

Omarova A.Ye.

Jawaharlal Nehru University,
India, New Delhi, e-mail: omarova-almira@mail.ru

MORALITY AND RELIGION IN IMMANUIL KANT'S CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Morality and religion have always influenced the formation of the value-semantic relationship of man towards the world. All philosophers from antiquity to the present, one way or another, in their treatises tried to adequately understand the essence of that relationship in question. On the one hand, the person's value attitude to the world is connected, anyhow, with the world of obligation, and on the other hand – the value interpretation of the world is always connected with the world of being, that is, the essential understanding of the world of obligation and its role in the system of cognitive and practical human activity. Discarding all conventions, we can say that Kant was the philosopher who most acutely posed this problem in his works. If we go over Kant's critical philosophy, we will see that Kant has greatly expanded and deepened the boundaries of the philosophical analysis of religious issues, paying special attention to the study of sociological and philosophical roots of religion. In the present article, I am highlighting that the Kantian philosophy of religion has rather made a large path in its development and therefore we could try to reveal the patterns and principles of this path. The main questions that I am mainly dealing with in this article are related with a) complex outlook between morality, religion and reason, b) I will also be throwing light on the questions that bring together Kant's perception of the notion of theoretical and practical reason, his transcendental idealism and I will try to respond to the questions that are being raised in the relation between morality and religion. Specifically, I am trying to raise concerns over questions such as how does Kant reconcile our freedom with that of religious dogmas and canons? The main conclusion of the research would be the statement that morality inevitably leads to religion.

Key words: morality, religion, reason, freedom, free will, theoretical and practical reason, obligation, God, «Critique of Practical Reason», «Critique of Pure Reason», «Religion within the boundaries of bare Reason».

Омарова А.Е.

Джавахарлал Неру Университет,
Индия, Нью Дели қ., e-mail: omarova-almira@mail.ru

Иммануил Канттың сыни философиясындағы мораль мен дін

Дін мен мораль адамның дүниеге деген семантикалық-құндылықтық көзқарасын қалыптастырады. Ежелгі Антика мен заманауи философтар өздерінің трактаттарында тиісті деңгейде дін мен мораль арасындағы өзара қатынасты түсінуге тырысты. Біріншіден, адамның қоршаған ортаға деген құндылықтық қатынасы белгілі мағынада міндетпен; екіншіден, қоршаған ортаны құндылықтар тарапынан түсіну болмыс әлемімен байланысты. Басқаша айтқанда, адам іс әрекетінің тәжірибелік және когнитивті жүйесіндегі міндет ұғымының мәні мен оның орны өзекті философиялық сұрақтардың бірі болып саналады. Осы орайда, Канттың философиялық мұрасында аталған сұрақтар өзінің көрінісін кеңінен тапты. Канттың философиялық жұмыстарына тереңінен үңілетін болсақ, онда біз Канттың діни сұрақтардың философиялық талдау шекараларын кеңейтіп, олардың терең анализ жасағанын аңғарамыз. Бұл мақалада а) мораль, дін және себеп арасындағы өзара күрделі қатынас; б) Канттың тәжірибелік және теоретикалық зерде ұғымдары; в) Канттың еркіндік ұғымын діни көзқарастармен келістіру тәжірибесі сынды мәселелер баяндалады. Сондай-ақ бұл мақаланың негізгі қорытындысы – Канттың мораль мінсіз дінге жетеді деген тезисінің дәлелденуі.

Түйін сөздер: мораль, дін, себеп, еркіндік, ерік, теориялық және тәжірибелік зерде, міндет, Құдай, «Таза зердедегі сын», «Тәжірибелік зердедегі сын», «Зерде аясындағы дін».

Омарова А.Е.

Университет Джавахарлала Неру,
Индия, г. Нью Дели, e-mail: omarova-almira@mail.ru**Мораль и религия в критической философии Иммануила Канта**

Мораль и религия всегда влияли на формирование ценностно-семантических отношений человека по отношению к миру. Философы от древности до настоящего времени, так или иначе, в своих трактатах пытались адекватно понять суть этих отношений. С одной стороны, ценностное отношение человека к миру связано с миром обязательств, а с другой – ценностная интерпретация мира всегда была связана с миром бытия, то есть с существенным пониманием мира обязательства и его роли в системе познавательной и практической человеческой деятельности. Отбросив все условности, мы можем сказать, что Кант был философом, который наиболее остро поставил эту проблему в своих работах. Если мы перейдем к критической философии Канта, мы увидим, что он значительно расширил и углубил границы философского анализа религиозных вопросов, обратив особое внимание изучению социологических и философских корней религии. В настоящей статье рассматривается кантовская философия религии, которая сделала огромный путь в своем развитии, и поэтому мы могли бы попытаться выявить закономерности и принципы этого пути. Основные вопросы, которые в основном рассматриваются в этой статье, связаны со сложным мировоззрением между моралью, религией и разумом. Также освещаются вопросы восприятия Кантом понятий теоретического и практического разума, его трансцендентальный идеализм, и делаются попытки ответить на вопросы, возникающие в отношениях между моралью и религией, и в частности, как Кант примиряет человеческую свободу с религиозными догмами и канонами? Основным заключением данной статьи будет попытка обоснования основного тезиса Канта, что мораль неизбежно ведет к религии.

Ключевые слова: мораль, религия, разум, свобода, свободная воля, теоретический и практический разум, обязательства, Бог, «Критика практического разума», «Критика чистого разума», «Религия в пределах разума».

Introduction

Many philosophers have compared Immanuel Kant's ideas with that of the discoveries of Copernicus, which challenged the prevailing dominant worldview about our universe, since his crucial ideas on reason, morality and religion were going to become causes for revolution in philosophy itself. Namely, if we refer to John R. Silber, he indicates that «the Copernican Revolution in the *Critique of Pure Reason* consists in the recognition of the knower's contribution to the knowledge of objects (Silber, 1959: 182). While, in the *Critique of Practical Reason* the Copernican Revolution consists in the discovery that the object of moral volition – the good – is determined by the will of the moral agent and that the good does not determine the will of the moral agent.» If it was after Copernicus that we began to think of earth as rotating around the sun, then Kant who was stimulated by such a notion began to wonder as to around which doctrines and concepts, a philosophical knowledge could be arranged. Kant asserts that the whole world of phenomena depends on human reason, which is understood in one of Kant's main philosophical works – the *Critique of Pure Reason* [*First Critique* hereafter] as pure reason that is free from the impact of external prejudices. The reason itself has to be

understood as the source of self-knowledge, since, Kant believed that philosophy is obliged to answer at least, four questions such as – What can I know? What ought I to do? What may I hope? (Kant, 2007: 635) and What is man? (Kant, 2007: 635) In fact, it enables one to investigate pretensions and boundaries of the reason itself through our better assessment of faculties. The first three questions are formulated in the *First Critique* and the fourth question has been developed in his lectures on logic. Kant has eventually given answers to these questions in several of his philosophical works throughout his life. The first question he related it to metaphysics, the second to morality, third to religion and fourth to anthropology. So, if we give these questions an analytical and philosophical direction, it turns out that Kant tried to define: 1) what are the sources of human knowledge; 2) scopes of the possible and useful application of any knowledge and finally; 3) the boundaries of the reason itself.

In fact, there are many broad concepts in Kant's entire moral philosophy that needs to be examined; therefore we will take a brief look at his key ethical categories in order to understand our intentions behind examining his philosophical insights concerning religion itself and particularly the relation between morality and religion. Mostly, here, we would be focusing on Kant's main ideas as

of goodwill, categorical imperative, Kant's conception of the highest good and after that we would like to consider Kant's views on freedom, good and evil principles and the notion of radical evil.

So, the initial notion of Kant's ethics is an autonomous goodwill, which he also calls an unconditional good. Goodwill is a prerequisite, the motive of a theoretical and practical choice of a person in the sphere of morality. It is the free choice of man, the source of human dignity, which separates him as a person from other beings of an intelligible world. (Kant, 2002: 9-21) However, in my view, such freedom also carries danger: since the will of man can be subordinated not only to reason, but also to feelings, therefore there cannot be a complete guarantee of moral actions. Moral development is necessary in the process of upbringing and self-education of a person, but, since it is impossible to envisage everything in life, according to Kant, people can be subjected to inclinations and aspirations for doing good and evil deeds. In order to explain the autonomy of goodwill Kant appeals to the concept of freedom. The concept of freedom in Kant is directly related to the notion of duty. Only duty gives the act a moral character, duty is the only moral motive. Kant in detail examines the notion of duty and considers the various types of human duty: duty to himself and duties of respect to others. (Kant, 2002: 9- 11). There are many desires in a person and Kant asks questions whether their execution would lead to happiness? Another complex problem is the happiness of another, because no one can force him to be happy and imagine what another person understands by this. Despite the complexity and sensitivity of the approach to happiness as the most important ethical category, Kant nevertheless examines it in detail and, ultimately, connects happiness with the human's virtues. (Silber, 1959: 190).

On the basis of a critical analysis of human's cognition and behavior, Kant tries to find a law of morality, which is subordinate to reason. He believes that if the reason and feelings are in harmony, then there is no conflict between them, otherwise the person should give preference to the reason. According to Kant, to act morally is to act reasonably, even if sometimes by coercion of will. Therefore, the principles of human behavior are never determined empirically, but always rely on the activity of reason and exist *a priori* and do not depend on experimental data.

Now, we must highlight some of Kant's achievements in moral philosophy as follows: 1) He created a deep, interesting ethical theory on the

basis of scientific generalization and respect for moral consciousness; 2) substantiated the thesis on autonomy of morality, which is valuable in itself and happens to be law, and not derived from external principles; 3) proposed a theoretical basis for the organization of a reasonable life of man, having formulated a moral law, which is obligatory for execution by every intelligent being; 4) justified in a new way the principle of the self-worth of each individual, which under no circumstances can be a means to achieve any goals whatsoever; 5) emphasized the importance of the interrelation between morality and scientific knowledge on the basis of unity of practical and theoretical reason (Wood and Guyer, 2005: 405- 478).

Kant proposed the concept of autonomous ethics, according to which the moral principles of a human being exist independently of the surrounding environment and must be inextricably linked with each other. He considered a human being as the highest worth in an intelligible world. Each person has a sense of dignity, which he carefully protects. But, another person also has his sense of dignity. Accordingly, a person has the freedom to choose actions in the context of understanding the feelings of another person. The thing is that Kant in *Religion* has developed the idea of ethical community where people are under the common laws of virtue and morality and Kant's proposed „moral religion“ would live and coexist altogether and would have done good deeds according to the sense of duty to himself and duties of respect to others (Kant, 2009: 109). However, in my view, this Kant's conception of an ethical community at first sight appears as *utopia*. To say that all human actions are evaluated based on the concepts of good and evil according to Kant is plausible. Therefore Kant, in order to understand human beings' behavior by means of the relation to another, had developed his concept of categorical imperative. The categorical imperative is a strict necessity for applying the basic principles that determine a human behavior. It commands us to act morally, no matter how these actions affect our personal well-being. Kant believes that we must be moral for the sake of morality and virtuous for the sake of virtue; the fulfillment of a debt is in itself the goal of a good behavior. Moreover, only such a person who does good not because of happy inclinations in his nature, but exclusively for reasons of duty, can be called completely moral; morality rather defeats such inclinations rather than going along with them, and among the incentives of virtuous action there should be no natural inclination to such deeds. The categorical imperative, which is

not prepossessed neither by the will of God or by the pursuit of happiness, but extracted by practical reason from its own depths, is possible only under the assumption of freedom and autonomy of our good will, and the irrefutable fact of its existence gives one the right to look at himself as a free and an independent doer.

In fact, Kant's moral philosophy is aimed at achieving happiness and the highest good. In this sense, Lance Simmons in his article entitled «Kant's Highest Good: Albatross, Keystone, Achilles Heel» asserts that:

The highest good lays at or near the surface of many of his ethical discussions. Concern for the highest good runs through all *Three Critiques*, and the highest good is the sustained focus of attention throughout the dialectic of pure practical reason in the *Critique of Practical Reason*. There is thus good reason to suppose that the highest good is at the heart of Kantian ethics. (Kant, 2009: 355).

The methods of the study

The study is based on both descriptive and theoretical analysis. Primary as well as secondary sources will be consulted, which include Kant's main works and the other books related to his philosophy of religion and moral philosophy, articles and the other published materials. The study will depend on the critical analysis of available sources.

Discussion and outcomes

I would like to highlight certain outcomes while exploring the relationship between morality and religion in Kant's critical philosophy. One of the points being, while discussing the questions on religion in many of Kant's work however invariable priority was given to morality where he also tried to prove the moral necessity of God's existence.

The first argument which I want to emphasize upon here is that in *Religion*, on the one hand, Kant proves the independence of moral dogmas from religion, on the other, affirms the obligation of recognizing the existence of God from the point of view of practical reason (Kant, 2009: 57). God was required not to dominate upon nature, but to serve as a kind of guarantee of moral demands in human's behavior such as *a complete change of heart*. (Kant, 2009: 57). Kant acquires that the content of religious consciousness is a concept of God as moral legislator and religion consists in the recognition by man of all his moral obligations as God's divine commandments. This opinion

is justified by Kant considering that, if a person comes to believe in the idea of God only through the concept of the highest good, and this concept is created by man only according to the requirements of a moral feeling. Practically, a man desires that virtuous life should be rewarded, and vice punished. But since, such desires of man are not actually realized, he also composes himself the idea of such a being that would fulfill his desire and, at least in the future, provide him with the necessary harmony between the moral ideal and reality. In fact, we can assume that the egoistic need is so strong in us that recognizing God's being for the satisfaction of this need is a moral necessity for one. But since, the mere acknowledgment of God's existence by man, in fact, provides only one simple opportunity like getting a reward for virtue, and then of course a man would not have such grounds of reward if he did not think to some extent that God was obligated to fulfill a mercenary desire of the human's heart. Therefore, we dare to say that a person is so blind in his absurd desire for happiness that if he really places this duty on God, representing the fulfillment of his moral obligations, as if he fulfills God's commandments in them. Such was Kant's reflections, at first sight it could be considered for the decisive denial of all religion.

Kant regards comprehension of man's moral duties as God's divine commandments, as normal and necessary product of pure practical reason, therefore, the existence of religion under such a form and the content of such idea is regarded as necessary expression of human life as the life of free and intelligent personality. A man at the same time must also visualize his moral obligations as God's divine commandments, and keep in his mind such an idea that God, perhaps, still does not exist, so that as a matter of fact, man's religious consciousness should be kept strictly towards not to recognizing his moral obligations for the real God's commandments, namely only to the representation of them as if they were valid God's commandments. (Bruxvoort Lipscomb and Krueger, 2010: 253-290)

The next point is not less significant as the intercourse of morality and religion becomes a fact, such that the notion of *faith* in Kant's critical philosophy for the first time receives the status of moral and authentic knowledge (Clewis, 2015: 365). Kant's intention was to find the conditions for universality and necessity in the sphere of experience and metaphysics as well. In the theoretical aspect, this is only a belief, and from the objective point of view insufficient knowledge. In order to clarify not

the accidental, but especially necessary character of *moral faith*, Kant has compared it with other kinds of faith. We shall give a brief definition here what moral faith is so that we would not be getting confused while discussing Kant's conceptions of faith. So, moral faith: it is not knowledge like experience and is not a speculation, that is, it does not try to justify ontologically anything, nor does it synthesize the object of experience. Behind it there are no subjective factors, but only a pure moral consciousness, proceeding from considerations of freedom and duty. Therefore, we can comprehend moral faith as free. It appeals to man, as to a free being capable of using his freedom in his interests as a free being. In the aspect of moral faith, a person falls out of the natural space and is transferred to the sphere of obligation that is freedom. The moral maxim demands from him the restriction of freedom in order to again and again assert itself as a free intelligent being; it does not require external compulsion, but self-coercion. Moral faith unconditionally assumes those absolute things that must exist, since there is a moral consciousness such as freedom, soul and God as an absolutely good holy being, as an unattainable limit of man's moral searches. Clewis has, meanwhile, as Kant indicated and justified in favor of the moral religion:

Kant assures his readers that the «yoke» of universal, moral religion is far lighter than that of «statutory law» imposed by the clergy in a typical church: whereas the former *frees* people to obey the moral law, the effect of the latter is «that conscience is burdened. (Clewis, 2015: 377).

In general, as we have already said, religion for Kant has no significance outside the moral field of life and human activity. All that which a person thinks of executing more to be pleasing to God except of good behavior in life, since it is mere simple religious deception and distorted service to God. True morality, according to Kant's theory, is an autonomous, independent and unconditional morality by claiming that morality in its content does not need another ground since it is self-sufficient. However, if this is so, then it is asked: how does Kant find a point of support that would allow coexistence of religion and morality simultaneously? How does Kant define religion as the recognition of all our duties? Does Kant contradict himself in this case, while supplying morality in dependence on religion, then declaring its independent and not needing any religion? To answer this question, one should not forget that Kant does not speak about what was and what is the moral among people at the present time, but about what kind of morality should be among

people. Kant does not at all reject that morality, as far as the human species knows his history, has always been dependent on religion; in contrary, he asserts only that such morals conditioned by religion, as it were, true morality.

So, with a view to look into the matter of Kant's doctrine of autonomous morality we need to once again have a look at it. Kant argued that the moral actions should not be estimated from the perspective of a single person's mind; it has to be done with the help of universal one. (Silber, 2012: 64). What is this common for all minds? It means that Kant's thoughts on universal wisdom are nothing more than an abstract concept, conceivable only for the philosophical discourse. Nevertheless, we presume that Kant was talking about the universal law which is presented in *Groundwork*, namely the very formula of the categorical imperative which is common for all mankind (Kant, 2002:37).

When Kant points to the *universal mind* as the judge of the moral actions of each person, it means that we must consider only those actions that are recognized by all humanity. But we cannot know the judgments of the whole of mankind. If we even admitted that anyone has learned about judgments made by all people that have lived up to now and are living now, it is certainly impossible to admit that he could know how people of future generations that are yet to come will judge the same actions. And if this autonomous reason is neither the mind of the person, nor the mind of the all, then what is it? This question could lead to the outcome that the human's reason would have been withdrawn from the higher principle, from the divine initial cause, and thus the autonomy of a man would have been united with that of theory of *theonomy*. That is, the principle of autonomy implies that a person acts independently, without any external influence whereas the principle of heteronomy means that a person acts according to external forces and influence. In religion, under such external influence, God is often understood. However, God is not an external force or an external factor, so the most adequate will be the principle of *theonomy* that declares that God's influence on us and our freedom are not opposite. In other words, they are occurring in different dimensions.

However, the judgment of most people is not yet an unmistakable, correct and obligatory judgment; they can also be selfish and immoral and can also easily err and mistake, like any single person. If, according to Kant, every individual can be so suppressed by sensuality that he becomes deaf to the requirements of the moral law, then how most of such people should be free from this oppression

of sensuality and how it will become responsive to the voice of conscience and moral requirements? Here again, we have to defend humans for the simple reason that we belong to the two worlds (world of appearances and things-in-themselves) simultaneously and this advantage allows us to act in accordance with both the morality and intuition. If radical evil, as Kant insists, is inherent in human's nature, without exception, how does all humanity or just a simple majority of people become free from its disastrous influence on the purity of moral behavior and on judgments about moral actions? In this matter, history repeatedly shows us how often humanity has been mistaken and how it has sometimes been unfair for plenty of people to treat individuals. Especially it should be said about phenomena in the moral field.

Since Kant denied the necessity of religious justification of morality, his ethics turned out to be one of the stages in the development of free thinking of the eighteenth century. The principle of Kant's autonomy of ethics is a continuation of the enlightenment criticism of religion initiated by Hume who came forward with the assertion that ethics do not need religious sanction. (Winegar, 2015: 888). However, proclaiming morality as autonomous in relation to religion, Kant could not hold this view consistently. In his views, on the relation between morality and religion, two tendencies are revealed: firstly, he emphasizes the complete autonomy of morality, the independence of its justification from faith and creeds; secondly, on the contrary, he promotes the need for faith in God – however, not solely to justify morality itself, its laws and decrees, only to establish and justify a belief in the existence of a moral order in the world.

So, Kant had not fulfilled his plan of the theory of autonomous ethics to the end. He only limited the authority of religion, but did not at all renounce the religious faith. Kant's God is no longer the legislator of morality, not the source of the moral law and it does not proclaim this law directly. (Bruxvoort Lipscomb and Krueger, 2010: 23-47). Only he considers the cause of the moral order in the world. Without this order, the moral pattern of action and bliss would remain uncoordinated. Even the postulate of immortality, taken for granted, does not fully guarantee, according to Kant, the reality of the moral order of the world. Immortality opens only the possibility of harmony between moral dignity and the corresponding good, but not the necessity of this harmony.

It is theoretically possible to imagine a world in which the souls of people are immortal, but nevertheless, even in the afterlife there is no

correspondence between the inclination and the moral law and between the highly ethical mode of action and bliss. The real complete guarantee of the reality of the moral order in the world can be, according to Kant, only a God who arranged the world in such a way that in the long run its act will be in harmony with the moral law and it will be necessary to receive retribution in the afterlife. At any rate, the existence of God which is not proved by any arguments of theoretical reason however is a necessary postulate of practical reason.

By presenting proofs which are in favor of the autonomy of morality, reinterpreting philosophical terms and concepts used by Kant can be confusing since he highlights that the notion of autonomy is spontaneity itself. (Silber, 2012: 75).

So here we have tried to reconsider the grounds submitted by Kant, yet logically and sequentially we try to reveal them, then, it turns out that they are more in favor of theonomy than human's autonomy since the requirements of the moral law, must be executed for the sake of and out of respect for the law itself, which is conceivable only if this law is not alien to the will. Thus, Kant rejects the doctrine of the dependence of morality on religion on the grounds that a moral law must not be alien to the human will. In order to keep apart God's existence as the legislator of moral laws, Kant has recognized the general legislative will as being identical with practical reason. Only an intelligent being has the ability to act in accordance with the concept of the law, that is, according to principles or will and if fulfilling actions by laws requires reason, then this will is nothing more than practical reason. Kant has indicated, an apparent self-contradiction in the relationship between religion and morality since the connection between them must be recognized only at the beginning of the moral development of human consciousness, and that is why the religion itself is defined only as the recognition of all our duties as the divine commandments. This self-contradiction has appeared in the fact that Kant negatively treated morality, derived from religion that is theological morality. The moral law is laid in reason of a man, and it is he who testifies the being of God. Morality consists in following a duty and suppressing in itself the inclinations contradicting this duty. If I act in accordance with the moral law, but do not overcome myself at the same time, i.e. if I act according to my inclination and inner impulse, my actions are only legal, but do not have moral dignity. With such a statement of the question, for instance, the canon «love your neighbor as yourself» ceases to be the driving force of morality. Meanwhile, in the

gospels the commandment of «love your neighbor as yourself» is one of the most important thesis. Duty and love do not reconcile with each other: we cannot love for debt. However, this contradiction cannot be considered as solely due to the religious form of morality. This contradiction is caused by life itself; religion gave only its interpretation of the historically arisen discrepancy between duty, inclination for virtue and happiness, immutability of morality of demands, personal interest and free choice of solutions.

Only with the further development of the moral self-consciousness of man, religion must lose its significance; a person must be morally good in respect to the moral law, therefore, should become autonomous and independent of religion or any other motives than the requirements of the moral law inherent in the very spiritual human's nature.

So, from all that has been said above, we dare to say that it is clear that autonomous morality is impossible and that in reality morality is always in close internal connection with religion, so that on the one hand true religiosity must necessarily be moral, that is, it must be accompanied by the fulfillment of all the requirements of the moral law, on the other hand, the true, not egoistic, morality must necessarily be religious, that is, it must be based on the principles of religion, subject to the highest religious authority as the cause of the existence and the moral law in the spiritual man's nature. And this close inner connection, in which there is a relationship between religion and morality, does not give us any right to segregate these two different areas in the spiritual life of human species, and I think that Kant was a bit wrong, defining religion only as the recognition of our moral obligations.

Religion and morality are, in fact, so different among themselves that it is unjustifiable to confuse or determine them for one who has not been blinded by any preconceived and one-sided false philosophical worldview. They are different between themselves 1) in their objects, 2) in the spiritual abilities of humans, which are especially manifested in them, and 3) in their general nature. (Adler, 1902: 162-195). The main object of our all moral aspirations of man is to recognize the good, the fulfillment of which corresponds to the basic requirements of our moral law; in the field of moral activity, the will of one is manifested primarily as an ability that encourages us to choose between good and evil principles and to actually execute one or another of our intentions, as an ability to initiate in our activities. Religion is not limited to one's will, but it embraces everything

like our spiritual strengths and abilities as reason, good will and heart. Finally, religious feelings have the same special and independent character as all our other feelings such as aesthetic, moral and intellectual.

But if the connection between religion and morality is so clear to everyone that there is no serious reason for specifying them, whence, it is asked, could have arisen the very thought ascribing morality an autonomous meaning? The only true answer to this question, I claim can be the lasting philosophical continuity that the thinkers who have assimilated to themselves such false and tendentious philosophical deliberations that the faith in the existence of a personal God or, at least, in the divine understanding about the world and human species are still there.

In reality, the Kantian revolution in the understanding of religion begins in his *First Critique*, namely, in the *Dialectic of Pure Reason*, where he at first sight does not recognize God, the immortality of the soul and free will as objects of theoretical knowledge or objects of possible experience, but views them as *ideas* of the reason itself, i.e. as concepts that are problematic for speculative reason (Kant, 2007: 378). Their problematic nature is due to the lack of appropriate sensory contemplations, without which it is not possible to theoretically verify the reality of objects. Since, these ideas are excluded from the sphere of theoretical knowledge, they can be consistently thought of as objects of practical application of reason. The ideas of reason acquire practical reality through humans' freedom and lead us into the realm of intelligible being. In the *Second Critique*, these ideas are given the status of postulates of pure practical reason leading to a moral interpretation of religion. So, what is the revolutionary change in the understanding of religion? (Kant, 2002: 163). It can be expressed in the form of the following questions. Does morality need religion? What is the purpose of religion itself? Kant has answered that in his treatise *Religion* where *every* question on all previous European moral philosophy have been turned around, while trying to seek a basis for morality in religion. Here, we shall reiterate Kant's statement:

Hence on its own behalf morality in no way needs religion (whether objectively, as regard willing, or subjectively, as regards capability) but is rather self-sufficient by virtue of practical reason. (Kant, 2009: 33).

From the point of view of pure practical reason, laws oblige our will through only one *form of*

universal legitimacy of maxims, and therefore it does not need absolutely no material for determining grounds. The moral law, open in the humans' reason, serves as a reliable basis for choosing the maxims of behavior. However, herewith the question arises: is a person able to independently follow these chosen maxims; is he strong enough to be a moral being? Ultimately, can a person be free without God's help? We have to draw attention to the fact that the reason requires us to be free and moral beings; wherein these requirements have the form of imperatives such as *you ought to*. Are these requirements of the reason groundless? Recognizing their groundlessness, it means doubting on man's very ability to be a reasonable creature as well. Consequently, these requirements can either be softened referring to the *weakness of the human heart* and the *fragility of humans' nature* according to the principle *you ought to do* only what you can do or hope for divine assistance that will make up for the lack of will power available to man. Moreover, all nature as a material unity is in continuous formation and constant creation, and hereupon, the nature of man is also created by the efforts of man himself, his reason and will.

Now we can see why Kant insisted on the autonomy of the will which means a person's ability to spontaneously design his nature according to the laws of freedom in order to improve it. What principle should a free will obey: its own moral law or divine will? For that matter, we shall say that in relation to religion, Kant applies a general practical requirement: it should not deceive us, that is, its statements must not contradict our reason. It is in religion, which is related to the supersensible being of man, that there are most temptations and risky attempts to give out the probable for the real, impossible for the possible, unknowable for the secret knowledge, since for a long time the religious faith has tried to oppose reason and even tried to raise above it. If we want to recognize religion as necessary for the ultimate, mortal rational being, we must exclude from it any deception and delusion that our reason cannot agree with.

Conclusion

So after discussing the relation between morality and religion, a number of focal questions has been raised such as where do we know what the will of God is? Does our action correspond to its higher will or not? For what purpose does man fulfill the divine command? It should be noted that a number of these questions lead us to the Kantian line of thought,

which is aimed at finding the source of all human obligations, and thereby, of freedom. Primitively speaking, if God's law is only an objective principle of the application of freedom, that God wants it, and if a person should obey God only because God wants this obedience, then such obedience should be deprived of any possible moral and legal basis; then, the basis of this freedom would be God's irresistible will. Who wants to obey the God's will only because of its omnipotence, one can do good not because God wants good, it means, not disinterestedly, but with a view to either hope of personal bliss given from above, or fear of possible punishment, i.e. a certain corollary of consequence. In this case we are dealing with the conditional imperative of human behavior, which has its object of hope for bliss or fear of punishment. Such an imperative will always depend on the external condition, namely, on the omnipotence and omniscience of God, without which one will not be sure of his own strength and his own rightness.

Is God's omnipotence and omniscience a credible position for our reason? In a material world, all phenomena are subject to the laws of nature, and in an intelligible world we know only the moral law. Therefore, we are not only unable to experience the omnipotence and omniscience of God, but we must also abandon it in the intelligible sphere, since this concept contradicts human freedom, and therefore moral law. Therefore, we are of the opinion that Kant, being a man of his time, could not openly acknowledge the contradictoriness of divine omnipotence, but his limitation of God's will by means of a moral law directly points to this. From this it follows that morality as an action that desires good for the sake of good is completely independent of the possible existence and possible will of God, and also of all religion. Such a conclusion does not mean that religion is not needed at all. With this, we felt that Kant would have never agreed. But the necessity and usefulness of religion arises from the very morality; from that ultimate goal that pure practical reason has. The function of religion in Kant's moral philosophy depends on the function that the highest good has (Collins, 1977: 157-180). If the highest good has the necessary function for motivating towards moral actions, then religion is central to morality. The highest good is an element that establishes the relationship between morality and religion. Indeed, the theory of the highest good, which is considered by Kant in the *Groundwork* and in the *Second Critique*, leads us to the recognition of the existence of God or religion itself.

Kant gives a moral proof of the existence of God, which in our view, is not a *demonstration of the existence of God, but only a demonstration of the need to accept this being*. This proof is nothing more than a confirmation of the foundation of faith, and therefore has only moral certainty. It all adds up to that faith in God does not contain the assertion of its existence, and can regard its being only as a postulate of pure practical reason. The postulate of the existence of God as the moral creator of the world allows us to reconcile the kingdom of nature with the kingdom of freedom in order to think about the possibility of the common good. We can think of the idea of God and the idea of a highest good beyond the limits of a possible experience, notwithstanding that they do not have theoretical certainty.

There is another sort of a moral revolution in religion which Kant outlined in his *Religion*. He expresses a profound idea on the possibility of a radical transformation or change in the way people think, who decided to become morally good. Such a person, according to Kant, no longer needs any other motives than the idea of duty, and this decision:

That so long as the foundation of the maxims of the human being remains impure, cannot be affected through gradual *reform* but must rather be effected through a revolution in the disposition of the human being (a transition to the maxim of holiness of disposition). And so «a new man» can come about only through a kind of rebirth, as it were a new creation (John, 3:5, compare with Genesis 1:2) and a change of a heart. (Kant, 2009: 168)

So, from this passage a question arises as to how should a person act if he wants to be part of morality? The answer is clear that one acts morally

when a person elevates his law of deeds before duty to man and mankind. Morality must be universal and universally valid that is, it has to have the form of a law. I must always act only in such a way that my desire for transforming my personal principle (my maxim) convert into a universal law. We can therefore understand Kant's justification of the concept of good will (it is autonomous, does not depend on either faith in God or fear of punishment) as a postulate of practical reason.

However, the ultimate goal of practical reason is not the preservation and development of the conflict between theoretical and practical objects, but bringing its sides into harmony in no way without compromises of freedom, which is possible, if only we are admitting the highest good that removes all the contradictions of earthly reality. In turn, the fulfillment of duty necessarily requires acknowledgment of the existence of the cause of the highest good. So we come to a rational concept of the existence of God. That God exists for our reasoning with moral necessities, although theoretically speaking it is a hypothesis or an arbitrary assumption of his existence. The notion of the supreme good and God as the source of the highest good refers to the field of hope as a necessary moral concept of pure reason as well. Practically, hope here is not an accidental psychological state and not a timid assumption, but a specific concept, the reality of reason, determined by our moral duty. In any case, the highest good is attainable only in an intelligible world with the assumption of the immortality of the soul and God's being; therefore, the moral law through the concept of the highest good inevitably leads to religion.

References

- Benjamin J. Bruxvoort Lipscomb and James Krueger. Kant's Moral Metaphysics: God, Freedom, and Immortality. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 2010.
- Clewis, Robert R. Reading Kant's Lectures. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2015.
- Collins, James. «Functions of Kant's philosophy of religion.» *The Monist*, Vol. 60, No. 2, Philosophy and Religion in the 19th Century. Oxford University Press, 1977, pp. 157-180.
- Hume, David. *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 1854. Hume, David. *The Natural History of Religion*. London, 1889.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Practical Reason*. Translated by Lewis White Beck, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing, 1956.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Practical Reason*. Translated by Werner S. Pluhar, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2002.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason*. Translated by Marcus Weigelt based on the translation by Max Muller, Penguin Books, 2007.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*. Translated and edited by Allen W. Wood with essays by J. B. Schneewind, Marcia Baron, Shelly Kagan, Allen W. Wood, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason and other writings*. Edited by Allen Wood and George de Giovanni. Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Kant, Immanuel. *Religion within the Bounds of Bare Reason*. Translated by Werner S. Pluhar, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2009.

R. Silber, John. «The Metaphysical Importance of the Highest Good as the Canon of Pure Reason in Kant's Philosophy.» *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, Vol. 1, No. 2, University of Texas Press, 1959, pp. 233-244.

Silber, John. *Kant's Ethics: The Good, Freedom, and the Will*. Boston/Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2012.

The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant: Notes and Fragments. Translated by Curtis Bowman, Paul Guyer, Frederick Rauscher. UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Winegar, Reed. «Kant's criticisms of Hume's Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion.» *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 23, No. 5, Fordham University, 2015, pp. 888–910.