

THEORY AND PRACTICE IN KANT'S MORAL  
AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

by

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P R E F A C E

For the student who desires insight into the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, there is certainly no dearth of information, discussion or commentary from which to proceed. The various aspects of Kant's thought - theory of knowledge, moral and political philosophy, philosophy of history, philosophy of religion, etc. - have preoccupied many scholars from the time that Kant's books were published for the first time right up to the present.

However, the unity of Kant's philosophy, though pointed to by others, has not been investigated to the best of my knowledge, specifically in terms of the principle of rational striving as the underlying common factor in the several areas of human experience explored by Kant. The specific problem of theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy can be seen in its proper perspective when viewed from the standpoint of the principle of rational striving.

It was/.....

It was my primary intention not only to show the unity of Kant's thought in terms of the principle of striving but to show that this principle is essential to a clear understanding of Kant's concept of Practice, both in the moral and political dimensions. This approach afforded me the opportunity to analyse Kant's moral and political philosophy in terms of an essentially practical perspective - the striving of the imperfectly rational but free individual towards the creation of a rational mode of existence.

For this particular perspective I am indebted to Professor G.A. Rauche's paper "Das Menschenbild Kants", presented to the 4th International Kant Congress in Mainz, Germany in 1974. This paper provided the stimulus for my own approach to Kant's moral and political philosophy in terms of the principle of rational striving. I would like to express my appreciation to Professor Rauche, who supervised this research, for the philosophical insights that he shared with me and the guidance he afforded me. I have had the benefit of his valuable advice not only for the duration of my study but for the entire period of our acquaintance.

It is/....

It is also my great pleasure to thank my husband for his encouragement and the assistance, both intellectual and emotional, that he rendered me throughout my period of study. To friends who offered me encouragement and various forms of assistance, I express my sincere thanks. I would also like to thank Miss Sushie Munsamy and Mrs. Rita Balkishun for typing the draft manuscript and Mrs. Theresa Venkatrathnam for typing the manuscript.

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C H A P T E R   O N E

INTRODUCTION

"When today we oppose 'practice' to 'theory', we usually have in mind lived life as opposed to abstract ideas, or else man's acting as opposed to his 'mere' thinking and reflecting." <sup>1</sup> This traditional contrast between theory and practice contains a value judgement that is loaded in favour of "practice" as being down-to-earth and useful as contrasted with the merely peripheral status of "theory" viewed as being synonymous with abstraction or even uselessness. As Kant himself pointed out, the superficiality of such a simplistic contrast of theory and practice is dangerous as a depreciation of the determinant value of rational reflection in our lives.

It is more fruitful to view "theory" and "practice" as referring to the relationship between how men think and act, a relationship which provides us with an illuminating framework from which to view many problems in morality and politics. Such problems are not always merely academic exercises but

existential dilemmas/...

existential dilemmas which can confront us at some time or other in our lives. Moral decision-making and conduct are realities which all men experience even though we may become conscious of ourselves as moral personalities only in times of crisis. At the same time, we co-exist within political communities and are, as citizens, all affected by political decision-making and practice, even though we may not, for various reasons, participate in political processes, or feel that the effect of our participation is negligible.

The fact that, as social beings, we inhabit a moral and political context means that we engage in reflections and conduct which affect each other. Within such a context, the problem of defining the nature and extent of human freedom inevitably arises, not only as a theoretical issue but as an agreement for co-existence. It is, however, a fact, perhaps a truism, that no principle of freedom whether theoretical or actual remains immune to continual rational reflection and criticism. As the essential issue in the spheres of both morality and politics, the principle of freedom can be seen as the common goal both of theory and practice.

Theory has/....

"Theory" has been interpreted as having many different meanings or emphases. It can be taken primarily as that which pertains to man's "thinking" or "reflecting" but not necessarily in the sense of that which simply refers to a man's thoughts about, for example, how to make more money. The kind of reflections envisaged in this instance refer to man's "thinking and reflecting" about the ends or aims of life or about the content of "Truth" or the "Good", or about the meaning of "reality". In this sense, it confronts the "theoria" of Aristotle which pertains to the contemplation of the divine and the eternal in the universe, (knowledge for the sake of knowledge) and looks to, for example, Habermas' view of theory as providing the framework for critique (of individual and social status quo positions), as well <sup>as</sup> being "action-oriented" <sup>2</sup> i.e., directed towards establishing the alternative society.

On the other hand, "practice" can be taken to stand, not for the full range of everyday routine activities but that activity which aims at the establishment of moral or social or political goals or alternatives on the basis of some perceived deficiencies in the status quo. In this sense, it is akin to the  
concept of/.....

concept of practice used by Aristotle who is given credit as the first thinker "explicitly to contrast 'theory' and 'practice'." <sup>3</sup> It refers also specifically to "rational and purposeful human conduct"<sup>4</sup> in the realm of moral and political activity. The relationship between "theory" and "practice", then, can be taken to stand for the relationship between theoretical analysis of or rational reflection on moral and political ends, and the possibilities of conduct to achieve such ends.

Although analysis isolates the various strands of the concepts of theory and practice and in this way sets them apart, within the larger context of reality there is a constant interaction of idea and act. Just as man's relationship to the world is not passive in that he both changes his world and is transformed by it, so too there is an essential dynamism in the relationship between theory and practice, so that both are transformed in the process of interaction. This dynamism in the final analysis defies total description or intellectual control since it is an ongoing process.

Lobkowitz argues/.....

Lobkowitz argues that he suspects that "there does not exist anything resembling a genuine history of theory and practice",<sup>5</sup> so that he is dealing only with the history of the ideas of theory and practice, i.e. the "theory of theory and practice."<sup>6</sup> This is only true in the sense that there appears to be no historical instance of the details of any actual deliberate practice corresponding to the details of any actual theory. This, however, does not exclude the possibility that specific kinds of purposive activities have an undoubted theoretical foundation, or that the outlines of a theory may be adapted to a specific historical situation or for a specific purpose, and that the theory itself as such no longer retains the exact intellectual definition visualised by its creator but is transformed by the needs of the situation. The question of the perversion of theory and its unfortunate consequences in practice, can most legitimately be raised, but the point is that theory of some kind remains and fulfils the function of providing a framework of ideas which encompasses activity. In this sense there is a constant dialectic between theories and practices within the context of actual historical situations. Cases in point are the theory and practice of religious systems or political systems where/.....

systems where, for various reasons, practice does not correspond in every detail with theory as visualised by its creator, but where, nevertheless, theory forms a general framework within which practice occurs.

Kant's own view of "theory" and "practice" and "theoretical" and "practical" philosophy is a unique one which derives its originality from the methodological foundations of the Critical Philosophy. More specifically, the concept of theory and practice in his moral and political philosophy emerges as one of several theory/practice relationships in the Critical Philosophy as a whole. In each instance, Kant conceived of a fundamental and necessary relationship between theory and practice.

In this thesis, we propose to make a critical analysis of theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy. The method that we intend to follow is to use the principle of rational striving as the basis of our analysis on the assumption that this principle can be used to bring out the coherence of Kant's philosophy in general and the position of his moral and political philosophy in particular.

It will/....

It will be argued in this thesis that the exact status of theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy can only be set into focus in terms of the concept of a striving reason whose activity, powers and limitations Kant explores through several areas of human experience.

The notion of moral and political duty cannot be divorced from issues like Kant's resolution of the problem of metaphysics, his teleological view of nature and history, or his concept of rational religion. This being the case, our investigation into theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy in terms of

- (a) exposition of the basic ideas of his moral and political philosophy;
- (b) consideration of some of the strengths and deficiencies of his view;
- (c) assessment of the practical character of his theory,

is conducted on the basis of an analysis of Kant's critical explorations as a whole. In addition, the principle of rational striving is seen both as the factor which unifies the different areas of Kant's enquiry as well as delineating the concept of moral and political duty.

When actively/....

When actively involved in the dynamics of "doing" or "living" or "acting", the actual compatibility or otherwise of one's ideas and any directly related conduct may be the least of one's concerns, since various factors which may or may not be under the agent's control determine one's conduct, apart from the desirability of making one's conduct in a specific instance accord with one's theory of conduct for that instance. One of the problems arising from this issue revolves around the assumption that the sole determining principle in making conduct accord with a "rational" or "correct" or "good" theory is the appropriate act of will on the part of the agent. This view is, to some extent, based on a simplification of reality since it ignores the complexity of factors or circumstances within which individuals have to think and act.

The absence of an all things being equal situation, where the individual is in command of the situation, recognises different alternatives and has the strength to make the correct response, which is usually what characterises many concrete situations, makes the prescribed compatibility of theory and practice difficult, if not impossible. The demand for  
compatibility is/....

compatibility is a view that also presupposes that the alternatives for conduct in a specific situation are clear-cut and clearly visible to the agent, disregarding the possibility that ambiguity and confusion rather than sheer ill-will may prevent the agent from making the correct voluntaristic response of a mature, morally responsible and enlightened agent able to act on the basis of rationally chosen principles.

Kant's treatment of this issue marks the process of his own coming to terms with it as a problem that gained in complexity as he traces the striving of reason from the sphere of knowledge and ultimately to its confrontation with the divine in the sphere of religion. Kant attempted to base his final view of the moral agent and his true capacities and limitations on a clear perception of the many real difficulties facing man in his choice of motives and conduct.

This is only one of the difficulties associated with the problem of making practice accord with theory in actual acting situations. In a situation of contemplation or reflection, however, it appears in order, philosophically speaking, to prescribe or expect some degree of compatibility between theory and practice./...

and practice. This raises the interesting issue of whether, or to what extent, the problem of theory and practice is a philosopher's problem or a mere theoretical concern. This aspect will be taken up again in the last chapter.

However, if we regard the problem of theory and practice as being also the problem of justifying the existence of philosophy itself (philosophy and theory seen as a methodological framework, rationally constituted and used to interpret, criticise or transform reality), then we can formulate it as the problem of the relationship between wisdom (or truth or knowledge) and conduct, between philosophy (as theoretical reflection on truth) and actuality (the sphere of our practical activities). If "practice" is taken to refer to purposeful moral and political activity, we can postulate a significant relationship between "practice" and "actuality" by viewing "practice" as the means by which to transform "actuality" according to one's aims, thus attaining to reality or that condition sought by man as constituting his authentic being.

With reference to Kant's own understanding of the relationship between reality, actuality and truth,

Rauche draws/.....

Rauche draws our attention to the fact that Kant's conception arises from the methodological foundations of Kant's own critical perspective. "Reality, i.e., transcendental reality, is the result of the constitution by the mind of the world of experience. It is the limited functional world of man's understanding and knowledge. Truth, on the other hand, is the a priori world of rational faith .... Actuality is the process of man's striving towards truth, by which process man is led to take a decision and to move from the world as it is, i.e., from transcendental reality...to the world as it ought to be, in which the Ding-an-sich reveals itself and in which true reality is found."<sup>7</sup> Both transcendental reality as well as actuality are meant to be transcended by means of truth in order to achieve authentic reality. The problem of whether in fact, this process can be a concrete possibility for man will be taken up again later in this thesis as one of the fundamental problems confronting Kant's moral and political philosophy.

Within the history of philosophy, philosophers have had varying conceptions of the relationship between theory and practice, even though the problem may not have been formulated in such specific terms and also/.....

and also keeping in mind that "philosophy", "theory", "reality", and "practice" have all been variously interpreted. Plato, for example, attempted to establish a fundamental relationship between knowledge and virtue. Good conduct is based not on ignorance nor opinion nor pretence of knowledge but on true knowledge which can be seen to possess a normative or regulative status.

In the Middle Ages, despite the more limited conception of the role of philosophy (reason) in the face of the comprehensive status of theology (faith), the problem of the relationship between theoretical or philosophical insights and theological ends or a Christian life was, nevertheless, a live issue. Augustine did not even go so far as to make a distinction between the value of theoretical speculation as an end in itself and the ends of Christianity. The function of reason or the theoretical intellect, in co-operation with faith, will and grace, is to bring man to a unified Christian wisdom.

Thomas Aquinas' creative re-thinking of Aristotelianism within a Christian context also indicates a conception that sees a valid role for philosophy. Although Thomas maintained a more radical distinction between philosophy and theology than

Augustine had/....

Augustine had envisaged, he did make provision for the validity of philosophical insights within the context of Christian life by maintaining that correctly argued philosophical principles would, in fact, be compatible with the facts of revelation. In the final analysis, the relationship between theory and practice in the mediaeval context is the relationship between knowledge i.e., rational insight into revelation and faith i.e., accepting or striving for the truth of revelation through love.

The possibility for philosophy to attain to truths independent of theology, attested to by Thomas himself, is postulated with renewed vigour in the 17th and 18th centuries, especially within the context of the spectacular development of physical science. In fact, the boundaries between science and philosophy at this point are not very clearly defined - an ambiguity which is indicative of the specific conception of the nature and function of philosophy held by men like Bacon (who was actually anti-theoretical if "theory" meant useless speculative knowledge) who desired the "restriction of philosophy to the study of nature,..."<sup>8</sup> The relationship between philosophy and the practical concerns of the time is well illustrated by a study of the central themes of modern philosophy - Nature and Man coupled with the rise of/...

rise of science - as opposed to the theocentricity of mediaeval philosophy. The knowledge obtained from a scientific study of nature could be, for man, the key to effective control over his material conditions of existence. The Platonic knowledge is virtue gives way to the Baconian knowledge is power. Philosophy (a specific conception thereof) is assured of a role in the transformation of the material world on the basis of increasing knowledge of this world. Of this period, Copleston writes about the mood of "optimistic confidence in the power of the philosophical mind."<sup>9</sup> Physical science has "not yet so completely dominated the scene as to produce in many minds the suspicion, or even the conviction, that philosophy can add nothing to our factual knowledge of reality. Or to put the matter in another way, if philosophy has ceased to be the handmaid of theology, it has not yet become the charwoman of science." <sup>10</sup>

The philosophers of the Enlightenment continue the attitude of confidence in the power of reason and philosophy to cope with the problems of reality, within the context of the new themes of intellectual pre-occupation - Man and Society. The role of philosophy is seen specifically in terms of the function of  
enlightenment/.....

enlightenment i.e., bringing man to a state of rational maturity on the basis of which he could effectively order his moral life as well as his social and political circumstances.

Kant, in spite of his warnings as to the danger and folly of overconfidence in the power of reason and the subsequent limitations he imposed on theoretical reason, nevertheless, shares in the spirit of the age. Enlightenment is an important aim of the philosophical enquiry into the a priori principles of knowledge and morality. But enlightenment for Kant is more than mere intellectual progression. It marks a practical ontological shift, a movement from moral immaturity, from "laziness and cowardice" <sup>11</sup> to freedom and autonomy based on rational self-reflection. Consequently, both theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy are aimed towards enlightenment. The principle of practical reason which Kant believes ought to regulate moral and political conduct is essentially a principle of enlightenment.

Kant elaborated a very distinct conception of theoretical and practical philosophy. In fact, the fundamental principles of the Critical philosophy rest

on the /.....

on the Kantian distinction between theoretical and practical reason. How did this distinction arise? In the face of the claims of Wolffian speculative metaphysics on the one hand and the successes of the natural sciences on the other, the Kantian dilemma was to make possible the co-existence of the theoretical objective certainty of science and the genuine human impulse to metaphysics which would preserve the integrity of ethics. Kant's resolution of the problem <sup>12</sup> is based on his distinction between theoretical and practical reason, his restriction of the former to the phenomenal realm and his assertion of the primacy of the latter in governing our moral existence. In fact, the limitations of the one point to the activity of the other. In this way, the theoretical validity of the sciences is unchallenged while ensuring the authenticity of moral principles. Theory and practice, then, point to two different aspects of the function of Reason.

Within the context of the Critical Philosophy, "practice" in no way refers to actual moral conduct or even to pragmatic conduct, but rather to the sphere of practical reason where the moral law (given by reason) governs all acts. Whereas for Aristotle, "practice" referred only/....

referred only to purposive human acts directed towards happiness, for Kant it meant the free act of an autonomous, self-legislating subject acting, not for the sake of happiness, but out of respect for the moral law. "Practice" refers to the sphere of the rationally given moral ought. As such, it is not a mere description of one kind of act or several kinds of acts both moral and non-moral. It is, rather, a theory about authentic acting or rational practice. "Practice" refers to the rationally necessary or obligatory act. As such, it constitutes the theoretical ideal on which actual moral conduct must pattern itself. The only authentic unconditional basis and criterion for moral acts is the moral law of practical reason.

What has emerged so far are two theory/practice relationships in Kant's philosophy:

- (a) the relationship between theoretical reason (knowledge) and practical reason (morality).
- (b) the intended relationship between his theory of rational moral practice and actual practice.

In addition, Kant postulates another - that between morality and politics, with morality viewed as  
the theory/.....

the theory on which politics as practice must be founded. There can be no authentic political conduct apart from the principles of moral theory. This enables us to make a further distinction between ideal political practice (theory of political practice) and actual political practice.

Kant himself made several observations on theory and practice in different contexts. Distinguishing between knowledge and morality, he states that the sciences, "if they can be termed rational at all, must contain elements of a priori cognition, and this cognition may stand in a two-fold relation to its object. Either it may have to determine the conception of the object - which must be supplied extraneously, or it may have to establish its reality. The former is theoretical, the latter practical, rational cognition."<sup>13</sup> Elsewhere in the first Critique he argued: "It may be sufficient ... to define theoretical knowledge or cognition as knowledge of that which is, and practical knowledge as knowledge of that which ought to be. In this view, the theoretical employment of reason is that by which I cognize a priori (as necessary) that something is, while the practical is that by which I cognize a priori what ought to happen." <sup>14</sup>

In an/.....

In an essay entitled specifically On the Common Saying: 'This may be true in Theory, but it does not apply in Practice', Kant is concerned both to explicate the difference between theory and practice as well as to criticise those who consider theory to be unnecessary and superfluous and worse, those who maintain only the abstract theoretical value of theory as opposed to what really happens in practice. Of theory and practice he writes: "A collection of rules, even of practical rules, is termed a theory if the rules concerned are envisaged as principles of a fairly general nature, and if they are abstracted from numerous conditions which, nonetheless, necessarily influence their practical application. Conversely, not all activities are called practice, but only those realisations of a particular purpose which are considered to comply with certain generally conceived principles of procedure." <sup>15</sup> Kant takes great pains to point out that any theory "founded on the concept of duty"<sup>16</sup> could never be a merely abstract ideal with respect to practice because "it would not be a duty to strive after a certain effect of our will if this effect were impossible in experience..."<sup>17</sup>

Theory, then, has a fundamental relation to practice. In fact, Kant goes on to argue that moral practice gains/....

practice gains in value to the extent that it is compatible with theory as formulated by reason. "... the canon of reason is related to practice in such a way that the value of the practice depends entirely upon its appropriateness to the theory it is based on; all is lost if the empirical (hence contingent) conditions governing the execution of the law are made into conditions of the law itself, so that a practice calculated to produce a result which previous experience makes probable is given the right to dominate a theory which is in fact self-sufficient."<sup>18</sup> This necessary dependence of practice on a "self-sufficient" (i.e., formulated by reason and independent of experience) theory, Kant postulates for three realms of moral activity - that of the individual person, in the relations between persons within a state and finally with respect to the "welfare of the human race as a whole..."<sup>19</sup>

Kant also wrote of the necessity to effect a meaningful connection between theory and practice and postulated an act of judgment as the link. "It is obvious that no matter how complete the theory may be, a middle term is required between theory and practice, providing a link and a transition from one to the other. For a concept of the understanding, which contains the/....

contains the general rule, must be supplemented by an act of judgement whereby the practitioner distinguishes instances where the rule applies from those where it does not." <sup>20</sup>

In the Critique of Judgement Kant, with reference to "practice" itself, distinguishes between the technically-practical and the morally-practical. Here, he makes it clear that the former, far from belonging to practical philosophy proper, refers to principles which "belong to theoretical philosophy (natural science), whereas those morally-practical alone form the second part, that is, practical philosophy (ethical science.)" <sup>21</sup> The technically-practical is no more than the "practical" aspect of theoretical philosophy in so far as it consists of rules of art or skill "directed to producing an effect which is possible according to natural concepts of causes and effects." <sup>22</sup> The morally-practical on the other hand is the "truly" practical insofar as it does not rest on determination by any rule of nature (as in the theoretical sphere) but is "founded entirely on the concept of freedom,..." <sup>23</sup>

The "practical", then, is no more than the sphere of the moral ought, and the primacy of the practical is the primacy of moral theory or the moral ideal

as the/....



as the product of practical reason. The function of rationally formulated moral theory is enlightenment, liberation, moral reform. Reason or theory as the product of reason is seen not only as a principle of freedom. It is, for all practical purposes, a principle of liberation geared towards an active freeing of man from the various limitations of immaturity, sensuous egoism, laziness and so on. Freedom, envisaged by Kant as the achievement of authenticity, has nothing to do with historical necessity, humanitarian sentiment or pragmatic need. It is a goal determined by the very being of man as a subject who can employ his rational capacity to strive towards a moral existence. This being the defining character of being human, liberation becomes a practical demand of human existence. Actual practice - what men actually do in concrete situations, while having no bearing on the formulation of moral theory, must take its cue from moral reason in the natural drive to transcend the limitations perceived in any situation.

Needless to say, several aspects of Kant's view of theory and practice are highly problematic. For example, a view of "practice" as referring to the morally ideal as given by reason ("Practice simply is the necessary happenings of the ideal order" <sup>24</sup>)

poses difficulties/....

poses difficulties, not so much because of Kant's specific understanding of practice (we can, for "practice", simply read "moral theory"), but more so because of the difficulty of establishing a meaningful relationship between moral theory and actual moral and political practice. The problem arises from the fact that for Kant, theory is the product of reason, formulated in isolation from practice but intended nevertheless for moral reform in actual practice.

The problem is compounded by the position of Kant himself. On the one hand, he makes it clear that his philosophical enquiries are not going to extend to the realm of the anthropological or actual practice, that he is concerned only to elaborate the a priori principles of morality apart from any consideration of what goes on in human experience, that the principles formulated by reason are valid and binding even if actual practice has never demonstrated the truths of reason and even contradict them. On the other hand, Kant also argued that a theoretical ought is meaningless if it cannot be made real in practice - "ought" implies "can".

The conflict which lies at the heart of his view of theory and practice is the conflict between  
the concern/.....

the concern for truth as the necessary product of reason ("for the essential thing in scholarship is always truth" <sup>25</sup>) and the meaningfulness of such truth for men in contingent situations. The claims of both are equally strong and have somehow to be balanced or reconciled for any authentic theory/practice relationship. There is a strong case for setting out the theoretical principles which ought to govern conduct according to a particular vision, even though actual conduct at that time contradicts that vision. There is a case for not deriving one's principles of conduct solely from how men do act or have acted because this may turn out to be an effective limitation of new and, perhaps, better possibilities of thought and conduct. Transcendence as the means by which the dynamism of human existence is ensured, is threatened by confining our principles to the is of human affairs. The necessity for utopian thinking is hence a real necessity and not merely a vehicle for fantasies and dreams. On the other hand, an insistence on "truth" alone is not enough and lays one open to the charge of academic irrelevance if its principles are not seen to be meaningful for practice, for men in concrete problem situations.

Kant's moral/.....

Kant's moral theory intends to transcend, or rather transfigure, actual experience as well as the contingent needs of men in concrete situations. The extent to which the concepts of practical reason and moral practice remain theoretical abstractions or can acquire historical concreteness is the fundamental issue on which the enduring value or otherwise of Kant's moral and political philosophy can be established. By an examination of his concept of theory and practice in morality and politics with a view to establishing the merits and demerits of Kant's position, we will attempt, in this thesis, to assess the practical nature of his theory of moral reason as a principle of liberation. The problem will be raised of the translation of rational precepts into effective practical programmes of action, on the assumption that theory, as the product of rational reflection within concrete situations, and not in abstraction, is necessary for authentic practice, and the extent to which Kant came to terms with this problem. While it may be reasonably argued that moral conduct, if it is to be authentic, must be based on rational theory, Kant intends to separate both reason and theory from contingent historical experience. A concept of reality (authenticity) based on such a separation can/.....

separation can be said, therefore, to be not a comprehensive enough concept of reality, a fact which undermines the practical value of Kant's concept of rational practice.

In spite of these problems and failures, there is a great deal of value to be retrieved from Kant's concept of theory and practice in morality and politics from which to continue the quest for authentic modes of human conduct. His vision of the moral personality is an elaboration of the best that man is capable of in the face of his finite reason and imperfect will, indicating the dignity, the discipline and the freedom to which we can attain. But perhaps the most fundamental practical value that he espoused was the principle of the responsibility of the individual in the striving towards and the creation, if possible, of a more rational society. Horkheimer made an apt comment on critical theory which sums up the value of this responsibility: "Men of good will want to draw conclusions for political action from the critical theory. Yet there is no fixed method for doing this; the only universal presumption is that one must have insight into one's own responsibility." <sup>26</sup>

Kant's principle/....

Kant's principle of individual responsibility may yet have something to offer to us today.

The problem of theory and practice in morality and politics is an enduring one even though it may be formulated in different ways. It endures because it arises out of man's perennial reflections on the nature of the "good life" and his attempts to achieve it in some way or other. Hence it is not a topic that is exhausted by any one approach and needs to be raised afresh over and over again in the history of man and in the history of philosophy. Kant's concept of theory and practice in morality and politics, despite its problems, deserves fresh attention on account of the valuable insights it provides into the establishment of a responsible human freedom.

In the light of unfortunate historical experiences as well as pessimistic opinions about the perversities of human nature, the question inevitably arises as to the moral, political and social effectiveness or ineffectuality of the concept of a rational imperative to govern conduct.

Rationality/.....

Rationality, reasonableness, the public use of reason - all these point to a middle way which is precarious and difficult to achieve, let alone maintain. And yet the belief in rational conduct, or at least reasonable conduct, is our only guarantee for the achievement of a truly "human" existence. Kant, by showing that the essence of rationality lies in individual responsibility, puts us on the difficult road towards moral co-existence.

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22. Ibid., p.10.
23. Ibid., p.11.
24. LOBKOWICZ, N. : op. cit., p.132.
25. KANT, I. : "The Quarrel between the  
Faculties" in Kant (G. Rabel  
- ed.), p.333.
26. Quoted from Horkheimer by J. O'Neill in  
On Critical Theory, p.1.

C H A P T E R   T W O

THE LIMITATIONS OF THE THEORETICAL (AS INDICATED  
BY KANT) AS POSSIBILITY FOR THE PRACTICAL.

(a) Kant's Resolution of the Problem  
of Metaphysics.

Within the context of the title of this thesis, Kant's position on theory and practice in morality and politics becomes most explicit in his writings on ethics, politics, history and religion. But his standpoint on what constitutes authentic practice cannot be understood apart from his investigation into the problem of knowledge and, in fact, arises from it insofar as his philosophy attempts to provide a coherent picture of human reason in its diverse capacities. The Critique of Pure Reason, then, assumes a seminal significance as a work where the resolution of the problem of metaphysics lays the foundation for all of Kant's subsequent, more detailed investigations in the sphere of ethics, politics, religion, etc., of the role of reason in terms of the goals that it strives after. The question of theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy will be/....

will be explored on the basis that it is integrally related to Kant's resolution of the problem of metaphysics, a resolution which rests basically on the crucial distinction between theoretical and practical reason.

1. Metaphysics and the Limits of Reason.

Kant has made it exceedingly clear both in the Critique of Pure Reason and the Critique of Practical Reason that it is the interest of practical reason which points to the authentic being of man. But if "practical" refers to "all that is possible through free will,"<sup>1</sup> then it is obviously set off from a set of conditions where free will is not possible - the theoretical realm. Before the genuine value of the practical can be established, the bounds of the theoretical have to be clearly delineated. This brings us to a fundamental problem which, for Kant, was not merely a philosophical or an academic one but a practical problem requiring urgent resolution since it affected moral existence - the problem of the authenticity of human values and human ends within a mechanistic and deterministic view of nature. This is a problem which is not only

a post/.....

a post-Renaissance one i.e., one arising from the thinking of Galileo and Newton, but can be seen in embryo in the contrast between the naturalistic speculations of the Pre-Socratics (the Milesians, the atomists) and the anthropocentric concerns of Socratic philosophy.<sup>2</sup> It was a problem that became acute with the rise of modern science and the depiction of the world as a well-run machine in Newtonian physics. The conflict between the view of mechanical determinism on the one hand and purposive human agency on the other Kant resolved into a distinction between theoretical and practical reason and between determinism and freedom. It is on the basis of this distinction that he "resolves" the problem of metaphysics and is able to establish Practice as the realm of freedom.

But what does the distinction between theoretical and practical reason really indicate, and how does it help to resolve the problem of metaphysics, and why, in fact, had metaphysics begun to pose a problem? In the history of philosophy, metaphysics has long been part of man's attempt to obtain a theoretical understanding of Being or being or reality or the  
unity of /.....



unity of reality. Kant is both thoroughly metaphysical as well as sharply anti-metaphysical in different senses of the word - which indicates the different conceptions of metaphysics which we must distinguish within the Kantian context. That metaphysics which he rejects (which also points to why metaphysics now posed a problem) is "a non-empirical science (or alleged science) which claims to transcend experience, attaining to a knowledge of purely intelligible (non-sensible) realities by means of a priori concepts and principles." <sup>3</sup>

The conception of metaphysics as a theoretical science providing insight into the supra-empirical, based on a tradition going back to Aristotle and given reinforcement by the mathematico-rational principles of the Cartesian tradition, formed the basis of the rationalist metaphysics of thinkers in the Leibniz-Wolffian tradition. It is this conception that Kant challenged on account of its uncritical confidence in the power of reason.

The Enlightenment confidence in the power of reason to create a rational and humane world animates Kant's philosophy no less than those of his contemporaries he criticised. But Kant was also keenly aware of the limits of reason and knowledge,

so that/.....

so that even though he was strongly drawn to the idea of an all-encompassing reason in his pre-Critical investigations, the essence of the Critical Philosophy is its critical attitude towards the power of reason. The dogmatic view of reason claimed to provide cognitive certainty about the traditional metaphysical concepts of God, Freedom and Immortality. This view had become especially problematic in the light of the new mathematical criterion as that which distinguishes scientific knowledge. The conception of metaphysics as the "queen" of the sciences was becoming more and more untenable not only in terms of its unfounded cognitive claims but also insofar as it was obscuring the genuine practical significance of metaphysics.

It is a practical concern for metaphysics in its links with fundamental aspects of the human condition which leads Kant to the question of the possibility and status and value of the metaphysical undertaking. The resolution of the problem of metaphysics enables Kant to analyse the conditions of knowing (theoretical reason) and acting (practical reason) within a unified system where theory and practice are both differentiated as well as dialectically linked. Theoretical reason deals with the enquiry into the  
specific conditions/...

specific conditions in terms of which we have objective knowledge, and practical reason with man's authentic (i.e., free) conduct as a rational being, especially in view of the mechanical causality which prevails in the sphere of theoretical knowledge of objects, as well as the methods and procedures of the sciences in the quest for objective knowledge.

The question of method is a fundamental concern of the Kantian philosophy. What is the best method for philosophy to pursue if it wishes to retain scientific respectability? This concern with method is already evident in the Cartesian aim to put philosophy on a strong scientific basis. Admiration for mathematics as a model of rigorous thinking is elaborated in the philosophy of Leibniz as well. The bond between Kant and his rationalist predecessors is the desire to place philosophy on a rigorously scientific footing. The cleavage between them arises from the restrictions on reason envisaged by the Critical Philosophy. This limitation strikes at the roots not only of the Cartesian hopes for reason but also of a much earlier confidence in the unlimited powers of reason - for example, in the Platonic theory that reason can enable man to know metaphysical realities that lie beyond the doxa world given by the senses./.....

the senses.

Despite the limitation imposed on reason, the Kantian philosophy is a highly ambitious attempt to make philosophy a matter of strict method and scientific rigour, so that it could validly pursue a critical examination of all the factors (a priori and otherwise) which make human knowledge possible. Kant admires Wolff for being "the first to point out the necessity of establishing fixed principles, of clearly defining our conceptions, and of subjecting our demonstrations to the most severe scrutiny, ..." <sup>4</sup> But dogmatist philosophy had proceeded to employ pure reason "without previous criticism of its own powers," <sup>5</sup> and in rectifying this invalid procedure, the Critical Philosophy claims a stricter observance of methodological procedures. If reason is a means to obtaining knowledge, then that reason must be analysed before all else. On the basis of an analytical charting of the preconditions of human knowledge, man could make meaningful decisions in relation to theory and practice, knowledge and morality, respecting the demands but observing the limits of both dimensions.

Kant was/.....

Kant was a great admirer of the progressive advance of knowledge in the mathematical and physical sciences. Not the least of the reasons for such success was the general acceptance of certain methods of procedure. In terms of the evident success of the sciences on the basis of method, metaphysical claims to give knowledge of transcendent realities could be exposed as hollow and deluded by an analysis of the method used by metaphysicians. "... the conflict produced by the steady success of the natural sciences and their ever-growing prestige seemed to be a conflict between science and metaphysics. The signs all pointed to the victory of the sciences. Their progress was steady, their methods and principles were winning increasing agreement; they went on producing practical results and giving man steadily increased control over nature. Metaphysics on the other hand showed no such progress and had won no such agreement." <sup>6</sup> The ceaseless dialectic of metaphysical argument, the disputed claims of rival systems, the absence of unanimity concerning method could only serve to frustrate and confuse man. What could be done to introduce philosophical clarity into this confused and confusing mass of metaphysical speculation? The Critical Philosophy constitutes an intensive enquiry into the possibility of metaphysical knowledge by means of reason.

From the/.....

From the point of view of the practical or ethical dimension, the question of metaphysics had also to be settled. An analysis of the history of ideas reveals a fundamental relation between metaphysics (as a comprehensive theory of reality) and ethics. On the basis of metaphysical "knowledge" of reality, criteria and formulae for moral conduct could be formulated. In Plato's philosophy, for example, metaphysical knowledge of reality (that which is eternal and unchanging - the Forms) leads deductively to the ethical certainty that the path to the Good is precisely by a knowledge of the Forms. Hence the equation of virtue with knowledge. In traditional philosophy, then, ethical enquiry looked to metaphysics for its foundations. But if metaphysical claims to comprehensive knowledge of reality are disputed, it is possible that the moral life is in danger unless a new focus can be found for it. The danger to moral existence was increased by the notion of mechanical determinism implicit in the scientific explanation of Newton, for example. Despite his respect for scientific knowledge, Kant felt it imperative to make provision for the ethical or practical domain as well. He had to show that human reason could come to terms both with the scientific and the ethical, the theoretical and the practical as equally valid dimensions of reality.

The scientific/....

The scientific revolution, an ongoing process which began in the seventeenth century and whose end seems nowhere in sight, was, in Kant's time, beginning to generate its own peculiar subculture with its specific ground principles. The power of science seemed limitless. "...if there was one area of human experience in which progress was reliable it was science, and if there was any real hope for man, it was science that would realize it." <sup>7</sup> This optimism and confidence in science, not surprisingly, began to have an influence on other spheres of human activity - the aesthetic, the social and political dimensions and so on. Philosophers believed that they had to reflect on the significance of scientific criteria and principles for the realm of philosophy.

Although Newton, one of the great scientific minds of the Enlightenment, saw no conflict between scientific progress, morality and Christian belief (God is the active creator of this law-governed universe), there persisted the view of scientific discoveries as being somehow antithetical to or exclusive of morality and religion. The Pietists were a case in point, regarding science as a threat to moral and religious life. "The irresistible propulsion of modern scientific enquiry was towards positivism, toward the elimination of metaphysics, and the clean separation of/....

separation of facts and values... Scientific thinking exacted the stripping away of theological, metaphysical, aesthetic, and ethical admixtures that had been a constituent part of science since the Greeks;... Every scientific discovery weakened the hold of theological explanation, metaphysical entities, and aesthetic considerations : the orbits of planets were neither beautiful nor ugly; the law of gravitation was neither cruel nor kind; observed irregularities in the skies proved nothing about divine activity." <sup>8</sup>

So the moral neutrality of science was alarming to some minds although Gay points out that those philosophers who knew science best feared it least (Hume, D'Alembert, Kant) and in fact tried to establish the proper significance and function of science. In the opinion of such thinkers, science was a reliable and valid means of establishing knowledge of the universe. Bronowski <sup>9</sup> points out that with respect to function, that of science is indeed different from the function of the artistic or moral, but this in no way indicates a definitive or permanent cleavage. His position stems from his conviction of the unity of knowledge, a conviction that motivates Kant as well as seen in his recognition that science and morality are equally indispensable to man. "Kant was always both scientist and/.....

scientist and moralist, always convinced of the vital importance of both these activities of the human spirit, always concerned to defend the independence, integrity, and distinctive nature of each. He had an almost equal reverence for Newton and for Rousseau." 10

Kant was aware that the investigation into metaphysics, which in the Critique of Pure Reason involves a radical analysis of cognition as well as a consideration of the relationship between philosophy and science, would have serious implications for morality. The conditions governing theoretical knowledge could not, for the sake of freedom, be applied in the practical sphere as well. Scientific determinism, although acceptable in the theoretical context, is a threat to the freedom necessary to preserve the integrity of moral decisions. Here Kant takes his cue from Rousseau's conception of an autonomous will as the ground principle of morality. And yet one cannot overlook the fact that science plays a legitimate and powerful role in human affairs. The Critical Philosophy hoped to delineate the boundaries of both nature and morality. An analysis of the powers and limitations of each would make possible the mutual co-existence of both without the integrity of either being threatened./...

being threatened. The threat to morality (freedom) was already inherent in, for example, Bacon's view that "the same method elaborated for the physical and metaphysical interpretation of material nature can also be extended, in principle, to the domain of human psychology and ethics." <sup>11</sup> So the problem of metaphysics needed urgent resolution both from the theoretical and practical points of view - for the sake of human knowledge as well as human freedom.

In terms of rationalist metaphysics - if pure reason is supposed to be the faculty that gives knowledge of transcendent realities- then, in Kant's view, it is this very reason which must be subjected to rigorous scrutiny in order to ascertain its exact power but also its limit. "... Kant's philosophy is a systematic, exhaustive, critical inventory of the powers, possessions, activities, and propensities of the mind. As such, it is, Kant assures us, complete and final, for while experience may throw up an endless variety of objects, the mind which encounters them is once-for-all fixed and thoroughly knowable."<sup>12</sup> By such an undertaking, the Critical Philosophy could avoid the excessive claims of dogmatic metaphysics and indicate the sphere of the legitimate exercise of/.....

exercise of both theoretical and practical reason. Kant had no wish to absolutise reason in the manner of the extreme rationalists but neither could he dispense entirely with the function of reason like the extreme empiricists. For him reason has to be placed in its proper perspective, an issue indissolubly linked to the resolution of the metaphysical problem.

Kant, manifesting the spirit of the Enlightenment with its optimistic assessment of human rationality, felt no unease at the fact that such an evaluation of the powers of reason is to be undertaken by reason itself. "For pure speculative reason has this peculiarity, that, in choosing the various objects of thought, it is able to define the limits of its own faculties, and even to give a complete enumeration of the possible modes of proposing problems to itself, and thus to sketch out the entire system of metaphysics." <sup>13</sup> In this assessment of human reason as being capable of an objective analysis of its own powers, Kant shows himself to be a rationalist in the broad sense of the word. Confidence and self-assurance in the life of reason emphasizes the Enlightenment conception of man as master of his own fate, with a mind ably endowed for the tasks at hand. The mysteries of mysticism recede before the clear  
light of/....

light of reason and an increased faith in the possibilities of rational human effort.

Caird<sup>14</sup> makes the point that the Enlightenment promoted a tremendous sense of humanism and individualism, its focus being the study of man, his mind, his works, his abilities. Grayeff writes: "It was an age imbued with a high concept of humanity and by a belief in man's inherent divinity."<sup>15</sup> Pietistic mysticism on the other hand, offended by the claims of rationalism and humanism, demanded a return to God as the proper object of human endeavour. The Kantian philosophy attempts to accommodate the demands of both these viewpoints. God is by no means excluded from the Kantian universe (although the manner of His presence may be a problematic issue) but the importance of the rational autonomy of the human will and the freedom of man is firmly upheld. Kant's faith in reason is balanced by his desire for reason to be self-critical, an ambivalence reflected in his "call to reason, again to undertake the most laborious of all tasks - that of self-examination, and to establish a tribunal, which may secure it in its well-grounded claims, while it pronounces against all baseless assumptions and pretensions, not in an arbitrary manner, but/....

manner, but according to its own eternal and unchangeable laws." 16

## 2. Metaphysics as Analysis and Synthesis

Thus far we have been discussing the context in terms of which metaphysics, as understood by the rationalist metaphysicians, had become problematic and the subsequent need for a critical examination of reason which may reveal the possibility of reconciling the claims of scientific knowledge on the one hand and the integrity of moral conduct on the other. In relation to this problem Kant offers a critical "solution".

While rejecting dogmatic metaphysics, Kant nevertheless refers to metaphysics in connection with the aims and intentions of the Critical philosophy i.e., as pertaining to the system of pure reason. "Metaphysic is divided into that of the speculative and that of the practical use of pure reason, and is, accordingly, either the Metaphysic of Nature, or the Metaphysic of Ethics. The former contains all the pure rational principles - based upon conceptions alone (and thus excluding mathematics) - of all theoretical cognition; the latter, the principles which determine and necessitate a priori all action." 17 However, although it is clear from the above quotation/....

above quotation, that metaphysics is not merely reducible to epistemology, but that it is more comprehensive, Kant goes on to make it clear that the "metaphysic of speculative reason is what is commonly called Metaphysic in the more limited sense." 18

It is this more limited sense of metaphysics as a specifically cognitive undertaking that concerns Kant to a large extent in the Critique of Pure Reason. Rotenstreich observes: "When Kant considers metaphysics to be the philosophy of the first grounds of our knowledge, it is clear that in his view transcendental philosophy is the legitimate successor and heir of what has been called 'metaphysics', since transcendental philosophy has precisely this task of exploring the grounds of knowledge." 19 However, the view that what Kant understands by metaphysics is no more than epistemology<sup>20</sup> reflects only the analytical activity of Kant in establishing the bounds of knowledge. This epistemological analysis points to a synthetic aspect which reflects a broader conception of metaphysics - a conception that borders not only on man's cognitive processes but on his very existence as a moral personality. It/....

personality. It is only as analysis that metaphysics resolves itself into epistemology.

"....according to Kant both constructive metaphysics and a metaphysics transcending sensibility are impossible. It implicitly follows that the only genuine and fruitful metaphysics must be a critical or transcendental investigation based exclusively, as Kant assumes, on analysis."<sup>21</sup>

On the other hand, metaphysics as synthesis points to the dimension of freedom and the primacy of the practical.

The conception of metaphysics as being both analysis and synthesis reflects a theme in Kant which he has in common with the whole tradition of metaphysics including the metaphysicians whom he criticised - the search for the unity of experience (understood in its broadest sense). However, his pursuit of unity is based on the view that reality is differentiated into various aspects rather than being reducible to a single set of criteria.

Metaphysics is an exploration of reality but in metaphysics understood as analysis, reality refers to "appearance", whereas from the point of view of synthesis, Kant makes it clear that the limits of sensibility are/....

sensibility are not the limits of reality. Within the context of this broad, differentiated conception of reality, the dialectical nature of Kant's view of metaphysics becomes evident. In terms of the dialectic of metaphysics as analysis and synthesis, Kant is able to "solve" in a novel way the problem of human (moral) values in a deterministic universe. Beck,<sup>22</sup> for example, points out that this problem was variously treated by philosophers before Kant - who either denied the problem or declared it to be not resolvable or illusory for different reasons. Kant's merit lies in being able to contain the conflicting claims of freedom and determinism within the context of an integrated or unified system. Unity is achieved by the factor of man's natural striving which, for Kant, is an experiential fact manifesting itself in various ways in different areas of his experience.

In the Critique of Practical Reason Kant argued that all interest is ultimately practical. In terms of this, metaphysics conceived of as epistemology is not merely a functional analytical operation but a product of man's striving for knowledge. But the striving for knowledge reflects only one aspect of human striving. The pursuit of knowledge is  
supplemented by/....

supplemented by and eventually superseded by the search for moral authenticity. Kant acknowledges a deep-seated metaphysical impulse in man which results in an eternal striving for the Absolute (a comprehensive ideal covering knowledge and morality). It is this striving, manifesting itself in different ways, which brings about the division between knowledge and morality, between understanding and reason, between theory and practice. The divisions, however, possess an essential interdependence in so far as they function within a dialectical unity generated by the category of man's striving.

The unity of theoretical and practical reason is pointed out by Kant himself in the Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals: "I require of a Kritik of pure practical reason, if it is to be complete, that the unity of the practical reason and the speculative be subject to presentation under a common principle, because in the final analysis there can be but one and the same reason, which must be differentiated only in application." <sup>23</sup>

The theme of a dialectical relationship between differentiated aspects underlied by the general factor of striving as manifested in the relationship between  
knowledge and/.....

knowledge and morality, between theory and practice is repeated throughout Kant's thinking, not only within the epistemology but also in connection with his views on morality and politics and constitutes Kant's pursuit of unity under the "principle of identity".<sup>24</sup> In nature, for example, there is the purposeful motion of natural objects. In the field of knowledge, striving is suggested by the dialectical nature of the categories which point to meaningful changes in objects (e.g. the sun warms the stone). In their turn, the categories themselves indicate certain limits and point beyond themselves to the noumena. Within history, man develops from a primitive stage to the civilised man of Kant's time (exemplified by Locke under what Kant terms the hypothetical imperative), and finally into the man of culture who is free and autonomous in terms of his reason. Analogous to man's development is the development of social and political structures directed towards the ideal of rational social existence.

It appears, then, that nature (knowledge) and history (morality and politics) are subject to purposeful striving in terms of which development occurs and problems are resolved. The striving is directed towards a/.....

towards a goal where man is in line with nature, his own authentic nature (reason) and society (his relationship with other persons). Kant visualises striving to be an enduring aspect of man's existence insofar as the tension between theory and practice reflects something about the human condition (the conflict between rationality and sensuousness). It is also this very category of striving (which is first directed towards sense experience and issues in knowledge (theoretical) and then towards conduct (practical) which results in moral principles) that represents the principle of identity in terms of which Kant constructs a unified view of reality.

*11*  
In connection with Kant's resolution of the problem of metaphysics, it becomes evident, then, that his rejection of dogmatic metaphysics does not result in the simple reduction of metaphysics to epistemology as has been suggested by certain critics. Kant resolves the problem of the conflict between the claims of scientific knowledge and the principle of moral autonomy by a differentiation of metaphysics into analysis and synthesis. His rejection of dogmatic metaphysics in no way signifies a fundamental opposition to all metaphysics. de Vleeschauwer writes: "His complaints are directed against a particular metaphysics and a particular method. At the same time he himself constructed/...

himself constructed, at least in rough outline, a different metaphysics and elaborated another method. To discover ultimately the correct philosophical method and by means of it to construct an eternal metaphysics were the aims cherished by Kant." <sup>25</sup>

de Vleeschauwer points out that the Kantian attempt to destroy Wolffian metaphysics and replace it with an "eternal metaphysics" based on a critical foundation is what gives a certain unity of purpose to Kant's philosophical investigations.

That metaphysics plays a more fundamental role than merely resulting in a theory of knowledge is now quite clear. G. Martin in his Kant's Metaphysics and Theory of Science goes even further by pointing out that even metaphysics as analysis i.e., epistemology, has ontological roots. "Our guiding principle is that the Critique of Pure Reason is fed by two great streams: by theory of science and by ontology." <sup>26</sup> Martin continues to argue along these lines: "The Critique of Pure Reason is also in the proper sense an ontology ... We have to regard the Kantian metaphysics not only as a doctrine of the being of God; we must learn to see that to determine the being of space, the being of time, the being of nature, the/....

nature, the being of appearance, is as much -  
an ontological problem as to determine the being of  
God. The transcendental ideality of appearances and  
the objective reality of intelligible being are both  
equally the theme of metaphysics..."<sup>27</sup>

Martin also stresses Kant's concept of unity.  
The search for unity places Kant firmly in the  
metaphysical tradition stretching from the Milesians  
and including Aristotle, Aquinas and Leibniz. In  
fact, as Bronowski points out, the assumption of unity  
is what guides scientific investigation as well being  
fundamental in the arts. One continually operates  
with judgements of like and unlike things in the  
quest to widen the area of like and unlike things.  
"When we discover the wider likeness, ... we enlarge  
the order in the universe; but more than this, we  
enlarge its unity. And it is the unity of nature,  
... for which our thought reaches ... We seek to find  
nature one, a coherent unity. This gives to  
scientists their sense of mission and, ... of aesthetic  
fulfilment: that every research carries the sense of  
drawing together the threads of the world into a  
patterned web." <sup>28</sup>

Kant's theory of reality rests on the foundation  
of the unity of theory and practice. Theory (knowledge)  
is itself/.....



is itself the product of the practical fact of striving. It operates within specific limits and beyond these limits are the possibilities for what Kant calls "practice" - the realm of morality. "Practice" itself as understood by Kant stands for a theoretical model of authentic conduct. Knowledge and morality form the pivotal foundations of Kant's theory of reality, and stand together as differentiated modes of reality in a necessary relationship with each other. The possibility of and criteria for knowledge within the theoretical sphere are set off against the restriction of knowledge in relation to practice, whereas the restriction of knowledge in morality points to the possibility of freedom denied within mechanical causality. The Critical Philosophy transforms in this way the traditional relationship between metaphysics and ethics. The apparently non-Greek tendency of modern philosophy to begin philosophical enquiry with an analysis of how and how much man can know, in Kant's case, can be located within a broader metaphysics or theory of reality that covers both epistemology and ethics.

The reconciliation of science (knowledge) and morality (freedom) within a broad theory of reality enables Kant to transcend the narrow visions of rationalism (Wolffian dogmatism) and empiricism (Humean scepticism)/...

(Humean scepticism). These two standpoints were not only problematic from the point of view of epistemology. More significantly, they restricted, each in their own way, the comprehensive metaphysical concept of reality. Empiricism restricts reality to phenomena and is, on account of its scepticism, ultimately self-defeating. The consequences of such a position are a threat to moral existence. Rationalism, on the other hand, locates the whole of reality in a transcendent dimension about which it then claims objective knowledge. The consequent neglect of phenomenal reality breeds both a false view of morality, insofar as its exact and legitimate status is not clearly established, as well as harming the cause of reason.

Kant's scientific metaphysics or metaphysics as analysis is directed toward the investigation of knowledge as the product of both a priori as well as experiential or phenomenal aspects. The Critique of Pure Reason analyses the possibility and valid employment of synthetic a priori judgements. Kant argues that "metaphysics, according to the proper aim of the science, consists merely of synthetical propositions a priori."<sup>29</sup> If this is the criterion for metaphysics, then it is quite clear that "metaphysics as a science has hitherto not existed at all./.....

at all." <sup>30</sup> What this assertion indicates is that traditional metaphysics, especially dogmatic metaphysics, had become highly problematic from the epistemological, ontological as well as moral points of view insofar as it treated as one, different dimensions of reality. The difference between the phenomenal and the noumenal aspects of reality had been glossed over and empty claims made on behalf of reason.

Kant hoped to demolish the old unscientific metaphysics and replace it with a more scientific one, that is, an enquiry into the powers and limits of reason. In one of its aspects, this investigation establishes the limits of human knowledge, in another the possibilities of human freedom. The distinction between theoretical and practical reason enables Kant to "resolve" the problem of metaphysics, in that metaphysics becomes both more modest (in its epistemological aspect) while at the same time assuming its proper status with respect to human freedom. Metaphysics as theory cannot use synthetic a priori judgements to extend our knowledge of realities lying beyond sensibility e.g. God, Freedom and Immortality. As practice, however, it is entitled, even obliged to use these Ideas of Reason in a regulative way within the context of moral conduct.

The Kantian/.....

The Kantian attempt to accommodate apparently irreconcilable claims within one broad view of reality results in a number of dichotomies- theoretical and practical reason, knowledge and morality, determinism and freedom, phenomena and noumena. Within the context of the Critical Philosophy these dichotomies are not fatal insofar as unity is established by a meaningful relationship between the components of the various dichotomies. The distinction as well as the relationship between phenomena and noumena is a case in point. In terms of knowledge, only phenomena (as indicating any possible or given object of experience) are cognitively accessible to man since they are represented to us through the intuitions of Space and Time. This, however, constitutes the limits of our knowledge since no amount of theoretical investigation can disclose the nature of noumena or things-in-themselves which lie beyond Space and Time. But the negative aspect of the limitation of our knowledge with respect to noumena is transformed into a positive factor when viewed from the standpoint of morality where the noumena have a necessary regulative role. Since man has no intellectual intuition but only sensuous intuition, knowledge of anything lying beyond the senses is impossible.

The distinction between phenomena and noumena forms  
the basis/.....

the basis of Kant's rejection of the possibility of metaphysics as being able to provide knowledge of transcendent objects. In addition, the distinction is crucial to certain basic premises of the moral philosophy e.g. that of autonomy or moral integrity. The unknowability of the noumenal sphere is actually necessary to safeguard morality from the dangers of heteronomy. A fully comprehended reality undermines the concept of moral striving. So the limitation of knowledge, far from being an impediment, is a moral necessity. Kroner, for example, points out that a completed metaphysics signals the end of all striving. "Every metaphysical system conceives of the world as something finished and thereby leaves the will with nothing to do... Kant therefore held that such a metaphysic is not only an intellectual blind alley but also an aberration of moral reason, because a metaphysical system produces an illusory knowledge which shakes man's moral foundation and violates the majesty of the moral 'ought'."<sup>31</sup> From the moral point of view the absence of total knowledge is a safeguard and a guarantee for the meaningfulness of further moral striving. It is also, on Kant's part, a sober reminder of human finitude and a contrast to the assurance of those who are motivated by a belief in the possibility of comprehensive insight into reality and the tyranny that might/.....

that might accompany such belief.

Essay 113 ✓  
Within the context of a unified conception of reality, phenomena and noumena perform separate but important roles - the one making objective knowledge possible and the other providing for an authentic moral existence. Kant, by his various distinctions or dichotomies, attempts to resolve not only the problem of traditional metaphysics but various other issues as well - the problem of reconciling freedom and determinism, the role of science and its implications for morality, and the unity of theoretical and practical reason. Within the whole each component has its proper place and value but also its limits, and these limits point beyond themselves to other components, and the relationship between the many dichotomies is maintained by the factor of striving. As such, the one component is not sacrificed for the sake of the other, nor does Kant envisage an identity of the two. In this way, Kant's outlook is essentially a philosophy of balance that attempts to take cognisance of apparently contradictory elements which, logically speaking, cannot be reconciled but which, nevertheless, confront man in his existential situation.

Although in/..

Although in the Critique of Pure Reason Kant attempted, by his resolutions of the problem of metaphysics, to give cognisance to traditionally opposed but equally fundamental areas of human experience within the context of a totality outlined by the striving of reason (both on the theoretical and practical level), the very dichotomies by means of which he tried to resolve the metaphysical problem in the first Critique can be seen to raise many difficulties especially for the concept of Practice in the moral and political writings later on. The most basic of these, arising from Kant's primary distinction between theoretical and practical reason, is the contrast between man being phenomenally (mechanically) determined on the one hand and being noumenally free on the other. This distinction provides a rich field for Kant interpretations which attempt to indicate the various implications of Kant's distinction as well as suggest ways of coping with the sharp contrasts of this distinction.

One of the main implication of Kant's distinction between phenomena and noumena which has to be resolved satisfactorily for the sake of morality or authentic practice is the problem of explaining where and how the moral struggle between the call of duty and the lure of/.....

lure of inclination occurs, if man's phenomenal being is understood as being located in Space and Time but his noumenal being, on the other hand, which is his authentic self, is not knowable (even to himself) and not determined temporally or spatially. Martin, for example, in his book Kant's Metaphysics and Theory of Science attempts to explain Kant's position by showing that Kant moves between Plato's two-world theory and Aristotle's two-aspect theory. If the conflict between reason and sensuousness is not to be a mere illusion, then one has to conceive of two worlds, each of which wields a real power over man. On the other hand, the unity of man and world must not be undermined since it is the same man who belongs to both realms - so that the two aspect view becomes more feasible i.e., representation to the same man of something from different points of view.

Martin sees the Aristotelian conception in the first Critique (borne out by the following quotation: "... while I cannot cognize, I can quite well think freedom, that is to say, my representation of it involves at least no contradiction, if we bear in mind the critical distinction of the two modes of representation (the sensible and the intellectual).." <sup>32</sup>), the Platonic in the Critique of Practical Reason (only the two/.....

the two-world theory renders the moral conflict meaningful) and the Aristotelian again in the third Critique (the connection between the theoretical and the practical is more feasible on the basis of the two-aspect theory rather than the two-world one). Martin appreciates Kant's realisation that any philosophical system which does not take into account both the determined (natural) and non-determined (free) aspects of man's existence fails to reflect the totality of existence. But the connection between the two worlds is beyond understanding and Kant is not able to offer a solution that satisfies the demands of logical analysis. But although Kant's view is problematic, Martin does not regard it as weakness: "we regard this aporetic solution, which draws on all the essential historical solutions, not as a defect but as a decided advantage." <sup>33</sup>

R. P. Wolff, in his treatment of the same problem (the moral struggle and the relationship between the phenomenal and noumenal aspects of man), also points to the correctness of the Kantian view in wanting to co-ordinate the natural and the noumenal. "Kant is correct in claiming that each of us conceives of himself in two different and apparently incompatible ways: as subject of action, deliberating, choosing and/..

choosing, and determining himself to act by means of reasons; and as natural creature subject to nonrational laws of physiology and behaviour, subsumable as an instance of inductive generalizations, predictable, a part of nature rather than either a knower of it or a doer in it." <sup>34</sup> As a way out of the Kantian dilemma, Wolff suggests the rejection of the distinction between causal determinism and freedom in favour of the possibility of freedom within causality. "The drama of conscience must be construed, as, in fact, later psychologists and sociologists have construed it, as a causally determined psychocultural phenomenon entirely explainable, at least in principle, by the natural laws of physiology, psychology, society, and history." <sup>35</sup> So Wolff maintains that we should look for "a way of construing causally determined behaviour as also rational and, hence, free." <sup>36</sup> He does, however, confess that he has no idea of how to proceed in accounting for such a point of view.

Silber in his Introduction to Kant's Religion within the Limits of Reason alone attempts to revise Kant's distinction between the phenomenal and the noumenal so that one can "account for the existence of the moral will in time and for its capacity to act in the phenomenal order." <sup>37</sup> Silber argues that although  
Kant postulated/...

Kant postulated the separation and independence of the two realms "he found it impossible to speak of moral problems without presupposing their complete interaction." <sup>38</sup> Silber suggests a way out of this problem by "broadening the conception of the phenomenal world to include all aspects of human experience - the moral, aesthetic, and organic, no less than the theoretical..."<sup>39</sup> In other words, the concept of a separate sphere for moral freedom is not necessary.

All these approaches to the Kantian dualism on which, as mentioned already, hinges the resolution of the metaphysical problem and which has implications for moral and political practice, indicate the centrality of this issue not only as a problem arising from Kant's specific approach but more generally as a human dilemma as to the extent to which man is both determined and determining. Kant's attempt to relate within a meaningful whole, opposed aspects of human experience yields, as Wolff rightly points out, both rich insights as well as sharp inconsistencies. "Despite his oft-stated intention to create a thoroughly interconnected philosophical system, he time and time again refused to stifle his deeper reflections in the interest of systematic coherence or architectonic symmetry." <sup>40</sup>

From the/.....

From the point of view of technical detail, one cannot deny the existence of formal inconsistencies in Kant's standpoint. This however, does not negate the value of several Kantian insights especially if one postulates a holistic existential view of unity and connectedness arising from the striving of human reason to come to terms with various facets of human experience, rather than a formal linear one. In any case, Kant himself in his Preface to the Second Edition of Religion within the Limits of Reason alone draws attention to the technical nature of the distinction between phenomena and noumena in contrast to the fundamental simplicity and reality of the issue. Speaking of the Religion he states: "To understand this book in its essential content, only common morality is needed, without meddling with the Critique of Practical Reason, still less with the theoretical Critique. When, for example, virtue as skill in actions conforming to duty (according to their legality) is called virtus phaenomenon, and the same virtue as an enduring disposition towards such actions from duty (because of their morality) is called virtus noumenon, these expressions are used only because of the schools; while the matter itself is contained, though in other words, in the most popular children's instructions and sermons, and is easily understood."<sup>41</sup>

Philosophy, in/.....

Philosophy, in order to be called scientific, operates with certain methodological tools, one of which is the test of logical consistency. However, in its subject matter, philosophy deals with the most profound issues of human existence, issues of which, often, there can be no rational or logical resolution. Although this is no plea for obscurant mysticism, it is possible to concede that the pursuit of truth may go beyond the confines of logical consistency or coherent articulation. Plato, for example, used the form of myth to present certain insights since his conclusions sometimes required belief in concepts which reason could not adequately explore. Heidegger's das Nichten des Nichts from the logical, or even linguistic, point of view may appear nonsensical but nevertheless possessed a grim existential meaningfulness for a whole generation.

In the case of Kant also, the problems with which he grappled brought him certain profound insights into different aspects of human existence which are authentic insofar as they confront man as existential realities but which, from the point of view of logical analysis, appear to contradict each other. In the final analysis, the range and depth of his philosophical vision should not be overshadowed by the demand for  
absolute mental/.....

absolute mental fastidiousness and logical tidiness. Within the confines of theory, it is much easier to demand consistency and freedom from contradiction than it is within practice which is dynamic and riddled with unpredictable factors. But if one's prime concern is a theory that is neat and consistent, it is possible that one ends up with an artificial framework, irrelevant to practice. Since, for Kant, it is always practice that is primary, an absolutely tidy theory is not the main aim of philosophical enquiry but rather the practical concern of establishing the best way to live one's life as a potentially rational being. Since Kant attempts to formulate a comprehensive metaphysics, he includes disparate elements which appear logically exclusive. However, this does not demolish the broader unity and connectedness which Kant sought, particularly in terms of his concept of rational striving.

Accepting Silber's resolution of the Kantian dualism i.e., postulating a broadened concept of the phenomenal world to include moral experience as well - we can argue, in addition, that man is both determining and determined in his moral conduct but a precise theoretical demarcation of this state is impossible in view of the dynamism and contingency of human existence. The intersection of determinism and freedom/.....

and freedom is, in the final analysis, beyond knowledge or theoretical analysis. It is only within experience - within acting and decision-making situations - that the reality of either freedom or determinism may become apparent.

Acts and decisions, especially moral acts and decisions, are existential realities which may or may not fit into theories about human behaviour. What is beyond doubt is man's experience of himself both as a freely choosing subject and as a determined or subjected being. If philosophy is to be at all times an authentic reflection of life, its own urge to theoretical completeness or logical tidiness or wanting all ends to be neatly tied up must, if there is a conflict, remain secondary to the dynamism of human experience. Even though we may agree with Kant that "Human reason is by nature architectonic"<sup>42</sup> and hankers after system, an important aspect of the authentic philosophical attitude is the awareness that the totality of human experience may in fact transcend the bounds of a specific system. In a more than Kantian sense, the primacy of the practical always asserts itself over all theoretical constructions of reality.

We come now to a discussion of the concept of  
unity in/.....

unity within a system of reason as visualised by Kant. The theme of unity is an enduring one in the Critical Philosophy, clearly evident already in the Critique of Pure Reason. This notion of unity is employed on various levels and, in conjunction with the concept of a striving reason, it is intended to render coherence to the Kantian system. In the Preface to the first edition of the Critique of Pure Reason Kant states that "Pure reason is a perfect unity;" <sup>43</sup> in the sense that in terms of its principles all metaphysical problems can be solved. In this particular instance, unity is ascribed to reason itself in view of the fact that if its principles are valid to cope with issues (generated by reason itself) in one area, they are valid also for other areas.

Kant, however, also uses the concept of unity in the sense of that goal which reason pursues as well as assumes in its striving - unity as a regulative principle employed by reason in its investigation of nature. In this sense, the concept of unity is basic to the very activity and function of human reason. "The greatest systematic unity, and consequently teleological unity, constitutes the very foundation of the possibility of the most extended employment of human reason. The idea of  
unity is/.....

unity is therefore essentially and indissolubly connected with the nature of our reason." <sup>44</sup>

In the sphere of our cognitions, the understanding cannot by itself provide the ordering principle for the unification of cognitions, which renders nature into a meaningful system. It is reason which directs us to the idea of the connectedness of our cognitions and the subsequent unity of nature. From the cosmological point of view, the connectedness of all phenomena in the world is based on the idea given by reason that all phenomena originate from God as the "supreme and all-sufficient cause." <sup>45</sup> Kant, however, stresses that illusion and contradiction result if we regard the principle of unity as a constitutive principle of cognition. It is a regulative principle which provides the idea of the "systematic unity of experience - a unity indispensable to reason, advantageous to the understanding, and promotive of the interests of empirical cognition." <sup>46</sup>

However, the unity of cognitions employed as a heuristic principle of reason is only part of a greater unity - the systematic unity of ends or teleological unity. This wider unity, again, points away from the limits of the mechanically determined natural world/.....

natural world to man's highest ends which are, for Kant, "those of morality", <sup>47</sup> which bears out his assertion of the primacy of the practical, while at the same time linking the theoretical and the practical within the context of a wider unity. In terms of this wider unity investigated in detail in The Critique of Judgement and intended as a link between the positions of the two earlier Critiques, nature itself is seen as being ultimately in harmony with the moral ends of man.

Through the concept of teleological unity, nature is rendered meaningful in terms of a certain goal-directedness and is no longer seen as an independent mechanical system inimical to moral freedom. Kant writes: "... we can make no teleological use of the knowledge of nature, as regards cognition, unless nature itself has established teleological unity. For without this unity we should have no school for reason, and no cultivation through objects which afford the materials for its conceptions. But teleological unity is a necessary unity, and founded on the essence of the individual will itself." <sup>48</sup>

Through theoretical reason alone, i.e., in terms of the natural world, this teleological unity of ends cannot be established. It can only be founded  
practically, i.e./....

practically, i.e., through the activity of the rational will. But the moral use of reason, which is the highest and most authentic use of reason, is only possible on the basis of a "supreme original good" <sup>49</sup> or First Cause. "In it independent reason, equipped with all the sufficiency of a supreme cause, founds, maintains, and fulfils the universal order of things, with the most perfect teleological harmony, however much this order may be hidden from us in the world of sense." <sup>50</sup> This Idea however does not come from speculative theology but from the idea of "moral unity as a necessary law of the universe, ..." <sup>51</sup> It is significant that, in terms of his view of the primacy of the rational will, Kant represents the First Cause as the supreme will. "For how, under different wills, should we find complete unity of ends? This will must be omnipotent, that all nature and its relation to morality in the world may be subject to it; omniscient, that it may have knowledge of the most secret feelings and their moral worth; omnipresent, that it may be at hand to supply every necessity to which the highest weal of the world may give rise; eternal, that this harmony of nature and liberty may never fail; and so on." <sup>52</sup> In the final analysis, it is moral unity which "leads inevitably also to the teleological unity of all things which constitute this great whole,.. and/.....

whole, ... and unites the practical with the speculative reason." 53

The notion of teleological unity also indicates to us Kant's view of the true function of philosophy. He distinguished between a scholastic conception of philosophy and a cosmical conception, indicating the differences between a provisional or partial value of philosophy and a total one. The former refers to metaphysics as analysis - the articulation of the systematic unity of cognitions, the latter to metaphysics as synthesis - the view of man and world in terms of the ultimate ends of reason. So, in its cosmical conception, "philosophy is the science of the relation of all cognition to the ultimate and essential aims of human reason (teleologia rationis humanae),..."<sup>54</sup> In this conception of philosophy, Kant postulates a unified Weltanschauung which includes both theoretical requirements (knowledge in and of the natural world) and practical (moral) ends.

In the Critique of Pure Reason, Kant, in his description of the tendency of reason, provides a good example of how philosophical theories (including his own) operate under the principle of identity.

He observes/....

He observes: "Reason cannot permit our knowledge to remain in an unconnected and rhapsodistic state, but requires that the sum of our cognitions should constitute a system. It is thus alone that they can advance the ends of reason. By a system I mean the unity of various cognitions under one idea. This idea is the conception - given by reason - of the form of a whole, in so far as the conception determines a priori not only the limits of its content, but the place which each of its parts is to occupy." <sup>55</sup> The reduction of several ideas to one basic principle enables one to constitute a unified view by means of which one orders the world or experience or reality.

The fact that Kant stresses the whole and that the whole is an "organism" rather than an "aggregate"<sup>56</sup> indicates the criterion by which the parts are to be judged. Regarded as isolated cognitions, the natural and the moral, the theoretical and the practical contradict each other on analysis. But as parts of a whole directed to a specific end, they can, from the existential rather than the logical point of view, co-exist within a dynamic whole, so that the "unity of the end, to which all the parts of the system relate, and through which all have a relation to each other/.....

each other, communicates unity to the whole system." <sup>57</sup> Kant in fact points to the difference between the work of the logician (whom he groups with the mathematician and the natural philosopher) who is engaged in the mere "arrangement and formation of conceptions" <sup>58</sup> and the philosopher who employs the conceptions for a wider purpose - "the advancement of the essential aims of human reason." <sup>59</sup> From the Critique of Pure Reason we can gather that Kant did not regard science (epistemology) and ethics as separate concerns but aspects which constitute a whole that embraces different areas of human experience.

Although Kant disposes of dogmatic metaphysics and its claims to provide knowledge of God, Freedom and Immortality, he nevertheless remains firmly within the metaphysical tradition, insofar as his own philosophy reflects the drive towards systematisation and the pursuit of unity. Metaphysics as synthesis is rooted in the human disposition or need to understand experienced reality in the completest possible way, to seek for explanations and systems which cover as many facts and events as possible and reduce the multiplicity of experience to a unified vision of reality. Even though Kant rejects the notion of metaphysics as/.....

metaphysics as a science of cognitive principles as claimed by the Wolffians, the drive towards knowledge is part of the metaphysical impulse in man. Caird puts it succinctly: "... all our empirical investigations are stimulated and directed by the search for unity. ...By the very nature of our intelligence, difference and multiplicity are a problem to us; and all our attempts to explain phenomena have relation to a projected or assumed unity of principle beneath them, however little we may be able to determine the nature of this unity in particular cases... In setting this ideal before us, reason does not beg the question, for it does not determine what kind or degree of unity is to be found in experience; but it certainly commands us to seek for unity, ... To renounce the search for unity would be for reason to renounce itself." <sup>60</sup>

In its search for unity, however, Kant depicts reason as a comprehensive concept which, although is one and the same reason, manifests itself as theoretical and practical reason. Theoretical reason has certain aims and objects as well as certain powers and limitations. What theoretical reason has no jurisdiction over, practical reason provides access to. By his differentiation of function, Kant extends the power of/....

power of reason over all human activities. However, he makes it quite clear, even in the Critique of Pure Reason that it is to moral practice in terms of practical reason that the search for unity is ultimately directed. "In view of the complete systematic unity of reason, there can only be one ultimate end of all the operations of the mind. To this all other aims are subordinate, and nothing more than means for its attainment. This ultimate end is the destination of man, and the philosophy which relates to it is termed Moral Philosophy." 61

(b) The Status of Practice in the Light of Kant's Resolution of the Problem of Metaphysics.

The limitation of theory points to the proper significance of practice. By distinguishing between theoretical and practical reason, Kant believes that he has set the problem of human cognition in its proper perspective and also prepared the ground for his conception of a rational autonomous Will. Within the sphere of practical reason, man can rise above the limits of sensibility on the basis of rational moral decisions. It is in terms of practical reason that man achieves his authentic being within the

Kingdom of/....

Kingdom of Ends as outlined in Kant's moral and political philosophy.

In this resolution of the problem of metaphysics, Kant's abiding concern has been to indicate how we can retain what is valuable in metaphysics without falling into metaphysical illusion. "For, as the world has never been, and, no doubt, never will be, without a system of metaphysics of one kind or another, it is the highest and weightiest concern of philosophy to render it powerless for harm, by closing up the sources of error." <sup>62</sup> The Critical Philosophy is no less a comprehensive metaphysics which has its origin in the varied reality of human experience.

Although Kant emphasizes the primacy of practice in the sense of the primacy of moral ends over those of theoretical reason, there is an added sense in which practice is supreme. And that is, that the theory of knowledge and the theory of the Ought both issue from the existential fact of man's rational striving for comprehensive explanation, meaningfulness, and unity. In this sense, philosophical theory originates in actuality. Man's rational striving leads to the construction of a theory of knowledge (a reflection on the relation of mind to experienced reality)./.....

reality). Epistemology, however, does not satisfy the urge to unity and synthesis, and points beyond itself to the moral realm. The theory of the Ought which originated in man's actual striving is now postulated by Kant as a model on which actual practice is to be based. However, in the link between actual practice and moral theory, and especially in the translation of this theory into practice again, a number of issues arise which are especially significant for an assessment of Kant's moral and political philosophy. The next two chapters concern themselves with this theme.

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C H A P T E R   T H R E E

KANT'S RATIONALISATION OF THE PRACTICAL AND THE  
THEORY OF THE OUGHT.

Having analysed Kant's resolution of the problem of metaphysics in terms of the concept of rational striving and proposing a view of metaphysics as including both analysis and synthesis, we come now to an examination of Kant's moral philosophy. We intend to focus on the reciprocal relationship between Theory and Practice as it emerges in the connection between knowledge and ethics, and within ethics itself, and finally to discuss Kant's intended rationalisation of the practical domain by the integration of Reason into it. We take our cue from Kant's own words: "... all interest is ultimately practical, and even that of speculative reason is conditional, and it is only in the practical employment of reason that it is complete." <sup>1</sup>

(a) The Reciprocal Relationship Between  
Theory and Practice with respect  
to Knowledge and Ethics.

Kant's critical philosophy is essentially a philosophy of movement and dynamism generated by the  
striving of/....

striving of Reason in its search for comprehensive unity. Such unity is however a rational ideal which is beyond human achievement, since its achievement heralds the end of thought as well as rendering superfluous any further moral effort. The various dualities of the Critical Philosophy - between nature and freedom, knowledge and morality, theory and practice - point to a necessary factor that indicates Reason as a dynamic principle. The finitude and incompleteness of human endeavour means that human reason moves constantly between the component parts of each duality, seeking not an identity of opposed components but rather a unified whole within which these components occupy their rightful positions. Reason strives constantly towards unity and the overcoming of incompleteness but this very incompleteness of vision as a feature of the human condition ensures that reason continues to strive.

The distinction between Theory and Practice with respect to knowledge and ethics in the Critical Philosophy is grounded in the ontological fact of rational striving. But this ontological ground is the source of the unity (not to be understood as identity or merging) between Theory and Practice/.....

and Practice as well. This is because scientific knowledge and moral conduct are both rooted in the striving of Reason which is continually pointing beyond itself in its search for an essential unity and completeness of vision. Kant's own words: "The strife of dialectic is a necessity of reason,..."<sup>2</sup> can take on a more significant meaning if "dialectic" is seen to indicate not only the inevitable rise of fallacies and illusions by the misapplication of the Ideas of Pure Reason, but also the movement towards new positions on the basis of the limits of previously held ones. Reason has certain ultimate aims or ends or needs. Its striving and its self-legislation to this end is for the sake of complete and systematic unity within a framework encompassing the realms of Necessity and Freedom. With respect to the two realms Kant himself says: "The legislation of human reason, or philosophy, has two objects - Nature and Freedom, and thus contains not only the laws of nature, but also those of ethics, at first in two separate systems which, finally, merge into one grand philosophical system of cognition. The philosophy of Nature relates to that which is, that of Ethics to that which ought to be."<sup>3</sup>

It is within the framework of the striving of  
Reason that/.....

Reason that the various distinctions and reciprocal relationships arise and co-exist as elements of a unified end or purpose, an end which is a demand and a postulate of Reason. Since it is always one and the same Reason which ever pursues its ends, as Kant points out in his second Critique, the distinction between theoretical and practical reason indicates no fatal cleavage but only the striving of Reason under different aspects or interests. The ends which Reason could not achieve under its theoretical aspect find realisation under the practical aspect of Reason. Theoretical reason points inevitably beyond itself to practical reason within the context of rational human aspiration towards completeness. The reciprocity of Theory and Practice with respect to knowledge and ethics consists in the fact that the cognitive limitation of theoretical reason is not definitive in the sense of undermining the role and power of Reason in general, but is actually supplemented and even transcended by the role of practical reason. In turn, practical reason must refer back to theoretical reason for a function it does not perform i.e., to provide for the cognitive apprehension of phenomena which ensures scientific knowledge.

The unity of theoretical and practical reason  
is guaranteed/.....

is guaranteed by a relationship of limitation and transcendence, of constant and inevitable referral, the one to the other. To see the limitation of theoretical reason as final is contrary to the expectations of Reason itself. For example, in the Critique of Pure Reason theoretical reason assumes the possibility of Freedom in order to fulfil its search for speculative unity. It is, nevertheless, unable to provide cognitive assurance about the concept of Freedom. What could only be assumed by theoretical reason is, however, given validation by practical reason, thus ensuring two points - preventing the dialectical (fallacious) use of theoretical reason which may be tempted, in the absence of the role played by practical reason, to assume cognitive status for the concept of Freedom, and secondly, completing the totality of conditions demanded by Reason by indicating a valid regulative use of the concept of Freedom as an Idea of Reason. To see the theoretical limitation as final is to overlook the totality of conditions in terms of which Reason operates. The essential nature of Reason is threatened by not seeing theoretical and practical reason as standing in a fundamental relationship with each other - pointing to each other, and each necessary for/.....



necessary for the existence of the other.

The necessary relationship between theoretical and practical reason can also, from the point of view of the Critique of Pure Reason, be seen as the employment of Reason in its negative and positive uses. In its negative employment it still possesses great value. It indicates to Reason that comprehensive truth cannot be achieved by speculative or theoretical means alone, and hence functions as "a discipline for the determination of the limits of its (Reason's) exercise; and without laying claim to the discovery of new truth, it has the modest merit of guarding against error." <sup>4</sup> But the negativity within Reason indicates its positive counterpart - the "positive cognitions which belong to the domain of pure reason," <sup>5</sup> and which "form the goal towards which reason continually strives." <sup>6</sup> Rational striving makes possible the movement from the negative to the positive use of Reason. The positive exercise of Reason lies within the domain of practical reason. Since truth as a whole is not limited to phenomenal experience, Kant is able to locate man's essential destiny as lying beyond the mechanical determinism of the sphere of Necessity and within the sphere of Freedom.

The unity/....

The unity of Reason which underlies the reciprocal relationship between Theory and Practice had already been postulated by Kant in the Critique of Pure Reason which, as Gottfried Martin points out, is not only "a theory of mathematical natural science" <sup>7</sup> but is also "to the same degree an ontology." <sup>8</sup> The main works outlining Kant's moral theory - the Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals and the Critique of Practical Reason present the details of Kantian moral analysis on the basis of a unity of reason already presupposed in the first Critique. The theory of the Ought which will be discussed in detail later in this chapter, is a product of the tension between theoretical and practical reason. The former, operating within the sphere of necessity, is confined to what is, whereas practical reason relates to that which ought to exist in the sphere of moral activity. To limit reason to the sphere of the is is to eliminate the possibility of human freedom and moral willing, both of which are, for Kant, practical realities. "The existence of practical freedom can be proved from experience alone. For the human will is not determined by that alone which immediately affects the senses; on the contrary, we have the power, by calling up the notion of what is useful or hurtful  
in a /.....

in a more distant relation, of overcoming the immediate impressions on our sensuous faculty of desire. But these considerations of what is desirable in relation to our whole state, that is, is in the end good or useful, are based entirely upon reason. This faculty, accordingly, enounces laws, which are imperative or objective laws of freedom, and which tell us what ought to take place, thus distinguishing themselves from the laws of nature, which relate to that which does take place. The laws of freedom or of free will are hence termed practical laws." <sup>9</sup> So the limitation of theoretical reason to the is cannot be final but must point beyond itself to reason in its practical aspect, whose legitimate area of activity is the sphere of the ought. The limitation of Theory points to its transcendence in Practice.

"Theoretical" and "Practical" with respect to knowledge and ethics refer specifically to the distinction between nature and freedom. The former refers to elements grounded in phenomenal experience and yielding objective knowledge of nature, whereas the latter refers to the exercise of the same a priori reason completely separate from the influence of empirical conditions and motivations. Whereas theoretical reason guarantees scientific knowledge, practical reason/...

practical reason makes possible an autonomous moral existence. The limitations of neither are self-destructive. On the contrary, their combined strengths with respect to differentiated functions and spheres of activity provide the comprehensiveness necessary to Reason in its striving after systematic unity of conceptions. The underlying ontological dynamism given by the fact of striving is able to contain the related but opposed positions of Theory and Practice. The positive element of Theory with respect to knowledge of phenomena encounters its negation or restriction in the Ideas of Reason (God, Freedom and Immortality) which are only regulative and not constitutive. The negative or limiting element in Practice (it does not seek nor can it establish scientific knowledge of objects) has its positive counterpart in the substantiation or validation of the Ideas of Reason, especially the concept of Freedom. Without the validation by practical reason of the Idea of Freedom and its subsequent regulative employment, it would be meaningless to speak of morality and moral obligation.

In Chapter Two we examined the role of theoretical or speculative reason within the realm of necessity in terms of the idea that the search for theoretical  
certainty which/.....

certainty which issued in knowledge is itself an aspect of the general striving of Reason towards unity and completeness. Theoretical reason was seen to be able to provide man with scientific knowledge of phenomena but truth was something that could not be restricted to the merely phenomenal. Its scope, like that of Reason, extends to a broader purpose which both presupposes as well as makes possible an authentic moral consciousness. The distinction between theoretical and practical reason points actually to the dimension of morality. Beck points out: "This dualism is the necessary presupposition of Kant's ethical theory. Without it, science would be the only occupant of reason. With it, science is limited in two respects : a boundary is fixed beyond which scientific knowledge cannot aspire and the possibility is established that natural law may not be the only form of causality." <sup>10</sup>

The limitations of theoretical reason illuminate the possibility for practical reason to fulfil the as yet unsatisfied demands of Reason.

(b) The Primacy of the Practical

Thus far we have been stressing the ultimate unity of theoretical and practical reason by seeing their common ground in rational striving. But

such unity/.....

such unity does not imply the equal status of theoretical and practical reason. Kant, already in the Critique of Pure Reason, points to the ultimate primacy of reason in its practical interest. The highest ends of Reason, the systematic unity it seeks in its striving (which theoretical reason could not achieve on its own) is made possible in the sphere of practical reason. In the Critique of Practical Reason Kant writes:

".... when pure speculative and pure practical reason are combined in one cognition, the latter has the primacy, provided, namely, that this combination is not contingent and arbitrary, but founded a priori on reason itself and therefore necessary. For without this subordination there would arise a conflict of reason with itself; since, if they were merely co-ordinate, the former would close its boundaries strictly and admit nothing from the latter into its domain, while the latter would extend its bounds over everything and when its needs required would seek to embrace the former within them. Nor could we reverse the order and require pure practical reason to be subordinate to the speculative, since all interest is ultimately practical, ..." <sup>11</sup>

It is clearly the interest of Reason in its  
practical operation/...

practical operation that is prior and determinative of all other interests. The notion of the primacy of the practical can be understood on various levels. But before such an analysis can be undertaken the various connotations of "practical" must first be established in order to appreciate exactly what Kant meant by his idea of the primacy of the practical. Practical reason is not immediately identical with the practical sphere. The "Practical sphere" itself can be understood in two senses - as the sphere pertaining to what actually happens, where empirically conditioned pragmatic laws operate, and the sphere of practical reason or the moral ought. It is the latter sense of prescriptiveness or normativeness in relation to actuality that Kant intends to convey when he speaks of Practice.

Practice pertains to conduct but not to the conduct ascertainable by or derived from empirical circumstances. It refers to the conduct required of us as beings who are rational, free and autonomous. Practice indicates the sphere of authentic conduct where reason is the sole determinant of the will. This takes us back to the Kantian distinction between Theory and Practice (knowledge and ethics) on the grounds that the former facilitates scientific knowledge because of the integral link with phenomena whereas the/.....

whereas the latter indicates the realm of freedom precisely because the will is determined only by a priori reason, and empirical determination is ruled out to safeguard morality from the threat of heteronomy. Hence Kant's own definition of "practical" : "I term all that is possible through free will, practical." <sup>12</sup> It is within the practical sphere understood in the Kantian sense of ideal rather than actual practice that Reason is able to complete the quest for unity initiated by it in its theoretical aspect within the realm of nature. It is at this point that the sphere of Practice is also the sphere of practical reason.

The terms "morality", "freedom", and "practice" are gradually knit together by Kant into a system where they often function more or less synonymously. A moral being is free because his will is determined by reason and is not empirically conditioned. Freedom is actualised when man observes moral obligation which is, in essence, rational obligation. "Practice" refers to the practical exercise of Reason which facilitates the activity of the moral consciousness which could only be a free consciousness. Underlying all these terms is the dynamic activity of Reason which co-ordinates the various aspects of morality, freedom/....

morality, freedom and practice to give us a unified image of man as a moral personality and Kant's vision of authentic human existence. It is this rational ideal which comprises the theoretical part of Kant's ethics - his Theory of the Ought, and which has to be meaningfully related to "Practice" understood in the sense of what actually happens.

"Practice", then, can refer to conduct in the light of the moral ought (related to the activity of practical reason) or to conduct which is not determined specifically by reason but possibly by hypothetical or pragmatic principles. If the former meaning is taken as the theoretical ideal (which is what Kant intended) and the latter sense indicates actual conduct, the ultimate unity of Theory and Practice within the sphere of ethics itself will be achieved by the gradual subordination of the latter form of conduct to the former. The human aspiration to this stage can again be ascribed to the striving of Reason to unify the sphere of its operations. It is man's duty to strive to transcend the opposition between rational motivation and empirical motivation in order to guarantee a fulfilled human existence.

The notion of a rational and an empirical  
conception of/.....

conception of "Practice" can be meaningfully linked with Beck's idea of the twin roles that man can and does play in Kant's ethics. "Man is considered in two roles in Kant's ethics - man as the moral ideal and man as an empirical character trying to achieve personality. Man in the first role is the archetype for man in the second role. Empirical man always has an obligation to respect personality in the former sense, to serve and promote it." <sup>13</sup>

Man as a moral personality is the authentic occupant of the practical sphere (understood as the normative ideal), whereas empirical man occupies empirically conditioned practice. But these two delineations of man and human conduct are not static. Movement from the latter to the former is both necessitated and facilitated by rational striving.

We are now in a better position to understand Kant's conception of the primacy of the practical. First of all, this can be understood in the sense discussed in Chapter Two, where it became clear that the striving of Reason in general to establish the systematic unity of conceptions is a real and practical need. So even the search for objective certainty by Reason in its theoretical aspect (issuing in scientific knowledge of phenomena) can be seen/....

be seen as the one aspect of a whole that Reason is striving to establish. The search for knowledge is itself a facet of rational striving which ends only with a recognition of the cognitive limitations of theoretical reason with respect to noumena. But rational striving is not paralysed by this limitation because the ends of Reason have not yet been fulfilled. The limitations of theoretical reason are transcended by the possibility of practical reason to complete the system. Even from the point of view of speculative reason, the ultimate interest of Reason can be seen to be practical - the need of reason itself to establish systematic unity.

The above aspect indicated one sense of the primacy of the practical. But the practical (moral) dimension is prior also in another sense insofar as in Kant's view, it circumscribes the dimension of the truly authentic human existence. Theoretical reason has an important role to play but cannot, of itself, establish the essential destiny of man, because this destiny lies beyond the power of the senses (empiricism). "...in the whole faculty of reason it is the practical reason only that can help us to pass beyond the world of sense and give us knowledge of a supersensible order and connection,..."<sup>14</sup>

It is/.....

It is the moral dimension (practice in its prescriptive sense) which puts man in touch with an eternal and abiding reality and also reveals enduring and essential aspects of human nature. Therefore, it has primacy over and above theoretical reason since it constitutes the dimension where the essential humanity of man as a being of reason can best be expressed. Kroner writes: "Kant is of the opinion that the point of contact between man and the supersensible and eternal sphere is to be discerned in the facts of man's moral life, in his self-determination, and in the laws of his moral will; for it is on these laws that the dignity and freedom of man rest." <sup>15</sup> "Practice" (practical reason) raises man above the status of being a mere phenomenon among other phenomena in the realm of necessity.

This aspect of Kant's moral analysis outlines a moral anthropology which represents the nature, destiny and essence of man in terms of certain enduring rational imperatives. Beck observes that "Kant, like Socrates, searched for the essential character of man's nature, a universal law determining its particular manifestations." <sup>16</sup> Kant himself writes : "I shall make distinct the method by which man must be studied, not just man as he is distorted by the /.....

by the variable form which his chance condition impresses upon him and as he has almost always been misjudged even by philosophers, but rather the abiding nature of man and its unique position in creation..."<sup>17</sup>

In the first Critique Kant makes clear the priority of the moral sphere : "the ultimate intention of nature, in the constitution of our reason, has been directed to the moral alone."<sup>18</sup> And again! "In view of the complete systematic unity of reason, there can only be one ultimate end of all the operations of the mind. To this all other aims are subordinate, and nothing more than means for its attainment. This ultimate end is the destination of man, and the philosophy which relates to it is termed Moral Philosophy."<sup>19</sup> In addition to the above assertions of the primacy of the practical, and within the context of the different meanings of "practice", it is also clear that rational practice must be prior to empirically conditioned practice in order to guarantee moral autonomy and freedom.

The claim of practical reason to priority is consolidated by a creative role assigned to it by Kant, which theoretical reason does not possess.

Reason in/....

Reason in its practical aspect is capable of the realisation of its object by means of a practical a priori law. Its creativity lies in its practical capacity to determine the will and produce certain objects, viz., free actions. Theoretical reason possesses no such corresponding creative power within the sphere of necessity. Practical reason is able to create the idea of a moral world and postulate it as an objective reality for the empirical world to pattern itself on.

If the mechanical causality of nature is not the only form of causality and freedom is conceived of as a kind of causality, and if freedom indicates the absence of empirical determination - then the objects of free causality are brought into existence by such causality without depending on the contribution of sensuous intuition, as is necessary under natural causality. This again demonstrates the advantage practical reason has over theoretical reason. Beck writes: "Here, then, we have the one instance in the whole of knowledge where thought can create its object directly, and not by being a cause of a series of events which may terminate in an object." <sup>20</sup> The advantage enjoyed by the categories of freedom over the theoretical (empirical) categories which refer to nature lies/.....

nature lies in the fact that the latter need the intuitions of sensibility in order to provide knowledge whereas "the practical a priori principles in relation to the supreme principle of freedom are at once cognitions, and have not to wait for intuitions in order to acquire significance, and that for this remarkable reason, because they themselves produce the reality of that to which they refer (the intention of the will), which is not the case with theoretical concepts." 21

(c) The Reciprocal Relationship Between Theory and Practice in Ethics.

Having outlined the relationship between Theory and Practice with respect to knowledge and ethics, as well as Kant's notion of the primacy of Practice, we come now to an analysis of the reciprocal relationship between Theory and Practice with respect to Kant's ethics itself. Again, we are able to distinguish two levels on which such a relationship operates. The first which forms the core of Kant's moral philosophy is a distinction between the theoretical and practical concerns of morality in its ideal determinations. An analysis of these related concerns together provides us with Kant's Theory of the Ought - his theory about the essential nature of morality/.....

of morality and its specific manifestations in human conduct. Abbott expresses succinctly this specific Theory/Practice relationship. "The principal question on the Theory of Morals may, with sufficient accuracy for the present purpose, be said to be these : First, the purely speculative question, what is the essential nature of moral rightness? Secondly, the practical questions, What is to man the criterion of his duty? and what is the foundation of his obligation?" <sup>22</sup>

Within the context of Kant's ethics we can distinguish two aspects - the theoretical aspect of establishing the essence of morality apart from any specific reference to man or human nature, and the practical aspect of indicating how man, in whom both rational and sensuous motives prevail, relates to the imperatives of morality - how the universal in morality relates to a particular application within human existence. The latter aspect though practical in direction is still a theoretical issue since it is an outline of Kant's theoretical vision of the Ought with respect to morality. Given that the essence of morality (for all rational beings) is expressed in the form of certain universal and necessary imperatives, and given that man is subject to a /.....

to a conflict between rational and sensuous determination, the question is how ought man to act in order to maximise his rational and human potential. Here, Kant is not concerned with how man does act. The "Ought" of practical reason is a theoretical ought in so far as it is a normative or prescriptive end and the target of striving. At this point, "Practice" within ethics refers to a theoretical outline of authentic conduct.

The necessity of the relationship between Theory and Practice within the Theory of the Ought is easy to understand. A purely theoretical or speculative elaboration of the nature and essence of morality in general hangs in the air unless it is grounded in the practical considerations relating to human conduct and its limits. In this sense, Theory necessarily points beyond itself to Practice where the principles of the former can be seen to have valid and concrete applicability. Practice, of necessity, refers back to Theory because without reference to theoretical ground principles, conduct can have no rational direction. To rephrase Kant himself - Speculation (Theory) without practical applicability is void. Conduct (Practice) without rational direction is blind.

In addition/....

In addition to the Theory/Practice relationship within the Theory of the Ought as discussed above, there exists, with reference to Kant's ethics, a further Theory/Practice distinction - Theory referring to the Theory of the Ought as a whole (both its theoretical and practical concerns) which Kant termed morality and which outlines his normative anthropology, and Practice relating to empirically conditioned motivations, defined by Kant as the sphere of practical anthropology, i.e., a descriptive anthropology pertaining to what is or what happens. Kant also uses the terms "rational" and "empirical" to distinguish between that which ought to exist as a rational imperative (outlined in his Theory of the Ought) and that which actually exists in empirically conditioned practice. This contrast is also covered by the distinction between pure and applied ethics.

Beck points out that although the Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals and the Critique of Practical Reason are supposed to deal with the principles of pure ethics, confusions and ambiguities nevertheless arise because "Kant made no very consistent effort to separate discussion of pure  
from applied/.....

from applied ethics, ..." <sup>23</sup> Even the second Critique which is supposed to be an elaboration of pure ethics (theoretical analysis of the a priori laws of morality) contains discussions pertaining more to applied ethics (consideration of psychological and empirical principles connected with the actual nature of man as subject to both rational and sensuous determination).

By distinguishing between a theoretical (pure) and practical (applied) aspect within the Theory of the Ought as a whole, some of the apparent confusions can be seen to fall away, and applied ethics, which is supposed not to belong within a discussion of pure ethics, especially in the second Critique, can be seen to be the valid and necessary counterpart of pure ethics in its practical aspect of relating the pure moral law applicable to all rational beings to a human will which is in itself not wholly rational. Thus, applied ethics, rather than being seen as an intrusion into the intended pure ethics of the second Critique, is in actual fact a necessary facet of the reciprocity between Theory and Practice within the Theory of the Ought itself. Such a view is in line with Kant's notion that " 'in the construction of a system of pure morality empirical concepts must/.....

concepts must necessarily be brought into the concept of duty."<sup>23</sup>

Kant makes it very clear that the empirical cannot be determinative of duty. It can even be seen to be antithetical to duty and can endanger morality if not confined to its proper place. The empirical, however, must be considered if morality (pure moral theory) is to be meaningfully related to man, for whom the empirical is real or actual in the form of pain or pleasure. In other words, if man is not indifferent to the empirical (and he is not because he experiences pain and pleasure), then, no matter how pure and a priori its ground principles are, moral theory cannot be either. Kant observes:

"Moral conceptions are not perfectly pure conceptions of reason, because an empirical element - of pleasure or pain - lies at the foundation of them. In relation, however, to the principle, whereby reason sets bounds to a freedom which is in itself without law, and consequently when we attend merely to their form, they may be considered as pure conceptions of reason."<sup>25</sup>

Applied ethics is, nevertheless, still prescriptive or normative and therefore part of ideal theory, and can be distinguished from actual ethics, i.e., practical anthropology or the actual conduct of men.

In relation/.....

In relation to the second Theory/Practice distinction we were discussing (between Theory as prescriptive ideal and Practice as actual conduct), the relationship intended by Kant between Theory and Practice is more problematic but real nevertheless, and unity is again effected by rational striving. The actualisation of the theoretical conception of Practice exists as the ideal and ultimate end of rational striving. As such, empirical practice has to be brought in line with it, and it is the power of Reason which makes such co-ordination possible. The ideal is postulated as the necessary teleological summit of Kant's ethics. "... human reason contains not only ideas, but ideals, which possess, not, like those of Plato, creative, but certainly practical power - as regulative principles, and form the basis of the perfectibility of certain actions." <sup>26</sup>

Ultimately, the principles of empirical practice ought to be subordinated to the a priori principles of reason as outlined in Kant's Theory of the Ought. The link between Theory and Practice exists within a teleological structure of which the energizing or motive force is rational striving.

What must be kept in mind, though, is that the unity of Theory and Practice is achieved not by the accommodation by/....

accommodation by reason of the empirical factor (which is pragmatism) but by the triumph of the rational over the empirical. In this case, it is not the practical (empirical) which must take priority because this results in the triumph of heteronomy, which nullifies freedom, responsibility, duty, autonomy - every facet of the authentic moral consciousness. Here, the practical must bow to the superior guidance of rational theory. The empirical/practical has to be rationalised by the infusion of the theoretical principle of the Ought. This point will be discussed further at the end of this chapter.

We now return to a more detailed analysis of Kant's Theory of the Ought in both its theoretical and practical concerns. As mentioned earlier, the speculative or theoretical question revolves around the establishment of the a priori essence of morality, and the practical issue concerns the relation of these theoretical moral principles, which are valid for all rational beings, to the human will which is a will not wholly rational. Kant thus sees his ethics as a practical philosophy, where man ascertains not the reasons of what happens or is, but the laws of what ought to happen, even though such acts never actually take place.

We consider/.....

We consider the theoretical aspect first. Kant set out to establish what constitutes moral rightness on the basis of presuming that morality is a given fact, an experiential reality. "The basis of this theory is man's moral experience. Kant describes this experience as an immediate intuition of the value and importance of moral goodness; as a spontaneous feeling of respect for the moral law and an innate sense of 'ought' or obligation to obey the law's behests." <sup>27</sup> The possibility of morality is never in question. Nor does Kant analyse why morality or moral consciousness are realities for man. "He believes that this moral faculty is as inexplicable as is man's capacity for sensuous intuition, but he accepts it as an ultimate, incontrovertible fact and regards it with awe and wonder." <sup>28</sup>

Though Kant provides no explanation as such for morality in general and man's moral consciousness, it is nevertheless possible to link them with the striving of Reason and with Kant's distinction between the sphere of necessity and the sphere of freedom. Reason strives towards unity of conceptions. We have mentioned earlier on in this chapter that, according to Kant, reason directs itself both to nature and to freedom. If the purposes of reason cannot be fulfilled within the sphere of nature, then we must look to the sphere of/.....

sphere of freedom for completion and fulfilment.  
Hence the existence of morality.

The origin of human moral consciousness or why man should feel obligated by the imperatives of morality can be linked to the fact that man moves in two worlds - the phenomenal world of necessity and the noumenal world of freedom. If man belonged only to the former, freedom and morality would be non-issues. If man belonged only to the latter he would not be subject to sensuous temptation. But since man moves between the two realms, the concept of obligation becomes meaningful and important for him. It is his membership of the noumenal world which makes him aware of the value of rational conduct. It is his membership of the phenomenal world which subjects him to the power of inclination. The notion of duty arises from the tension between these two viewpoints. Kant maintains that our will, because it is free, can be moved by the law of practical reason. This capacity is realised when duty is unconditionally observed.

In the Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals where Kant sees his task as the "search for and establishment of the supreme principle of morality."<sup>29</sup>,

he begins/....

he begins with the presupposition that "common human reason" is able to identify, largely correctly, the components of true morality or moral goodness. Although it operates with only a popular conception, possibly without awareness of the universal implications, the ordinary moral consciousness is correct in its understanding that there is a difference between acts done from duty and acts done from inclination, even though actual human conduct may not always rest on this awareness. The notion of the moral law Kant believed to exist already in the "common reason of mankind..."<sup>30</sup> (though in an unarticulated form) and therefore does not have to be taught as a theoretical issue discoverable only by philosophers. It is a practical existential fact, not a chimera of the imagination, even though we may not observe it and continually make exceptions in our own favour.

Kant's ethical theory then, has as its starting point a practical fact of moral consciousness. Theory does not, in pure and splendid isolation, formulate principles which are then imposed in a superficial way on practice. But if Theory is rooted in a practical fact, what implications does this have for Kant's intention to construct a pure moral philosophy, free from any/....

from any empirical or anthropological element given in practice? <sup>31</sup> Kant argues that even though ordinary moral consciousness is aware of the distinction between acts performed from duty and acts performed from inclination, actual conduct is not necessarily based on this awareness. It is possible that there has never been an instance of true moral conduct, and even if there has, one cannot prove it by means of any definite example. "...though much may be done that accords with what duty commands, it is nevertheless always doubtful whether it is done from duty and thus whether it has moral worth. ...It is in fact absolutely impossible by experience to discern with complete certainty a single case in which the maxim of an action, however much it may conform to duty, rested solely on moral grounds and on the conception of one's duty." <sup>32</sup>

Consciousness of duty does not necessarily indicate observance of duty. Moral awareness is so far only a fact of consciousness and not necessarily a factor in actual practice. The supreme principle of morality, however, cannot be derived from actual experience. It is only because the source of the universality and necessity of the moral principle is a priori reason that moral philosophy can be pure.

So the/.....

So the moral ought (Theory of ideal conduct) is not dependent on any feature of actual human conduct. It is, nevertheless, based on the fact that there is a real possibility for the human consciousness to be a moral consciousness, and that therefore, the ought is not something that hangs in the air but has crucial significance for man. This constitutes a fairly complicated relationship between Theory and Practice and can be traced to Kant's desire to maintain a fundamental unity between them, even under the most problematic conditions.

The fact that ordinary human reason can correctly identify moral knowledge with its component ideas of obligation, duty, etc., indicates the possibility of a rational a priori moral system which is absolute, universal and necessary. Kant's Theory of the Ought in its final form is seen as being not totally alien to human consciousness because, in its preliminary and unelaborated form, it already exists as the content of ordinary moral consciousness. This constitutes a sound foundation later on for a meaningful link between Theory and Practice. There exists as a fact a minimal rationality (consciousness of duty) which can be maximised (observance of duty). If Theory (ideal practice) were totally unrelated to human consciousness, then the difficulty of making it applicable to/....

applicable to Practice would be insurmountable. But, in Kant's view, the ground for the rationalisation (making rational) of Practice by Theory already exists. The unity of Theory and Practice in Kant's ethics operates on different levels and is more complex and sophisticated than appears at first glance. The link between them is again forged by man's rational striving.

It is only because man is a being of reason that the concepts of duty and obligation are meaningful to him. If he were totally sensuously determined, the conflict between duty and inclination would not arise. The consciousness of duty as contained in one's ordinary moral convictions indicates already the presence of reason (as yet in its most unarticulated sense) which, by its striving, aims towards bringing conduct in line with consciousness. The moral law, when articulated, is actually for man the "rational expression of his moral consciousness,..."<sup>33</sup> This indicates also another aspect of the moral law - that it is a command or imperative of a self-legislating will.

Under a heading in the second section of the Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals entitled  
The Autonomy/....

\* The Autonomy of the Will as the Supreme Principle

of Morality, Kant writes: "Autonomy of the will is that property of it by which it is a law to itself independently of any property of objects of volition." <sup>34</sup> If the law had its origin in any other compelling source e.g., God or other desired objects (whether rational or sensuous), the result would be heteronomous morality. So though man is subject to the moral law, he has, as a rational being, legislative power with respect to the law. This again reflects the unity of Theory and Practice insofar as the moral law is not an abstract theoretical ideal imposed on man to facilitate rational practice. If man is both legislator and subject of legislation with respect to the moral law, Theory and Practice do not indicate radically contradictory dimensions of reality. If man is legislator, the practical is fundamentally related to rational theory, theory which it needs to bring it in line with the moral law. Theory is not a merely speculative construction but a practical need.

The unification of Theory and Practice (which is a demand of Reason) also indicates to us Kant's conception of the philosophical task. It is the function of philosophy to uncover and elaborate in a scientific way/.....

scientific way the principle or principles underlying moral conduct as understood by the ordinary moral consciousness. "Philosophy is to elucidate moral common sense and to strengthen it by distinguishing its essential from its accidental features." <sup>35</sup>

In fact, the scientific philosophical approach is necessary to protect ordinary moral wisdom from falling prey to the power of inclination. By a systematic elaboration of the principles of morality, philosophy (as rational theory) strengthens the ordinary moral consciousness. The need to strengthen it arises from the fact that the command of duty represented to man by reason is not universally observed. Kant points to the "natural dialectic" <sup>36</sup> that arises between the laws of duty and the tendency to question these in the interest of inclination. This is because the human will is determined not by reason alone but <sup>by</sup> <sub>^</sub> sensuous motives as well.

The clear and scientific presentation of the conflicting claims of duty and inclination and an indication of the value of each will be invaluable in facilitating rational choice. Hence philosophy operates as an aid to reason in its attempt to secure control over the will. So the descent into philosophy is not, according to Kant, a merely theoretical activity but

a practical/....

a practical need of the ordinary moral consciousness to obtain scientific clarity about its ground principles on the basis of which it can engage in rational decision and conduct, while avoiding the possibility of confusing rational moral principles with opposing principles based on inclination.

The striving of Reason is again highlighted in the passage from a popular common sense form of rational awareness (the ordinary moral consciousness of man) to an authentic scientific rationality given in philosophy as rational theory. Common reason as a minimal rationality points beyond itself to practical reason and its effective agent - the authentic moral personality. But why should man choose to act according to reason when he is also affected by inclination? What pleasure or satisfaction does this choice bring? Kant argues that it is impossible to demonstrate theoretically that the moral law, which has no element of sensibility, can produce any sensible feelings. It is sufficient to say that the law interests us as valid for man because it originates in our "will as intelligence, and hence from our proper self." <sup>37</sup>

Kant had set out to establish in a theoretical way the essential nature of morality. But the theoretical was seen to be inexplicably linked to a practical fact of human/.....

of human consciousness (the awareness by the ordinary moral consciousness of the distinction between acts done from duty and acts from inclination). And then again, this ordinary practical moral awareness is to be consolidated by philosophy which brings us back to the realm of theory. And finally, this theoretical consolidation is not for the sake of theory itself but for a practical goal - the possibility of effective decision-making and conduct on the basis of clearly delineated options. Theory and Practice are indissolubly linked together in a system of reciprocal interest.

So far we have dealt only with the starting point of Kant's ethical analysis - man's ordinary moral convictions. We have yet to consider what Kant thought constitutes the core of moral rightness. Kant makes it clear that the principles which he believed comprise the essence of morality are valid for rational beings in general and are neither solely derived from the nature of human moral agents nor applicable only to them. Any fact about human nature cannot form the basis of moral essence. Otherwise, morality is fatally tinged by empiricism. "...the ground of obligation here must not be sought in the nature of man or in the circumstances in which he is placed, but a priori solely in the concepts of pure reason,...all moral philosophy rests solely on/....

solely on its pure part. Applied to man, it borrows nothing from knowledge of him (anthropology), but gives him, as a rational being, a priori laws." <sup>38</sup> So though the moral law exists for man as a rational being, it does not exist because of him. It has solely to do with his rationality and is valid for all rational beings. The application of the moral law to man, who is not fully rational, forms the practical aspect of Kant's Theory of the Ought which will be discussed later on this chapter.

The kind of morality which is binding on all rational beings can be located in three propositions outlined in the first section of the Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morality. The first indicates that acts which possess moral significance are those performed from duty. The second principle is: "An action performed from duty does not have its moral worth in the purpose which is to be achieved through it but in the maxim by which it is determined. Its moral value, therefore, does not depend on the realization of the object of the action but merely on the principle of volition by which the action is done without regard to the objects of the faculty of desire." <sup>39</sup> And the third, again in the form of a quotation: "Duty is the necessity of an action executed from respect/.....

from respect for the law." <sup>40</sup> These three propositions indicate the possibility of achieving an end given by reason, that is, the development of a will good in itself and not as a means to anything else. This is itself a practical end as Kant points out since reason in its practical aspect is able to determine the will and produce its own objects in the form of free or moral acts. "...reason, which recognizes its highest practical vocation in the establishment of a good will, is capable only of a contentment of its own kind, i.e., one that springs from the attainment of a purpose which is determined by reason, even though this injures the ends of inclination." <sup>41</sup>

For Kant the value of a good will supersedes even that of happiness. The end of reason is not happiness although Kant was able to accommodate this strong human inclination with his notion of happiness deserved in accordance with moral worth. Although it is an end which man seeks, a universally acceptable theoretical definition of the exact content of happiness is impossible because of the infinite variety of situations and the contingency of practice. As such, it can be a divisive end which is the opposite of the harmony that a universal law can promote. One cannot establish a law or absolute criterion for happiness which can/....

which can function as an ought because it is "an ideal not of reason but of imagination, depending only on empirical grounds." <sup>42</sup> Kant makes it clear that man should not renounce claims to happiness entirely but realise "only that the moment duty is in question we should take no account of happiness. It may even in certain respects be a duty to provide for happiness; .... But it can never be an immediate duty to promote our happiness, still less can it be the principle of all duty." <sup>43</sup>

If happiness was man's ultimate end, the instincts would have served him better for its achievement, since it is the idea given by the sum total of our instincts. But Kant has already indicated that man's will is not completely sensuously determined. That man understands concepts like moral obligation and duty is an indication of the fact that we do in fact possess reason (though minimal to start off with but pointing beyond itself to a fully fledged rationality). If we possess reason we must be directed to an end other than happiness, an end given by reason and achievable by it. Although this end (a will good in itself) may conflict with and frustrate the ends of inclination, it is nevertheless to be pursued with assurance, since it enables us to transcend heteronomy/.....



heteronomy (which is the end of empirical practical reason) and enter the realm of morality or autonomy. This is an imperative binding on man not as a theoretical demand but a practical one, in so far as it confers on him dignity, personality, humanity, authenticity - all genuine human aspirations. It is morality which gives to man access to a dimension which enables him to transcend his position as a member of the sphere of necessity. It gives him the status which Beck succinctly describes as: "Man is in the world but not of it." <sup>44</sup>

How exactly does practical reason realise its object? It does so by means of one supreme law or moral principle which in one of Kant's formulations reads: "Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law." <sup>45</sup> All moral principles are deducible from this supreme principle so that, though the actual content of duty may vary with circumstances, the imperative stands before one as the absolute criterion of one's duty. If reason can be practical at all, it is possible only through the moral law. "...if man is capable of action at all, if ...reason can in any manner be practical, then pure reason must be capable of moving him to act. From this, it follows that the moral law/.....

moral law is valid. ....if man is capable of action at all, then he is bound by the Categorical Imperative." <sup>46</sup> If morality (as rational conduct) is possible at all, then the moral law must be the ground principle of human conduct. The law then becomes "... the primary object of investigation."<sup>47</sup>

This brings us to Kant's discussion of Freedom, which he believed to be the fundamental presupposition of the moral law. It is also the key notion which delineates the practical aspect of Kant's Theory of the Ought. The traditional opposition between Nature and Freedom is transformed by Kant into a positive relationship of co-existence by his distinguishing reason into a theoretical and a practical aspect. If there were to be a real contradiction between nature and freedom, Kant argues that it is the latter which will invariably be sacrificed. This will render moral discourse meaningless and reduce man to being merely acted upon in the sphere of necessity, instead of acting as an autonomous and rational agent. The genuine co-existence, then, of nature and freedom is a necessity. "...reason in its speculative purpose finds the way of natural necessity more well-beaten and usable than that of freedom; but in its practical purpose the footpath of freedom is the only one on which it is possible to make use/....

make use of reason in our conduct..... Philosophy must therefore assume that no real contradiction will be found between freedom and natural necessity in the same human actions, for it cannot give up the concept of nature any more than that of freedom." 48

The existence of both aspects is necessary for the activity of Reason, which, when it reaches a limit in one sphere is then able to turn to the other for the completion of its ends.

Kant makes it clear that from the theoretical point of view we can never prove that reason can be practical or how freedom is possible. Yet it is necessary from the practical point of view to operate with these notions. Also, from the logical point of view these ideas involve no contradiction, so that the ideas can be taken as valid although only within the practical dimension. Although freedom cannot be known, it must of necessity be presupposed by our reason. This stipulation of Kant's indicates his reluctance to make epistemological claims which may be problematic in terms of his own criteria, while at the same time showing how the co-existence of nature and morality depends essentially on the phenomena/ noumena distinction. "... while I cannot cognize , I can quite well think freedom, that is to say, my representation of it/.....

of it involves at least no contradiction, if we bear in mind the critical distinction of the two modes of representation (the sensible and the intellectual) and the consequent limitation of the conceptions of the pure understanding, and of the principles which flow from them.... Now morality does not require the speculative cognition of liberty; it is enough that I can think it, that its conception involves no contradiction, that it does not interfere with the mechanism of nature. But even this requirement we could not satisfy, if we had not learnt the two-fold sense in which things may be taken; and it is only in this way that the doctrine of morality and the doctrine of nature are confined within their proper limits." 49

The Critique of Practical Reason even more explicitly than the Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals elaborates on the following aspects:

(a) a more fully marked out conception of Freedom than had been presented either in the first Critique or in the Foundations, and which Kant defines as the "keystone of the whole system of pure reason,...." 50

(b) an effective/....

- (b) an effective relating of the moral law, which is valid for all rational beings, to man who is not wholly rationally determined.

It is these two aspects which bring us to the practical aspect of Kant's Theory of the Ought - the aspect concerned with the connection between the theoretically established moral law (as the essence of moral rightness) and man who is at the same time a member of both phenomenal and noumenal realms.

Thus far we have presented the theoretical or speculative aspect of Kant's Theory of the Ought - the uncovering of the essence of morality located by Kant in the moral law or Categorical Imperative. We have seen that some of the salient features of this theoretically established ground principle of morality are that:

- (a) it is pure in the sense that it is given by a priori reason.
- (b) it is universally and necessarily valid for all rational beings.
- (c) it is already presumed, though in an unarticulated way, by the average moral consciousness/....

consciousness (which already points to the practical aspect).

(d) it is a normative or prescriptive ideal circumscribing the dimension of the Ought.

(e) it is given to man by his own legislative reason (thus eliminating the danger of heteronomy from morality).

From the point of view of this thesis, only (a) and (b) can be said to fulfil Kant's intention to uncover the essence of morality as derived solely from the nature of rationality itself and not from any fact of human nature or experience. (c), (d) and (e) already point to the practical aspect of Kant's Theory of the Ought - the link with man. (c) and (e) indicate that the moral law is not the imposition of an alien principle on human practice, because, in its unarticulated form, it already exists in human moral consciousness (in actual practice). In its articulated form it is the product of the self-legislation of rational man (in ideal practice). (d) indicates that the Categorical Imperative is binding on all rational beings but that it assumes the form of an ought or carries the notion of obligation for man because he is the occupant/.....

the occupant both of the phenomenal and noumenal worlds. This reveals to us that Theory and Practice within the Theory of the Ought are integrally related to each other. The formal principles of morality as applicable to all rational beings are meaningful to man only because they are applicable to him as a rational being who is at the same time a sensuous being. There exists a supreme principle of morality valid for all rational beings. Therefore it is valid for man as well, but in the form of an ought.

We now return to the two issues which are fundamental aspects of the practical aspect of the Theory of the Ought - the concept of Freedom and the relationship between the moral law and man, two issues which are closely related. The notion of obligation can be seen as the link between the moral law and man, so that the law exists for man as a Categorical Imperative. Consciousness of the moral law by man becomes a fact through consciousness of a feeling of obligation with respect to the moral law. Beck writes: "The moral fact - the phenomenon to be explained and rendered intelligible - is the consciousness of obligation to carry out the terms of the moral law. We have no independent faculty of intuition or moral sense to/....."

sense to give us the concept of the good as something to be achieved; the mode in which moral concern first arises is obligation, expressed by the law and its imperative, ...." 51

On the level of experience, in the face of the pressure of sensuous determination, it is still possible for one's consciousness to obtain an awareness of the moral law by a consciousness of an alternative mode of determination - which is the consciousness of being obligated by the moral law to determination by reason. This fact reveals the reality of Freedom. Awareness of obligation to one factor rather than to another indicates the possibility of choice. Choosing is a meaningful activity only under the condition of Freedom. Kant illustrates this with an example in the Critique of Practical Reason of the man asked by his ruler to bear false witness against an honourable man, and to bear such witness under threat of execution. Kant insists that although such a man may not affirm whether he would lay down his life in the cause of truth and justice, he must admit the possibility of being able to do so. Man can, therefore, become conscious of his freedom which is only possible because the moral law constitutes an ought.

The notion/.....

The notion of Freedom as signifying the possibility of choice can be linked with Beck's effective resolution of a dilemma arising from the idea that only a good will is free - an interpretation possible because of different formulations employed by Kant on different occasions. The problem arises from the issue of whether only a good will is a free will and whether evil indicates the absence of free choice. Beck overcomes this problem by ascribing two meanings and two functions to Will, already indicated by Kant's use of Wille and Willkür - "Wille as practical reason, the legislative function, and Willkür, as the executive faculty of man." <sup>52</sup> Wille is actually autonomous pure practical reason which furnishes Willkür with the moral law which is then free to observe any of the following:

- (a) act out of respect for the moral law, giving us the moral will, or
- (b) act in accord with the law, giving us the legal will, or
- (c) act in a manner opposed to the law, as under sensuous determination, giving us the evil will.

In all/.....

In all three cases, however, Willkür possesses full freedom of choice. The ground of this freedom is actually the freedom associated with all rational will - that of Wille which only issues orders which Willkür may or may not obey. Wille itself does not act at all. Beck correctly argues that the distinction between Wille and Willkür enables Kant to offer a valid theory of moral evil, the overcoming of which is a necessary target of rational striving. In its separate functions as Wille and Willkür, there is nevertheless only one Will, linked in both respects to reason. From the point of view of the distinction between Wille and Willkür, the aim of rational striving is the elimination of any contradiction between the legislative and executive functions of the will. From the human point of view, striving will continue because this contradiction cannot be overcome in any final sense.

The idea of Freedom is clearly seen by Kant as possessing effective reality. In the first Critique, Kant had, by his resolution of the 3rd antinomy, shown that Freedom is a possibility, a fact which has crucial implications for both theoretical (cognition) and practical (ethics) reason. In relation to the former, theoretical reason must think the possibility of /....

possibility of Freedom "lest the supposed impossibility of what it must at least allow to be thinkable should endanger its very being and plunge it into an abyss of scepticism." <sup>53</sup> If theoretical reason is to be able to continue its task of seeking a totality of conditions or a unified world, it can do so only on the assumption of Freedom. But the resolution of the 3rd antinomy also establishes the possibility of Freedom as a kind of causality (as distinct from natural or physical causality).

The first Critique had already established the possibility of Freedom from both theoretical and practical points of view, but its practical reality is made explicit in the second Critique, where it is also seen to give objective reality to the remaining two ideas of Reason, those of God and Immortality. And it is through the moral law that the reality of Freedom is established. Kant describes the unique relationship between the moral law and freedom in a much-quoted phrase: "...freedom is the ratio essendi of the moral law, while the moral law is the ratio cognoscendi of freedom. For had not the moral law been previously distinctly thought in our reason, we should never consider ourselves justified in assuming such a thing as freedom, although it be not contradictory./....

not contradictory. But were there no freedom, it would be impossible to trace the moral law in ourselves at all." 54

An analysis of the idea of Freedom will reveal at the same time the relationship between the moral law and man as indicated by the last sentence of the above quotation. It also brings into sharp focus the several dualisms in Kant's moral philosophy - the world of sense and the world of the understanding, man as a phenomenal being and as a noumenal being, the possibility of sensuous and rational determination of the human will, the notions of natural and free causality. Rational striving within the context of these dichotomies aspires towards the creation of the authentic moral personality with an autonomous will, where Willkür obeys the moral law given by the Wille as practical reason. In this lies the possibility for pure reason to be practical. Pure reason can be practical (can determine the will in an a priori manner without reference to empirical motivations) because freedom as causality is real. This points to Kant's conception of the negative and positive aspects of Freedom. In its negative sense it indicates non-dependence on or freedom from inclination or empirical motives. In its positive sense it indicates

the determination/....

the determination of the will by the "legislative" form of the law as given by reason.

We have already mentioned earlier that the concept of obligation points to the connection between the a priori moral law and man. But how do we come to consider ourselves as standing under an obligation? This brings us again to the earlier mentioned dichotomies in Kant's theory and the relationship of dynamic strife between the two factors of each dichotomy, a constant interplay that is produced by the striving of reason towards completeness. This striving as the striving of practical reason points to the Summum Bonum which Kant defines as the "unconditioned totality of the object of pure practical reason....." <sup>55</sup> Reason in both its theoretical and practical aspects seeks to find the unconditioned, and all its striving is to this end. Kant, however, ever watchful against the threat of heteronomy in morality, makes it clear that "though the Summum Bonum may be the whole object of a pure practical reason, i.e., a pure will, yet it is not on that account to be regarded as its determining principle; and the moral law alone must be regarded as the principle on which that and its realization or promotion are aimed at." <sup>56</sup>

The concept/..

The concept of the Summum Bonum leads us to the remaining two Ideas of Reason - the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. In Kant's view the Summum Bonum includes two elements which can also be seen in terms of Theory and Practice - moral worth (theoretical ideal) and happiness (practical need). There is no necessary connection between these two elements in the world. And man, not being the cause of what is, has not the power to harmonise these two elements. But if the Summum Bonum is the necessary object of pure practical reason, then the existence of God as the principle of harmony between happiness and morality must be postulated. If reason in its striving imposes on man the duty of pursuing the Summum Bonum, then the existence of God becomes a morally necessary postulate. That this Idea of Reason is no mere theoretical ideal but very much a practical concern is clear from Kant's idea that the moral necessity of God's existence is "subjective, that is, it is a want, and not objective,.."<sup>57</sup> It serves a practical purpose issuing in what Kant calls pure rational faith. As for immortality of the soul, if holiness of will (perfect observance of the moral law) is an ideal of the striving reason, then this "endless progress is only possible on the supposition of an endless duration of the existence and personality/.....

and personality of the same rational being.....  
The summum bonum, then, practically is only possible  
on the supposition of the immortality of the  
soul;" 58

The question of God and of man's duty in  
relation to the Divine is investigated in greater  
detail in Kant's Religion within the Limits of Reason  
alone. What is clear, however, is that by seeing  
rational religion as the necessary conclusion or  
summation of morality, Kant anchors morality even  
more firmly in the practical, insofar as the religious  
need which is also the need or aspiration towards a  
supreme cause or condition of existence, is essentially  
a practical need. This aspect is taken up again in  
Chapter Five.

With reference to the dichotomies which reveal  
to us why we stand in a relationship of obligation  
towards the moral law - in the first Critique, from  
the point of view of Theory and for the sake of  
cognition, Kant had employed the distinction between  
a phenomenal world of which knowledge is possible, and  
a noumenal world where no such knowledge is possible.  
This distinction is of crucial significance from the  
point of view of practice (ethics) where reason produces  
its own/....

its own objects through the mechanism of a free causality in contrast to natural causality. If man were subject only to natural causality, the notions of moral responsibility and freedom would be meaningless. We would be limited to the position described by the antithesis of the 3rd antinomy. But Kant had resolved this antinomy on the basis of a distinction between the world of phenomena and the world of noumena. This dualism, itself arising from the distinction between theoretical and practical reason, plays a crucial role in Kant's resolution of the problem of metaphysics and in his moral philosophy. The whole notion of moral progress depends on the concept of a reciprocal relationship between the two aspects of the dualism within the broad context of rational striving.

As a partially rational, partially sensuous being, man's will is subject to two kinds of causal mechanisms - natural and free causality. This brings to the fore the idea of a struggle or conflict between reason and inclination to determine the will. Beck points to the "military symbolism" in Abbott's translation of Kant's view of the status of moral reason in relation to inclination ("the moral disposition militant."<sup>59</sup>) Kant makes it clear that when the will acts in accordance with/....

accordance with the moral law, it does so "not only without the co-operation of sensible impulses, but even to the rejection of all such, and to the checking of all inclinations so far as they might be opposed to that law." 60

Kant's moral philosophy is permeated by his vision of a perpetual struggle between the power of inclination (which prevents man's fulfilment as a rational being) and the power of reason which points to the good. The humiliation of the former power (self-love) by the moral law produces a positive feeling of respect for the moral law as that which puts man in touch with reality through a rational mode of existence. It is this feeling of respect, which Kant insists is not empirical in origin but a priori, that makes us stand in a relationship of obligation to the moral law. Respect for the moral law obligates man so as to produce in his consciousness an awareness of where his duty lies - to rise above the needs of inclination to a life of virtue through reason. Kant's examples of virtue in the Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals stress the necessity for reason to triumph over inclination. By man's striving for virtue the awareness of duty is transformed from a mere idea of his consciousness to a real fact of conduct.

The struggle/....

The struggle for virtue in view of human finitude is never ending. Striving is a permanent feature of human existence since, even if Reason is on the way to virtue, it must constantly be on guard against the power of inclination. This refusal to take up permanent residence in an imagined or exaggerated moral perfection<sup>61</sup> and the humility and recognition of human limits which it engenders, gives both intellectual and moral appeal to Kant's ethical conception. It also undermines the idea that Kant demands impossible standards of virtue from a humanity incapable of complying with such standards. Ultimately, for Kant, the essence of moral duty is rational striving - the pursuit of virtue through reason, a process beset by many obstacles and setbacks. Therefore, his goal is not wholly unrealistic, and is linked to the necessary activity of man's reason.

The struggle between sensuous and rational determination of the will and the striving to overcome this conflict reveal why the moral law becomes a reality for man in the form of an imperative to duty. What Kant calls a holy will is also subject to the moral law, but since there is a spontaneous co-incidence between such a will and the moral law, there is no relation of obligatory obedience between the holy will and the/.....

and the moral law. This is because such a will encounters no conflict within itself between sensuous and rational determination, between "ought" and "is". However, for man who is also subject to sensuous determination, for whom the struggle between "is" and "ought" is an existential reality and who has an imperfect will, the moral law is an imperative. "The moral law is in fact for the will of a perfect being a law of holiness, but for the will of every finite rational being a law of duty, of moral constraint, and of the determination of its actions by respect for this law and reverence for its duty... Duty and obligation are the only names that we must give to our relation to the moral law." 62

The above discussion completes our analysis of both the theoretical and practical aspects of Kant's Theory of the Ought. We had conceived of the theoretical part of his Theory of the Ought to lie in those aspects pertaining to the validity of certain moral principles as binding on all rational creatures, without consideration of any anthropological or empirical factors; and the practical part of the Theory of the Ought to lie in the relationship between the moral law and man. In the latter aspect, the form of the moral law is specifically related to anthropological aspects of reality which Kant himself

drew attention/....

drew attention to - human moral existence as occurring within the context of the conflict between reason and inclination. His conception of human virtue is only feasible on the basis of assuming this conflict as an experiential or practical reality.

The moral law, in the form of an imperative, is very much related to the nature of man. But it does not, by virtue of that, lose its purity. The application of the law points to the anthropological dimension but its origin is in reason alone. The moral law retains its purity because it is still given by a priori reason and not because of any fact about human nature. The moral law takes on the form of a Categorical Imperative for man because of a fact about human nature (the struggle between duty and inclination) but it does not arise out of that fact. "Practice" requires the modification of the form of the law to make it applicable to man. So the Kantian claim to establish the moral law as an a priori law of reason (as a theoretical framework) without special reference to human volitions can be upheld, although such a law is made relevant to man by its assuming the form of an imperative (in Practice). Kant may now be said to have effectively tied together the theoretical and practical aspects of his Theory of the Ought as a rational and prescriptive pattern of conduct for man.

Considering that/....

Considering that the moral law is a law of reason and therefore valid for all rational beings, and that man is a being for whom the struggle between reason and inclination is real - what constitutes authentic consciousness and conduct? The answer is given by Kant in his Theory of the Ought, which can be seen to have a very practical bearing - man aspires to a moral existence. But insofar as it is prescriptive and not descriptive of actual moral conduct, the Theory of the Ought can be seen also as a theoretical ideal, as circumscribing the dimension of ideal practice.

A re-ordering of actual practice by the activity of Reason so as to bring it in line with ideal practice (as indicated by the Theory of the Ought) is the ultimate goal of Practical Reason. Reason aspires towards systematic unity as well as seeking the unconditioned condition of the totality of things. The need to overcome the discrepancy between actual practice and ideal practice is part of this aspiration. This brings us to the last point of this chapter - the rationalisation (making rational) of actual practice by the integration of Reason (with its norm of ideal practice) into it.

(d) The Rationalisation/...

(d) The Rationalisation of the Practical.

We indicated earlier in this chapter that the sphere of practical reason is not necessarily identifiable with the practical sphere, understood as the sphere of actual empirically motivated practice. The striving of Reason is directed towards the transformation of this practical sphere into the sphere of practical reason. That practical reason could, by its power, create a new possibility of experience which would then supersede or replace experience as we understand it (actual practice) is already mentioned in the first Critique. Kant writes: "Pure reason, then, contains, not indeed in its speculative, but in its practical, or, more strictly, its moral use, principles of the possibility of experience, of such actions, namely, as, in accordance with ethical precepts, might be met with in the history of man. For since reason commands that such actions should take place, it must be possible for them to take place; and hence a particular kind of systematic unity - the moral must be possible."<sup>63</sup>

The transformation of ought into is is the necessary goal of the striving of Reason, and fulfils  
not only/.....

not only the purposes of Reason, but is also the goal of human existence. The moral world which ought to exist can actually exist because man as a rational being has the freedom to bring it into existence. By striving towards the transformation of ought into is, man fulfils his destiny as a rational autonomous being, since the highest ends of man are given by morality. "The supersensible and eternal world is accessible only through moral activity; we are in the process of building it up by living in accordance with moral laws." <sup>64</sup>

The various facets of ideal moral practice as laid down by Kant circumscribe a kingdom of ends. Kant defined this notion as "the systematic union of different rational beings through common laws." <sup>65</sup> As such, it has a crucial role with regard to the rationalisation of the practical. To quote Kant: "Teleology considers nature as a realm of ends; morals regards a possible realm of ends as a realm of nature. In the former the realm of ends is a theoretical idea for the explanation of what actually is. In the latter it is a practical idea for bringing about that which is not actually real but which can become real through our conduct, and which is in accordance with this idea." <sup>66</sup> The transformation of actual practice into ideal practice is the process of striving towards the creation of a kingdom of/....

kingdom of ends.

The authentic reality delineated by the integration of practical reason into actual practice goes part of the way towards answering the third of the three questions Kant set down in the first Critique - what may I hope? With regard to the first question : What can I know?, the Critique of Pure Reason had outlined the possibilities of human cognition in terms of the limits set on theoretical reason. With regard to the second question : What ought I to do?, the Theory of the Ought as outlined in the Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals and the Critique of Practical Reason indicated to man where his duty lay if his conduct were to be rational i.e., in accord with the moral law.

The third question concerning what man could reasonably hope for, Kant saw as being both theoretical and practical. It is practical insofar as "all hoping has happiness for its object, ..."<sup>67</sup> Happiness is a component of morality insofar as it is valid for man and hence cannot be disregarded (though Kant stresses worthiness to be happy rather than the mere satisfaction of human desires.) But the object of hoping is also a theoretical issue in that it indicates  
the end/....

the end that is possible if I act as I ought to do. The ultimate co-incident of ought and is is both the means to happiness (which Kant has already pointed out as the object of hoping) as well as the goal of all rational striving. The question concerning the object of my hope is also the question concerning the object of my striving. My striving is for the sake of what I hope, and it is aimed at overcoming the discrepancy between what ought to be as a dictate of reason and what is as a matter of necessity. Hoping "arrives finally at the conclusion that something is (which determines the ultimate end), because something ought to take place;"<sup>68</sup> The total implications of what man may hope for only emerge after Kant considers the question of authentic practice within the context of his political philosophy, philosophy of history and philosophy of religion, which will be discussed in later chapters.

The co-incident between ought and is as the object of hoping and the goal of striving indicates a unity of Theory and Practice which can be seen to function on two levels. The first level is within the sphere of practice (ethics) and pertains to the relationship between the Theory of the Ought as a normative pattern for ideal practice, and actual practice itself where various motives compete for control of/....

control of the will, and the victor is not always reason. Kant's idea was that the Categorical Imperative as outlined in his Theory of the Ought would, gradually, from being a theoretical ideal, become an actual motivating law of human consciousness and conduct so that, by degrees, the power of inclination would be subordinated to reason. Such a view again reinforces the fundamental role of rational striving envisaged by Kant as the dynamic creative power that acts as a link between ought and is. The implications of this dynamic element of Kant's ethics in so far as it provides a framework for his social and political ideas will be discussed in greater detail in the next two chapters.

When the ought in the form of a law becomes the law of the is, then reason can be said to have successfully penetrated practice (actuality). Theory, (the Theory of the Ought) then, can be said to stand in a relationship of reform with respect to Practice - its task is the purification of Practice. The deficiencies of Practice are to be corrected by prescriptive Theory. But Theory is ultimately for the sake of Practice since all interest is ultimately practical, as Kant himself pointed out. This reflects the underlying unity of Theory and Practice. It must be observed/.....

be observed that this unity is achieved by a movement from ought to is and not the other way around. Kant was adamant that from an is (anthropological features of existence) an ought (as a product of a priori reason) could not be derived. The striving of reason demands the transformation of the ought into an is. The problematic issue of whether the purification of actuality can occur in practice or whether it is possible in theory only can be more effectively resolved only on consideration of the details of the political philosophy.

The co-occurrence of ought and is as a reality within a kingdom of ends points also to another aspect of the unity of Theory and Practice. This level pertains to the distinction between the function of reason under its theoretical aspect (establishment of the principles of cognition) and its practical aspect (establishment of the principles of morality and conduct). Kant had emphatically stated in the Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals that it is one and the same reason which functions under two aspects. But, in both its functions, its goal is the same - the search for systematic unity and the unconditioned. "Reason ceaselessly pursues the unconditioned, both in its theoretical and in its practical employment." <sup>69</sup>

Theoretical reason/....

Theoretical reason in its own search for unity had to assume the possibility of the Ideas of Reason but only in a regulative way. To regard these ideas as constitutive, i.e., as forming a real world, is to fall into antinomic confusion. The search for unity is continued by practical reason with greater success since in this instance, Reason is able to constitute a world in accordance with its own demands. An ought can be made into an is since Reason in its practical aspect can, in accordance with its principles, postulate and actualise a moral world in terms of the power it has to realise its objects. The is which theoretical reason describes is not sufficient to fulfil Reason's demand for unity. So it postulates an ought (as practical reason) which must again become an is. But this is an is which satisfies reason's demand for completeness since it is the realisation of a rational prescription. Caird writes: "'Just because reason cannot find its ideal (of necessary and universal systematic unity) realised in the world, it seeks to realise that ideal for itself.'" <sup>70</sup> The various reciprocal relationships between is and ought, and then ought and is, are intended to reinforce the idea of the unity of theoretical and practical reason.

Kant's final emphasis again indicates the primacy  
of the /.....

of the practical as mentioned earlier in this chapter. The pattern of existence delineated by the ought of practical reason must become the pattern for existence within the realm of nature (theoretical reason). The relationship between Nature and Man, especially rational man, will be discussed in the next chapter. What Kant makes clear within the context of his ethics is that the essence of man and his final aspirations cannot be accommodated adequately within the sphere of necessity, i.e., in terms of the is of theoretical reason. An existence in accordance with man's rational essence must lie within the orbit of practical reason. The ought of practical reason must become the is which replaces the is described by theoretical reason. Kant makes it clear that it is only by the integration of Reason into human existence that the ultimate aims of humanity will be fulfilled. That is why, for him, Reason is not only a theoretical philosophical or intellectual criterion but a real principle of human existence. If this is so, any conflict between Theory and Practice is more apparent than real.

N O T E S

1. KANT, I. : Critique of Practical Reason, p. 218.
2. KANT, I. : Critique of Pure Reason, p.427.
3. Ibid., p.475.
4. Ibid., p.452.
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p. 157.
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Critique of Practical Reason,  
p. xlix.
23. BECK, : op. cit., p. 10, footnote 21.
24. Quoted from Kant by Beck, Ibid., p. 9.
25. KANT, I. : Critique of Pure Reason, p.335.
26. Ibid., p.335.
27. GREENE, T.M. : In his Introduction to Kant's  
Religion within the Limits  
of Reason alone, p.11.
28. Ibid., p. li.
29. KANT, I. : Foundations of the Metaphysics  
of Morals, p. 9.
30. Ibid., p. 21.
31. Although Kant does not universalise a  
feature of empirical moral practice, he  
does universalise a practical (actual)  
need of reason to strive towards  
comprehensive insight, of which process  
the moral sphere forms a part.
32. KANT, : op. cit., pp. 26-27.
33. GREENE, : op. cit., p. lii.
34. KANT, : op. cit., p.67.
35. BECK, L. W. : "Kant's Theoretical and  
Practical Philosophy" in  
Studies in the Philosophy  
of Kant, p. 22.
36. KANT, : op. cit., p. 25.
37. Ibid., p. 91.
38. Ibid., p. 6.
39. Ibid., p. 19.
40. Ibid., p. 19.

41. Ibid., p.15.
42. Ibid., p.41.
43. KANT, I. : Critique of Practical Reason, pp. 186-187.
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45. KANT, I. : Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals, p.44.
46. WOLFF, R.P. : In his Introduction to The Autonomy of Reason, p.28.
47. de VLEESCHAUWER, H.J. : The Development of Kantian Thought, p.118.
48. KANT, : op. cit., p.85.
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50. KANT, I. : Critique of Practical Reason, p.88
51. BECK, L.W. : Commentary on Kant's "Critique of Practical Reason", pp. 127-128.
52. Ibid., p.202.
53. KANT, : op. cit., pp. 87-88.
54. Ibid., p.88, footnote 1.
55. Ibid., p.203.
56. Ibid., p.204.
57. Ibid., p.222.
58. Ibid., pp. 218-219.
59. BECK, : op. cit., p.227.
60. KANT, : op. cit., p.165.

61. Ibid., pp. 176-178.
62. Ibid., p. 175.
63. KANT, I. : Critique of Pure Reason,  
p. 458.
64. KRONER, : op. cit., pp. 2-3.
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Metaphysics of Morals,  
p. 58.
66. Ibid., p. 62, footnote 17.
67. KANT, I. : Critique of Pure Reason,  
p. 457.
68. Ibid., p. 457.
69. WOLFF, : op. cit., p. 213.
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C H A P T E R   F O U R

KANT'S IMAGE OF MAN AND SOCIETY

(a) The Relationship between Morality  
and Politics.

The centrality of the concept of duty both in morality and politics is clearly spelled out by Kant in his Perpetual Peace : "...there can be no conflict between politics, as an applied branch of right, and morality, as a theoretical branch of right (i.e. between theory and practice);" <sup>1</sup> In terms of Kant's often stated pursuit of unity and in terms of the principle of identity which underlies all his investigations, his political vision must be seen as an integral part of his whole metaphysics. The norms and values of politics and social existence are not in any sense arbitrary or peripheral but rooted in Kant's general vision of human existence.

Man's restless striving reason brings him to knowledge in its function as theoretical reason. But reason in its striving cannot be content with the realm of Nature and points beyond the limits of cognition to the moral realm and the possibility of freedom.

As practical/....

As practical reason, its concern is with the moral decisions of the rational will. The factor of striving forms the underlying basis for the connection between knowledge and morality, rendered in the Critical Philosophy as the relationship between theory and practice.

"Practice" as pertaining to the ideal functioning of the rational will rather than to actual conduct itself assumes a theoretical character insofar as the principles of morality operate as a theoretical framework for social and political relations. This results in a theory/practice relationship which sees morality as a theoretical branch of right and politics as the applied branch of right. However, even within the context of politics as an applied branch of right, there is a further distinction between ideal political relations which are based on rational moral principles and a pragmatic politics which aims first at a law-governed society (legality) and only subsequently at one based on moral principles.

Once again we postulate the principle of rational striving as the link between morality (seen as theory) and politics (seen as practice) on the one hand, and between moral politics and pragmatic politics on the other/.....

the other. In the case of the former, human reason strives towards the actualisation of moral principles in the political dimension, and in the case of the latter, pragmatic politics, when seen from the point of view of the whole or the totality of reason's drive towards the unconditioned, can be seen as an authentic part of the striving towards a moral politics rather than a contradiction and a threat to it.

If, as Kant argued, the ultimate ends of man are located in the moral dimension, and if politics is the sphere of the application of the principles of right, then there can be little doubt as to the legitimate status of socio-political analyses within the Kantian philosophy as a whole. The problem of Freedom, whose significance Kant had already underscored in the Critique of Pure Reason is the kind of problem of which discussion remains incomplete if viewed only within an individual context. Individual values and actions, of necessity, have social implications. Hence the passage from the discussion of what is morally obligatory for the individual (in the Critique of Practical Reason and Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals) to the obligations of a citizen in a social and political community (as discussed in the smaller writings on politics, history and law) is a logical and necessary progression.

There is/....

There is at present an increasing tendency to view Kant's writings on politics, history, law and religion as constituting an integral part of the comprehensive Kantian vision. Fackenheim,<sup>2</sup> for example, insists that we are obliged to consider Kant's philosophy of history seriously. "To do so is to treat it as a systematic whole, and as <sup>(a)</sup> systematic part of a larger systematic whole - the Kantian system."<sup>3</sup> Although he concedes the possibility of contradictions, he argues that such contradictions must be seen as the result of philosophical requirements which are themselves conflicting or contradictory rather than "non-philosophic factors, such as irrational changes of mind, a mere yielding to environment influence, or the weakness of old age."<sup>4</sup>

Saner's entire book<sup>5</sup> is devoted to the explication of the thesis that "Kant's political thought ... is the heart of his philosophizing"<sup>6</sup> and that the "substance of his political philosophy stems from his basic metaphysical posture."<sup>7</sup> Hans Reiss,<sup>8</sup> while hesitating to see Kant's political writings as the ultimate end of his thought, nevertheless argues that they "grow organically out of his critical philosophy."<sup>9</sup> Despland<sup>10</sup> sums it up best by accepting L. W. Beck's judgement that "Kant's mature interpretation of history is his application of the principal theses of his critical/....

his critical philosophy to (the) widespread beliefs of his time."<sup>11</sup>

In terms of one of the basic themes employed in this thesis in order to consider the problem of theory and practice - the principle of rational striving seen as the underlying link running through the three Critiques as well as Kant's writings on politics, history and religion - we regard Kant's political philosophy and philosophy of history as his continuing investigation into the role of man's striving reason within the context of the tensions and continuities relating to nature, morality and history. A consideration of Kant's image of man and society within the context of history is therefore an essential complement to any broad analysis of the Critical Philosophy. In this sense, his political theory is not an isolated account of the nature and object of political relations among men but includes two other issues which, for example, Doyle points out as also constituting the core of political thought - "The nature and functions of man; his relation to the rest of the universe which involves a consideration of the meaning of life as a whole; ..." <sup>12</sup>

Kant's political philosophy must be seen, therefore,  
in its/....

in its close conjunction both with theoretical moral principles and the philosophy of history, as an integral part of his metaphysics of rational striving. It provides an image of man and society in the process of evolution from a state of nature, through civilisation (the pragmatic motive) towards a state of culture or moral being-in-the-world. As such, it follows the recurring Kantian paradigm of the conflict between the instinctual (sensuous) and the rational, and the striving of the rational will to achieve mastery.

The political philosophy in relation to the philosophy of history is both a delineation of what is possible for man as a partially rational being within the socio-political context as well as a pointer to religious concerns (explored in detail in the Religion within the limits of Reason alone) which bring into final focus what the entire Kantian investigation has been concerned with to some extent or other - a definition of man and authentic being in view of the finitude of human reason on the one hand and the eternal destiny of man on the other.

Doyle<sup>13</sup> goes on to characterise political thinkers as belonging to two groups - the idealists who are concerned with/....

concerned with the ground principles of ideal politics and the realists who are concerned with the actual workings of states and constitutions and hence look to experience for practical rules. Kant, on first impression and according to his perception of his own philosophising, would quite clearly fall exclusively into the first category. In his ethical theory he makes it quite plain that the appeal to experience is a threat to the sovereignty of the moral law, so that the rules for moral conduct are to be founded only on prescriptive reason. Very often when he speaks of practice he is referring to the ideal rather than the empirical or actual.

Since politics is to take its cue from morality, one assumes that the political ideal is authentic only insofar as, in the formulation of its ground principles, it unconditionally separates itself from political actuality. However, insofar as Kant allies his political theory with a philosophy of history, a close analysis indicates that, in addition to the a priori aspects of his idea of history, there are certain generalisations about socio-political relations which Kant took from actual experience e.g., the antagonism among men combined with their desire or need to be sociable, or that human conduct sometimes reflects glimpses of/.....

glimpses of rational wisdom and at other times gives way to sensuous irrationality.

Kant, in the philosophy of history, while concerned with the theoretical articulation of the components of an ideal (moral) politics, at the same time attempts to anchor this ideal in man's experience of himself as a finite being with an imperfect will. Kant's insistence on a moral politics as the only authentic form of political relations in keeping with the potential of man as a rational being, does not mean that he ignores the reality of political relations based on pragmatic or hypothetical motives. This raises the crucial issue of the relationship between the actual, the pragmatic and the moral within the context of history, and the possibility of moving from the pragmatic to the moral.

Kant is concerned with showing that man's striving reason must lead him to look beyond pragmatic politics, even where it is successful and satisfies many, towards a moral politics. That everyone cannot be wholly satisfied with the pragmatic is itself clear from the fact that it is based on the hypothetical imperative and is therefore not universalisable. As such, it is  
only an/....

only an imperfectly achieved stage of socio-political relations and its problematic nature points beyond itself to a moral politics based on universal reason.

The cornerstones of Kant's political philosophy are the enquiry into the rational principles on which a universal and lasting peace could be established, and the search for a constitutional arrangement by virtue of which the following could be guaranteed by law:

- "1. The freedom of every member of society as a human being.
2. The equality of each with all the others as a subject.
3. The independence of each member of a commonwealth as a citizen." 14

Universal peace and a moral constitution, while not necessarily characteristic of any previous or existing political arrangements, are the only norms in terms of which "a state can alone be established in accordance with pure rational principles of external human right." 15 Kant's philosophical justification of these two aspects must, however, be seen against the background of his philosophy of history. If politics is to be the application of the principles of right/....

of right, history is the process within which such application becomes possible. Unlike the majestic abstraction from all empirical elements of the ethical analyses in the second Critique and the Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals, Kant's political theory is not independent of existential reality. History is the medium within which theory as a vision of ideal practice can interact with actual social and political realities. This is one way in which theory can escape abstraction and gain concreteness.

It is not only political theory which gains concrete possibilities through its rootedness in history but moral theory as well, insofar as it is only in terms of a temporal context that the notions of moral striving and moral progress for the individual become meaningful. Moral perfection is an end towards which the imperfect will can only strive and Kant in fact interprets the pattern of history in terms of the notion of moral progress. This, argues Hancock, makes history both normative and descriptive. "The concept of history is normative, since the pattern of events is not simply inferred from the events of history; it is descriptive, since it asserts that the events do have such a pattern." <sup>16</sup> History is both an account of concrete problems confronting the individual will in a socio-political/....

socio-political context as well as an indication of how these problems ought to be dealt with. The two fundamental principles of his political philosophy (eternal peace and a civil society based on law) are seen by Kant as being rational imperatives which, nevertheless, gain reality only in conjunction with a particular view of man's historical development.

Kant's political philosophy is an association of various elements into a system which reflects both Kant's continuity with established philosophical positions as well as his ability to transcend many of them. There exists, for example, perhaps as the most overwhelming element, the moral orientation - "A true system of politics cannot therefore take a single step without first paying tribute to morality. And although politics in itself is a difficult art, no art is required to combine it with morality. For as soon as the two come into conflict, morality can cut through the knot which politics cannot untie." <sup>17</sup> Kant nevertheless makes it clear that he is aware that this is only a theoretical ideal. "Thus in objective or theoretical terms, there is no conflict whatsoever between morality and politics." <sup>18</sup> However, in the subjective sense where there exists a conflict between the two on account of man's imperfect will, Kant interprets the conflict as a dynamic creative principle rather than/.....

rather than as a destructive one since "it serves as a whetstone of virtue" <sup>19</sup> and hence "ought to remain active,...." <sup>20</sup> This view sums up a basic aspect of Kant's general philosophical position insofar as he regarded not so much the achievement of virtue but the striving towards it as the constant characteristic of human existence. Where conflict ceases, there ceases also the possibility for the attainment of virtue.

One could argue that Kant's attitude is a mere rationalisation for his philosophy of continual rational striving. We would like to maintain rather that this philosophy is a response to the awareness of human existence as a constant struggle to balance or square off tensions and antagonisms and achieve the equilibrium necessary simply to continue. It would be too facile to argue that Kant eternalises conflict (between reason and inclination, between morality and politics, between theory and practice) because he needs to, insofar as, without it, his whole theory collapses. Kant's arguments are based on the realisation that the cessation of conflict implies not only the termination of all moral possibility but also the termination of human existence as we understand it in terms of our finite reason and imperfect will.

Although Kant/....

Although Kant concedes the possibility of moral acts in the future which have not been performed in the past, he at no time envisages our transcending the imperfect human condition. In the Contest of Faculties he argues, for instance, that even where pragmatic progress occurs, such "developments do not mean, however, that the basic moral capacity of mankind will increase in the slightest, for this would require a kind of new creation or supernatural influence."<sup>21</sup> As a consequence of this, the image of man that he proposes is that of a being who vigorously and actively strives towards the realisation of the moral law rather than being a passive victim of the conflict between reason and sensuousness. Insofar as this conflict is an integral feature of our human existence, Kant strives not towards the elimination of this conflict but towards a positive human engagement with it.

In connection with the moral orientation and Kant's position in relation to other philosophical positions on the founding of the state - Hobbes also thought that man's political activity should be geared towards the attainment of peace and security on the basis of reason, but these for him were not moral imperatives. The basis of his political theory is not the morally ideal state but the rationally ideal one - rational only in the sense of/.....

sense of what most effectively promotes the desires of its citizens. Politics is based on interest, not on moral obligation, and citizens accept political coercion and are politically obedient because of the former and not the latter. "There is no moral sense in which they ought to obey their sovereign, but there is a rational sense in which they must do so if they desire ... to enjoy peace and security." 22

Locke, on the other hand, stressed the moral state, arguing that political coercion is acceptable as long as it complies with the moral standards of the law of Nature. For Kant, morality began where the power of Nature ended. He also argued against Locke's view that the primary responsibility of government is to safeguard men's property, "by which is meant their lives, their liberties and their possessions." 23

Rousseau, reacting to the Enlightenment faith in reason and science, had posited a disjunction between science and morality. He also argued against the traditional view of the sure social and political progress of man by maintaining in contrast that civil society corrupts man. Kant overcame the first problem by assigning science and morality to the separate spheres of theoretical reason and practical reason, thus showing that although/...

that although he was prepared to accept a distinction between science and morality, he would not accept a permanent disjunction between reason and morality. Despite his admiration for Rousseau's ethical work, Kant could not share Rousseau's view on the degeneration of man in civil society. For Kant, it is only via the passage through civil society that man has the possibility of entering a moral society.

This brings us to Kant's conception of the several stages within human history, which mark the development of man from a state of nature to a moral existence. This movement, according to Kant, indicates "in the history of the entire species, ... a steadily advancing but slow development of man's original capacities." <sup>24</sup> Kant makes it clear that the final moral progress that he postulates is not confined to isolated individuals or states but applies to mankind as a whole.

In his Idea for a Universal History, a philosophical treatment of history as a process conforming to "certain rational ends" <sup>25</sup>, Kant outlines in the seventh proposition, the three stages of human development. Man begins in a state of nature, characterised by "unrestrained", "brutish" and "lawless" freedom. The only positive thing to be said of/....

said of this stage is that it forces men into "a civil constitution in which all their dormant capacities could be developed."<sup>26</sup> This is the stage of civilisation, typified by Locke's conception of the state as an instrument for promoting the well-being of man. In this stage, although moral progress cannot be judged in terms of empirical evidence as to motive, a kind of pragmatic progress will become evident from facts like a decrease in the violence of the rulers, an increase in civic obedience to the law, "more charity, less quarrels in legal actions, more reliability in keeping one's word, and so on in the commonwealth, partly from a love of honour, and partly from a lively awareness of where one's own advantage lies; and this will ultimately extend to the external relations between the various peoples, until a cosmopolitan society is created."<sup>27</sup>

This half-way stage in the development of man's capacities from "the lower level of animality to the highest level of humanity...."<sup>28</sup> is fraught with some of the gravest dangers for man, stemming from the very prosperity that men enjoy in civil society. The benefits accruing from this purely pragmatic arrangement of socio-political relations creates a stability which may become an obstacle in the way of further striving towards morality/....

towards morality. "We are cultivated to a high degree by art and science. We are civilised to the point of excess in all kinds of social courtesies and proprieties. But we are still a long way from the point where we could consider ourselves morally mature. For while the idea of morality is indeed present in culture, an application of this idea which only extends to the semblance of morality, as in love of honour and outward propriety, amounts merely to civilisation."<sup>29</sup> However, Kant argues that civilisation is not enough because ultimately "all good enterprises which are not grafted on to a morally good attitude of mind are nothing but illusion and outwardly glittering misery."<sup>30</sup>

Progress involves the passage from a state of nature towards the state of civilisation, but the ultimate imperative fully in keeping with the dignity of man is the passage from civilisation to moral culture. This ultimate stage is not a mere quantitative advance on civilisation but a qualitatively new and different phase of human existence. Locke's civilised man is thus only a preliminary to Kant's man of culture. Kant's ideal image of man and society emerges from the interplay of social, political and moral aspects which form part of the evolution of human society.

Kant's conception of a moral politics reflects  
not only/....

not only the spectrum of political and philosophical discussions out of which his own conception eventually emerged, but also his deeply felt conviction that no human action is deserving of the dignity that attaches to rational conduct unless it is done with the moral purpose in mind. This is no less true in the realm of politics because it is the realm of relations between man and man, where the ideals of ethical theory have the possibility of some kind of approximate, if not complete, realisation.

As in the sphere of individual morality, the emphasis in the political sphere is on the concept of obedience to the autonomous self-imposed law. "The democratic community stands in the same relation to the laws it makes as the moral individual does to his own self-determined imperatives of action."<sup>31</sup> The concept of law is fundamental to political relations insofar as it is law which guarantees the freedom of each against all. So man's primary political obligation is the obligation to obey the law. In the Kantian political philosophy, law is fundamental and immutable insofar as it does not depend on changing needs and historical circumstances but is grounded in reason itself.

Gregor shows clearly the connection between law in morality and in politics in her Laws of Freedom.

Since the/.....

Since the "first principle of all duty,..."<sup>32</sup> given by reason itself is the categorical imperative, it is the "ultimate criterion" both of what is "ethically right" as well as "juridically legal....".<sup>33</sup> Since state laws are not arbitrary but grounded in the "notion of freedom.",<sup>34</sup> the imposition of these laws on citizens is necessary for the realisation of external freedom. In fact, Gregor argues that Kant "derives the legal structure of the State from the nature of man as a moral agent."<sup>35</sup>

Ideally or theoretically, then, political power is no more than the power of reason, and political obedience is a rational activity, so that criticism of law and authority is really criticism of reason. Kant imposes severe strictures on civil disobedience, rebellion and revolution even in the face of injustice and for the sake of a more moral existence. "It thus follows that all resistance against the supreme legislative power, all incitement of the subjects to violent expressions of discontent, all defiance which breaks out into rebellion, is the greatest and most punishable crime in a commonwealth, for it destroys its very foundations. This prohibition is absolute. And even if the power of the state or its agent, the head of state, has violated the original contract by authorising the/.....

authorising the government to act tyrannically, and has thereby, in the eyes of the subject, forfeited the right to legislate, the subject is still not entitled to offer counter-resistance. The reason for this is that the people, under an existing civil constitution, has no longer any right to judge how the constitution should be administered."<sup>36</sup>

However, since man is still on the way to a moral politics, it is possible for him to query the law and the obligation to obey in the process of striving towards the Rechtsstaat. The only rights Kant grants to the citizen with respect to political change is the "freedom of the pen"<sup>37</sup> i.e., the freedom to voice publicly respectful criticism of measures which he feels are unjust but this too subject to the approval of the ruler, and secondly the right to a "negative form of resistance, in that they may refuse in parliament to comply on all occasions with those demands which the executive says must necessarily be met for administrative purposes."<sup>38</sup>

One can argue that it is not only Kant's political conservatism that leads him to take this attitude but also that it is logically demanded by the kind of constitutional arrangement which he regards as ideal.

For Kant/.....

For Kant the Rechtsstaat only becomes possible through submission to the universal legislative will of the head of state, and resistance undermines this legal arrangement. If there were to be a law allowing resistance "the supreme legislation would have to contain a provision to the effect that it is not supreme, so that in one and the same judgement, the people as subjects would be made sovereign over the individual to whom they are subject."<sup>39</sup>

It is nevertheless an attitude that is morally perplexing in view of the unity postulated by Kant between morality and politics and his intention that man should strive towards such a unity. The question of the status of the existing law in a less than moral state, even in an unjust or tyrannical state, is never properly resolved and Ladd points out that for legal positivists the "practical effect of identifying law with a part of morals is either to nullify existing law in favour of an ideal law or to elevate all existing law to the status of what is moral;"<sup>40</sup>

For Kant, positive law, even though it is not in accordance with the supreme principle of morality, is absolutely binding, and bad law is better than no law at all, since the latter represents a return to the  
state of/.....



state of nature. "Every actual state represents to a greater or lesser degree of perfection the Idea of the state." <sup>41</sup> Progress in fact is judged in terms of advance towards the Idea of the state. "All our political and legal obligations have their source in the Idea, and so we are obligated to obey the political authorities in actual states because, however imperfectly, they still represent the Idea." <sup>42</sup> This is the justification for political obedience - any state, no matter how tyrannical, contains the potential for a moral politics and hence has a legal advantage over the state of nature.

This places the individual will in the dilemma that if it strives to overcome an unjust political situation in the name of a moral politics, it may in fact be striving towards a greater injustice, firstly insofar as, between the fall of one state and its replacement by another, men revert to the brutish state of nature, and secondly, insofar as the citizen has no guarantee that the new state will be any closer to a moral politics than its predecessor. Kant's political tendency is clear - men have to build on whatever they already possess.

From the ideal point of view, this poses few problems. If all men - ordinary citizens as well as rulers and/.....

rulers and legislators - are engaged in the process of rational striving, change (both political and moral) will come about without the need for revolution. In a less than ideal situation, the prospects for change are not as promising. What is clear, however, is that the active pursuit of right by the citizen or citizens is definitely circumscribed by very rigid rules which can make for a kind of political passivity.

From the theoretical point of view, the characteristics of the Rechtsstaat are clearly delineated. In practice, advance towards it is not ruled out but its possibilities severely limited. Gradual reform according to fixed principles is the only chance for progress. In addition, political reform can only be initiated by the legislative head of state. Kant takes too narrow a view of civil participation in political progress and too optimistic a view of reform from the top.

In addition to the moral orientation in Kant's political philosophy and the notion that law possesses moral authority, there is also the attempt to interpret history as a process of development - a process which Kant sometimes speaks of as being a progress in morality and at other times as only a progress in legality.

(b) History and/....

(b) History and Moral Evolution.

In the Idea for a Universal History Kant sets out to find a "guiding principle" <sup>43</sup> for history in terms of which it can be viewed as a purposeful progression of human development rather than as a "senseless course of human events,..." <sup>44</sup> - a view which can generate distaste and despair. The traditional 18th century view of history as teleological progression formed the groundwork of Kant's own discussion of history, although Kant does not accept the Enlightenment view that man is inevitably moving towards greater and greater perfections. The question of evil, for example, cannot so easily be reconciled with the optimism of those who believed in the steady unhampered progress of man.

As Kant also points out, empirical observation does not bear out the concept of inevitable progress in history. Kant argues that "despite the apparent wisdom of individual actions here and there, everything as a whole is made up of folly and childish vanity, and often of childish malice and destructiveness." <sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, to remain with such a vision of history - history as a process without direction or purpose - results in the negation of moral striving and effort.

Kant resorts/..

Kant resorts therefore to a concept of history as possible moral progression. This not only enables the introjection of theoretical moral ideals into historical actuality, but also ensures that moral aspiration is not in vain by the interpretation of history as a meaningful course of events in terms of the possibility of moral progress. Kant's view of history thus makes provision for the possibility that rational (moral) human choices and decisions can overcome, to some extent, the sense of alienation man might feel in the universe as a finite imperfect being, and give man a sense of purpose in the creation of his own future.

What is clear is that man is placed firmly in charge of his moral destiny, whether he observes the moral law or not, and that there is no reason for him to discontinue moral striving out of a sense of despair or hopelessness. "Aesthetic experience and teleological organisation of Nature give us signs that the world is such as to have 'meaning', or such as to be a home where human beings can strive towards moral goals without being doomed to absurdity. As such these signs are welcome to strengthen the human spirit and its moral dispositions. The philosophy of history likewise is seen by Kant as bringing comfort to a moral disposition/...

moral disposition that needs to be strengthened and confirmed... The display of human stupidity and perversity offered by human history is the worst challenge to Kant's rational faith and the philosophy of history is expected to lay the demon of nihilism to rest." 46

In terms of theory and practice, historical actuality when observed empirically does not reveal unity and conformity to rationally chosen ends. However, interpreted from the point of view of the moral law (as a law of reason), actual practice assumes a meaning and direction which is an encouragement to moral aspiration. Theory (as the rational postulation of an ideal moral end) transforms practice (history) as the possible ground for a moral human existence. Whether in fact men do make rational use of their freedom and autonomy in following the moral direction postulated by theory is a different question altogether. "Unlike many of his contemporaries, Kant was very cautious in his predictions and never ceased to insist that the future will be what men will make it. Natural teleological development cannot serve as a guarantee of moral teleological development." 47

It becomes clear from Kant's philosophy of history  
that his/.....

that his interpretative description of history furnishes man with an ideal which renders moral effort meaningful. The goal of history, it is clear, is not the one towards which history is advancing but one towards which it ought to advance. Despland likens Kant's Idea of history to the Ideas of Reason - it has regulative and not constitutive significance. "Such ideas of reason must be absolutely limited to the 'conditions of practical use.' Representations of the historical end of the world are mere ideas, which the mind created and with which it plays. They have no cognitive value, since they are out of historical reach. But such ideas have value from the practical point of view. If we cannot know what will happen, we can know what should happen, and towards which end we should work;" <sup>48</sup>

(c) The Role of Nature in Morality and Politics

In the Idea for a Universal History Kant asserts that development in history proceeds according to a plan of nature rather than a plan of human reason. This brings us to another element in the philosophy of history - the strange role of nature. On first glance it appears as if Kant undermines his own attempt in the first two Critiques where the possibility of knowledge and morality was seen to rest on a radical distinction between/...

distinction between the realms of nature and freedom. In the philosophy of history the greater continuity between nature and human effort, and the role played by nature in creating the context of morality (driving men into civil association which then becomes, depending on rational human choice, the possible threshold of moral association) may be seen as setting at odds with one another the philosophy of history and the political philosophy on the one hand, and the theory of knowledge and moral philosophy on the other.

It appears as if Kant wished both to separate nature and morality and postulate a connection between them. Fackenheim, for example, states that "Kant's attempt to show a link between nature and morality is in inescapable conflict with his concept of morality itself..... But if the link between nature and morality is broken, then the entire historical construction must suffer collapse." <sup>49</sup> This need not necessarily be the case if viewed within the context of Kant's whole philosophy and the role played by striving reason in the different areas of human experience.

Despland, for example, points out that when Kant postulates a closer link between nature and morality  
in his/.....

in his philosophy of history he is using nature not in the "pastoral-poetic sense (country with arresting vistas or scenes of animal life with moral lessons), and not in the scientific, critical sense of Newtonian nature (the system of causal relations empirically known). We hear there of a Nature which is Providence, the mother of mankind, the mainspring of progress, and the guarantee of order... Succinctly, we hear of the Nature of the classical metaphysicians."<sup>50</sup> Despland continues: "Such metaphysical consideration of Nature is what we find in the philosophy of history where we hear of a Nature which is good and wise and has a plan..."<sup>51</sup>

We would like to maintain that such a view of nature is valid in terms of a systematic treatment of the whole Kantian philosophy, thereby obviating certain alleged inconsistencies and contradictions. In the striving of reason with respect to objective knowledge, nature is apprehended in its mechanical aspect. But this is only a stage in the striving of reason towards the unconditioned. In its epistemological pursuit, reason encounters nature in terms of mechanical causality.

It is only in this phase that man's reason  
prescribes laws/....

prescribes laws to nature (understood as limited). Beyond the narrow confines of the specifically cognitive dimension and in terms of nature viewed teleologically, man's reason is seen to be in line with nature's plans. Kant had already indicated in the Critique of Pure Reason the necessity to go beyond the concerns of theoretical reason. Reason in its practical aspect and in its view of nature in terms of teleological judgement (which Kant intended as the bridge between theoretical and practical reason) has, in its striving, already gone beyond the stage of mechanical causality. So there is no inconsistency involved when, in its a priori view of history as rational teleology, reason is seen to confront a non-mechanical concept of nature. This constitutes the progression of human reason in its striving towards the unconditioned.

However, even with a teleological view of nature, Kant does not absolve man of the responsibility of working towards a moral existence on the basis of his own autonomous striving. Teleology does not mean automatic moral determinism and the moral ought is still binding on man. Kant makes it clear that the ends of nature are different from (though in the philosophy of history not in contradiction to) the ends of man/....

of man as a rational moral being. Nature, despite its positive role in the creation of civil society and civilisation, cannot create moral culture because this would undermine the reality of human freedom. As such, nature has its limits.

Kant himself states that he is reluctant to identify nature with and call it Providence because this would involve making statements about nature as reflecting "the underlying wisdom of a higher cause, showing the way towards the objective goal of the human race and predetermining the world's evolution,....".<sup>52</sup> This is the kind of conclusion for which there can be no cognitive evidence and which could only be significant in a practical context. That is why he concludes that "in contexts such as this, where we are concerned purely with theory and not with religion, we should also note that it is more in keeping with the limitations of human reason to speak of nature and not of providence, for reason, in dealing with cause and effect relationships, must keep within the bounds of possible experience."<sup>53</sup>

Kant's political philosophy, by its use of elements like nature and history, provides us not with a static theoretical vision of an ideal political community but/....-.

community but of a dynamically evolving political ethos which emerges as a historically and temporally conditioned phenomenon. Moral politics based on reason is the theoretical ideal which functions as a pointer or guide to our political aspirations. Our ultimate political obligation which is in essence moral obligation is to strive for the transformation of a utilitarian or pragmatic politics into a moral politics.

Kant, in his political philosophy, interprets pragmatic politics as being on the way to a politics based on moral principles. This approach facilitates a greater unity of theory and practice within the political philosophy insofar as the gap between ideal and actuality is not that between two wholly dissimilar positions, and movement from the one to the other, if not probable, is at least possible. Kant here allows a more legitimate role to factors like empirical motives, expediency (the hypothetical imperative), pragmatism and so on. In fact, his whole image of man is more balanced and positive. All this is possible because of his teleological view of history. A moral politics is not a vision of instant utopia but the possible product of a developmental process. The radical contrast between the ideal and anthropological images/....

anthropological images of man from the ethical analyses is somewhat blurred within the temporal process of history. If actuality (practice) is seen as a process, then theory can be seen as the direction in which the process develops. This constitutes the unity (not identity) of theory and practice within the process of history, a unity postulated on different levels within the whole Kantian model.

Kant offers his moral politics as the direction in which all and any politics of expediency can and ought to move. History explained in terms of the notion of moral progress outlines the development of individuals and states from a state of nature via civil society based on pragmatism towards moral cosmopolitanism - towards the development of moral personality (in the case of the individual) and moral culture (in the case of society). Civic association for pragmatic reasons is a necessary phase in our development but it is only the striving towards a moral politics that is in keeping with the full dignity of man as a rational being. As such, Kant's vision of a political association based on moral reason is a perennial challenge.

In terms of theory and practice, there are three  
elements which/..

elements which can be clearly distinguished in Kant's philosophy of history and which play a significant role in it :

(a) The first aspect is an anthropological image of man as he is in terms of his desires and inclinations. To this is allied the function of nature in manipulating this aspect of human behaviour for a meaningful end. This image is the product of Kant's assessment of the human material that is available in the journey towards a political community based on the principle of right.

That Kant is not operating with an over-optimistic or too naive an image of man and his capacities is clear from the philosophy of history. In the 6th proposition of his Idea for a Universal History Kant paints a bleak image of man: "...man is an animal who needs a master. For he certainly abuses his freedom in relation to others of his own kind. And even although, as a rational creature, he desires a law to impose limits on the freedom of all, he is misled by his self-seeking animal inclinations into exempting himself from the law where he can. He thus requires a master to break his self-will and force him to obey a universally valid will under which everyone can be free .....

Nothing straight can be constructed from such warped wood as/.....

wood as that which man is made of." <sup>54</sup> This is a harsh judgement, calculated to dispel any notion that because Kant conceived of man as a potentially rational being, he was unaware of that human conduct which is untempered by reason.

Kant is very clear about man's ideal image as a rational being (an image that should be the target of his striving) but this goes hand in hand with a sharp awareness of the reality of negative human behaviour as manifested in actual practice. Reiss argues that such an image must have been conceived of in terms of the Christian conception of fallen Man. The moral rigour of the ideal political community, far from being based on too idealistic an image of man as he actually is, must actually be seen within the context of the "Christian dogma of original sin, of the radical evil in human nature." <sup>55</sup> Unlike in the first two Critiques and in the Foundations where Kant states his intention of concerning himself only with ideal conduct as laid down by reason, in the philosophy of history the anthropological image of man is fairly strongly developed.

(b) The second aspect is an interpretative description of the course of human development within  
the process/.....

the process of history. As such, Kant's conception of the movement of history within which moral and political aspirations can be realised is not a mere description of actual practice but an interpretation of actuality in relation to a theoretically postulated end (moral culture).

(c) The third aspect is a prescriptive account of the ends of man in terms of reason - Kant's theoretical image of ideal moral and political conduct. It is the interpretative description of history which operates as the link between the two images of man and society - that which is and that which ought to be - because it is within the process of history that the transition from the one to the other may occur. It is history which links theory and practice.

It is within the context of these three aspects of the philosophy of history that the search for the ground principles of Kant's political theory can now be pursued - perpetual peace and a just constitutional arrangement which guarantees the freedom of all before the law.

In setting the scene for the achievement of the above two principles, the directive hand of Nature  
is very/.....

is very obvious. Kant's theory of history is a theory of human progress but he makes it clear that the initial impetus to the advancement of mankind is not due to any "rational purpose of its own in its collective actions,...." <sup>56</sup> It is due rather to a plan of Nature which oversees the increasing rationalisation of existence and conduct. In the first two Critiques the concept of nature which we became accustomed to was one related to the possibility of cognition. In Perpetual Peace Kant speaks of "the great artist Nature herself" <sup>57</sup> which gives us another conception of Nature already explicated in the Critique of Judgement which Kant intended as a link between the earlier two Critiques and which also leads us into his philosophy of history.

In his examination of aesthetic judgement in the first part of the Critique of Judgement, Kant argues that the aesthetic experience of beauty and sublimity can awaken man to the realisation of the "rational character of Nature " <sup>58</sup> as consisting of "an order of purposiveness and design..." <sup>59</sup> Kant then turns to the biological sphere to see if he cannot discover here "some trace of a system, ..." <sup>60</sup> He tries to show that, using teleological judgement in a reflective rather than/....

rather than in a determinant (constitutive) way, it is possible to view nature as a system of ends of which man is the "ultimate end."<sup>61</sup>

The teleological rather than the mechanical conception of nature, which indicates that it contains a ground that leads us to assume a harmony between the ends of nature (conceived of as a purposive system) and moral ends, is intended to fulfil the Kantian intention in the Critical Philosophy of unifying what had been separated in the course of Kant's investigation in the Critique of Pure Reason and The Critique of Practical Reason - the realm of phenomena (knowledge of facts) and the realm of noumena (moral values). In other words, a teleological view of nature, strictly as a regulative judgement, can bring man to the realisation that it is possible to conceive of a conformity between the purposefulness in nature and the moral order in the universe.

It is in this context that Nature is seen as functioning in such a way as to drive man towards enlightenment and freedom. This is the concept of nature within the context of the philosophy of history, a concept which is seen to be more orientated towards the facilitation of freedom. It is according to a  
plan of/.....

plan of Nature that man is put on the road to Freedom, although Kant insists that, ultimately, if he achieves it, it is as a result of his own rational autonomous choice.

Kant opens his essay on history by asserting that: "Whatever conception of the freedom of the will one may form in terms of metaphysics, the will's manifestations in the world of phenomena, i.e. human actions, are determined in accordance with natural laws, as is every other natural event. History is concerned with giving an account of these phenomena, ..." <sup>62</sup> Later he argues that Nature has endowed man with "reason, and freedom of will based upon reason, ..." <sup>63</sup> and within the process of history Nature intends man to fulfil his potentialities" as the only rational creature on earth." <sup>64</sup>

Whereas previously it was the very determinism in nature which was a threat to freedom, in the philosophy of history it is the determinism of nature - now viewed in a more dynamic non-mechanical way - which uses human aggressiveness and selfishness to force man into civil society and bring him face to face with the possibility of freedom. What is clear in the philosophy of history is that Nature, History and Reason co-operate/....

Reason co-operate to form the climate for freedom through which the moral development of man and society can take place - from a state of nature, through civil society towards moral culture.

Any activity of the rational will only comes into the picture once Nature has initiated her own work. Even though Kant stipulates that man ultimately ought to achieve his ends through moral reason, the history of philosophy represents history as having meaning in terms of the purposes Nature has for mankind. Nature has implanted in its creatures certain natural capacities which are "destined sooner or later to be developed completely and in conformity with their end." <sup>65</sup>

The means by which this development is initiated is what Kant calls the "unsocial sociability" <sup>66</sup> of men, used by Nature to drive men into civil association. In the fourth proposition of his Idea for a Universal History Kant describes this condition of man as the "tendency to come together in society, coupled, however, with a continual resistance which constantly threatens to break this society up. This propensity is obviously rooted in human nature. Man has an inclination to live in society, since he feels in this state more/.....

state more like a man, that is, he feels able to develop his natural capacities. But he also has a great tendency to live as an individual, to isolate himself, since he also encounters in himself the unsocial characteristic of wanting to direct everything in accordance with his own ideas." 67

It is the constant tension between the mutual antagonisms of men on the one hand and their tendency to socialisation on the other (which makes man more than a mere creature of nature) which generates the possibility of movement towards civilisation and then culture. Kant transforms mutual resistance into a positive creative factor by arguing that it is this very resistance which "awakens all man's powers" 68 and spurs him on to greater effort through the desire for "honour, power or property,...". 69 Though none of the above-mentioned desires have any specific moral flavour, this development nevertheless marks the first state of enlightenment. Although the value of this stage lies only in its legality rather than in morality, it serves nevertheless as a preliminary towards "establishing a way of thinking which can with time transform the primitive natural capacity for moral discrimination into definite practical principles; and thus a pathologically enforced social union is transformed into/...

transformed into a moral whole." 70

The whole process, including the stage of moral existence, would have been impossible without man's "unsocial sociability." If man had lived happily like a domesticated animal, there would have been no occasion for him to develop his talents and powers as a rational being. Since Nature did not intend happiness but rather the development of our rational nature as the end of human existence, even the irrationalities of human existence - "social incompatibility, enviously competitive vanity, and insatiable desires for possession or even power " 71 are represented by Kant as having a positive and necessary function. Kant writes in his lecture On the Different Races of Men: "I believe it is just the mixture of evil and good that calls the slumbering forces of mankind into action and compels them to develop all their talents." 72

Although Kant did not visualise uninterrupted moral progress and often expressed his awareness of the power of evil and the frailty of the human will, ultimately, his position on what man could hope for is a positive one, based on his faith in moral reason and in a divine moral order. That is why he focuses constantly on/.....

constantly on the positive possibilities of the clash between good and evil in an ultimately ordered universe instead of contemplating a world where human effort, whether moral or not, makes no difference. The question of the value of deliberately chosen rational conduct and moral striving in an absurd and godless universe is not yet a problem in spite of the great measure of Kant's realism.

Kant thus links moral striving and thereby political striving, to the notion of an ultimately meaningful universe (even though this is beyond human comprehension). Overall, Kant, by representing the apprehension of nature by the human mind in terms of different stages (beginning with the mechanically causal in the sphere of knowledge, and proceeding to the level of history where a teleological view of nature makes possible a closer association of nature and morality), is able to incorporate a variety of theory/practice relationships within the context of a unified system whose foundation is the principle of rational striving. These relationships (between nature and morality in the sphere of knowledge, and between nature and morality within the sphere of the philosophy of history) are represented by Kant as taking on a specific character depending on the area of striving.

This, seen/... .

This, seen from a narrow point of view may appear contradictory. From the point of view of the whole, however, these various relationships can be seen as the systematic progression of reason in its apprehension of the natural, the human and the transcendent aspects of reality.

In terms of morality and politics, whereas previously, morality had been possible only on the basis of the rigid separation of the natural (instinctual) and the moral, in the philosophy of history, morality is assisted by the natural. With this view, Kant is able to accommodate the idea that although ultimately, true politics ought to be based on the principle of right, an order based on political expediency and the hypothetical imperative can be viewed as a necessary first stage which can set the scene for a moral politics.

Kant's political theory is sometimes said to have overtones of authoritarianism because of his stress on the virtues of obedience to the law. Considering his strong censure of any political striving which results in revolution, even though it is aimed at eliminating tyranny and injustice, it is highly probable that in practice the kind of political relations he envisaged would in/.....

would in fact be, morally speaking, highly problematic. In intention, however, it is essentially the core of a responsible freedom (freedom not as licence) that Kant is concerned to delineate in his political writings.

The question of the rights of the individual (which he called "God's most sacred institution on earth"<sup>73</sup>) in a socio-political context was a constant concern of his political philosophy. The maximising of individual freedom within a civil framework, which at the same time ensures that one individual's freedom does not threaten that of another, Kant saw as a fundamental problem of just political practice. The creation of political institutions which permit individuals to exercise freedom without coercing others is necessary since it is only within this context that any discussion of the rights of man and the question of justice can have practical validity.

In the republican constitution Kant saw the best guarantee of the rights of individuals, and law as the foundation of this guarantee. The republican constitution ensures the freedom of all in a system where all are subject to common law, hence providing for the legal equality of all citizens. The law  
safeguards both/....

safeguards both the governor and the governed since its transgression threatens totalitarianism on the one hand and revolution on the other. In Perpetual Peace Kant makes it clear that only within a civil state based on law (as contrasted with a state of nature) can men co-exist in security. Otherwise, they are permanent threats to each other. In a state of nature, even though someone does not actively injure me, he is still a threat to me by the "very lawlessness of his state...." 74

The issue of perpetual peace is fundamentally linked to that of civil existence under law since it is only a republican constitution which can form the foundation for perpetual peace. And the principle of rational autonomy is crucial in this instance. Kant writes: "... my external and rightful freedom should be defined as a warrant to obey no external laws except those to which I have been able to give my own consent." 75 Fundamental to the republican constitution is the idea that its terms require the consent of all citizens. The pursuit of war would have to be, therefore, a matter of civic consent. This in itself contains the prospect for peace since men as citizens will not readily embark on war, which is costly and painful in human and economic terms. No such misgivings  
bother the/....

bother the ruler if he is the sole decision-maker as to the necessity for war. War, then, threatens both states as well as citizens, and to ensure the rights of both, peace becomes an "immediate duty."<sup>76</sup> This idea of peace which for Kant is based on the idea of right, is thus a moral imperative and not a mere state of suspended hostilities.

From the theoretical point of view there is no difference between the moral and the political imperative since both are directed to the pursuit of right. A republican constitution and the establishment of perpetual peace form the only basis for the protection of individual rights and the enjoyment of freedom.

In the ethical analyses Kant linked the concept of freedom in an integral way to the authentic moral being of the individual. In the political philosophy the problem of freedom becomes more concrete and urgent in terms of the social dimension and viewed from a historical context. The socio-political dimension constitutes the real (practical) challenge to the principles of moral theory, although the fact that freedom is the common goal of the individual and society (history) shows the unity between morality and politics.

Kant argues/.....

Kant argues that the highest purpose of nature is directed towards the establishment of a civil society which would guarantee the greatest possible liberty for the individual but at the same time, be a society with "the most precise specification and preservation of the limits of this freedom in order that it can co-exist with the freedom of others." <sup>77</sup> He goes on to argue that the "highest task which nature has set for mankind must therefore be that of establishing a society in which freedom under external laws would be combined to the greatest possible extent with irresistible force, in other words of establishing a perfectly just civil constitution." <sup>78</sup> Man contracts with others and thus sacrifices his unrestrained freedom in order to live under rational restraint, so that freedom is guaranteed by law which restricts and permits all alike for the sake of an orderly co-existence.

The establishment of a civil society, then, is the challenge that confronts man and indicates his duty. But it is a duty that is originally pre-moral in that, although civil existence is a more rational arrangement when compared to the state of nature, the imperative to establish it is not a moral one. Although his ideal is a political arrangement based/...

arrangement based on universal moral reason, the anthropological reality, according to Kant, is that man who is "otherwise so enamoured with unrestrained freedom, is forced to enter this state of restriction by sheer necessity." 79

The first impetus to establish civil society as a more rational form of human co-existence indicates only the most pragmatic and not the most moral form of socio-political relationship. In other words, originally, man is forced to be a good citizen even though he does not act from moral motives. In fact, Kant maintains in Perpetual Peace that the "problem of setting up a state can be solved even by a nation of devils (so long as they possess understanding)." 80 This intermediate stage of societal organisation i.e., of civilisation which operates only with the "likeness" of morality, nevertheless, counts as part of the process of increasing rationality.

The inclusion of pragmatism (stage of civilisation) and the role of inclination (man's unsociability) under the concept of a striving reason that brings man closer to his moral destination is possible within the philosophy of history on account of the concept of  
history as/...

history as development, as well as a broader conception of nature as a teleological process whose ends are in harmony with moral ends. Kant writes: "All the culture and art which adorn mankind and the finest social order man creates are fruits of his unsociability. For it is compelled by its own nature to discipline itself, and thus, by enforced art, to develop completely the germs which nature implanted."<sup>81</sup> It is clear that Kant has a more positive conception of the role of the inclinations within the context of history viewed as a process of development towards a moral goal. The whole of history is viewed by Kant as an ultimate unity of morality, politics and reason.

Kant thus maintains that individuals are impelled by nature towards the establishment of civil society and a just civil constitution. But such a constitution can only exist meaningfully within the context of a law that governs relations among states. There is no point in establishing law-governed freedom in one state if it is threatened by the lawlessness of other states. Kant sees states also as being in the position of individuals exercising lawless freedom before joining civil society. But the same unsociable tendencies which drive men into seeking the stability and security of civil society, also leads states from lawlessness into  
a "federation/.....

a "federation of peoples in which every state, even the smallest, could expect to derive its security and rights not from its own power or its own legal judgement, but solely from this great federation (Foedus Amphictyonum), from a united power and the law-governed decisions of a united will." <sup>82</sup>

With respect to perpetual peace, although Kant postulates the ideal as a true peace based on right and reason, he is aware that "since this is not the will of the nations, according to their present conception of international right....., the positive idea of a world republic cannot be realised." <sup>83</sup> In the light of this, Kant is prepared to settle for a "negative substitute in the shape of an enduring and gradually expanding federation likely to prevent war. The latter may check the current of man's inclination to defy the law and antagonise his fellows, although there will always be a risk of it bursting forth anew." <sup>84</sup> This represents Kant's more sombre assessment of the possibility of achieving a moral peace.

Although the imperative to strive for peace remains an enduring challenge for man as a partly rational being, Kant is keenly aware of man's difficulty in achieving moral goals. Despland argues that, in

Perpetual Peace/.....

Perpetual Peace, Kant "expects progress from divine Providence more than from human endeavour." 85

Kant's position is that "political improvement can move ahead somewhat without waiting for moral improvement. The hope for moral perfection or for facilitating moral improvement through reform of political life no longer enters into his political thinking, although the notion of moral evil remains very much part of it." 86

Despite Kant's growing awareness of the magnitude of the problem of evil and the difficulties inherent in the optimistic Leibnizian teleology, 87 his position on man's duty as a partially rational being remains fundamentally unchanged. Not even the power of evil absolves man of the responsibility of striving towards a moral existence and realising his freedom in the most rational way possible. Neither his political and moral realism, nor his pinning his hopes on Providence as in Perpetual Peace leads Kant to a major shift in perspective with regard to man's rational striving. If anything, the precise meaning of this striving is now starkly and painfully revealed.

Having traced the role of reason in the sphere of knowledge, Kant's theoretical ethics held out the  
promise that/....

promise that the limitations of theoretical reason would be compensated for by the role of practical reason as the means by which he could achieve authentic being. This moral optimism extended to man's socio-political existence as well, insofar as Kant argued that men, forced into civil association by nature, could transform this pragmatic arrangement into a genuinely moral association. From the theoretical point of view, this was Kant's postulation of the role of practical reason. But his study of history as a catalogue of human misery (despite his a priori interpretation of it) and his changing view of evil as being more than a mere spur to the achievement of virtue leads Kant to his most realistic assessment of the position of practical reason within an actuality that is not automatically in line with man's moral intentions.

This position reflects the maturing of Kant's own philosophic vision insofar as he is now able to articulate fully what he expects of man as a striving rational being. Man strives towards his true being fully aware of the power of evil in a world where moral progress is not automatic and where, in fact, the defeat of morality appears more evident, and with the realisation that even the existence of God does not  
absolve man/.....

absolve man from the responsibility of participating in the process of actualising his own freedom. This position is most clearly stated in the philosophy of religion.

In spite of the difficulties in Kant's view of the relationship between morality and politics, in intention there is no difference in human authenticity seen from the moral or political points of view. Culture or a moral existence is still, in the final analysis, the Kantian ideal. In terms of theory and practice, it is the target of all striving since it indicates the stage of human freedom. It is only the condition of moral freedom, in Kant's view, that defines the essential humanity of man. Although Nature has brought man to the threshold of morality, it cannot play any further role without compromising the freedom and autonomy of man in living according to self-legislated rational principles. This is the point where the teleologically directive agency of Nature ends, leaving man free to choose a moral direction. Moral culture, then, represents the coming of age of humanity insofar as man now has the possibility of gaining control of his destiny and appropriating the full dignity which attaches to a being of reason. The highest purpose of Nature, though not itself a moral purpose, is/....

purpose, is directed to the facilitation of the moral purpose. The point at which Nature fulfils its ends is not the limit of human progress but only the point at which man can break free to create a condition of existence (moral culture) which he can truly call his own.

Despland, for example, points to the discontinuity as well as the continuity between the ends of Nature and the moral ends of man. The discontinuity lies in the limit set to the directive agency of Nature, the continuity in the fact that Nature is not opposed to the moral purpose of men. "Thus the opposition between Nature and freedom hardly appears as a sharp and final one... Cast in this light, then, the philosophy of history begins to appear as one of the Kantian efforts, ... to reunite what the first two Critiques had so energetically separated, or to rebuild bridges between the noumenal and the phenomenal worlds." 88

The total picture of Nature as emerging from the first Critique on the one hand, and from the Critique of Judgement and the philosophy of history on the other, is now clearly evident. Man's reason (as theoretical reason) first encounters nature in terms of its knowability as a system of phenomena. Practical reason, however, goes on to reveal Nature as a system  
of ends/.....

of ends which is not in contradiction to the achievement of moral freedom because a kind of rational purposiveness in Nature forces men into pragmatic political associations. However, Kant makes it clear that, despite this purposiveness, Nature's role is limited when it comes to the creation of a moral politics. The achievement of a moral existence is to be the sole responsibility of man's autonomous rational will.

(d) Rational Striving and the Possibility of a Moral Culture.

In view of Kant's distinction between civilisation and culture, and his own doubt about the achievement of culture from the practical point of view, it is nevertheless possible to retain meaningfully the concept of a moral culture as the target of human striving. It would be meaningless to regard it as a stage characterised in all respects by rational moral conduct, to imagine it as a chronological reality that follows as a progression only after the phase of civilisation. Kant's frequent characterisation of man as only a partially rational being attests to his ever-present awareness of the finitude of man and the constant instinctual drives which threaten to undermine the moral will. The view that man is partly sensuous and partly rational and/....

rational and that, therefore, morality will be a constant struggle is a good reason not to visualise moral culture as a final condition of human existence which follows inevitably once the pressing problems of civilisation have been sorted out. This would imply the elimination of the rational/sensuous dualism and the transformation of man into a wholly rational being.

The Kantian view of morality is possible on the basis of the dynamic interplay of reason and inclination, and the striving of reason for control. The notion of a separate moral state (a state with a specific temporal and spatial location) is a static notion that is contrary to the dynamism of the Kantian view of moral striving in terms of man as a finite and imperfect being. As such, we ought not to regard moral culture, representing the theoretical ideal for conduct, as the alternative society in any realisable sense as a whole, for this would be a society of fully rational beings. Yet, on the other hand, morality is possible because "ought" implies "can".

The way out of any dilemma apparent here is to look upon the stage of civilisation as the only socio-political reality, as the only realm of practice within which man can pursue (as he ought) moral aspirations.

As such/.....

As such, theory (as ideal end) can take up its meaningful role of functioning as the moral imperative which guides practice (as authentic conduct) in the transformation of actuality. This can only occur at a stage where there is still a gap between legality and morality i.e., the level of civilisation. One ought to strive for a moral culture but its total achievement signifies the end of human finitude, of the condition of men as partially rational beings, and also the overcoming of the dualism between theory and practice. Kant neither intended nor postulated any of these as a necessary and inevitable end for man. The dualism between rational theory and actual practice is a necessary and permanent one as long as man is defined as a finite but free being. The merging of theory and practice actually signals the end of all striving.

As to the question of whether it is meaningful for man to strive for something that is beyond human achievement, one can answer that, quite apart from any other-worldly or spiritual considerations (the question of salvation, etc.), there is sufficient justification in striving for moral culture from the point of view of man's possession of rationality and the need to achieve true freedom. In fact, it is the striving which can  
be interpreted/....

be interpreted as the manifestation of rationality in man rather than the full achievement of moral culture. In Kant's view also, man as a potentially rational being cannot help but strive towards a transcending of his limitations.

By taking as his starting point the fact that man is a partially rational being who has to co-exist with others within civil society but who has also to strive for morality to achieve authenticity, Kant attempts to establish a fine balance between realism and utopianism. Utopianism on its own carries the danger of ignoring present realities. Realism on the other hand may be blind to everything except present realities, and hence ignores the potential of man to transcend the present.

In the political philosophy, instead of visualising civilisation and culture as two successive stages of human development, we can conceive of the one reality where man's instinctual life manifests itself but where the possibility of morality also exists. This reality is the civil society which we all inhabit. When men act according to rational moral principles, then their conduct creates a moral reality which interpenetrates the reality of civil existence. In this sense, civil/....

sense, civil society forms the matrix for the development of the full potential of man.

Within such a society, it may be the case that certain individuals strive towards morality more often than others, but it also may be the case that being only partially rational, these same individuals are not consistently moral in their total conduct. Such a situation makes for moral dynamism, both in the instance of more moral individuals as compared with less moral ones, and in the case of individuals themselves the contrast between moral acts and acts which ought to be moral but are not. Man inhabits an area which is delineated by the tension between theory (ideal end) and practice (authentic conduct) on the one hand and actuality on the other. There is no smooth passage from the one realm to the other but only an ongoing struggle in a world where moral failure is more probable than not, but where moral victories are possible.

Failure must spur man on to greater striving whereas victory must be defended or re-won over and over again. There is no chronological golden age of permanent moral victory somewhere in the future. Moral culture is actually a process of continual striving, and man/....

and man as a finite being can have no other expectation. Despland characterises the difference in attitude between a being who is finite and one who has no such limitation as the difference between conscientiousness and perfection. "Man is not the truth and he is not infallible. The very best he can do is to be conscientious, that is, to mean well and try hard... The rigour of this distinction between conscientiousness and perfection (which is a radicalization of the metaphor that makes of human life an unceasing pilgrimage) committed Kant to an approach which always distinguishes between form and content in the moral life, or between the method of decision-making and the attainable results." 89

Kant is neither overly optimistic or totally pessimistic as regards human morality. Man may be frail and imperfect and ultimately even in need of help from Providence, but striving towards a life of reason as the ultimate purpose of human existence remains an essential part of being human. Unwilling to take the step from prescription to prediction, Kant was content to prescribe what man ought to do as a free being, but argued that one cannot say with certainty what he will do. From experience, just as one cannot, from the evil that men do, conclude as  
to their/....

to their ultimate deterioration, one cannot, from the good that they do, conclude as to their ultimate moral emancipation.

His vision of the alternative society is not of an idyllic moral existence (whose essentially static nature would contradict the reality of human existence) but of a life of continual striving. He writes: "It certainly transcends our imagination to envisage the total lack of all change" <sup>90</sup> - a state where "intellect fades away and all thinking stops." <sup>91</sup> Kant is totally opposed to the mysticism which such a view entails. The dualities of human existence (theory and practice, reason and sensuousness, phenomena and noumena) are not meant to be transcended insofar as they are the fundamental characteristics of human life as finite existence, and the tensions between them generate the possibility for moral progress. Although, from the point of view of theory, there exists no conflict between morality and politics, in practice Kant is aware that such conflict is real and enduring as long as man remains a finite being.

The reconciliation of the anthropological and ideal images of man and society is a goal only in the sense of a theoretical ideal of reason as a target for/....

target for striving. Although history is a medium for moral progress, Kant does not locate the reconciliation in any historical epoch. For all practical purposes, Kant's ideal image of man is not that of man as a fully rational and moral being but as a striving being who, in spite of his imperfect will, aspires to a vision of a rational moral existence.

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C H A P T E R     F I V E

"Kant is not content with a philosophical position - mildly sceptical or Pyrrhonian - which would require a sharp and ultimate division between mere theorizing and the thought which, as Hume put it, accompanies 'action, and employment, and the occupations of common life'. For him a theory which fails to do justice to practice must give way to one which is acceptable to real men, who do not only reflect and predict, but also act and plan." 1

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

(a) Summary of the various Theory/Practice Relationships.

The relationship between theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy is not a simple reflection of Kant's general view of theory and practice in the Critical Philosophy as a total conception. In fact, one can hardly speak of one general, fairly homogenous<sup>e</sup><sub>A</sub> conception of theory and practice within the Kantian philosophy as a whole. What is apparent is a variety of usages, as well as the depiction of one basic theory/practice conception in its various aspects or stages. However, despite the apparent lack/....

apparent lack of homogeneity, there are certain common elements underlying the several theory/practice relationships envisaged by Kant. These common elements which, for Kant, are fundamental not only as theoretical presuppositions but as real aspects of human existence, serve to unify the various theory/practice relationships in a meaningful way, and provide us with the insight that the various facets of Kantian enquiry - in epistemology, ethics, history, politics, religion - are responses to these aspects of human existence.

The view of man as having both a sensuous and a rational aspect (thereby participating in both the phenomenal as well the noumenal worlds) is perhaps the most fundamental of the above mentioned features and the one to which the others are essentially related. In the sphere of knowledge (theoretical reason) the sensuous/rational dichotomy works in a positive way by stipulating the essential contribution of each in order to make knowledge possible. In the sphere of morality the sensuous/rational bifurcation is rendered as a conflict which, notwithstanding its negative connotation, sets the scene for morality.

The conflict in man between rational and sensuous  
motives points/...

motives points to two other features of human existence - the essential finitude of human reason and a constant striving to achieve certain objectives in the attempt to approach the unconditioned. This rational striving is traced by Kant through the three Critiques, the writings on history, politics and law, and the philosophy of religion, and is seen to generate a number of theory/practice relationships. It is within this context that this thesis approaches the problem of theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy and in Kant's philosophy as a whole.

The striving of human reason to overcome its limitations which, for Kant, is not a mere philosophically constructed principle but the expression of a deep-rooted metaphysical impulse in man and hence a given factor in reality, first manifests itself in the Critical Philosophy as the striving for knowledge. In the Critique of Pure Reason, the striving of reason issues in the epistemological aspect, while at the same time indicating a dimension beyond. Kant circumscribes the epistemological domain by means of the function of reason in its theoretical aspect, thus providing us with a theory/practice dichotomy which is also rendered as a contrast between knowledge and morality, between/....

morality, between phenomena and noumena, between the "is" and the "ought". It becomes clear here that Kant is using "theory" and "practice" in an unorthodox way - the restriction of theory to appearance, phenomena or what is and the ascribing to practice the sphere of the ought. Practice is supposed to possess primacy over theory as the most fundamental aspect of our existence. The effect of this conception is not to de-emphasize or devalue the function of the epistemological dimension (theoretical reason) but rather to show its position in relation to the totality of human existence.

By making a distinction between theoretical and practical reason in the Critique of Pure Reason, Kant establishes a broad division in man's encounter with reality in terms of nature (mechanical causality) on the one hand and freedom on the other. Lobkowitz explains this particular theory/practice dichotomy in terms of "the ontological character of their respective subject matters." <sup>2</sup> Lobkowitz continues: "that part of philosophy which operates with the concept of freedom is practical only because freedom is trans-phenomenal and thus cannot be reached by Kantian theory, which is restricted to appearances by its mathematical method."<sup>3</sup> We can say, then, that man as a striving subject encounters reality/....

encounters reality both in the theoretical and practical spheres, relating to the differing ontological characters of theory and practice in terms of the different stages of rational striving.

In its striving, reason in its theoretical aspect is adequate only to cope with nature in its narrow conception as mechanical causality, which can be contrasted with a broader teleological conception in the Critique of Judgement and in the philosophy of history. This limitation of theoretical reason points to the role of practical reason and the realm of freedom. Every subsequent theory/practice dichotomy envisaged by Kant is seen to issue from the striving of reason in its practical aspect. This is investigated by Kant through the formal ethical analyses of the Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals and the Critique of Practical Reason, to the role of reason in the establishment of a moral state within the context of history, and finally a consideration of man's rational encounter with the divine in the philosophy of religion. <sup>4</sup>

Kant makes a broad distinction between theory and practice in terms of theoretical reason and practical reason, and then establishes a number of theory/practice dichotomies within/....

dichotomies within the context of practical reason itself. Once again, all these dichotomies must be seen as issuing from the basic fact of rational striving which not only gives thematic unity to the whole Kantian corpus of writings but also enables one to view certain apparent contradictions, especially in the moral and political philosophy, in a new light as constituting, rather, phases in the striving activity of reason and hence reconcilable within the dynamics of striving as a whole.

Within the context of practical reason we come now to the first and perhaps the most basic theory/practice relationship which, in a sense, pertains to all the others in this context. Although Kant discusses this particular relationship in detail only in his essay On the Common Saying : 'This may be True in Theory, but it does not Apply in Practice', it is already prefigured in the earlier Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals and Critique of Practical Reason. This is a conception where theory is no longer taken to refer to the realm of phenomena, to what is but to the precepts of practical reason. "Theory" within the context of practical reason refers to the rationally established principles of moral conduct. However, although "theory" here refers to rational moral conduct, it does/....

it does not, on its own, indicate the duty of man. In its own right, as the product of practical reason, it is simply an outline or collection of precepts governing the conduct of any rational being.

In relation to man as a being who is only partially rational, theory begins to point to obligation for man as a being who does not automatically act according to the precepts of practical reason. What is strange, however, is that, although questions about the criterion of duty and the foundation of human obligation are clearly practical questions, one cannot really draw a radical contrast between theory and practice at this point, because, for Kant, moral practice does not refer to what men do in actuality. It refers to the role of theoretical principles as the basis of obligation for men who are partially sensuous and partially rational. Practice, then, refers specifically to the observance of theory (formulated by practical reason) which has become the foundation of human moral obligation. This concept of practice as indicating rationally obligatory conduct is sustained throughout in the moral and political philosophy.

As far as "theory" is concerned, Kant stresses the great danger of not giving it sufficient recognition,  
or worse/....

or worse still, stressing only its academic value as theory while believing that other, more relevant criteria apply in actual practice. From the Kantian point of view, the devaluation of theory is the devaluation of reason. In reality, practice must take its cue from theory if it is to possess any rationality at all.

Just as Plato contrasted knowledge and opinion and asserted the value of knowledge to lie in its association with reason, Kant contrasts theory as the product of reason with the wisdom of experience which he rejects as ultimately illusory. Reason then, i.e., theory, rightfully prescribes to experience, instead of the other way around. "...all is lost if the empirical (hence contingent) conditions governing the execution of the law are made into the conditions of the law itself, so that a practice calculated to produce a result which previous experience makes probable is given the right to dominate a theory which is in fact self-sufficient." <sup>5</sup>

This view of the self-sufficiency of rational theory, which is actually the self-sufficiency of reason, goes hand in hand with Kant's view of the priority of reason in/....

reason in relation to any contingent experience. It is a view that is problematic in that it ascribes to experience only a secondary significance in man's quest for the most authentic form of human existence. In its rejection of the contingency of experience, it opposes an aspect of actuality that is real and constant and the transformation of which is difficult to conceive from a finite point of view.

If he chooses to view reality only in terms of that practice which takes its cue from rational theory, Kant can be said to be still rooted in a philosophical construction of reality. Since he holds that rational striving is, in a sense, inevitable for man (he cannot help striving since he is not a fully rational being), it is strange that Kant could not also conclude that not only does rational striving occur in the face of contingent experience but that, in fact, rational striving constitutes a part of man's contingent experience.

Kant's further position on rational theory as the basis of moral obligation is that, even though actual experience does not and may never have reflected the rational principles of duty, it is, nevertheless, the function of reason in its practical aspect to formulate them. At the same time, Kant argues that theory would

not be /.....

not be valid if it could not be made real in practice. "For it would not be a duty to strive after a certain effect of our will if this effect were impossible in experience (whether we envisage the experience as complete or as progressively approximating to completion)." <sup>6</sup>

Kant finds himself in the position both of insisting on the applicability of rational theory to experience (otherwise, reason and theory would remain irrelevant to actuality) and asserting the complete independence of reason in the formulation of theory. The attempt to concretise practical reason in actuality is, no doubt, made difficult by the radical separation between reason and experience. Kant, however, continues to hold the difficult position that rational theory is constituted independently of actuality but is decisively relevant for it.

As the basis of his conception, Kant takes as an incontrovertible fact, man's striving to abide by the moral motive in contradiction to other opposing motives. He takes for granted that the striving for moral purity in the observance of duty is an inescapable part of being human. Kant argues that although it is possible

that no/....

that no single act of duty has ever been observed on the basis of a purely moral motive, the fact that we do strive towards moral purity is the best argument against the one which claims that "human nature does not permit moral purity (which no-one can say with certainty in any case)." <sup>7</sup>

We ought to strive because in any case we do. This does not sound so absurd if rendered in another way - man proves that moral practice is within his capacity because he occasionally manifests in his conduct the attempt to observe the moral motive above all other motives, or in the face of sensuous temptation. This position is not so difficult to accept, but Kant goes further by claiming that "... the concept of duty, if it is presented to the exclusive judgement of even the most ordinary human reason, and confronts the human will separately and in actual opposition to other motives, is far more powerful, incisive and likely to promote success than all incentives borrowed from the latter selfish principle." <sup>8</sup> This optimistic reading of human experience in confronting the moral dimension is more an indication of how Kant would like human choice to be rather than an actual description of how it is, and contrasts with other more sombre observations on the evil in human nature and the daunting task of

establishing a /....

establishing a moral commonwealth.

In the moral dimension Kant establishes first, theory as pertaining to the essential nature of moral right and valid for any rational being and second, the way in which this theory is the basis of moral obligation for a being not wholly rational, which gives us his conception of practice. Kant makes this very clear: "... not all activities are called practice, but only those realisations of a particular purpose which are considered to comply with certain generally conceived principles of procedure." <sup>9</sup> It is this conception of practice (obligatory conduct for man based on the maxims of reason) that operates as a theoretical framework for human conduct in the different areas of practical reason - history, politics, law, religion. In addition, it delimits the boundaries of rational or authentic conduct.

Having investigated what he considered to be the essential nature of moral right and how this relates to man as a moral ought, Kant, in the political philosophy, analyses the role of this ought within the context of history and in terms of state and society. This brings us to two other theory/practice relationships - that between morality conceived of as theory,

and politics/....

and politics conceived of as practice, and that between moral politics and actual or pragmatic political relations.

To take the first - the relationship between morality and politics - Kant insists that the principle of right that is valid for the individual is as binding in the sphere of socio-political relations. In the appendix to Perpetual Peace Kant states: "Morality, as a collection of absolutely binding laws by which our actions ought to be governed, belongs essentially, in an objective sense, to the practical sphere." <sup>10</sup> This is in line with Kant's original distinction between theoretical reason as referring to the sphere of knowledge and practical reason as pertaining to morality.

In a more mundane sense, morality can also be seen to belong essentially in the practical sphere in so far as it is concerned with man's actions or conduct, although the Kantian sense of what is "practical" derives from practical reason. However, in relation to politics, morality is seen by Kant as the theoretical branch of right. It is the theory in relation to which politics is seen as the sphere of the application or practice of the principle of right. Any authentic politics, whether it concerns relations among individuals in one state or/....

state or relations between states, is essentially an application of moral principles given by reason. From the point of view of reason there exists no conflict between morality and politics since both aspects are governed by the principles of right. But from the subjective point of view of man, in whom sensuous motives vie with the rational, there exists a conflict whose continued existence Kant sees as necessary to serve as a "whetstone of virtue." <sup>11</sup>

Again, Kant uses his notion of a rational/sensuous bifurcation in man as the fact which generates the conflict between theory (morality) and practice (politics), and the principle of rational striving as the bridge between the two. Kant makes it clear that, although there is a discrepancy between morality and politics from the human point of view, this does not indicate the non-validity or non-reality of morality (theory) in the sphere of politics. The principle of rational striving guarantees the real significance of moral principles in the realm of politics.

This view indicates a role for a special kind of pragmatism in politics which in itself does not exclude moral theory. Such a pragmatism can constitute a legitimate phase in the striving towards a more moral existence

both from/....

both from the individual and social points of view. Pragmatism in politics will be discussed again in the next section of this chapter. What is clear, however, is that Kant rejects not pragmatism per se but the attitude of men who advocate political opportunism on the assumption of the non-reality of freedom in practice, and who reject morality in politics as "pure theory."<sup>12</sup>

In keeping with his concept of practice as indicating rational moral conduct, Kant rejects the notion of practical wisdom ("practical" here describing the wisdom gathered from our experience) as a purely pragmatic non-moral wisdom. The latter concept of wisdom would only be valid if one views the whole of man's existence, including his socio-political existence, as governed exclusively by the principles of mechanical causality. "If, of course, there is neither freedom nor any moral law based on freedom, but only a state in which everything that happens or can happen simply obeys the mechanical workings of nature, politics would mean the art of utilising nature for the government of men, and this would constitute the whole of practical wisdom; the concept of right would then be only an empty idea." <sup>13</sup>

Kant also makes it clear that in the process of rational striving, it is not theory (morality) which  
must be/....



must be accommodated to practice (politics) but rather that the principles of political expediency be fashioned in such a way that they are compatible with morality. Worse still than the man who fits morality to political opportunity is the standpoint of the politician who justifies his opportunism on the grounds that "human nature is incapable of attaining the good which reason prescribes as an idea." <sup>14</sup> Kant asserts that such men "make progress impossible, and eternalise the violation of right." <sup>15</sup>

Kant prefers to postulate an anthropological image of man in terms of his moral potential as a partially rational being, and it is clear that the principle of rational striving enables him to maintain an open-ended view of human moral achievement. This attitude is, at the same time, balanced by the view that, since man will never overcome completely the conflict in himself between rational and sensuous motives, the struggle for moral achievement will continue, and the essential finitude of human reason is maintained as the boundary of human achievement. In other words, Kant postulates that human reason must strive to transcend its immediate limitations in order to create a moral existence but at the same time he does not assert a non-human view of transcendence as an ultimate transition from the imperfect human

condition to/....

condition to something perfect.

Kant's position in his discussion of the relationship between morality and politics is distinctly anti-Machiavellian - the principle of right is superior to brute force or cunning or opportunism of any kind, and it is superior in view of man's rational potential. Kant's insistence that political practice be grounded in moral theory is not in itself so startling or alien to the principles of political practice as perceived even by practising politicians in many instances. In theory at least, lip service is paid to the notion that socio-political life is based on some kind of moral/spiritual foundation. The charters and constitutions of many states testify to this. What is striking in Kant is his view that if one accepts the validity of theory, one accepts it for practice as well and not only in terms of theory alone. The concept of duty is meaningless if one can really not act according to its demands. "...if we have once acknowledged the authority of this concept of duty, it is patently absurd to say that we cannot act as the moral laws require. For if this were the case, the concept of duty would automatically be dropped from morals." 16

The Kantian dilemma, then, is to understand why men do not actualise in practice what they might  
acknowledge in/...

acknowledge in theory. In a footnote to Perpetual Peace Kant advances one possible reason: "... each individual believes of himself that he would by all means maintain the sanctity of the concept of right and obey it faithfully, if only he could be certain that all the others would do likewise, ... But since each individual, despite his good opinion of himself, assumes bad faith in everyone else, men thereby pass judgement on one another to the effect that they are all in point of fact of little worth - although it is a moot point why this should be so, since we cannot blame it on the nature of man as a free being." <sup>17</sup> This is the point at which the need for government becomes apparent, firstly as the means of ending lawless activities which then "makes it much easier for the moral capacities of men to develop into an immediate respect for right " <sup>18</sup> and secondly, and ultimately more significantly, in terms of the state seen as a collection of individuals rallying around God.

In his discussion of the relationship between morality and politics, although Kant recognises that man, because of his shortcomings, will not be able to act consistently in accordance with the moral law, he assumes, nevertheless, that men recognise or are conscious of the distinction between what is morally obligatory

in a/....

in a situation and what is not. Even though Kant is often pessimistic about the conduct of men and their tendency to subordinate the rational to the sensuous, he cannot conceive of men who are not aware of the moral law through ignorance or a moral blind spot. So, inevitably for Kant, failure to abide by the moral law is not due to the absence of moral knowledge but rather to the failure of the will in upholding the correct moral motive.

Silber in his introduction to Kant's Religion within the Limits of Reason alone provides a useful analysis of the different stages in the "decline of moral goodness in volition"<sup>19</sup> as seen by Kant. The stage from which the decline begins is the stage of complete autonomy where the "Willkür acts both in accordance with and for the sake of the moral law."<sup>20</sup> The decline begins when: "Out of weakness Willkür abandons the difficult course of willing the law of its rational nature and freely gives it strongest momentary desires mastery over its actions."<sup>21</sup> However, moral awareness of the law and its transgression is still present.

The next stage is the only one where Kant indicates the existence of moral ignorance - where the Willkür fails to/....

fails to "distinguish between moral and non-moral motives in its action." <sup>22</sup> At this stage, man may even observe the demands of the moral law but may do so unknowingly, or he does not observe the moral motive as the ultimate motive of conduct. The last stage <sup>23</sup> is where "Willkür now deliberately subordinates its moral incentive to its non-moral ones." <sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, there is still the awareness of the moral law. The moral law, under all circumstances, is the condition of human freedom, so that the will must always relate to the moral law (negatively or positively) as there is no other source for its free activity. "The will, always transcendently free to reject the moral law, can never escape its jurisdiction and punishment." <sup>25</sup> Kant assumes the absolute and eternal reality of the moral law as a defining condition of all volitional activity.

With reference to the question of man's awareness of the moral law and his understanding of its demands, Kant assumes largely that men recognise situations bounded by the moral law. In the one instance where he concedes moral ignorance, he assumes, nevertheless, that an individual may be observing the moral motive though in an unauthentic way. A moral situation, however, never presents itself to an individual without any

reference to/....

reference to the moral law, where there is total ignorance about the kind of moral response necessary. There is, in fact, an immediate awareness of moral situations. In addition to this moral awareness, there is also, according to Kant, a tendency to relate to the moral law in some way or other. This leads him to write about "that respect for the concept of right which man is absolutely incapable of renouncing..."<sup>26</sup> or that "the moral principle in man is never extinguished,..."<sup>27</sup> or that political wisdom based on moral reason "presents itself as it were automatically; it is obvious to everyone,....."<sup>28</sup> unlike solutions based on artifice.

The "how" and "why" of the moral convictions that Kant assumes in men are not so clearly evident in Kant's analyses, perhaps because of Kant's view that to enquire into such matters is as pointless as asking questions about why we are free. He speaks only of "our (necessarily inward) experience that no idea can so greatly elevate the human mind and inspire it with such enthusiasm as that of a pure moral conviction, respecting duty above all else, struggling with countless evils of existence and even with their most seductive temptations, and yet overcoming them - for we may rightly assume that man can do so."<sup>29</sup> Kant is convinced

that man's/....

that man's moral sensibility is such that when we violate the moral law "we feel the consequences directly, and appear despicable and culpable in our own eyes." 30

It is not unreasonable to conclude that Kant transferred his own personal convictions about morality to a philosophical argument that human beings in general have these convictions about morality. That is why he could claim that he had not discovered any new moral principle, but was merely articulating the rational principles which underlie man's actual moral experience. This is significant for his view of the theory/practice relationship in morality, because he could show that the underlying theoretical principle is not alien to and therefore, valid for practice.

On the debit side, one can argue that Kant absolutised certain aspects of possible moral experience (where some men or many men may in fact be aware of some kind of moral ought) to stand for human response in general. On the basis of this view, he tends to see reality only in terms of its reformability in accordance with the moral law. To some extent this is a simplification of moral reality. Kant argues that, as potentially rational beings, we do respond to moral situations in/....

situations in a particular way. From this position he maintains that we ought to respond in just that way, thus giving us his theoretical conception of practice or authentic conduct.

The question of the nature of human moral awareness is really a problematic one in Kant and can be said to crystallise in his views on education. In his famous acknowledgement to Rousseau, Kant makes it clear that he does not believe that moral awareness is in direct proportion to intellectual ability. If this is the case it is possible even for the untutored man to intuit (in a qualified sense) the validity of rational moral principles. But this view is only the one facet of Kant's view on morality and education. The other is the enlightenment assumption of progress on the basis of the increasing use of reason.

Beck, in his essay Kant and Education, points to these two conflicting strains - on the one hand that education, especially moral education, is a "means to enlightenment and eventually to a moral commonwealth,.."<sup>31</sup> and that man's moral hopes are grounded in a slow historical progress, and on the other hand the view that "Education, like civilisation, is a conditio sine qua non of moral progress, but it is not its cause."<sup>32</sup>

Beck argues/....

Beck argues that what sets Kant apart from other Enlightenment thinkers is the Kantian view that "there is a supernatural, superhistorical dimension to morality and the transition to it. In such an eschatology the social institutions of civilization, including that of education, play only a preliminary role.... ." 33

One could argue that Kant could, without too much difficulty, have held both views since he could have maintained the existence of an original moral awareness in man which moral education could then heighten, but this would raise numerous other problems like whether those who had the benefits of moral education were more culpable in transgressing the moral law than those who had not, the problem of the exact nature of moral education, the failure of moral education to guarantee moral progress and so on.

We come now to the second theory/practice relationship with reference to politics - that between moral politics and pragmatic politics. In terms of the principle of right, an authentic politics is one where the moral ought is the ultimate motive underlying political practice. Kant asserts that the goal of politics is not the exercise of power in terms of any

non-moral/....

non-moral advantages this brings, but the creation of a state where all citizens are free to pursue their own ends under the discipline of rational moral law. "...political life is only superficially concerned with political power. Power cannot be ignored, but the real problem of politics is to ensure right, i.e. law and justice. If we take the dignity of man, his freedom as a rational being, as the starting-point of our enquiry into political practice, only a theory of right based on principles of pure reason is capable of explaining political life. Other theories are false and thus mislead not only in their understanding of political practice, but also in their political repercussions." <sup>34</sup> If politics is at all concerned with power, it is concerned with the power of moral reason.

Even though it is clear that the moral motive is the only authentic motive underlying all moral and political volition, and that, therefore, theory as the product of reason is indispensable - we can legitimately ask what happens to that political practice which is not fully in accordance with the moral law but does not set out to be a flagrant disregard of it either. In other words, what is the moral status of a political practice that is not yet a moral politics but is, nevertheless, best suited to specific circumstances?

Here emerges/....

Here emerges a measure of Kantian political realism insofar as he can, within the context of a dynamic philosophy of history, accommodate a kind of pragmatism that is not in total contradiction to morality but points rather towards it - slowly, painfully and with many setbacks in between.

Although Kant insisted that only a moral politics is fully in keeping with the dignity of man as a rational being, his theoretical ideal does not preclude him from accepting aspects of actual experience especially in terms of "the needs of the actual situation."<sup>35</sup> This means that although the formal ethical analyses of the Foundations and the Critique of Practical Reason indicate Kant's theoretical position on morality, they are not definitive of Kant's position on the entire compass of morality, taking his philosophy as a whole. The philosophy of history and the political philosophy indicate his attempt to consider the possibilities of morality within the realities of actual experience, although the framework of his discussion is always the principle of moral reason.

This attitude is fully in keeping with Kant's gradualistic approach in the sphere of politics and political reform. He espoused no overnight political

upheavals in/....

upheavals in the name of morality. His strictures on the moral and constitutional hazards of revolution are well known. In the Metaphysic of Morals Kant writes: " 'The best constitution is that in which the power rests with laws instead of with men.' For what can be more metaphysically sublime than this idea,.... But no attempt should be made to put it into practice overnight by revolution, i.e. by forcibly overthrowing a defective constitution which has existed in the past; for there would then be an interval of time during which the conditions of right would be nullified. If we try instead to give it reality by means of gradual reforms carried out in accordance with definite principles, we shall see that it is the only means of continually approaching the supreme political good - perpetual peace." 36

The notion of gradual reform is linked effectively to the concept of rational striving. Striving is a process motivated by a specific moral goal. The pragmatic aspect can be viewed as a part of the process of human striving towards the fullest expression of moral rationality possible for man. However, Kant cannot warn us enough of the danger of accepting any political pragmatism which claims to constitute in itself a goal, even though it brings happiness.

He points/....

He points out, for example, that, in the case of a political constitution that has been in existence for a long time and seems to work satisfactorily, people become "accustomed to judging both their happiness and their rights in terms of the peaceful status quo." 37

This does not "encourage them to value the existing state of affairs in the light of those concepts of happiness and right which reason provides." 38

It is clear that for Kant, that pragmatism which does not view itself as a limit but is open to moral transformation is a valid part of rational striving, but that expediency which points to the impracticability of moral duty and asserts itself as self-sufficient is unacceptable. It is even dangerous because

- (a) it cannot be proved with certainty and
- (b) it imposes an illusory limit on the possibilities of rational human conduct.

Here, Kant's basic faith in man's capacity for moral conduct emerges clearly. It is a faith based on the belief that human nature has an essential respect for right and duty, and that therefore it is not foolish to admire practical moral reason. This expresses not only a mere philosophical hope for mankind based on a naive assessment of human rationality but a practical hope

based on/....

based on the view that although human nature is capable of evil, it is also capable of moral victory - and this, in the final analysis, is its definitive quality. It is here that Kant's vision contrasts most strongly with Schopenhauer's pessimistic view of human nature.

It would be too facile to dismiss this core Kantian insight as naive or erroneous on the basis of a historical catalogue of human evil and irrationality up to now and claim, rather, that this proves the opposite of what Kant believed - that there may be a few instances of rational moral conduct but that human nature is essentially irrational. Even this would be difficult to prove with finality. If history is a dynamic process and rational striving an ongoing reality, then the totality of past negative human experience is not definitive of human nature. In the end, what it boils down to is that Kant proposes a specific attitude towards life and its possibilities in the face of all the absurdities and irrationalities of existence - an attitude of heroic optimism, and faith in ourselves and in our capacity to act in a morally responsible way.

In spite of all the problematic assumptions in his moral and political philosophy, this aspect is of  
inestimable value/....

inestimable value as a practical proposal. That it is a difficult attitude to maintain in the face of our experience of past and present moral and political aberrations, is not denied, but to reject it is to fall victim to a pessimism about human nature which Kant warned is dangerous. "Such theories are particularly damaging, because they may themselves produce the very evil they predict." <sup>39</sup> To have faith in man's rational moral capacity is not always to act in a rational moral way. But not to have faith in man's moral capacity may mean that one makes no effort at all to act in a morally rational way. If this is the case, the former attitude is infinitely preferable since it, at least, provides the framework for possible moral conduct on the part of man.

Although it is true that Kant sometimes did argue as if the moral aspect would eventually triumph over all other aspects over a long period of time, it is best seen as a theoretical target or goal of rational striving, rather than an actually realisable stage in history. The final triumph of morality would mean, as Kant himself realised, the transcending of man from a finite, partially rational being to one for whom the moral ought is no longer meaningful. The concept of rational striving

indicates, then/....

indicates, then, not so much an optimism about the total victory of the moral aspect in human nature over all other negative aspects, but rather an optimism about the possibility of authentic moral conduct on the part of a being who is only partially rational. It is also an encouragement to make this possibility actual as frequently as possible.

In the final analysis, the question of the relationship between morality and politics, and between moral politics and pragmatism resolves itself into the question of whether men have that openness to the moral law as defined by Kant and which, for him, was the saving grace of pragmatic practice, and whether man has the strength and moral equanimity to sustain the attitude of heroic optimism in the face of many negative historical experiences which so often breed pessimism and despair about the moral future of mankind.

Underlying the various theory/practice relationships in the Critical Philosophy, beginning with the original distinction between knowledge and morality, and including those in the sphere of morality and politics is Kant's concept of rational striving as an attempt to cope with the varying aspects of actuality. It is a concept which unifies Kant's discussion of widely ranging areas like  
science, morality/....

science, morality, politics, history, law, aesthetics and religion. In the Kantian philosophy, this rational striving, which points constantly to a moral goal, can be seen as a transcendental principle in terms of which all experience - cognitive, moral, political and even religious - becomes intelligible as the various stages of the activity of human reason in its search for completeness.

In actuality, man does strive for knowledge, for moral and political goals, for religious integrity - he has to make decisions and act in all these different areas. Kant did not intend to concern himself with principles which are generalisations from experience in any of those fields, but attempts to show that all experience is itself the manifestation of striving. And since human reason is finite, man cannot help striving. The limitation of man is a constant spur, and guarantees the continuation of the process of rational striving. However, the concept of rational striving is meaningful only in terms of the concept of Freedom. This brings us to the next section of this chapter - the role of Freedom in relation to rational striving and authentic practice. This is an aspect which any discussion of theory and practice must come to terms with.

(b) The Role/....

(b) The Role and Importance of Freedom in Striving.

Kant regarded the concept of Freedom as the "keystone of the whole system of pure reason,...."<sup>40</sup>

It plays a crucial role in his philosophy as the single factor through which man can transcend his position as an object among other objects determined by the laws of natural causality, and engage in the process of self-creation and self-definition on the basis of the principles of reason. The concept of rational striving is only meaningful if man is free to choose from any number of alternatives, and work towards the one most consistent with the possibility of a moral existence. The concept of freedom as rational self-determination must have a decisive bearing on Kant's view of practice as authentic conduct. The strength and deficiencies of his view of freedom are reflected in his concept of practice, and the problems which surround the former remain to plague the latter as well.

A fundamental feature of Kant's ethics is the notion that every man, by virtue of his humanity and irrespective of any other consideration, has the right to make choices and decisions autonomously, and is not to be regarded as a mere object in the choices and decisions of others.

Rationality in/....

Rationality in conduct, whether moral or political, consists in living by principles which enable one's existence as a free and autonomous agent without, at the same time, infringing on the freedom and autonomy of others. This requires man to seek the foundation of his maxims not in inclination (which caters for the satisfaction only of my own interests) but in reason which indicates only my duty in a situation, irrespective of my sensuous desires or the desires of others. "To be rational is to infuse into conduct a form which is equally valid for all agents and therefore not biased towards anyone." <sup>41</sup>

All men, then, in their capacity as partially rational beings, have the potential power of rational self-definition. In this consists their freedom. Any dignity or worth attaching to man and his conduct accrues solely from this freedom. It is what enables man to transcend the mechanical determinism in nature and participate in a different kind of causal process. And it is only on the assumption of this freedom that any talk of morality is meaningful at all. Such an assumption of freedom is not only a philosopher's privilege. Berlin, for example, maintains in his Essays on Liberty that "men have, at all times, taken freedom of choice for granted in their ordinary discourse. And

I further/....

I further argue that if men became truly convinced that this belief was mistaken, the revision and transformation of the basic terms and ideas that this realization would call for would be greater and more upsetting than the majority of contemporary determinists seem to realize." 42

In the Kantian context, freedom of choice is not a theoretical goal to be achieved by rational striving. It is already something that man possesses by virtue of his rational capacity, a capacity which we all have as human beings. The potentialities in human existence are all related to this rational capacity and so to the freedom of men. This means that all past and present experience is not by any means a limit to what is possible for man as a rational being, because our freedom makes transcendence a constant possibility. Human striving in the various goals that it pursues can be seen as a manifestation of human freedom. So in politics, as much as in morality, the concept of freedom is central to an understanding of authentic conduct. Rational conduct, both in morality and politics, is no more than conduct based on free autonomous choice.

In actual terms however, what is the meaning of freedom in the sphere of morality and especially politics?

Reiss, points/....

Reiss, points out that Kant's "conception of political freedom is not positive, but negative. It is concerned with those restraints which the individual must accept in order to avoid conflict with others so that he may enjoy the freedom of moral action." <sup>43</sup> Taylor defines negative freedom as indicating a situation where one is "independent from external interference, whereas 'positive' conceptions define it rather as realized in action which comes from or expresses the true self." <sup>44</sup>

According to our view, Kant's conception of freedom as rational self-determination includes both negative and positive aspects, arising from a common basis. We maintain further that the concept of rational striving links both the aspects. In its negative aspect, freedom indicates the absence of sensuous constraint. Reason strives towards a victory over all sensuously determined motives, over materialist egoism. Freedom means, then, the freedom from determination by my sensuous self - which is as it should be in terms of human authenticity, since my sensuous self, though real, is not definitive of my existence as a moral being.

In the political sphere, in addition to the notion of freedom as freedom from sensuous determination, is emphasized the idea of law as creating the context of freedom within/....

freedom within which the individual is not unjustly coerced by the will of other individuals. In this respect, freedom is negatively represented in terms of the justified legal restraints on individuals which enable men to live together without infringing on each other's rights and dignities. This negative conception of political freedom is a fundamental component of a politics which sets out to create a context for the expression of moral reason. Berlin, for example, argues that, without wishing to absolutise negative freedom, he, nevertheless, sees this conception as constituting the "fundamental sense of freedom." <sup>45</sup> He continues: "To strive to be free is to seek to remove obstacles; to struggle for personal freedom is to seek to curb interference, exploitation, enslavement by men whose ends are theirs, not one's own. Freedom, at least, in its political sense, is co-terminous with the absence of bullying or domination." <sup>46</sup>

Kant, in his concept of negative freedom, very strongly emphasizes what he considers to be a non-negotiable principle of any political practice which seeks to be moral. This freedom is, however, both a personal responsibility as well as a public necessity. If each individual strives to assert the rational moral aspect of his being over all others, he helps to create a  
context for/....

context for public right. In this way the unity of individual and social right is established on the basis of the fact that all individuals, in their capacity as partially rational beings, are engaged in the process of striving to overcome their limitations. Kant, then, makes right, whether individual or social, completely dependent on the autonomous decision of the individual to express his freedom by a rational conquest over all other motives.

The possibility of total autonomy or freedom raises many questions concerning the actual power and effectiveness of freedom, especially in the socio-political sphere. This is a crucial issue which has a strong bearing on the question of whether Kant's concept of practice can be a real possibility for man. In a footnote to his introduction to Kant's Religion within the Limits of Reason alone Silber attempts to clarify this issue. He writes: "Kant does not deny that there are influences on the will and limitations on the expression of freedom. Moral instruction, temptation, disease, health, intelligence, and stupidity influence this will by increasing or decreasing or modifying its power of self-expression... Kant does deny, however, that such factors can determine the will without destroying it.

If a /....

If a person is free and responsible, then his freedom is unqualified and absolute, although the possibilities for its expression may vary considerably." 47

In addition to the factors mentioned by Silber, the effectiveness of individual freedom is also challenged by powerful aspects like the political climate in a state, the power of institutions, the conditioning influence of the media, etc. If it is the case that the individual possesses freedom of choice by virtue of being human, but that various limitations in the status quo have a bearing on the expression of this freedom, it would have been more illuminating, for the sake of practice, if Kant had elaborated on the problem of freedom from the point of view of its effective expression instead of concentrating on man's unqualified freedom.

In actual practice, freedom can be seen as an internal power of man which has to contend with various external powers that can affect its possibilities of self-expression. There is no guarantee that man's striving or that the correct volitional attitude can effectively triumph over all external limitations. Even though man may strive in his own being to observe the moral law, the striving of the self may be inadequate to realise the/....

realise the full meaning of freedom as self-determination.

This problem of influences on the will and its capacity for self-expression goes hand in hand with problems arising from the Kantian concept of freedom as radical self-determination by the self. This may be understandable as a theoretical ideal, but in actuality it is difficult to visualise since it means the "determination of effects by a self which is not determined by anything else - not even by its own prior nature." <sup>48</sup> Freedom in this sense means that man must be secure both "spatially and temporally from determination by all factors alien or antecedent to himself in the moment of action;" <sup>49</sup> This freedom of the self from any situational determination guarantees its absolute autonomy but very clearly draws attention to its isolation from very real and concrete factors in actual experience. And yet, paradoxically, despite the problem of visualising the possibility of a radically free self, it is an assumption that is vitally necessary if the concept of moral responsibility is to be intelligible.

In the final sense, the free self stands in the same relationship to its existential situation as rationally formulated theory does to actual practice - just as  
theory must/....

theory must be the sole product of a a priori reason, yet relevant in actuality, so too the self must be free from all determination, yet direct itself to the creation of a free or moral society. It is only via Hegel that we come to Marx and the idea of rational self-determination and self-creation as being linked to the notion of the restructuring of environmental factors, so that both the self and its context are to be seen as inextricably linked for the purposes of any discussion about human freedom or the authentic self and its most rational form of existence.

With regard to the distinction between negative and positive freedom, Kant upholds the value of negative freedom both in relation to the individual self (as freedom from determination by non-rational non-moral motives) and the self in a socio-political context (freedom from the unjust coercion of other wills). In addition to the concept of negative freedom, there exists also a positive view of freedom as the expression of my authentic self - the positive attempt to realise chosen moral goals.

However, before discussing this positive aspect we have to draw attention to the analyses of L. W. Beck <sup>50</sup> and J. Silber <sup>51</sup> who correctly point out that both

heteronymy and/....

heteronymy and autonomy are means of expressing freedom and that rationality "is involved in both the heteronomous and the autonomous modes of free expression."<sup>52</sup> This obviates the problem-ridden view that man is free only in the expression of his moral personality and postulates instead, the view that there are authentic and unauthentic ways of expressing one's freedom. Using this distinction as a worthwhile hypothesis, we can render freedom in its positive aspect as the most authentic (in relation to moral reason) assertion of my self.

In terms of Kant's contention that my moral being is the most definitive aspect of my being human, rational striving is directed towards the assertion of freedom in its authentic aspect. But the distinction between authentic and unauthentic freedom must be linked to a further distinction between authentic and unauthentic forms of rational striving. It must be possible for man to use his reason to strive after non-moral goals but this is no more than the victory of man's sensuousness over his reason, and hence an unauthentic form of rational striving. We can regard it as an irrational use of reason. The only authentic form relates to the activity of man's reason on the basis of a recognition and respect for the moral law, and the subordination of the sensuous to its proper place.

It is/....

It is only when the rational part of our being pursues moral reason that we transcend the purely selfish and attain to the "universality of reason which is the sole means whereby the will can positively assert its creative independence." <sup>53</sup> Man only realises his human potential, not as an isolated selfish individual but as a being whose freedom is defined in relation to the freedom of his fellow human beings, by what we can call a rational use of his reason, which is simply a moral use of his reason. The attempt to achieve this attitude is what typifies the man who is enlightened, the Kantian man of culture.

In connection with the positive assertion of authentic freedom, Kant postulates specific goals like perpetual peace and the establishment of a republican constitution, which man is morally obligated to pursue. Kant, of course, stresses that these positive goals must be seen as the rational expression of the freedom of mankind as a whole rather than of single individuals. However, in terms of Kant's distinction between perfect and imperfect duties, it is clear that the negative conception of freedom in the political sphere (the acceptance of justified legal constraints) falls in the area of absolutely binding perfect duties whereas the positive goals of perpetual peace, etc., are imperfect

duties which/....

duties which are not as binding on the individual in terms of his legal/political duties within the state. This indicates the importance of negative freedom in Kant's political philosophy as the primary goal of rational striving in the attempt to create the context within which the positive goals may be realised.

The relationship between rational striving and freedom now become more explicit. Man is free by virtue of his being human and having the capacity to act rationally. But this freedom is a potential that can be used heteronomously or autonomously. It is only when freedom is used autonomously that one can speak of the liberation of man. It is in this sense that moral reason operates as a principle of liberation in making possible the fullest and most authentic expression of our freedom. Our rational striving is directed towards this kind of freedom, and it is only because we are capable of this freedom that rational striving is a meaningful activity. By our striving we make this particular kind of freedom actual or real by greater and greater degrees.

Although complete freedom will not be achieved on account of our essential finitude, our moral duty is to strive to make it a reality in our personal lives as far

as we/....

as we can. By the striving of our reason we engage in the process of creating our moral self-hood, thus liberating ourselves from isolationist egoism and proclaiming our fitness to enter the moral commonwealth or the community of moral beings. In this respect, the question of individual moral discipline is always linked to the concept of a free community, thus indicating the unity of the individual and social spheres. Man's moral duty is both individual as well as social. It is for this reason that Kant argued that, theoretically, there is no conflict between man's moral and political obligations.

We have already touched on the problematic issue of whether it is moral education or the process of civilisation that brings us to moral awareness, or whether it is an act which has no antecedents - a kind of a moral leap by which man breaks away from sensuous determination to create a moral mode of existence which no one can take credit for except himself. Whatever the means, man becomes truly free only when he strives towards moral reason. Not to strive towards this freedom is not to exist or want to exist in the most authentic way possible for human beings.

The Kantian concept of rational striving and freedom as moral self-determination are powerful intellectually  
and emotionally/....

and emotionally persuasive ideas. The assumption of moral freedom and its value for man appears to be non-negotiable. Not to assume it indicates that one believes that human authenticity can be defined without reference to moral freedom. As the capacity for a moral expression of freedom, Kant's concept of authenticity transcends cultural and historical contingencies and is maintained as valid in the face of all contradictory data from past and present experience on the basis that, as a rational capacity, it always has the possibility of realisation at some time or other.

Rational striving as the basis of Kant's whole philosophy is a process in terms of which several areas of human experience and their specific problems can be set into focus. The goal common to all these areas is that of indicating to man what is theoretically in accord with reason, and more significantly, what man's practical obligation is in the sphere of volitional activity. The significance of practical reason is elaborated first on the theoretical level of defining right for a rational being, and then on the more practical level of indicating obligation within the context of our existential experience.

The striving of reason (a metaphysical impulse that men cannot help having on account of their imperfect

rationality and/....

rationality and their subsequent finitude) occurs within the context of two aspects. First, reason in its striving comes up continually against its own limits in the various spheres of human experience. In his primary distinction between theoretical and practical reason, Kant shows how reason comes up against the boundaries of cognition, and its need to transcend this boundary in its capacity as practical reason. The striving of reason for transcendence is a feature which not only distinguishes theoretical reason from practical reason but manifests itself also in relation to practical reason in the different areas that it has jurisdiction over - in the striving to establish an authentic morality for the individual will, to establish a moral state as well a moral commonwealth of states, etc.

In each of these areas, there are obstacles and problems which indicate both the "frailty of human reason" <sup>54</sup> as well as the need for it to soldier on in its quests, because each limit points beyond itself to new possibilities of reason. The Kantian notion that each boundary points positively to something lying beyond, used in the Prolegomena to set apart the function of practical reason from theoretical reason, can be applied in a more general sense to the total activity of reason, including practical reason.

The need/....

The need of reason to transcend the limits it encounters is no more than the need of man to grasp the ultimate basis and the totality of being human in the world - the full range of the possibilities of existence for an imperfectly rational being who is nevertheless free. Kant, of course, gives priority to practical reason in bringing man to a truly human existence, and so the striving of practical reason delineates the sphere within which human authenticity is ultimately to be located. "The practical use of reason is an act of the human being orienting itself among being." 55

The second aspect related to the striving of reason, which emerges from the one discussed above, is the fact that through this striving in the various spheres and stages of volitional human activity, a definition of authentic human nature emerges, and from the point of view of practice, indicates to us our duty within the context of this definition. The long journey of philosophical exploration from the problem posed by traditional metaphysics and its resolution by means of which Kant attempted to delineate the boundaries of knowledge, to a consideration of the role of practical reason within the context of history - brings us to this perception of the powers and limits of human nature (viewed integrally from the point of view of human reason)

as well/....

as well as the reality within which it functions.

Operating on the normal assumption that his perception of reality is greater or more sure than that of his predecessors, Kant postulates a vision of man as he is, as he ought to be, and as he can be. But the definition of man is not quite complete on the basis of exploring the spheres of knowledge on the one hand, and that of morality and politics on the other. We maintain that the question of theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy can only be comprehensively dealt with by including a consideration of the religious dimension as the ultimate perspective from which to view our moral and political duties. Therefore, the concept of a striving reason which aims at explicating the nature of human obligation in terms of its passage through the different areas of human volition includes, within the Kantian philosophy as a whole, the question of God and of human religiousness.

(c) The Culmination of Human Striving in Religion

Human striving is directed towards several goals - knowledge of phenomena, the articulation of the moral ought, the meaningful translation of this ought into a historical context in the struggle to forge a moral

politics./....

politics. Ultimately, however, reason (as distinct from the understanding) directs itself towards the Unconditioned - the totality which conditions all existence, that which is not a principle of knowledge but is the underlying foundation which, as a regulative principle, impels reason to seek its own nature and in the process, define its own powers and limits.

Although, as pointed out by Greene in his introduction to Kant's Religion within the Limits of Reason alone, Kant did not specifically relate the notion of the Unconditioned (as "a metaphysical approach to a Supreme Being" <sup>56</sup>) to his religious conception, the relating of reason to the concept of the Unconditioned, nevertheless, indicates the direction that striving ultimately points to - to some principle or Being that delineates the totality (both natural and moral) within which man moves and with which man's reason must come to terms. The striving of reason then, can be seen as the factor that unifies the various facets of human existence (including the religious) and outlines the whole within which man wills and acts as an imperfectly rational but free being.

Kant approaches religion in terms of the principle of practical moral reason rather than as a cognitive

enquiry into/....

enquiry into the existence of God. Such an approach indicates an attitude to religion made primarily in terms of man as a being with specific limitations and potentialities, who is engaged in the private pursuit of integrity as well as having public or social moral commitments within a historical context. Man's relationship to the divine, therefore, is not a private a-historical communion with God but the ultimate expression of a striving that manifests itself in terms of several kinds of human needs.

If this is the case, the religious dimension is not a peripheral issue to the striving of reason but an essential sphere in the passage of reason towards the most authentic form of human existence. Practical reason in its dynamic critical activity, therefore, cannot ignore the question of the relationship between the human will and the Ultimate, since the notion of authentic practice covers the full range of human experience.

The approach to Kant's philosophy of religion in terms of its status as one of the areas covered by the activity of man's striving reason (and, as will be argued later, as constituting, in fact, the culmination of human striving) differs from the traditional approach to Kant's philosophy of religion which usually focuses on its

subsidiary significance/..

subsidiary significance in relation to Kant's position on ethics.

We postulate our own approach in the light of certain recent approaches made by writers like James Collins in his study of modern philosophy of religion: The Emergence of Philosophy of Religion and Michel Despland in his significant study Kant on History and Religion, although the emphasis in our own approach is determined by the idea that the concept of rational striving, by unifying different areas of human experience like the sphere of objective knowledge, ethics, politics, law and religion, sets the problem of theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy into its clearest focus.

Despland chooses to approach Kant's writings on religion through his philosophy of history. With this approach he establishes two major points:

- a) that the writings on history, while indicating the problems of human volition from a temporal/historical perspective, are also rich in "theological concerns" <sup>57</sup>.
- b) that the philosophy of religion is not a mere "appendage" to the ethical philosophy but "a coherent intellectual effort, pursued in its own right," <sup>58</sup> and is thus a "philosophical consideration of  
man's religious/....

man's religious nature and of man's historical religious communities." <sup>59</sup> Viewed in this light, the philosophy of religion, Despland correctly argues, is an integral part of Kant's balanced philosophical position, and by its discussion of various problems not investigated satisfactorily or not at all in his earlier philosophy, has, in fact, the function of making fully explicit the total implications of Kant's view of man and reality.

The above approach together with that of James Collins who argues, with reference to Kant, that the "duty of the philosopher is to enquire about the general human significance of religion, along with the specific means of integrating it with our other modern concerns and achievements. Kant will propose a critical theory of religion, in order to bring the religious outlook into an intelligible relationship with his other major interpretations of experience through science, morality and art " <sup>60</sup>, or that Kant sought "'in a philosophical spirit which is not itself a minister to some theological purpose... the properly human significance of religion as it can be grasped and lived cooperatively by all men'", <sup>61</sup> provides a much richer and more satisfying perspective of Kant's philosophy of religion rather than viewing it simply as an addendum to his work on ethics. It provides a useful framework from which/....

from which to develop our own view of Kant's philosophy of religion as a philosophical analysis of the striving of reason within the religious life of man.

This perspective of Kant's philosophy of religion arises from a systematic elaboration of the ground principle on the basis of which this thesis proceeds, and that is, that the specific theory/practice relationships in the sphere of morality and politics are a reflection of a larger theme - the striving of reason and its postulation of and impetus toward certain authentic goals in the various spheres of human experience. In terms of the totality of experience outlined by man's striving reason, the religious dimension must be seen as one of the spheres where the problem of the capacity of the human will as well as its rational duty is legitimately pursued. A more limited view of the philosophy of religion would not do full justice to the legitimate striving of reason in the religious dimension of human experience.

We would like to argue further, within the context of this thesis, that the religious dimension can be seen as being more than simply one of the legitimate spheres of activity of the striving reason. It can be seen, in a sense, as the culmination of human striving. For

the kind/....



the kind of being that man is - partially rational and partially sensuous but with the capacity for free moral choice - the philosophy of religion postulates that a religiousness based on practical reason is the least limited possibility of human expression. To put it positively, the religious dimension is the area within which, given man's specific nature (the finitude of human reason, the possibility of sensuous and selfish temptation, etc.) he can express himself in the most authentic way, where the optimum self-fulfilling opportunity possible exists for man as a partially rational being.

We take this view - that religion is the culmination of human striving - not because Kant considered man's relationship with the divine as the most fundamental relationship for himself, but , more importantly, because man's private awareness of practical reason as well as his public pursuit of its imperatives in socio-political life are both set into clear focus only through man's relationship with the divine. As such, the philosophy of religion, in its consideration of the rational duty of man in relation to the Ultimate, is of fundamental significance for any discussion of theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy. Within the Kantian system viewed as a whole, it is the consideration of the

concept of/....

concept of God and of man's relationship to God that provides the full meaning of authentic practice both on the individual level and in terms of socio-political relations.

On the individual level, human religiousness, which as Despland aptly points out does not refer to "doctrine and practice but to an inner attitude of the heart", <sup>62</sup> now becomes the ultimate perspective within which the human will can be seen to relate to the moral imperatives of reason. This emerges clearly in the famous declaration: "Religion is (subjectively regarded) the recognition of all duties as divine commands." <sup>63</sup> There is, in effect, no contradiction between the religious obligations of man and the obligations imposed on his will by practical moral reason.

In addition, viewing moral duty as divine command does not undermine the autonomy of practical reason or the freedom of man in any way. Kant provides the following reason: "'We shall not look upon actions as obligatory because they are the commands of God, but shall regard them as divine commands because we have an inward obligation to them.'" <sup>64</sup> The religious attitude as the perspective to view all moral duties, is based on the faith that the universe and man are ultimately disposed

of in/....

of in terms of the moral law, so that the moral law somehow permeates the totality of being. And this moral law leads, "alone and of itself, to belief in God, or at least determines the concept of Him as that of a moral Legislator..."<sup>65</sup> Any historical faith must, according to Kant, be based only on a prior, already established, religious faith revealed by the moral law.

Included in the concept of religion as an attitude to being is the wonder and awe at the majesty of the universe governed by its supreme moral Legislator, and - more important from the point of view of practice - an optimism and hope that, in spite of the frailty of man, the striving of his reason towards authenticity is not in vain, because the moral order in the universe is real and constitutes in fact the supreme reality. In the face of an ultimate moral reality, the duty of man as a partially rational being, whether viewed from the moral or religious points of view is "conscientiousness"<sup>66</sup> in the pursuit of virtue.

Because "conscientiousness" is not a state of perfect moral wisdom but reflects rather the genuine struggle to achieve this wisdom, the striving of reason does not come to a rest in any final sense since man is still, and will continue to be, imperfectly rational.

The striving/....

The striving of reason can be said to culminate in the religious sphere only in the sense that reason, in its passage through the various areas of human experience, comes up against the bounds of the totality within which it moves and, as such, reaches its furthest point. It continues to strive, nevertheless, viewed from this vantage point, in its never-ending pursuit of authenticity.

The philosophy of religion, in addition to circumscribing the sphere of individual duty, also indicates the nature of public duty in the socio-political sphere. In his Religion within the Limits of Reason alone Kant distinguishes between the political and ethical commonwealth. Within the political commonwealth, individuals exist in an "ethical state of nature"<sup>67</sup> and hence can still fall prey to evil even though determined to observe the moral principle. The primary reason for this is that in an ethical state of nature, there is no common goal or principle that unites all individuals. In such a state the individual, though politically subject to the juridical laws which regulate the inter-relationships of men, is still morally free in that there exists no public authority which can coerce him to enter into an ethical commonwealth.

Kant makes/....

Kant makes it clear that the ethical commonwealth is ultimately a social goal - social not only in the limited sense of the duty of man towards a few other men with whom he must interact but pertaining to his duty towards mankind itself. "For the species of rational beings is objectively, in the idea of reason, destined for a social goal, namely, the promotion of the highest as a social good. But because the highest moral good cannot be achieved merely by the exertions of the single individual towards his own moral perfection, but requires rather a union of such individuals into a whole toward the same goal - into a system of well-disposed men, in which and through whose unity alone the highest moral good can come to pass." 68

The ethical commonwealth transcends all political borders, although it must of necessity be based on the political commonwealth. In its basic definition it is a union of men under moral laws. Kant writes: "In addition to prescribing laws to each individual, morally legislative reason also unfurls a banner of virtue as a rallying point for all who love the good, that they may gather beneath it and thus at the very start gain the upper hand over the evil which is attacking them without rest." 69

But what/....

But what is the relationship between this normative concept of the ethical commonwealth and man's religious being? Kant argues that the idea of a "universal republic based on laws of virtue, is an idea completely distinguished from all moral laws (which concern what we know to lie in our own power); since it involves working toward a whole regarding which we do not know whether, as such, it lies in our power or not. Hence this duty is distinguished from all others both in kind and in principle. We can already foresee that this duty will require the presupposition of another idea, namely, that of a higher moral Being through whose universal dispensation the forces of separate individuals, insufficient in themselves, are united for a common end." <sup>70</sup>

Within the ethical commonwealth, neither the people nor any public authority can legislate in respect to the moral laws governing such a union of men. Only God can be regarded as the supreme law-giver in the ethical commonwealth insofar as all our moral duties are at the same time divine commands. "Hence an ethical commonwealth can be thought of only as a people under divine commands, i.e., as a people of God, and indeed under laws of virtue." <sup>71</sup> Religion, then, becomes the fundamental means by which men can strive towards a moral commonwealth as a "kingdom of God." <sup>72</sup> Practical reason

in its/....

in its indication of man's public duty directs him towards participation in a state seen as a union of individuals rallying around God. This is man's only hope of transcending his selfish individualism and moving towards goodness as a universal principle that unites and hence strengthens mankind.

As was the case in the sphere of both morality and politics, the tendency to indicate the theoretical ideal of reason and then outline man's practical obligation is repeated in Kant's philosophical consideration of religion. Practical reason points to the ethical commonwealth as man's highest public duty but man has the freedom to choose whether he wishes to work towards it. "The idea of such a state possesses a thoroughly well-grounded objective reality in human reason (in man's duty to join such a state), even though, subjectively, we can never hope that man's good will will lead mankind to decide to work with unanimity towards this goal." <sup>73</sup>

Kant again draws our attention to the fact that the "conditions of sensuous human nature" <sup>74</sup> greatly circumscribe the "means for establishing such a whole." <sup>75</sup> Therefore, it is a goal which can be completed only by God. But this confidence in the moral ruler of/...

ruler of the universe in no way absolves the individual of the responsibility of striving towards this goal of reason. "Rather must man proceed as though everything depended upon him; only on this condition dare he hope that higher wisdom will grant the completion of his well-intentioned endeavours." 76

The religious dimension, then, puts into clear focus both man's private moral duty as well as his public one, operating on the assumption that practical reason outlines the totality within which all of man's moral duties can be made explicit.

One more point can be made in connection with the status of the philosophy of religion. Kant's doctrine of God takes on several formulations when traced through the three Critiques, the Religion within the Limits of Reason alone and other smaller writings on religion and history. We encounter the notion of the Unconditioned, the concept of God as the guarantor of the Summum Bonum, the idea of God as the principle of reconciliation between the world viewed mechanically and teleologically, so that this "supersensible substratum" 77 is conceived as "containing within itself the ultimate explanation of all the principles applicable to the world of which man is a part - mechanism, teleology and morality." 78 We also know of God as the moral legislator of the

universe, as/....

universe, as well as the rallying point around which individuals can unite, and in the Opus Postumum the idea that God is revealed directly in the Categorical Imperative.

Although the strengths and weaknesses of these several conceptions vary considerably, the multitude of approaches indicates Kant's abiding concern with the Ultimate and the attempt to come to terms with it to the satisfaction of a reason that strives towards a clear articulation of duty. The only proviso common to all these conceptions is that man can never grasp the divine from the point of view of cognition. This is beyond the capacity of his striving reason, although practical reason opens the way for a non-cognitive approach to God.

Kant's multi-faceted approach has the effect of providing an extremely rich philosophy of religion that manifests itself in some form or other throughout the whole of Kant's philosophy, rather than exclusively in the writings on ethics and religion. The problem of God and of human religiousness is a persistent concern in view of Kant's conception of the ultimate primacy of the religious as the perspective to view all human volitional activity.

The question/....

The question of theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy must be seen in relation to his analysis of rational volition as outlined in his philosophy of religion. What emerges in connection with the relationship between theory and practice, taking into account Kant's epistemology, his moral and political philosophy and his philosophy of religion is a sustained attempt to integrate several areas of human experience on the basis of the principle of a striving human reason. Amid all the highly complex details of his philosophical position, his constant concern, despite many problems and failures, is the struggle to explicate an essentially practical quest - in the face of man's finitude and frailty, but also his freedom, what is the correct thing to do to achieve personal integrity and social harmony, and ultimately a metaphysical equilibrium or a feeling of being in step with the universe?

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C H A P T E R   S I X

GENERAL   ASSESSMENT

The arguments which we have used in this thesis to analyse theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy in terms of the concept of rational striving serve to emphasize one fact - Kant's intense preoccupation with Reason. The function or activity of Reason, its limits and powers and, more importantly from the standpoint of our thesis, its central position in moral and political activity in view of its link with human freedom are investigated by Kant with great care and concern.

His reverence for Reason and his fears for its disregard are expressed without any ambiguity in the following quotation from his essay What does it mean: To Orientate Oneself in Thinking: "Friends of the human race and of what is most sacred to it! Accept what appears to you, after careful and sincere examination, as the most worthy object of your beliefs, facts, or arguments. Only do not deprive Reason of that which makes it the most precious good on earth, namely the privilege of being the ultimate touchstone of truth. If you do, you will, unworthy of your freedom, certainly  
lose it/....

lose it and you will drag into this calamity all those innocent fellow citizens who would have been well enough disposed to make lawful use of their freedom." <sup>1</sup> The relationship between Reason and truth, between Reason and freedom, the value of rational self-discipline and the concept of Reason as a practical individual and social determinant are all encompassed in this Kantian appraisal of Reason.

In this thesis we set out to investigate the nature of and the relationship between theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy. The theoretical and practical aspects of Kant's view of morality and politics were examined in the light of the principle of rational striving as the unifying factor in Kantian thought. The central argument was proposed that the specific problem of theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy could only be explicated through a wider consideration of the activity of Reason in various areas of human experience. It is for this reason that we began with Kant's resolution of the problem of metaphysics and the role of Reason (in its function as theoretical reason) in the sphere of cognition. We then went on to consider Kant's moral and political philosophy proper, and proceeded finally to include a consideration of Kant's philosophy of religion.

The foundation/....

The foundation for our proposed argument we traced to Kant's distinction between theoretical and practical reason, his concept of the different kinds of needs associated with each of these aspects of Reason and his assertion of the primacy of the practical need and hence of practical reason.

In terms of the concept of rational striving in various spheres of human experience ranging from science to religion, we become aware of the anthropological dimension <sup>2</sup> in the Critical Philosophy. The value of Kant's early training and orientation in scientific matters under the influence of Knutzen <sup>3</sup> is not in any way negated by his later investigations but can be seen to culminate in a broader concern with the moral destiny of man in its individual, social and eternal aspects. In the Critique of Pure Reason Kant writes: "The whole interest of reason, speculative as well as practical, is centred in the three following questions:

- (1) What can I know?
- (2) What ought I to do?
- (3) What may I hope?" <sup>4</sup>

These questions are all related in some way or other to the activity of Reason. Kant's attempt to provide answers to them takes us beyond specific epistemological

enquiries to/....

enquiries to a consideration of the limits and powers of human nature itself and to the moral destiny of man as a finite but free being. We have considered the problem of theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy in the light of this standpoint.

The central position of Reason within the Critical Philosophy is beyond question. But what is the significance of the concept of Reason as criticism (which forms the basis of Kant's resolution of metaphysics in the Critique of Pure Reason) within the context of theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy? It is our contention that the concept of an ever-striving reason, which continues and, in a sense, completes in the practical domain the labours it began in the theoretical, encompasses the concept of criticism in all its activities. The critical concept of Reason as awareness of limits in the face of illusory claims to knowledge <sup>5</sup> is rendered, in the sphere of practical reason, as the awareness that even practice has limits which arise not only from our imperfect will but our very humanity.

The critical concept of Reason in the moral and political philosophy can be linked to the idea of a

reason that/....

reason that continually strives towards authenticity while at the same time being aware of the crucial gap between a precariously maintained virtue and a finally achieved perfection. Such self-awareness of human limits is the best guarantee of Reason against its own tyranny.

Critical reason, however, stands against not only those who claim too much for man but also those who claim too little. The concept of limit indicates not only what man cannot achieve but also what he is capable of, an awareness of which is crucial in the exercise of man's rational commitments. We consider this last aspect to be one of Kant's enduring insights in relation to the concept of rational practice - the realisation that critical reason can enable man to transcend the false limits which we may have imposed on theory and practice in our moral and political conceptions.

In the light of Kant's criticism of the extravagant claims of Rationalism, it is interesting to consider whether or in what respect his own estimate of the role and power of Reason in the sphere of practical liberation is not itself uncritical. Some critics speak of the

arrogance of/....

arrogance of humanism arising from the conception that man can create his own future in terms of Reason. To be fair to Kant we have to emphasize that he did not postulate the automatic progress of rationality in human affairs. What he did make clear was that rational reform is not a mere theoretical or abstract concept but can be a real possibility for man. Not to believe in this is to stop short at a limited and false conception of human capacity. It is our contention that this is a valuable Kantian insight which is not as far-fetched as some would like to make it, and which is actually grounded in some of the techniques that man already employs in the ordering of his experience. As such the practical character of the function of Reason is not remote from human experience.

In an essay entitled Philosophy and Ideology, Harris points to the reality of rational reflection and argues that "man is a self-conscious, self-reflective and self-critical being, and the very existence of sciences depends upon this specifically human characteristic.

In the natural sciences he reflects upon the facts of his every-day experience - the movement of bodies, the revolution of the heavens, the numerical relations  
of things/....

of things, and the sequence of commonly experienced events. He is led to do this in the course of his attempt to control natural events in his effort to supply his physical needs. Science is man's critical reflection upon his more immediate experience and is only the intellectual aspect of his critical reflection upon his practical experience..."<sup>6</sup> Harris goes on to maintain that man can develop the implications of his scientific results for practical purposes and in this way he is "liable (or rather bound) to modify his practice in the light of his own scientific results,..."<sup>7</sup>

It is easily conceded that the possibility of achieving unanimity on the basis of rational reflection is greater in the sciences than in the sphere of moral and political conduct. But the difficulties confronting Reason in morality and politics in no way detract from the value of critical reason as a guide to moral and political practice and the necessity to postulate it as a real possibility. The repudiation of reason paves the way for excesses of unreason which constantly threaten the fragility of individual integrity and social co-existence. The postulation by Kant of the concept of a critical Reason which in its striving becomes aware of its true limits, highlights the difficult path that  
  
is open/....

is open to man in his pursuit of the best way of maximising human potential. It is a misconception to imagine that reflections on authentic practice are valid only if they stress the easiest way out for man, or that the goals to which we aspire can be achieved without effort.

Kant's concept of Reason forms the basis of an injunction addressed to the sense of responsibility of each one of us as individuals while, at the same time, not ignoring the social bases of our existence. It constitutes, in addition, a modest unspectacular way of coping with human relations in contrast to uncritical positions which may carry a stronger emotional persuasion. It is precisely in this that its greatest value consists as well as its greatest obstacle in becoming a reality in practical terms in that it makes no spectacular claims which can grip the imaginations of men, but teaches only the rather painful and disconcerting lesson of continual effort in the face of comfortable and secure positions. This guarantees the keeping open of lines of communication among men and emphasizes the essentially non-dogmatic nature of critical reason.

It may appear from the above discussion that Kant's concept of critical reason is a merely functional one  
in the/....

in the sense of being a technique or instrument for man in his self-reflective activities. It is functional in the sense that it is a power which enables man to resolve theoretical (knowledge) and practical (ethics) issues. But it is essentially an ontological principle insofar as Kant visualises the rational capacity of man to constitute not only the most distinctive but also the most definitive characteristic of man. It is reason which directs man to his ultimate destiny and as such is alone, indissolubly linked to his essential being.

It is with regard to this ontological conception of reason as indicating, solely and autonomously, the essence of man that the unrealistic nature of Kant's view emerges. This lack of realism must of necessity affect his concept of authentic practice in morality and politics, not as regards the concept of critical reason as a principle of liberation in practice but rather insofar as he pictures the wholeness of an authentic human existence solely in terms of reason.

This leads us to the interesting conclusion that, in its functional role, Kant's concept of Reason as a principle of liberation in its aspect of criticism can be seen to possess a great practical value. But in  
its ontological/....

its ontological aspect, in its neglect or suspicion of the real claims of man's sensible nature and experience, Kant's concept of Reason suffers some lack of perspective. On the basis of this, it can be argued that his vision is not comprehensive enough to embrace all the genuine claims of our human experience (understood in a broad sense), and that his theory of reality reflects his own strong preference for the rational dimension of our existence at the expense of our contingent experience which, viewed positively, can play an educative role in the process of enlightenment.

Although Kant makes it very clear that he does not expect from man the moral perfection that only reason can bestow, he nevertheless directs man to an ideal of existence given by reason alone. In this respect the "reality" that we are supposed to strive to construct by our moral and political conduct is to be characterised by the principle of reason alone. Kant's intention to render an essentially practical character to the principle of Reason is jeopardised by his postulation (even though only as a goal or target of striving) that the actuality of moral and political life (where there may be an interplay of rational and empirical factors) must somehow be transcended or replaced by a "reality" whose boundaries are firmly

and jealously/....

and jealously drawn by our reason acting independently of all other facets of our being. His concept of "practice" in the final analysis looks neither to nature nor history nor experience but to pure reason. In this respect, Kant's theory of authentic reality as the reality bounded by reason sets itself against our actual experience, which in its comprehensiveness both invites as well as defies theoretical reduction.

Having distinguished between the functional and ontological dimensions of Kant's concept of Reason, and having discussed the basic problem arising from the latter aspect, we are now in a position to set into clear focus the genuine value of his concept of Reason as a theoretical ideal geared towards liberation in practice. The concept of Reason in its function of promoting self-awareness and self-criticism, of making man aware of both true and false limits can be seen as the true concept of liberation. The theoretical ideal of reason as criticism can create the condition of enlightenment out of which can arise authentic moral and political conduct. The fact that we do not all observe the demands of critical reason in no way detracts from the value of the fact that, as partially rational beings, we ought to whenever we are in a position to choose, to some extent, our principles of/....

principles of conduct. The process of enlightenment can be no more than the human commitment to proceed according to the standards of critical reason both in the private and social aspects of our being.

It is according to this concept of critical reason that Kant hopes that men will have the vision to look beyond that which is at any particular time towards a state which is not a naively or simplistically imagined utopia but which is a condition of human existence that is perceived, in the freely expressed opinions of men, to be an improvement on that which has gone before. The commitment to Reason, though no guarantee of a secure and trouble-free future, nevertheless indicates the practical role that reason can play in the formation of an attitude towards the circumstances of one's life. This is an attitude which recognises the danger of the belief in final solutions and which is constantly aware of the limits of the human condition.

Any theoretical framework for morality and politics which has the kind of inbuilt safety mechanism that Kant could claim in his concept of critical reason can be seen to possess a positive non-tyrannical relationship with practice. Reason provides the means

by which/....

by which theoretical ideals are formulated but in its non-dogmatic tendency it also carries the guarantee that man aspires to these ideals in a responsible and non-authoritarian fashion. This stipulation is our precarious guarantee against the dangers of the perversion of theory in practice.

We raised the issue in Chapter One of whether the problem of theory and practice was not merely a philosopher's problem - a theoretical enquiry into reconciling one's reflections with one's practical goals and activities. For Kant at least it is very clear that the question of establishing a meaningful relationship between theory and practice is a crucial one. If practice is to be the ground for the emergence of the moral essence of our being, then it must possess an essential openness to rational theoretical direction. Theory as the formulation of rational ends in morality and politics is intended by Kant to be more than abstract reflection. It is meant to function in fact as a framework for practical decisions.

Over and above Kant, it can be argued that men do in fact hold moral and political opinions as well as engage in practical activities directed towards various kinds of goals. In addition, they are capable of perceiving/....

of perceiving the difference between aims and activities which further their interests and those which frustrate those same interests. If this is the case, the process of reconciling one's theory and one's practice must be an ongoing process for man as a necessary practical process. What is emphasized by Kant however is the rational basis of theory and the necessity for any moral and political practice that intends to be authentic, to be based on such theory.

In relation to Kant and the theoretical and practical aspects of his researches Pitte makes some interesting observations. He maintains, for example, that while "there is always a practical aspect to the work of Kant, there is also a paradoxical inability to work at the practical level." <sup>8</sup> Elsewhere he observes in connection with the development of Kant as a young scholar: "...there was always a tension between the speculative and the practical in his thought: a constant concern with practical ends, and a constant employment of speculative means to achieve them." <sup>9</sup> Pitte also quotes Stuckenberg's comment on the way in which Kant's thought proceeded: "'Now it takes a purely speculative turn, then it deals with physics or with mathematics; now it contemplates theology, then/....

theology, then morality; but whatever the subject may be, he lifts it into the region of the intellect, and there disposes of it. In the ordinary sense, he was certainly not a practical man; but it may be said that he was speculatively practical, or if it did not seem too paradoxical, that he was theoretically practical.'" 10

This last comment appears to be a most apt judgement on Kant's disposition as well as his concerns. Kant's emphasis is on the practical only because of his perception that the focus of Reason both in its theoretical and practical functions is a practical one - that of directing man towards his highest good (a goal which for Kant must embrace both happiness and virtue). This practical goal, however, includes man's aspiration to knowledge as well as his quest for the unity of human experience as it manifests itself in science, morality, politics, religion, etc.

In addition to the practical orientation of both theoretical and practical reason, Kant also stresses the primacy of the moral/practical over the cognitive function of theoretical reason, maintaining that only an a priori framework given by reason can form the basis of authentic moral and political decisions.

In this/....

In this respect his conception of what is practical is synonymous with the theoretical principles of duty as outlined by reason. We can assert therefore that Kant, while maintaining the primacy of the practical in the two senses mentioned above, nevertheless proceeds in a theoretical way (in terms of a priori principles of reason) to trace the activity of reason in several areas of human experience as well as provide a moral framework for practice.

In this thesis we investigated the problem of theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy on the basis of the principle that human reason engages in a process of continual striving towards goals which are variously defined in the various areas of our experience but which together constitute the Good to which we aspire. We maintained that the striving for moral and political integrity must be seen as one aspect of man's rational striving in general, of which the striving for knowledge as well as religious integrity form essential parts.

It may appear naive to reduce the detailed researches of the Critical Philosophy in the spheres of physics, mathematics, epistemology, morality, law, religion, etc., to the single principle of rational

striving. But/....

striving. But this is no more than that which Kant postulated as being true of the activity of Reason itself - a persistent search for unity in the light of the unconditioned condition of all things, a condition which reason both assumes and pursues.

If unity is the goal of Reason, then it is legitimate to postulate the striving of Reason as the means whereby the various facets of reality are revealed to man in their clearest determinations as regards his capacity as well as his duty. The concept of Reason in its striving activity represents for Kant both a principle of truth (theory) as well as a truly human activity which offers the best chance for the creation of an environment where authentic moral and political decisions can be made (practice).

N O T E S

1. KANT, I. : "What does it mean : To Orientate oneself in Thinking" in Kant (G. Rabel - ed.) p.170.
2. F.P. van de Pitte"s book Kant as Philosophical Anthropologist is devoted to explicating the thesis that the Kantian system is a philosophical anthropology and that the Critical Philosophy "is the pure philosophical core of his fully developed conception of man, and man's place in reality.", pp. 5-6.
3. de VLEESCHAUWER, H.J.: The Development of Kantian Thought, p. 17.
4. KANT, I. : Critique of Pure Reason, p. 457.
5. The problems arising from the cognitive claims of dogmatic metaphysics very early led Kant to see the necessity for Reason to be self-critical. He states in the Preface to the first edition of the Critique of Pure Reason that by criticism he means "a critical inquiry into the faculty of reason, with reference to the cognitions to which it strives to attain without the aid of experience; in other words, the solution of the question regarding the possibility or impossibility of Metaphysics, and the determination of the origin, as well as of the extent and limits of this science.", p.3.
6. HARRIS, E.E. : "Philosophy and Ideology" in Philosophical Papers, Vol. 1, 1972, p.4.

7. Ibid., p. 5.
8. PITTE, : op. cit., p. 10.
9. Ibid., p. 94.
10. Quoted from Stuckenberg by Pitte, op. cit.,  
p. 11.

SUMMARY

This thesis investigates the problem of theory and practice in Kant's moral and political philosophy. It is argued that the exact status of theory and practice in Kant's moral and political analyses can only be set into focus in terms of the concept of a striving reason whose activity, powers and limitations Kant explores through several areas of human experience. On the basis of this, it is maintained that Kant's concept of moral and political duty cannot be seen in isolation from his resolution of the problem of metaphysics, his teleological view of nature and history or his concept of a rational religion.

The problem of theory and practice in morality and politics is investigated in view of the different meanings of "theory" and "practice" within the context of Kant's philosophy and his assertion of the primacy of practice. It is finally asserted that it is Kant's concept of the relationship between man and God which most clearly delineates the meaning of duty in the moral and political sphere.

In attempting/.....

In attempting to assess the practical nature of Kant's theory of moral reason as a principle of liberation, we postulated that Kant's concept of reason in its ontological aspect i.e., as that which is alone indissolubly linked to man's essential being, is open to criticism. We maintained this on the grounds that Kant conceives of the wholeness of a meaningful human existence solely in terms of reason and independently of man's sensible nature and experience, and that therefore his vision is not comprehensive enough to embrace all aspects of our human experience.

We maintained, nevertheless, that his concept of Reason as a principle of liberation in terms of its critical activity can be seen to possess practical value. In this respect, the critical concept of Reason in the moral and political sphere indicates the value of self-reflection, and self-awareness of true and false human limits. It is in this sense that rational reform can be a real possibility for man. We maintained, therefore, that Kant's concept of Reason can be seen as having the power to create an environment where responsible moral and political decisions can be made.

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