

Kant (Book notes)

PREFACE

- 3 Fields of ancient greek philosophy:

- Logic: study of pure thought, independent of any objects

- Physics (natural philosophy): study of how things happen in the world of material objects

- Ethics: study of how things ought to happen in the world of human beings

- Pure philosophy: deals with only priori concepts that occur independently of experience / perception

- basic ideas about the world (notions of time, space, causation are priori concepts hard wired into our brains)

- Empirical philosophy: deals w/ the objects we experience in the world around us

- Actions are not completely moral if they only appear to conform to moral law but lack a moral motivation → moral actions should be done for the sake of morality (as opposed to self-interest)

- Moral ideas may be universally valid only if they are based on the intrinsic validity of priori concepts

- Human nature should not be a consideration in moral thinking

- Rational ideas have a strong claim to authority → morality based on reason would be best system

Section 1

- Qualities of character: wit, intelligence, courage

- Qualities of good fortune: wealth, status, good health

- Reason's function will bring a will that's good in itself

- ↳ duties are specific obligations of a good will

- actions are genuinely good when they are done for duty alone

- actions are judged not by their intended purpose, but by the 'maxim' or

principle that served as the motivation

- duties should be done out of reverence for the law → only a rational being could recognize a moral law + act out of respect for it

• **Law of morality**: we should act so the maxim (motivating principle) of our actions to become a universal law

The only principle of universal validity are priori principles of reason / logic (non-contradiction → Fundamentally similar to the bible's "do unto others as we would have done unto us")

• Contradictions against Kant

- Hegel argued our thinking is structured by beliefs, institutions + traditions of the society we live in → you can't know what actions are self-contradictory unless you know about their society (can't develop moral principles w/out considering circumstances of the world)

Section 2

• Reason's demands → imperatives: command that a single action is necessary to some purpose, ex: attainment of personal happiness

- categorical imperatives command that an action is necessary in + of itself → must be derived a priori → act only in a way that you could want the maxim of your action to become a universal law