

An outline of kant's foundations of metaphysics of morals assignment

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Preface The foundation of the metaphysics of morals is a critical examination of a pure practical reason. The present foundations is the search for and establishment of the supreme principle of morality. Method: analytically from common knowledge to the determination of its supreme principle; then , synthetically from the examination of this principle and its sources back to common knowledge. Division: 1. the common rational knowledge of morals -; the philosophical rational knowledge of morals 2. the popular moral philosophy -; the metaphysics of morals 3. he metaphysics of morals -; the critical examination of pure practical reason (its foundation) . transition from the common rational knowledge of morals to the philosophical (?)a good will: good without qualification ? gifts of nature: talents of mind: intelligence, wit, judgment qualities of temperament: courage, resoluteness, perseverance If the will (which is to make use of them) is not good, they can become bad. ? gifts of fortune: power, riches, honor, health, well-being, contentment(happiness) A good will is needed to correct their influence on the mind.

Thus, the good will seems to constitute the indispensable condition of the worthiness to be happy. ? some qualities: moderation in emotions and passions, self-control, calm deliberation They can become bad without the principle of good will. (eg: the coolness of villain) A good will is not good because of the end, but only because of its willing, i. e. , it is good of itself. Even if the end cannot be achieved because of the unfortunate fate , only the good will had its full worth of itself. Usefulness and fruitlessness can neither diminish or augment this worth.

Its usefulness would be only its setting. The absolute worth of the good will alone. Reason's proper function must be to produce a will which is good in itself but not good merely as a means. This will must be the highest good and the condition of all others, even the achievement of happiness. The good will dwells already in the natural sound understanding, and does not need to be taught as only need to be brought to light. The good will always takes first place in the estimation of the total value of our actions. (?) The concept of duty

Three kind of actions: whether they are done from duty

1. actions which are recognized as opposed to duty, they cannot be carried out from duty, since they conflict with it.
2. actions which are in accordance with duty and to which has no direct inclination, but impelled by another inclination. not from duty but for some selfish purpose –dealer's story
3. actions which is in accordance with duty and the subject has a direct inclination to do it. – preserve one's life: If..., ...has no intrinsic worth and has no moral import because not from duty but from a direct inclination. –to be kind: It is on a level with other inclinations, such as honor, fortunately directed to accords with duty. . actions which is for neither selfish purpose nor direct inclination but from duty –preserve one's life: If he wishes for death but preserves his life, ...has a moral import because from neither inclination and nor fear but from duty. –to be kind: –to secure one's own happiness: in accordance with duty / done from duty popular moral philosophy / the metaphysics of morals

(?) three proposition of morality

1. To have moral worth an action must be done from duty
2. Moral value does not depend on the realization of the purpose but merely on the principle of will.
- 3.

Duty is the necessity of an action executed from the respect for law. subjective element “ The necessity of my actions from pure respect for the practical law constitutes duty” p61 I can never have respect for the effect of an action, because it is a mere effect and not an activity of a will. I can have no respect for any inclination because I can at most approve it. Only law itself can be an object of respect and thus a command. Law is connected with the will merely as ground and not as consequence, and does not serve (be subject to) inclination but overpowers it or at least excludes it from being considered in making a choice.

Three factors which can determine the will: 1. the influence of inclination 2. the object of will and the end/purpose/effect/result of action 3. the law itself Now, an act from duty wholly excludes the influence of inclination and the object of will, and remains which can determine the will: objectively the law, and subjectively pure respect for this practical law. I ought to follow such a law even if it thwarts all my inclinations. The highest and unconditional good, which we call moral, can be found only in the will of a rational being.

I should act in such a way that I could also will that my maxim should be a universal law. The common reason of mankind in its practical judgments is in perfect agreement with this. -to lie Thus within the moral knowledge of common human reason we have attained its principle. p26-27 To call in philosophy is resulted from the powerful counterpoise of needs and inclinations against commands of duty which reason presents to man, and is in order to escape from the perplexity of opposing claims based on needs and inclinations, and to avoid the danger of losing all genuine moral

principles. transition from the popular moral philosophy to the metaphysics of morals The complain out of experience: 1. we cannot cite a single sure example of the disposition to act from pure duty 2. though much may be done that accords with what duty commands, it is always doubtful whether it is done from duty, and thus whether it has moral worth. For this reason, many philosophers denied the reality of this disposition, attributing everything to more or less refined self-love. self-love: he frailty and corruption of human nature, employing reason, which should legislate for human nature, only to provide for the interest of the inclinations. In the most researching self-examination: A secret impulse of self-love can falsely appear as the idea of duty, for we like to flatter ourselves with a pretended nobler motive. all morality is a mere phantom of human imagination overreaching itself through self-conceit. It is the dear self instead of the stern command of duty which supports our plans.

This is especially true as one's years increase and one's power of judgment is made wiser by experience and more acute in observation. duty: Except the clear conviction that, even if there never were actions springing from such pure sources, our concern is not this or that was done but that reason of itself and independently of all appearances commands what ought to be done... This duty, as duty in general, prior to all experience, lies in the idea of a reason which determines the will by a priori grounds. eg: pure sincerity in friendship he necessity of metaphysics of morals A completely isolated metaphysics of morals is not only an indispensable substrate of all theoretically sound and definite knowledge of duties, but also a desideratum of the highest importance to the actual fulfillment of its precepts. Because: a <https://assignbuster.com/an-outline-of-kants-foundations-of-metaphysics-of-morals-assignment/>

mixed theory of morals which is put together both from incentives of feelings and inclinations and from rational concepts must make the mind vacillate between motives which cannot be brought under any principle and which can lead only accidentally to the good and often to the bad.

So all moral concepts have their origin entirely a priori in reason and they cannot be abstracted from any empirical and hence merely contingent cognitions. If we are not in possession of such a metaphysics, it is futile to define accurately the element of duty in all actions which accords with duty.

Will: the capacity of acting according to the principle

Everything in nature works according to laws while only a rational being has the capacity of acting according to the principle. This capacity is will. Since reason is required for the derivation of actions from laws, will is nothing else than practical reason. Practical good is what determines the will by means of the conception of reason, and hence not by subjective causes but objectively on the grounds which are valid for every rational beings.