(a) Briefly explain the **historical** and **philosophical** context of Kant's philosophy. (5)

(b) Summarise the argument that Kant advances in his essay, What is Enlightenment?(1795) (5)

(c) Explain Kant's concept of a **good will**. (12)

(d) Explain Kant's distinction between **acting in accordance with the moral law** and **acting in reverence (Achtung)** for the moral law. Refer to Kant's examples in your answer. (12)



Immanuel Kant

#### What, for Kant, is the form of the moral law?

# Kant identifies 3 types of law

physical

laws

logical

laws

•moral

laws

•govern the natural

universe

•govern

thought

•govern

freedom

•e.g. Newton laws of motion •e.q. Aristotle's laws of thought

#### btw: Postulates

- •Theism is presupposed by morality (summum bonum)
- Freedom, too, is presupposed...it cannot
  - be **proven**

#### Read the Laws sheet.

Physical

Logical

Are these laws universal? Or particular?

Are they subjective? Or objective?

# Universality

- Laws, qua laws, are universal in form (structure)
- •Laws are thus established a priori
- The a posteriori, empirical → generalisations (Rule Utilitarianism)
- If it is a moral law, it applies to all rational beings, equally

Read Leibniz (1704), a rationalist, on the same idea

#### **Quick Review**

What three types of law does Kant identify, and what do these laws govern?

What is the link between law and universality?



#### 2. What, for Kant, is the content of the moral law?

#### **Recall: moral laws**

# govern freedom

#### autonomy

#### Autonomy, autonomous

- •Etymology: Auto: self hetero: other
- •Nomos: law
- Literally, one who gives oneself one's own laws
- Thus, rational beings are legislators of the moral law



Explain it.

Memorise it.

#### Two things fill the mind

with ever-increasing

Achtung the starry

heavens above me and the

moral law within me

~ (Kant, 1788)

Not imposed externally: not **heteronomous** 

# Objective, not subjective

- The moral law is grounded in reason
- Reason, for Kant, itself is universal
- •e.g. If 2a=4, then a=?...
- •e.g. All girls are female; Jen is a girl; therefore...

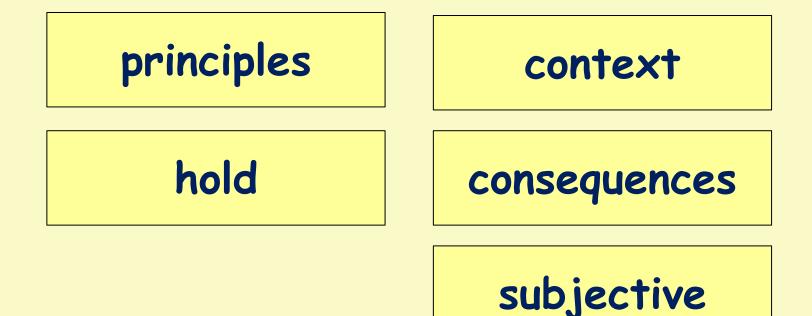
# Synthetic, not analytic

- •If moral laws were **analytic** (true by definition), then there could not be serious uncertainty about them.
- There is uncertainty about moral laws
- •Therefore...

## Apodeictic: Modal Category

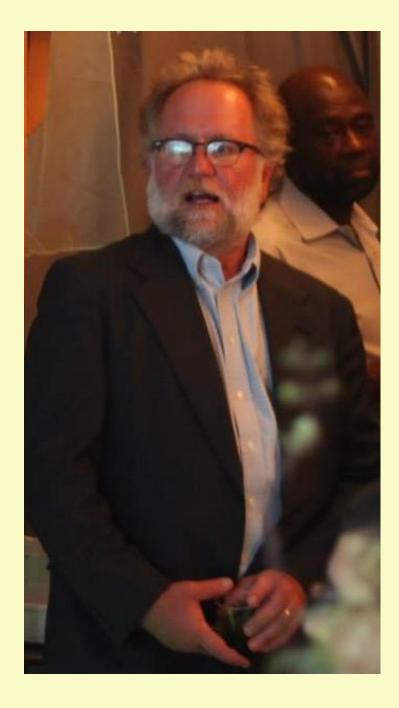
- 'Problematic' possible
- •'Assertoric' actual
- 'Apodeictic' necessary

http://www.blackwellreference.com/sub scriber/uid=/tocnode?id=g97814051067 95\_chunk\_g97814051067952\_ss1-168 From apodeictic necessity to moral absolutism



#### **Rational will**

- Moral laws are therefore binding we are
  bound by them
- They 'command' us, so to speak
- A gute Wille is therefore, ultimately, a rational will.
- But, because we are free and imperfectly rational...



# "a rational will must be regarded as

\_\_\_\_\_, or free in the sense of being the \_\_\_\_\_\_ of the law that it."

#### Robert Johnson, 2008

- autonomous
- binds
- author

# Why are moral laws binding?

#### Apodeictic: Modal Category

- 'Problematic' possible
- 'Assertoric' actual
- •'Apodeictic' necessary

http://www.blackwellreference.com/subscriber/uid=/tocnode?id=g9781405106795\_ chunk\_g97814051067952\_ss1-168 extra info about this distinction

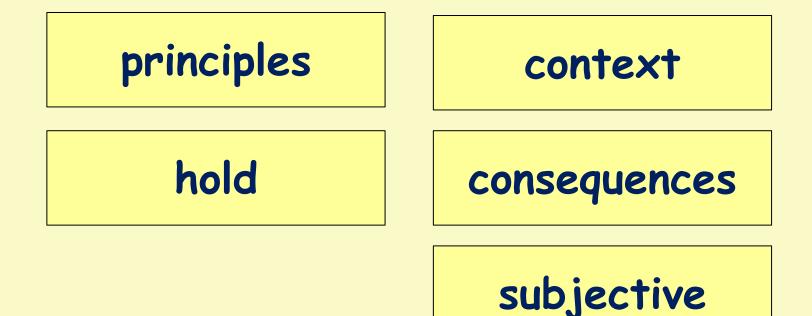
#### Problematic, assertoric, or apodeictic?

- •1+1=2
- David Cameron
- Square triangles
- Aristotle's law of identity: A is A
- Dodos
- A married bachelor

# Apodeictic necessity

- The apodeictic force of moral laws render them binding – we are bound by them
- They 'command' or 'tug' us, so to speak
- But we're imperfectly rational

From apodeictic necessity to moral absolutism



Explain why Kant thinks that the moral law is grounded in the two core Enlightenment values of human autonomy and reason.

- •synthetic (not analytic) Key words
- •a priori (not a posteriori)
- universal (not general)
- absolute (not relative or contingent)
- apodeictic (necessary so binding)
- autonomous (not heteronomous)
- objective (not subjective)
- •rational (not empirical)

#### Mini-Review 1

- 1. What did MacIntyre and Rachels assert about Kantianism?
- What are the names of Kant's three chief works on ethics? German, English, year
- 3. What, for Kant, was metaphysics?

4. What is pure practical reason?

#### Mini-Review 2

- 1. Recall Graham's example. What does it show?
- 2. Why is a weak gute Wille not a genuine one?
- 3. What's the quote with 'jewel' in it?
- Explain the gute Wille using words: 'highest' 'primacy' 'sole' and 'complete'
- 5. What's the summum bonum?