

## IMMANUEL KANT, *CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON*,

Translation (into Romanian) by Rodica Croitoru, 2019

This is only a note about the translation into Romanian of Kant's *magnum opus*: Immanuel Kant, *Critica rațiunii pure*, Traducere, Studiu introductiv, Studiu asupra traducerii, Note, Bibliografie selectivă, Index de concepte german-român, Index de concepte român-german de Rodica Croitoru, București, Editura Paideia, 2019, 1061 p. [Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Translation (into Romanian), Introductory Study, Study about Translation, Notes, Selective Bibliography, German-Romanian Concepts Index, Romanian-German Concepts Index by Rodica Croitoru, București, Editura Paideia, 2019, 1061 pages].

Este doar o notă despre traducerea în limba română a principalei și celei mai cunoscute opera a lui Immanuel Kant: *Critica rațiunii pure*, Traducere, Studiu introductiv, Studiu asupra traducerii, Note, Bibliografie selectivă, Index de concepte german-român, Index de concepte român-german de Rodica Croitoru, București, Editura Paideia, 2019, 1061 p.

Kant has written in the language of his time, which first means the philosophical concepts and theories, and, in part, the style of professional philosophers. However, starting from that threshold, he has not only arrived at a new network of concepts and theories, even overthrowing the old ones, but also at a new philosophical style. Because of his deep commitment to Enlightenment, he endeavoured to deploy a *clear language*, fit for the logical *method* he developed along the construction of his revolutionary pattern: the *mediation of ontology through epistemology* and the *dependence of the knowledge of the world on both the rationality and the morality of the human being*. Without rejecting the objectivity of the world, Kant has demonstrated the power and the limits of the human faculty of knowing and thus, the responsibility of the human subject in front of the existence. And this had to be expressed *perspicuously*: precisely because people must evolve from the age of their “self-incurred immaturity” into the full maturity of human understanding, behaviour and creative ability.

Another feature specific to the Enlightenment was, related to the former, Kant's *respect for science* and the signal of philosophy and science integration. Though he was also read in a spiritualist key, he was far away from the *dominant* spiritualism within the philosophical atmosphere of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. On the contrary: and it was just his *rationalism*, emphasising the *possibility of moral imperatives and education of humans* according to these moral requirements, that led to the general cold attitudes of those then called *homo academicus*<sup>1</sup> towards Kant and his rationalist principles, which, if developed all the way to the end – as he himself showed –, could unpleasantly shake the world favourable to this *homo*. Clearer, the respectable professional philosophers have restricted Kant's works exclusively to scholarly interpretations, closed into the narrow group of specialists, while his moral philosophy was labelled as “formalist” (implying an immeasurable distance between real life and its theorizing), just in order to once more alienate the common people from philosophy, rationalism and moral criteria. Certainly, here it is not about sincere philosophers such as Hegel and Schopenhauer<sup>2</sup>, but about the mainstream philosophical atmosphere reverberating in Europe and imposing reductionism towards Kant<sup>3</sup>. But Kant is not distant to the real life because the reason of philosophy is to extract problems from the rich, diverse and contradictory human experiences of the world, and thus to go beyond empirical

<sup>1</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus* (1984), Translated by Peter Collier, Stanford Ca., Stanford University Press, 1988.

<sup>2</sup> See Ana Bazac, “Arthur Schopenhauer's mirror: the will, the suffering, the compassion as philosophical challenges”, *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai, Philosophia*, Vol. 64, No. 3, December 2019, pp. 195-225.

<sup>3</sup> Ana Bazac, „Semnificații ale filosofiei practice kantiene și preocupări românești pentru filosofia practică a lui Kant”, *Studii de istoria filosofiei universale*, vol. XII, București, Editura Academiei Române, 2004, pp. 434-463 [Significances of Kantian practical philosophy and Romanian concerns for Kant's practical philosophy].

descriptions up to the theoretical groundwork without which the human practice as such is halted. Kant is a pillar of the modern development of the human beings: for their evolution was not only in the direction of disdain towards reason in the name of the world's unbridled consumption in order to "enjoy themselves" here and now, but also in the direction of *deep understanding, science and moral. Kant can be taught and used, especially nowadays.*

If, as it is known, Whitehead said metaphorically that the entire European philosophical tradition is a series of footnotes to Plato, i.e. that Plato was a founding father through the amplitude of his ideas, the same can be said about Kant. The substantiation of *constructivism* / of the "transcendental idealism" – that the world "exists" / has meanings for us only through the processing by our minds of the signals coming via the sense organs; or that our knowledge of the world is through our *ideas* whose multi-storey mechanism, form, content and meanings must and can be known – the description of the *complexity of the human reason*, and the pattern of *rejection of the unilateral approach*, together with the necessary and pertinent *criticism*, considered as the other face of the philosophical *method*, have made the entire subsequent philosophy to develop beyond the old naïve couple (idealism-materialism). This path is challenging, indeed, because it finds something that is beyond the effort of so many professional philosophers who demonstrate various theses about various aspects of knowledge, or about some interpretations of concepts: though philosophy involves this permanent demonstration and professional dialogue, if they do not relate, in a very earthly manner, to the concrete human *responsibility*, philosophy itself proves to remain "pre Kantian". Kant has connected his "transcendental idealism" to the highly philosophical – and at the same time very clear to the common people whom the elitism of some professional intellectuals despises – moral imperatives. Kant's ethics is an inherent follow up of his epistemology, there is no shrillness in their system.

An important aspect in the education based on Kant's horizon is the translation of his works. In Romanian, a translator of many books and essays [*Critique of Judgement* (1790), *First Introduction to the Critique of the Faculty of Judgment* (1790), *Metaphysics of Morals* (1797), *Perpetual peace: A Philosophical Sketch* (1795), *Announcement of the Near Completion of a Treatise on Eternal Peace in Philosophy* (1796), *Essay on Some Considerations about Optimism* (1759), *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798), *The Dreams of a Visionary Interpreted through the Dreams of Metaphysics* (1766) (translated into English as *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*), *About the Organ of the Soul* (letter to Professor Sömmering, 1796), *Letter to Professor Hufeland* (1798), *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* (1793), *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1763) and *Notes to Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1764-1768), *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788); and recently, in an impressive edition that, indeed, will remain as an emblem for the Romanian culture, *Critique of Pure Reason* (both the edition of 1781 and that of 1787, totaling 1061 A4 pages)] is **Rodica Croitoru**. Some of the above translations were even republished in a permanent revision and addition, which are indeed the sign of the good (and reliable) work of translators. All the translations feature an accurate confrontation of the Romanian text with the pages of the Berlin Academy edition of the German texts.

We have to mention the contents of the Introductory study to the *Critique of Pure Reason*: Kant's spiritual bibliography before the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and Historical-methodological preamble – with the following sections: A new kind of knowledge, Metaphysical exposition of the concept of space, Transcendental exposition of the concept of space, Metaphysical exposition of the concept of time, Transcendental exposition of the concept of time, The concepts of pure reason, The principles of transcendental deduction of categories, The system of transcendental ideas, The dialectical reasonings of pure reason (and here the sub-sections: The paralogisms of pure reason, The antithetics of pure reason – pointing The cosmological ideas and The antinomic dynamics –

The ideal of pure reason), Traditional arguments of God's existence (with the sub-sections: The impossibility of ontological proof of the existence of God, The impossibility of the cosmological evidence of the existence of God, The impossibility of physico-theological proof), Deduction of the ideas of reason, Evolution of transcendental idealism after *The Critique of Pure Reason*.

All the translations and the studies about Kant's works and ideas once more give us the model of scientific work and of the treatment of multiple mediations between man and the world, including its own creations. What does this urge to make Kant popular mean? Obviously, it supposes the continuation of the deep theoretical analysis but, at the same time, the endeavour to explain Kant's proximity to the present scientific research of knowledge and man, and to the humanity's striving for a life according to its inner *telos*.

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