perfect philosophy”; and, that only Scripture, preached by the Church, “offers solution to all the important problems of [the human] mind.”⁸² In one of his early sermons, Bogdashevskii comments:

If we consider the whole history of human understanding, in all the respect to philosophy, selflessly inclined to comprehend the truth, we will not find in this field the satisfaction for our mind. We will be stopped and astonished by the variety of opinions and by their contradictions. What is formed in the subject during one period is demolished in the other age... There is no end for this continuous change of the philosophical systems and teaching. Can we find here the satisfaction for our mind?... In this perplexity, the holy Christian faith arrives as the help. She is - although many do not perceive it - the greatest intelligence, resolving for us, in the most clear and simple way, every theoretical question which is important for us... Thanks be to God, that in the midst of different and strange teachings, surrounding us, we have His revelation, to which we should well pay attention *as to a lamp shining in a dark place* (2 Peter 1:19).⁸³

It is highly conceivable that the above quotation is, in fact, Bogdashevskii’s autobiographical confession. Perhaps, because of his personal convictions, Bogdashevskii was not comfortable with the idea of ‘a pure philosophy’ and was not able (or simply had no intention) to fit more specifically his religious world-view into discussion of a selected body of philosophical concepts, developed throughout the history of philosophy. Thus, he dedicated the rest of his academic and pastoral life to the study of the New Testament.

Conceivably, his decision to change his field of specialization was indirectly influenced by the tendencies to combine Scripture and philosophy in such way as to show the dependence of biblical wisdom upon ancient philosophical trends. This is one of the main statements in his response to Adolf von Harnack (1851-1930), a leading German Protestant theologian and historian, whose critical views were a major influence in late 19th- and early 20th-century theology, and who traced the evolution of the Early church from biblical

⁸² D. Bogdashevskii, “Sound Metaphysics,” Book review of P. Linitzkii, *Guide to the Study of Philosophy* (Kharkov’: 1893) in *TKDA* II (1898) 5: 125. He concludes that without the Church and faith, man cannot find a satisfactory answer for the basic philosophical questions: where are people from, and to where are they going? Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, “Slovo. Pri vospominanii strastei Khristovykh (Luke 23:21),” [“Sermon. In remembrance of Christ’s suffering (Luke 23:21),”] *TKDA* II, 5 (1888): 56. Also, “In faith in God and Lord Jesus Christ... in religion we will find calmness in everything that indeed disturbs and concerns us.” D. I. Bogdashevskii, “A Sermon. In remembrance of Christ’s suffering: Where to find Peace for Our Doubts? (John 14:1),” *TKDA* II, 5 (1891): 3-10. For the analogous argument see also his “Where to find Peace for Our Doubts? (John 14:1),” *TKDA* II, 5 (1891): 8-9; “In remembrance of Christ’s suffering: Against Tolstoy’s perversion of Christianity,” *TKDA* I, 4 (1982): 591.

⁸³ D. I. Bogdashevskii, “A Sermon. In remembrance of Christ’s suffering: Where to find Peace for Our Doubts? (John 14:1),” *TKDA* II, 5 (1891): 4-5 [his italics].

Christianity, which he claimed had been corrupted by the introduction of Greek metaphysics.⁸⁴ For Bogdashevskii, Scripture, above all, is the revelation of God, based on His wisdom. Scripture is self-reliant. It should be considered as the source of human wisdom rather than its product.

In addition, Bogdashevskii's pastoral 'heart' stipulated that in philosophy as such there is no practical help for the Church neither in the questions of dogma nor in pragmatic or ethical element of human life. Observing the history of philosophy, Bogdashevskii says, "There were many religious and philosophical teachings, but none of them could possibly be called the Gospel, because it did not give birth to a man or renew him; none of them healed human broken heart or bring a true freedom, freedom from sin."⁸⁵

Bogdashevskii, of course, did not view philosophy and science as completely opposed to the Orthodox faith. Nevertheless, in his way of thinking, the tragedy of mankind, so in need of the eschatological and moral salvation in Christ, was caused not by the inadequate philosophical theory, but by unbelief in God and the Church. In solving this tragedy, "none of the philosophies could possibly replace religion."⁸⁶

From the moment of his leaving the Department of Philosophy, Bogdashevskii did not publish a single study on a philosophical topic.⁸⁷ This fact does not suggest, however, that he stopped his creative work in philosophical reflection.

On the whole, the elements of Bogdashevskii's philosophical thought form basis for his hermeneutics. There are four main elements that really influenced the way in which he treated texts of the New Testament. *First*, Bogdashevskii stresses the importance of logic in the development of rational argument where is a particular understanding of the relationship between the suppositions and the conclusion. Thus, religious suppositions are important in dealing with religious reality of biblical texts.

⁸⁴ See D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Adolf Harnack, *Sushchnost' Khrisianstva*," ["Adolf Harnack, *The Essence of Christianity* (M.: 1906),"] *TKDA* III, 9 (1907): 151-155.

⁸⁵ D. I. Bogdashevskii, "O Evangelii i Evangel'skoi Istorii: Protiv sovremennogo ratsionalizma," ["Lecture. About the Gospels and Its History: Against Contemporary Rationalism,"] *TKDA* 2 (1902): 270.

⁸⁶ D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Chtenie. Neskol'ko slov o teosofii," ["Lecture. Several Remarks on Theosophy,"] *TKDA* III, 11 (1912): 341.

⁸⁷ Aside from his insignificant response to theosophical systems purporting to furnish knowledge of God, and of the universe in relation to God, by means of direct mystical intuition, philosophical inquiry, or both, see D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Lecture. Several Remarks on Theosophy," *TKDA* III, 11 (1912): 341-351.

Second, in Bogdashevskii's philosophical thought it is impossible for man to understand without enlightenment from a divine wisdom that extends the horizon thought for anyone searching to understand concepts of reality which differ from a simple material nature. In his hermeneutics it is correspondent to the role of the Holy Spirit as the illuminating agent for understanding the scriptures.

Third, for Bogdashevskii, on the one hand, one has, first, to arrive at the understanding of the whole in order to know the composites. On the other hand, however, the whole can be perceived only through its parts. This is closely related to Bogdashevskii's high regard of the corporate mind of the Church and tradition as the interpretative context of the Bible.

Last, Bogdashevskii emphasizes his support for a scientific world-view. He argues, however, that a 'pure science' or a 'pure experiment' alone cannot be employed for solving philosophical problems. Correspondently, in his hermeneutics, Bogdashevskii does not merely endorse a pure scientific approach of bible study. He emphasizes that all the components of biblical interpretation are not based on 'pure scientific' observations with respect to human activity, but are rooted in the understanding of the Bible as divine-human book. This demands that the idea of God should not be overlooked, but should be accepted as the initial and authoritative ground for all scientific considerations of bible interpretation. The truth concerning God becomes exceedingly valid and it should be taken as the foundation for any and all scientific research.

The applicability of these philosophical ideas and their influence on his hermeneutics will be noticeable when we turn in the following sections to the analysis of his exegetical and homiletic writings.