FIRST:

so today we turn to khan's

0:04

notion of the moral law which he defines

0:07

in terms of the categorical

0:09

imperative

0: 12

now let's turn to khan's concept

0:15

of moral law what is this moral law what

0:19

are its contents

0:20

and how does it work kant essentially

0:24

undertakes a multi-step

0:25

argument he begins by distinguishing

0:29

between two kinds

0:30

of law which he refers to as imperatives

0:33

in order to generally identify what type

0:36

of law

0:36

or imperative moral law would have to be

0:40

if there were such a thing as moral law

0:43

so he'll start by

\*\*\* first locating the

0:46

tool or instrument by which we can

0:48

figure out what a moral law

0:49

looks like or might look like

0:53

and then he's going to try to deduce the

0:55

actual content of that moral law

0:58

just from the concept of rationality or

1:00

rational

1:01

agency and then he is going to show

1:05

how we apply that law so in these three

1:07

steps he is going to arrive at

1:10

a certain understanding of moral law

1:14

based on which we undertake carry out

1:17

our moral duties

1:19

and he begins by defining this notion

1:22

of an imperative imperatives in general

1:26

are commands that dictate a particular

1:28

course of

1:29

action such as you shall clean your room

1:32

and so on an imperative is something

1:35

like a command

1:36

which attacks the form of either do this

1:39

or

1:40

don't do that or one ought to do this

1:43

or one should do that

1:46

so in other words a command in

1:48

accordance with some sort of law

1:50

which we want to figure out what sort of

1:52

law that is

1:54

kant identifies two kinds of imperatives

1:57

hypothetical

1:58

imperative and categorical imperative

2:01

now let's take a detailed look at each

2:03

one of them

2:07

now a hypothetical imperative has an

2:10

if clause in it if you want

2:13

x then do y don't do y if you want

2:18

x so on they tell you what you ought to

2:21

do

2:22

under certain conditions and

2:25

um hypothetical imperative in other

2:28

words depends on your

2:30

circumstances good or desires

2:34

in other words it is suited for

2:36

expressing the connection between

2:38

certain means and certain ends so it

2:41

takes this means form

2:43

now what is the point of all of this let

2:46

me give you

2:47

an example as i've put up there if you

2:49

want to retain a

2:51

if you want to obtain a scholarship you

2:53

must retain

2:54

a 3.5 gpa it's a hypothetical command

2:58

since

2:59

it only binds you if you want to obtain

3:01

that scholarship

3:03

if you want to obtain a good grade in

3:06

this course

3:07

you must carry out these certain actions

3:10

you have the option of not carrying out

3:12

those actions if you didn't care

3:14

about passing the course for example

3:18

so similarly we can take another

3:21

classical example that we have already

3:23

seen so far

3:24

if you want to be happy then you must

3:26

act virtuously or morally

3:29

as aristotle is fond of saying

3:32

but in according to kant someone who

3:35

thinks they don't desire happiness

3:37

then has no reason to care about

3:39

morality

3:40

suppose you say if you want to be a good

3:42

person you should care about telling the

3:45

truth

3:46

but what if the other person responds i

3:48

don't give a crap about being a good

3:50

person that's only for suckers

3:52

etc again that person would have no

3:55

reason

3:56

to obey these rules of morality

3:59

in other words if you're dealing with

4:01

hypothetical imperatives

4:03

then one can opt out of those rules

4:06

whenever one

4:07

one one wants to let's look at it from

4:10

an egoistic perspective

4:12

if you want to maximize your

4:14

self-interest then

4:16

be honest now that seems fine since in

4:19

most cases people

4:21

do want to maximize their self-interest

4:26

and so uh they have plenty of good

4:28

reasons to act honestly

4:31

but of course the problem arises when

4:33

you can

4:34

if you can equally endorse the claim

4:36

that

4:37

if you want to maximize self-interest in

4:40

cases

4:40

in which you can get away with it then

4:43

don't be honest

4:45

S ee if you can get away with it not

4:47

being honest and it maximizes

4:49

self-interest

4:50

then you have a good reason to not be

4:52

honest

4:53

so the upshot of all of this is since

4:57

if you're honest since you're honest

4:59

because it's in your self-interest

5:02

then you can always opt out of it when

5:04

it's not in your self-interest

5:07

so once again what we then see is

5:10

that once we understand what a

5:13

hypothetical imperative

5:15

is then we can see why can't things that

5:17

it cannot be the type of command

5:20

morality is interested in because

5:23

whether or not one

5:24

obeys these commands depends entirely

5:27

or solely on the end that you happen to

5:30

desire

5:32

again only deals with the kind of good

5:34

or action that you might want to pursue

5:37

under certain circumstances

5:39

in other words in const terms we're

5:41

dealing with a

5:42

qualified good so another word of

5:45

putting it is that we associate the

5:48

hypothetical imperative with the

5:50

qualified good

5:51

if something is a qualified good a good

5:54

under certain conditions

5:56

you want to pursue them under those

5:58

conditions so a qualified good

6:00

and the hypothetical imperative sort of

6:04

go hand in hand and

6:07

as i've already mentioned hypothetical

6:09

imperatives

6:10

appear as a means to an end therefore

6:13

hypothetical imperatives according to

6:16

kant cannot generate moral

6:18

duties morality for kant is not a means

6:21

to an

6:22

end now let's contrast that

6:25

this with categorical imperatives

6:31

categorical imperatives on the other

6:33

hand

6:34

has the form of simply do this

6:37

whether or not you want something is not

6:40

at issue here

6:41

one just has to obey the command and

6:43

that's what categorical means here

6:45

that it should be followed without

6:48

option

6:49

without exception sorry they tell you

6:52

what you must

6:53

They tell you what you ought to do no matter what

6:57

so they take the form such as 2x

7:00

don't do y don't lie don't steal

7:04

and so on uh give charity and so on

7:09

so a categorical imperative unlike the

7:11

hypothetical imperative doesn't have an

7:13

if clause

7:13

in there it is a simply do or do not a

7:17

command

7:18

no qualifications about what you're

7:19

supposed to be

7:21

when you're supposed to be doing this

7:22

under what conditions and so on

7:25

rather something you can you do no

7:28

matter

7:28

what so here we have a tool

7:32

that uh kant is getting at in his

7:35

efforts to identify

7:37

a moral law a categorical by definition

7:41

means the commands are

7:42

absolute and without qualification so in

7:45

other words

7:46

again once again in contrast to the

7:49

hypothetical imperative which we

7:50

associated with the qualified good

7:53

in the case of categorical imperative we

7:56

can associate it

7:57

with good without qualification

8:02

so whereas a hypothetical imperative

8:04

tells you what you ought to do under

8:06

certain conditions

8:07

a categorical imperative tells you what

8:10

you ought to be doing no matter what

8:14

so the categorical categorical

8:16

imperative

8:17

is independent of your goals your

8:19

desires

8:20

circumstances or anything particular

8:23

about you they apply universally and

8:26

they apply

8:27

as unqualified good as i just mentioned

8:30

so in other words a categorical

8:33

imperative in this context you're

8:36

pursuing that unqualified good or the

8:39

good

8:39

without qualification and

8:42

we have already seen according to kant

8:45

there is only one

8:46

and only one unqualified good namely

8:49

having a good will so there is only one

8:53

categorical imperative possible you

8:55

ought to have

8:56

a good will khan doesn't quite express

9:00

it in these terms but that's the basic

9:02

idea

9:03

that ties all of these formulations

9:05

together

9:06

and links the goodwill to the

9:08

categorical imperative which will now

9:10

take us to

9:11

the concept of moral law there's only

9:14

one thing that is always good no matter

9:17

what

9:18

and that is having a good will

9:22

you know and so what does that mean

9:24

firstly a good will

9:26

acts only on the basis of universal

9:29

considerations we have also seen this

9:31

already

9:34

in other words so in other words in

9:37

effect saying that

9:38

always act on the basis of universal

9:41

considerations

9:43

not your particular subjective

9:45

determinants

9:46

you ought to rather act on the basis of

9:49

general

9:50

or universal principles

9:55

and as we'll now see from here only

9:59

categorical imperative could therefore

10:01

capture

10:02

this concept of moral law if there were

10:05

a moral law which produced duties that

10:08

we have

10:09

that law would have to be categorical in

10:12

nature

10:13

it's unconditional it's a good without

10:16

qualification

10:18

it's closely linked to having a

10:2 1

good will and because can't views

10:23

morality as laws

10:25

which are similar to logic

10:28

and mathematics as we'll see

10:32

we cannot admit any exceptions based on

10:36

what we may or may not want based on any

10:38

conditions and so on

10:40

so no exceptions uh in this context

10:44

the moral law uh for example determines

10:47

that we have a duty

10:48

to be honest or rather if the moral law

10:52

determines that we have a duty to be

10:54

honest

10:55

then honesty is required in all cases

10:58

even if we don't want to be honest even

11:01

if it goes against our

11:03

self-interest or is inconvenient or even

11:06

seems foolish

11:07

it's nonetheless required the reason

11:11

khan thinks this is because he thinks

11:14

moral rules are categorical

11:17

in nature

11:20

and it's accepts admits no exceptions

11:23

and it's binding on

11:24

all rational creatures regardless of

11:27

their wants and desires as

11:28

i've just pointed out

All

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SECOND:

now once again moral law must be must take the form of a categorical imperative

0:09

it must be universally binding in every case it must be a law that all rational

0:15

beings acknowledge as being worthy of respect

0:20

now let me stop here for a second and link this to the the question

0:27

of exception the reason khan thinks that there can be no exception or the

0:33

reason he thinks moral rules are categorical in nature is they don't admit exceptions in the same way

0:41

a mathematical statement let's say 2 plus 2 equals 4 doesn't admit exceptions even in cases

0:49

where it inconveniences you i mean you can try convincing a shopkeeper to accept

0:54

you know just once that two plus two equals three because you only have three takas rather

1:01

than four takas you know that's not going to get you very far so same thing he will argue applies

1:09

say in the case of say a murder or trying to commit a murder

1:15

if the moral law is that we have a duty not to murder or not to kill someone then it doesn't

1:21

matter whether killing someone is convenient for us or furthers our goals and so on

1:27

so according to khan the moral law is binding on all persons just like laws of gravity

1:34

just like one cannot exempt oneself from gravitational pull neither can they exempt themselves from

1:42

moral rules count is saying you might think it does not apply to you

1:48

but that is then just irrational just it would as it would be rational to deny gravity

1:55

so it's universal in nature any rational person can verify for themselves that morality that moral

2:04

law is there and that it is true simply by reasoning about it in an appropriate way same way we reason

2:12

through mathematical problems we can't imagine scenarios where something like two plus

2:19

two would not hold and kant is trying to make similarly a

2:24

strong argument about a moral laws

2:31

so so far we have seen then kant is giving us an argument that if there were

2:36

to be a moral law if there's such a thing as a moral law it would have to be

2:44

categorical in nature let's think about this in another way or think about

2:50

making an exception in a different way

2:56

you know we can ask what would be the basis or the true nature of immorality then in this context

3:02

is it people acting according to wrong rules can't would say no it is people acting according to the

3:09

right rules but making an exception for themselves that in this framework is more immorality

3:18

one can sort of safely assume that a thief or a murderer doesn't want to be wrong the same way

3:25

they might go about wronging others stealing their things or killing someone in other words kant says that these

3:32

persons a thief or a murderer are not consistently and constantly

3:37

living under the rule and not to kill not to steal and so on

3:43

because on the one on the one hand they wouldn't like it done to themselves but they're then

3:49

making an exception for themselves when they're going and committing these acts so therefore

3:56

knowing the rules they make an exception for themselves and can't use this as a great temptation

4:03

to always try to make an exception of ourselves but according to khan a moral person

4:09

doesn't do this and there is a test for this that

4:14

he takes us through basically this test allows us to identify the

4:22

content of this moral law and let's start with the first moral law that he sets up the

4:27

categorical imperative the the first formulation of this categorical imperative

4:34

and we can see what the content of this categorical imperative is in order to understand his idea of this

4:41

law act only on that maxim whereby you can at the same time will

4:48

that it should become a universal law what does it mean by this

4:56

now when we when he uses the term maxim he's basically referring to

5:03

certain policy or certain guidelines that describe what one is doing when i'm acting in a

5:10

certain manner i'm acting according to some maxim a maxim is simply

5:16

something like a description or explanation of what the person is doing in such a way that the person would

5:23

approve of it when i'm doing something i want i'm doing it according to some

5:29

spoken or unspoken rule and i would want to be able to

5:35

approve of this rule by which i am acting and by investigating whether this rule

5:41

is a contradictory rule or not we can start getting at a sense of how

5:46

we might justify our action so this is where we start a maxim

5:52

a personal policy or guideline that describes what one is doing and the categorical imperative relies on

6:01

maxims and so one must first formulate the maxim that describes one's action

6:11

and then the second from there one must go and

6:18

one must then ask what the world would be like if the maxim or the guide or the principle

6:24

by which i am acting was a universal law that everyone had to obey and then the third

6:32

step is then to ask is there a contradiction if there is a contradiction then the

6:38

maxim is immoral see this is we will go through numerous

6:44

examples where we'll work through uh these um steps you know once again

6:52

uh the the this is sort of the moral test the underlying our actions the first

6:58

thing we do is identify the maxim why am i doing this what is my reason for doing this

7:05

action what is the sub most importantly what is the subjective principle for this action and once you've

7:13

identified that principle then the second step you ask is could everybody act

7:18

on the basis of this maxim and then the third step becomes if they

7:24

could all act on the basis of this maxim could i will it to be

7:30

a universal law in other words would it be without a contradiction because if it is with a

7:35

contradiction or if a contradiction gets identified

7:40

then if the maxim is immoral and it cannot stand in for a universal law

7:49

now can't things if one understands fully what this test moral test means

7:56

and reflects on it then one will see that this is the kind of rule

8:01

which every person ought to obey namely that their actions should be

8:08

non-self-contradictory they should be consistent and the reasoning is really by way of

8:16

uh an analog the way we think in logic you know in terms of contradictions you

8:23

know let's just think of a sort of general pattern of logical reasoning let's take a silver

8:32

all men are mortal socrates is a man

8:39

so socrates is mortal now this is exemplified symbolically

8:45

by the form in syllogistic logic all a's are b s is an a therefore s

8:52

is a b if we just reason about this form we see that anything we put in place of

9:00

a b and s we still get something which is true or truth preserving in other words

9:06

it avoids a contradiction and god wants to argue that something very similar is working here

9:14

that there's sort of a syllogistic logic at work here also we have a sort of

9:20

major premise and then a minor premise and then we can derive a sort of truth-preserving uh consistent

9:29

uh conclusion from it it avoids a contradiction and his argument is that something

9:35

similar is happening in the case of a categorical imperative as well that when we reflect on the rule one

9:41

sees that non-contradiction is guiding one's reasoning process this

9:46

is the key aspect here is that the principle by which i am acting

9:52

if that were to become the law everyone had to obey does that produce consistency or does it

10:00

lead to contradiction if my proposed course of action were to suddenly become the law everyone

10:08

has to obey it or do it what would be the case would there be a contradiction in the case

10:13

if there is a contradiction then that action is immoral

10:20

so what we start seeing here again then is a sort of very close link since i

10:25

mentioned this logic of reasoning very close link between moral law and rationality here you know to

10:32

emphasize the main point again the reason why you have to respect the law

10:38

the reason why one has to respect the law if we fully understand it is because

10:45

it does embody for kant the very concept of rational action that's why we have to respect the law

10:54

in other words the idea that human beings act for reasons whereas other beings don't kant is

11:02

impressed by this basic idea it's central to his formulation that human beings act for

11:08

certain reasons and every object in the world obeys rules but

11:14

only human beings get to pick or choose which rules they obey it's not so much

11:20

like i get to pick the laws of gravity but i do get to choose whether to obey

11:26

traffic laws or to tell the truth or to follow other rules and laws

11:32

human beings choose the laws which they obey so in recognizing we ought to obey moral

11:38

law we are expressing for khan the very concept of the freedom of the will in other words of real

11:47

free autonomous actions which means acting on the basis of our own reason

11:53

and our own logic rather than being some other external factor determining

11:59

my behavior so in other words recognizing that moral law is that which ought to

12:05

guide my behavior so you can close you can see how kant closely links

12:11

morality autonomy freedom and rationality all together animals

12:17

can't do that you know it is reason that allows human beings to grasp moral laws to grasp laws

12:25

of gravitation laws of logics or mathematics so similarly it is reason that allows us

12:33

not only to understand rules and truths of mathematics but also of morality

12:42

again what is being developed here we see is a sort of very complex

12:49

argument um that the foundation of morality

12:54

is reason in the real sense that you find it in the in uh logical reasoning

13:02

in terms of as i mentioned earlier in terms of detecting contradictions

13:19

okay sorry about that let me stop here

13:25

now before we examine some of khan's examples of the categorical imperative at work

13:34

let's uh go through some of these tests uh the steps of this moral test are once

13:40

more in a little more detail and before we do that

13:45

let me once again sort of emphasize this close relationship that we have

13:52

already noticed that's been developed between duty and goodwill and rationality

13:58

indeed as khan puts it the only thing that can command the respect of a rational person

14:05

is this concept of a universally binding moral law the moral law has to be something which

14:11

every person would accept something which rational persons are impressed by or awed by

14:19

which they recognize just by reasoning that it is something valuable and

14:26

that this universally binding moral law commands us to do these actions

14:34

and what kind of thing would this uh uh thing be that impresses all

14:41

rational beings all rational beings regardless of their circumstances would

14:46

accept it and let it guide their actions according to current there's only one thing that

14:54

would do it which is a universally binding moral law or rule well let's formulate it this way

15:01

kant says of course this has something to do with actions but not particular actions if you have already noticed

15:08

only the concept of action only the command that one ought to act in such a way that one's

15:15

actions could be done by all other persons without contradiction

15:20

so once again this maxim that he has act only sorry this uh categorical imperative

15:27

this formulation that he has act only on that maxim whereby you can

15:32

at the same time will that it should become universal law this is the first

15:39

formulation of the categorical imperative later on uh in this lecture we'll see that he has

15:46

three other formulations in total four formulations of the categorical imperative

15:51

but there is only one categorical imperative he's just finding four different ways of

15:56

expressing it we'll just look at this one primarily and

16:02

touch on a second one towards the end so this formula so the formulation we

16:08

are focusing on is this formula of natural law or the formula of universal law act only on that maxim

16:18

that you can at the same time will then it should become a universal law you can translate it in

16:25

different ways you can act only on the maxim that you will it to become universal or act as if everybody

16:32

would act on the basis of your maxim or you can put it negatively don't make

16:38

an exception of yourself let's once again reiterate these steps

16:44

first is in the in in formulating this universal law the first step

16:50

is formulating a maxim that describes your action

16:55

what is a maxim that you would will into universal law according to kant once again maxim is

17:02

something like a description of ex or explanation of what the person is doing

17:08

if you have for example and a person is doing in a way that one can ask whether one

17:14

can approve of that action for example if you're asked a question of you know someone let's say

17:23

if you're asked question of whether someone looks in a nice or not in a new pair of jeans

17:29

and you say what you know to be false that they don't look particularly either that maybe the jeans

17:36

are too tight or not fitting very well or something the pants are not fitting very well

17:41

but you don't quite want to say that so you say what you know to be false and then and then you say that oh they

17:48

look very nice in those pants or in the in those in those clothes you know in other words then we can say

17:54

that the maxim you endorsed endorsed here is when asked awkward

18:00

questions it is appropriate to lie in order to save that person's feelings

18:05

or in order to avoid confrontation you know this could be sort of a little policy you have you

18:12

know something that you do without necessarily thinking about it so that's what a maxim is

18:17

you know but if someone asks so you think that it is okay to lie to avoid

18:22

trouble you'd reply yes so that would be like a maxim guiding your action when i know

18:29

that like if i gave a response that could lead to the other person's feelings being

18:35

hurt or other person getting upset with me i find it

18:40

okay to lie to avoid that trouble so this is like a maxim guiding your action just to give you an example

18:47

so maxim is just the thing a person would uh ascend to as a description a general

18:53

explanation of what it is that you are doing so and categorical imperatives

19:01

work on such maxims now so we do need to have this kind of description or

19:06

explanation of what we are generally doing because that's going to be the first step

19:12

is trying to figure out what it is that we are doing and derive some kind of a personal rule

19:18

or policy out of that which then we want to see if that can be applied universally

19:26

so that takes us to the second step so then you're in effect asking what

19:32

would be the world like if every followed everyone followed this maxim of mind that

19:38

of mine that i have in my mind let's say what would the world be like if

19:43

everybody followed the rule that to lie in an awkward situation

19:48

this is what it means to universalize that maxim what would it be like if everyone

19:54

everybody thought it was okay to lie in an awkward situation would there be some kind of a problem arising with it

20:01

from this in particular when thinking about these uh possible scenarios

20:06

uh where you maximize your maxim as a universal law of nature think about it this way that people

20:13

don't have a choice but to act in the way that your maxim that guideline that you had that in an

20:20

awkward situation is better i lie that everyone would have to obey that

20:25

then the question would be in such a world where everybody acted in that way

20:31

what would happen so this is sort of the second step imagine a world where your maxim is now

20:38

an absolute law without exception that everybody has to obey

20:43

so then we go to the third step which is evaluating for or assessing

20:49

uh for contradictions of course everyone would be lying

20:55

kant is not interested strictly speaking in the consequences of the action remember that

21:01

we're not dealing with a consequentialist here rather he's interested in whether or not there's a contradiction

21:07

in the world we're imagining if we detect some kind of contradiction

21:13

in the first instance then right away we know that this action we're describing is

21:19

immoral let's take some commonplace examples injunctions against lying and

21:27

stealing in this uh framework and see um what we come up with let's apply the

21:35

categorical imperative and see if we end up with the

21:40

contradictions in fact before getting into the now

21:45

let's let me let me move there so so when we think of the world where people lie in order to promote something

21:52

they think is good can't would argue there is also a contradiction namely that a person wouldn't be able to

22:00

lie in such a world truth becomes meaningless why is that because if you have said

22:07

that a lying is if the maxim you have is that i lie in certain situations to

22:14

get what i want now that maxim

22:20

that i lie to get what i want now becomes universalized that everyone acts in that manner

22:27

then everyone would be lying in order to get what they wanted

22:35

then in such a world truth would become meaningless lying crucially depends in order for

22:41

someone's light to be successfully believed lying crucially depends on other people

22:47

accepting what you say as true but in a world where everyone is lying

22:52

for whatever reason nobody would ever accept anything anyone says as true this is the sort of

22:59

contradiction kant is trying to aim at showing us that if the maxim of your action is

23:06

that i like to get my way and then you universalize that maxim such that

23:12

everyone is now uh acting in that uh according to that law

23:20

that it is an absolute law now that we lie to get our own way in that context

23:27

uh kant is arguing truth and lies wouldn't make any sense at all because lying

23:33

depends if if your lies to be successful you need to be believed but in a world

23:39

where everyone is lying for different reasons whatever reasons no one would ever believe

23:45

anything anyone says as true so the very thing you're thinking of doing lying in

23:53

order to uh let's say in this case avoid conflict would be impossible where

23:59

everyone was following the rule you're following or if you think what

24:05

you're doing is lying in order for people to believe it would no longer be believed so lies

24:12

and truths would not make any sense so just by lying once you universalize it

24:17

you put the you know you created a world in which it is contradictory to lie

24:22

because no one would you know believe you anymore truth and lie wouldn't make any sense let me give you another example should i

24:30

steal something that i want what do i do you know let's say i need uh

24:38

some um a pen and i see a pen uh you know sitting on a

24:45

desk and i decide to take the pen so someone asks you so do you think it's okay to take the pen

24:51

when you need it and you say yes uh i take the pen when i so

24:58

when i need it so again first let's identify the maxim why are you doing it

25:04

what is your reason what is the subjective principle for the action what is my maximum it could be as simple

25:10

maxim as steel take what you want now let's try to second step

25:16

universalize it could that be a universal law would everyone go around stealing from

25:23

everyone else khan's answer is no can't in fact makes a very inventive argument he's not

25:30

talking about consequences or anything he argues that in a world where everyone

25:35

steals from everyone no one would ever own anything anymore there would be no such thing as property

25:42

so there would be nothing you could steal because no one would own anything

25:48

because the rule would be just take what you want so it would be impossible according to

25:55

khan to have a world where everybody honoring the principle steal what you want

26:03

that itself wouldn't hold ground because such a world would be one where

26:10

no one owned anything there would be no property so in other words stealing would be

26:16

impossible so khan concludes that stealing is unjust so according to

26:23

khan therefore imagining that everyone acted this way

26:29

that you choose to act in effect shows you that the thing you're doing is contradictory

26:34

and therefore irrational you know when you're lying once you turn that into a universal rule

26:41

that everyone can lie to get what they want or when you're stealing and you turn that into a universal rule

26:49

that everyone can steal to get what they want in the process what you do is making

26:57

make both lying and truth telling both meaningless because if you lied no one would believe

27:02

you anymore because everyone lies similarly if you were stealing and you

27:08

just took whatever you wanted and everyone just took whatever they wanted there would be no such thing as property

27:14

anywhere so there would be no such thing as stealing you can't steal something if somebody

27:20

else doesn't own it everyone would be just taking what they're taking so this is what kant is basically

27:27

getting at that if you imagine that everyone acted this way that you choose to act

27:33

in effect that shows you what you're doing is contradictory and therefore irrational and as a

27:39

rational being you cannot endorse the world be contradictory in nature like this so when you're

27:46

suggesting that there is this universal moral law that it is okay to say lie

27:54

but this results in something that is contradictory and so you cannot endorse it as a

28:00

rational being now you cannot endorse telling a lie even when you think it is going to benefit you because then

28:07

you'll end up in a situation where truth and lies don't make any sense anymore

28:13

and khan talks about this in in many places you know in many ways this is sort of

28:18

the main thrust of his argument that when you're about to do something when you're about

28:24

to violate one of your duties like lie by lying or by stealing you

28:29

sort of think if you're honest with yourself well i don't think everyone should act this way

28:35

but in this particular case it is okay for me to do so and that's why i can't discussing you

28:41

it's like no you cannot make an exception of yourself you have to assume that if you doing it

28:47

everyone should act that way then you have to ask what would be the consequences

28:53

you know that we all try to we all do know understand and expect everyone

29:01

to follow this universal rule but we're just trying to make an exception for ourselves that's what he's

29:06

getting at no person who steals steals thinks stealing is good

29:12

or that everyone should steal rather what the thief thinks is that in this case in his particular

29:19

case of his particular circumstances merrick that he's still

29:26

so it uh in both virtue ethics and inconsequentialist argument we have seen that circumstances

29:34

may merit that i should steal that's what a sort of no rule absolutely

29:42

non-absolute is like aristotle would say if the virtuous decides or comes to

29:47

conclusion that in this particular case stealing is something that should be done then that is okay

29:55

if the conclusion is that lying is good in this instance for example to save a life

30:01

you know then lying is the good action one that the virtuous performs or we

30:08

could apply the consequentialist arguments we saw last week that stealing or lying is good if it

30:14

leads to good outcomes we saw that both with the murderer at the door

30:19

that a murderer has come to kill your friend and you lie and tell them no the friend is

30:25

not there uh so the consequences would say that's a good action there

30:30

even though you lied because it produced a good consequence can't would thoroughly disagree with

30:36

that he says no you cannot lie in this context so kantian formula can produce

30:41

counter-intuitive arguments where you're not lying to the murderer so the murderer can get in there and kill your friend for example

30:49

but can't do strongly so you know they can't is strongly arguing against these

30:54

kinds of exceptions or circumstances you know he's strongly disagreeing there

30:59

he says it cannot be right that in some cases lying is good and in some cases it's bad this is

31:06

because moral commands don't admit these kinds of exceptions

31:11

which is because once you apply that maxim of lying to everybody else you know you find

31:18

yourself in a world where everybody is lying that were in that world you find yourself in a world of contradictions

31:24

what truth and lies don't make sense anymore similarly with stealing with stealing and property don't either

31:31

have any meaning anymore if somebody no one can own anything then there can be no such thing as

31:37

stealing so this in other words basically kant is

31:43

saying is that these things are universal in nature

31:49

they can have no exceptions and it is irrational fundamentally to say that my moral laws have

31:56

exceptions because none of them have exceptions as soon as you

32:02

uh generalize them or universalize them so finally then uh just say uh

32:10

one last word before we return to the examples is let's say a couple of words about the

32:16

nature of these contradictions one we have seen if there's a contradiction in the world then the maxim is moral

32:24

for example with the stealing the stealing leads to everybody then being able to steal

32:31

and it leads to there being no more property no one owns anything

32:36

and therefore there is no stealing stealing doesn't make sense so that's a contradiction so that maxim is moral but there's also

32:44

another context where we see that there isn't a contradiction you

32:49

know if there isn't a contradiction then we still must ask the second question would we want to live in such a world

32:56

and if we see that we cannot or we would not want to live in this such a world then also the maxim can be

33:03

immoral so there's two ways the maxim that you have taken as the guide for your action

33:09

can be immoral first is it leads to a contradiction second is it doesn't lead to a

33:15

contradiction but it leads to a world that one a rational being would not want

33:20

to live in and related to those two

33:26

types of contradictions are two different types of duties or rather the two different ways

33:32

of arriving at these contradictions give rise to two different kinds of duties perfect duties ones that i must always

33:40

do and imperfect duties are ones that i may choose how and when to do

All

Recently uploaded

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THIRD:

now let's turn to some of khan's own

0:02

examples of

0:04

how the categorical imperative would

0:06

work

0:07

he gives us four examples two examples

0:10

of

0:11

what he refers to as perfect obligation

0:14

or perfect duty

0:16

keeping one's promises or

0:19

rather another way to put that would be

0:22

not making false promises

0:24

and the second perfect duty is not

0:26

taking

0:27

one's own life in both these cases he

0:30

will show

0:31

that uh making a false promise or

0:34

taking one's own life leads to a

0:37

contradiction

0:38

in the world and therefore these skilled

0:40

actions cannot be

0:42

a maxim that can be universalized for

0:45

all

0:46

the other two examples are of imperfect

0:48

duties

0:49

uh helping others giving charity uh

0:52

developing one's own talents and

0:55

abilities

0:56

in these cases he'll show that if you

0:58

were not to help others if you were not

1:00

to devour or if you were not to develop

1:02

your own capabilities doesn't

1:05

necessarily

1:06

lead to a contradiction but raises the

1:09

question of whether you'd want to live

1:10

in a world like that

1:12

where no one helps each other or no one

1:14

seeks to develop their innate talents

1:16

and so on

1:17

here you'll get not a contradiction in

1:19

the world a world can exist with such

1:22

actions but it leads to a contradiction

1:25

of will has

1:26

as he'll put it so let's start first

1:28

with the

1:29

example of keeping uh one's promises

1:33

or as i mentioned uh not making a false

1:36

promise

1:38

let's take this example up here uh

1:40

suppose you need money

1:41

and you go to a friend to borrow it she

1:44

agrees to loan you

1:45

that money as long as you promise to

1:48

repay it by the end of the month

1:49

she's going to need that money to pay

1:51

her next month's bills

1:53

her rent and so on she has put this

1:56

money aside solely for that purpose she

1:58

doesn't have

1:59

other money she could use for that so

2:01

yet she's willing to loan you this money

2:04

as long as you promise to pay it back by

2:06

the end of the month

2:07

so that she can meet her own obligations

2:10

now suppose you already know that

2:13

there's just no way

2:15

you can pay this money back by the end

2:17

of the month that you'll have some money

2:18

coming but it'll maybe take a month and

2:20

a half to come

2:21

or it certainly won't be there by this

2:23

time

2:25

yet you decide to tell your friend that

2:28

you'll pay her back by the end of the

2:30

month

2:31

because you really need the money and

2:32

she's not going to loan it to you

2:34

if you cannot make that promise to pay

2:36

it by the end of the month

2:39

so the only way you can get your friend

2:41

to loan you this money is if you make

2:43

this false promise

2:44

to repay it on time even when you know

2:49

even when

2:51

excuse me even when you know that you

2:53

cannot do so

2:55

so let's uh let's try to apply the

2:58

categorical imperative here

3:00

so first again let's formulate a maxim

3:03

based on

3:04

your action and you're thinking behind

3:06

that action

3:08

so what is the maxim in this case when i

3:10

need money

3:11

i will borrow it and promise to repay it

3:14

back

3:14

even though i know i cannot do so you

3:18

think that is okay

3:19

so now let's see if that would apply to

3:21

everybody so let's now

3:23

take the second step which is the next

3:26

thing you do is you universalize this

3:29

maxim

3:30

you know what if everybody went around

3:33

making promises

3:34

that they did not intend to keep

3:37

remember now you're turning this into a

3:38

universal law

3:40

what that everyone would have to obey or

3:43

must obey

3:45

in other words there everyone would go

3:46

around making promises

3:48

that they don't intend to keep

3:51

now would there be a contradiction would

3:54

there be a contradiction in such a world

3:57

khan thinks absolutely yes there would

3:59

be a contradiction

4:00

why because in this world it is now a

4:03

law

4:04

that people promise to do things that

4:06

they never intend to do

4:08

so every promise that is made is one

4:12

that the person doesn't intend to honor

4:15

so is that a world or a scenario in

4:18

which people can ever make promises

4:21

no there cannot be any promising in a

4:23

world khan says

4:24

what people don't really think you're

4:27

promising

4:28

that no you're going to break the

4:29

promise remember this is the rule in the

4:31

world now just like we saw

4:33

with stealing and lying once you

4:35

universalize it

4:37

so you know think about uh maybe an

4:39

example

4:40

from our ordinary world

4:44

let's say you keep writing checks

4:47

from your bank account and you don't

4:50

have any money

4:51

in the bank and you keep writing these

4:54

checks

4:55

all over the place these checks keep

4:57

bouncing every time the people you have

4:58

written the check to

5:00

you the finance accounts office you've

5:03

gone and paid your

5:04

tuition with the check and you know

5:06

there's no money in your bank

5:08

so they go to cash that check in the

5:10

bank and they don't get any

5:12

money so what would happen no one would

5:15

take a check from you again

5:17

they don't believe you have that money

5:19

and the checks

5:22

that you're signing wouldn't be worth

5:24

anything because the checks only work if

5:26

they believe you

5:28

so similarly if you're saying i promise

5:30

to do something

5:31

only works if people generally believe

5:34

each other's promises

5:36

and generally believe that promises are

5:39

kept in fact that is the

5:40

you know that is the idea behind of a

5:43

promise

5:44

once people realize that there is

5:46

nothing to it

5:48

you know that you know you know you or

5:51

now it's a universal law

5:53

um that nobody uh keeps their promises

5:57

promises that then just become cheap and

5:59

meaningless

6:00

uh statements in other words it's only

6:03

believed if they're honored

6:06

and if only if if it's only honored

6:09

then promising can continue if people

6:12

believe that that promise will be

6:13

honored

6:14

and so on so in a world where your maxim

6:18

of making false promise has been

6:20

universalized

6:22

where people now make promises that they

6:24

never intend to keep

6:26

as a matter of rule the very thing you

6:28

were trying to do

6:30

which was make promises false promise

6:32

for benefit you needed that money

6:35

remember so now that would become

6:37

impossible to do

6:39

if it was a world where no one kept

6:41

there kept their promises

6:42

and you went and asked your friend for

6:44

some money and you tell her i promised

6:46

you

6:47

pay it back by the end of the month but

6:49

you know she is living in a world where

6:50

nobody keeps their promises

6:52

your promise wouldn't be worth anything

6:55

so no one can then really go around

6:58

promising in this

6:59

world where false promises is the

7:02

universal law because no one believes

7:05

they can be promising the way it is

7:06

described

7:07

in other words promises are meant to be

7:10

honored

7:11

so khan says there's a contradiction

7:13

here

7:14

and therefore uh to care make these uh

7:18

false promises or to make a promise and

7:21

not

7:21

keep it is irrational because you all

7:24

you're doing is once you're maximizing

7:26

you're creating a contradiction where

7:28

promises don't mean

7:30

anything so it's irrational to make

7:33

false promises

7:34

and therefore it's immoral

7:41

now let's turn to a case of an

7:44

imperfect obligation let's say a case

7:48

of helping others or giving charity

7:52

here let's uh take an

7:57

you know example uh take a person who

8:00

thinks

8:01

you know i've got it pretty well made

8:03

i'm quite

8:04

well-off i'm you know wealthy i could

8:07

help others

8:08

but should i i won't take anything from

8:11

anybody

8:12

nor end with them but neither do i want

8:14

to contribute to someone else's welfare

8:17

so someone who feels that they're in a

8:19

position to help others

8:21

but chooses not to help them

8:24

now what happens in this case when we

8:26

apply the categorical imperative

8:29

once again let's try the first part of

8:31

the test let's identify the maxim

8:34

i'm going to only look after myself

8:38

leave others to look after themselves

8:40

and not going to help them

8:42

or you can frame it also as a as the way

8:45

i have it up there

8:46

when i'm in a position to help others

8:48

i'm not going to help them

8:50

now let's move to the second part of the

8:53

text

8:54

if this were a universal law

8:57

is that something that could be followed

8:59

universally

9:01

kant actually says yes the human

9:04

race may you know well survive

9:07

in a state where everybody sort of

9:11

keeps to themselves doesn't help others

9:15

you know keeps what they can betrays you

9:18

know

9:18

others from helping them and so on in

9:21

short khan says that you could have a

9:23

world where everyone acts

9:25

selfishly focuses on their own

9:28

self-interest so uh

9:32

rather than you know talk you know

9:34

having sympathy

9:35

good will caring for others instead

9:38

everyone just lives for their own selves

9:40

and their own self-interest

9:43

now so you know there is no

9:47

contradiction here you could imagine a

9:48

world in fact we have seen

9:50

scholars who imagine a world where

9:53

everybody acts on the basis

9:54

of their own self-interest you know

9:58

but then for question that comes up for

10:01

them

10:01

comes up for khan is that but would we

10:04

want to live in a world

10:06

such as this where no one

10:09

helps anyone else

10:12

and in fact he would say no

10:16

it would be impossible for us to will or

10:18

choose

10:19

or decide to live in a world like this

10:22

because we all need that to live in a

10:26

world where nobody helps each other

10:28

nobody has sympathy for each other and

10:30

so on

10:32

we all need love and sympathy of others

10:35

there may have come a time where we all

10:38

need help from

10:39

each other and so on you know so you

10:42

don't get a contradiction in the world

10:44

insofar as the world is not going to

10:46

fall apart

10:46

if everybody is not helping each other

10:49

and so on

10:50

everybody is just being self-interested

10:52

but

10:53

you wouldn't want to live in a world

10:55

where nobody helps each other

10:56

we all need a love and help and sympathy

11:00

of others so here khan calls this

11:03

not a contradiction in the action but a

11:06

contradiction

11:07

in our will in what we decide

11:11

because we'll see that yes i could live

11:14

this way

11:14

the world might even survive in this way

11:17

but would i want to live in a world like

11:19

this

11:20

when no one helps one another you know

11:22

where if i ever need

11:24

help love or sympathy from others that

11:27

i'm not going to get it

11:29

and he says no we wouldn't choose to

11:30

live in such a world

11:32

so here he's arguing that we therefore

11:34

have an imperfect duty

11:36

to help others imperfect again once

11:39

again in the sense

11:40

that if we didn't carry out this duty

11:43

we're not getting a contradiction

11:45

in the actions and so on but nonetheless

11:48

we have a duty to

11:49

help others because otherwise it creates

11:51

a type of world

11:52

which we wouldn't want to live in now

11:55

let's take

11:56

another example of such an imperfect

11:58

obligation

11:59

this time to one's own self

12:06

okay then another case of imperfect duty

12:09

suppose uh you have some amazing talent

12:13

you're a great you know you just buy

12:15

from a very young age you draw very well

12:18

or uh you just from a very young age

12:22

extremely proficient at mathematics

12:25

you can calculate things very well you

12:27

can put numbers together

12:29

uh and so on or you uh

12:33

have a sort of excellent talent from a

12:36

very young age you're an excellent

12:37

football player you can just dribble the

12:39

ball

12:40

off your feet do all sorts of tricks

12:42

with

12:43

this uh talent that you have

12:47

so you know so you could have any number

12:48

let's say a person has any number of

12:51

has a particular talent which if you

12:53

developed it

12:55

it could be useful to you and beneficial

12:57

to you

12:58

you would enhance your own capabilities

13:00

perhaps allow you to

13:02

perhaps use it as a means to attain some

13:05

other

13:06

ends uh maybe this

13:09

innate talent in mathematics already

13:11

gets noticed from a very

13:13

early young age etc and as you grow up

13:16

and you become more proficient in it

13:18

you get offered this amazing scholarship

13:21

to go off and study somewhere

13:23

and so on or you're an excellent sports

13:26

person

13:27

and you play a talent scout picks out of

13:31

this

13:33

young you know woman plays excellent

13:35

basketball

13:36

she's already so good at it so some team

13:39

calls you up or

13:40

you play excellent cricket and a talent

13:42

scout man

13:43

sees it informs some team and the teams

13:46

pick you up and they

13:47

train you in that then you can become

13:50

good

13:50

you can gain fame from it gain wealth

13:53

take care of your family take care of

13:55

members of your community

13:57

and so on so in other words you could

13:59

develop this talent

14:01

use in and use it in a number of ways

14:04

that beneficial that is beneficial to

14:06

you

14:06

and to others around you but let's say

14:09

you decide not to develop them

14:11

you just enjoy a good life just hanging

14:13

out

14:14

not doing anything lying around

14:17

indulging in pleasure

14:18

just being comfortable that you prefer

14:20

to just take it easy

14:22

not do anything enjoy pleasure and all

14:25

of that

14:25

rather than going through all this hard

14:28

work of training and dedication

14:31

uh even the pain of developing

14:34

certain natural capabilities that

14:36

requires hard work

14:37

that you have a innate talent to place a

14:39

musical instrument but then to become

14:41

really good at it

14:42

you have to practice five hours a day

14:45

you know

14:46

or you know you have to you know go to

14:49

school

14:49

and learn more and more math taking

14:51

classes with older kids and so on

14:54

you know instead of spending your time

14:55

just hanging about and playing

14:57

and or just lying around so once again

15:01

let's see what the uh maxim might look

15:05

like i have these natural talents or

15:07

abilities

15:08

but i choose to neglect developing them

15:12

that i'm neglecting my gifts and talents

15:16

now now let's see what uh

15:19

the world would look like if this were

15:22

to become

15:23

a universal law so what if everybody did

15:26

that what do it

15:27

everybody who has different talents

15:29

someone is good at this someone is good

15:30

at

15:31

cooking someone is good at uh

15:34

building things could grow up to be a

15:37

great architecture

15:38

or someone is just very good with

15:40

computers and so on

15:42

so wide range of talents that people

15:45

could pursue

15:46

and everyone decides not to do that

15:48

remember your maxim

15:49

is now being universalized into a law

15:52

that everybody

15:53

must obey so what would the world look

15:55

like where people have innate

15:57

capabilities

15:59

or talents or abilities that could be

16:01

developed through hard work

16:03

but they decide not to

16:06

now what would such a world look like

16:08

such a world could survive

16:10

no doubt you know uh and let's say

16:12

everyone lying around

16:14

uh slackers lying around in the beach

16:16

that could happen

16:17

people could do that the world won't

16:19

fall apart and so on

16:21

but would you want to live in such a

16:22

world once again the question

16:24

uh comes up you know there is no

16:26

contradiction in your action

16:28

you may decide not to develop your

16:30

talents and that becomes a law everyone

16:32

decides not to

16:34

develop their talents everyone just lies

16:36

around and being lazy

16:37

you can even think of situations you

16:40

know that might happen

16:41

but what would happen in such a world if

16:44

we all gave up

16:45

what we were doing to just lie around

16:47

and hang out

16:48

and not do anything life would become

16:51

purposeless

16:52

to begin with uh we could also have all

16:54

sorts of problems things might not get

16:56

produced things might just not might

16:59

might not get done because everyone's

17:01

not

17:02

bothered about developing the

17:04

capabilities of doing these different

17:06

things

17:07

we could run out of food suppose who's

17:09

going to go bring it

17:10

who's going to go grow the food and so

17:13

on you know

17:14

so in other words what he's basically

17:16

getting at is

17:17

as a rational person i

17:21

choose or decide or will that my

17:24

faculties or my talents that i have

17:27

should be developed after all they're

17:29

there to serve me

17:31

so if i'm a rational person i would

17:34

choose the means to attain my ends

17:36

and in this case my abilities are the

17:39

means that will allow you

17:40

allow me to attain my ends and i value

17:43

my abilities

17:45

and i value being able to take these

17:48

abilities or talents that i have and

17:50

using them

17:51

as a means to attain my ends and that's

17:54

exactly what talents are

17:56

as a rational being i necessarily value

18:00

my rationality i value my other talents

18:03

and so on in other words i value my

18:05

ability

18:06

to achieve my goals and ends using

18:10

whatever means are at my disposal

18:12

including mine

18:14

in a given capabilities and talents

18:17

so since a rational being is someone who

18:20

values

18:21

their own rationality and own and hear

18:24

rationality specifically referring to

18:27

values their abilities to take their

18:31

whatever means they have to attain their

18:33

goals including their capabilities and

18:35

all

18:36

this will would be contradicted then if

18:39

decided not to do it and no one did this

18:42

so once again he argues this

18:44

also shows that we have an imperfect

18:46

duty

18:47

to develop our talents imperfect because

18:50

if we didn't develop our talents

18:53

and it was universalized and no one did

18:56

the world is not going to be in a

18:57

contradiction it can go on

19:00

you know yet it would be a contradiction

19:03

in

19:04

will because we use whatever is at our

19:07

disposal including our

19:09

capabilities and talents and so on

19:13

as means to attain whatever goals we

19:15

have in life

19:17

so if we were not to do that we're sort

19:19

of failing

19:20

in that imperfect duty to our own self

19:24

so not a contradiction in the world as

19:27

such

19:28

but a contradiction in my will i'm not

19:30

doing what my rationality tells me i

19:33

should be doing

19:40

finally let's take this one last example

19:44

this moral command against taking

19:47

one's own life now this one

19:50

is a bit more controversial in terms of

19:54

how he goes about

19:55

explaining it kanta you know certainly

19:58

thinks

19:58

that we have a duty to preserve our own

20:01

life

20:02

and that taking our own life is

20:04

something immoral

20:06

and but what he wants to do i mean and i

20:09

should mention this

20:10

account was a deeply religious person

20:12

and as a christian

20:14

suicide is as immoral as it is in our

20:17

religion in islam

20:19

so but he is not trying to so in other

20:22

words in his religious perspective

20:24

he could argue that it's not up to us to

20:26

decide when we die

20:28

it's up to god so suicide is strictly

20:31

ruled out

20:33

however he is now trying to explain this

20:36

not from this religious perspective

20:38

which he does

20:40

subscribe to but he's trying to make the

20:42

argument of the categorical imperative

20:45

to show that this is

20:48

a produces a contradiction and that we

20:52

have a perfect obligation

20:54

to our own self not to take our own life

20:59

so let's see once again how he goes

21:02

about it

21:03

so he says suppose you consider a person

21:06

who wants to

21:08

take their own life because his own life

21:11

is so unbearable

21:12

that he doesn't want to continue to live

21:15

anymore

21:17

so is that it's he's so miserable that

21:20

he doesn't want to he wants to end this

21:22

pain or end this misery or end this

21:25

suffering

21:26

so he doesn't want to live anymore

21:29

so let's formulate the maxim again

21:32

that i choose to shorten my own life

21:35

from

21:36

my self my love for myself that i have

21:39

this miserable life

21:41

i'm miserable i'm in pain and so on

21:44

and because i love myself i don't want

21:47

to bear this pain

21:48

anymore etc i choose to shorten my life

21:53

so once again uh and i can't

21:57

imperative tells us let's try to

22:00

universalize this

22:01

maxim what would the world look like if

22:04

this

22:05

maxim were a law of nature

22:08

what would the world look like if you

22:11

know everyone

22:13

who found their life to be unbearable

22:16

would put an end to this life

22:21

what if everyone did this kill

22:23

themselves when their life became

22:25

miserable again remember he's not a

22:28

consequentialist he's not

22:29

interested in the consequences of this

22:32

you know which would be that the human

22:34

species would die off

22:35

you know if everyone went around doing

22:37

that but that's

22:39

not what his interest is here he's

22:41

interested in

22:42

getting at a moral law a duty against

22:46

taking one's life and uh so

22:49

we have this maxim that

22:53

i will take my own light used to shorten

22:55

my own life

22:57

out of this sense of self-love because

22:59

this life i'm living

23:01

in is just too miserable and too painful

23:04

for me

23:04

and i want to put myself out of that

23:06

pain put myself

23:08

out of that suffering and so on no

23:11

and then you universalize this maxim

23:14

what if everyone went around

23:15

uh killing themselves you know he's

23:19

is there a contradiction and once again

23:21

can't this is a perfect duty we are

23:23

talking about can't

23:24

uh things absolutely there's a

23:26

contradiction

23:28

because the uh reason

23:32

that you act to take your own life is

23:34

supposedly

23:36

you're saying is for self-love but khan

23:39

says

23:40

self-love is normally used to justify

23:43

preserving our life

23:46

why do we want to preserve our life why

23:49

do we want

23:50

uh now we could turn to a number of

23:52

theories we have seen now if you

23:54

remember

23:54

hobbes's uh uh

23:58

state of nature and the law of nature

24:01

that we

24:02

are human beings uh it's a law of nature

24:05

that we

24:05

preserve our lives and so on and here

24:08

he's saying

24:09

so the basic aim of life self-love

24:12

is the principle which leads us to

24:14

prolong our lives

24:16

it's self-love that leads us to

24:19

remove ourselves from harm's way

24:22

it's self-love that leads us to get go

24:25

get a treatment

24:26

if we're unwell it's self-love to take

24:29

care of our pain

24:30

if we feel it if i hurt myself and so on

24:34

and so he basically is arguing that

24:37

it's self-love that motivates us to act

24:40

in ways

24:41

to prolong our own life so if now

24:45

we want to use the same uh

24:48

logic you know that the normal purpose

24:51

of

24:51

self-love is life preserving but in this

24:55

case of suicide

24:56

the thing that is normally used to

24:58

preserve our life

25:00

the self-love is now being used to end

25:03

our life

25:04

so this raises a contradiction

25:08

in the purpose of a thing now this is

25:11

kind of a

25:12

if you recall kind of an aristotelian

25:14

argument

25:15

uh flow here floating in here coming in

25:18

being inserted here

25:20

remember aristotle we saw right at the

25:22

beginning

25:23

every act every being everything has

25:27

a purpose even human beings

25:31

that and the purpose of a human being is

25:34

to preserve

25:35

one's life out of self-love

25:37

self-interest whatever we want to call

25:39

it

25:40

we saw this in natural law theories also

25:42

with

25:43

hops that it is a law of nature that

25:46

human beings preserve their own lives

25:49

so now if we're using that same

25:51

self-love

25:52

to try to end our own life can't things

25:56

that leads to a contradiction

25:59

and therefore he argues that we have a

26:02

perfect he feels he has demonstrated

26:04

that we have a perfect duty

26:06

to preserve our own life

26:09

according to khan there are no

26:11

circumstances

26:12

under which taking one's life is

26:15

permissible

26:16

because it goes against the very basic

26:18

function

26:19

of human beings which is to preserve

26:21

their own lives

26:23

so on so he's brought in a couple of

26:25

other arguments law of nature type of

26:27

argument

26:28

to preserve one's life this function

26:31

argument

26:32

from aristotle and so on that are

26:35

the purpose of self-love is to

26:38

prolong and preserve our life and so on

26:42

rather and here being used to end our

26:44

life

26:45

leads to a contradiction so he argues

26:48

that we have a perfect duty

26:50

to preserve our life not preserving our

26:53

life

26:54

and taking our life or even putting our

26:56

life in harm's way

26:58

would be a contradiction it would be

27:00

irrational

27:02

and therefore immoral

27:05

so these are sort of the four examples

27:07

now let me give you a brief sense

27:09

of other ways he expresses this

27:12

categorical imperative so far

27:14

this categorical imperative has been

27:16

expressed in terms of this

27:18

notion of the formula or of universal

27:21

law

27:22

if you're going to do something you know

27:26

first discover identify your reasons for

27:29

doing it

27:30

treat it as a maxim this is sort of the

27:33

guiding principle

27:34

that is leading me to act in this way

27:37

then will it such that this guiding

27:40

principle

27:41

guides everybody's actions that it

27:43

becomes a universal law

27:45

and then you discover if it leads to a

27:47

contradiction

27:49

if it does lead to a contradiction if

27:52

either sort that we have talked about

27:54

it is immoral it is irrational

27:57

and you have a duty not to do that now

28:00

let's look at

28:01

few other formulations

All

Recently uploaded

Watched

FOURTH:

0:01

so kant has

0:03

actually four ways in which he uh

0:06

expresses this categorical imperative

0:08

now remember there is only one

0:10

categorical imperative

0:12

but he states it in four or typically

0:15

it's thought of as three different ways

0:16

but one can actually conceive it

0:18

some do as four different ways some

0:21

others even go as far as six different

0:23

ways there's no

0:24

sort of really need to do that by

0:26

breaking these

0:27

down uh into sort of the embedded ideas

0:30

within each

0:32

but we can talk about four or three

0:34

different ways

0:36

and they're all supposed to be

0:37

equivalent each of these formulations

0:40

will produce the same conclusions

0:42

regarding the morality of a particular

0:44

action

0:45

you know the first one we have already

0:47

seen the formula of the law of nature

0:50

or the formula of universal law act as

0:52

if the maxim of your action

0:54

were to become through your will a

0:57

universal

0:58

law of nature we have seen that already

1:02

the second one we can call sort of the

1:04

formula of

1:05

humanity or let's say the formula of the

1:08

end in itself what does this mean this

1:12

is the idea here

1:13

of you know where you know we're back to

1:15

these means and formulations that you

1:18

you know existing ends are always

1:20

connected to certain means

1:22

but can't argue that rational nature

1:25

exists as an

1:26

end in itself i value my

1:29

own rationality so i ought to

1:33

respect the rationality of other beings

1:36

or to put it simply and we'll come back

1:38

to this treat people

1:39

as ends not only as means

1:43

to your own ends so treat humanity as

1:47

such

1:47

as an end now that's why i often refer

1:49

to this as a formula of humanity

1:53

this sort of gives rise to the third

1:55

formula which is generally not the one

1:57

taken up

1:58

typically it's the first second and the

2:00

fourth that refer to the three

2:02

formulations

2:03

of categorical imperative the formula of

2:06

universal law

2:07

the formula of the ending itself and the

2:09

formula of the kingdom of

2:11

ends here you can insert this third step

2:14

in between so that you have four of them

2:16

to see how it flows

2:18

so having you know you know seen the

2:20

second categorical imperative the

2:22

formula

2:23

of treating uh others and humanity as

2:27

large

2:27

not i mean as ants rather

2:30

than simply as means treating humanity

2:33

always has ends in themselves since we

2:35

respect our own rationality

2:37

value our own rationality we have to

2:39

value the rationality of others we can't

2:42

just always

2:43

treat them as means for my own ends they

2:45

are

2:46

ends in themselves so this

2:49

in other words gives rise to a third

2:51

expression the formula

2:53

of autonomy you know which sort of

2:56

expresses uh certain uh

2:59

impositions of some restrictions

3:03

of using others as means

3:06

so the formula of autonomy imposes

3:09

certain constraints or restrictions of

3:11

using

3:12

others as means and this kind of just

3:14

basically turns the formula of universal

3:17

law

3:17

around to emphasize the autonomy of the

3:21

rational being so act that your will

3:25

can regard itself as this at the same

3:28

time

3:29

as making universal laws through its

3:31

maxims

3:33

so this emphasizes the autonomy of your

3:36

will

3:36

and you always act such that you

3:39

recognize

3:40

that autonomous or the free nature of

3:43

your own will

3:44

you know going back to earlier what we

3:46

have said you have to have this sense of

3:48

an autonomy of your

3:50

own will if you're going to go through

3:52

this whole exercise

3:53

of formulating a maxim and then

3:56

assuming that this maxim could become

3:59

universal

4:00

law now if you didn't have your own will

4:03

you wouldn't be able to go through these

4:05

exercises uh even if you identified

4:08

what's guiding your action

4:09

you would not be able to assume that

4:12

let's take this to be

4:13

a law that's binding to everybody so

4:16

this is sort of the key aspect of this

4:18

third formulation the formula of

4:19

autonomy so act that your will can

4:22

regard itself at the same time

4:24

as capable or as making universal laws

4:28

through its maxims then this

4:31

then this formula of autonomy this

4:33

principle of every human being

4:35

will as a will that is capable of

4:38

producing universal laws

4:40

leads us to a sort of formula of the

4:43

kingdom of ends which is like

4:45

a formula of a community

4:48

the idea that there is a regulated

4:50

community

4:51

where every rational being must act as

4:55

if

4:56

her as if

4:59

by her will by her maxims at all times

5:03

she was acting as a law making member of

5:06

this community

5:07

so act as if you were through your

5:09

maxims a law making

5:11

member of a kingdom of ants now we won't

5:15

go through

5:15

all of these i just want to point out

5:18

the second

5:19

of these the formula of the ending

5:22

itself

5:22

and show how that produces the same

5:24

results as we saw with the first one

5:27

the formula of universal law returning

5:30

to those four examples that we had

5:35

okay so we just look at these two

5:37

formulations we have already looked at

5:38

the formula

5:39

of the law of nature now let's look at

5:42

the formula of humanity or the formula

5:44

of the end in itself

5:46

so act so as to treat humanity

5:49

whether in yourself or in others as an

5:52

end in

5:52

itself and never as means only

5:56

and we can illustrate and khan does

5:58

illustrate the second principle using

6:00

the same for examples

6:02

that we have seen plus a couple of

6:04

others the stealing also

6:05

we can throw in and this gives you a

6:08

sense how

6:08

these are just different ways of

6:10

expressing the

6:12

uh categorical imperative through

6:15

different sorts of formulations

6:17

and the equivalence of these formula

6:20

formulations they give the same results

6:23

false promise when you're making a false

6:25

promise according to

6:26

this formulation now i'm using other

6:30

person

6:30

as a means to get money and that's

6:33

immoral

6:34

similarly to taking one's own life i'm

6:37

using myself

6:38

as a means to end my suffering

6:42

same with imperfect duties talent

6:45

i use myself my life my rationality

6:48

purely for enjoyment

6:50

not giving myself respect as an

6:52

irrational agent

6:55

similarly with charity or helping others

6:58

i'm not giving

6:59

others respect as a rational agent

7:01

allowing them

7:02

to develop their rationality and so on

7:05

and finally with the example he doesn't

7:07

use but we have with stealing

7:09

i'm using other persons to get their

7:11

property

7:12

so in all of this we get a sense of

7:16

how each of those i mean i've just given

7:18

you the brief

7:19

set of conclusions of each of those

7:22

examples

7:23

using that second formulation we don't

7:25

need to go through the

7:26

entire bit but in each as you can see

7:30

that the violation of each of those

7:33

examples

7:34

would lead to a violation of the formula

7:37

of humanity or the formula of

7:39

ending itself because you're either

7:41

using another person

7:43

to get their money or using another

7:45

person to get their property

7:47

or you're using yourself as a means to

7:50

end suffering

7:51

or you're using sort of your own

7:55

life purely for enjoyment and not giving

7:57

yourself respect as a

7:59

rational agent you don't want to live in

8:01

a world where

8:02

you don't give yourself respect as a

8:05

rational agent or give

8:06

others respect as a rational agent where

8:09

the charity part comes in

8:12

so that kind of concludes our long

8:14

lecture here

8:19

but let me end with a couple of sort of

8:21

major problems some of which i've

8:23

already hinted at

8:24

you know the big issue that emerges here

8:27

as you have already

8:28

uh caught on by now anything that is not

8:31

regarded

8:32

as rational has no moral worth

8:35

and can be treated as means only

8:39

you can just use them for your own ends

8:42

you know

8:43

and uh and that it is morally

8:46

permissible

8:47

for example in this case then to use an

8:50

animal simply as a means

8:52

that you have no duty to an animal

8:55

now this is quite odd let's break this

8:57

down a little bit this idea that

8:59

anything that's not rational

9:00

has no moral value and can be treated

9:04

as means only that we owe

9:07

animals nothing they are not moral

9:10

agents they don't matter

9:12

even though they feel pain there is no

9:14

way

9:15

uh you can act immorally towards a dog

9:19

let's say can't things towards an animal

9:21

let's say con things

9:22

you know because let's say a cat

9:25

or a dog isn't rational they don't have

9:27

any rights according to khan

9:31

you know because in order to have rights

9:33

they would have to be rational

9:35

and they would have to be member of a

9:37

moral community to be a member of a

9:39

moral community to be a member of a

9:41

kingdom of hearts

9:42

they have to be a rational agent and

9:45

since animals

9:46

don't have rationality they don't have

9:48

rights

9:49

and they don't have are we you don't

9:52

have any moral duty

9:54

towards them animals do

9:57

feel pain no doubt as we have seen

9:58

already with utilitarians

10:00

bentham counted their uh pain as a

10:04

measure in a sidonic principle you know

10:08

but can't things they don't count

10:10

morally even if they feel

10:11

pain now this is of course highly

10:13

problematic in a way if you think about

10:15

it

10:15

so if i kick a dog and cause pain uh

10:20

you know according to khan khan says i'm

10:22

not doing something wrong to the dog

10:25

because i have no duties to the dog but

10:27

all of us would have some problems with

10:29

this notion

10:30

you know uh let's take it uh you might

10:33

have

10:34

let i'll leave it there let's take it uh

10:36

uh

10:37

further what about uh

10:40

you know some things that people might

10:42

treat as the same

10:43

as animals who don't have rationality or

10:46

have lost

10:47

rationality or the rational faculty in

10:50

the way we have talked about rational

10:52

agents

10:53

capable of acting according to logic

10:55

according to reason

10:57

according to morality and so on what

10:59

about infants

11:01

or the mentally afflicted or the

11:03

mentally ill

11:04

or the elderly who have gone senile i

11:07

mean if they're mentally no different

11:09

from animals

11:10

can we also treat them simply as means

11:14

don't we have any moral duties towards

11:16

them i mean you can see this is leading

11:18

to a real problem here

11:19

now some kantians have tried to get

11:21

around this

11:23

that they argue why children will

11:25

infants will one day grow up to be

11:27

rational

11:28

and mentally ill could be rational you

11:31

know

11:32

uh maybe there are moments of

11:33

rationality or through treatment they

11:36

may become

11:36

rational rational and so on or the

11:39

elderly who may have gone senile now

11:42

were rational at one time in other words

11:44

they tried to argue that they were

11:46

or they will be in the future members of

11:49

the rational species

11:51

of beings of humans so we should uh

11:54

count them and treat them as rational

11:57

beings even if they're lacking

11:59

or have lost the faculty of rationality

12:02

that they're members of the rational

12:04

species and therefore

12:06

we owe them moral duty also we have to

12:08

treat them as morally and we cannot

12:11

treat them simply as

12:12

means to our ends and finally as i have

12:16

mentioned

12:16

for long many non-europeans

12:20

were considered to be lacking in

12:22

rationality bai khan

12:24

and many other sort of philosophers of

12:26

his times in europe and so on

12:28

this was uh and has justified

12:31

widespread sort of appropriation of

12:34

their lands

12:35

the lands of indigenous populations in

12:37

the new world

12:38

have been by and large appropriated by

12:41

europeans who went and settled there

12:43

who justified it can't himself justifies

12:45

it

12:46

in terms of his notion of private

12:48

property in his own understanding of

12:50

what is mine and what is thine

12:53

and he bases that all in a concept of

12:55

rationality

12:56

and those lacking rationality we don't

12:58

owe them any moral duty

13:00

this is also led to widespread

13:02

extermination of populations

13:04

and a disregard and disrespect some

13:07

would argue that might even continue to

13:09

this day

13:10

of the persons and rights of

13:13

non-europeans so

13:14

this is sort of a very troubling aspect

13:17

of

13:18

uh kantian uh morality some kantians

13:21

have tried to argue that well you can

13:23

separate these

13:24

sort of racist racist or racial

13:27

inclinations

13:28

from his actual moral theory

13:31

but yet given the centrality he gives to

13:34

this notion of rationality

13:36

and then denying this rationality in

13:38

certain beings

13:39

intimately wraps up this racism a denial

13:43

of their rationality entirely based on

13:46

certain very spurious

13:48

and over time proved to be completely

13:51

false

13:51

misguided notions of racial superiority

13:55

brain power and all

13:57

linked to notions of rationality and all

14:00

all of that

14:00

is just bunk just garbage scrap you know

14:04

but those have been used to carry out

14:06

widespread

14:07

grabbing people's land exterminating

14:10

people

14:10

and disregarding and disrespecting their

14:13

rights

14:14

so this very problematic aspect of this

14:16

moral

14:17

framework does remain

14:21

this was a long lecture thank you for

14:23

your patience now we'll move to shorter

14:26

versions hopefully in the next one