



University of Tabriz-Iran
Philosophical Investigations
Vol. 11/ No. 21/ Fall & Winter 2017

Kant and Demystification of Ethics and Religion *

Qodratullah Qorbani**

Associate Professor of Philosophy, Kharazmi University

Abstract

Kant's demystification is meant to put away any metaphysical and revealed elements from ethics and religion. Kant, fulfilling this, first argues that metaphysical questions of reason, from theoretical aspect, have no certain answers. In practical reason, he establishes his moral foundations, based on own human being without any referring to metaphysical bases. In fact, Kant places human being as the base, legislator and finally the end of ethics, so that the totality of morality is depended on itself him/her and there is no moral reality out of our humanly understanding. Kant, then, by confirming the necessity of rational religion, believes that the age of revealed religions have been expired, since they were belonged to the childhood age of human being's reason, while in Kant's rational religion, this is human being's subjective intellect that defines the nature and function of God. Therefore, for Kant's moral and rational religion, there is no credibility for affairs like miracles, blessings and prayers, since they indicate religious misguidance. In Kant's rational pure religion, the religion is relied on human being's pure reason in which his/her reason is the only criterion of religious beliefs. Therefore, for Kant, religion means recognizing our duties as divine judgments, and that such religion pertains to our mundane life not for worshipping God in order to get his satisfaction or benefitting his grace. In short, Kant's religion and morality are totally depended on our humanly and earthy rationality and understanding, and that there is no mystery out of our humanly willing. So the mysteries that are claimed by revealed religions are meaningless, since our reason, itself, determines the nature, function and virtues of God, moral axioms and religious beliefs.

Key words: Ethics, Religion, Demystification, Modernism, Subjectivism.

* Received date: 2017/06/03

Accepted date: 2017/09/05

** E-mail: qorbani48@gmail.com

Introduction

Modern philosophy of the west can be divided into two parts including before and after Kant. Since Kant was those of modern philosophers who have completed the philosophical process of modern subjectivism and humanism. He was able to introduce new versions of rationalism and empirical knowledge within which there is no space for metaphysical realities. In fact, Kant was of the most significant modern philosophers who separated physical knowledge from metaphysical one, and argued that only the former has epistemic certainty and credibility. Meantime, he posed human being's reason as the ontological and epistemological center and foundation of any kinds of knowledge. Concerning ethics and religion, Kant by using his humanistic and subjective rationality introduced a rational approach to them in which we should make foundations of ethics and religion based on human being's epistemic and ontological understanding, and that we do not need to any sources out of or beyond human being's intellect.

In fact, Kant's fundamental significance is that he tried to give earthy interpretation of heavenly truths, and to bring down God from heavens to the earth, and to introduce a new relation between Him and human being from his/her approach not from God's eyes. This approach of Kant, here, can be called as demystification that means we should put aside all mysterious and metaphysical affairs and realities from our thought and knowledge, and should build human being rationality based only on empirical and phenomenon data. The importance of Kant's demystification was eliminating revealed, metaphysical and mysterious elements of religion and ethics, and introducing a humanly and earthy one in which all metaphysical affairs either have their meaning within human being modern rationality or should be omitted. The conclusion of such thought was putting aside metaphysical elements of religion and ethics from modern human being's thought which was led to the emergence of atheism and positivistic approaches, from one hand, and fideism from other hand that believes in God not based on rational proofs but through gaining religious experience.

This paper by paying attention to the fundamental significance of ethics and religion in Kant's philosophy, in order to answer this question, that how does Kant demystify religion and ethics? tries to explain and analyze some principles of Kant's project of demystifying religion and ethics, and argues that what consequences has his demystified thought given to philosophical thought of the west after Kant.

Kant and demystification of theoretical reason

Theoretical Reason of Kant, which was cleared in the book *Critique of Pure Reason*, clarifies his epistemological viewpoints that can be considered as the epistemological and philosophical foundations for demystifying ethics and religion. In fact, Kant's theoretical reason through arguing impossibility of metaphysics, and demonstrating epistemic certainty and credibility of natural sciences, has provided the bases for demystification of ethics and religion.

Kant's main struggling, in his theoretical reason, is assessing possibility or impossibility of traditional and rational metaphysics. Since, he starts to assess the ability of human being's epistemic faculties, in order to clarify their ability for recognizing metaphysical and immaterial truths and realities. Meantime paying attention to human being's fundamental questions concerning God, freewill and immortality, Kant, wants to investigate that do such questions have certain answers regarding theoretical reason or not?

Kant pays attention to main philosophical schools in his time including rationalists and empiricists. The former believe in rational and innate ideas and conceptions, and consider them as the origins of human being's knowledge, and ignore of the role of sensation in the process of knowing. The latter pay more attention to sense perception and consider it as the origin of human being's knowledge. Kant maintains that although there are some truths in these two approaches, but they are unable to explain the nature of human being's knowledge and its origin. Since, for Kant, although all kinds of knowledge are started from sensual experience, but it is not necessitated that knowledge itself should be originated from sensual experience (Kant, 1998, P139-140, Copleston, 1977, P235-240). For clarifying this matter, Kant divides the structure of human being's mind, regarding knowledge, into two categories of sensation and understanding, which the former includes of time and space that they are the only structures that all of our external perceptions and knowledge can be conceivable only through them. In fact, time and space are as the only conditions and ways within and through them our perceptions are provided from the external world. Hence, time and space make our epistemic boundaries for acquiring external facts (Ibid, P142-148). Therefore, there is no way beyond boundaries of time and space for getting external facts, and that we are restricted in the limitations of time and space. So, if there is a reality or truth that we want to recognize it, it must be conceived through structures of time and space. Consequently, according to Kant's epistemology, realities and truths are restricted to temporal and spatial conditions which both of them are material and empirical virtues of the natural world. So, when Kant limits realities and truths to the temporal and spatial boundaries of the world, it means that he demystifies other epistemological realities and truths of the whole system of being that this is the first step of Kant to demystifying the world and human being's thought.

On the other hand, Kant considers categories of understanding for the mind. These twelfth categories combine pluralities of sense perceptions that are gained through sensational categories to our minds, so that through their synthesizing and analyzing the science is produced. So for Kant, science is resulted by receiving external data through sensational categories, and their synthesizing and analyzing by understanding categories. Therefore, the mere role of understanding is to synthesize and analyze sense perceptions, and the role of sensational categories are to attract external data, while each one is not enough to produce science, but they need to each other to work together (Ibid, P137-138). For Kant, the essential virtues of understanding categories, however, is that, they are intrinsic for our minds and not derived from the external world. So there are no rational truths regarding categories of

sensation and understanding, since all epistemic data are received from the external world and analyzed or synthesized by understanding.

On the other hand, Kant divides the whole system of being into two worlds of Noumenon and Phenomenon. The Phenomenon world, for Kant, is the world of experience and empirical knowledge and sensation. He believes that we get certain knowledge only related to realities of this world that are conceived within the framework of categories of sensation and understanding. He argues that since realities of the Noumenon world are out of sensational categories, then we can't get any certain knowledge regarding them. So Kant sends out fundamental metaphysical questions, like God, immortality and freewill from the realm of the phenomenon world, and believes that they are belonged to the Noumenon world. Hence he maintains that so far as human beings knowledge is certain within the realms of empirical and phenomenon universe, we have no certain recognition concerning things itself in the Noumenon world, since we are able to recognize things of the empirical universe as they are appeared to us not they are in the Noumenon world. Therefore, for Kant, realities of the Noumenon world are out of our epistemic faculties and abilities, and if we want to get certain knowledge concerning them, we are involved in contradiction (Ibid, P313).

So, we should think of realities of the Noumenon world as metaphysical mysteries. In fact, Kant by, restricting the certainty and truth to the empirical and Phenomenon world, demystifies metaphysical mysteries and truths of the world, since for him, whatever is certain and true, it should be acquired through sensational categories of time and space which is not applicable to metaphysical mysteries. On the other hand, he, by expelling these mysteries to the Noumenon world, denies the possibility of recognizing them. Therefore, Kantian world is divided into two universes included of demystified Phenomenon world and the mysterious Noumenon world, so that everything has reality and certainty based on empirical experience, and mysterious realities and truths of the noumenon world are not recognizable based on his/her epistemic faculties. So there is no epistemic way and method for human being to recognize metaphysical truths and mysteries of the whole system of being. Hence they should be laid aside from our thoughts and philosophies.

By considering rationalists viewpoints in Kant's time in which they believed in ability of human beings reason for recognizing all metaphysical realities of the world, and the crisis that was arisen from their thought, wonderful development of empirical sciences that had not concerned with metaphysical ideas, he finally draws his epistemological and scientific plan of the natural world which its objects are mundane and empirical things and there is no space for immaterial, mysterious and spiritual things and ideas. In fact, Kantian epistemic world is the world demystified from metaphysical conceptions that all its phenomena are meaningful based on empirical and a priori concepts and principles. So, although there are some mysterious questions pertaining to the Phenomenon world of Kant, but such questions

are expelled to the world of things in themselves, since they have no certain answers for human being according to Kant's pure reason.

Consequently it can be said that for Kant due to hegemony of modern empirical sciences and their abilities for anticipating and controlling the world, and scientific approaches that are arisen from these facts, modern thinkers like Kant had gradually got to this thought that mysteries and metaphysical affairs and ideas have no effective role in our mundane life and its practical or theoretical aspects. In fact, modern thinkers such as Kant restricted the whole system of the being only to the empirical world and mundane life, which can be recognized, controlled and changed by natural sciences and human being's modern quantitative reason.

Kant and demystifying ethics

Practical reason or ethics is one of the more significant parts of Kant's philosophy which plays an effective role in the totality of his philosophical thought, so that it answers unanswered questions of theoretical reason. Kant's method in ethics is like his method in theoretical reason, that is, ethics has some a priori concepts and axioms regarding moral cognition. For Kant, however, by practical reason is its role and function in our life not epistemic aspect. In fact there is one reason has plural functions which are distinguished from each other. First, it can determine its objects, while the given object originally is raised from another source different from the reason. Second, it can realize its objects. The first is called as pure reason, and the second as practical reason or ethics. Hence, in moral approach, reason itself is the origin of its objects, and concerns to moral freedom and priorities, not to aesthetics sense datum, that means, the reason itself makes moral decisions and priorities on the basis of the law that is originated from itself (Kant, 1974, P56-58). So, pure reason pays attention to knowledge while practical reason concerns with freewill and moral duty.

Kant in his ethics extremely emphasizes on human being's essential virtues like good freewill, duty, tendency and law. He, regarding the existence of good freewill, believes that it is impossible to call something as a good, except as a good freewill inside or outside of the world unconditionally (Kant, 1974, P64-65). It means, in Kant's view good freewill is the only absolute good that previously was unconditionally placed in human being's existence, so far as it is impossible that good freewill be a bad or evil in any situations, since it is an unconditional and absolute good. Hence, it can be said, for Kant, the conception of good is the conception of will that always and essentially, and due to its intrinsic validity, is good not due to the goal is actualized.

Kant, then, pays attention to the conception of duty and considers it as the essential property of moral awareness, and maintains that the will which acts to fulfill moral duty is really good will, so good will is the will that acts to fulfill duty (Kant, 1974, P68). Kant, at the same time, considers only those acts to fulfill duty that have moral value, then links them to dignity of human being's soul. Therefore, according to Kant, the moral value of act that is fulfilled regarding duty is increased based on reducing of tendency to do it.

Kant continues his project to change the acting accordance to duty based on moral laws, because, in his view, duty is the necessity of acting based on respecting the law. But Kant's favorite moral law, which has universality, has humanly source and has been not originated from any other sources even divine one. He, then, explains that there are only one categorical imperative regarding moral laws, and only based on the rule you can at the same time will that rule will be a universal law. This rule is said by Kant as follows: 'Act as if the maxim of your action were to become through your will a universal law of nature (Kant, 1974, P89). Kant, also, believes that ethical laws and duties are absolutely ethical so far as in them is considered a categorical imperative as itself end which this end is the same as intelligent existent who is human being. So Kant says: Act in such a way that you always treat humanity? whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end (Kant, 1974, P96). Therefore, human being, as the intelligent existent, can be placed as the background and the basis and the end of ethical principles. So, Kant's ethics is a subjective ethics in its principles and end which its base and end is placed in human being itself, so far as Kant considers the freewill as the absolute principle of ethics and only principle of all ethical laws, and their similar duties.

He then discusses on ideas such as freewill, the existence of God and human being's immortality based on the concepts of happiness and virtue in ethical imperative through ethics without paying attention to their epistemological aspects, and tries to argue their necessity. His belief concerning freewill is that this concept and the idea of absolute principle of ethics are united, so far we can define practical freewill as the independence of will from everything except ethical law (Kant, 1974, P98). And he presupposes the idea of freewill due to its dependency on ethical law, and by supposing of two concepts of happiness and virtue in ethical act due to their guarantee by God, explains the necessity of the hereafter life and immortality of human being's soul by God.

So Kant answers unanswered questions of pure reason by its practical aspect. The importance of his reply is that his answering is not epistemic reply, but it is moral approach to metaphysical questions. Here the most significant note is that the base and end of Kant's ethics is laid in himself as far as his ethics is humanistic and the base of religion. In fact, Kant takes place humanity as the exile, foundation and end of ethics. Hence when he says human being or every intelligent existent is as the end of absolute finality of ethics, his purpose is that there is nothing beyond human being as the presupposition, axioms or ends of ethics. So, for Kant, although this is God who guarantees final happiness and virtue of ethics, but this is human being who is obligated to determine its moral content. Therefore, Kant's ethics is totally humanistic and demystified ethics in which there is no space for divine, metaphysical and revealed truths. In fact, for Kant, since human being is an intelligent existent, he/she is able and should build the foundations and axioms of ethics, and there is no need to other meta-human

being origins. So human being not only obeys moral absolute imperative but he/she itself creates it and legislates moral laws.

Consequently, Kant's ethics has two essential properties, first it is depended on human being regarding its bases and axioms and ends, that is, it is an ethics for human being and has meaning in the humanly values and boundaries, second, although human being is the end of ethics but due to his/her restrictions needs to God for guaranteeing moral virtue and happiness in its high level which is called as holiness or sacredness. So, Kant's interpretation of ethics is a demystified and humanistic ethics in which there is no need to divinity and metaphysical teachings since human being can understand, legislate and determine totality of such moral system. Although, Kant finally needs to God to guarantee his ethics through determining the object of moral happiness and virtue, but such a Kantian God is demystified and humanistic God who only serves to human beings according to their needs and desires. In fact, in this approach, God is the servant of our moral and mundane or spiritual needs that we determine how He should serve to us, and we are as the masters that determine moral duties of our servant who is God.

Finally, Kant's understanding of ethics is totally demystified from divinity, revealed and metaphysical teachings and truths, in which this is human being who based on his/her understanding and desires, builds, legislates, changes and defines the bases, axioms, principles and ends of ethics. So as far there are many human beings who have different values and benefits. Therefore, it seems it is difficult to get a universal and comprehensive understanding of ethics. In fact, demystifying revealed and metaphysical elements of ethics is maybe led to moral relativism, skepticism, secularism, ignoring of moral supreme ends and finally it is ended to mundane hedonism.

Kant and demystifying religion

One of the main parts of Kant's philosophy concerning demystification is his philosophy of religion. Kant's basic and main debate about religion was explained in his book: *Religion in the Boundaries of Bare Reason*. This book, in fact, describes conflicts between evil and good in human being's existence and its consequences in his/her social dealings, and Kant's hope to final victory of good over evil in human being and his/her acts. First it should be noted that Kant had considered himself as a faithful and Christian and had kept his belief until the end of his life. The significance of his viewpoint, however, is about dependency of religion upon ethics, that is, in his thought, religion is very ethics that has been considered through a special point of view. Hence Kant emphasizes on self-authority of ethics that its result is self-authority of religion, and he even disagrees with other-authority of religion which its result is that human being does not obey any other religious reference except his/her intelligible intrinsic freewill. Hence, Kant, in the preface to the first edition of his book, says: *Morality, insofar as it is based on the concept of the human being as one who is free, but who precisely therefore also binds himself through his reason to unconditional*

laws, is in need neither of the idea of another being above him in order for him to recognize his duty, nor, in order for him to observe it, of an incentive other than the law itself. At least it is the human being's own fault, if such a need occurs in him; nor, indeed, can that need then be remedied by anything else; for, what does not issue from himself and his own freedom provides no compensation for the deficiency of his morality. Hence on its own behalf morality in no way needs religion (neither objectively, in regard to volition," nor subjectively, in regard to capability); rather, through the power of pure practical reason it is sufficient to itself (Kant, 2009, P55).

Kant, but, for explaining his project and clarifying the nature of religion, in this book, first divides its into two religions including the religion of Statutes or Observation and the religion of morality, and then speaks of necessity of changing the former to the latter in the process of human being historical evolution that its requirement is eliminating of main elements of the former, that is, its beliefs and mysterious virtues and miracles should be removed for welcoming to moral religion. Since there is no space for mysterious teachings regarding moral human being in moral and intellectual religion. Hence Kant says: "A moral religion is to be established (such a religion must be posited not in statutes and observances but in the attitude of the heart to observe all human duties as divine commands), then all miracles that history connects with the introduction of that religion must in the end render dispensable the very faith in miracles as such (Kant, 2009, P 95). Kant, however, does not deny the being of miracles, but he maintains that there are some intellectuals who believe in miracles but they should not interfere miracles concerning their religious duties in the moral religion, since for Kant, miracles are as facts related to the unseen or Noumenon world that we have no certain recognition regarding how they causally effect and should be kept unrecognizable (Ibid, P 97). In fact, in the moral approach, we don't try to causally recognize metaphysical facts and realities, but for us their practical influences are important. Hence, for Kant, human beings can't use miracles and mysterious realities and interfere their effects in their mundane and ordinary life, and should not apply them in all rational applications of their reason. Kant, of course, through dividing of miracles into two groups of divine and satanic or demonic ones, says that there are some people who apply divine miracles as linguistic interpretations regarding their ordinary affairs, but so far as the effects of divine miracles are derived from the divine world, human being can't confirm them for managing his/her mundane life. In fact human being is unable to understand the nature of heavenly miracles, since they are out of human being's ability to recognizing them. In the other word, believing in miracles can't be considered as the principles of neither theoretical nor practical reason (Ibid, P 99).

Kant then takes into account two forms of manifestation of religion in society, which the first is Christian religion and the second is moral pure religion. The former is based on revelation and worshiping, but the latter is derived from human being's intellect fiat. The former naturally and historically is prior to the latter. In historical evolutionary process, however,

human beings religion was changed from the former to the latter, and finally moral pure religion will sustain in the history. So, for Kant, the real religion is not more than one and it is very mere moral pure religion. He thinks our duties, as human beings, are to change revealed and historical religions, like Judaism and Christianity, to moral pure religion as Kant's real religion which is able to generalize among all people. He believes that the unique virtue of moral pure religion is that it can spiritually welcome to and cover all human beings from any nation, race and ethnicity. So, for Kant, as much as historical religious beliefs based on revelation is closed to pure rational religion, it means actualization of divine governing is more closed, since rationality is nothing except manifestation of divinity in human beings life (Ibid, P 104-105).

Kant considers the conflict of historical religion against rational religion as an intellectual dialectic that human beings are involved in which historical and worshipping religion is included of some statutes, blessings and prayers, while rational religion is consisted of some moral rules based on human beings reason for managing his/her mundane life. Meantime this conflict finally will be ended to victory and replacement of moral rational religion instead of revealed worshipping religion (Ibid, P 120-127).

For Kant, at the same time, investigating concerning internal essence of religious beliefs will be ended to a mystery which includes of a sacred fact that maybe recognizable individually for every faithful believer, but it generally is not recognizable. Hence, such mysteries should be recognized and applied for practical reason purposes not for theoretical reason aims. Therefore, Kant thinks maybe it is possible to believe in a sacred mystery as a divine grace or rational maintaining, but it can't be demonstrated as a priori pure rational belief, while the cause of his moral pure axioms are not considered as mysterious affairs. Freewill, for example, as one of the absolute axioms of morality, is not a mystery, since human being knows about his/her freewill through unconditional law of ethics in the process of voluntarily acts, although its metaphysical foundation has not yet been clarified for Kant as a mystery.

Kant, however, notices that human being herself/himself can't actualize or make the meaning of absolute good that is unavoidably relied on pure morality, then he/she is encountered with a duty that works for actualization that meaning. Hence, Kant believes in cooperation or correlation with authority of global ethics, since it is only through this method to reach the absolute good that it is not clarified without discovering some aspects of divine mysteries. In this case, for Kant, believing in revealed religion within which there is no mystery regarding God who is introduced as omniscient, all benevolent and creator or omnipotent, and as the establisher of the sacred laws and just judge. Since such the description of God explains His clear moral relation with human being that can be understood by his/her reason and is manifested in religious belief of the most moralists (Ibid, P 154-155). Hence Kant says: this faith contains in fact no mystery, because it expresses solely God's moral conduct toward humankind, it also offers itself own to any human reason and, therefore, found in the religion of most civilized

people (Ibid). Kant, next, argues that while such a tendency of God's laws and authority over human beings is suitable with him/her sacredness, and that God's benevolence necessitates that he pays attention to moral virtues of his servants and to help them for reaching the perfection. He says God's justice, also, with regard to his moral benevolence is restricted to making harmony between human being and the sacred law. In fact God has wanted to be worshiped and served in one moral quality that has three dimensions. This three dimensional divinity, however, has its own significance for human being only practically while it is impossible to theoretically understand and describe divine essence since it is considered as a mystery. Hence, Kant says: Only what which in a practical reference one can indeed quite readily understand and gain insight into, but which from a theoretical point of view (for determining the nature of the object in itself) surpasses all our concepts, is a mystery (in one reference) and can yet (in another) be revealed (Ibid, P158). Kant calls such mysteries as the mystery of the Calling, the mystery of Satisfaction, and the mystery of Election that human beings are unable to exactly understand their meaning, although can apply them in their practical life.

On the other hand, Kant, by considering his emphasizing on real intellectual religion instead of worshiping and revealed religion, tries to explain the meaning of service and pseudo service under the dominion of the good principle and in the real rational religion. Hence, he again divides religion into two revealed and natural religions, and says revelation is the base of the former, and duty is the base of the latter that is very pure moral rational religion. Therefore, for Kant, natural religion is the religion of principality of reason so that in its context is recognized a moral necessity. In fact elements of natural religion are necessary for revealed religion since revelation can be added to the concept of religion by helping of reason, its vice versa, but is not correct, that is, the natural virtue of religion is that everybody can accept it by his/her own reason and its teaching virtue is that we can guide all people. Hence, he says: But every religion, even, the revealed one, must yet at least in part also contain certain principles of natural religion. For, revelation can be added in thought to the concept of a religion only through reason, because this concept itself, being derived from an obligation under the will of a moral legislator, is a pure concept of reason (Ibid, P170).

So, for Kant, religion should serve human moral system in which the reason is prior to the revelation. Then if the end of religion is merely worshiping God and is ignored human being moral reforming, he/she will be involved in religious misguidance or pseudo religion, that he/she traditionally acts some works, such as blessing, meeting sacred places and so on, for getting the satisfaction of God that all of them are a kind of religious deviation, while real religion is nothing except struggling for reforming morality. So the basic principle of revealed religion is whatever human being can do except moral acts and he/she believes that his/her acts are for getting satisfaction of God, all of them are as religious delusion and pseudo service. Hence, he says; To begin with, I assume the following proposition as a

principle requiring no proof: Apart from a good way of life, anything further which the human being supposes that he can do to become pleasing to God is a mere religious delusion and a pseudo service of God. I say, anything which the human being believes that he can do; for whether beyond everything that we can do there may not, in the mysteries of the supreme wisdom, still be something that only God can do to turn us into human beings pleasing to him is not thereby denied. Yet if the church were perhaps to proclaim such a mystery as revealed, still the opinion that having faith in this revelation, as sacred history relates it to us, and confessing it (whether inwardly or outwardly), is intrinsically something by which we make ourselves pleasing to God is a dangerous religious delusion (Ibid, P 189).

On the other hand, Kant believes that it is possible to certainly judge concerning people's religious beliefs, since the realm of our acts is the realm of possibility in which recognizing the necessity of acts are out of our understanding's ability, and also we can't impose anybody to accept a religious belief as a true religious dogma, since everybody has special understanding of religious beliefs based on his/her abilities, and because real religion is relied on human being's pure reason, himself/herself is as the criterion of his/her religious beliefs and that other criteria out of him/her have no meaning. Therefore, Kant says: The true (moral) service of God, which persons of faith have to render as subjects belonging to his kingdom but no less also (under laws of freedom) as its citizens, is indeed like the kingdom itself invisible, i.e., a service of hearts (in spirit and truth), and can consist only in the attitude, that of observance of all true duties as divine commands, not in actions determined exclusively for God (Ibid, P213). Kant takes into account some apparently acts for God that they cause to misunderstanding and delusion in real religion which are called as service of God. According to Kant, these religious delusions are included of going to the Church, private worshipping, the propagation, and the preservation of this community. For Kant, preservation of the community means keeping a repeated public formality which makes continuous the union of these members into an ethical body, namely under the principle of the mutual equality of their rights and of their share in all fruits of the morally good. Hence he says: Any venture in religious matters, if one does not take it merely morally and yet adopts it as a means that in itself makes one pleasing to God and that thus, through him, satisfies all our wishes, is a fetish faith, which is a persuasion that what cannot bring about anything at all, neither according to laws of nature nor according to moral laws of reason, will indeed bring about the wished-for thing if only one has the firm faith that it will bring about this sort of thing and one then links with this faith certain formalities (Ibid, P214).

Kant, then, speaks of three kinds of religious delusory that they cause human being to go beyond of boundaries of pure reason regarding metaphysical affairs. First, is this belief that we can recognize a fact that it can't be recognizable through empirical laws such as miracles, second is related to a fact that we try to get its concept as the necessary base of our moral interests like mysteries and sacredness that it seems they are out of our

pure reason abilities, and third is the belief that we through some religious acts, like prayer, can make some effects that their essences are unknown as mysteries (Ibid, P215). Regarding the third delusion, Kant, emphasizes more on prayer and considers it as superstitious delusion and fetishism, since for him prayer is nothing except a mere declaration of wishing directed toward a being who needs no declaration of the inward attitude of the person wishing; thus nothing is done through it and therefore none of the duties incumbent upon us as commands of God are performed, and hence God is actually not served (Ibid, P215). Finally, for Kant, believers regarding religion pays attention to divine grace more than divine justice and other attributes which indicates that they want to easily use God's beneficences, while relying on His divine grace for moral salvation is led that sinners do not reform themselves and involved in deviation and delusion.

So general meaning of religion for Kant is recognizing our moral duties as divine commands, since this is real religion that has been introduced for our mundane life not for exercising religious deeds and worshiping in order to get the satisfaction of God and benefiting of his grace. Therefore, the foundation of real religion is made based on pure rational morality that it should be such an ethics and its axioms are placed in human being itself not in metaphysical or mysterious axioms or principles that are descended through God and sacred texts. Since the essence of these divine mysteries are unknown, and human being should think of his/her life based on reason and ethics, since can't and shouldn't interfere divine unknown mysteries in his/her life. We also have no certain recognition about the origin of moral acts and their ends which are led human being to final salvation that are appeared as divine grace and human being's reason, and since we have no knowledge concerning the essence of divine grace, then we should establish ethics and religion based on human being's reason in order to know its boundaries and functions. In the other word, Kantian ethics and religion is not involved to deny God, they maybe need to believe in God in their end, so far as moral and rational certainty, however, have meaning only in the light of human being's reason, then the nature of God, metaphysical affairs and mysteries should be understood by this humanly reason. Human being's reason, but, is unable to understand metaphysical and mysterious affairs, meanwhile it confirms the being of such affairs but put them aside from his/her rational, religious and moral life. Concerning religion, for Kant, its understanding and interpretation is depended on our humanly and earthy faculties, then religious acts and duties should be determined by human being itself, since they have no origin out of him/her. In fact, according to Kant, the basic virtue of religion is seeking of our moral duties as divine commands. So, as far as the origin and foundation of religion and ethics are in human being, God does not externally obey human being through religious texts and the Prophets, but our God is inward God who sends divine command through our pure reason. So since outward God has no meaning, there is no meaning for some divine attributes like compassionateness, the almighty, absolute sovereignty and so on, and also revealed and worshiping religion lose its certainty and credibility, and there

is only rational pure moral religion that has moral authority. So far as, in such a moral and natural religion the criterion of religious certainty is natural faculties of human beings reason, then the certain existence of miracles, mysteries and religious sacred affairs and prayers are subjected to questioning and maybe denied. So Kantian desired religion is also a humanly religion based on rational faculties of human beings in which there is no mysterious and metaphysical element, and that all its reality, even God is actualized in the boundaries of human beings pure reason. Hence Kant believes and argues that God is nothing out of me, but is my thought itself, it is meaningless to ask: is there a God? This proposition that God exists is merely a mental subjective thought. God is the result of our thought and reason. God is the ideal of a substance that we create it for ourselves. Human beings reason itself creates the conception of God, and the concept of soul. God and so on are as credible concepts that are not real but are ideal. The existence of such a being, namely God, can be requested practically, that is, we necessarily should act such as that as if we have acted according to such a horrible but saver existent. The proposition that there is a God has no meaning except that there can be found a supreme principle in human beings reason that morally determines itself and find God as his/her guide. God can be found only in us, and in absolute command. This hypothesis does not mean that there is a supreme substance gives me unavoidable commands, but his commands or forbidden are from my reason, that is, the outward commander as separated substance does not exist (See: Kant, 2009, P4-6).

Conclusion

As far as Kant's thought concerning his pure reason, ethics and religion shows, he believes in the being of mysteries and mysterious affairs, that is, for Kant, there are some metaphysical and mysterious facts and realities related to theoretical reason, ethics and religion that are called as things in themselves or Noumenon. On the other hand, his certain given is based on human beings epistemic restriction. So Kant rejects epistemic aspect of mysteries since according to his subjective and empirical thought, whatever can be conceived in the light of sensational and understanding's categories has epistemic meaning, while human beings can't recognize metaphysical and mysterious affairs through application of such epistemic categories and faculties. So mysterious and metaphysical realities have no meaning epistemologically in the realm of theoretical reason, then for Kant, although human reason confirms their existence, but has no need to think about and use them since has no distinct recognition regarding them. On the other hand, although mysterious questions of theoretical reason find some answers in ethics, these replies are not epistemic but are practical answers. In addition, as far as ethics has humanly axioms and ends, has no end and finality beyond human being and loses its mysterious aspect, that is, some mysterious and metaphysical concepts like God, freewill and immortality, have got their meaning only in the light of practical aspect of human beings reason in which is no mysterious reality out of our humanly reason.

Regarding religion, Kant's demystifying is mostly extended. He establishes religion based on ethics that its result is humanization of religion. He, also, draws historical evolution of religion from revealed religion to rational and moral religion which its outcome is demystifying mysterious and metaphysical aspects of religion and meaningless of religious acts like going to church, worshiping, prayer and so on, and finally establishing a mere humanly and humanistic religion. In such a religion, there is no place for revelation and revealed affairs and divine inspiration, and there is no need to the prophet, since the foundation of religious beliefs is mere human being's reason itself, and he/she uses religion only for managing his/her mundane life, meantime the criterion of certainty of religious beliefs is himself/herself that such the religion can be called as the religion of humanity that is replaced of divine religion. In fact, by keeping the form of religion, its divinity is omitted and humanly virtues are replaced. So Human being should not appeal, bless and prayer before God in such a religion, since human being itself is the master and a kind of King and others like God, are servants who serve human beings. Hence religion has its meaning only in the light of human being's understanding, then there are no mysteries out of him/her. So this is human being's mundane abilities and moral virtues that make sense the totality of religion, because human being is the center and base of religion.

So Kant's demystification of religion means that there is no mysteries or metaphysical truths out or beyond of human being's natural, empirical or moral faculties and virtues. Consequently, religion is totally a humanly and humanistic fact and this is he/she due to the evolution of his/her reason, should establish, determine, legitimate and assess all virtues, functions and teachings of any kind of religions in the modern time.

The totality of Kant's philosophical thought, specially, his demystifying morality and religion, has impressed next thinkers, so that they have had three different reactions to his epistemological project of demystifying religion and morality. The first reaction is related to thinkers who have atheistic approaches. They, under the influence of Kant, have accepted denying and rejecting of metaphysics, but, in spite of Kant, they have not accepted demonstrating some Noumenon like God, freewill and immortality through ethics and practical reason. They, in fact, have accepted weakness and inability of human reason for demonstrating the existence of Noumenon like God, but believed that it is impossible to do it by ethics. Some of such philosophers are Arthur Schopenhauer, and some Positivists philosophers like Ayer. For them, religious propositions have no meaning and are vain, and since moral judgments are not originated from human reason, but are from emotions and feelings in order to be useful, have no epistemic value and credibility (See: Ayer, 1964, P115). The second reaction is pertained to Wittgenstein who reduced and adjusted positivists' viewpoints. He based on his theory of linguistic games, believes that the language of religion is a distinguished and separated language, and argues that positivistic criterions concerning meaningfulness of propositions can't reject meaningfulness of religious propositions. He asserts that for understanding religious language,

it should be to see that what roles religious propositions have in people's life. In fact, meaningfulness of religious language and teachings are not epistemological but are practically and non-cognitive. The third and the most significant reaction is relevant to those thinkers and religious theologians who, like Kant, have believed in religious truths and spiritual ideas, and maintain that human reason and philosophical methods can't demonstrate and understand metaphysical and mysterious truths. They argue human reason can be legally applied to natural and mathematical matters. Some of such thinkers are Albert Richel, Soren Kierkegaard, Martin Buber, and Karl Barth that can be called as fideisms. In this case, Kierkegaard, by declaring that Kant is his favorite philosopher, believes that the substance of religious teachings is irrational. For him whatever a religious teaching is more irrational is more compatible with religious truths. He thinks final reality and intrinsic virtue of religion is faith which is an unexplainable fact by the language of reason and rational concepts. In fact, he maintains that rationality and reasonability is different from and contrary to being religious, then he appeals to this phrase that I believe, since it is irrational and impossible (See: Kierkegaard, 2006, P105).

On the hand, Karl Barth as the prominent representative of modern Orthodoxy, separates divine truths from other affairs, and believes in God as the Other Being that recognizing Him and whatever He reveals are totally out of human beings' reason, and are depended on divine grace and guidance alone. He says that divine truths are clarified through only God's manifestation on human being not through his/her struggling for seeking God. Therefore, for Barth, religious teachings and concepts, as far as they are depended on divine realm, are out of human being's efforts to understand them. So there is no relation between revelation and human being's reason. Revelation is bestowed through God, and until it has not been bestowed and divine truths has not issued, human being's efforts and struggling has not yet yielded (See: Barth, 1956, P297-300).

So the common virtue of such thinkers is that they under influence of Kant, think human reason is unable to understand the essence of metaphysical and mysterious truths and realities, and then put away such truths from the realm of rational contemplations, that such a thinking is exactly the same as Kant's demystifying religion and ethics, which we see many of its aspects in contemporary philosophy of religion.

References

- Ayer, A. J (1964), *Language, Truth and Logic*, London: Rutledge.
- Barth, Karl (1956), *Church Dogmatics*, edited by G. W. Bromily and T.F. Torrance, Vol. 1, Edinburg, Scotland.
- Copleston, Fredrick (1977), *History of Philosophy*, London, Search Press.
- Kant, Immanuel (1974), *The Moral Law or Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Translated by H. J. Paton, London, William Brendon and Son, Ltd.
- Kant, Immanuel (1998), *Critique of Pure Reason*, Translated and Edited by Paul Guyer & Allen W. Wood, Cambridge University Press.

- Kant, Immanuel (2009), *Religion Within the Bounds of Bare Reason*, Translated by Warner, S, Pluhar, Hackett Publishing Company, Inc, Cambridge.
- Kierkegaard, Sorren (2006), *Fear and Trembling*, Cambridge University Press.

