Kant's Critique Of Metaphysics

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'I have no wish to incur the reproach of picking petty quarrels with a genius to whom we must all look up with grateful awe'

- Gotolob Frege (in the course of expressing his disagreement with Kant on arithmetic but agreement on geometry.)

I

Kant, like all great philosophers, has inspired divergent lines of philosophical development after his time. The most prominent (and the most unfortunate) was the idealism of Hegel. Then there were various moral theologies, attempting to found religion on morality–not to speak of attempts to found morality on religion. Then some forms of pragmatism – the "*As if*" philosophy, which confined itself to the *Critique of Pure Reason (CPR)*. Pierce, we learn, read the *CPR* every day for two hours until he knew the whole of it by heart. Phenomenology, and the various continental extravagance into which it entered as an element, owes some thing to him. His criticism of metaphysics received some attention after the positivist elimination of it, and then he was bracketed with Hume, not just as his answer, but as a fellow-worker who inaugurated a new enlightenment. If we confine ourselves to *CPR* the criticism amounts to total rejection. His general approach is not the same as Hume's whose dismissal of metaphysics is a remarkable anticipation of positivism of the Vienna circle albeit in a different terminology rooted in his 'Psychological' method. But Kant's characterization of speculative metaphysics is no less severe. He writes:

> "There is no polemic in the field of pure reason (speculative metaphysics). Both parties beat the air and wrestle with their own shadows, since they go beyond the limits of nature, where there is nothing that they can seize and hold with their dogmatic grasp. Fight as they may, the shadows which they leave as under grow

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> together again forthwith, like the heroes of Valhalla, to disport themselves a-new in the bloodless contests"[1]

But the perception of him as a philosopher who provided a new and sound foundations for metaphysics after decisively dismissing the delusions of 'Transcendental Metaphysics' was understandable, because that was precisely what he claimed to do. Not only are the negative conclusions of the *CPR* supplemented by the positive ones of two later critiques but even in the first critique the noumenal order is accepted as an integral part of his critical philosophy. The use made of it is largely but not wholly negative. Kant is explicit that there can be no knowledge of noumena but only of phenomena. Absolute metaphysics is an attempt to gain *a priori* knowledge of noumena or things as they are in themselves by using ideas of reason. By means of them it seeks to extend and complete our knowledge, to reach the summit of it as it were. However, the proper use of the ideas of reason is regulative-to provide valuable guidelines to the investigation of phenomena.

Kant's rejection of transcendental metaphysics is inextricably connected with the system of critical philosophy which he reerected with great patience and enormous subtlety. Its architectonic is majestic in its sweep and the subtlety with which he elaborately works out intricate details of his arguments is impressive. An evaluation of his critique of meta-physics cannot be separated from an assessment of his critical philosophy. But an attempt should be made to single out, in general terms, some of his central ideas and their bearing on the metaphysical enterprise. For Kant all knowledge arises from the interaction of two distinct faculties, intuition (sensibility) and thought or judgment. The former cannot be reduced to the latter as Leibnitz did when he regarded sense perception as confused thinking. Nor can the latter be reduced to the former as Hume seems to have done when he regarded thinking as the occurrence or arising of combinations and permutations of impressions and ideas (sensations and images) according to psychological laws. The former is awareness of data or presentations. It is wholly receptive or passive. For knowledge to arise, the presentations must be regarded as representative of objects to which they are referred. The task of ordering and organizing the sense-manifold is carried out in accordance with certain *a priori* concepts and principles which are innate to the human mind in the sense that they are not abstracted from experience but are applied to it by the human mind. Without such

ordering, objective cognition or knowledge is not possible. But even the awareness of presentations involves the forms of space and time which are a priori that is, they are not abstracted from experience but are presupposed by it. They are indispensable forms of all presentations-time of inner sense and space of outer sense. But both the forms of intuition and the categories of understanding are essentially principles of organization and give us the structure of a priori knowledge that we have in mathematics and physics. But if they are to give rise to knowledge there must be presentations of the sense manifold, which arise in the human mind as a result of the action of things-in-themselves. The forms of intuition and *a priori* concepts of the understanding have application only to phenomena i.e. presentations caused in our mind by things as they are, or their appearances to us. If we try to extend them beyond the limits of possible experience, and determine the nature of objectively existing reality by means of them, the result is intellectual disaster or transcendental illusion.

There are three bogus sciences to which this intellectually self defeating attempt leads–rational psychology, rational cosmology and speculative metaphysics or natural theology. Of these the first is not of much contemporary interest. The other two deal with philosophical problems which have always been of interest not only to philosophers but to all reflective persons. Kant's treatment of them separates them more than they should be. For example, the cosmological argument for the existence of God and the fourth antinomy discuss essentially the same problem. It is impossible in the course of an article to evaluate his critique of metaphysics without discussion of his project of critical philosophy and his peculiar brand of 'transcendental idealism'. I shall not, therefore, enter into such a discussion. That many lines of argumentation in the *Critique* have been rendered untenable by subsequent developments in the field of knowledge is no surprise. The most serious is his dependence on the classification of propositions in traditional logic which is both confused and inadequate. Kant connects his categories and the *a priori* principles involving them, neatly, rather, over neatly, with the heads and subdivisions of this classification. The results are not happy and his claim to finality for the list of categories and related principles cannot be accepted. Transcendental Logic, the most important and difficult part of the *Critique* is most affected by this limitation in Kant's thinking. The Aesthetic too contains arguments of uneven value and has been overtaken by developments in mathematics

and physics. I shall not consider the implications of these developments for his philosophy even cursorily. Luckily many of the arguments of the dialectic stand on their own and can be considered on their merits.

> "The intellectual blind alleys into which we lead ourselves are not due to accidental errors or confusions which can be avoided with greater care. The tendency to over reach ourselves in using ideas of reason which are not categories but arise from the attempt to extend the latter beyond the limits of possible experience–is built into the very structure of the human mind.

Kant writes:

> "There is therefore a natural and unavoidable dialectic of pure reason. Not that in which a bungler involves himself for want of requisite knowledge nor that which a sophist devises for the purpose of misleading us but that which is an inseparable adjunct of human reason"[2]

II

Though natural and to persons of a certain temperament irresistible, the attempt to acquire knowledge of reality by pure speculative reason is bound to result in worse than failure viz. an intellectual impassee which manifests itself in the form of antinomies of reason. Kant sets forth, elaborately four antinomies–two mathematical and two dynamical. In each of them we are confronted with a choice between a thesis and an anti-thesis which are related to each other as contradictories, we must accept *one of them* and reject the other and yet *both* can be disproved, or proved indirectly through the refutation of the opposed statement. This is a pivotal part of the transcendental dialectic. Unless Kant's arguments or suitable reformulations of them can be sustained, the project to expose the transcendental illusions, once and for all, cannot be considered the last word on the subject as Kant apparently did. It is not my intention to discuss the antimonies at length. It is not necessary for my purpose nor am I equipped to do that.[3] I shall select the first antinomy and argue that Kant's arguments are far from conclusive.

The first antinomy concerns whether the world in space and time is finite or infinite (*śāśvata or aśāśvata* in Indian terminology) The thesis

states: "The world has a beginning in time and is also limited in regard to space." The anti thesis states "The world has no beginning in time and no limits in space but is, in relation to both time and space infinite." Kant adopts the procedure of *refuting both* the thesis and the anti-thesis and thus providing an *indirect proof of both* of them. In defence of the thesis Kant begins by supposing that the world has no beginning in time. If so, its duration upto any given event in its history must have been infinite. This is impossible because say, the number of years that have elapsed before the year of Indian independence is a series that comes to an end, and is therefore finite. It has completed itself, as it were, and 'the infinity of a series consists in the fact that it can never be completed through successive synthesis.'

Kant's 'subjective' definition of an infinite series, is doubtless unhappy. A definition in purely logical and mathematical terms can be given which does not refer to any successive acts of synthesis, either mental processes or mental processes accompanied by repeatable physical procedures. Possibly Kant imagined himself traveling backward in time and ticking off the years one by one, or completing the counting imaginatively. (Imagination plays a very important role in Kant's philosophy as a mediator between sensibility and understanding: a similarity to Hume which is seldom noticed). Either way the synthesis cannot be completed, if time has no beginning. But Kant feels and argues, the series has been completed at the terminal point chosen by us. (That the succession o phases in the history of the world continues after the selected point has no bearing on the argument). Hence, is the contradiction, that an incompletable series has been completed. There is something disturbing about this argument–a sense of being tricked without knowing how, as in the case of the ontological argument. Broad says that Kant here substitutes for the intrinsic synthesis which is uniquely characteristic of the temporal process, the extrinsic synthesis in terms of which his definition of the 'transcendental' conception of infinity is framed.[4] Russell makes perhaps the same point when, without referring to the direction or sense inherent in a time series, he simply says

> "owing to the inveterate subjectivism of his mental habits he failed to notice that he had reversed the sense of the series by substituting backward synthesis for forward happening and thus he supposed that it was necessary to identify the mental series which had no

end with the physical series which had an end but no beginning."[5]

This piece of philosophical psycho analysis may be correct. But I think Kant was simply expressing a feeling of unease which many of us have in contemplating a progression which has an end but no beginning. It is of some interest to notice that we don't have the same discomfort in contemplating a series that has a beginning but no end. Let us suppose that we are gifted with a body, which is, like the soul in the *Gita*, immune to the destructive power of wind and water, fire and weapons. If there is no end to the temporal process, we shall never, traveling with the time arrow, complete the synthesis of the years that have to lapse in finite time. In other words, we feel no great difficulty in admitting that there is a first phase in the history of the world but no last phase; but a world process that has an end but no beginning seems incongruous if not downright inconceivable. Kant seems to be expressing, in a learned way, this discomfort in contemplating a process that has an end, (Though a relative end point chosen by us) but no beginning. Our feelings of conceivability and inconceivability go with certain mental pictures we conjure up in contemplating these cosmic possibilities. They cannot be eliminated altogether though their influence may not be desirable in this context. Kant, I think is simply denying the conceivability of a history that has even a relative terminal point, but no beginning. He is asserting that infinite duration *cannot have lapsed* before a chosen temporal landmark. And yet, if time is infinite, this is precisely what has happened, and will happen so far as the future phases in the history of the world are concerned. So, I think he is simply begging the question at issue.

In a formal way, the two suppositions can be stated in logical-mathematical terms, without any contradiction in either of them. To say that the world is finite in time is to say: choose any 'cut off' point you like and measure duration in any standard units then no more than n successive units of duration have lapsed before our 'starting point'. Similarly, with the same procedure, there is some number N (not necessarily the N representating past duration) such that no more than n successive units of duration will lapse after our chosen cut off point. To maintain that time is infinite is to say: with the same procedure outlined above, there is no number N such that it represents the upper limit of duration either backwards or forwards. Neither statement seems to be self contradictory. But in this matter, as in some others of philosophical interest, philosophers have maintained that some suppositions, though

not self-contradictory, are inconceivable or unintelligible where conceivability is not identical with our ability to picture or imagine the alleged state of affairs. That they do not always come down on the same side in a philosophical dispute is unfortunate, but it does not make the debate a delusion. In addition, there is the bearing on these debates of the researchers into the nature of infinity and continuity by Cantor and his followers. These tend to show that what appears puzzling to the point of self contradiction, to the common, non-mathematical man does not really involve a contradiction. The mathematics of infinite and continuous classes and series can be worked out consistently. The mathematical theories tend to help the advocates of infinitude of space and time though their position seems to be more paradoxical; but finitism, in this matter, is not free from puzzles either. But a series of abstract entitles like numbers is so unlike a spatial or temporal series of areas and durations that the analogy between them cannot be pressed beyond a point. Take, as an example, the series of rational fractions which ends with 1/1 but has no beginning. It has a last term but no first term. Can we use this example to show that though the world may have no first phase (or absolute beginning), a finite measure of time may have elapsed upto a given point in time?[6] or even to show that the world may have an absolute end without its having an absolute beginning, because the series of rational fractions has no first term but has a last term? I think not, unless there are independent grounds for accepting such a supposition. As for the other half of the antinomy Kant argues that to say that the world has a beginning implies that this beginning was preceded by empty time. But, he continues, there is nothing in any stretch of empty time to explain why the world should begin at that time rather than at any other. In the absence of any reason, why it should begin at a given time, it cannot begin at any time and is hence without beginning. If the earlier argument against the everlastingness of the world is fallacious or inconclusive, then this argument strengthens the supposition of the infinitude of the world in time. But even without the appeal to Leibnitz's principle of sufficient reason we can say that there is something very odd about the beginning of time. This seems like saying that there was a time when there was no time; if this sounds like verbal jugglery, we can say that an absolute beginning to the world processes presupposes empty time and the concept of empty time is not intelligible. In a theistic context the difficulty becomes particularly acute–why did God create the world when he did rather than an earlier or later date?

St. Augustine solved the problem by maintaining that the world and time were created together. A relative view of time is part of this view. Kant was an absolutist, no less than Newton. But, on the relative view, it is just a brute fact that there was a first event or a set of simultaneous first events, not preceded by any previous processes. On the assumption of infinite time, we never come across such an event or set of events however far back we may go in the history of the world. Both the alternatives are logically possible. St. Augustine makes finitism more plausible by obviating the need for empty time, but his view gives rise to certain paradoxes of its own. He will have to rule out as unintelligible certain questions which appear to be meaningful. For example, why is the world not older or younger than it is, whatever its age and however we may estimate it? Could we not be living in the $N+1^{th}$ century or the $N-1^{th}$ century instead of the N^{th}? Ultimately, St. Augustine will have to say that the question of the age of the universe is meaningless, though particular events and processes can be dated and measured within the world. In the non-theistic context we shall have to say that the world emerges suddenly without any antecedent condition, a sort of creation without God!

The antinomy concerning extent in space need not be discussed at length. Against the infinity of the world in space, Kant says "An infinite aggregate of actual things, cannot be viewed as a given whole, not consequently, as simultaneously given."[7] The world is therefore, as regards extension in space, not infinite. If we go into the details, it becomes clear that Kant's argument rests upon the impossibility of completing the successive synthesis of the parts of an infinite world in finite time. But he has already argued that clasping of infinite duration is impossible. I have already argued that his arguments about time are inclusive. Second, there seems to be a contradiction between this argument and the fourth metaphysical argument for his conception of space as an *a priori* intuition. "Space is presented (represented?) as an *infinite* given magnitude."[8] The matter need not be pursued further. I have said enough to show that Kant's arguments are, at the least inconclusive. If so, one can consistently take either of the two positions. One of the two, the thesis or the antithesis, is necessarily true. Or else we can say, both are logically consistent and neither is therefore necessarily true. St. Thomas Aquinas takes this view and opts for a finite world on grounds of faith. I would agree with him rather than Kant.

That Kant's arguments are, in many respects, blunted by advances in logic, mathematics and physics is undeniable, but even independently of them, his arguments are unacceptable, at least as they stand. In discussions of this topic, space and time are clubbed together and the same sort of attitude is taken to both, yet there is no a priori reason why we should do so. Finitism is much more plausible in the case of space than in the case of time. The reason is, as Kant, among others, has pointed out, space is a unity of coexisting parts, where as time is essentially becoming and 'successively synthesizes' itself. That is why some philosophers and mathematicians have maintained that there is no actually existing infinite and that all infinity, being potential, results from addition of units in time. (This must be comforting to Kantians.) On the other hand, the relative view of time is more plausible than that of space. Otherwise we have to agree with Aristotle that there is passage of time even if there is no other change.

III

In contrast to Kant's treatment of rational cosmology which is heavily dependent on the rest of his critical philosophy, his treatment of natural theology is autonomous. His criticisms of the traditional arguments for the existence of God are sharp and incisive, and have stood the test of time. These are so well known that it is not necessary to recapitulate them. As he points out, psychologically, the argument from design (the physico theological argument) occurs first to thinking persons, then the cosmological (first cause) argument and the ontological argument never, unless they have studied philosophy. Logically, the ontological argument is first and is presupposed by the cosmological and is a necessary supplement to the theological, unless one is content with a very powerful cosmic architect or engineer. Kant was preceded by Gassendi whose objection to Descartes was the same as Kant's viz. that existence is not a predicate in the logical sense. In our own day the analysis of the logical forms of different types of propositions and their unambiguous expression has reached a precision unknown to Kant. The contributions of Russell and Moore have exposed the fallacy in the argument decisively. But Kant made his point very clearly, since 'existence' is not a predicate like 'red', 'round', 'omnipotent',

'benevolent', etc. it cannot be included in or excluded from any concept. Consequently all existential propositions are synthetic and neither self-evidently true nor self evidently false. Terms like 'necessary being' are vacuous. The cosmological argument infers the existence of a necessary being from the existence of contingent beings. Its conclusion that a necessary being exists as the ground of contingent and conditioned existents, is in a way less specific than that of the ontological argument– that the description is necessarily true of something.

The cosmological argument clearly implies there is a being whose essence necessarily implies its existence. Kant finds here a nest of fallacies, the most important being that, in the end, it falls back upon the ontological argument. He goes so far as to say that there is a

> "stratagem by which it imposes upon us on old argument in a new dress and appeals to the agreement of two witnesses, the one with the credentials of pure reason and the other with those of empiricism; while in fact it is only the former who has changed his voice and dress for the purpose of passing himself off as on additional witness."[9]

Kant's rejection of the argument is justified but the relations between the two arguments are more complex. If the ontological argument is valid, then there can be no objection to the concept of necessary being postulated at the last step in the cosmological. Kant himself spends some logical ingenuity in showing that the end realism of the former can be identified with the necessary being of the latter assuming their validity, which he rejects. But the cosmological argument can be accepted while rejecting the ontological argument. St. Thomas did precisely that. His reason, sounds curious to our ears viz. that having no clear conception of his essence. We cannot deduce God's existence from his essence though God's essence is his existence.

> '...The proposition, 'God exists' though of itself self evident-since the subject and the predicate are identical for God is his essence is never-the-less not self evident to us because we do not know what the essence of God is."[10]

Of the five ways of Aquinas three are versions of the cosmological argument taken over from Aristotle. It may be that this position is untenable in the final analysis. But if the concept of a necessary being is not empty or self contradictory, such a position can be rendered consistent. In any case the claim of the ontological argument is much

stronger that we can frame a description viz. that of 'the most perfect being' which is necessarily satisfied by an existent entity. This claim may be dismissed decisively, as Kant does, and yet it may be said that there is an unconditioned being whose existence should be postulated as the ground of a contingent but causally connected series.

But they will fall together if the ground for rejecting the ontological argument is not restricted to a particular description, that of the most perfect being however this notion may be further specified, but is applicable to any description whatever. The criticisms of Kant and subsequent philosophers clearly imply that whether a description or definition is instantiated is always contingent; to claim that there is or can be a description which is necessarily applicable is to utter meaningless verbiage or contradict oneself.

Many who believe in the existence of God would admit that atheism is consistent. By the same token the believer, though wrong, is not contradicting himself. It can be that there is a being that possesses all perfections to the highest possible degree. But if there is, then his existence is contingent. If so, he may not have existed. Now, we may ask, what kind of being is God whose existence is a matter of accident or chance? This last way of putting the matter may be objectionable for using words like 'accident', 'chance' which have an emotive force not applicable here philosophically; all we want to convey is that the statement 'God exists' is neither necessary nor impossible. But never-the-less a sense of discomfort remains, a feeling of being let down by a contingent God. This feeling is at the back of J.N. Findlay's 'Necessity of Atheism' as also the attempt to revive the ontological argument by Malcolm and Heart-Shorne in the sixties of the last century. They maintained that not existence but necessary existence is perfection. But if 'existence' is not a predicate or perfection, 'necessary existence' goes the same way.

J. N. Chubb in *Faith Possesses Understanding*[11] tries to show what may be called the 'necessity of theism'. He defines God as the proper object of total self surrender and the only such object; and then argues that such an attitude is inconsistent with any doubt or conditionality. The fool who says in his heart 'there is no God' is better than the agnostic whose prayer is: 'O God, if there is a God, save my soul, if I have a soul.' Chubb's argument is developed with great subtlety but I think it suffers from the same defect as the traditional formulations of the

ontological argument.

But what is the bearing of the last paragraph of my criticism that there is a logical lacuna in Kant's account of the relation between the ontological and cosmological arguments? First of all, it seems to me that philosophers like Aquinas are not wrong-headed. It is possible to reject the ontological argument and accept the cosmological though in the end both may have to be consigned to the post-Kantian dustbin. Kant is too ready to think that once the ontological argument is disposed of, others will either fail or fall short of the ideal of religious devotion. But if Kantian and post-Kantian criticisms of the argument are accepted (and how can we reject them?) then the existence of God, even if he exists– become contingent, and considering the religious attitude at its most intense, we seem to be deprived of the *very notion of a supreme being* who is all in all; and a sort of atheism becomes necessary. Hence is the attraction, for some philosophers, of reviving the ontological argument in some form. This suggests that notions like 'necessary being', 'ground of everything', 'supreme being', etc. have a significant analogue to but not definable in purely logical and epistemological terms. Then all philosophers who are interested in religion may have to do their homework again. But even apart from this suggestion, which may let in irrationalism of all sort, Kant with his over precise, pigeon-holding mind keeps the fourth antinomy and the cosmological argument more or less isolated from one another. He fails to realize that this has a bearing on his own moral theology and even the noumenal order which is integral to critical philosophy.

Kant recognizes that if the improper use of reason generates antinomies and brings us to a standstill, reason is under an obligation to resolve these antinomies and clear the path for subsequent proper use of reason–'pure practical reason' as it turns out. Though I have discussed the first antinomy, in so far as it has a bearing on his criticism of a priori metaphysics, particularly Kant's rational cosmology, I shall not discuss the antinomies. To do so, with any degree of satisfactoriness, would require consideration of his theories of space and time and the role of categories in human knowledge. In short, it would necessitate evaluation of his 'mysterious meta-psychology' (Ryle's phrase). However, his general approach to the resolution of antinomies is interesting. It is well known that he removes the apparent contradictions differently in the case of mathematical and dynamical antinomies. In the former case both the

thesis and the antithesis are false whereas in the case of the latter, both are true, provided care is taken to distinguish between phenomena and noumena and interpret the two apparently contradictory propositions properly. His treatment of the third antinomy is a telling illustration of the latter method of resolution. One and the same phenomenon may be subject to two different types of causation-natural causation which connects phenomenon with one another according to laws of nature. There is also what Kant calls causality through freedom, the power of initiating an action or a state, spontaneously, without such an act of initiating itself being determined by any previous conditions according to laws of nature. Natural causation is applicable to all phenomena including voluntary human actions. The latter kind is applicable to me as a member of the noumenal order. In the first critique Kant claims to have proved the possibility of the idea of freedom. Its reality is proved by regarding it as a postulate of our moral experience which Kant regards as rational and objectively valid. For our purposes the important point is that natural causation is applicable to nature that is regarded as a system of connected phenomena, whereas causality through freedom belongs to my noumenal, rational self. There is a great deal of intellectual tight-rope walking here which we need not discuss in detail. It has been suggested that Kant adopted this kind of solution to the third and fourth antinomies because he wanted to keep the door open for the reality of freedom and immortality and the existence of God, in his later *Critique*. The fourth antinomy regarding the existence of an absolutely necessary being is resolved by distinguishing between a cause within the phenomenal world (which can never be a self explanatory being) and an intelligible cause or thing-in-itself which may be a cause of phenomena. In the second case, there is no infinite regress because noumena are not in space and time and hence it is enough if we take the first step and say that the phenomenal order as a whole is dependent asymmetrically on the noumenal order. It is better here to speak of the relation of ground and consequence rather than cause and effect; the category of causation is the relation of ground and consequence schematized through time.

Once again it is not possible to comment on the intricacies of this transcendental idealism. But we may note that neither Leibnitz nor Aristotle regarded God as the first, self explanatory cause within the phenomenal world. Whatever may be his difficulties in explaining the relation of God to the world, Leibnitz did not place God within the

phenomenal world (we leave aside, for the time being, that space and time are, for him, not ultimately real). For him the existence even of an infinite series of contingent beings is not necessary and hence God is needed as the necessary being who is the ground of the series as a whole. The logical relation is exactly parallel to that of noumena and phenomena. The cosmological argument arises from a sense of wonder that there is a world at all, and it can have nontheistic solutions. Heidegger concludes his 'What is Metaphysics?' with the comment "Why is there anything rather than nothing?" Later and, independently, Wittgenstein remarked: Not how the world is, is the mystical, but that it is.[12]

As regards moral theology or the metaphysics of morals it is enough to remark that its arguments and conclusions are as controversial as those of Transcendental Metaphysics. Just as Kant considers cosmological antinomies and speculative theology more or less in isolation, he does not consider the conclusions of the second critique in relation to his criticisms of speculative theology. Even if we grant that Kant establishes the existence of God as a postulate of morality, has he shown that this ruler of the world is perfect in power, knowledge, and goodness? Are not his criticisms of the physico-theological argument equally applicable here? It is enough if his God who is responsible for the fulfillment of a necessary condition of the realization of the consummate good, is inconceivably more wise and powerful than the best of human beings. He need not even be responsible for the existence of the world. Kant hoped that his metaphysics of morals would replace the transcendental variety which he thought, he had destroyed for ever. The trouble is not that every one does not agree with him. The trouble is that his arguments are of the same sort as those of older philosophers. Metaphysics is an attempt to jump out of our skins-an enterprise at once irresistible and impossible. Kant put us in human hide of double thickness and hoped that 'the still small voice' would lead us into the heart of things.

Notes and References

[1] *Critique of Pure Reason: Everyman's Library p.432*

[2] *ibid p.210*

[3]*The best discussion of the topic I know of is in C.D. Broad's Kant: An Introduction, Cambridge, CUP, 1978 pp. 210-275*

[4]*ibid 214-15*

[5]*Russell, Bertrand: Our knowledge of the External World Chicago, Open Court Publishing Co. 1914, p. 161*

[6]*Broad : op.cit, pp. 216-17*

[7]*CPR p. 261*

[8]*CPR p.44*

[9]*CPR p.354*

[10]*Summa Theologica Ia, ii, I*

[11]*Chubb Jehangir N.: Faith possesses Understanding: A suggestion for a new direction in rational theology, Concept Publishing Co. New Delhi, 1983*

[12]*Wittgenstein, L.W.: Tractatus Logico Philosophicus 6.44*