

REVIEW OF A HANDBOOK TO KANT'S CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON BY RASHVIHARY DAS

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Abstract: Kant is a very familiar name for every student of philosophy. Actually Kant is even considered as the Father of Modern Philosophy as his thesis consists of both Empiricism and Rationalism. In his view, knowledge starts from experience, goes through understanding and ends with reasoning. Hence Kant's philosophy is known to be the Critical Philosophy. And among all his other books Critique of Pure Reason seems most critical for understanding. So any handbook for understanding the inner meanings of this important book [named Critique] of Kant is thoroughly welcomed by the students of philosophy. And Rashvihary Das has done that great job effortlessly. He in his Handbook [we can call his book in this name as the name is quite large] tries to evaluate Kant's contribution to the world of philosophy in very easy manner. His use of language is so much flawless that any person can understand it very quickly and easily. Thinking about the students of philosophy, he even added his own Preface and Introduction even before Kant's Preface and Introduction within the book.

Keyword: Handbook, Pure Reason, philosophy, job effortlessly.

INTRODUCTION

It is really very hard job to overrule Kant's writings, but the author successfully performed this job. His chapter divisions even remind us of Kant. In Introduction we come to know the important concepts regarding distinction between Pure and Empirical Knowledge, the nature of Apriori knowledge, its need in Scientific analysis, distinction between Analytic and Synthetic judgments along with the famous concept about the possibility of Synthetic Apriori judgements in Pure Mathematics, Pure Geometry and Natural Sciences. After the Introduction portion, he incorporated the Transcendental Doctrine of Elements which contains Part I : Transcendental Aesthetic along with Part II : Transcendental Logic. Transcendental Aesthetic contains the concept of Space and Time as apriori intuition [apriori = independent of existence & intuition/pure intuition = pure form of sensibility]. For showing the exact nature of Space and Time as Apriori Intuition, following Kant, the author also has gone through the Metaphysical and Transcendental Expositions of Space and Time in very easy language. Transcendental Logic consists of two divisions – Division I : Transcendental Analytic and Division II : Transcendental Dialectic. In the Transcendental Analytic portion, there are two Books. In the Book I, the author mainly concentrated on developing the important concepts of twelve Categories following twelve different kinds of judgements on the basis of Quantity, Quality, Relation and Modality. On the basis of Quantity, three categories evolve following three judgements – Singular judgement : Unity, Particular judgement : Plurality and Universal judgement : Totality. On the basis of Quality, three categories evolve from three judgements – Affirmative judgement : Reality, Negative judgement : Negation and Infinite judgement : Limitation. On the basis of Relation, three other categories evolve from three judgements – Categorical judgement : Inherence and Subsistence [Substance & Accident], Hypothetical judgement : Causality and Dependence [Cause & Effect], Disjunctive judgement : Community [Reciprocity]. On the basis of Modality, three other categories evolve from three

judgements – Problematic judgement : Possibility-Impossibility, Assertoric judgement : Existence-Nonexistence and Apodeictic judgement : Necessity-Contingency. In this way we get the complete idea of twelve Categories of Kant. In the Book II, there are three different chapters. Chapter I concentrates on the Schematism of the Pure Concepts; Chapter II concentrates on the highest principle of all Analytic and Synthetic judgments along with the Systematic Representation of all Synthetic principles of Pure Understanding. However it consists of Axioms of Intuition : all intuitions are extensive magnitudes [in First Edition: all appearances are, in their intuition, extensive magnitudes]; the Anticipations of Perception : in all appearances the real, which is an object of sensation, has intensive magnitude, that is a degree; Analogies of Experience : experience is possible only through the representation of a necessary connexion of perceptions. The First Analogy or Principle of Permanence of Substance concludes that in all change of appearances substance is permanent, and its quantum in nature is neither increased nor diminished. The Second Analogy or Principle of Succession in Time in accordance with the Law of Causality concludes that all changes take place in conformity with the law of the connexion of Cause and Effect. The Third Analogy or Principle of Co-Existence in accordance with the Law of Reciprocity concludes that all substances, in so far as they can be perceived to co-exist in space, are in thoroughgoing reciprocity. In this regard Kant goes through Postulates of Empirical Thought and, following him, the author also divides them into three different Postulates – First Postulate i.e. that which agrees, in intuition and concepts, with the formal conditions of experience, if possible; Second Postulate i.e. that which is connected with the material conditions of experience, that is, with sensation, is actual; Third Postulate i.e. that which in its connexion with the actual is determined in accordance with universal conditions of experience, is [that is, exists as] necessary. In Chapter III we become introduced with the general distinctions between Phenomena [Appearance] and Noumena [Reality]. Here ends Division I

or Transcendental Analytic. Under the head of Division II or Transcendental Dialectic, in Book I and II, the author, following Kant, superbly mentions about the concept of Pure Reason, Dialectical Inferences of it, its Paralogisms, four Conflicts as the Antithetic of Pure Reason etc relative questions. Among them except the last one, belonging to Chapter II, all others are included within Chapter I. In Chapter III, he tries to mention regarding the Ideal of Pure Reason as the General Ideal along with the Transcendental Ideal or God and gives several proofs about his existence : Proof of existence as Supreme Being, impossibility of Ontological Proof, impossibility of Cosmological Proof, impossibility of Physico-theological Proof etc general proofs of existence. And at last in the Transcendental Doctrine of Method, following Kant, the author also discusses in Chapter I : Discipline of Pure Reason, Chapter II : Canon of Pure Reason, Chapter III : Architectonic of Pure Reason, and in Chapter IV : History of Pure Reason. However all these are written in very flawless manner and in very English language so that even a very dull student of philosophy can easily understand the inner meaning of Kant's such a important writing as Critique.

REVIEWED BOOK :

Das, Rashvihar, A Handbook to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, Progressive Publishers [published by Sri Kamal Kumar Mitra], College Street, Calcutta, 1999. Price – 60.00.