

## THE PROBLEM OF THE SUBJECT IN RUSSIAN IDEAL-REALISM

[O PORBLEMA DO SUJEITO NO IDEALISMO-REALISTA RUSSO]

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**ABSTRACT:** This study aims to solve the issue of subject and object in onto-gnoseological knowledge. The subject is revealed considering its inexhaustibility in the cognitive process. This concept correlates with such important features of Russian philosophical thought as pondering on the essence of personality, the status of truth, and its place in discourses on the cognitive process. The research methodology includes such methods as analysis and synthesis, comparative analysis, which allows making valid interpretations of the foundations of the existing reality. An important method in the article is the historical-genetic approach. The article shows the transition in discourse from the issue of the subject to the topic of personality, which is an ontological concept and brings thought to the scope of freedom in the philosophical knowledge of the world. The paper demonstrates how Russian philosophy becomes ideal-realism, which combines the most important concepts of philosophical thought. This research can be used in further study of Russian philosophy. The analytics of such concepts as intuition, organic outlook, and discursive thought is presented, and the issue of personal expression of cognitive practices is raised, which expands the boundaries of the concept of the subject and makes a connection between epistemology and ontology. It shows how ideal-realism becomes the leading philosophical direction of its time, and its possibilities on the way to knowledge of the truth are also revealed.

**RESUMO:** Este estudo visa resolver a questão do sujeito e do objeto no conhecimento onto-gnoseológico. O sujeito se desvela considerando sua inesgotabilidade no processo cognitivo. Esse conceito se correlaciona com características importantes do pensamento filosófico russo, como ponderar sobre a essência da personalidade, o status da verdade e seu lugar nos discursos sobre o processo cognitivo. A metodologia de pesquisa inclui métodos como análise e síntese, análise comparativa, o que permite fazer interpretações válidas dos fundamentos da realidade existente. Um método importante no artigo é a abordagem histórico-genética. O artigo mostra a transição do discurso da questão do sujeito para o tema da personalidade, que é um conceito ontológico e traz o pensamento para o âmbito da liberdade no conhecimento filosófico do mundo. O artigo demonstra como a filosofia russa se torna realismo ideal, que combina os conceitos mais importantes do pensamento filosófico. Esta pesquisa pode ser usada em estudos posteriores da filosofia russa. A análise de conceitos como intuição, perspectiva orgânica e pensamento discursivo é apresentada, e a questão da expressão pessoal de práticas cognitivas é levantada, o que expande os limites do conceito de sujeito e faz uma conexão entre epistemologia e ontologia. Mostra como o realismo ideal se torna a principal direção filosófica de seu tempo, e suas possibilidades no caminho para o conhecimento da verdade também são reveladas.

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**KEYWORDS:** personality; religious philosophy; cognitive strategies; European philosophy; culture.  
**PALABRA-CLAVE:** personalidad; filosofía religiosa; estrategias cognitivas; Filosofía europea; cultura.

## INTRODUCTION

The most significant in the Russian religious philosophy of the Silver Age was the project of the ontologization of the theory of knowledge. It allows thinking over the ontological status of the religious component at the level of the subject of thought. The problem is not to think up religion regarding philosophical activity, for example, giving credit to the history of the culture of our country and the modern religious revival in Russia. It is important to categorically consider how promising a subject as a category of epistemology can be clarified as a category of ontology, i.e., a person who is religious in the understanding of the Russian philosophical school. If the subject begins to organically and naturally figure as a category of ontology in the discourse, without introductory clarifying clauses “including”, “and”, “in addition”, etc., the project of ontologization of epistemology could be considered finished, and the basis to answer the question about the ontological status of ideal-realism in many respects valid.

In the common line of the formation of Russian religious philosophy, there are no tangled intricacies and moves that led to the existing quality of philosophical work, and there is no knowing how. V. Soloviev outlined a program covering the entire problematic field of philosophy of the 20th century: direct and indirect statements are contained in his texts. Two lines depart from this program (SOLOVIEV, 1988). The first is academic, systemic, and the second is existential.

Western philosophy put forward a certain ontological structure on the agenda and used it to the limit of possibilities, seeing significant shortcomings. Then it moved on to its criticism, hypostatizing it as metaphysics, philosophy, ontology, culture, etc. (OBORSKY & CHISTYAKOV, 2018). Russian philosophy craves mastering the limiting foundations, the functionality of which becomes applicable only if they are embedded in the tasks of thinking, which are most important for humans. There were two milestones in Russian philosophy that essentially and fatefully controlled the formation of the dominant discursive strategies: the Logos in Antiquity and the Logos in Christianity (TENACE, 2019). The changing points in history, the struggle of philosophical parties – it is mainly here where nationally and politically determined philosophical trends lose their power and influence. The bad infinity of philosophical attitudes and their denial in retrospect and actual being within one or two generations is absorbed and stabilized in straightforward tasks through the category of reality. The category of reality governs the dominant discourse strategies (HEIDEGGER, 1993).

This is a different rhythm of thinking and other tasks that can be defined as personalistic, because it is personalism that essentially gives quality to the style,

process, and result of philosophizing in Russian-language philosophy (POLIPCHUK, 2014). Philosophical personalism becomes not a topic but a thoughtful constituted way of a person's in philosophy. In realism, philosophy becomes actual because it cultivates the subject of philosophizing and thereby fulfills, among other things, the task of Descartes, the founder of modern European thought, to change ourselves prior to the world (SOLOVIEV, 1988). Perhaps this is just a coincidence or such a high level of intellectual intuition that discursive logic cannot be traced in all the necessary subtleties. The most important feature of realism – the changeability of the subject in the thought process and in the direction of harmonizing it with the world of existence – displays itself (INISHEV, 2018). Realism in Russian philosophical history is substantially personalism. Indeed, the realism of an objectified type aimed to change the world to the advantage of implementing the axiom of human rationality and apodicticism of his logic and planning, as a rule, led in practice to self-denial (MALINOV & KUPRIYANOV, 2019). A conspicuous example is Marxism, which was overthrown from the pedestal of its own ideological and social infallibility and scientific character by the paradigmized practice derived in its epistemological discourses as a criterion of truth. Practice as a criterion of truth has shown the untruth of Marxism (PYLAEV, 2018).

The space of historical transformation is not in external activism, but creative spiritual doing aimed not at the transformation of the Other but the existence of the Other (SARTRE, 2002). The key concept is coordination, not impact, or expansion, etc. Therefore, Russian ideal-realism can be called a group of philosophical ideas that have been clearly formulated and have the intellectual program meaning and structure. In the depths of ideal-realism:

The tendency of the development of knowledge is explained, and it has national cultural embeddedness. Unique features are widely represented in it, but they underlie the universal properties of philosophizing;

Ideal-realism continues and confirms the status of Russian philosophy as an independent direction of European philosophy. The term “self-reliance” may need a comment. It emphasizes independence and autonomy from foreign language schools, methodologies, and experience in developing ideas (LOSSKY, 1991).

For S. Frank and N. Lossky, the largest Russian systematic philosophers who did not abandon categorical thinking, the project of ontologization of epistemology can be called ideal-realism, the term was introduced in work “The World as an Organic Whole” (LOSSKY, 1991). This is the most important text of modern religious cosmology, demonstrating all levels of the structure of being and human presence in the context of the religious world picture. As a basic definition, N. Lossky wrote that a specific ideal-realism is such a system “which finds not only abstract ideas, rules, laws, etc. in the sphere of ideal (spiritual) being, but also concrete ideal principles, namely substances as living beings, Spirit with an infinite content of being, not exhausted by abstract ideas” (LOSSKY, 1991, p. 476).

The ideal-realism of S. Frank and N. Lossky became a philosophical program of the early 20th century, which not only considered the above features but also, without going beyond the framework of classical thought features, multiplied the opportunities for solving the main problems of classical rationalism. For instance, M. Heidegger's fundamental ontology contained elements of the destruction of classical philosophy, and the categorical apparatus was replaced by the language of existentials (HEIDEGGER, 1993). For Russian philosophers, the task was not in the plane of the destruction of traditional methods of philosophizing. The historical practice of thinking in metaphysics has shown that the solution of the subject-object dichotomy cannot be trivial. The major lesson of Western rationalism for Russian thinkers was that all previous attempts inevitably ran up against the principles of inflexible maximalism and extremes: from hyper-rationalism (panlogism) to subjective idealism (solipsism, agnosticism). Such a scale of opinions and the absence of balanced ontological decisions demonstrate the impossibility of an authentic explication of the substantial properties of human being, which, in particular, becomes especially acute in the absence of a transition from the theory of knowledge to being and ontology.

The trans-subjectivity category clarifies the cognitive capabilities of the subject, highlighting some *compulsory* properties of being. Trans-subjectivity reveals a great dependence on the subject of cognition and simultaneously discloses its qualities beyond its control. Trans-subjectivity has the following features:

- An essential side of the subject's experiences and perceptions;
- Outsideness of objects and things concerning the subject;
- Superior aggregate (total) quality of being about the subject. For instance, the knower is surpassed not only by the Divine, the transcendent, which is natural in itself and is justified by ontological evidence of the existence of God, but also the basic collection of objects, their unaccounted divergence, and infinite variety;
- Record of certain coercive aspects of being, common to all, which do not change their status and quality depending on the mode of their existence or attributive differences. It emphasizes the necessity for the subject to recognize the importance of the trans-subjective world and some constant elements of knowledge. It is these elements that serve as the basis for integral practices determining the main types of human existence (FRANK, 2000).

Compulsory experience without a person (subject) is impossible, but it is more than the subject. It is not its creativity, the result of individual activity, and is constant for other subjects. This experience is neither personal nor objective. It is trans-subjective, compulsory in its inner quality, creating an integral world of understanding, including the ability of many people to understand things accessible to perception in the simplicity without prior epistemological attitudes. Trans-subjectivity is the most important feature and condition for learning the being (LOSSKY, 1991). The basis of cognition, the initial prerequisite for acquiring knowledge, is the fundamental axiom that man is an entity among other entities according to the metaphysical heritage of Western philosophy. The category of

trans-subjectivity allows unfolding in thinking to entities that surpass man, fully and multilaterally belong only to being, but in this case are not infinitely removed in the transcendent, as per the ultimate foundations of agnosticism.

Many philosophers dealt with the existential limitations of transcendentalism. These were correct and understandable claims to Russian and Western people, clarifying the narrowness of the human world in the classical and non-classical discourses of the transcendental schools and their followers. However, only N. Lossky and S. Frank managed to express this categorically, at the conventional level (ZENKOVSKY, 2001). These philosophers' world perception was just as acute to the shortcomings of the philosophical vision of Western schools, which do not pay attention to some subtleties in the world perception because of the conviction that much more significant tasks are being solved in their philosophical activity. Probably, no one can challenge the importance of the sphere of subjective human experiences in the 20th-century thematic focus. No one can call it easy and useless. Most likely, we will talk about the unscientific nature of its conceptual defining, more precisely, about its unavailability using philosophy, which is now especially well developed, against the background of the general failure of thinking within the framework of a specific ontology and overall engagement in the theory of knowledge. It is no wonder that various types of literary creativity poured into this niche, emphasizing the unique aspects of human existence, but understandable to everyone due to the context of the era, or the congeniality to the European person's inner world, which no one has ever seriously embarked on to verify it and have an opportunity for further dialogue. In 1927, books *Steppenwolf* by G. Hesse and *Being and Time* by M. Heidegger were published and turned the European world upside down. The books developed the theme of the existential world of man, subjective experiences, and constituting new means of their expression (Heidegger, 2003).

Speaking about the first work, after many decades, people will note the tendency of an amazing coincidence of the experience of the main character of the book, patterns, and algorithms for thinking over his own world with other people who have read the novel. As such, there was even a tense feeling of irritation in the fact that whether it was possible for the overwhelming majority of readers to almost completely identify themselves substantially with the main character. One can try to generalize the situation using some of the values provided by the category of trans-subjectivity. G. Hesse was able to express in his book ideas that have a trans-subjective compulsion. They are familiar to everyone; they are in the sphere recorded by the classical language of philosophy, namely, the subjective sphere, but surpassing it outside the limits of a single subject (FRANK, 2000).

Indeed, in the situation that G. Hesse gives in the narrative, experiences are the essence of reactions to the circumstances common to many people related to the personal crisis of existence, which has a constant set of events, the deepest motives for revising assumptions regarding various life issues. These experiences

are given to the subject; they can be expressed in another clear language, in this case – literary. They were ultimately given life in a stunning book. Its artistic and philosophical merit was highly appreciated. Classical philosophy cannot grasp the contours and overall look of the niche that such human experiences occupy. The fact that M. Heidegger refers to the destruction of the history of philosophy in *Being and Time* once again proves this. Given these circumstances, there is some perspective for a productive analysis of the details of the situation (HEIDEGGER, 2003).

N. Lossky (1991) comes to the need to introduce the concept of trans-subjective into the discourse in the critical understanding of I. Kant's philosophy. This concept contains a certain forced reality – trans-subjective compulsion. The last nuance suggests that the all-embracing voluntarism that came to philosophical Europe after the Copernican coup of the Sage of Königsberg can be limited within reasonable conditions. Here not only common sense plays a role, speaking about its rights at the moment of complete freedom of constructive activity of the mind, but also research conclusions leading to such restrictions. They also find a functional application. What S. Frank calls transdefinite, N. Lossky defines as an irrational rest that reveals itself in the cognitive process of comparison. S. Frank's concept of "transfinity" in N. Lossky's discourse corresponds to that side of reality that always declares itself as something greater than what has already been cognized or grasped by a certain conceptual apparatus (LOSSKY, 1991). In other words, exactly like that of S. Frank (FRANK, 1990).

In the mentioned Russian philosophers' work, indifference is overcome, which is based on the ontology of Descartes' substances and remains the essential point organizing discourse of modern European philosophy until now. Descartes concludes dubitously by recording the absence of differences between sleep and reality on a mere statement of the sameness of the subjective set of sensations. In their philosophical work, Frank and Lossky not only return to the moment from which all the new European subordination of the same, similarity, identity, and not authenticity, uniqueness, and individuality originates (ZENKOVSKY, 2001). Russian philosophers, who can be ranked among the academic wing, managed not in an irritable and careless tone to focus on the indifference that appears in the abstraction of everything from the semantic whole (POLTORATSKY, 1975).

Emotional discontent can confirm little in cognition in the era of its crisis when everything that exists is only phenomena, the qualities, and values of which are transcended beyond all possible spheres of human cognitive activity. When it turns out that the world created by man, refined by his talent and suffering, only one methodical sophisticated, and effective technique provokes an escape into a sphere that is infinitely alienated from him (INISHEV, 2018). The human world was left without a human. Cognition is forced to admit its negative dependence on its attitudes and inventions, which it does not want to sacrifice because this would mean questioning the cognitive process's very seriousness and fundamental nature.

Therefore, reality has a trans-subjective compulsory character, i.e., it refers to the experiences given to me. Sleep, in turn, is my experience. There is no unity and monotony in them under a thorough analysis; they have sufficient originality not to be subjected to deterioration and unjustified reduction in the complex palette of human feelings (GAISIN, 2018).

The irrational rest, which revealed itself in cognition and mentioned in N. Lossky's thesis (LOSSKY, 1991), is also comprehended by S. Frank (Frank, 2000). He skips the specific qualification of it as being irrational. He develops the fundamental doctrine of the metalogicality of being, which is part of his philosophical system. Suppose N. Lossky makes the irrationality of a cognizable object an essential part of the result of cognition. In that case, S. Frank begins with the fact that the impossibility of final rationalization – metalogicality – will inevitably lead to an irrational factor. Thus, being similar in the main thing, the approach to the inexhaustibility of being in Russian thinkers' research is somewhat different. In particular, by the fact that S. Frank begins with a statement of this factor, and N. Lossky prefers to prove it in every cognition act, recording it at the end of cognition, in the effect of understatement familiar to everyone which is contained even in the final wording. In this sense, N. Lossky tends to gnoseological substantiation (LOSSKY, 1991), while S. Frank begins with the ontologization of this feature (FRANK, 2000).

In such a structural difference, the coordination of the subject and rational and irrational rationale remain. Still, the entire set of meanings that serves for the strategies of realistic thinking plays a significantly greater role. Centractions characteristic of various Western European schools of thought have been overcome here. Substantiality is not predominant in the ontology. Reality performs this role. Without detailed elaboration, the concept of substance is no better than the concept of reality as a part or basis of ontology. The discursive format of the differences between these concepts allows speaking about unequal existential reflection based on one and the other concept. “Imaginary values” (SOLOVIEV, 1988) and reality produce a different framework for thinking. In particular, N. Lossky and S. Frank illustrate the emergence of a separate cognitive act through narrative intrusions into discourse, describing walks, and daily situations, regular and understandable intuitions.

N. Lossky writes: “When the surfing waves hit the coastal stones, the leaves tremble and rustle from the wind, the hawk rushes from a height downward and tears the peacefully cooing pigeon, in all this, there is no trace of doingness inherent in the phenomena themselves” (LOSSKY, 1991, p. 121). N. Lossky illustrates the failure to find a subjective factor in the trans-subjective sphere without artificiality and illusionism. There is a trans-subjective compulsion throughout it all, which constitutes the sphere of the experiences given to me (LOSSKY, 1991). The philosopher notes: “If I walk on a hot summer afternoon along the riverbank, shrouded in luxuriant vegetation, and I do not think about

anything, I do not want anything, as if losing my self, merging into the uniform whole with nature, then nothing exists separately for me, everything blends into one mighty stream of life. But then something splashed over the water, attracted my attention, and the intellectual process of distinguishing began.

The mirror-like water surface, green river banks, coastal reeds – everything began to separate from each other...” (LOSSKY, 1991, p. 195). Here N. Lossky, without resorting to long and detailed comments on the need for unconditional thinking, gives a narration, which describes the beginning of the thought process. It is significant that the source of thinking, as far as can be judged from the passage, originates in the trans-subjective sphere and is not exhausted by the constructivism of the self-enclosed judgment. It outwardly demonstrates the ontogeny of the emergence of hypotheses in abstract thinking from the directly mythological and religious world perception of rational, conceptual, symbolic, and schematic knowledge (TENACE, 2019). Each person, having a cognitive element in its functional social qualitative scope, passes through this immediacy of perception and faith. And even in the depths of knowledge, at the heights of philosophical insights, many elements of philosophical knowledge, unconfirmed hypotheses, elements of authority in tradition have immediacy in the perception of categories, images, theories, and speech objects. It is what S. Frank, following Kuzanets, called sophisticated ignorance (FRANK, 2000).

Based on the above, the following conclusions can be made:

- In Russia, prophetic studies were developed, the spiritual source of which was the religious component determining the language, frameworks, and output format. For classical philosophy, they, perhaps, did not correspond to the very essence of philosophical work. Along with this, other methods of philosophy, for instance, categorial analysis, also, despite their canonical load, became self-defeating and were in crisis. At the same time, in Russian philosophers' works on several very topical and exciting issues, the prophetic experiments were very accurate and had the meaning and rigor of the program. This was reflected in devising objective trends, made of objective historical and speculative prerequisites, including an understanding of religion, society, and personality.
- The subject in Western discursive practices becomes the center and construct of generalizations of different levels. The subject could be a class, a state, a continent, a cognizing mind, a perceiving consciousness, an activated method, a source of meaning in a situation, etc. In the analytics of the trans-subjective sphere, the key development is given to the conceptualization of the subject of cognition and being in a personalistic interpretation, i.e., in a person whose most important quality in life is religious commitment. Personality is explained as the highest religious unity of knowledge and

being, which is both the basis and the final point of thinking. The effect of concentration of the subject's conceptual basis appears and becomes stronger, as opposed to the splitting up of the subject or even its denial in the phenomenon of the author's death and the subjective in general. Just as surely as the infinite is established in the finite, the boundless in the boundary, so the subjective and the subject are established in the trans-subjective. Its stabilization in the discourse of ideal-realism allows moving on to such an important ontological component as the religious component.

- The indistinguishability of the subjective and the trans-subjective level out the ontological meaning of epistemology. The solution to the question of trans-subjectivity offers a solution to the ontologization of the theory of knowledge in a technical philosophical sense, without discourses about a different state of knowledge. Explication of the trans-subjective world in N. Lossky and S. Frank's philosophical systems ontologizes the theory of knowledge within the framework of non-classical philosophy when considering classical conceptual-categorical means. They also become essential in the personalistic interpretation of the religious quality of a person's being.
- Russian ideal-realism makes the project of ontologization of the theory of knowledge a reality, an objective and visible achievement of non-classical philosophy. This became possible due to the differentiation of my experiences and the experiences given to me, the categorial development of the sphere of the subjective and trans-subjective.

Russian ideal-realism has become an epoch-making philosophical trend, the leading style of thinking in the 20th century. This had a certain effect on all the philosophical work that was carried out in Russian philosophy. The issue of the subject has become the cornerstone, the problematic point, the solution of which helps comprehend the meaning and the ultimate foundations of thinking in the most crucial period of the formation of Russian philosophy. The issue of the subject is combined with important topics that relate to questions of personality, objective reality, and cognitive capabilities of the mind within the boundaries limited by the grounds of a philosophical attitude to reality. These aspects should be studied with great care in historical and philosophical research. The prospect of studying ideal-realism has not yet been fully explored. We can dwell on the fact that the study program defines and reflects on complex ontological and epistemological problems. Research on this topic can be continued with renewed vigor and lead thinking to a constructive conclusion about what ideal-realism is for modern philosophy.

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