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How *A Priori* Knowledge is Possible: A Russellian Appraisal of Kant

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Abstract

The present paper, by offering a tricentennial tribute to Kant's birth anniversary, traces a Russellian appraisal of the latter's contributions to philosophy. The appraisal outlines Russell's appreciation of Kant's *great* philosophical importance by centring round its discussion primarily on the chapter *How A Priori Knowledge is Possible* authored by the former. As a prelude to the discussion presented through this chapter, the paper illustrates few relevant points set out in the chapter *On Our Knowledge of General Principles* authored by Russell himself. To lay down the appraisal, the paper begins with a discussion on Kant's groundbreaking *call* to *reason* to emphasize *reason*'s critique of its own. It is by critiquing reason Kant seeks to examine to what extent human reason is capable of *a priori* knowledge. Discussion on Kant's *call* to *reason* is succeeded by a Russellian analysis of the knowledge of general principles where he brings into light the relevance of various logical and non-logical *a priori* principles for philosophy, and also the importance of *great historic controversy* in philosophy between the empiricists and the rationalists. As Russell's analysis of general principles leads him to take up and outline Kant's philosophy, the paper, in the third section, provides the former's appreciation and critique of the latter. In his critique, Russell's focus is on Kant's *method*. The critique that considers one main objection as *fatal* is Kant's attempt to deal with the problem of *a priori* knowledge by his *method*. The paper takes up Russell's deliberations on such *fatal* objection. Finally, the paper, in the light of the preceding sections, makes an attempt to analyse the reasons behind Russell's admiration for Kant despite his rejection of the latter's philosophy. The paper, thus, besides featuring Kant's philosophical contributions, also reveals Russell's spirit as a *historian of philosophy*.

Keywords: *Kant*, *Russell*, *a priori knowledge*, *method*, *fatal objection*

Preamble

Kant's tricentennial birth anniversary occasions a unique opportunity for all—it is an opportunity to be appreciative of Kant's philosophical thoughts from variety of angles. Beautiful is such an opportunity the present paper grabs—it is an endeavour to approach Kant's philosophical thoughts from Russell's point of view. What is special about Russell's point of view is that his criticism and rejection[2] of Kant's

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philosophy could no way thwart him from admiring the latter's philosophical importance.

The present paper draws Russell's appraisal and outlines his appreciation for Kant's *great* philosophical importance by centring round its discussion primarily on the chapter *How A Priori Knowledge is Possible*. As a prelude to this discussion, the paper illustrates few relevant points set out in the chapter *On Our Knowledge of General Principles* authored by Russell himself. Besides these, Russell's book *History of Western Philosophy* is a source of bibliographical reference in the paper as the chapter *Kant* (chapter on Kant) included in the book records the former's words of disagreement yet his appreciation for Kant: "Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) is generally considered the greatest of modern philosophers. I cannot myself agree with this estimate, but it would be foolish not to recognize his great importance" (*History of Western Philosophy* 677). In the "End Notes" of the present paper Russell's words find consideration in two places (included in his philosophical autobiography, viz., *My Philosophical Development*) which mark his rejection as well as his disliking for Kant's philosophy. These Russellian words, excerpted from *History of Western Philosophy* and *My Philosophical Development*, will strengthen one of the chief foci of the paper, i.e., to highlight the significance of Russell's unbiased spirit as a *historian of philosophy*. To add to these bibliographical sources, Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* remains a primary source for the paper. In short, by strictly limiting the references to the works of Russell and Kant, the paper sets a purely text-based setting to proceed with the sections. Thus, the paper, by laying down a *critical* Russellian appreciation of Kant's *great* philosophical importance based on these references, nevertheless is privileged to focus on the latter's spirit as a *historian of philosophy* as well.

In the first section of the present paper "Kant's *Call* to *Reason*", a discussion on Kant's epoch-making *call* to *reason* is laid down to highlight the epistemic significance of the *call*. In the second section "Russell on Our Knowledge of General Principles", Russellian deliberations on our knowledge of general principles is being made to bring out the significance of few important philosophical questions paused by Kant. In the next section "Russell on How *A Priori* Knowledge is Possible", the paper throws light on a Russellian outline on the *new problem*[3] of Kant and its solution alongside his *fatally* objectionable methodical critique against Kant. The last section is the conclusion.

Kant's *Call* to *Reason*

Kant announces an unprecedented *call*—it is a *call* to *reason*. The point now is that why it is *reason* which needs to be *called*? There may be two intertwining questions which can be paused here justifiably: first, why is Kant announcing a call to *reason?* second, as to reason why is Kant at all announcing a *call*?

To respond to the first question, i.e., why is Kant announcing a call to *reason?* one may consider these words of Kant: "Human reason has this peculiar fate that in one species of its knowledge it is burdened by questions which, as prescribed by the

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very nature of reason itself, it is not able to ignore, but which transcending all its powers, it is also not able to answer" (7). That is, even though human reason is responsible for *burdening* itself with those questions which it cannot ignore yet it cannot answer all of them. These words bring to the fore Kant's emphasis on the capacity of human reason. Kant's emphasis gets more prominent when he talks about *pure reason* and writes about its principles: "Pure reason is, indeed, so perfect a unity that if its principle were insufficient for the solution of even a single one of all the questions to which it itself gives birth we should have no alternative but to reject the principle, since we should then no longer be able to place implicit reliance upon it in dealing with any one of the other questions" (10).

What is *pure reason* for Kant? *Pure reason* is the faculty which contains principles of *a priori* knowledge whereby we can know anything absolutely *a priori* (Kant 58). In the *Introduction* to his *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant questions whether there is any knowledge which is "independent of experience and even of all impressions of the senses. Such knowledge is entitled *a priori*, and distinguished from the *empirical*, which has its sources *a posteriori*, that is, in experience" (42-43). By *a priori* knowledge Kant does not refer to any knowledge which is independent of this or that experience but that which is absolutely independent of all experience (Kant). He says that *a priori* knowledge must possess two sure criteria, viz., *necessity* and *strict universality*[4], because these criteria cannot be derived from experience. *A priori* modes of knowledge are entitled "pure when there is no admixture of anything empirical" (Kant 43). In short, by *calling reason* Kant wants to ensure if anything absolutely *a priori* can be known or not.

While turning our attention to respond to the second question, i.e., why Kant at all announces a *call*? following words may find special mention here:

…It is a call to reason to undertake anew the most difficult of all its tasks, namely, that of self-knowledge, and to institute a tribunal which will assure to reason its lawful claims, and dismiss all groundless pretensions, not by despotic decrees, but in accordance with its own eternal and unalterable laws. The tribunal is no other than the *critique of pure reason* (9).

In other words, to *call* reason is to *critique* pure reason. It is by *critiquing* reason Kant seeks acknowledge the capacity (limits) of reason, i.e., reason has to *know itself*. By acknowledging the capacity of reason Kant wants to ascertain *how* far or to *what* extent reason can *know* without the aid of experience (otherwise reason would not be called *pure*). Kant says that "any knowledge that professes to hold *a priori* lays claim to be regarded as absolutely necessary" (11). Since *a priori* knowledge must hold *a priori*, such knowledge must be an example of apodeictic certainty. By apodeictic certainty Kant means absolute certainty. As to certainty Kant prescribes himself the maxim "that in this kind of investigation it is in no wise permissible to hold *opinions*" (11). By stating this maxim Kant argues that in case of *a priori* knowledge there is no place for differences of opinion with respect to what it states.

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As Kant seeks ensure reason's capacity to *know* itself by his *call* to *reason*, this *call* is to be considered an *epistemic* call. In other words, it is reason's *self-critique*, the *epistemic* core of Kant's *call* to *reason* via which he seeks to examine to what extent human reason is capable of *a priori* knowledge.

The following section will engage with Russell's deliberations on general principles where he focuses on the philosophical importance of *a priori* principles.

Russell on Our Knowledge of General Principles

In the beginning of his chapter *On Our Knowledge of General Principles* Russell writes about general principles: "there are principles which cannot be proved or disproved by experience, but are used in arguments which we start from what is experienced" (*The Problems of Philosophy* 39). Such principles are called general principles (his illustrations on general principles are discussed throughout this section). Regarding our knowledge of general principles, he says:

In all our knowledge of general principles, what actually happens is that first of all we realize some particular application of the principle, and then we realize that the particularity is irrelevant, and that there is a generality which may equally truly be affirmed….'two plus two are four' is first learnt in the case of some particular pair of couples, and then in some other particular case, and so on, until at last it becomes possible to see that it is true of *any* pair of couples (39)

Russell's discussion of general principles includes logical principles. He illustrates logical principle which is a general principle in this way: if in an argument premises are said to be true, it cannot be denied that the conclusion must also be true. This argument is a valid argument. Now, what makes this argument valid? It is a *general logical principle* which makes the argument valid. The principle can be stated in this way: "Suppose it known that *if* this is true, then that is true. Suppose it also known that this *is* true, then it follows that that is true" (40). The same principle can be stated in this way: "Whatever follows from a true proposition is true" (40). Logical principles of this kind are *self-evident*. These principles are *self-evident* because the truth of *logical principle* is such that this principle is "impossible to doubt" (40). The obviousness of this principle is so great that at first sight it *seems* almost trivial (40). Contrary to this, Russell claims that such principles are *not* trivial for philosophers because "they show that we may have indubitable knowledge which is no way derived from objects of sense" (40). He is emphatic here to state the close *connection* between *logical principles* and *indubitability* of knowledge as a matter of *great* concern for philosophers.

In his discussion of general principles Russell keeps room for the 'great historic controversies in philosophy' between empiricists and rationalists (41). He refers to the rationalists' claim, especially of Descartes and Leibniz, who maintain that "in addition to what we know by experience, there are certain 'innate ideas' and 'innate principles', which we know independently of experience"; expresses affinities with their point, and claims that "logical principles are known to us, and cannot be themselves proved by experience, since all proof presupposes them" (41). On the

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other hand, Russell is unhesitant to point out that "even that part of our knowledge which is *logically* independent of experience (in the sense that experience cannot prove it) is yet elicited and caused by experience" (41). To quote Russell: "…while admitting that all knowledge is elicited and caused by experience, we shall nevertheless hold that some knowledge is *a priori*, in the sense that the experience which makes us think of it does not suffice to prove it, but merely so directs our attention that we see its truth without requiring any proof from experience" (41).

Referring to another point of great importance, Russell, as against the rationalists, considers the empiricists to be right in their claim. He says that "Nothing can be known to *exist* except by the help of experience" (41). What he argues here is that if it is wished to prove that something of which we have no direct experience *exists*, we must have premises which state the existence of one or more things of which we have direct experience. For example, our belief that the author of *The Problems of Philosophy* existed depends on testimony, and in the last analysis testimony consists of "sense-data seen or heard in reading or being spoken to" (42). In contrast to the empiricists, rationalists' belief here is that from the "general consideration as to what *must* be they could deduce the existence of this or that in the actual world" (42). Russell considers this belief of rationalists to be a mistake. He argues that all knowledge, as we can acquire *a priori* concerning existence seems to be hypothetical—such knowledge tells us that "*if* one thing exists, another must exist, or, more generally, that *if* one proposition is true another proposition must be true" (42). The discussion on the *great historic controversy* ends with the following words:

All knowledge that something exists must be in part dependent on experience. When anything is known immediately, its existence is known by experience alone; when anything is proved to exist, without being known immediately, both experience and *a priori* principles must be required in the proof. Knowledge is called empirical when it rests wholly or partly upon experience. Thus all knowledge which asserts existence is empirical, and the only *a priori* knowledge concerning existence is hypothetical, giving connexions among things that exist or may exist, but not giving actual existence (42).

In his deliberations on general principles Russell also claims that all pure mathematics, like logic, is *a priori*. He refers to the empiricists' denial of this thesis who argue that experience is the source of our knowledge of arithmetic. The empiricists' point here is that by the repeated experience of seeing two things and two other things, and finding that they make four things, they are led by *induction* to the conclusion that two things and two other things will *always* make four things. To this Russell says that the way mathematical knowledge actually proceeds is that "…a certain number of instances are needed to make us think of two abstractly, rather than of two coins or two books or two people, or two of any other specified kind" (43). However, "…as soon as we are able to divest our thoughts of irrelevant particularly, we become able to *see* the general principle that two and two are four…" (43).

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Russell's deliberations include the distinction between the proposition "two and two are four" and the "best attested empirical generalizations"[5] (43). He says, it is the *necessity* of the proposition, e.g., 'two and two are four' which demands that two and two would be four in any *possible* world. This sort of *necessity* is absent in empirically generalized ones.

Besides *a priori* knowledge which is of logical kind, Russell also talks about non-logical *a priori* knowledge –knowledge as to *ethical value*. By considering knowledge as to *ethical value* in this way, Russell asserts that "…all judgements as to what is useful depend upon judgements as to what has value on its own account" (44). Here he emphasizes that "…what is intrinsically of value is *a priori* in the same sense in which logic is *a priori*, namely in the sense that the truth of such knowledge can be neither proved nor disproved by experience" (44).

Discussion on general principles comes to a closure with the observations of Kantian relevance in the history of philosophy:

…there are propositions known *a priori*, and that among them are the propositions of logic and pure mathematics, as well as the fundamental propositions of ethics. The question which must next occupy us is this: How is it possible that there should be such knowledge? And more particularly, how can there be knowledge of general propositions in cases where we have not examined all the instances, and indeed never can examine them all, because their number is infinite? These questions, which were first brought prominently forward by the German philosopher Kant (1724-1804), are very difficult, and historically very important (40).

The next section traces Russell's outline of Kant's philosophy where the contentions are based on the chapter "How *A Priori* Knowledge is Possible."

Russell on How *A Priori* Knowledge is Possible

Russell proclaims:

His [Kant's] most distinctive contribution was the invention of what he called the 'critical' philosophy, which, assuming as a datum that there is knowledge of various kinds, inquired how such knowledge comes to be possible, and deduced, from the answer to this enquiry, many metaphysical results as to the nature of the world. Whether these results were valid may well be doubted. But Kant undoubtedly deserves credit for two things: first, for having perceived that we have *a priori* knowledge which is not purely 'analytic', i.e., such that the opposite would be self-contradictory; and secondly, for having made evident the philosophical importance of the theory of knowledge (46).

He acknowledges a remarkable departure in Kant from his predecessors. Before the time of Kant, it was generally held that whatever knowledge "'was *a priori* must be 'analytic'" (46). For example, by stating that 'A bald man is a man', one

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makes a purely *analytic* judgement, i.e., the predicate is obtained by merely analyzing the subject.

It was Hume (who preceded Kant) who discovered that the causal principle is not analytic, but *synthetic*. Since the connection of an effect with its cause is *synthetic*, Hume argued, nothing could be known *a priori* about the connection. Kant accepted that the connection is *synthetic* because no analysis of the subject reveals the predicate; however, he maintains that it is known *a priori*, because the principle is *universal* and *necessary*, and therefore it cannot be derived from experience. Kant observed that not only the connection of cause and effect is synthetic (after Hume declares), but all the propositions of arithmetic and geometry are synthetic because no analysis of the subject reveals the predicate here. For example, in the proposition 7+5=12, when 7 and 5 are put together to give 12, the idea of 12 is not contained in them. Nor even the idea of 12 is contained in the idea of *adding* 7 and 5 together. These observations led Kant draw a distinction between the *a priori* and analytic. From these descriptions Kant concludes that all pure mathematics, though *a priori*, is synthetic. This conclusion, as Russell observes, raises *new problem* for Kant, for which the latter endeavours find solution for it.

At the beginning of his philosophy Kant puts the question, namely 'How is pure mathematics possible?' In this context Russell writes the following about Kant, which, for the latter, is a matter of serious philosophical concern:

It seems strange that we should apparently be able to know some truths in advance about particular things of which we have as yet no experience; but it cannot easily be doubted that logic and arithmetic will apply to such things. We do not know who will be the inhabitants of London a hundred years hence; but we know that any two of them and any other two of them will make four of them. This apparent power of anticipating facts about things of which we have no experience is certainly surprising. Kant's solution to the problem, though not valid in my opinion, is interesting (Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy* 47-48)

These considerations led Kant formulate the "general problem of pure reason" which is the proper problem of pure reason paused in the form of this question—"How are *a priori* synthetic judgments possible?" (55)

In his outline Russell observes, for Kant, in all our experience there are two elements to be distinguished: one, which is due to the object (Russell calls it physical object), and the other which is due to our own nature. Russell refers to his own discussion of matter and sense-data where he differentiated physical object from the associated sense-data; and that the sense-data are to be regarded as those which result from an interaction between the physical object and ourselves. Russell utters here: "So far, we are in agreement with Kant" (*The Problems of Philosophy* 48). After this, his subsequent words carry a different tone of observation:

But what is distinctive of Kant is the way in which he apportions the shares of ourselves and the physical object respectively. He considers that the crude material given in sensation –the colour, hardness, etc.—is due to the object, and that what

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we supply is the arrangement in space and time, and all the relations between sense-data which result from comparison or from considering one as the cause of the other or in any other way (48).

Russell illustrates the reason behind such Kantian *apportioning*:

His [Kant] chief reason in favour of this view is that we seem to have *a priori* knowledge as to space and time and causality and comparison, but not as to the actual crude material of sensation (48).

And says further:

We can be sure, he says, that anything we shall ever experience must show the characteristics affirmed of it in our *a priori* knowledge, because these characteristics are due to our own nature, and therefore nothing can ever come into our experience without acquiring these characteristics (48).

Since, for Kant, nothing can ever come into our experience without acquiring the characteristics affirmed of it in our *a priori* knowledge, such knowledge, therefore, although it is "true of all actual and possible experience, must not be supposed to apply outside experience" (48). Russell considers this account of Kantian solution as an attempt to reconcile and harmonize the rationalists' contention with that of the arguments of the empiricists.

In the Kantian way of solving the *new problem*, i.e., in Kant's theory of *a priori* knowledge just described above, Russell finds various minor flaws. However, he speaks of one *fatal* objection against Kant's philosophy—the *fatality* lies in Kant's attempt to deal with the problem of *a priori* knowledge by his *method*. It is Kant's *method of thought* which advocates the thesis that objects must conform to our knowledge—a thesis which is a *reversal* of the hypothesis that our knowledge must conform to objects (advocated by all before Kant). Russell hits this *revolutionary* method of Kant with the following critiques:

Russell argues that if we are to have "certainty that the facts must always conform to logic and arithmetic" then it cannot be said that logic and arithmetic are *contributed by us* (49). Russell's point here is that human nature is as much a fact of the existing world as anything, and it is uncertain that human nature will remain constant. That is, human nature is subject to change; and that the human nature would so change as to make *two and two become five* tomorrow cannot be denied. The possibility that human nature may change, Russell says, "seems never to have occurred to him [Kant], yet it is one which utterly destroys the certainty and universality which he is anxious to vindicate for arithmetical propositions" (49). The crux of Russell's objection here is that Kant's method, by adhering to the thesis that objects must conform to our *a priori* knowledge, fails in the attempt at explaining the *certainty* of *a priori* propositions, e.g., arithmetical propositions.

Russell further claims that "…if there is any truth in our arithmetical beliefs, they must apply to things equally whether we think of them or not. Two physical objects and two other physical objects must make four physical objects, even if physical

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objects cannot be experienced" (49). The truth of the assertion that *two physical objects and two physical objects must make four physical objects* (even though physical objects cannot be experienced), he says, is as indubitable as the truth of the assertion that *two phenomena and two other phenomena make four phenomena* (Russell tries to state the argument by referring to the Kantian distinction between *physical object* and *phenomena*. For Kant, in contrast to the physical object which cannot be experienced, *phenomena* since they are given in our experienced can be experienced). Russell's point is that "…if there is any truth in our arithmetical beliefs, they must apply to things equally whether we think of them or not" (49). He argues Kant's solution to have unduly *limited* the scope of *a priori* propositions besides failing in its attempt to explain their certainty.

In line of an argument Russell sets forth in the context of the 'laws of thought', he lays down another argument against Kant's method. Russell argues that to consider the three principles which are commonly called *laws of thought* as merely about *thoughts* is erroneous. To make this point clear he illustrates the law of contradiction which is stated in the form "'Nothing can both be and not be'" (49). He provides two examples to state the principle, viz., *if a tree is a beech it cannot also be not a beech*, and *if my table is rectangular it cannot also be not rectangular.* He says that "when we have seen that a tree is a beech, we do not need to look again in order to ascertain whether it is also not a beech; thought alone makes us know that this is impossible" (50). But to conclude from this that the law of contradiction is a law of thought is erroneous for Russell. This is because "It is not, e.g., the belief that if we *think* a certain tree is a beech, we cannot at the same time *think* that it is not a beech; it is the belief that if the tree *is* a beech, it cannot at the same time *be* not a beech" (50). Thus, Russell argues that "…although belief in the law of contradiction is a thought, the law of contradiction itself is not a thought, but a fact concerning the things in the world" (50).

Russell says that *a priori* judgements can be understood in the light of the similar argument mentioned above. He argues that "The fact that our minds are so constituted as to believe that two and two are four, though it is true, is emphatically not what we assert when we assert that two and two are four" (50). That is, "no fact about the constitution of our minds could make it true that two and two are four" (50). The reason behind Russell's argument is this: "When we judge that two and two are four, we are not making a judgement about our thoughts, but about all actual or possible couples" (50). He claims that "…our *a priori* knowledge, if it is not erroneous, is not merely knowledge about the constitution of our minds, but is applicable to whatever the world may contain, both what is mental and what is non-mental" (50). He leaves a clue at the end about his take on this issue without laying down any detailed account on it: "The fact seems to be that all our *a priori* knowledge is concerned with entities which do not, properly speaking, *exist*, either in the mental or in the physical world. These entities are such as can be named by parts of speech which are substantives; they are such entities as qualities and relations" (50).

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Conclusion

The ongoing Russellian appraisal unfolds few relevant questions. In regard to the first section a question may be paused justifiably: despite being a rejecter of Kantian philosophy why does Russell consider *call* to *reason* worth *hearing*? To address this question attention may be turned towards the third section of the present appraisal where Russell extensively talks about the importance of general principles for the enterprise of philosophy. From this sections' highlights, i.e., from Russell's thrust on the importance of *general logical principle* which *makes* an argument valid; *non-triviality* of these principles for philosophers which show them that *we may have indubitable knowledge which is no way derived from objects of sense*, i.e., *epistemic* importance of these principles it is clear why Russell recognizes Kant to have *evidently* given great *epistemic* importance on each of these points. These observations made Russell appreciate the groundbreaking Kantian *epistemic call* despite his rejection of Kant's philosophy, and made him give credit to Kant as one who made *philosophical importance of theory of knowledge evident*.

Another question regarding *great historic controversies* in philosophy would be that what is Russell's take on this? Or to put it differently, how does Russell try analyse the issue of controversy relating to either of the camps—empiricists as well as rationalists? These questions are important to throw light on Russell's recognition of Kant's attempt to harmonize rationalists' contentions with that of the empiricists. Russell's proclamation that *even that part of our knowledge which is logically independent of experience (in the sense that experience cannot prove it) is yet elicited and caused by experience* makes it obvious that he analyses merits and flaws of both the camps and points out the *epistemic* significance of both *a priori* principles and experience.

Another possible query might be that how does the question, viz., "how is pure mathematics *a priori*?" remain relevant for Russell in appraising Kant? To this query Russell's argument against the empiricists' thesis that they are led by *induction* to the conclusion that two things and two other things will *always* make four things appears significant when he appreciates Kant for denying the same thesis in the context of the question "how is pure mathematics possible?" That is, both Russell and Kant are in tune with each other when they claim (individually) that *induction* cannot lead one to have knowledge of *a priori* proposition in pure mathematics. Russell's claim that "our knowledge of the general propositions of mathematics (and the same applies to logic) must be accounted for otherwise than our (merely probable) knowledge of empirical generalizations such as 'all men are mortal'" is crucial to see the reasons for appreciating Kant at this point (47).

If something is useful, the end must be valuable on its own account—how is this Russellian claim about non-logical *a priori* knowledge, i.e., *intrinsic* value of knowledge as to *ethics* be influential for the present appraisal? Here, attention may be drawn towards this: while using *knowledge as to ethical value* as non-logical *a priori* knowledge Russell makes it clear that "I am not speaking of judgements as

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to what is useful or as to what is virtuous, for such judgements do require empirical premises; I am speaking of judgements as to the intrinsic desirability of things" (42). These words may remind anyone of Kant, i.e., his contention about ethics – ethics, for him, is *intrinsically* valuable. Nevertheless, it is not the case that Russell is subscribed to the Kantian ethics.[6]

Drawing our attention to the present Russellian outline of *new problem* of Kant and his solution of the problem, question may be asked as to why Russell's chief target of criticism is Kant's *method*? As the outline reveals, Kant's thesis that nothing can ever come into our experience without acquiring the characteristics affirmed of it in our *a priori* knowledge is due to his *method*. Russell's critique against this method, while discovering the flaws in it, broadens the possibilities for reflecting more on the *method* and also on Kant's philosophy which is based on the method.

Russell as a *historian of philosophy* focuses on the significance of Kantian philosophical claims, and tries analyse these claims possibly in a *dispassionate* way. Russell's recognition of Kant's solution to the problem "how a priori knowledge is possible?" as *very difficult* and that the solution has been understood differently by different philosophers led him announce that he draws the *merest outline* in the chapter "How *A Priori* Knowledge is Possible". This sort of realization made Russell clear that the outline "will be thought misleading by many exponents of Kant's system" (48). What is chiefly appraised of Kant in the present paper is made through the Russellian appreciation for Kant's *invention* of the solution to the *new problem* and also through his *methodical* critique against Kant. As an appraiser whatever Russell appraises here of Kant is not subjected to any further investigation in the paper, because it restricts its discussion to Russell's appraisal of Kant only and does not extend such discussion to any further observations on Russell's appraisal of Kant.

The paper, while witnessing Russellian appraisal of Kant, witnesses Kant as a *trailblazer* in philosophy in multitude of ways: Kant, the *first* who brought prominently forward *very difficult* and *historically important questions*; Kant, the *distinctive contributor* and the *inventor* of *critical philosophy*; Kant, the *perceiver* that we have *a priori* knowledge which is not purely *analytic* (such as the opposite would be self-contradictory); also Kant, the one who makes the philosophical importance of the *theory of knowledge evident.* While witnessing these, the paper takes sufficient care to note Russell's acknowledgements of Kant's *epistemic* contributions to philosophy. Although Russell is highly appreciative of Kant's *epistemic* contributions, his critique (*fatal* objection) against Kant's *method* nevertheless brings to light the reasons for Russell's disagreements with Kant. To append to this, Russell's critique provides inklings to understand why Russell, despite being an ardent appreciator of Kant's *invention* of *critical philosophy*, is not reluctant to doubt the validity of metaphysical results as to the nature of the world (46). The appraisal leaves many pathways open for all even to question Russell, the appraiser.

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End Notes:

[1] *How A Priori Knowledge is Possible* is the eight chapter of Russell's book *The Problems of Philosophy*. The chapter's main concern is to critically highlight Kant's contribution of *critical* philosophy, so to say, a Russellian critique on Kant's critique.

[2] Russell writes: "At Cambridge I was indoctrinated with the philosophies of Kant and Hegel, but G. E. Moore and I together came to reject both these philosophies" (*My Philosophical Development* 9).

[3] *New problem*, in Russell's words, is the Kantian problem which the latter had to face while declaring that all pure mathematics, though *a priori*, is synthetic. The present paper considers Kant's *new problem* for discussion in the section "Russell on How *A Priori* Knowledge is Possible".

[4] Strict universality is different from empirical universality in that while strict universality is *a priori*, empirical universality is not *a priori*, says Kant.

[5] Russell argues that even *best attested empirical generalizations*, e.g., 'All men are mortal' always remain mere *facts*. By calling these generalizations *facts* he says that there might be a world in which such generalizations were false, though in the actual world they happen to be false.

[6] Russell writes what he finds displeasing in Kant: "I cannot, like Kant, put the moral law on the same plane as the starry heavens. The attempt to humanise the cosmos, which underlies the philosophy that calls itself 'Idealism' is displeasing to me quite independently of the question whether it is true or false" (*My Philosophical Development* 97).

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