Phil. 106: Kant

Take Home Midterm

Instructions

Answer any *three* of the following questions, 2–3 pages for each answer, for a total of 6–9 pages. You may hand in your answers early if you like, but all answers are due by Mon, May 11th. Please e-mail to me (`abestone@ucsc.edu`) in PDF, MSWord, LaTeX, plain text, HTML, or RTF).

The questions are keyed to different reading assignments, with the idea that each question is raised most centrally in a certain part of the reading. However, you can and should use material from anywhere in the text where it's relevant to the answer.

Because this is an exam rather than a paper, I will give priority to accuracy over originality in grading. However, all the questions do require some thought; they can't simply be read out of the texts. Moreover, in many (if not all) cases the "correct" answer is unavoidably a matter of interpretation: in such cases it would be safest to reproduce what I said in class, but it will also be acceptable if you're clearly following some other reasonable interpretation. And, of course, as usual, your answer must be "original" in the sense that it is your own work. (If you use any outside source—which I *don't* recommend—you must cite it.)

Since we read the A edition only, please base your answer on the A edition text (where there are differences). You can cite it by the A-edition page number (e.g., "A112").

Questions

1. (Introduction) Explain the distinction between "a priori" and "a posteriori," and between "analytic" and "synthetic." Why must all analytic judgments be a priori? Give examples, other than Kant's own examples, of judgments which are analytic, synthetic a posteriori, and synthetic a priori, according to Kant. Why is it surprising that some synthetic judgments (according to Kant) are also a priori? Why, roughly speaking, does Kant think it important to show how such synthetic a priori judgments are possible? (Give at least one rough reason.)

2. (Aesthetic) Explain, roughly speaking, Kant's distinction between (human) "intuitions" and "concepts." How does an intuition, as opposed to a concept, relate to an empirical object? What is the matter of our intuitions,

according to Kant, and what is their form? How does existence of a (pure) form of (human) intuition explain why the laws of geometry, for example, can be known a priori (by humans), and how does it restrict what they apply to?

3. (Metaphysical Deduction) Using simple empirical examples (other than Kant's own), explain the distinction between "concepts" and "judgments." What role do concepts play in a typical judgment? Explain why, according to Kant, the various fundamental types of judgment correspond to fundamental pure concepts of the understanding (categories): what role does the understanding play in both cases? (You need not talk in any detail about the Table of Judgments or the Table of Categories, although if you *can* discuss a specific example of correspondence, that would be great.)

4. (Transcendental Deduction, part I) A transcendental deduction, according to Kant, establishes the legitimacy or "objective validity" of a concept. Explain (1) why, according to Kant, we don't normally need a transcendental deduction of empirical or mathematical concepts and (2) why what Kant calls an "empirical deduction" (a) could never serve as a transcendental deduction for any concept and (b) is not available at all in the case of pure (a priori) concepts, such as the categories.

5. (Transcendental Deduction, part II) The transcendental unity of apperception means (roughly speaking) the possibility of thinking the whole manifold of appearances together as mine. What does that have to do with the categories, according to Kant? What does it have to do with the possibility of there being an *object* of experience—that is (roughly speaking, according to Kant), the possibility that something guarantees the appearances will agree with each other according to a rule?

6. (Schematism) Explain why an empirical concept, such as the concept *dog*, does not apply directly to appearances (or images) of dogs. What role does the faculty of imagination play in allowing such a concept to be applied? How does this involve a "schema"? Give another example which shows the role of the imagination and its schemata in the case of mathematical concepts. Why is there a special problem with there being schemata for pure concepts of the understanding, such as the categories?

7. (Analogies) The Highest Principle of All Synthetic Judgments is, roughly, that the appearances must be such that they can all be thought together as mine (in the unity of apperception). What does this have to with the categories, and with the schemata of the categories? How does it rule out

certain synthetic judgments as (not self-contradictory, but) empty? How does it make other synthetic judgments a priori? Explain in particular, roughly, with respect to the judgment that every event has a cause (Second Analogy).

8. (Phenomena and Noumena) The Transcendental Analytic has shown that all the objects of our knowledge are mere appearances. Explain why this seems to mean that we do, after all, know *something* about the way things are in themselves. Why might it seem to show that things in themselves are substances (whose accidents we know)? Why might it seem to show that things in themselves are causes (whose effects we know)? Why, if either one of those were correct, would we know something about noumena—that is, objects which an understanding can think on its own, without sense?

9. (Amphiboly) Consider the concepts of *identity* and *difference*. Explain, roughly, why we must be able to apply them to objects if we are to think of those objects under concepts (for example, to think that all objects of a certain kind are dogs, or that some of them are). How, according to Kant, can we actually apply these concepts (of identity and difference) to objects: that is, what makes two objects different? (Hint: how is space involved?) Why would that not work, according to Kant, if the objects of our knowledge were noumena?