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Los Angeles

Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism in the German Enlightenment:  
The Anthropological Foundations of Immanuel Kant's Political Thought

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
Requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy  
in Political Science

by

Roey Reichert

2022

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2022

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism in the German Enlightenment:  
The Anthropological Foundations of Immanuel Kant's Political Thought

by

Roey Reichert

Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

University of California, Los Angeles, 2022

Professor Joshua F. Dienstag, Co-Chair

Professor Anthony R. Pagden, Co-Chair

The overarching claim I advance here is that to understand Kant's political thought, it is necessary to understand his philosophical anthropology. This I demonstrate by examining Kant's conceptual relationship between nationalism and cosmopolitanism. Besides the introduction and conclusion, the dissertation follows a fourfold topical division into philosophical anthropology, philosophy of history, political philosophy, and ethics.

The dissertation begins with the intellectual and historical context in which Kant developed his novel 'pragmatic' approach to anthropology and the unique features he identified in the human species. These include three rational predispositions: the technical, the pragmatic, and the moral, which, through social interaction and history, respectively develop into culture, civilization, and morality. Crucial is Kant's positing of a *moral* teleological end for the human species

(*Bestimmung*). The anthropological analysis of the human species leads Kant to the conclusion that cosmopolitanism is intrinsic to its character, and that its *Bestimmung* lies in a ‘cosmopolitically united’ system—a universal *moral* community. For it to fulfill its cosmopolitan *Bestimmung*, it is incumbent upon humanity to first eliminate the chief impediment to its progress—namely, the perpetual state of war between states. This it will achieve primarily through rational political institutions; states ought to first reform themselves into republics and then establish a “Federation of nations” (*Völkerbund*) as a guarantor of perpetual peace.

Here I make an intervention in a long-standing debate within Kant scholarship over the ostensible oscillations he made regarding his preferred form of cosmopolitical government. I claim that Kant’s anthropology demonstrates that the universal *moral* community can only be constituted under the condition of a singular universal *political* community—therefore, the *Völkerbund* must ultimately coalesce into a “World-republic”. To this end, I further advance the argument that, far from being antithetical to his cosmopolitan vision, nation-states are, in three major ways, *conducive* to it on Kant’s own terms: since, (1) they prevent global tyranny, (2) their common idioms provide the most solid foundations for republics, which eventually (3) makes them amenable for cosmopolitical unification. The upshot, however, is that although nationalism has a cosmopolitan role to fulfill, cultural diversity has only secondary value for Kant—it is merely a particular means to a universal end. The dissertation concludes with a discussion of the immense amount of time that humanity must traverse for it to fulfill its moral *Bestimmung*.

The dissertation of Roey Reichert is approved.

David D. Kim

Davide Panagia

Joshua F. Dienstag, Committee Co-Chair

Anthony R. Pagden, Committee Co-Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2022

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## Note on Citations, Translations, and Capitalizations

As customary, quotations from Kant's works are cited in the body of the text by volume and page number in *Kants gesammelte Schriften*, edited by the Royal Prussian (later German, then Berlin-Brandenburg) Academy of Sciences (Berlin: Georg Reimer, later Walter de Gruyter, 1900–), 29 vols., except for quotations from the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which are cited by the customary use of the pagination of its first (A) and second (B) editions.<sup>1</sup> When available, the English translations in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant* (general editors Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992–), 16 vols, are used, with occasional modifications or unless otherwise noted. The following is the list of the specific works of Kant used in this study, together with their German shortened titles and abbreviations:

<i>Anfang</i>	<i>Mutmaßlicher Anfang der Menschengeschichte</i> (Conjectural Beginning of Human History), 8: 107–23
<i>Anth</i>	<i>Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht</i> (Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View), 7: 117–333
<i>Aufklärung</i>	<i>Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?</i> (An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?), 8: 33–42
Bemerk	Bemerkungen zu den Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen (Remarks on the Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime), 20: 1-192

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<sup>1</sup> With some additions and modifications, I have mostly followed Louden's example on citation and references. For the original see: "Note on Citations and Translations" Robert B. Louden, *Kant's Human Being: Essays on His Theory of Human Nature*, First Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), xiii.

<i>Beob</i>	<i>Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen</i> (Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime), 2: 205–56
Denken	Was heißt: Sich im Denken orientieren? (What does it mean to orient oneself in thinking?), 8: 133–47
<i>Geo</i>	<i>Physische Geographie</i> (Lectures on Physical Geography), edited by Friedrich Theodor Rink, 9: 151–463
<i>Gr</i>	<i>Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten</i> (Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals), 4: 385–463
<i>Idee</i>	<i>Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht</i> (Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim), 8: 15–31
<i>KpV</i>	<i>Kritik der praktischen Vernunft</i> (Critique of Practical Reason), 5: 1–163
<i>KrV</i>	<i>Kritik der reinen Vernunft</i> (Critique of Pure Reason), references are to the standard A and B pagination of the first and second editions
<i>KU</i>	<i>Kritik der Urteilskraft</i> (Critique of the Power of Judgment), 5: 165–485
<i>Logik</i>	<i>Logik</i> (Lectures on Logic, also known as <i>The Jäsche Logic</i> ), edited by Gottlob Benjamin Jäsche, 9: 1–150
<i>MdS</i>	<i>Metaphysik der Sitten</i> (Metaphysics of Morals), 6: 203–493
<i>Menschenrace</i>	<i>Bestimmung des Begriffs einer Menschenrace</i> (Determination of the Concept of a Human Race), 8: 89–106
Menschenliebe	Über ein vermeintes Recht aus Menschenliebe zu lügen (On a supposed right to lie from philanthropy) 8: 423–430

<i>Nachricht</i>	<i>Nachricht von der Einrichtung seiner Vorlesungen in dem Winterhalbjahre von 1765–1766</i> (Immanuel Kant’s Announcement of the Program of His Lectures for the Winter Semester of 1765–1766), 2: 303–13
Nachschrift	Nachschrift zu Christian Gottlieb Mielckes Littauisch-deutschem und deutsch-littauischem Wörterbuch (Postscript to Christian Gottlieb Mielcke’s Lithuanian-German and German-Lithuanian dictionary), 8: 443-5
<i>Racen</i>	<i>Von den verschiedenen Racen der Menschen</i> (Of the Different Races of Human Beings), 2: 427–43
<i>Refl</i>	<i>Reflexionen</i> (Notes and Fragments), 14–23, references are first to the Academy <i>Reflexion</i> number, followed by the Academy volume and page
<i>Rel</i>	<i>Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft</i> (Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason), 6: 1–202
<i>Streit</i>	<i>Streit der Fakultäten</i> (Conflict of the Faculties), 7: 1–116
<i>T&amp;P</i>	<i>Über den Gemeinpruch: Das mag in der Theorie richtig sein, taugt aber nicht für die Praxis</i> (On the Common Saying: That May Be Correct in Theory, But It Is of No Use in Practice), 8: 273–313
<i>ZeF</i>	<i>Zum ewigen Frieden</i> (Toward Perpetual Peace), 8: 341–86

Other texts cited from the Academy edition—particularly the anthropology lecture transcriptions—are referred to either by the name of the transcriber (e.g., *Friedländer*, *Mrongovius*, *Pillau*, *Starke*) or the traditional title (e.g., *Menschenkunde*), followed by volume and page number.

Square brackets [] indicate the German original—written in italics—or comments inside quoted passages. As a proper noun, *Enlightenment* refers to the historical period, otherwise it refers to the movement, or the process. English words that correspond to certain German concepts are capitalized as well. e.g., Right for *Recht*, Idea for *Idee*.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Enlightenment, Kant tells us in his famous essay on the subject, necessarily involves “a few falls” along the way. I was therefore extremely fortunate to have a committee whose members were always ready to lend a helping hand and show me that “this danger is not in fact so great”. I would thus like to express my deepest gratitude to David D. Kim, Davide Panagia, Joshua Foa Dienstag, and Anthony Pagden for helping me find the courage to make use of my own understanding.

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At UCLA History, I owe much to Perry Anderson, whose enlightenment and nationalism seminars were foundational for this dissertation, and Pete Stacey, a teacher—and a friend.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to UCLA’s Center for European and Russian Studies (CERS) for their generous financial support over the years, and especially to Liana Grancea, who never failed to keep her door open.

I have spent the last year working on this dissertation at the Interdisciplinary Centre for European Enlightenment Studies (IZEA) at the Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg. This was made possible by a research grant for doctoral candidates from The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for which I am very much grateful. Having previously been an IZEA fellow in 2019, I was overjoyed at the opportunity to return to this vibrant intellectual community. I would like to thank Daniel Fulda, Frank Grunert, Heiner Klemme and especially Andrea Thiele for their hospitality, as well as Han Vermeulen, who provided plenty of helpful comments on the final draft as well as a large dose of encouragement.

At The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where I spent my formative years, I would like to thank Shlomo Avineri for his guidance and insistence that I always think for myself, as well as Nicole Hochner, Iddo Nevo, and Gayil Talshir for their continuing friendship.

I am also very grateful to my students who proved time and time again that the Talmudic adage—that one learns the most from one’s students—still holds true.

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I would also like to mention Ignat Kalinov, a friend and colleague, a man of quick wit and dark humor, whose untimely death has tragically robbed the world of a true independent thinker.

Finally, I would be remiss in not mentioning my family—and especially my sister Gal for her unwavering support. I originally intended to dedicate this dissertation to my grandmother, Dvora Reichert, who survived a period of the darkest barbarism to later help build a nation-state with a cosmopolitan aim. Yet the sudden passing of my mother, Einat Ben-Menachem Reichert, put paid to this intention. A true cosmopolitan spirit, it was she who taught me more than anyone about the value of culture in all its myriad forms. To them both, therefore, this dissertation is dedicated in loving memory. יהי זכרן ברוך.

## VITA

### EDUCATION

<b>University of California, Los Angeles</b> M.A. Political Science.	2019
<b>The Hebrew University of Jerusalem</b> M.A. Political Science. Magna Cum Laude	2013
<b>The Hebrew University of Jerusalem</b> B.A. Political Science and Philosophy	2011

### POSITIONS HELD

Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg, Interdisciplinary Centre for European Enlightenment Studies (IZEA) Associate Member (Starting December 2022)	2022-2026
--	-----------

### SELECTED AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

UCLA Center for European and Russian Studies Dissertation Research Fellowship	2021
The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) One-Year Research Grant for Doctoral Candidates	2021/22
UCLA Academic Senate Distinguished Teaching Assistant Award (Nominee)	2019
Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg, Interdisciplinary Centre for European Enlightenment Studies (IZEA) Fellowship for Enlightenment Studies	2019
UCLA Center for European and Russian Studies Pre-Dissertation Research Fellowship	2018
UCLA Department of Political Science Awarded Distinction for Qualifying Paper: "Johann Gottfried Herder: What Kind of Cosmopolitanism?"	2017
UCLA Graduate Division Graduate Research Mentorship Fellowship Program	2015/16
UCLA Graduate Division Graduate Summer Research Mentorship Program	2014, 2015
UCLA Department of Political Science Awarded Distinction for Qualifying Paper: "On the Role of Cognition and Culture in Ernest Gellner's Social Thought"	2015
The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) Intensive German Language Course Scholarship	2015
UCLA Center for European and Russian Studies Summer Language Study Grant	2015

## PUBLICATIONS

“Herder’s Reluctant Relativism and Poetic Pieties.” *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* (Forthcoming 2023)

## SELECTED CONFERENCE AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITY

**Invited Participant:** “Herder’s Reluctant Relativism and Poetic Pieties”, Book Symposium on Anik Waldow’s *Experience Embodied* Organized by the School of Philosophy, University College Dublin (November 18, 2022)

**Paper:** “Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism: Kant’s Anthropological Foundations.” *Kant Oberseminar Heiner Klemme*, The Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg (May 23, 2022)

**Paper:** “Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism in the German Enlightenment: Kant and Herder.” *American Political Science Association*, San Francisco (September 10-13, 2020) (Accepted and Withdrew due to COVID-19)

**Discussant:** Sankar Muthu’s Global Domination and Resistance in the Political Thought of Kant and Quobna Ottobah Cugoano. *UCLA Political Theory Workshop* (February 10, 2017)

## SELECTED TEACHING EXPERIENCE

UCLA Political Science Teaching Assistant Coordinator:

Teaching Political Science (Graduate Seminar)

Fall 2020, Spring 2021

Instructor:

Introduction to Political Theory

Summer 2018

Nationalism: History and Approaches

Spring 2018

Teaching Assistant:

Early Modern Political Theory

Winter 2018, Spring 2020

Topics in Political Philosophy: Anarchism and Utopianism

Winter 2020

Social Science Research and Perspectives

Fall 2019

Laws of War and Peace: International Political Theory

Winter 2019

Late Modern Political Theory

Fall 2017

Political Science Travel Study Program in Europe

Summers 2017, 2018

Contemporary Regional Issues of the Middle East

Winter 2015, 2017

The Arab-Israeli Conflict

Spring 2015, 2017

Introduction to Political Theory

Fall 2014, 2016



## I: Introduction

The field of philosophy in this cosmopolitan sense can be brought down to the following questions:

1. *What can I know?*
2. *What ought I to do?*
3. *What may I hope?*
4. *What is man?*

*Metaphysics* answers the first question, *morals* the second, *religion* the third, and *anthropology* the fourth. Fundamentally, however, we could reckon all of this as anthropology, because the first three questions relate to the last one (Kant, *Logik* 9:25).

### 1.0 Preface: Why Anthropology?

Today, Kant's name is synonymous with that of enlightened political cosmopolitanism. Yet to honor his name means not to accept such a characterization uncritically. The imperative to think for oneself becomes even more pronounced once it is recalled that Kant wrote relatively little on political theory, and that his treatment of political problems, in the majority of what he *did* write, was done in a characteristically highly abstract form. Furthermore, these few writings were published only towards the end of his life—long after completing the “critical turn”—which further suggests that, for him, political theory was merely an afterthought of ethics.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, historically, this view of Kant as the modern *ur*-cosmopolitan has not always been universally accepted. Primarily due to the centrality of ideas such as autonomy and self-determination to his ethical thought, several thinkers have identified him as a harbinger of the (ostensible) obverse doctrine of nationalism. Eli Kedourie held that Kantian reasoning inevitably

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<sup>2</sup> Although there is evidence that Kant was preoccupied with politics even before the French revolution, he did not publish much on the subject Frederick C. Beiser, *Enlightenment, Revolution, and Romanticism: The Genesis of Modern German Political Thought, 1790-1800* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1992), 37; Kant's mature political philosophy developed in the 1790s: namely, in the essays *On the Common Saying: That may be Correct in Theory, but it is of no Use in Practice* (1793), *Toward Perpetual Peace* (1795), the “Doctrine of Right” of *The Metaphysics of Morals* (1797) and *The Conflict of the Faculties* (1798). Paul Guyer, “The Crooked Timber of Mankind,” in *Kant's Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim: A Critical Guide*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty and James Schmidt, First Edition, Cambridge Critical Guides (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 134.

makes autonomy the essential end of politics, since “A good man is an autonomous man, and for him to realize his autonomy, he must be free. Self-determination thus becomes the supreme political good”.<sup>3</sup> Isaiah Berlin, in turn, claimed that there “is indeed a connection between Kant’s view and the rise of romantic nationalism”, although admitting that Kant was certainly “a man of the Enlightenment, of its universalism, its belief in the dry light of reason and science, which transcends local and national boundaries”.<sup>4</sup> Claims such as these were rebuffed by Ernest Gellner, who, while acknowledging that although “the notion of self-determination is absolutely central to Kant’s thought”, nevertheless maintained that Kant was “the very last person whose vision could be credited with having contributed to nationalism”, Kant’s commitment to enlightenment universalism, Gellner reaffirmed, was such that “If a connection exists between Kant and nationalism at all, then nationalism is a reaction against him, and not his offspring”.<sup>5</sup>

To examine the tenability of these claims warrants a closer look at what Kant himself wrote about nations and nationalism and how, if at all fitted, if at all, they fitted within his cosmopolitan framework.<sup>6</sup> Yet if Kant’s writings on politics are meagre, then the treatment of the subject *within* those writings is even slimmer, somewhat ambiguous, and occasionally flat-out contradictory.

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<sup>3</sup> Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism* (Oxford, UK; Cambridge, Mass., USA: Blackwell, 1993), 12–23 quote from p.22.

<sup>4</sup> Isaiah Berlin, “Kant as an Unfamiliar Source of Nationalism,” in *The Sense of Reality: Studies in Ideas and Their History*, ed. Henry Hardy, First Edition (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998), 233–34.

<sup>5</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 2nd edition, New Perspectives on the Past (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 125–28.

<sup>6</sup> There is, of course, more than a passing resemblance in the title and topic to Meinecke’s magisterial *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*. However, Meinecke’s study is narrower in the sense that its focal point is the development of the German nation-state in the 19th century, and not the nation-state *as such*. Furthermore, Meinecke’s treatment of Kant is restricted to a passing mention as part of the intellectual backdrop in which the “Romantic-Conservative” view of the nation was formed. *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat: Studien zur Genesis des deutschen Nationalstaates*, 7. Auflage. Reprint 2019 (Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 2019); English Translation: *Cosmopolitanism and the National State*, trans. Robert B. Kimber, First Edition (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1970).

This study argues that the proper way to unpack this ambiguity, therefore, is to broaden our scope and look beyond the so-called “political writings” to examine the body of work that underpins Kant’s political thought, namely, his philosophical anthropology.<sup>7</sup> This will be demonstrated by tracking the trajectory of several different elements of Kant’s philosophical anthropology, via his philosophy of history, and the way they are sustained in his political thought—thus shedding light on his views on nationalism, cosmopolitanism, and how the two relate to each other. By “Nationalism”, I understand Ernest Gellner’s definition as “a political principle, which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent”.<sup>8</sup> Nations, according to this principle, are first and foremost, *cultural units*, grounded in a common idiom. “Cosmopolitanism” can tentatively be defined, with Kant, as “the way of thinking in which one is not concerned with oneself as the whole world, but rather regards and conducts oneself as a mere citizen of the world” (*Anth.* 7:130). Once this lens is adopted, it will become clear that, far from being an afterthought, Kant, in his political writings, was articulating political expressions of anthropological ideas.

Clearly, anthropology meant a great deal to Kant. Beyond *The Jäsche Logic*, from which this study’s epigraph is taken, Kant asserted in two more places that the question “What is the human being?” is the most fundamental question in philosophy, one which encompasses all others.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> It is important to emphasize that I am dealing with *philosophical* anthropology—an attempt to create a “science of man” as it developed during the eighteenth century—which bears little resemblance to the academic discipline as it is taught today. For a conceptual history of anthropology, and how it developed in the German Enlightenment see: Han F. Vermeulen, *Before Boas: The Genesis of Ethnography and Ethnology in the German Enlightenment* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), chap. 7 especially pp. 357-366; See also: Robert Wokler, “Anthropology and Conjectural History in the Enlightenment,” in *Inventing Human Science: Eighteenth-Century Domains*, ed. C. Fox, R. Porter, and R. Wokler (University of California Press, 1995), 31–52.

<sup>8</sup> Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 1.

<sup>9</sup> See the letter to Carl Friedrich Stäudlin from May 4, 1793, 11:429; and *The Metaphysik Pölitz* 28:533–34

Perhaps even more telling would be his decision, shortly after being promoted to the chair in logic and metaphysics at the university of Königsberg in 1770, to make use of the academic freedom this position granted and, starting in 1772, to offer a new lecture course devoted solely to anthropology. Kant would make use of this privilege every single winter semester thereafter and would continue to regularly hold this course until his retirement in 1796.<sup>10</sup>

Apparently, Kant's students shared his enthusiasm for the subject, who seemed genuinely to enjoy these lectures (while dreading those on logic and metaphysics), not the least because they found them quite accessible.<sup>11</sup> It is important to note that these lectures were "popular" in both senses of the word; by treating the subject in a way which would be entertaining, the lectures focused on "all that is practical" while foregoing any "dry academic stuff". The lectures aimed, and succeeded, to attract a broad audience, and they were well attended indeed.<sup>12</sup>

The official textbook for the course—*Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (hereafter referred to simply as the *Anthropology*)—was published in 1798, making it the last major work for whose publication Kant was personally responsible.<sup>13</sup> However, its initial poor reception prompted a search for student notes of the courses—of which some have been successfully recovered. These reveal Kant's longstanding preoccupation with the subject and shine a light on the evolution of his

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<sup>10</sup> Also quite telling is that Becker's famous 1768 portrait of Kant, done when he was forty-four years old, has him holding an anthropology book as well. John H. Zammito, *Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology* (University of Chicago Press, 2002), 292.

<sup>11</sup> Manfred Kuehn, *Kant: A Biography*, Revised Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 204–5.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 205 I shall return to the origins of Kant's lectures on anthropology and the significance of their "popularity" below; Werner Stark, "Historical Notes and Interpretive Questions about Kant's Lectures on Anthropology," in *Essays on Kant's Anthropology*, ed. Brian Jacobs and Patrick Kain, trans. Patrick Kain (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 16.

<sup>13</sup> Van de Pitte suggests that this was no accident; that despite considering publishing the *Anthropologie* already in 1773, Kant intentionally withheld the publication "until after he had established the *a priori* principles of human nature by means of the three Critiques". This fits well within his interpretation of Kant's *entire work* as "a gradual revelation of man in relation to reality". Frederick Patrick van de Pitte, *Kant as Philosophical Anthropologist* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1971), 112.

thought over the years.<sup>14</sup> Far from remaining static, Kant continuously kept modifying his lectures on anthropology, and significantly—even after the three *Critiques* were published.<sup>15</sup>

Yet, Kant’s decision to publish the *Anthropology* with the explicit intent that it be “the present manual for my anthropology course” (*Anth* 7:122n), together with its self-styling as “An anthropology written from a pragmatic point of view that is systematically designed and yet popular” which therefore “yields an advantage for the reading public” (*Anth* 7:121), confirm its status, and will therefore be treated, as Kant’s most definitive attempt to answer the question “What is the human being?”

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<sup>14</sup> Seven of these have been compiled and edited in: Immanuel Kant, *Vorlesungen über Anthropologie*, ed. Reinhard Brandt and Werner Stark, Immanuel Kant: Gesammelte Schriften 25 (Berlin, Boston: Walter de Gruyter & Co, 1997); A selection of these texts have been translated into English in: Immanuel Kant, *Immanuel Kant: Lectures on Anthropology*, ed. Robert B. Louden and Allen W. Wood, trans. Robert R. Clewis et al., The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

<sup>15</sup> Louden, *Kant’s Human Being*, xvii I am thankful to Perry Anderson for first pointing this out to me.

## 1.1 Argument and Outline

Kant's anthropology is a rich mine of insight for his political thought. Kant's political writings are effectively anthropological reflections expressed (somewhat succinctly) in a political vocabulary. These are intended to address specific problems, such as the political institutions most conducive for the human species to employ its reason. Furthermore, as a result of his engagement with the popular philosophers, Kant's pragmatic anthropology was conceived, from its inception, as a political science. An anthropological analysis of the human species yields, for instance, that cosmopolitanism is an intrinsic part of the human species' character, that the purpose of grounding cosmopolitan right in hospitality is to establish trust, and that the path to enlightenment is fraught with delays, setbacks, and reversals, making it neither smooth, nor linear.

Therefore, Kant's political thought ought to be examined against the backdrop of his anthropological thought, and doing so does indeed provide a richer, more comprehensive, standpoint. Once some key anthropological insights are considered, namely—that man has certain predispositions; that these, in turn, require an inordinate amount of time to develop fully; and that antagonism is a necessary mode for this development, it becomes evident, for instance, that the *Weltrepublik*, remains the final form of the universal political community, and that perpetual peace is a means for humanity to achieve it. These, in turn, are both merely conditions—albeit necessary ones—for humanity to fulfill its *Bestimmung* in the universal moral community.

A further way in which Kantian anthropology enhances our understanding of Kant's political thought is that it demonstrates that nations, and nationalism, have three major roles within this cosmopolitan vision: they help prevent global tyranny, induce pragmatic and moral development, and, by doing so, create conditions for the propagation of enlightenment, and thus eventually advancing the creation of the *Weltrepublik* itself. The reason for selecting Kant's philosophical

anthropology as the point of departure is therefore twofold: (A) contextualizing Kant's political thought in this manner fills some of its gaps, and (B) in particular, doing so establishes the proper relations between nationalism and cosmopolitanism in his political thought.

This study can thus be seen as an attempt to think through the meaning of the primacy that Kant grants to the human species, *qua* species, in his anthropological thought, and, as a corollary, to cosmopolitanism in his political thought, *in their strictest sense*. One ramification that emerges from this attempt is that the comprehension of both warrants a shift in the temporal perspective—Kant was writing in the utmost sincerity when he claimed that progress is achieved only over the course of many generations. Hence the importance of addressing Kant's philosophy of history as well, which purports to describe the species' movement through time.

This study is divided into four major sections, each with a focus on a different element of Kant's philosophy, which are further subdivided into smaller subsections: the first is devoted to philosophical anthropology, the second to the philosophy of history, the third to political thought, and the fourth to ethics. The first three sections also center, albeit not exclusively, on a different text or texts: the first focuses on the *Anthropology*, the second on the *Idea* and the *Conjectural Beginning of Human History*, and the third on *Towards Perpetual Peace*. Naturally, there is some overlap between the sections, however, I have tried to organize them in such a manner that each section builds on those that precede it.

## *II: Philosophical Anthropology*

### *2.0 Introduction: The Popularphilosophie Movement*

Prior to examining Kant’s own anthropological thought, the intellectual context in which it developed ought to be addressed, particularly one movement that had a formative effect on how Kant shaped his own approach to anthropological questions.

The *Popularphilosophie* movement was, in brief, an intellectual movement centered in Berlin, and was mostly active between 1750-1780, a period that—since it stretched between the two “high points” of Wolff and Kant—is known in German intellectual history as the “High Enlightenment” (*Hochaufklärung*).<sup>16</sup> Like their counterparts in Enlightenment Britain and France—the *philosophes*—the members of this informal movement made up a broad and diverse group, which, besides philosophers, also counted poets, historians, and other men of letters among its members.<sup>17</sup> As a movement, it “may be understood as a combination of practical philosophy and literary skills with the goal of morally educating a literate public to be useful citizens of the absolute state”.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> For an overview of the historical context of the movement, as well as recent scholarship, see: Johan van der Zande, “What Was Popular Philosophy?,” in *Das Achtzehnte Jahrhundert*, ed. Stefanie Stockhorst, 1st ed., *Das Achtzehnte Jahrhundert - Zeitschrift Der Deutschen Gesellschaft Für Die Erforschung Des Achtzehnten Jahrhunderts* 45/1 (Göttingen: Wolfenbüttel Wallstein Verlag, 2021), 28–50 I would like to thank Frank Grunert for bringing the importance of this movement to my attention; See also: George di Giovanni, *Freedom and Religion in Kant and His Immediate Successors: The Vocation of Humankind, 1774–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), chap. 2 especially pp. 37-55.

<sup>17</sup> Due to its highly eclectic character, an exhaustive list of the movement’s members is difficult, nonetheless because some would have resented being associated with other so-called members, as well as the “Popular” label itself, which historically was used in a pejorative manner to dismiss its members. As van der Zande writes, the term ‘popular philosophy’ is in fact inaccurate since it “is descriptive neither of eclectic philosophizing, nor of the science of man. It is, therefore, irrelevant to raise the question who legitimately can or cannot be considered a popular philosopher”. Zande, “What Was Popular Philosophy?,” 22. Traditionally, J. A. Biester, J. A. Eberhard, J. Engel, J. F. Feder, C. Garve, F. Nicolai, E. Platner, J. G. Sulzer, and A. Weishaupt are commonly referred to as some of the movement’s prominent figures.

<sup>18</sup> Johan van der Zande, “In the Image of Cicero: German Philosophy between Wolff and Kant,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 56, no. 3 (1995): 421.



What all members *did* have in common was a desire to break free from the constrictive views of the German university, where Wolff's philosophical system still reigned supreme, and to seriously reconsider the relationship between thought and life.<sup>19</sup> In marked contrast to what they saw as the staid "scholasticism" of academic philosophy—much too preoccupied with formal philosophy and metaphysics—the popular philosophers posited that "Man [is] an immense sea of learning".<sup>20</sup> They therefore identified philosophy with *practical* philosophy, and sought to unify it with the study of history, aesthetics, pedagogy, and language.<sup>21</sup> Their concern was "in understanding moral action as the outcome of the complex situations of social reality and of insights in human nature offered by practical and historical experience".<sup>22</sup> In a word, they sought to "bring philosophy down to earth" so that the welfare of mankind may be improved:

Anthropology in all its aspects and bearings became the concern of all, in particular at the instigation of English and French thinkers. Everywhere one insisted on the thorough study of the philosophy of life: The attention paid to natural history, philosophy of history, history of mankind, aesthetics, and pedagogy was partly the fruit, partly the cause of a practical approach in philosophy. This became increasingly popular and urged philosophers to look everywhere for new subject matter with which to enrich their discipline and to make it useful in life.<sup>23</sup>

These practical concerns, combined with a self-conscious eclectic method, evolved into a more comprehensive, historically oriented, "science of man", namely, *Anthropology*. Henceforth, the popular philosophers impressed, all methods of inquiry into the varieties of human experience

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<sup>19</sup> Frederick C. Beiser, *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte*, Reprint edition (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 166.

<sup>20</sup> Letter from Moses Mendelssohn to Thomas Abbt (1764). Quoted in: Zande, "In the Image of Cicero," 430.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 421–22.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 421.

<sup>23</sup> Georg Gustav Fülleborn, "Abriss einer Geschichte und Literatur der Physiognomik," Fülleborn, ed. *Beyträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie* 8 (Zurich, 1797) 156; cited in: Johan van der Zande, "The Moderate Skepticism of German Popular Philosophy," in *The Skeptical Tradition Around 1800: Skepticism in Philosophy, Science, and Society*, ed. Johan van der Zande and Richard H. Popkin, International Archives of the History of Ideas / Archives Internationales d'Histoire Des Idées (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 1998), 75.

should be brought together under this new science.<sup>24</sup> The adoption of this paradigm resulted in a philosophy of life in which thinker and thought would be intimately linked; the recognition of the futility of the endeavor to observe life from a “view from nowhere” made active participation the order of the day. Thus, if philosophers were to learn anything of value, they should renounce the thought-stifling confinement of the ivory tower and venture out into the world instead.<sup>25</sup>

By answering the call that “the proper study of Mankind is Man”, *Popularphilosophie* set out to redefine philosophy’s mission: instead of theoretical knowledge and certainty, philosophy, or enlightenment, would now become a vehicle for sociopolitical change and progress; a reconception which, in the process, would also render the standards of philosophy as historically conditioned; henceforth the “vocation of man” [*bestimmung des Menschen*] would become the highest philosophical criterion of value.<sup>26</sup> The point, as it were, was to change the world, not just to understand it.<sup>27</sup>

In short, anthropology was born a *practical*—and not a contemplative—science, one which ascribed to itself the wide purview of improving the moral conditions of mankind. To embrace anthropology meant not merely to attempt to popularize this new “science of man”, but most of all, to champion *enlightenment* as a means for social and political progress.<sup>28</sup> As such, from the very moment of its conception, anthropology itself was already pregnant with political thought,

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<sup>24</sup> Zande, “In the Image of Cicero,” 430.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 431.

<sup>26</sup> A key concept which I shall return to later.

<sup>27</sup> Although it must be emphasized that the movement was by no means politically radical nor revolutionary, rather it was liberal and reformist in its orientation. Indeed, much of its activities were done under the auspices of royal patronage. While its members wanted to enlighten the public, they disapproved of democracy and never questioned the state, or the need for elite rule. Beiser, *The Fate of Reason*, 166–67.

<sup>28</sup> Zammito, *Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology*, 241.

and should therefore be considered a *political* science as well. This is the point of origin for this study's trajectory.

Kant's relationship with the popular philosophers was close and complex—to say the least. It was under their influence, for instance, that he developed his decisive reading of Rousseau.<sup>29</sup> In a now-famous marginal note in his own copy of his 1764 book, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, Kant credited Rousseau for teaching him respect for “the common man”, writing that:

I am myself by inclination an investigator. I feel a complete thirst for knowledge and an eager unrest to go further in it as well as satisfaction at every acquisition. There was a time when I believed that this alone could constitute the honor of mankind, and I had contempt for the rabble [*Pöbel*] who know nothing. *Rousseau* brought me around. This blinding superiority disappeared, I learned to honor human beings, and I would find myself far more useless than the common laborer if I did not believe that this consideration could impart to all others a value in establishing the rights of humanity (*Bemerk 20:44*).<sup>30</sup>

However, after the “critical turn” Kant fell out with the popular philosophers, and they became bitter enemies, to the point of devoting entire journals to the sole purpose of criticizing his philosophy.<sup>31</sup> Yet John Zammito is probably right to claim that, even if he did come to reject its methods, Kant never abandoned the goal of *Popularphilosophie*, and that a vestige of “popular” impulses is still very much present in his anthropological thought—and should therefore be examined accordingly.<sup>32</sup>

The timeline of how Kant's own work developed further supports the claim that the Kant of the *Anthropology* was still a popular philosopher of sorts. While all of Kant's overt writings on politics

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>30</sup> See: Beiser, *Enlightenment, Revolution, and Romanticism*, 30; Zammito, *Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology*, 92; Otfried Höffe, *Kant's Cosmopolitan Theory of Law and Peace*, trans. Alexandra Newton (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 225; Loudon, *Kant's Human Being*, 195.

<sup>31</sup> Beiser, *The Fate of Reason*, 167.

<sup>32</sup> Zammito, *Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology*, 7. Mainly, Kant rejected the eclecticism of the popular philosophers in favor of a more systematic approach.

and the philosophy of history were published *after* the “critical turn” (the so-called “silent years” of 1770-1781),<sup>33</sup> the first iteration of anthropology as a standalone course was already offered in 1772. This strongly suggests that Kant’s anthropological thought developed in *parallel* to his critical breakthrough, and that at least insofar as anthropology was concerned, his popular impulses remained, to a certain extent, shielded from the scrutiny of his critical philosophy.<sup>34</sup> As we shall see, several ideas exhibited in the historical and political writings directly continue the role that the *Popularphilosophie* movement prescribed to “Anthropology”.<sup>35</sup> Thus there are good grounds to assume that Kant’s philosophical anthropology is a worthy repository for answers regarding his political thought, and that the views Kant expresses in a narrower form in his topically political writings, should be complimented by referring to his anthropological investigations.

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<sup>33</sup> The first—*Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim*, was published in 1784.

<sup>34</sup> Brandt goes so far to hold that “Empirical, pragmatic anthropology is not a part of philosophy in a strict sense, but is rather Kant’s idiosyncratic [eigentümliche] popular philosophy or philosophy for living” Reinhard Brandt, “Ausgewählte Probleme der Kantischen Anthropologie,” in *Der ganze Mensch: Anthropologie und Literatur im 18. Jahrhundert: DFG-Symposion 1992*, ed. Hans-Jürgen Schings, Germanistische Symposien Berichtsbände (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 1994), 17 quoted also in Zammito, 457 (fn10); Zammito suggests that this ambiguity means that Kant was “of two minds” during this period, and was concerned with mediating, rather than expunging, the impact of the popular philosophers in anthropology Zammito, *Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology*, 255–307.

<sup>35</sup> Zammito, *Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology*, 8.

## 2.1 The Origins of Kant's Anthropology

Königsberg, although somewhat isolated, was hardly a backwater in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Aside from its German-Prussian majority, the “Venice of the North” was home to a variety of ethnic and religious communities: Poles, Russians, Lithuanians and other Baltic peoples, Mennonites from Holland, French-speaking Huguenots, a significant Jewish community, as well as several prominent Dutch, English, and Scottish merchants.

These communities, who kept their own customs and traditions, nevertheless still lived next to one another; and while they may have not interacted much socially—they still conducted business with each other. Moreover, the university of Königsberg not only absorbed and reflected this international character, but also actively contributed to it by attracting students from the surrounding countries, and counted significant numbers of Poles, Lithuanians, and other Baltic nationalities among its students.<sup>36</sup> Growing up in this environment made Kant familiar, from a very young age, with different ways of life besides that of the German tradesman class.<sup>37</sup> Conceivably, this also instilled within him an awareness of how trade, or *Verkehr*, may help transcend cultural differences.<sup>38</sup>

Such a multicultural society attests to the marked openness of the city to the rest of the world, which the Russian occupation from 1758 to 1762 only amplified. Personally, for Kant occupation meant liberation from soul-stifling pietistic customs and prejudices, as the Russians, who took to everything “beautiful and well-mannered” transformed the city’s cultural climate with their lavish consumption and increased social activity. Softening the distinctions between commoners and

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<sup>36</sup> Kuehn, *Kant*, 65.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>38</sup> More on this concept in 5.4

nobility, these activities—dinners, parties, masked balls, and other diversions—helped further humanize the city’s society while making it freer and even more worldly in the process.<sup>39</sup>

It was during this period that Kant became deeply embedded in Königsberg’s high society: first with Russian—and later, Prussian—military officers, successful bankers, well-off merchants, and their families as well. He also became a regular guest at the provincial court of Count Keyserlingk—where he had the opportunity to mix with the local nobility.<sup>40</sup> Significantly, however, Kant did not restrict his socializing only to these exclusive circles, and often enjoyed the company of people from all sorts of backgrounds and social classes—for over thirty years he took his lunch regularly at the local pub, as he felt that “a philosopher might be more at home in a farmer’s pub than among distorted heads and hearts”.<sup>41</sup> In other words, although Kant “mixed with people in all the estates, and gained true trust and friendship”, he never forgot his humble background, and plausibly, the republican ideals he espoused in his political writings were impacted by these personal experiences.<sup>42</sup>

It was also around this time that Kant began to develop his anthropology course out of his physical geography course at the University of Königsberg, which he first gave in the summer semester of 1756.<sup>43</sup> In the winter semester of 1772–73 Kant decided to spin off a significant portion

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<sup>39</sup> Kuehn, *Kant*, 113–14.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 115.

<sup>41</sup> Quoted in: *Ibid.*, 221.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 116; Of interest is also Kant’s active involvement in the small, egalitarian, learned community which was the local reading society. Such involvement, according to Kuehn, showed “how seriously he took the concerns of the Enlightenment”. *Ibid.*, 164.

<sup>43</sup> Robert B. Loudon, “National Character via the Beautiful and Sublime?,” in *Kant’s Human Being: Essays on His Theory of Human Nature*, First Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 152 This section draws heavily on the work of Robert Loudon.

of the physical geography material into a completely new lecture course which he dedicated solely to anthropology. This novel course would make him the first academic to offer a regular university course on the subject, and, by doing so, a pioneer in developing the obscure term of anthropology into an academic discipline.<sup>44</sup> In contrast to the popular philosophers, who dealt with anthropology mostly among their own circles (i.e., mainly outside of the university), with these lectures Kant managed to bring anthropology to a wider audience. The lasting importance of both courses for Kant is evident from his decision to continue to teach them separately, alternating between physical geography in the summer and anthropology in the winter, every single year until his retirement in 1796.<sup>45</sup>

Both courses were designed for a popular audience, with the intent to introduce the students to the world outside of the classroom and their local communities.<sup>46</sup> The international cohort notwithstanding, most of Kant's students were predominantly young, educated, and upwardly

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<sup>44</sup> Robert B. Loudon, "Anthropology from a Kantian Point of View: Toward a Cosmopolitan Conception of Human Nature," in *Kant's Human Being: Essays on His Theory of Human Nature*, First Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 78–79.

<sup>45</sup> Stark, "Historical Notes and Interpretive Questions about Kant's Lectures on Anthropology," 16.

<sup>46</sup> Kant makes this quite clear in his announcement for his courses in 1775 (note the use of the terms "pragmatic", "destiny [*Bestimmung*]" and "cosmologically", all of which we will return to below):

"The physical geography which I am announcing hereby belongs to an idea which I make myself of a useful academic instruction and which I may call the preliminary exercise in the *knowledge of the world*. This knowledge of the world serves to procure the *pragmatic* element for all otherwise acquired sciences and skills, by means of which they become useful not merely for the *school* but rather for *life* and through which the accomplished apprentice is introduced to the stage of his destiny [*Bestimmung*] namely, the *world*. Here a two-fold field lies before him, of which he requires a preliminary outline so that he can order in it all future experiences according to rules, namely, *nature* and the *human being*. However, both of these must be considered *cosmologically*, namely, not with respect to the noteworthy details that their objects contain (physics and empirical psychology) but with respect to what we can note of the relation as a whole in which they stand and in which everyone takes his place. I call the first instruction *physical geography* and have chosen it for the summer lecture course, the second one I call *anthropology*, which I reserve for the winter lecture course. The remaining lecture courses of this semester have already been announced publicly in the proper location". (*Racen* 2:443)

mobile *Germans*.<sup>47</sup> These men were part of a generation which faced a twofold identity crisis—theirs was a struggle to orient themselves in thinking about their place in both their local state, as well as the wider framework of European culture; of how to achieve citizenship (*Burgertum*) together with humanity (*Menschheit*).<sup>48</sup>

As mentioned, these lectures exhibited a popular, and even entertaining, element, and—even more pertinent to our subject—they retained the spirit of *Popularphilosophie* by *not being purely scholarly or academic undertakings*.<sup>49</sup> As their pedagogical goal was to provide these students with useful information about the world and its inhabitants—that is, *pragmatically* oriented knowledge. By teaching them what to expect when coming to interact with the foreign peoples and cultures they may encounter in their future occupations as merchants, journeymen, civil-servants and the like:

in an anthropology from a pragmatic point of view... the only thing that matters to us is to present the character [of different peoples] as they are now... which makes it possible to judge what each can expect from the other and how each could use the other to its own advantage (*Anth* 7:312)

Thus, the anthropology course was also designed to accommodate the strive of this young, Eastern-Prussian, German-speaking generation to find its place in the *world*. It would help them come to terms with their sense of cultural nationhood, by providing a way to navigate the rivalry between the dominant French and British high cultures, the “impinging mystery of the Slavic powers, especially Russia”, and a fascination—fostered by a burgeoning travel literature—with

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<sup>47</sup> Zammito describes the audience of these lectures as “Green young men—fifteen to twenty years old—at a provincial university on the easternmost frontiers of German civilization, aiming to take their place in a dauntingly demanding world” “What a Young Man Needs for His Venture into the World: The Function and Evolution of the ‘Characteristics,’” in *Kant’s Lectures on Anthropology: A Critical Guide*, ed. Alix Cohen, Cambridge Critical Guides (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 230.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 236.

<sup>49</sup> Loudon, “National Character via the Beautiful and Sublime?,” 153.



far-flung exotic countries and peoples; be they ancient and civilized, such as China and Japan, or primitive and barbaric, such as in the New World, Africa, or the Pacific. For these young Germans, what to make of these newly discovered peoples was closely intertwined with the question of how to make sense of themselves as *Europeans*.<sup>50</sup>

The anthropology lectures were therefore in effect the loci for Kant to act on his impulse to develop and present his own take on *Popularphilosophie*—even if not in the mode that the popular philosophers themselves advocated.<sup>51</sup> Thus, from the very beginning, anthropology was imbued with a popular disposition *for Kant as well*. Right at the outset, in the preface for the *Anthropology* Kant states:

An anthropology written from a pragmatic point of view that is *systematically designed and yet popular* (through reference to examples which can be found by every reader), yields an advantage *for the reading public*: the completeness of the headings under which this or that observed human quality of practical relevance can be subsumed offers readers many occasions and invitations to make each particular into a theme of its own, so as to place it in the appropriate category. Through this means the details of the work are naturally divided among the connoisseurs of this study, and *they are gradually united into a whole* through the unity of the plan. As a result, *the growth of science for the common good is promoted and accelerated* (*Anth* 7:121/2 emphases added).

Günter Zöllner claims, for instance, that Kant “always aimed a substantial part of his teaching and writing at the nonprofessional philosophical public” and that “much of his philosophy in the popular vein can be seen as an exoteric extension of his esoteric core project of the critique of

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<sup>50</sup> Zammito, “What a Young Man Needs for His Venture into the World,” 242–43; Against this background, Kant’s Eurocentrism, by way of an almost exclusive focus on European national characters in the *Anthropology*, may be, in this case, understandable—and not merely for the prosaic reason that he simply knew more about them—it stands to reason that he believed that there was a better chance that his students, and readers, would encounter other Europeans than someone, for instance, from China or Japan. Louden, “National Character via the Beautiful and Sublime?,” 155.

<sup>51</sup> Günter Zöllner, “Kant’s Political Anthropology,” in *Kant Yearbook 2011: Anthropology*, ed. Dietmar H. Heidemann, *Kant Yearbook* 3 (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2011), 134.

reason”.<sup>52</sup> Thus, although Kant rejected the popular philosophers’ eclectic methods he retained their goal of public enlightenment—“the growth of science for the common good”. Consider, for instance, the following passage from the *Critique of Pure Reason*:

Until now, however, the concept of philosophy has been only a **scholastic concept** [*Schulbegriff*], namely that of a system of cognition that is sought only as a science without having as its end anything more than the systematic unity of this knowledge, thus the **logical** perfection of cognition. But there is also a **cosmopolitan concept** (*conceptus cosmicus*) that has always grounded this term, especially when it is, as it were, personified and represented as an archetype in the ideal of the **philosopher** (*KrV* A 838/B 866).

Essentially, Kant’s anthropology is a study of the human being not only in its natural and cultural variety, but, more importantly, *in its unity as well*. Thus, Kant retained the popular philosophers’ ambition to replace scholastic knowledge with ‘general knowledge’ (see below), yet at the same time he also strove to subsume the empirical approach they adopted under a more systematic, universal, and *normative* “science of man”. Earlier in the preface to the *Anthropology* he writes that:

*General* knowledge always precedes *local* knowledge here, if the latter is to be ordered and directed through philosophy: in the absence of which all acquired knowledge can yield nothing more than fragmentary groping around and no science [*fragmentarisches Herumtappen und keine Wissenschaft*] (*Anth* 7:120).

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 133; Naturally, there is considerable debate, and disagreement, about the role and relevance of Kant’s anthropology to his moral and critical philosophy. This includes the two editors of the 25th volume of the Academy edition of *Kants gesammelte Schriften*—a collection of student notes from Kant’s lectures on anthropology—themselves. *Kant’s gesammelte Schriften. Bd. 25*; Although accepting that anthropology “reveals many points of contact with the other areas of Kant’s thought”, Reinhard Brandt unequivocally denies that Kant’s anthropology is the practical complement of pure moral philosophy. As it is “completely self-sufficient it is in its material-psychological grounding, its pragmatic statement of ends, and [in] its outlook on the point of action immanent in the world”. Reinhard Brandt, “The Guiding Idea of Kant’s Anthropology and the Vocation of the Human Being,” in *Essays on Kant’s Anthropology*, ed. Brian Jacobs and Patrick Kain, trans. Patrik Kain and Jaimey Fisher (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 92; Werner Stark, on the other hand, expresses a view closer to that of Zöllner, claiming that the lecture notes themselves indicate that an internal, positive, relationship exists between Kant’s anthropology and his moral philosophy, and thus believes that “Kant considered anthropology to be an integral part of his philosophy (including his critical philosophy), and that it is not to be reckoned as a mere appendage to the system”. Furthermore, he claims that the lectures cannot be understood as “merely” pedagogical, nor can they be considered “‘popular philosophy’ completely distinct from the critically turned system of philosophy”. Stark, “Historical Notes and Interpretive Questions about Kant’s Lectures on Anthropology,” 21.

In the earlier *Pillau* transcript of the anthropology lectures held in 1777–1778 Kant drew the distinction between ‘local’ and ‘general’ knowledge, while adding that when such “general knowledge”, is grounded in the “cosmopolitan concept” of the *Critique* it becomes “cosmological knowledge”:

(1) A local knowledge [*Local Weltkenntniß*] of the world, which merchants [*Kaufleute*] have, which is also called empirical. (2) A general knowledge of the world [*general Weltkenntniß*], which the man of the world has, and which is not empirical but cosmological. Local knowledge of the world is tied to place and time, and also gives no rules to a person to act on in common life. He who becomes acquainted with the world through travel has only this knowledge of it, which, however, also lasts only for a while, for when the behavior in the place where he has been changes, then his knowledge of it also ceases. (*Pillau* 25:734)

Kantian anthropology thus prioritizes universals over particulars, that is, parts can only be understood in relation to the whole.<sup>53</sup> Anthropologies that describe characteristics of human associations as they were in particular times and places (such as in the widely-circulated travelogues of the time), are merely “local”, whose main value lies in their ability to impart (partial) knowledge for the cosmological concept of human nature—without which they would amount to “nothing more than fragmentary groping around and no science”.<sup>54</sup> In contrast, a *cosmological* anthropology strives to traverse time and space so as to universally account for what *all* human beings, in *all* times and *all* spaces, have in common with each other—and how the “local” anthropologies relate to this whole—which is the human species *qua* species.

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<sup>53</sup> The understanding that the whole is conceptually prior to the parts extends to all organic beings in Kant’s philosophy. See: Henry E. Allison, “Teleology and History in Kant: The Critical Foundations of Kant’s Philosophy of History,” in *Kant’s Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim: A Critical Guide*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty and James Schmidt, First Edition, Cambridge Critical Guides (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 32. This sets the stage, as we shall see later on, for Kant to make the claim that the species takes precedence over individuals, and even entire generations.

<sup>54</sup> This is not to say that they lack *any* value—quite the opposite “Travel belongs to the means of broadening the range of anthropology, even if it is only the reading of travel books” (*Anth* 7:120).

Thus, as Kant's anthropology aspires to be "a general anthropology," it concerns itself "not with the condition of human beings but with the nature of humanity" (*Friedländer* 25:471). By doing so, Kant established a fundamentally new approach and a new problematic.<sup>55</sup> It is the whole—the totality of the human species, rather than the parts—its particular cultures and historical moments—which is the object of analysis of Kant's anthropology:

The character of the species, as it is known from the experience of all ages and by all peoples, is this: that, taken collectively (the human race as one whole), *it is a multitude of persons, existing successively and side by side* (*Anth* 7:331 emphasis added).

This is not to say that the human species is an entity distinct from all the individual human beings who comprise it. Rather, as Zöllner puts it, it should be seen as the "culturally aggregated and historically accumulated result of the development of infinitely many individual human beings".<sup>56</sup>

Therefore, not only history—as in the title of Kant's famous essay—but also anthropology, geography, literature, and all the other disciplines that make up the "science of man", can, and *should*, be observed "from a cosmopolitan point of view", that is, with an eye towards the human species' long-term vocation (*Bestimmung*—more below).

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<sup>55</sup> Brandt, "The Guiding Idea of Kant's Anthropology," 98.

<sup>56</sup> Zöllner, "Kant's Political Anthropology," 145.

## 2.2 Kant's Pragmatic Anthropology

Kant's anthropology is also defined by his distinctive use of the term "pragmatic", which he uses in a broad manner to incorporate several different meanings—not all of which correspond to its conventional use today.<sup>57</sup> One such meaning becomes apparent if we compare Kant's "pragmatic anthropology" with the "physiological anthropology" of the popular philosopher Ernst Platner (1744-1818) and the 'philosophical physicians'.<sup>58</sup> Kant sharply drew the contrast himself:

A doctrine of the knowledge of the human being, systematically formulated (anthropology), can exist either in a physiological or in a pragmatic point of view. Physiological knowledge of the human being concerns the investigation of what nature makes of the human being; pragmatic, the investigation of what *he* as a free-acting being makes of himself, or can and should make of himself (*Anth* 7:119).

Contrary to the physiological anthropologists, who sought to describe man in purely naturalistic terms—by adopting the "man as a machine" point of view—Kant's anthropology is "pragmatic" in the sense that it asks: *what can man, as a free agent, make of himself?* Pragmatic anthropology, therefore, seeks not only to describe the human being as it *is* (i.e., what nature could make of him), but also to understand the potentialities that lie within it, and, most importantly, the *moral* potential which can be derived from the use of its freedom. Thus, as it incorporates *both* descriptive and prescriptive dimensions, pragmatic anthropology approaches the study of its subject with a strong underlying teleological assumption, and straddles, therefore the empirical and the normative. In

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<sup>57</sup> Loudon, "Anthropology from a Kantian Point of View," 81.

<sup>58</sup> Although I have decided, for reasons which by now I hope are evident, to focus only on the *Popularphilosophie* movement, this is by no means to imply that it was the *only* catalyst for Kant's Anthropology. It should be pointed out, for instance, that the medical, or physiological, conceptions of human nature such as those of Julien Offray de la Mettrie (1709-1751), who wrote the book *L'homme machine* ("Machine Man" or "Man a Machine", 1748) which influenced Platner, were gaining popularity in the late eighteenth century and also played a key role in the development of Kant's pragmatic anthropology. See: *ibid.*, 78–83; See also: Allen W. Wood, "Kant and the Problem of Human Nature," in *Essays on Kant's Anthropology*, ed. Brian Jacobs and Patrick Kain, First Edition (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 40. See also Kant's "On the Philosophers' Medicine of the Body" (1786) and "From Soemmerring's 'On the Organ of the Soul'" (1796).

Louden's words, "pragmatic anthropology studies the phenomenal effects of human freedom in the empirical world, not their allegedly non-empirical origins".<sup>59</sup>

Yet there is a further, even more pertinent, meaning of Kant's use of the term "pragmatic". Key to Kant's anthropology are the three rational predispositions that he identifies in the human species which help distinguish it from all other living beings. These are the technical, the pragmatic, and the moral predispositions—which develop over time:

Among the living *inhabitants of the earth* the human being is markedly distinguished from all other living beings by his *technical* predisposition for manipulating things (mechanically joined with consciousness), by his *pragmatic* predisposition (to use other human beings skillfully for his purposes), and by the *moral* predisposition in his being (to treat himself and others according to the principle of freedom under laws). And any one of these three levels can by itself alone already distinguish the human being characteristically as opposed to the other inhabitants of the earth (*Anth* 7:322).

The definition of the pragmatic predisposition as the ability "to use other human beings skillfully for one's purposes" makes it, *ipso facto*, the *political predisposition*. It should be noted that, strictly speaking, this makes pragmatic anthropology, just like politics, value free; it can be used for any purpose—moral or not. Yet it is the pragmatic predisposition which also enables human beings:

to become civilized through culture [*Civilisirung durch Cultur*], particularly through the cultivation of social qualities, and the natural tendency of his species in social relations to come out of the crudity of mere personal force and to become a well-mannered (if not yet moral) being destined for concord (*Anth* 7:323).<sup>60</sup>

That political development is an outcome of the pragmatic predisposition can be understood both in the sense that political activity *derives* from this predisposition, but also that the continuous development of this predisposition marks the *progression* of human societies into ever more complexity, such as from the family to tribe to the state, or from a hunter-gatherer or

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<sup>59</sup> Louden, "Anthropology from a Kantian Point of View," 81.

<sup>60</sup> The concepts of culture and civilization will receive further attention below.

pastoral economy into an agricultural one.<sup>61</sup> This, as we shall see later, makes the nation—as well as the nation-state—products of the progressive unfolding of the pragmatic predisposition—or *culture*.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, it will be argued that a highly-developed pragmatic predisposition forms a necessary, although not sufficient, condition for the establishment of all rightful political communities: the republican state, a *Bund* of these republics, and, eventually—what is the culmination of the pragmatic predisposition—the world-republic (*Weltrepublik*), the final, and necessary, condition for the universal *moral* community.<sup>63</sup> Such an outcome can be possible only when pragmatic anthropology is consciously appropriated for moral purposes—i.e., when it becomes a *moral anthropology*, which can provide a guide for applying general moral principles to practical daily life.<sup>64</sup>

This brings us to Kant’s third use of the term “pragmatic” in reference to anthropology, where it forms one part of the knowledge of the world [*Weltkenntnis*] which distinguishes it from “scholastic” knowledge.<sup>65</sup> Which, as we saw above, was a bone of contention for the popular philosophers as well. Whereas scholastic knowledge refers to becoming acquainted with the world, in the sense of observing it (*die Welt kennen*), pragmatic knowledge of human nature involves “having a world” (*Welt haben*), thus, “one only understands the play that one has watched, while

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<sup>61</sup> Zöller, “Kant’s Political Anthropology,” 150.

<sup>62</sup> “Culture” should be understood here in the wider sense to include physical production (as in agriculture), and not just as intellectual refinement. According to this definition, only creatures that possess substantive rationality (below 2.4) can be said to have culture Louden, *Kant’s Human Being*, xxii I shall return to the relation between culture and the pragmatic predisposition in section III.

<sup>63</sup> At this point, the moral, or ethical, community can be said to be where “all the elements of ethics (universality, man as end in himself etc.) are synthesized” see: Yirmiyahu Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 172 fn. As we shall see, the pragmatic and moral predispositions are deeply connected, and the former is instrumental in developing the latter, especially in the final stages of universal history.

<sup>64</sup> Robert B. Louden, “Applying Kant’s Ethics: The Role of Anthropology,” in *Kant’s Human Being: Essays on His Theory of Human Nature*, First Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 77.

<sup>65</sup> Wood, “Kant and the Problem of Human Nature,” 41. Physical Geography (the summer course) makes up the second part of *Weltkenntnis*.

the other has participated in it” (*Anth* 7:120). Pragmatic anthropology therefore involves knowledge that can be derived from human interaction, not merely by observing it. The cosmological scope of such *Weltkenntnis* means, therefore, that an anthropology can be considered pragmatic “only when it contains knowledge of the human being as a *citizen of the world* [*Erkenntnis des Menschen als Weltbürgers*]” (*Anth* 7:120).<sup>66</sup>

The binding of these two concepts together—the pragmatic with the cosmopolitan—thus makes it clear that those inherent moral possibilities of pragmatic anthropology that Kant wishes to explore, and impress upon his audience, *are cosmopolitan possibilities*.

Thus, insofar as Kantian anthropology is concerned, the pragmatical includes the political, and not just any “political”, but the *cosmopolitical*. And by making cosmopolitanism the defining character of the study of the human species, pragmatic anthropology thus also becomes a way to orient the direction of where the human species is heading. This, in turn, requires an analysis of the species’ movement through time—namely, history. Keeping in line with the *Popularphilosophie* framework, Kantian anthropology provides a criterion of value, namely, *cosmopolitan unity*, to assess how much the movements of certain ‘parts’ of the species—cultures, religions, nations, states, and anything else which can fall under the rubric of a “local anthropology”—are conducive to answer this moral call [*Bestimmung*].<sup>67</sup> Such a yardstick can thus help ascertain whether, and how, nationalism is indeed progressive towards this end.

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<sup>66</sup> Louden, “Anthropology from a Kantian Point of View,” 83.

<sup>67</sup> Yet contrary the popular philosophers, Kant would claim that his criterion is *not* historically conditioned.



### 2.3 *Bestimmung*

Yet another part of Kant's original approach to anthropology is his radical reformulation of its central question. Rejecting the classic formulation, already found in Plato, of the question as one of essence, "What is a human being?" (*ti estin anthropos*), Kant replaces it with a question of purpose, which is, "what is the *Bestimmung* of the human species?"<sup>68</sup>

Originally a theological concept, *Bestimmung* was secularized by the popular philosophers, and Kant followed suit by transposing it from the eschatological sphere to the historical one.<sup>69</sup> In German, the word *Bestimmung* has several meanings which, besides revealing its original religious overtones, also coexist in Kant's novel use of the word as well: "calling", "definition", "determination", and "destiny" are all possible translations.<sup>70</sup> *Bestimmung* is commonly, but not exclusively, translated in Kant's writings as "vocation". Thus, for instance:

the true vocation [*die wahre Bestimmung*] of reason must be to produce a will that is good, not perhaps *as a means* to other purposes, but *good in itself*, for which reason was absolutely necessary (*Gr* 4:396).

A cardinal concept, *Bestimmung* pervades Kant's anthropological thought and helps to conceptually unify seemingly different elements in it. Similar to the term 'pragmatic', *Bestimmung* contains a strong teleological element and therefore holds a tension between descriptive and prescriptive meanings as well; Kant uses it to 'define' as well as to 'determine' what the human

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<sup>68</sup> Reinhard Brandt, *Die Bestimmung des Menschen bei Kant*, Unveränderter Print-on-Demand-Nachdruck der Ausgabe von 2007 edition (Hamburg: Meiner, F, 2007), 102–8.

<sup>69</sup> Zöllner, "Kant's Political Anthropology," 144; According to Yovel, this is a typical move of the critical mode of thinking, which changes the function of dogmatic concepts by "transferring them from a context in which they have no validity to a context in which they gain a legitimate if limited use", Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 158.

<sup>70</sup> Brandt comments that "There seems to be no exact equivalent in Greek, Latin, or Italian for *Bestimmung*", and that Moses Mendelssohn pointed out that it can mean either *determinatio* or *destinatio*. For more about the different possible meanings of *Bestimmung* in German, see: Brandt, "The Guiding Idea of Kant's Anthropology," 96–98; For Kant's different uses, and meanings, of the term see: Brandt, *Die Bestimmung des Menschen bei Kant*, 57–60.

being *is* on the one hand, while describing what its ‘destiny’, or ‘calling’ *ought* to be, and how his ‘vocation’ works toward what it “can, and should”, be on the other.<sup>71</sup>

Thus, Kant employs *Bestimmung* to describe the human being’s inherent characteristics, while concomitantly arguing how it ought to pursue its *Bestimmung* as a free agent, who is not *a priori* predetermined to do so.<sup>72</sup> According to Kant, the existence and form of human beings can be grasped only insofar as the “*to what*” of their determination (*das Wozu seiner Bestimmung*) is recognized. Furthermore, it is the *Bestimmung* of the human species *as a whole* which is of interest Kant. The human being which is explored in the *Anthropology* and other related texts is not the individual but the whole of humanity. As we shall see in the following subsection, in marked contrast to other terrestrial animals, which achieve the purpose of their existence (*Daseinszweck*) as individuals, it is only in the species that the human being attains its *Bestimmung*.<sup>73</sup>

As we have seen (2.2), the relevant whole is neither all of creation, nor specific cultures and nations, nor the individual, but rather the entire human species—and it is to the species, first and foremost, that *Bestimmung* pertains.<sup>74</sup> It should be emphasized that whether the human species will actually *reach* its *Bestimmung* depends on the free choice of its members—which belies the

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<sup>71</sup> Robert B. Loudon, “Cosmopolitical Unity: The Final Destiny of the Human Species,” in *Kant’s Lectures on Anthropology: A Critical Guide*, ed. Alix Cohen, Cambridge Critical Guides (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 214.

<sup>72</sup> To use the classical Aristotelian example- an acorn’s *Bestimmung* is to become an oak tree, however, there is no guarantee that it will become one. However, while an acorn has no role in determining whether it will become an oak or not, Kant thinks that humans can actively choose to pursue their *Bestimmung*- or turn away from it. There is a further tension here, this time between teleology and reason, as Kant is not entirely clear as to whether the human species is determined by nature towards its *Bestimmung* as a cosmopolitically united species (teleology), or whether nature propels the species up to a certain point in time where it can choose to pursue its *Bestimmung* entirely freely (reason). A definitive resolution of this debate is far beyond the scope of this study, which will accept elements from both, but in general, sides with the latter (more about this in 3.3). See: Pitte, *Kant as Philosophical Anthropologist*, 94–107; As well as: Georg Cavallar, “Cosmopolitanisms in Kant’s Philosophy,” *Ethics & Global Politics* 5, no. 2 (January 1, 2012): 106–7; See also: Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History* (especially chapters 3 and 4), for Kant’s reintegration of teleological thinking into the critical system.

<sup>73</sup> Brandt, “The Guiding Idea of Kant’s Anthropology,” 97.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

putative view of Kant as a naïve believer in any kind of facile, pre-determined, progress towards the good.<sup>75</sup>

Thus, there is nothing that guarantees “that which constitutes the ultimate end of our existence, namely the moral vocation [*der moralischen Bestimmung*]” (*KU* 5:301). If human beings will ever indeed become “cosmopolitically united”, then it would be only as a result of their own conscious decisions, as nothing prohibits their choice to do otherwise. Again, with pragmatic anthropology we are only dealing with what man “as a free-acting being makes of himself, or can and should make of himself” (*Anth* 7:119).

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<sup>75</sup> Louden, “Applying Kant’s Ethics,” 76. More on this in section III, which deals with Kant’s philosophy of history.

## 2.4 Reason: *Animal Rationabile* and *Animal Rationale*

Closely related to the human species' *Bestimmung* is the identification of *reason* as a defining characteristic of the human being. This Kant qualifies in several different ways, some of which are quite novel as well.

First, Kant is careful to point out that man is merely the only *terrestrial* animal endowed with reason, which, to a certain extent, also circumscribes his exceptionalism. That is, the human being is the only being which is a member of both the class of terrestrial beings *as well as* the class of rational beings. Man is simply the only species known to us from experience that occupies both classes. This creates a problem for defining the character of the species (*Der Charakter der Gattung*):

The highest species concept may be that of a *terrestrial* rational being, however we will not be able to name its character because we have no knowledge of *non-terrestrial* rational beings that would enable us to indicate their characteristic property and so to characterize this terrestrial being among rational beings in general.—It seems, therefore, that the problem of indicating the character of the human species is absolutely insoluble, because the solution would have to be made through experience by means of the comparison of two species of rational being, but experience does not offer us this (*Anth* 7:321).

The human being just happens to be the only rational being on earth—there are non-rational terrestrial beings, and there may very well be non-terrestrial rational beings.<sup>76</sup> In fact, in the first *Critique*, Kant is even willing to stake “everything” that this is indeed the case (*KrV* A825/B853). The significance of this insight will become apparent later, as Kant is always careful to point out that cosmopolitanism is suitable for *rational* beings—not necessarily to human beings *per se*. The human species can aspire to reach a cosmopolitan condition only by virtue of its rationality, and

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<sup>76</sup> This can also be understood from Kant's phrasing in the *Critique of Judgement* that the final end of creation lies in “**the human being** (each rational being in the world) **under moral laws**. [**der Mensch** (*ein jedes vernünftige Weltwesen*) **unter moralischen Gesetzen**]” (5:448). The implication is that Kant grants the possibility of the existence of rational and moral, albeit not necessarily human, or even terrestrial, beings: “How it is with the inhabitants of other planets and their nature, we do not know” (*Idee* 8:26 fn.).

should another rational species be discovered on Saturn, then cosmopolitanism would suit it as well. So, although the problem of indicating the definitive character of the human species is ‘absolutely insoluble’, the best that can be offered is a provisional definition (at least until the discovery of non-terrestrial rational species). The only available comparison—with other terrestrial beings—will necessarily be found wanting.

All terrestrial beings, without exception, share the quality of being biologically determined, and the human being, as a member of this class, also operates under the guidance, and tutelage, of its biological instincts. However, as a member of the class of *rational* beings, the human being also possesses reason—which can attenuate the force of nature’s grip and guide him towards different ends. This marks the primary distinction between man and other terrestrial beings.<sup>77</sup>

However, contrary to the traditional definitions of man as a ‘rational animal’, Kant does not accept that rationality is given *tout court* in the human species. Man is not an animal endowed with reason *per se*, but only with the *capacity* for reason. Humans can be rational, that is, they possess the capability to *become* fully rational beings—but only if they purposely, and actively, develop their capacity to do so. Nothing necessitates that they will indeed choose to do so, nor is there anything that guarantees they will be *able* to, even if they did. Continuing the attempt to define the character of the human species in the *Anthropology*, Kant links together anthropology, history, and political thought, to claim that:

Therefore, in order to assign the human being his class in the system of animate nature, nothing remains for us than to say that he has a character, which he himself creates, insofar as he is capable of perfecting himself according to ends that he himself adopts. By means of this the human being, as an animal endowed with the *capacity of reason (animal rationabile)*, can make out of himself a *rational animal (animal rationale)*—whereby he first *preserves* himself and his species; secondly, trains, instructs, and *educates* his species

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<sup>77</sup> Zöllner, “Kant’s Political Anthropology,” 139.

for domestic society; thirdly, *governs* it as a systematic whole (arranged according to principles of reason) appropriate for society (*Anth* 7:321/2).<sup>78</sup>

This duality creates an inherent tension within the human being, who is simultaneously constituted out of what Kant calls someplace else the “animal human being” (*Tiermensch*) and the “moral human being” (*moralischer Mensch*).<sup>79</sup> The term “animal human being” corresponds to the human being as an “animal capable of reason (*animal rationabile*)” [*vernünftiges Thier [sic]*]. This is a being which, driven by its animal needs, can freely employ its reasoning in pursuit of satisfying them while disregarding the *regulative* aspect inherent in its natural instincts. This transgression of natural boundaries, via the instrumentalization of reason, effectively lifts the immanent constraints which would have otherwise kept its animalistic desires in check.<sup>80</sup>

On the other hand, as a “moral human being” the human being is a “rational being (*animal rationale*)” [*Vernunftwesen*].<sup>81</sup> Meaning that, not only can he employ his reason *instrumentally* to satisfy his animal needs (i.e., ‘intelligence’, which is part of understanding [*Verstand*]), but he can also use it *substantively* to deliberate which ends he *ought* to pursue, and to determine his choice

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<sup>78</sup> Note that the development of reason is concomitant with the development of governance. The species, as a whole, must develop its reason if it is to be governed as a whole. Wood conjectures that the three functions ascribed to the capacity of reason in human life—self-preservation, education, and governance—correspond to the three rational predispositions: the *technical* corresponds to self-preservation as it devises means for acquiring food and other necessities of survival, the *pragmatic* to education as it involves the transmission of learned behavior, or culture, over time, and the *moral* to the function of governing society through self-given rational laws. Wood, “Kant and the Problem of Human Nature,” 51–53.

<sup>79</sup> *Refl* 1521 15:888. quoted in: Zöller, “Kant’s Political Anthropology,” 155.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.* One example that can be given is the transition from hunting for sustenance to hunting for sport: “Yet reason soon began to stir and sought through comparison of that which gratified with that which was represented to him by another sense than the one to which instinct was bound, such as the sense of sight, as similar to what previously was gratifying, to extend his knowledge of the means of nourishment beyond the limits of instinct” (*Anfang* 8:111) .

<sup>81</sup> Historically, the Latin terms *animal rationabile* and *animal rationale* have both been used interchangeably to denote “rational animal”. Kant is the first to disentangle the two and draw a distinction between them. I am thankful to Calvin Normore and Peter Stacey for their help in clarifying this matter.

on purely rational grounds.<sup>82</sup> Substantive rationality, or reason (*Vernunft*) is what underpins morality.<sup>83</sup>

That is, not only can humans determine the *means* they require towards certain ends—as, to a certain degree, all animals do—but within the class of terrestrial animals, it is humans, and humans *alone*, who possess the capability to freely determine the *very ends they ought to pursue*: man “has a character, which he himself creates, insofar as he is capable of perfecting himself according to ends that he himself adopts” (*Anth* 7:321 above).

This freedom to pursue the ends of its own choosing, rather than being entirely determined by instinct, adds a further provisional note to Kant’s definition of the human species; by making substantive rationality its hallmark, Kant has effectively characterized the human species as being ‘determinedly undetermined’. Humanity, in the words of Reinhard Brandt, “is unambiguously determined or destined (*bestimmt*) by providence to self-determination (*Selbstbestimmung*) and is compelled, with all of reason’s wiles and natural force, to acquire this ethical autonomy”.<sup>84</sup>

This somewhat paradoxical fact—that *Unbestimmtheit* (indetermination) makes up part of the human species’ *Bestimmung*—marks the uniqueness of the human species among all terrestrial beings, and it is this inherent indeterminacy which also radically opens up its mode of life.<sup>85</sup> This

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<sup>82</sup> This is acquired by adopting a “culture of discipline” which “consists in the liberation of the will from the despotism of desires” (*KU* 5:432). To wit, this is the capacity *to determine the ends themselves* from the order of reason, and consciously work to achieve them.

<sup>83</sup> Zöllner, “Kant’s Political Anthropology,” 156; See also the introduction to: Loudon, *Kant’s Human Being*, xxi–xxii.

<sup>84</sup> Brandt, “The Guiding Idea of Kant’s Anthropology,” 96.

<sup>85</sup> Loudon, “Cosmopolitical Unity,” 218. It should be noted that the tentativeness of this definition is not a grave concern for Kant, who is less troubled with fixing anthropological definitions and essences, or with identifying the reasons as for why they are so (see the comparison with the “physiological Anthropologists” above). Kant is not preoccupied with describing the state of nature or with trying to resolve whether it was Hobbes or Rousseau who

open-ended potential, which holds the promise for a shift from animality to humanity, is Kant's main anthropological interest.<sup>86</sup> Thus pragmatic anthropology asks not only what *can* man, as a free agent, make out of himself, as we seen (2.2), but even more importantly, it asks what he *ought to make of himself* as well.

If this tension between the animalistic and the human is ever to be resolved, it is clear to Kant that it cannot be done over the course of a single lifetime. Here, the teleological element of *Bestimmung* enables Kant to further differentiate the human being vis-à-vis other animals; whereas individuals of the animal kingdom fulfill their *Bestimmung* over the course of their own lifetimes, it is one of the peculiarities of the human species that its *Bestimmung* can be fulfilled only within the species itself. To wit, *qua* animals, humans reach their *Bestimmung* by being born, maturing, and reproducing before dying, but *qua* rational beings, their *Bestimmung* can only be fulfilled over the course of *many* lifetimes, and as such, it can only be achieved by the species as a whole.<sup>87</sup> As Kant writes in the *Anthropology*:

First of all, it must be noted that with all other animals left to themselves, each individual reaches its complete destiny [*Bestimmung*]; however with human beings only the *species*,

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portrayed it more accurately: "The questions whether the human being was originally destined to walk on four feet... or on two feet;... whether the human being is a herbivorous or (since he has a membranous stomach) a carnivorous animal;—whether, since he has neither claws nor fangs, consequently (without reason) no weapons, he is by nature a predator or a peaceable animal – the answer to these questions is of no consequence" (*Anth* 7:322). Kant is more interested in why people would leave the state of nature, if it was as perfect as Rousseau described it. And he accepts the Hobbesian portrayal that there was a state of conflict in human history. Whether this was in the state of nature as Hobbes believed, or an early stage of civil society, as Rousseau countered, is of no concern to him. See also *MdS* §52, 6:339–40 in section 4.2 below.

<sup>86</sup> Zöllner, "Kant's Political Anthropology," 143; Loudon, *Kant's Human Being*, xxi.

<sup>87</sup> Zöllner, "Kant's Political Anthropology," 145 Although Kant does indeed point to the incongruity between the natural development and the rational development even within the individual human's life span. Consider, for example, the discrepancy in age between when a human being reaches sexual maturity, and the age when it is deemed socially acceptable to act on it: "the natural phases of his development refuse to coincide with the civil phases. According to the first, the human being in his natural state, at least by his fifteenth year, is driven by the sexual instinct, and he is also capable of procreating and preserving his kind. According to the second, he can (on average) hardly venture upon it before his twentieth year. For even if, as a citizen of the world, the young man has the capacity early enough to satisfy his own inclination and his wife's; nevertheless, as a citizen of the state, he will not have the capacity for a long time to support his wife and children" (*Anth* 7:325).



at best, reaches it; so that the human race can work its way up to its destiny [*Bestimmung*] only through *progress* in a series of innumerably many generations (*Anth* 7:324).<sup>88</sup> This tension will be resolved, if at all, only when the human species, *as a species*, will freely determine to resolve it. When it decides to transform itself from the condition of the *animal rationabile*—an animal enhanced with instrumental reason, determined by nature’s instincts but unbound by its constraints, into an *animal rationale*—one which exercises his reason freely, with only the moral law to regulate his conduct.<sup>89</sup> The long and winding road between the two, the “education of mankind”, is human history.

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<sup>88</sup> Cf.: “In the animal species each individual reaches its destiny [*Bestimmung*], but in the human race a single individual can never do this, rather only the whole human species can reach its destiny, despite the fact that the human being is furnished by nature like an animal. – In the human species it is inappropriate, that never the individual, but rather the species, reaches its destiny” (*Menschenkunde* 25:1196); “With the animal, every individual reaches the destiny [*Bestimmung*] of its being in this life already. With the human being, the species first reaches the destiny of humanity from generation to generation, since a generation always adds something to the enlightenment of the previous one, and thus it makes the [next] generation more perfectly endowed than it was. The human being has himself to thank for enlightenment not only in arts and sciences, but also in morals” (*Mrongovius* 25:1417). The formulation of this statement in the *Idea* (8:18/19) will be dealt with in 3.1.

<sup>89</sup> Zöllner, “Kant’s Political Anthropology,” 156; On Kant’s use of “instrumental reason”, although he did not use the term itself, see: Brandt, “The Guiding Idea of Kant’s Anthropology,” 103 fn.9.

## 2.5 Cosmopolitanism as the Organizing Principle of Pragmatic Anthropology: The Structure of the *Anthropology*

While there is a certain overlap between the terms *cosmological* and *cosmopolitan*, there is also a substantial difference; *Cosmological*, as we have seen, denotes a general perspective centered on the totality of the human species, whereas in Kant's use of the term *Cosmopolitan* "There are distinct political, legal, and moral overtones" which emerge from the use of the Greek suffix *politēs*, thereby granting it a distinctive normative dimension.<sup>90</sup> The subsumption of the particular under the general is reflected in the very structure of the *Anthropology* itself—which opens with individual cognition and closes with the call for the cosmopolitical unification of the species. When considering the context of its historical setting—lectures geared towards a popular audience—this vector, from the individual to the species, stands out in its significance.

This is no accident. The popular impulse for improving the social conditions of mankind finds its outlet in the explicit call for cosmopolitanism because, for Kant, the human species *is* a cosmopolitan species, and, significantly, part of its enlightenment consists in the recognition that cosmopolitanism is intrinsic to its *Bestimmung*. Hence, anthropology can *only* be properly done from a pragmatic (i.e., cosmopolitan) point of view. According to Louden, "Kant believes that in studying anthropology in the manner he proposes the student will eventually arrive at a cosmopolitan conception of human nature. Additionally, he holds that the most important reason to study anthropology is to obtain this specific conception of human nature".<sup>91</sup> And while he does not definitively lay out precisely what this cosmopolitan conception *is*, we find various

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<sup>90</sup> Louden, "Anthropology from a Kantian Point of View," 88.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

articulations of it throughout the *Anthropology*; for instance, where Kant discusses the shift from *egoism* (the individual) to *pluralism*:

The opposite of egoism can only be *pluralism*, that is, the way of thinking in which one is not concerned with oneself as the whole world, but rather regards and conducts oneself as a mere citizen of the world.—This much belongs to anthropology (*Anth* 7:130).

The consistent appearance of cosmopolitanism in the various earlier course notes, (as well as in other earlier sources), attests to the significance Kant attached to the subject—long before he wrote about it in his late political essays such as the *Idea* and *Perpetual Peace*—and grants further credence to our claim that Kant’s anthropology is foundational for his political thought.<sup>92</sup>

So, a further answer to “why anthropology?” is that pragmatic anthropology, by studying the human species in its entirety, reveals that the human species’ *Bestimmung*—a universal moral community—*requires a political condition*, namely, a cosmopolitan *political* community, for its establishment and propagation, which therefore compliments the “natural tendency toward it”:

The character of the species, as it is known from the experience of all ages and by all peoples, is this: that, taken collectively (the human race as one whole), it is a multitude of persons, existing successively and side by side, who cannot *do without* being together peacefully and yet cannot *avoid* constantly being objectionable to one another. Consequently, they feel destined by nature [*sich von der Natur bestimmt fühlen*—here can also be translated as “determined” or “called” by nature—RR] to [develop], *through mutual compulsion under laws that come from themselves* [emphasis added], into a *cosmopolitan society (cosmopolitismus)* that is constantly threatened by disunion but generally progresses toward a coalition. In itself it is an unattainable idea but not a constitutive principle (the principle of anticipating lasting peace amid the most vigorous actions and

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<sup>92</sup> “a general knowledge of the world, such as the man of the world has, and it is... cosmological” (*Pillau* 25:734 quoted in full above); “The point of view from which particularly princes should consider states must not be merely patriotic, but also cosmopolitical; that is, it should rise to the universal good” (*Menschenkunde* 25:1202); Semblance 1. indicates culture 2. is a means of winning hearts until it finally becomes reality. – With regard to cosmopolitan government, semblance is necessary and is also interwoven [with it] (*Mrongovius* 25:1255); “From it [Anthropology-RR], one gets to know those things about human beings that are **pragmatic**, rather than speculative. It treats human beings not from a **physiological** point of view, in which the origins of phenomena are identified, but from a **cosmological** point of view. (*Geo* 9:157 emphasis in original); “these must be considered cosmologically, namely, not with respect to the noteworthy details that their objects contain (physics and empirical psychology) but with respect to what we can note of the relation as a whole in which they stand and in which everyone takes his place (*Racen* 2:443). It is worth remembering that the published version (*Anth*) is only the *final* version which Kant authorized to serve as the course manual.

reactions of human beings). Rather, it is only a regulative principle: to pursue this diligently as the destiny of the human race [*Bestimmung der Menschengeschlechts*], not without grounded supposition of a natural tendency toward it (*Anth* 7:331).<sup>93</sup>

Hence the ethical dimension of Kant's anthropology—it prescribes the goals that humans, both as individuals and as collectives, ought to pursue—as mentioned above, *and to embody these goals in the laws and institutions of their political communities*. As it is our duty to pursue cosmopolitanism “diligently as the destiny of the human race”, the ‘popular’ audience—the students attending the anthropology lectures, as well as the readers of the published book—are thus provided, in the words of Robert Loudon, with a “moral map”, one that “describes both the long-term goal of humanity’s efforts and the major steps by means of which this goal is to be reached”.<sup>94</sup>

Moral cosmopolitanism, as it were, should thus serve as the lodestar to guide the ship which carries the human species through the turbulent waters of human history towards the ‘kingdom of ends’ which is the universal moral community. This ship—the cosmopolitan *political* community—must be built, however, through a collective effort of the entire species, and, if it is ever to arrive safely, it must chart its own course, while navigating between the Scylla of war—and the Charybdis of paternalism.

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<sup>93</sup> Note the emphasis on a gradual process (“generally progresses”). Here the aforementioned tension between freedom and teleology is displayed in stark detail; Loudon points out that “Kant almost seems to be hedging his bets” in this passage, pointing to the tension between the claim that there is a “natural tendency” in humans towards cosmopolitanism— as a part of human biology, that may very lie in our DNA, and the claim that it is also “an unattainable ideal”, a regulative principle whose purpose is to orient our thinking. Furthermore, as we shall see, this claim stands in further tension with Kant’s claims in *Toward Perpetual Peace* that “nature guarantees perpetual peace through the mechanism of human inclinations itself” and that “nature itself does it, whether we will or not (*fata volentem ducunt, nolentem trahunt*)” (*ZeF* 8:368, 8:365). See: Loudon, “Cosmopolitical Unity,” 228. I shall return to this tension below in 5.6.

<sup>94</sup> Loudon, “Applying Kant’s Ethics,” 75 This line of argument is developed further in the final part of section V.

## 2.6 Philosophical Anthropology: Conclusion

To conclude, Kantian anthropology is popular, general, and pragmatic—all of which makes it *cosmopolitan*. Furthermore, these all make it inherently *political*. As Louden states, “it is clear that a political dimension forms a necessary part of his [Kant’s] cosmopolitan conception of human nature”.<sup>95</sup> And, as it will be suggested in the closing section, it is through anthropology that Kant’s philosophy becomes an active force in the world. After establishing that the human species’ *Bestimmung* is cosmopolitan, we can now turn to examine how nations and nationalism fit within this scheme as well.

Although nominally Kant belongs to those thinkers for whom man is the crown of creation (or, at least, to those who *profess* to believe in a creation), his willingness to entertain the notion of extra-terrestrial rational life, together with his recognition that man’s rationality is not given, but rather accomplished, substantially qualifies his defense of human exceptionalism.<sup>96</sup> The preeminence of man—as a species and as an individual—is not given, but is rather an outcome of the overcoming of his animality. That is, man’s centrality in the grand scheme of things arises not by how he *is*, but how he *ought* to be. This he should struggle to accomplish by use of his reason and consciously pursuing the moral ends it ascribes.

This struggle, a result of its inherent indeterminateness, is what makes the human species a *historical* species. Philosophical, or moral, history is therefore not a series of temporal events, but a conscious activity determined by reason, and only when this is done properly—with an eye

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<sup>95</sup> Louden, “Anthropology from a Kantian Point of View,” 89; See also: Stark, “Historical Notes and Interpretive Questions about Kant’s Lectures on Anthropology,” 29.

<sup>96</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 180.

towards the species' moral cosmopolitan *Bestimmung* and its painstaking slow realization—can man assume his rightful place at the center of creation.

### *III: Philosophy of History*

#### 3.0 Introduction: From Pragmatic Anthropology to Universal History

Kant’s philosophy of history should be seen as a “component of anthropology” as well.<sup>97</sup> Indeed, it is the ‘determinate-indeterminateness’ character of human nature which makes history possible in the first place. Furthermore, as will be shown, each of the three rational predispositions has its own distinctively different mode of historical development.<sup>98</sup> Given that our focus is on a political question, and, having established that ‘the pragmatic is the political’, our concern lies primarily with the unfolding of the pragmatic predisposition—namely, with “pragmatic history”.

Kant’s first, and “most fully worked out”, statement of his philosophy of history is the essay *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim*, first published in the *Berlinische Monatsschrift IV* on November 11, 1784 (heretofore the *Idea*).<sup>99</sup> Comprised of nine propositions, the title of the essay already hints at its intention. The use of the terms “universal history” and “cosmopolitan aim” is an indication that Kant is employing the same “cosmopolitan concept” of the *Critique*, discussed above (2.1), but here he is applying it to history instead of anthropology.

The subject of the essay is therefore not the history of a particular field or people, which would amount merely to a fragmentary ‘local history’—the historical equivalent of a ‘local anthropology’—but rather “the totality of human actions and products, taken as a whole” in the

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<sup>97</sup> Reinhard Brandt and Werner Stark, “Einleitung,” in *Vorlesungen über Anthropologie*, by Immanuel Kant, ed. Reinhard Brandt and Werner Stark, Immanuel Kant: Gesammelte Schriften 25 (Berlin, Boston: Walter de Gruyter & Co, 1997), liii; See also: Louden, “Cosmopolitan Unity,” 214.

<sup>98</sup> Wood, “Kant and the Problem of Human Nature,” 53.

<sup>99</sup> *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht* Allen W. Wood, “Translator’s Introduction,” in *Kant’s Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim: A Critical Guide*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty and James Schmidt, First Edition, Cambridge Critical Guides (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 9. Significantly, the German word *Absicht* can also be translated as “intention”, “purpose”, “intent”, and even “plan”. Lewis White Beck, for example, chose to translate the title as “Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View” Lewis White Beck, ed., *Kant: On History*, First Edition (London: Pearson, 1963).

words of Yirmiyahu Yovel.<sup>100</sup> The *Idea* is a milestone of Kant’s political thought as well, since it marks the *written* debut of two of Kant’s most notable ideas; the anthropological concept of “unsocial sociability” (*ungesellige Geselligkeit*), and the political idea of a “federation of states” (*Völkerbund*).<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 141.

<sup>101</sup> Loudon points out that there are important forerunners of the concept of “unsocial sociability” in several of the Lectures on Anthropology, which precede the *Idea*. However, these are also tinged with a more moralistic shade, as “part of nature’s hidden plan is to bring good out of evil” Loudon, “Cosmopolitical Unity,” 224-226. As for the *Völkerbund*—which can be translated either as “federation of states” or a “federation of peoples” (more on this below)—the *Anthropology Friedländer* transcripts, which were taken almost ten years before the *Idea*—as early as 1775/6—do reference Kant discussing a “senate of nations” as part his anthropology course, but these were notes taken by a student, and were never officially sanctioned by Kant himself. See (*Friedländer* 25:696).



### 3.1 The Problem, an Idea, a Thesis

The essay opens with a statement of the problem that Kant is attempting to solve. Namely, whether it is possible to discern a rational pattern in the events of human history, “a hidden plan of nature” (*Idee* 8:27), given that, as we saw above, the human species occupies a middle ground between animals and rational beings:

Since human beings in their endeavors do not behave merely instinctively, like animals, and yet also not on the whole like rational citizens of the world [*wie vernünftige Weltbürger*] in accordance with an agreed upon plan... Here there is no other way out for the philosopher—who, regarding human beings and their play in the large, cannot at all presuppose any rational *aim of theirs*—than to try whether he can discover an *aim of nature* in this nonsensical course of things human; from which aim a history in accordance with a determinate plan of nature might nevertheless be possible even of creatures who do not behave in accordance with their own plan (*Idee* 8:17-18).<sup>102</sup>

Observing the hitherto sum of events and human deeds, “the philosopher” cannot avoid discerning a certain pattern emerging out of the apparent chaos and violence. This pattern consists of *two* kinds of correspondences: the first is an inner relation between the events and deeds of the past themselves, where man’s predispositions—primarily the technical and pragmatic—are, noticeably developing at an ever-increasing pace and in a cumulative manner.<sup>103</sup> From a pragmatic point of view, this progress can also be seen as the gradual emancipation of man from the arbitrary rule of nature—as despotic polities, founded on violence, are slowly becoming more and more civilized.<sup>104</sup> While the second correspondence is the striking congruence between the course of history itself, and what reason would have recommended *a priori* as a moral “ought”.<sup>105</sup> And given

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<sup>102</sup> Note that Kant explicitly binds rationality together with cosmopolitanism here as well.

<sup>103</sup> In the form, for instance, of technological advances, as well as the increase in the population, and complexity, of political communities.

<sup>104</sup> I shall return to this point later, in the third part.

<sup>105</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 166–67.

that humans do not behave “on the whole like rational citizens of the world”, this pattern cannot be a result of rational intent; hence, Kant infers, it *must* be ascribed to the blind work of nature.<sup>106</sup>

To explain this pattern, Kant adopts the “Idea” of cosmopolitanism. In Kantian terminology, “Ideas” have a specific meaning; they are “concepts of a perfection that we can always approach but never completely attain” (*Anth* 7:200). That is, they are rational concepts that function as *principles of totalization*.<sup>107</sup> They serve, therefore, both regulative and heuristic purposes; as the former they are rational regulations which, in lieu of the natural ones which have been dissolved, man *ought* to impose on himself. While as a heuristic, an “Idea” applied to history is a means to discern “how the course of the world would have to go if it were to conform to certain rational ends” (*Idee* 8:29).

As Pauline Kleingeld notes, “The leading problem of the *Idea* is an epistemological worry”, concerning the possibility of organizing empirical historical facts under such a unifying regulative Idea.<sup>108</sup> Here, Kant chooses to employ the cosmopolitan concept from the first *Critique* as such a regulative Idea for his reflection on world history—“this idea should still serve us as a guiding thread for exhibiting an otherwise planless *aggregate* of human actions, at least in the large, as a *system*” (*Idee* 8:29). By employing this heuristic, Kant purports to demonstrate that, when

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<sup>106</sup> As Yovel remarks: “It may be noticed that this expedient forces itself only with respect to past history, the only one we can review. There is nothing in Kant’s words to exclude the possibility that at a certain point in history, a conscious *a priori* plan of reason would emerge. This turning point occurs with the Enlightenment and with the full explication of reason’s inherent designs in Kant’s own *Critiques*. Henceforth, men would be able to promote history, even political history, from a common rational goal; but since not all of them will choose to share it, the cunning of nature will keep its role as a vehicle of progress, although no longer the sole vehicle”. *ibid.*, 143 I shall return to this cardinal point in subsection 4.1 when discussing Kant’s observation that people “do not at all want” a *Weltrepublik* in *ZeF*.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 141 (fn.).

<sup>108</sup> Pauline Kleingeld, “Kant’s Changing Cosmopolitanism,” in *Kant’s Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim: A Critical Guide*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty and James Schmidt, First Edition, Cambridge Critical Guides (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 175.

individual historical facts are viewed from a cosmopolitan view (*in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*), they acquire philosophical meaning. It is “only a thought of that which a philosophical mind (which besides this would have to be very well versed in history) could attempt from another standpoint” (*Idee* 8:30).<sup>109</sup>

“The cunning of nature” is the name of the thesis Kant develops to explain how the human species managed, without any intention or coordination, to produce a semi-rational system in history, and at its heart lies Kant’s famous concept of unsocial sociability.<sup>110</sup> The thesis, according to Yovel, holds “that man’s instincts, his antisocial inclinations, and especially his disposition to violence and to war ultimately cancel themselves and lead to the actualization of a rational political system”.<sup>111</sup> The cosmopolitan Idea is thus the “*aim of nature* in this nonsensical course of things human” and unsocial sociability is the means by which this “determinate plan” will be realized.<sup>112</sup>

The cunning of nature is thus an *a priori* principle in the explanation of history in the *Idea*.<sup>113</sup> Reflection on empirical history, particularly on the details of how unsocial sociability operates—through conflict, war, inequality, and other forms of social antagonism—and its relation to reason,

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<sup>109</sup> We have seen above (2.5) how Kant reaffirms cosmopolitanism as a regulative idea in the *Anthropology*.

<sup>110</sup> As we shall see in the following section, *nature is not a moral being*, therefore attributing intent to nature itself can be done only by analogy or in a metaphorical sense. It is impossible, therefore, for nature to grant meaning to human life—natural history included—thus it is up to man to grant it, or create it, through *moral* history.

<sup>111</sup> Yovel, in turn, adopted the expression “the cunning of nature,” from Eric Weil’s *Problemes kantians* (Paris, 1963). The title “is intentionally reminiscent of Hegel’s ‘cunning of reason’ (*List der Vernunft*), but for Hegel reason is immersed in the empirical world and in human instincts and representations, so that it is an active dialectical factor working towards its own self-realization by means of its opposite. But for Kant there is a radical division between reason and nature; dialectical ‘cunning’ must therefore be attributed to nature itself” Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 140fn; Henry Allison notes that “Kant himself uses virtually the same expression, referring to the *Kunstanstalten der Natur* (artifices [can also be rendered as ‘artistic designs’ or ‘artistic arrangements’ RR] of nature)” (*ZeF* 8:362) Allison, “Teleology and History in Kant: The Critical Foundations of Kant’s Philosophy of History,” 27 fn; See also: Höffe, *Kant’s Cosmopolitan Theory of Law and Peace*, 162.

<sup>112</sup> See also: Höffe, *Kant’s Cosmopolitan Theory of Law and Peace*, 162–64.

<sup>113</sup> For an explanation on how teleology becomes a critical concept on the basis of the principle of reflective judgement, in terms of “the *a priori* of the *a posteriori*” see: Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, chaps. 3–4 in short: “The teleological form is thus an *a priori* condition for the intelligibility of these phenomena but not for their ontological possibility as real entities in nature”. p. 160.

should reveal the empirical laws by which this model is realized. This allows history to be understood as a single, “general”, cosmopolitan history by which nature overcomes itself by producing a rational system that will eventually subordinate it.<sup>114</sup> Such a philosophical investigation of history hence provides the benefit to “serve not merely for the explanation of such a confused play of things human, or for an art of political soothsaying about future changes in states... but rather there will be opened a consoling prospect into the future” (*Idee* 8:30).<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 168.

<sup>115</sup> Approaching history from this standpoint also allows me to conjecture how nations and nationalism—political phenomena which, at best, were only beginning to manifest themselves in Kant’s time—might fit within such a philosophical history, while avoiding anachronism and forcing Kant into a procrustean bed of later concepts. i.e., it allows us to ask whether there’s a place for nations and nationalism in the Kantian philosophy of history, despite, strictly speaking, them being later phenomena.

### 3.2 Unsocial Sociability

Kant introduces unsocial sociability—the anthropological concept he employs to describe the antagonism that humans exhibit in their behavior towards each other—in the fourth proposition of the *Idea*.<sup>116</sup> It is through this antagonism that human beings develop their rational faculty, and, as Kant will later add in the *Anthropology*, in comparison to other possible rational beings on earth—it is a peculiarly *human* way to develop. Although the immediate effects of unsocial sociability may be harmful to the individual—it ultimately benefits the species.<sup>117</sup>

The concept introduces a certain dynamism into Kant’s philosophy of history, as it is unsocial sociability which propels the development of the human species’ predispositions forward. It therefore forms the conceptual bridge between Kant’s philosophical anthropology and his philosophy of history. Indeed, Allen Wood has commented that unsocial sociability is “fundamental not only to [Kant’s] theory of history, but also to his anthropology and even to his entire moral philosophy”.<sup>118</sup> It is the main device which the cunning of nature employs to drive the human species towards civilization and culture:

*The means nature employs in order to bring about the development of all their’ predispositions is their **antagonism** in society, insofar as the latter is in the end the cause of their lawful order. Here I understand by ‘antagonism’ the *unsociable sociability* of human beings, i.e. their propensity to enter into society, which, however, is combined with a thoroughgoing resistance that constantly threatens to break up this society. The predisposition for this obviously lies in human nature. The human being has an inclination to become *socialized*, since in such a condition he feels himself as more a human being, i.e. feels the development of his natural predispositions. But he also has a great propensity*

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<sup>116</sup> Kant adapted this term from Montaigne: “There is nothing more unsociable than Man, and nothing more sociable: unsociable by his vice, sociable by his nature.” In: “On solitude” Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Essays*, ed. and trans. M. A. Screech, Reprint edition (London, England; New York, N.Y., USA: Penguin Classics, 1993), 267.

<sup>117</sup> In Section III we will see that these benefits also include a *negative* role of cultural differences, and the conflicts they beget, in the prevention of a world despotism.

<sup>118</sup> Allen W. Wood, “Kant’s Fourth Proposition: The Unsociable Sociability of Human Nature,” in *Kant’s Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim: A Critical Guide*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty and James Schmidt, First Edition, Cambridge Critical Guides (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 114–15.

to *individualize* (isolate) himself, because he simultaneously encounters in himself the unsociable property of willing to direct everything so as to get his own way, and hence expects resistance everywhere because he knows of himself that he is inclined on his side toward resistance against others. Now it is this resistance that awakens all the powers of the human being, brings him to overcome his propensity to indolence, and, driven by ambition, tyranny, and greed, to obtain for himself a rank among his fellows, whom he cannot *stand*, but also cannot *leave alone*. (*Idee* 8:20-21).<sup>119</sup>

Unsocial sociability reappears in the *Anthropology*, albeit in a slightly different, yet significant, manner; whereas in the *Idea* both social and unsocial inclinations are conceived as natural, in the *Anthropology*, only *unsociability* is described as natural, therefore making it alone a device of the cunning of nature. Sociability, or concord, on the other hand, is the result of man's *overcoming* of this natural tendency towards discord, through the conscious and free application of his reason:

But in comparison with the idea of possible rational beings on earth in general, the characteristic of the human species is this: that nature has planted in it the seed of *discord*, and has willed that its own reason bring *concord* out of this, or at least the constant approximation to it. It is true that in the *idea* concord is the **end**, but in *actuality* the former (discord) is the **means**, in nature's plan, of a supreme and, to us, inscrutable wisdom: to bring about the perfection of the human being through progressive culture, although with some sacrifice of his pleasures of life. (*Anth* 7:322).<sup>120</sup>

So long as humans are incapable to freely determine their ends, they will remain free only in a very minimal sense; their freedom is tantamount to that of animals who have cast off the shackles of their natural instincts and live merely to satisfy their desires.<sup>121</sup> Moreover, their freedom is further constrained by their mutual, relentless, strive to impose their will on each other—while

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<sup>119</sup> Note that the three characteristic vices mentioned here, namely, ambition, tyranny and greed are all *intrinsically social*—as they are meaningless without a society.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. above: “taken collectively (the human race as one whole), it is a multitude of persons, existing successively and side by side, cannot *do without* being together peacefully and yet cannot *avoid* constantly being objectionable to one another” (*Anth* 7:331).

<sup>121</sup> Only a few steps, and a materialist interpretation, are needed to arrive from this central tenet of Kant's philosophical anthropology, of man as a free *agent*, to that of Marx's—which sees man as a free *creator*, who satisfies the new material needs which he himself created. In both cases, the eschatology of history is *freedom*.

constantly seeking to avoid the same being done to them. This competitive impulse forms the *unsocial* dimension of unsocial sociability.<sup>122</sup>

Concomitantly, humans exhibit an opposite *social* dimension when they choose to collaborate with each other, whether for reproduction and survival, or in pursuit of their now-unrestricted desires. Such cooperation, for instance, is observable when they conspire to increase their dominion over others, as well as when they join forces to resist being dominated themselves.<sup>123</sup> And although initially an unfettered reason abets both dimensions, it will not necessarily continue to serve them both equally: “Reason in a creature is a faculty of extending the rules and aims of the use of all its powers far beyond natural instinct, and it knows no boundaries to its projects” (*Idee* 8:19). Such “projects” include highly complex political associations, not the least of which is the *Weltrepublik*.

Discord is merely nature’s device for developing rational capacities that can direct human life to ends that are, in the last count, fundamentally opposed to this very same device.<sup>124</sup> Once unleashed, reason can proceed to switch from its instrumental to substantive modes, and articulate ends which are rational themselves—without the ‘leading strings’ of nature—and not merely determine the means necessary for their realization. In the final count, reason can, and should, be put in the service of concord—and the construction of such “projects”.

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<sup>122</sup> Zöllner, “Kant’s Political Anthropology,” 146; See also: Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 148–49. Although unsociability takes many forms (individual conflict, class inequality, economic self-interest, and so on) we shall focus on the most violent form—war—as it helps explain the rise of states and nations and their role vis-à-vis Kant’s cosmopolitan scheme.

<sup>123</sup> Hence the social dimension should not be assumed to be inherently *moral*, but rather as merely *pragmatic*. It is also pragmatic in the conventional sense, since community is a “necessary result of their [all human beings RR] existence on the earth” as a result of being constrained by the “the spherical surface of the earth” (*MdS* §15, 6:262). See also: Zöllner, “Kant’s Political Anthropology,” 147.

<sup>124</sup> Wood, “Kant and the Problem of Human Nature,” 55.

The *Idea* thus posits a dialectical relation between the individual and the species. The latter should constantly be remade in the light of ideal reason, which in turn, remakes the individual in this light as well.<sup>125</sup> It is important to note that this is tantamount to the claim that the individual, and even whole generations, are merely a means to achieving the species' *Bestimmung*:

Yet here it remains strange that the older generations appear to carry on their toilsome concerns only for the sake of the later ones, namely so as to prepare the steps on which the latter may bring up higher the edifice which was nature's aim (*Idee* 8:20).

At first blush, nature's use of persons as *means* to improve the human species seems antithetical to Kantian morality, although it *is* congruent with the cosmological view of the species. This requires some elaboration, as the temporal, or historical, dimension is a further novelty which Kant introduces to anthropology. Whereas previous anthropological conceptions saw the human being as a citizen of a *polis*, or even of a *cosmopolis*, for Kant the individual human being is not only a member of its contemporary society, but a member of the human species in its historical dimension as well. This makes the individual, both a member of, and a means to, the future of the species.<sup>126</sup>

In the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, Kant forcefully makes the case for the moral indifference of nature; nature lacks any intrinsic value of its own, therefore it cannot impart any value onto our lives. After stating that the value of a life lived in the pursuit of enjoyment (*Genuß*) is "less than zero", Kant remarks that nature has designed us "merely as a means to an undetermined final end" concluding that:

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<sup>125</sup> Manfred Kuehn, "Reason as a Species Characteristic," in *Kant's Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim: A Critical Guide*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty and James Schmidt, First Edition, Cambridge Critical Guides (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 91 already here we can note the revolutionary aspects of Kant's moral philosophy. This point will become significant when we shall examine later this reciprocal relationship between the nation and the republic. Part of the argument will be that nations make better republics- and republics, in turn, make better nations.

<sup>126</sup> Brandt, "The Guiding Idea of Kant's Anthropology," 98.



Thus nothing is left but the value we give to our lives through that which we do not merely do but also do so purposively and independently of nature that even the existence of nature can be an end only under this condition” (*KU* 5:434).<sup>127</sup>

Nature is not moral. Therefore, no morality can be derived from it—quite the contrary—morality lies precisely in the capacity to successfully act *independently* of nature. It is a matter of happenstance—the peculiarity of the human species as the only rational terrestrial species—that the world can be said to be imbued with any meaning at all. Hence, there is nothing incorrect with the proposition that nature treats individuals as a mere means to its end, and that older generations toil for the sake of younger ones, because *nature is not a moral being*.<sup>128</sup>

Unsociability is thus “the **means**, in nature’s plan” to spark the flame of human resistance against nature itself; against the natural indolence which, if left unchecked, would have left the human species under the eternal tutelage of the ‘benevolent tyranny’ of our natural, animalistic, instincts.<sup>129</sup> Had the human species been left in “an arcadian pastoral life of perfect concord”, morality—and the dignity of the human being as a free, rational, agent—would have remained unrealized forever:

Without these qualities of unsociability from which the resistance arises, which are not at all amiable in themselves, qualities that each of us must necessarily encounter in his selfish pretensions, all talents would, in an arcadian pastoral life of perfect concord, contentment and mutual love, remain eternally hidden in their germs; human beings, as good-natured as the sheep they tended, would give their existence hardly any greater worth than that of their domesticated beasts; they would not fill the void in creation in regard to their end as rational nature. (*Idee* 8:21)

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<sup>127</sup> The existentialist overtones here (along the lines of “existence precedes essence”) should not be lost on the reader. They will come into play at a later point in this study. See also: Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 169.

<sup>128</sup> Kuehn, “Reason as a Species Characteristic,” 91.

<sup>129</sup> Wood, “Kant’s Fourth Proposition: The Unsociable Sociability of Human Nature,” 115–16 Dialectically speaking, we can say that nature thus sows the seed of its own demise, from being the master of man it becomes its servant.

Unsocial sociability is the device of nature by which it seeks to develop the predispositions—especially the technical and pragmatic ones—of the human species.<sup>130</sup> It thus serves to bring forth all the human talents which would otherwise remain dormant; it is the vehicle which propels the *animal rationabile* to become an *animal rationale*:

All culture and art that adorn humanity, and the most beautiful social order, are fruits of unsociability, which is compelled by itself to discipline itself, and thus, by an art extorted from it, to develop completely the germs of nature (*Idee* 8:22).

This emergence from indolence mirrors the path towards of enlightenment; where idleness (*Faulheit*) is one of the reasons “that so great a part of humankind... gladly remains minors for life” (*Aufklärung* 8:35). If nature did not want humans to be morally autonomous beings, it would not have endowed them with the capacity for reason, nor instill within them the antagonistic tendencies by which it is realized. This unsteady, but ultimately *progressive*, movement of our “steps from crudity toward culture” (*Idee* 8:21) and the development of all rational predispositions is history—the education of mankind:

The education of the human race, taking its species as a whole, that is, *collectively* (*universorum*), not all of the individuals (*singulorum*), where the multitude does not yield a system but only an aggregate gathered together; and the tendency toward an envisaged civil constitution, which is to be based on the principle of freedom but at the same time on the principle of constraint in accordance with law: the human being expects these only from *Providence*; that is, from a wisdom that is not *his*, but which is still (through his own fault) an impotent *idea* of his own reason.—*This education from above, I maintain, is salutary but harsh and stern in the cultivation of nature, which extends through great hardship and almost to the extinction of the entire race.* It consists in bringing forth the *good* which the human being has not intended, but which continues to maintain itself once it is there, from *evil*, which is always internally at odds with itself. (*Anth* 7:328 emphasis added)

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<sup>130</sup> There is, of course, more than a passing resemblance to Marx’s later philosophy of history. For more on the affinities, and differences between the two see: Allen W. Wood, “Kant’s Historical Materialism,” in *Autonomy and Community: Readings in Contemporary Kantian Social Philosophy*, ed. Jane Kneller and Sidney Axinn, SUNY Series in Social and Political Thought (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 15–38; See also: Allen W. Wood, *Kant’s Ethical Thought*, First Edition (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 244–49.

In other words, the pattern that appears in universal history, when the philosopher views it *in weltbürgerlicher Absicht* is nothing but the tale of the human species' various attempt to resolve, through the application of its own imperfect reason, the fundamental antagonism that arises from the contradictory nature of evil, and its chief scourge—war.

Paradoxically, war, the extreme manifestation of this evil, is simultaneously the central device of the “cunning of nature” to develop the *pragmatic* predisposition of the human species. However, the progressive development of the pragmatic predisposition, combined with the cumulative development of the technical predisposition, gives rise to the fear that a point may be reached where war may drive the entire human species to annihilation.<sup>131</sup> The contradictory nature of war lies in its potential to destroy the very species it is supposed to “educate”, and should this happen, would thwart nature’s plan of creating moral beings.

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<sup>131</sup> Kant only had the carnage of the wars of Frederick the Great, witnessed firsthand, to look to as an example. The contemporary world of modern states with millions of citizens, armed with huge arsenals of weapons of mass destruction, only makes this prognosis more acute.

### 3.3 War, Culture, and Civilization: Unsocial Sociability Writ Large

Kant saw war as something natural, as it “needs no special motive but seems to be engrafted onto human nature” (*ZeF* 8:365). If violence between individuals is the most vicious form of the natural *unsocial* dimension, then war should be understood as violence exhibited human associations—which also form naturally out of the *social* dimension.<sup>132</sup> Kant echoes Thucydides’ observation that communities threaten each other with war by merely coexisting next to each other. Nevertheless, there is purpose in this constant threat:

The human being was not meant to belong to a herd, like cattle, but to a hive like the bee.—*Necessity* to be a member of some civil society or other.  
...But many such hives next to each other will soon attack each other like robber bees (war); not, however, as human beings do, in order to strengthen their own group by uniting with others—for here the comparison ends—but only to use by cunning or force *others’* industry *for themselves*. Each people seeks to strengthen itself through the subjugation of neighboring peoples, either from the desire to expand or the fear of being swallowed up by the other unless one beats him to it. Therefore civil or foreign war in our species, as great an evil as it may be, is yet at the same time the incentive to pass from the crude state of nature to the civil state. War is like a mechanical device of Providence, where to be sure the struggling forces injure each other through collision, but are nevertheless still regularly kept going for a long time through the push and pull of other incentives (*Anth* 7:330).<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Although the immediate effect of war on population size is obviously detrimental—it is not one-sided. War can also generate the opposite effect by forcing disparate groups to coalesce together into ever-growing political forms: the war discussed by Kant is both “partly of the kind in which states split apart and divide themselves into smaller ones, partly of the kind in which smaller ones unite with each other and strive to form a larger whole” (*KU* 5:433). Thus, war itself contains social and unsocial elements as well, and both spur the pragmatic predisposition forward to ever-larger political associations.

<sup>133</sup> Cf. “A condition of peace among men living near one another is not a state of nature (*status naturalis*), which is much rather a condition of war, that is, it involves the constant threat of an outbreak of hostilities even if this does not always occur” (*ZeF* 8:348-9 also below) “Nations, as states... already wrong one another by being near one another” (*ZeF* 8:354). As well as: “No state is for a moment secure from others in either its independence or its property. The will to subjugate one another or to diminish what belongs to another always exists, and arming for defence, which often makes peace more oppressive and more destructive of internal welfare than war itself, can never be relaxed”. (*T&P* 8:312).

This is part of Kant’s larger argument of original possession, and that people, and societies, constrain each other’s freedom by virtue of the spherical shape of the earth, and therefore must enter into a rightful condition with each other: “because the spherical surface of the earth unites all the places on its surface; for if its surface were an unbounded plane, people could be so dispersed on it that they would not come into any community with one another, and community would not then be a necessary result of their existence on the earth”. (*MdS* 6:262).

Yet war, “the source of all evil and corruption of morals” (*Streit* 7:86) also draws good out of the evil it creates; it is the central device by which nature, in its cunning, drives the human species to inexorably “become civilized through culture [*Civilisirung durch Cultur*]” (*Anth* 7:323, see also 2.2). This makes war the prime mover of hitherto natural, or pragmatic, history—and it is relentless in its drive.<sup>134</sup> War and culture are “that which nature is capable of doing in order to prepare him [the human being] for what he must himself do in order to be a final end” (*KU* 5:431). If history is the “education of mankind” whereby it realizes its *Bestimmung* through the lessons of culture, then war, as Thucydides famously remarked, is its violent teacher.<sup>135</sup>

Both substantive rationality, and the freedom to act upon the ends it can determine, are conditions of *culture*, which Kant defines in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* as “the production of the aptitude of a rational being for any ends in general (thus those of his freedom)” (5:431).<sup>136</sup> By spurring technological, economical, and societal advances, war is, in fact, “an indispensable means of bringing culture still further” (*Anfang* 8:121) which is why some have—quite rightly—concluded that Kant “was no pacifist”.<sup>137</sup>

[Nature’s] preparatory arrangement consists in the following: that it 1) has taken care that people should be able to live in all regions of the earth; 2) by *war* it has driven them

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<sup>134</sup> As Kenneth Waltz observed: “Many liberals of Kant’s time and after have looked upon war as annoyance or aberration, as something, one might say, that lies outside of history. Kant, in contrast, at once condemns war and demonstrates that its occurrence is expected rather than accidental” Kenneth N. Waltz, “Kant, Liberalism, and War,” *The American Political Science Review* 56, no. 2 (1962): 340.

<sup>135</sup> Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. Richard Crawley, 2018, para. 3.82.

<sup>136</sup> Again, culture should be understood in the broad sense of physical production and its social effects, such as a division of labor.

<sup>137</sup> “From the ‘Right of Nations’ to the ‘Cosmopolitan Right’: Immanuel Kant’s Law of Continuity and the Limits of Empire,” in *The Burdens of Empire: 1539 to the Present* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 206 ; See also: David Armitage, “Cosmopolitanism and Civil War,” in *Cosmopolitanism and the Enlightenment*, ed. Joan-Pau Rubiés and Neil Safier (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 2; The misleading view of Kant as some kind of pacifist is commonly contrasted with that of Hegel, who saw war as “the realm of valor”, and that wars, occasionally, are necessary for preserving the ethical health of the nation Wood, “Kant’s Historical Materialism,” 29; For a more nuanced view, see: Shlomo Avineri, “The Problem of War in Hegel’s Thought,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 22, no. 4 (1961): 463–74.

everywhere, even into the most inhospitable regions, in order to populate these; 3) by war it has compelled them to enter into more or less lawful relations (*ZeF* 8:363).

War scatters people to the remotest corners of the globe, and, necessity being the mother of invention, forces them to develop their technical predisposition (such as by making ingenious uses of scarce resources), as well as their pragmatic predisposition (by way of cooperation, division of labor, trade and so on), for their survival.<sup>138</sup> As this dispersion of people around the world is what gives rise to different cultural forms of life, such as language, religion, and so on, the nation as a cultural—in the Kantian sense—artifact, should be understood as an outcome of this process.

Furthermore, war compels peoples to create a code of conduct, minimal as it may initially be, to determine not only how it should be waged, but also *how it should be concluded*. This effectively creates a rudimentary ‘law of nations’, or international law, which will continue to develop until it will eventually be replaced by the “cosmopolitan condition”, which will initially be an association of political communities:

[War]... is inevitable, which, even though it is an unintentional effort of humans (aroused by unbridled passions), is a deeply hidden but perhaps intentional effort of supreme wisdom if not to establish then at least to prepare the way for the lawfulness together with the freedom of the states [*Freiheit der Staaten*] and by means of that the unity of a morally grounded system of them, and which, in spite of the most horrible tribulations which it inflicts upon the human race, is nevertheless one more incentive (while the hope for a peaceful state of happiness among nations [*einer Volksglückseligkeit*] recedes ever further) for developing to their highest degree all the talents that serve for culture (*KU* 5:433).

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<sup>138</sup> Therefore, I take some issue with Kleingeld’s claim that “Warfare between states, however, tends to stifle the developmental processes within states. Money that is necessary for education is used for weaponry; civil liberties that are necessary for enlightenment are curtailed in the name of the safety and security of the state” Kleingeld, “Kant’s Changing Cosmopolitanism,” 173. This is only partially true, as there is no shortage of wartime developments, technological and social, which created good (virtues of solidarity and valor for example). War may be a “violent teacher”, but its cultural lessons have much value. Kant himself seemed to be wary of this: “a cosmopolitan condition of public state security, which is not wholly without dangers so that the powers of humanity may not fall asleep” (*Idee* 8:26). Kant, as has been mentioned, was “no pacifist”; For a contemporary view on the subject which adopts this approach see: Margaret MacMillan, *War: How Conflict Shaped Us* (New York: Random House, 2020).

As one result of the unconscious, natural, development of the pragmatic predisposition, culture, therefore, is a historical object, which *ipso facto* makes it contingent and malleable. However, through its constant progression, it eventually leads to the *articulation* of the “Idea” of morality and the cosmopolitan condition. Thus war—the impetus for generating culture in the epoch of nature—is also the main device by which nature dialectically overcomes itself; since it is through culture that the human species gradually increases its dominion over nature. Thus, the proper sense of history, in Yovel’s words “is the moral reshaping of nature; but the basic historical activity lies in culture, or what we would call today civilization, which is the shaping of nature in view of human goals and interests *in general*”.<sup>139</sup> But so long as mankind remains under the sway of nature, this “Idea” of morality, will remain unrealized:

We are *cultivated* in a high degree by art and science. We are *civilized*, perhaps to the point of being overburdened, by all sorts of social decorum and propriety. But very much is still lacking before we can be held to be already *moralized*. For the idea of morality still belongs to culture; but the use of this idea which comes down only to a resemblance of morals in love of honor and in external propriety constitutes only being civilized (*Idee* 8:26).<sup>140</sup>

Thus, since freedom, the *sine qua non* of morality, is still very limited at this historical stage of the Enlightenment, culture is incapable of producing morality on its own—that only a good will can accomplish. At best culture can produce, through the creation of external conditions for a society of mutual harmony, only a “resemblance of morals”, or *civilization*. This ‘analogy of morality’, however, is not without its merits; although “everything good that is not grafted onto a morally good disposition, is nothing but mere semblance and glittering misery” (*Idee* 8:26), by positing the moral Idea as a regulative end, the individual can be reshaped, vis-à-vis the species, in the light of ideal reason—a process which civilization facilitates through the inculcation of

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<sup>139</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 138.

<sup>140</sup> Compare with excerpt from *Streit* 7:91/2 below.

moral *habits*.<sup>141</sup> In turn, the gradual increase of freedom and enlightenment forces man to reckon with the burden of choosing his own ends—eventually transforming pragmatic history into *moral* history, a struggle of self-abnegation, towards the realization of this ideal:

The sum total of pragmatic anthropology, in respect to the vocation [*Bestimmung*] of the human being and the characteristic of his formation, is the following. The human being is destined [*bestimmt*: here can also be translated as “determined”, or “called”] by his reason to live in a society with human beings and in it to *cultivate* himself, to *civilize* himself, and to *moralize* himself by means of the arts and sciences. No matter how great his animal tendency may be to give himself over *passively* to the impulses of ease and good living, which he calls happiness, he is still destined to make himself worthy of humanity by *actively* struggling with the obstacles that cling to him because of the crudity of his nature (*Anth* 7:324-325).<sup>142</sup>

The human species, as a whole, forms a temporized “system” (*Idee* 8:29) that is destined or determined (*bestimmt*) to realize its nature, namely autonomy.<sup>143</sup> This it achieves via three temporal modes: “cultivation” is the historical development of the *technical* predisposition to devise means out of nature to our ends; “civilization” is the historical development of the *pragmatic* predisposition that does the same to other human beings, as a way to pursue happiness through modes of life that can be transmitted through tradition and education or, *culture*; finally, “moralization” is the historical process by which the terms of people’s social interactions themselves are made rational, through the strive to obey self-given rational laws, whereby human society becomes a *system* of ends united and combined—a universal moral community.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> The concrete political effects of this process will be discussed in detail in the third section.

<sup>142</sup> According to Brandt, this passage can indeed be seen as a summary of Kant’s philosophy as a whole, as it answers the three famous questions from the epigraph: “What can I know? What should I do? What may I hope?”. Yet, significantly, here they are *not* subsumed under the fourth question regarding essence and definition: “What is a human being?”, but replaced, instead, with the question about purposes and ends: *to* what is a human being destined (*bestimmt*) by his nature and reason? Or, what is the vocation (*Bestimmung*) of the human species? Brandt, “The Guiding Idea of Kant’s Anthropology,” 93.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>144</sup> Wood, “Kant and the Problem of Human Nature,” 53.



Morality, the capacity to make moral discriminations, and to be motivated by moral incentives (“a morally good disposition”), thus historically emerges, even only as an “Idea”, in association with the sense of propriety that civilization creates. War propels the technical and pragmatic predispositions forward, forcing the human species into evermore complex societies, which provide, in turn, the necessary social conditions for the species to gradually transform itself from an *animal rationabile* aggregate into a systematic *animal rationale*.

This is because the more complex the individual’s society—in the dual sense of both a more intricate division of labor, as well as a broadening of its scope over a growing population, the more members of the species the individual will encounter—and in increasing variety. This, in turn, Kant believes, will eventually force individuals to come to term with their universal humanity—and the equality it demands. For our purposes, civilization provides the necessary *social* conditions that a republican constitution, and eventually, a *world* republican constitution, requires. Yet the process of civilization is neither smooth nor linear, while states will never be truly free as long as war has not been abolished. Moreover, while the very occurrence of war indicates that the goal of political history has not been reached, the abolition of war—while a necessary condition—does *not* suffice by itself as a guarantee that the species’ *Bestimmung* will be fulfilled.<sup>145</sup>

Morality’s task, therefore, is to replace war with reason as the foundation of human culture, and conflict with mutual recognition as the foundation of the state. The human species’ struggle to overcome nature—both externally and internally—by moralizing itself, is the process of enlightenment.

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<sup>145</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 152.



### 3.4 Enlightenment and The Trajectory of History

Kant was no meliorist. True, in a marginal note found inside his own copy of the *Anthropology* he wrote that “there is a cosmopolitan predisposition in the human species, even with all the wars, which gradually in the course of political matters wins the upper hand over the selfish predispositions of peoples” (*Anth* 7:326). Yet, an undeniable feature of the conflict-ridden form of human development is its irregularity; indeed, progress may very well stop, stall, and even retrograde. In fact, nothing guarantees the constancy of progress, nor that it will be able to overcome all obstacles in its path. As Kant notes in the *Conflict of the Faculties* (1798):

[N]o one can guarantee that now, this very moment, with regard to the physical disposition of our species, the epoch of its decline would not be liable to occur; and inversely, if it is moving backwards, and in an accelerated fall into baseness, a person may not despair even then of encountering a juncture (*punctum flexus contrarii*) where the moral predisposition in our race would be able to turn anew toward the better. For we are dealing with beings that act freely, to whom, it is true, what they *ought* to do may be *dictated* in advance, but of whom it may not be *predicted* what they will do: we are dealing with beings who, from the feeling of self-inflicted evil, when things disintegrate altogether, know how to adopt a strengthened motive for making them even better than they were before that state (*Streit* 7:83).<sup>146</sup>

Even though he believed that an “aim of nature” could be discerned from empirical history, Kant’s assumption of progress is always carefully qualified. Which brings us to a neuralgic point in Kant’s philosophy of history—its ambiguity regarding the guarantee of historical progress, and, by extension, how much of a role does free will play in determining the species’ cosmopolitan *Bestimmung* after all. In other words, whether nature, in its cunning, will inevitably drive the species towards its *Bestimmung* regardless of its will, or alternatively, that the fulfillment of the species’ *Bestimmung* depends on its willingness, once it realizes its end as a moral being, to accept

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<sup>146</sup> Cf. “[T]he progress [*Fortschreiten*] of the species is always only fragmentary (according to time) and offers no guarantee against regression, with which it is always threatened by intervening revolutionary barbarism (*Anth* 7:326)

the duty to pursue it and consciously proceed to take up the mantle of development from nature. This would make nature a necessary, yet insufficient, condition for the full development of humanity's predispositions.<sup>147</sup>

So, although there are good grounds—including textual evidence—for accepting either view, a definite solution for this predicament is far beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, intuitively it is hard to accept that the same philosopher who claimed that “*Freedom... is the only original right belonging to every man by virtue of his humanity*” (*MdS* 6:237) would espouse such a fatalistic view. Therefore, in this study I will tentatively accept Allen Wood's proposal to resolve this ambiguity by differentiating between the two distinct, yet overlapping, periods in Kant's philosophy of history—the epochs of nature and freedom.<sup>148</sup>

In the epoch of nature, the human species is completely subjugated to nature and must abide by its “harsh and stern” education, even if it is unknowingly following a “hidden plan”. In this epoch, nature, by cunningly employing all the forms of antagonism made available to it by unsocial sociability, is the sole driver of the species' development. This epoch culminates with the emergence of the Idea of the moral law and substantive rationality—the rational faculty to ascribe ends grounded in reason. This marks, in turn, the inception of the epoch of freedom. The nascency of substantive rationality is concurrent with the gradual realization that the costs of antagonism—especially war—outweigh its benefits, so much so that it poses a threat not only to the continued development of the species, but to its *very existence*. Thus, conflict and war, the “natural” means of development—the necessary outcomes of a depraved use of reason towards slavish ends—must,

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<sup>147</sup> None the least because Kant himself seems to say both. See fn.93 above (Louden on Kant ‘hedging his bets’).

<sup>148</sup> “Unsociable Sociability: The Anthropological Basis of Kantian Ethics,” *Philosophical Topics* 19, no. 1 (1991): 343; *Kant's Ethical Thought*, 269 Wood accepts many of Yovel's positions, but elucidates the following points in more detail, which is why I preferred his terminology.

for the sake of the species' future, be brought under control "in a universal association of states" (*MdS* 6:350).<sup>149</sup> The period where the two epochs are coterminous is Kant's own—the Enlightenment, which quite tellingly he refers to as the "adolescence" (*Rel* 6:121) of mankind.<sup>150</sup>

Part of this historical process is detailed in the *Conjectural Beginning of Human History* (1786).<sup>151</sup> In this irreverent essay, which satirizes both Herder's *Ideas for a Philosophy of the History of Humanity* (1784) and his earlier *Yet Another Philosophy of History for the Benefit of Mankind* (1774), Kant demonstrates that the book of Genesis can purportedly be interpreted as a historical defense of reason.<sup>152</sup> On this telling, history is "nothing other than the transition from the crudity of a merely animal creature into humanity, from the go-cart of instinct to the guidance of reason—in a word, from the guardianship of nature into the condition of freedom" (*Anfang* 8:115). A transition which culminates in man's realization that he is "the genuine end of nature":

The fourth and last step that reason took in elevating the human being entirely above the society with animals was that he comprehended (however obscurely) that he was the genuine end of nature, and that in this nothing that lives on earth can supply a competitor to him... He became aware of a prerogative that he had by his nature over all animals, which he now no longer regarded as his fellow creatures, but rather as means and instruments given over to his will for the attainment of his discretionary aims. This representation includes (however obscurely) the thought of the opposite: that he must not say something like this to any human being, but has to regard him as an equal participant in the gifts of

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<sup>149</sup> Or, in the words of Mephistopheles: "The small god of the world will never change his ways/ And is as whimsical—as on the first of days./ His life might be a bit more fun,/ Had you not given him that spark of heaven's sun;/ He calls it reason and employs it, resolute/ To be more brutish than is any brute". Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Goethe's Faust: The Original German and a New Translation and Introduction*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Anchor Books, 1962), ll. 281–286.

<sup>150</sup> Full quote: "The leading-string of holy tradition, with its appendages, its statutes and observances, which in its time did good service, become bit by bit dispensable, yea, finally, when a human being enters upon his adolescence, turn into a fetter" (*Rel* 6:121).

<sup>151</sup> *Mutmaßlicher Anfang der Menschengeschichte*, first published in the *Berlinische Monatschrift* VII (January 1786).

<sup>152</sup> According to Yovel, it may be more apt to refer to the central theme of the essay as a "pre-history" of reason "for it does not discuss the progress of reason toward maturation, but goes back to explore the more primordial and obscure stage, at which human reason had first broken away from 'the womb of nature' and established itself as an independent principle, higher than nature and opposing it". See: *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 191 Regardless, what is of special note here is that Kant is giving a temporal account of reason.

nature... and which far more than inclination and love is necessary to the establishment of society (*Anfang* 8:114).

Self-awareness brings man to the realization that being a member of a biological species (a *Tiermensch*) makes him a part of nature. Concomitantly, however, the realization that rationality contains a substantive mode as well—and that it is not merely an instrument for the pursuit of base desires—makes him a person (*Person*) and, as such, substantively distinct from the rest of nature, or “things” (*Sachen*).<sup>153</sup> This realization imbues him with a further sense of *equality* towards all other rational beings—albeit, the only known members of this class at this stage are other human beings—all whom share this claim to be ends-in-themselves:

And thus the human being had entered into an equality with all rational beings, of whatever rank they might be (*Genesis* 3:22); namely, in regard to the claim of being himself an end, of also being esteemed as such by everyone else, and of being used by no one merely as a means to other ends... This step is combined, therefore, at the same time with the release of the human being from the mother’s womb of nature (*Anfang* 8:114).<sup>154</sup>

That the first instance of a moral consciousness in man coincides with his release from “the mother’s womb of nature” therefore belies the view which ascribes to Kant the belief that the cunning of nature is sufficient by itself to fulfill the human species’ *Bestimmung*. Rather, nature’s end is limited to bring man to *the realization* that reason can be much more than the mere determination of the means for fulfilling natural ends—that is, that reason can *determine the ends*

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<sup>153</sup> For Kant, this self-awareness is perhaps *the* distinctive characteristic of the human species, as we observe in the opening lines of the *Anthropology*: “The fact that the human being can have the “I” in his representations raises him infinitely above all other living beings on earth. Because of this he is a person, and by virtue of the unity of consciousness through all changes that happen to him, one and the same person— i.e., through rank and dignity an entirely different being from things, such as irrational animals, with which one can do as one likes.” (*Anth* 7:127). cf. “Beings the existence of which rests not on our will but on nature, if they are beings without reason, still have only a relative worth, as means, and are therefore called things, whereas rational beings are called persons because their nature already marks them out as an end in itself, that is, as something that may not be used merely as a means, and hence so far limits all choice (and is an object of respect).” (*MdS* 4:428). For further discussion of this key distinction between persons and things see: Wood, *Kant’s Ethical Thought*, 122–24.

<sup>154</sup> Compare with below: “a universal *cosmopolitan condition*, as the womb in which all original predispositions of the human species will be developed” (*Idee* 8:28). The employment of the term “of whatever rank” is another allusion to Kant’s willingness to accept the existence of other rational beings besides the human species.

*themselves*.<sup>155</sup> This is the view expressed in the first two propositions of the *Idea* as well, where nature's end is to have humans develop their own capacity to determine ends.<sup>156</sup> Having attained moral freedom, it is now the species' onus to determine, and realize, the "cosmopolitan condition" (*weltbürgerlicher Zustand*) as its end. Nature develops man's *Bestimmung* only to the point where he becomes aware of his own *Unbestimmtheit*, or, as R. G. Collingwood succinctly put it: "The purpose of nature in creating man is therefore the development of moral freedom; and the course of human history can therefore be conceived as the working-out of this development".<sup>157</sup>

Thus, Kant's philosophy of history is entirely future-oriented. For Kant, while past society has evolved naturally (*naturwüchsig*) out of antagonism, future society will be consciously determined through freedom.<sup>158</sup> Man is thrown "into the wide world, where so much worry, toil, and unknown ills are waiting for him", and although his sufferings may elicit in him a desire to return to paradise—"the creature of his power of imagination" as he acerbically notes—"restless reason... drives him irresistibly toward the development of the capacities placed in him and does not allow him to return to the condition of crudity and simplicity out of which it had pulled him" (*Anfang* 8:114/5).

So, although reason may indeed be the source of all these ills and conflicts—war merely being the worst of them—when it is under the sway of nature, the remedy is not to be found in the

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<sup>155</sup> Allison, "Teleology and History in Kant: The Critical Foundations of Kant's Philosophy of History," 39–45; Wood, "Kant's Fourth Proposition: The Unsociable Sociability of Human Nature."

<sup>156</sup> First Proposition: "*All natural predispositions of a creature are determined sometime to develop themselves completely and purposively*". Second Proposition: "*In the human being (as the only rational creature on earth), those predispositions whose goal is the use of his reason were to develop completely only in the species, but not in the individual*" (*Idee* 8:18).

<sup>157</sup> *The Idea of History* (Oxford University Press, 1994), 98.

<sup>158</sup> Wood, "Unsociable Sociability," 344.

restoration of an imagined past golden age—but rather in the strive to create one in future times.<sup>159</sup>

The only solution to the predicaments of reason, including those which emerge naturally out of unsocial sociability, can only be *more reason*.<sup>160</sup>

This is evident when observing, as Kant does, hitherto history from his standpoint of the Enlightenment. That war has been found to be the primary means of progress does not entail that it is the *only* means of progress—once the rational faculty is developed enough, the possibility for non-antagonistic development, via the correct application of reason, is revealed:

[T]hrough wars, through the overstrained and never ceasing process of armament for them, through the condition of need that due to this finally every state even in the midst of peace must feel internally, toward at first imperfect attempts, but after many devastations, reversals, and even thoroughgoing exhaustion of their powers, *nature drives human beings to what reason could have told them even without so much sad experience*: namely, to go beyond a lawless condition of savages and enter into a federation of nations [*Völkerbund*], where every state, even the smallest, could expect its security and rights not from its own might, or its own juridical judgment, but only from this great federation of nations (*Foedus Amphyctyonum*), from a united might and from the decision in accordance with laws of its united will (*Idee* 8:24 emphasis added).<sup>161</sup>

Rather than a lamentation, this should be read as an exhortation. Amongst other things, enlightenment, ever-so-slowly, brings people to realize just how arbitrary and disastrous war is—its salutary effects notwithstanding. Although war may stimulate the cultivation and civilization of the human species, it may hinder them just as well. So much so, that, given the might of its highly developed technical predisposition, war threatens *the very existence of the species*.<sup>162</sup> The

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<sup>159</sup> “History looks backward, politics forward” as Onora O’Neill puts it in: Onora O’Neill, “Reason and Politics in the Kantian Enterprise,” in *Constructions of Reason: Explorations of Kant’s Practical Philosophy* (Cambridge England; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 22.

<sup>160</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 193–94.

<sup>161</sup> Kant can be seen as proposing a new way of doing history, by shifting the subject of history from wars and kings to man himself. As Loudon notes: “Here we also see the strikingly different approaches to war found in a world history of humanity and in standard histories of wars. The latter, again, ‘contain nothing more than descriptions of battles’ (*Friedländer* 25: 472), while the former analyzes the function and purpose of war in human life”. Loudon, “Applying Kant’s Ethics,” 76.

<sup>162</sup> “This education from above, I maintain, is salutary but harsh and stern in the cultivation of nature, which extends through great hardship and almost to the extinction of the entire race” (*Anth* 7:328) full quote above in 3.2.



correct conclusion to draw, therefore, is that an adherence to the dictates of reason would render such “sad experience” as unnecessary.<sup>163</sup>

Effectively, the cunning of nature ceases to be the exclusive mean of progress as soon as substantive rationality becomes explicated in the Enlightenment, when “the philosopher” has managed to decipher the “hidden plan of nature” (*Idee* 8:27) which corresponds to the ideal of practical reason *a priori* itself—the categorical imperative. Out of this realization, enlightenment—as the rational codification and arrangement of political institutions with respect to freedom—emerges as a real historical force which can, potentially, replace this “stepbrother of rationality”.<sup>164</sup> Not only is this view consonant with that of the popular philosophers but also with Kant’s own theory of rationality, which holds that reason is an actual, self-sufficient, motive for action.<sup>165</sup>

However, given that the reach of enlightenment will always be limited to those who only both understand the dictates of reason *and* choose to follow them, it will take an inordinate amount of time for reason to dethrone the cunning of nature.<sup>166</sup> The first task of reason, therefore, is to remove the cunning of nature as the *exclusive* means for political progress and relegate it to a complementary principle.<sup>167</sup> We are thus presented with two alternate means of progress, each characteristic of its respective epoch: the cunning of nature, which the necessary byproduct of “sad

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<sup>163</sup> This calls to mind the words of Israeli statesman Abba Eban: “Men and nations behave wisely when they have exhausted all other resources”. Quoted in: Robert Trumbull, “Japan Welcomes Eban Warmly; Her Industry Impresses Israeli (Published 1967),” *The New York Times*, March 19, 1967. A different version of this saying, which purports to describe only *Americans* in this manner, is commonly misattributed to Winston Churchill.

<sup>164</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 141.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

<sup>166</sup> As we shall see in the next section, Kant acquiesces to this fact, tacitly accepting how obdurate people may be (those who “do not want this”). *Popularphilosophie* should thus be seen precisely as an attempt to propagate the enlightenment’s reach. I shall return to the subject of Kant’s *longue durée* approach in 5.6.

<sup>167</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 154.

experience”, and enlightenment, understood as conscious rational praxis—which includes a transformation of the state.<sup>168</sup> In the overlapping age between the two—the Enlightenment—both have become available. To paraphrase H.G. Wells, history has now become a race between enlightenment and catastrophe.<sup>169</sup>

As a historical moment, the Enlightenment is therefore unique by virtue of an unprecedented confluence of events: the emergence of substantive rationality, together with a highly developed pragmatic predisposition—civilization, which includes highly complex societies—means that the human species has finally reached the stage where it can posit autonomous ends to itself *as a species*.<sup>170</sup> As a result, the abolition of war, as well as the political unification of the human species—the culmination of the pragmatic predisposition, which will also mark the end of the epoch of nature—are ends which, for the first time in human history, are conceivably within humanity’s grasp.

Hence Wood argues that “there is nothing ahistorical about Kantian ethics. It has a historically situated understanding of itself and is addressed to the specific cultural needs of its own age”.<sup>171</sup> Hence also the historical contingency of the Enlightenment, which is a product of a long,

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<sup>168</sup> I shall return to this in 4.4.

<sup>169</sup> *The Outline of History: Being a Plain History of Life and Mankind*, ed. Ernest Barker et al., Project Gutenberg eBook, vol. 2 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1920), 594 Strikingly, this quote appears in part 4: “What this World might be were it under one Law and Justice” of chapter 41, titled: “The possible unification of the world into one community of knowledge and will.”

<sup>170</sup> Or in the “Kantian Terms” of Eckart Förster: “if history has a common subject that evolves according to a hidden plan of nature, and if the goal of that plan is the development of mankind’s abilities to the fullest, and if the supreme abilities of humanity can only be developed in society through joined efforts and practices, then it must be within nature’s plan that humans reach a point at which they form themselves a picture of what they want to achieve”. Eckart Förster, “The Hidden Plan of Nature,” in *Kant’s Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim: A Critical Guide*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty and James Schmidt, First Edition, Cambridge Critical Guides (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 192.

<sup>171</sup> Wood, “Unsociable Sociability,” 336.

undetermined historical development, “a concatenation of accidents” in the words of Ernest Gellner, that cannot be divorced from its peculiar historical conditions.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Plough, Sword and Book: The Structure of Human History* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 257 This also points to the precariousness of enlightenment, as not growing from historical necessity, but rather out of the mechanical operations of unsocial sociability in history. More on this later.

### 3.5 The Linkage Problem

Kant's particular understanding of enlightenment as praxis is therefore revolutionary. It is a conversion (*Verwandeln*, more in 4.4) of the mode of consciousness, whereby reason, in its substantive mode, becomes aware of its ability to project a conscious historical plan *for the entire species*. This can be achieved through the substitution of conflict with its opposite principle of mutual recognition—the moral law to treat other persons as ends in themselves. As we shall see, the extension of this conversion's ambit to include more and more members of the species does *not* necessarily entail a violent revolution.<sup>173</sup> It will, however, require a degree of mutual intelligibility, which, as we shall see, makes nationalism not only congruent, but also conducive, to its success.

So, while peaceful means can develop man's predispositions just as well as conflict, and at a much lower price, it will be viable if, *and only if*, people consciously decide to adopt them, and it is in this sense which enlightenment becomes an agent of social change.<sup>174</sup> This is Kant's recasting of enlightenment as a vehicle of progress, an outlook which, as we noted above, he shared with the popular philosophers. *Popularphilosophie* should therefore be seen as a peaceful propagation of this conversion—a form of enlightened praxis. Yet for this ideal to be disseminated unhindered, first a condition of stability must be met, and peace must be established, not only for preserving the species' prior achievements, but—more importantly—to prevent the devastation that modern conflict can wreak as well.

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<sup>173</sup> Yovel remarks: "Not necessarily, but possibly. Rebellion, like the French Revolution, may prove *ex post facto* a sign of progress, even if it cannot be condoned *a priori*. But it is not a necessary condition for progress." Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 153 fn.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

Given that both the state and the international order are products of the epoch of nature, this condition of stability, in turn, requires that both undergo a conversion as well. To this end, the state and the international order exhibit a circular relationship; hostilities between states are the impetus for establishing the international order, while the international order, in turn, provides states with the peace and security they need for the enlightenment of their citizens.<sup>175</sup> Both, therefore, must be brought under a rightful condition:

The formal condition under which alone nature can attain this its final aim is that constitution in the relations of human beings with one another in which the abuse of reciprocally conflicting freedom is opposed by lawful power in a whole, which is called **civil society** (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*); for only in this can the greatest development of the natural predispositions occur. For this, however, even if humans were clever enough to discover it and wise enough to subject themselves willingly to its coercion, a **cosmopolitan whole** (*Weltbürgerliches Ganze*), i.e., a system of all states that are at risk of detrimentally affecting each other, is required (*KU* 5:432).

This theoretical novelty is already present in the fifth, sixth, and seventh propositions of the *Idea*—namely, the linkage between a just civil constitution and a just international order: “The problem of establishing a perfect civil constitution is dependent on the problem of a lawful external relation between states and cannot be solved without the latter” (*Idee* 8:24).<sup>176</sup> Therein lies the rub, however, since “the achievement of a civil society universally administering right” is, unfortunately, also “The greatest problem for the human species, to which nature compels him”. This problem is severely compounded by the fact that, partially due to the civilizing nature of such a constitution, *only* by establishing such a “perfectly just civil constitution...can nature achieve its remaining aims for our species” (*Idee* 8:22), namely, the full development of the *moral* predisposition in the cosmopolitan condition—the “womb in which all the original predispositions

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<sup>175</sup> Kleingeld, “Kant’s Changing Cosmopolitanism,” 176–78 I shall return to this topic in more detail in the next section.

<sup>176</sup> Höffe, *Kant’s Cosmopolitan Theory of Law and Peace*, 15.

of the human species will be developed” (*Idee* 8:28). It is from this womb that, once the gestation of the entire species is completed, the epoch of freedom will be born. In other words, the relationship between the state and the international order, as it is portrayed in the *Idea*, is one of codependence—they are simultaneously *both ends and means* to each to other—making a stable condition of peace between states a necessary condition for a just civil constitution—the former, therefore, cannot be solved before the latter.<sup>177</sup>

And yet, even if people *do* decide to follow the dictates of reason, they would not be able to solve the problem of war in isolation—they must concomitantly tackle the thorny problem of establishing a condition of right *within* the state itself. Hence one immediate effect of this intrinsic connection is that war hinders not only the establishment of a peaceful *international* order, but it also prevents the establishment of a just *domestic* order as well.

The difficulties do not end there, since a just state constitution, together with the federation of republican states—noble ends as they may be—are not final ends (*Endzwecks*) in themselves, but rather further *means* toward the final end of the human species, namely, the complete development of the human species’ predispositions for the use of reason, which culminates in moral agency in the universal moral community.<sup>178</sup>

It should be emphasized that at this stage, both the state and the proposed international order which Kant discusses are primarily *legal* systems, meaning that their members have, or will have, subjected themselves to common laws and a unified system which enforces them. Therefore, they are part of a conscious pragmatic development, or civilization, and are not the result of the

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<sup>177</sup> This, *in nuce*, is the problem of “the human being is an *animal which*, when it lives among others of its species, *has need of a master*.” and “the crooked timber of humanity” (*Idee* 8:23).

<sup>178</sup> Pauline Kleingeld, *Kant and Cosmopolitanism: The Philosophical Ideal of World Citizenship*, 2013, 164; Kleingeld, “Kant’s Changing Cosmopolitanism,” 174.

vicissitudes of nature. If Yovel is correct, such an institutional system, being only the “halfway mark”, implies that it is only an *analogy* to morality in the realm of legality, which would make the legal-institutional order subordinate and secondary to the historical ideal of the universal moral community.<sup>179</sup> In other words, the species’ *Bestimmung* will *not* be fulfilled in the just state, nor in the universal federation, nor even in the *Weltrepublik*, but, only, as we shall see in the next section, in the universal moral community.<sup>180</sup> This is why Kant refers to this transitional phase of history, of the combination of states, as “a universal *cosmopolitan condition*, [*allgemeiner weltbürgerlicher Zustand*] as the womb in which all original predispositions of the human species will be developed” (*Idee* 8:28). It is only the *beginning* of the epoch of freedom, which will require a long period of gestation and maturation before the universal moral community—humanity’s *Bestimmung*—will come to be.

Thus, the difference is that whereas *Right*, that is, the external laws of the state, serves the interests of *nature*’s ultimate end by bringing social conflict under the state’s control, morality will abolish social conflict altogether to realize the final end of humanity.<sup>181</sup> As we shall see, by replacing the unsociable mode of sociability with a conscious sociability, morality thus has the capability of emancipating humanity from the blind, cruel, indifferent tyranny of nature and to

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<sup>179</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 174fn.

<sup>180</sup> Also referred to as “the moral whole”, “the realm of ends”, “the ethical community”, “the kingdom of ends”, “the cosmopolitan society”, “the invisible church”, and “kingdom of God on earth”.

<sup>181</sup> There is an open question here as to whether what would happen with the state, or political community, once the moral community is established. Wood claims that although Kant does not explicitly mention the abolition of the state, this process does make the state superfluous Wood, “Unsociable Sociability,” 344; While Yovel thinks that a political facet will always remain, as both the moral and political communities are required for the realization of the ideal. Even if the political community is subordinate to the moral one Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 174.

transform it into a harmonious universal moral community of free rational beings, whose members live freely together according to a consciously self-devised plan.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Wood, “Unsociable Sociability,” 344 On this reading, morality is a historical process, which “forces people to be free”. A global pandemic, which affects the entire species, makes an interesting case in point.



### 3.6 Philosophy of History: Conclusion

In summation, war plays a paradoxical role insofar as the cosmopolitan end of the species is concerned; so long as people do not follow reason's exhortations—made evident in the Enlightenment—states will continue to abuse their relation of abject freedom towards each other until a condition of right is established among them: “only in a universal association of states (analogous to that by which a people becomes a state) can rights come to hold conclusively and a true condition of peace come about” (*MdS* 6:350).<sup>183</sup>

It is thus the *articulation*, and not yet the *realization*, of the “Idea” of a concrete political goal—the establishment of a *Völkerbund* as a rudimentary form of the cosmopolitan community—which heralds that the epoch of freedom is underway and that the epoch of nature may be coming to its end, while the Enlightenment forms the intermediate period between the two: “Before this last step (namely, to the combination of states) is done, thus almost halfway through its formation (*Ausbildung*), human nature endures the hardest ills under the deceptive appearance of external welfare” (*Idee* 8:26).<sup>184</sup>

Kant will return to address the “linkage problem” in more detail eleven years after publishing the *Idea* in the essay *Towards Perpetual Peace*. Let us now turn to focus on the ramifications of establishing the just state, and by implication—the nation, for the international order.

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<sup>183</sup> *nur in einem allgemeinen Staatenverein (analogisch mit dem, wodurch ein Volk Staat wird) peremptorisch geltend und ein wahrer Friedenszustand werden.*

<sup>184</sup> This is a reference to paternalism, which is anathema to Kant. See: Beiser, *Enlightenment, Revolution, and Romanticism*, 34. More about this in 4.5.

## *IV: Political Philosophy*

### 4.0 Introduction: Defining the State and the Nation

We have seen that Kant's application of the regulative idea cosmopolitanism to the study of the human species and its history yields political consequences in both the *Anthropology* and the *Idea*. To recap: cosmopolitanism, as a regulative political ideal, is a *result* of Kant's critical reflection on anthropology, which includes his philosophy of history—and not a Panglossian pipe dream of preestablished political harmony, merely begging history to demonstrate how it will unfold over time. As we claimed in the opening section—*anthropological thought precedes, and therefore, defines, political thought* in the Kantian system: political ideals should derive from human nature, but not in an essentialist, fixed, sense of how people are—but in the *pragmatic* sense of their *Bestimmung*, that is, of what *they can, and ought, to become*. Having explored the foundations of Kant's philosophical anthropology and philosophy of history, we are finally in the position to trace their political reverberations—as well as our contention that Kant's cosmopolitan schema is the necessary criterion for understanding his treatment of states, nations, and nation-states.

*Toward Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Project*, published in 1795, is Kant's contribution to the long-standing debate regarding the viability of such a peace, one which had endured ever since the Abbé St. Pierre published the first two volumes of his book on the subject in 1713.<sup>185</sup> The essay was occasioned by the withdrawal of Frederick William II from the War of the First Coalition, and, probably, by Kant's old age as well.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> *Zum ewigen Frieden: Ein philosophischer Entwurf*. Henceforth *Perpetual Peace*.

<sup>186</sup> Kuehn, *Kant*, 383 Kant was already 71 years old when the book was published; See also: Höffe, *Kant's Cosmopolitan Theory of Law and Peace*, 150.

The title of essay is somewhat ironic, given that essentially it is a treatise on the role of *war* in human history—up until its final moment of self-abolition. The essay continues to treat war as the primary driver of the development of the pragmatic predisposition, or culture, a function which Kant believed it will continue to perform for a very long time, even after the Enlightenment.<sup>187</sup> Whereas the *Idea* was an attempt at a philosophical analysis of history without prescribing a normative or political position *per se*, *Perpetual Peace* is undeniably so. The essay argues that a peaceful global order presupposes that the classical law, or Right (*Recht*), among nations (*Völkerrecht*) should be replaced with a cosmopolitan law, or Right, (*Weltbürgerrecht*) that states the rights of human beings as citizens of the world.<sup>188</sup> The essay establishes this thesis in two sections, two supplements, and a substantial appendix—divided into two parts as well.

Our focus will be primarily on the second section, which contains the “definitive articles for perpetual peace among states” (*ZeF* 8:348) and the second part of the appendix—the “principle of publicity”—since our concern is with how *Perpetual Peace* picks up where our treatment of the *Idea* left off; namely, the aforementioned “linkage problem” between the just state and the just international order.

*Perpetual Peace* charts a solution to this problem by detailing a legal and institutional order, one which forms a rudimentary *legal analogy* for the moral sphere. In this legal order, the cunning of nature, holds “a legitimate if restricted place”.<sup>189</sup> It will be argued that, as one of the devices of

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<sup>187</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 187 the question of *how long* will be addressed in 5.6.

<sup>188</sup> The German word *Recht* can be translated as either “Law”, “Right”, or “Justice”, without fully conveying the entirety of the original German meaning. Although Kant’s use encompasses all three English meanings, it mostly pertains to the first two. See: Mary J. Gregor, “Translator’s Note on the Text of The Metaphysics of Morals,” in *Immanuel Kant: Practical Philosophy*, ed. Mary J. Gregor, The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 357–59 Cosmopolitan Right will be discussed in more detail in 5.3.

<sup>189</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 185–86 This subordination will be discussed in 5.6.

the cunning of nature, nationalism can serve, among other things, as a vehicle for political and moral progress, including the advancement of the stated goal of perpetual peace.

Perhaps as a result of his conclusion in the *Idea*, that *if* human history has a rational end, then it *must* lie within the cosmopolitan society, Kant turned his attention to the sort of institutions such a vision entails. Yet this discussion warrants that some terminological clarifications regarding the state and the nation in Kant's writings first be made.

There are at least three different places in Kant's writings where he touches upon something close to our understanding of the cultural unit which is the modern nation. The most recent appears in the *Anthropology*:

By the word *people* [*volk*] (*populus*) is meant the *number* of human beings united in a region, insofar as they constitute a *whole*. This number, or even a part of it that recognizes itself as united into a civil whole through common ancestry, is called a *nation* [*Nation*] (*gens*); the part that exempts itself from these laws (the unruly crowd within this people) is called a *rabble* [*Pöbel*] (*vulgus*);\* whose illegal association is *the mob* [*das Rottieren*] (*agere per turbas*); this conduct that excludes them from the quality of a citizen. (*Anth* 7:311)

The nation, on this reading, is a group of citizens that recognizes itself as having a common ancestry *and* who also reside within a certain territory, it is therefore a subset of the species defined in both spatial and temporal terms.<sup>190</sup> However, these terms only serve as a basis for a *conceptual definition*; such a group of citizens needs to *recognize* that it shares a common ancestry and territory—even if in fact it does not. This definition corresponds, with some changes, to an earlier one Kant makes in the second section of *The Doctrine of Right*:

those who constitute a nation can be looked upon analogously to descendants of the same *ancestors* (*congeniti*) even though they are not. Yet in an intellectual sense and from the

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<sup>190</sup> These contingent elements will be significant in our later discussion (4.5) of the nation as the basis for the republic.

perspective of rights, since they are born of the same mother (the republic) they constitute as it were one family (*gens, natio*)... (*MdS* 6:343).<sup>191</sup>

It bears emphasizing that these are *not* nations in the modern sense, rather these are “nations as states” [*Völker, als Staaten*] (*ZeF* 8:354). Kant uses the term “people” (*Volk*) to denote a group of persons under *a common set of laws* (“they are born of the same mother (the republic)”), that is, only those persons who qualify for the status of citizenship, excluding the “rabble”. Hence the term “*Völkerbund*” can be translated both as “federation of peoples” *or* as “federation of states”—and Kant does indeed use these terms interchangeably.<sup>192</sup> Otfried Höffe thus remarks that: “whether states are ethnically homogenous or heterogenous is of no relevance here”.<sup>193</sup> In other words, a political community can share the same territory and ancestry—but those of its members who do not accept its laws will therefore *not* be part of the nation. This is clarified later in the passage:

The right of *states* in relation to one another (which in German is called, not quite correctly, the *right of nations*, but should instead be called the right of states, *ius publicum civitatum*) is what we have to consider under the title the right of nations (*MdS* 6:343).<sup>194</sup>

This is somewhat further complicated by an earlier passage, where Kant refers to the state in terms that today are more commonly used to refer to the nation. This is connoted by the word “trunk” (*Stamm*), which nominally refers to a people (*Stammvolk*) in the sense closer to what we might call a nation:

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<sup>191</sup> Cf. “Because the union of the members is (presumed to be) one they inherited, a state is also called a nation (*gens*).” (*MdS* 6:311). The familial metaphor that Kant adopts and routinely repeats—the republic as the mother of the nation—will be important later for the argument regarding the virtuous cycle between the republic and nation: i.e., that they improve each other. The republic not only gives birth to the nation, thus jumpstarting this process, but it continues, as a nurturing mother, to improve and educate it. This also refers to the cosmopolitan condition as the womb “in which all original predispositions of the human species will be developed” (*Idee* 8:28)

<sup>192</sup> Kleingeld, “Kant’s Changing Cosmopolitanism,” 174 fn.

<sup>193</sup> Höffe, *Kant’s Cosmopolitan Theory of Law and Peace*, 190.

<sup>194</sup> Das Recht der Staaten in Verhältnis zu einander (welches nicht ganz richtig im Deutschen das Völkerrecht genannt wird, sondern vielmehr das Staatenrecht (*ius publicum civitatum*) heißen sollte) ist nun dasjenige, was wir unter dem Namen des Völkerrechts zu betrachten haben.

For a state [*Staat*] is not (like the land on which it resides) a belonging (*patrimonium*). It is a society of human beings [*Gesellschaft von Menschen*] that no one other than itself can command or dispose of. Like a trunk [*Stamm*], it has its own roots; and to annex it to another state [*Staate*] as a graft is to do away with its existence as a moral person [*moralischen Person aufheben*] and to make a moral person into a thing [*Sache*], and so to contradict the idea of the original contract, apart from which no right over a people [*Volk*] can be thought (*ZeF* 8:344).

However, Kant's reference to states as *moral* persons, by virtue of them being made up of an agglomeration of moral beings themselves, belies the complete fungibility of the state with the nation. It is obvious that here Kant is referring to something closer to the nation as we understand it today as an entity distinct from the state—since territory, laws, constitutions, and all other trappings of a state, are “things”, which cannot, by definition, be considered as “moral persons”.<sup>195</sup>

Therefore, it would be more accurate to say that, in Kant's vocabulary, the nation is *defined* by the legal parameters of the state. It is nations—not states—which demand, and ought, to be treated as “moral persons”. That the nation, as a *political* community, is not conceived from the beginning as a *moral* community does not prohibit it from eventually *becoming* one. Just as the moral predisposition needs time to develop in the individual, who is not, as we saw, born fully moral, or rational, but can *become* so over time, much of moral history—the epoch of freedom—will consist of nations reforming themselves to conform with the moral law.

Hence Kant lacks a precise vocabulary to disentangle the state from the nation. However, it is clear that—regardless of whether they are, or are not, one and the same—they are both *political communities*, and, as such, they are products of culture and civilization—of the pragmatic

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<sup>195</sup> See fn. 153.

predisposition.<sup>196</sup> They can neither be an outcome of the technical predisposition, nor, more importantly, of the moral predisposition either.<sup>197</sup>

Yet this very ambiguity also indicates that the two are *not* entirely interchangeable either. Kant wrote *Perpetual Peace* after the French revolution—the eve of mass politics—and should not be faulted for failing to recognize nationalism as the world-historical phenomenon it would later become; the fact that he was sensitive enough to address it, however vaguely, demonstrates a remarkable attunement to his historical moment. But even more so, as will be demonstrated, a conceptual disentanglement between the state and the nation is necessary by Kant’s own terms—otherwise the process of moralization would be incoherent.

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<sup>196</sup> Plausibly, that Kant treats the state and the nation as interchangeable is precisely because, as political communities, they are both outcomes of the pragmatic predisposition—and as such, depend on empirical, and thus historically contingent, conditions, the domain of “local anthropologies”. To wit, distinguishing *between* the state and the nation is less important for Kant than the distinction between pragmatic and *moral* communities.

<sup>197</sup> A highly developed technical predisposition is not a guarantor of a similarly developed moral predisposition (Contemporary China serves as a good example—a totalitarian state with extremely advanced technological capabilities), these develop asynchronously, although the former may encourage the latter.

#### 4.1 Pragmatic Cosmopolitanism: Perpetual Peace

We have seen that Kant affirms enlightenment as an alternative principle to war for progress towards the species' *Bestimmung*. Insofar as the propagation of enlightenment depends on a degree of political stability—which requires, in turn, a condition of peace—enlightenment and war are mutually exclusive and cannot, therefore, coexist with each other.<sup>198</sup> If enlightenment is to become the sole driver of the species' development, then war must be abolished entirely through a true and enduring peace—“the end of all hostilities” (*ZeF* 8:344)—and not merely suspended. Such a *perpetual* peace can only be created out of an act of free political will:

A condition of peace among men living near one another is not a state of nature (*status naturalis*), which is much rather a condition of war, that is, it involves the constant threat of an outbreak of hostilities even if this does not always occur. A condition of peace must therefore be established; for suspension of hostilities is not yet assurance of peace... (*ZeF* 8:348-9).<sup>199</sup>

Kant believes that the best guarantor of such a peace would be some form of robust global governance. This requires, at least in its early stages, a second tier of government—the “universal association of states”, or the *Völkerbund* first mentioned in the *Idea*.<sup>200</sup> Moreover, we have seen that this peaceful condition is required not only *externally* between states, but, more importantly,

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<sup>198</sup> Peace, in and of itself, is *not* a principle of progress—for Kant it is quite the opposite—its value lies in being a condition for enlightenment, and eventually, the *Weltrepublik*. More on this below.

<sup>199</sup> The term “Perpetual Peace” has for Kant a qualitative rather than a temporal meaning. It signifies true and actual peace rather than simply everlasting peace, although the former implies the latter for Kant under his definition. Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 187.

<sup>200</sup> Since we are concerned with the relationship between the particular political community (the *state*, or *nation*) and the cosmopolitan order in Kant's thought, we may temporarily set aside the precise level of sovereignty in this proposed “second tier” of governance. Such as the degree of coercion it will have over its member states, as well as its precise institutional makeup (whether, for instance, it will be a strong federation or a consensual league). Not the least because Kant himself seemed to oscillate in his attempts to clarify these ambiguities. The cardinal point is that any association of states, no matter how it starts out, will only be a *pro tempore* solution.



*internally* within the states themselves as well. Nevertheless, Kant believes that, despite these herculean tasks, perpetual peace is a feasible endeavor.<sup>201</sup>

It is crucial, however, to emphasize that in *Perpetual Peace* the *Völkerbund* is described as only *the second-best guarantor of peace*, while the *very best* form of world-government would be a single-tier, global, “state-of-nations” (*Völkerstaat*). Specifically, one which would be comprised out of all the world’s nations, who will share a single republican constitution—a “world republic” (*Weltrepublik*):

In accordance with reason there is only one way that states in relation with one another can leave the lawless condition, which involves nothing but war; it is that, like individual human beings, they give up their savage (lawless) freedom, accommodate themselves to public coercive laws, and so form an (always growing) *state of nations* [*Völkerstaat*] (*civitas gentium*) that would finally encompass all the nations of the earth [*alle Völker der Erde*]. But, in accordance with their idea of the right of nations, they do not at all want this, thus rejecting *in hypothesi* what is correct *in thesi*; so (if all is not to be lost) in place of the positive idea of a world republic [*Weltrepublik*] only the *negative* surrogate of a league [*Bund*] that averts war, endures, and always expands can hold back the stream of hostile inclination that shies away from right, though with constant danger of its breaking out (*ZeF* 8:357).

The *Weltrepublik* is preferred because it *alone* (“there is only one way”) is “correct in *thesi*” that is, in *theory*—yet the execution of such a political project is *currently* not possible in *hypothesi* that is, in *practice*. This is due to an observable anthropological fact—people find it undesirable (“they do not at all want this”).<sup>202</sup> It is only in lieu of a viable prospect for the creation of a sustainable *Weltrepublik* that Kant makes the case for a compromise (“if all is not to be lost”) by advancing the notion of the *Völkerbund*.

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<sup>201</sup> Here too there is a certain ambiguity regarding whether this will happen naturally, despite the human species’ natural unsocial inclinations—the “cunning of nature”—or only as a result of free choice. In other words, *because* of nature or *despite* nature.

<sup>202</sup> I am thankful to Heiner Klemme for emphasizing the importance of this observation.

Yet Kant's willingness to betray his "republican idealism" by giving up on the *Weltrepublik* in the space of a single sentence should give us more pause, especially since he believed that his moral theory was derived from reason *a priori* and is, therefore, impervious to empirical considerations.<sup>203</sup> Furthermore, such a federal association of states would be tasked only with the minimal duty of preventing war, namely, the suspension of hostilities, and *not* with establishing *perpetual* peace—in the positive sense—among its members:

a federative condition of states having as its only purpose the avoidance of war is the sole *rightful* condition compatible with the *freedom* of states. Thus *the harmony of politics with morals is possible only within a federative union* (which is therefore given *a priori* and is necessary by principles of right), and all political prudence has for its rightful basis the establishment of such a union in its greatest possible extent, without which end all its subtilizing is un wisdom and veiled injustice (*ZeF* 8:385 emphasis added).

Of further significance is the conditional in this passage—Kant considers the federation to be *rightful only insofar as states wish to maintain their individual freedom*, that is, *after* he accepts people's reluctance to join a *Weltrepublik*.<sup>204</sup> However, such a federation would be irrelevant, for instance, in the case where states *do* agree to give up their freedom.<sup>205</sup> Here too, Kant seems to let a contingent political reality determine what is Right.

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<sup>203</sup> The term "republican idealism" is taken from: Höffe, *Kant's Cosmopolitan Theory of Law and Peace*, 200.

<sup>204</sup> Similarly, in this context it is important to point out that Höffe's claim that a federal world-republic "defies the simple alternative of "single state or cosmopolitanism" (p.201) is done *already within the parameters of Kant's "concession"*, as it were. That is, *after* he seems to accept the unfeasibility of a *Weltrepublik*. Our concern, however, is with examining what can be gained by adopting the "pragmatic point of view" of Kantian anthropology to illuminate his political thought. That is, in demonstrating the different ways in which Kant's political thought can be shown to derive from how he thought that humans can, and ought, to be. Höffe seems to recognize, but does not pursue, this avenue of inquiry, by acknowledging that a "shared consciousness regarding the morality of right and law on a global level, or so long as there is no willingness actually to act on the basis of a shared legal consciousness, a world state is in danger of allowing force, not law, to govern" (pp. 198-199). See: *Ibid.*, 198–203 It is precisely this "shared consciousness... on a global level" which is our concern here.

<sup>205</sup> Georg Cavallar, "Kant's Society of Nations: Free Federation or World Republic?," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 32, no. 3 (1994): 473. This excellent article focuses on the question whether the society of nations Kant envisioned was a "free federation of sovereign states" or rather "a universal state with coercive authority". Cavallar

On a more fundamental level, one could ask how could Kant—who was not known for his flexibility in moral matters—was willing to acknowledge that, in this case, his “proposition does indeed hold *in thesi*, but not *in hypothesi*” (T&P 8:276), thereby accepting a maxim that seeks to “reform reason by experience even in that in which reason puts its highest honor”, and therefore “does the greatest harm when it has to do with something moral” (T&P 8:277)? More particularly, is he not transgressing here his own dictum that “Right must never be accommodated to politics, but politics must always be accommodated to right” (*Menschenliebe* 8:429)?

One possible solution is that this accommodation should be seen as the adoption of an enlightened and pragmatic—in the conventional sense—position; a sign of respect towards peoples’ freedom—which includes their freedom to make mistakes, as given that the *Weltrepublik* alone is “in accordance with reason”, then *not* wanting to establish it would be, *ipso facto*, unreasonable.<sup>206</sup> None of this, of course, changes the fact that the *Weltrepublik* is the only rightful

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centers on the importance of voluntarism in Kant’s moral and legal philosophy, and claims that it is more consistent with a free federation, as well as with Kant’s post-1793 political writings. He concludes, on p.480, that “Kant finally rejected a compulsory international government as immoral. The true Kantian endorses a free federation of states. Kant was aware of the fact that this federation could not guarantee peace. Therefore he hoped that a world republic with public coercive laws might evolve at a later stage of development. He convincingly argued that solely just, peaceful means were justified in this process.” Thus, Cavallar’s conclusions are consonant with those I present here. However, we begin at different starting points—which reflect different, albeit complimentary, approaches to answering this question. Whereas Cavallar’s focus is on Kant’s voluntarism and the rejection of the “dirty hands theory” in his moral philosophy, here I advance the claim that the *Weltrepublik* can be derived from Kant’s philosophical anthropology for the fulfilling the *Bestimmung* of the species. Thus, the implicit voluntarism it necessitates is already accepted as a given, and its demonstration, which Cavallar adroitly does, is not required. Furthermore, as this is his focal point, Cavallar seems to reject the feasibility of the *Weltrepublik*, while accepting it as an *Idea* that “serves a regulative function, as is expressed in the movement toward a federation of free states” (p.474). That is, the analysis ends with the endorsement of the free federation, while leaving the *Weltrepublik* as an unrealizable horizon. Whereas I accept the idea of a *Weltrepublik* at face value, and therefore affirm its feasibility. Hence, I contend that ‘the movement’ is towards the *Bestimmung* of the species, and thus ought to continue until the *Weltrepublik* is established. Finally, there seems to be a reversal of means and ends here; whereas the idea of the *Weltrepublik* in Cavallar’s reading is a means for securing peace, I have sought to demonstrate that peace is only a means for (the eventual) creation of the *Weltrepublik*, which, in itself, is a necessary condition for the moralization of the species.

<sup>206</sup> Whereas an attempt to establish it by force (such as through revolution), as we shall see, would be counter-productive and, what is perhaps even worse—paternalistic.

*Völkerstaat in thesi*, nor, more importantly, does it preclude the possibility that in the future people may voluntarily change their minds and purposely act towards its creation.<sup>207</sup> Although such an outcome cannot be guaranteed, it must be seriously considered, given, as we have seen, how Kant's philosophy of history is entirely future-oriented.

However, Kant's acquiescence may have had an even more prudent reason, one which is pragmatic in the philosophical sense—which is that in Kant's historical moment, the Enlightenment, the species simply cannot be “made” into a single, unified, moral, whole. An attempt, therefore, to create a *Weltrepublik* which is grafted on to an insufficiently civilized species—that has not developed its collective pragmatic predisposition enough, and has not yet been thoroughly “educated”—would result in disaster. Since, just as war has salutary outcomes, peace has adverse effects:

The idea of the right of nations presupposes the *separation* of many neighboring states independent of one another; and though such a condition is of itself a condition of war (unless a federative union of them prevents the outbreak of hostilities), this is nevertheless better, in accordance with the idea of reason, than the fusion of them by one power overgrowing the rest and passing into a universal monarchy, since as the range of government expands laws progressively lose their vigor, and a soulless despotism, after it has destroyed the seed of good, finally deteriorates into anarchy. Yet the craving of every state (or of its head) is to attain a lasting condition of peace in this way, by ruling the whole world where possible. But *nature wills* it otherwise. It makes use of two means to prevent peoples from intermingling and to separate them: differences of *language* and of *religion*\* **which do bring with them the propensity to mutual hatred and pretexts for war** but yet, with increasing culture and the gradual approach of human beings **to greater agreement in principles**, leads to understanding in a peace that is produced and secured, not as in such a despotism (in the graveyard of freedom), by means of a weakening of all

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<sup>207</sup> The problems with how Kant proceeds in this argument have been duly noted by Lutz-Bachmann, who claims that “Kant provides no basis for rejecting the concept of a world republic or a new cosmopolitan structure discussed today in terms of the need for a new global political order” Matthias Lutz-Bachmann, “Kant’s Idea of Peace and the Philosophical Conception of a World Republic,” in *Perpetual Peace: Essays on Kant’s Cosmopolitan Ideal*, ed. James Bohman and Matthias Lutz-Bachmann, First Edition, Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1997), 74 I shall return to reconsidering the future possibility of a *Weltrepublik* in 4.7.

forces, but **by means of their equilibrium in liveliest competition** (*ZeF* 8:367 Bold emphases added).<sup>208</sup>

The undesirability, and hence, the *unfeasibility* of a *Weltrepublik* stems, merely, from the natural—and thus historically *contingent*—division of the world into different states, nations, religions, and other cultural forms. Given that this division is the result of the epoch of nature—“nature wills it”—we should view this obstacle to the *Weltrepublik* as another blunt instrument of the cunning of nature and part of the “education from above” which, indeed, can extend “almost to the extinction of the entire race”. Thus, it can be cogently explained in terms of unsocial sociability; not only as the obvious result of the *unsocial* dimension—“the propensity to mutual hatred and pretexts for war”—which can manifest as cultural chauvinism, religious zealotry, racism, or any other aspiration to dominate, or annihilate, other peoples, but of the *social* dimension—the desire to keep collective identities unique and intact as well.<sup>209</sup>

We have seen that, regardless of their ostensible motives, the unconscious acts of men drive them towards *outcomes* which may have well been prescribed by reason *a priori*. In this case, the

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<sup>208</sup> Cf. “If we are allowed to assume a design of providence here, the premature and hence dangerous (since it would come before human beings have become morally better) fusion of states into one is averted chiefly through two mightily effective causes, namely the difference of languages and the difference of religions” (*Rel* 6:123).

By subtly alluding to the story of the tower of Babel, this argument continues the biblical exegesis as a defense of reason of the *Conjectural Beginning of Human History*—there Kant refers to the story explicitly:

“the holy document is quite right to represent the melting together of the nations [*Völker*] into one society and its complete liberation from external danger, when its culture had hardly begun, as a restraint on all further culture and as a sinking into incurable corruption” (*Anfang* 8:121/2). The tower of Babel is also alluded to in the first *Critique* (A707/B735).

<sup>209</sup> Cf. to an earlier sketch in the *Reflections on Anthropology*, (*Refl* 1353 15:590) under the heading “Of the German national spirit” [*Vom deutschen nationalgeist*]:

Because it is a providential intention that nations should not merge together, but should be in conflict with each other through the driving force, national pride and national hatred are necessary for the separation of nations. Therefore, either by religion, since a people believes that all others are cursed, such as Jews and Turks, or by the conceit of the intellect, that all others are unscrupulous and ignorant, or of bravery, that (one) must fear everything before the people, or of freedom, that all others are slaves, a people loves its country before others. Governments like to see this delusion. This is the mechanism in the world order that instinctively binds and separates us. Reason, on the other hand, gives us the law that, because instincts are blind, they may direct animalism towards us, but they must be replaced by maxims of reason. For this reason, this national delusion [*Nationalwahn*] must be eradicated, and patriotism and cosmopolitanism must take its place (my translation).

“natural” division of the world into cultural units—nations included—and peoples’ desire to keep it this way is nature’s heavy-handed way to stymie not only the creation of a *Weltrepublik*, but to prevent the establishment of *any Völkerstaat* for that matter.<sup>210</sup>

In the epoch of nature, the plurality of nations is a safeguard that prevents the fusion of all nations together into a *Völkerstaat* which would not necessarily be a *Weltrepublik*. Moreover, even if this *Völkerstaat* were to be established as a *Weltrepublik*, say, by revolution, yet not grafted onto a human species with a “morally good disposition”, i.e., which has not been sufficiently *moralized*, it would be “mere semblance and glittering misery” (*Idee* 8:26) and would inevitably degenerate into the absolute worst *Völkerstaat* possible—“a universal monarchy”. Hence even if people *did* in fact possess the will to create a *Weltrepublik*, this would be impossible given their divisions—and so much the better.

So, while a fusion of all the world’s nations into a global *Völkerstaat* may *seemingly* achieve peace by allowing states to exit the natural state of war, unless the global *Völkerstaat* is constituted under the principle of Right, this peace “is produced and secured” at the terrible price of creating “a despotism (in the graveyard of freedom)”—and one which would encompass the entire globe to boot.<sup>211</sup> Given that freedom is the *sine qua non* for morality itself, such a trade-off would never

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<sup>210</sup> Although the cunning of nature can help prevent the *fusion* of them all together, it cannot *guarantee* that a single nation, or religion, will not acquire hegemony over the others. Differences encourage competition, and competitions have winners. These radical differences, according to Hegel, are the central reason that prevents the creation of a cosmopolitan order.

<sup>211</sup> Kant is punning here on the word for “Graveyard”—which in German is literally “Peace-yard” (“*Friedhof*”). In the introduction to *Towards Perpetual Peace* Kant refers to the “satirical inscription on a certain Dutch innkeeper’s signboard picturing a graveyard” (*ZeF* 8:343) as the source for the essay’s title.

be acceptable.<sup>212</sup> This conditional can be found already in Kant's earlier position in the *Theory and Practice* (1793) essay:

Just as unilateral violence and the need arising from it must finally bring a people to decide to subject itself to the coercion that reason itself prescribes to them as means, namely to public law, and to enter into a *civil constitution* [*staatsbürgerliche Verfassung*], so too must the need arising from the constant wars by which states in turn try to encroach upon or subjugate one another at last bring them, even against their will, to enter into a *cosmopolitan constitution*; [*weltbürgerliche Verfassung*] or else, **if this condition of universal peace is still more dangerous to freedom from another quarter**, by leading to the most fearful despotism (as has indeed happened more than once with states that have grown too large), this need must still constrain states to enter a condition that is not a cosmopolitan commonwealth under a single head but is still a rightful condition of *federation* in accordance with a commonly agreed upon *right of nations* (*T&P* 8:310/1 Bold emphasis added).

Note that it is only *if* there is a danger of collapse into a “graveyard of freedom” that the *ersatz* condition of peace of the federation should be accepted—as it merely suspends, and does not abolish, hostilities. Moreover, it maintains the natural division of nations, which, by definition, is a condition of war. Nevertheless, this would still be preferable to a non-republican *Völkerstaat*.<sup>213</sup>

By dividing the species into cultural units, the heavy hand of nature thus staves off a greater calamity. Although national differences may be a cause for hatred and war, nevertheless, it is still a worthy trade-off—but *only insofar as enlightenment has not become entrenched as a viable mode of development*. Furthermore, beyond the preservation of freedom, war, as we saw above, also

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<sup>212</sup> One may surmise that what Kant has in mind is a global China of sorts, which provided a real-life example of the tower of Babel, as it exhibited the dangers of peace bought at the price of freedom and the premature fusion of different nations into one state:

“One needs only to look at *China*, which on account of its situation has to fear perhaps only an unforeseen attack, but not a mighty enemy, and in which therefore all trace of freedom has been eradicated.—Thus at the stage of culture where humankind still stands, war is an indispensable means of bringing culture still further; and only after a (God knows when) completed culture, would an everlasting peace be salutary, and thereby alone be possible for us. Thus, as regards this point, we are ourselves responsible for the ills against which we raise such bitter complaints; and the holy document is quite right to represent the melting together of the nations (*Völker*) into one society and its complete liberation from external danger, when its culture had hardly begun, as a restraint on all further culture and as a sinking into incurable corruption” (*Anfang* 8:121). History, it seems, has yet to lose its rhyming skills.

<sup>213</sup> Kleingeld, *Kant and Cosmopolitanism*, 55.

helps establish *reason* as the guiding principle of international law, and—since territorial expansion breeds laxity—helps preserve the laws’ vigor by keeping the world divided into smaller political communities. A premature *Weltrepublik* thus runs the risk of losing the reach of its laws, which will facilitate, in turn, a collapse into anarchy.<sup>214</sup> “Salutary but harsh and stern”, crudely indiscriminate in its negation, nature, once again, demonstrates its cunning.

So, while it is indeed true that for Kant any *state* is better than none: “for some *rightful* constitution or other, even if it is only to a small degree in conformity with right, is better than none at all” (*ZeF* 8:373fn). It is most certainly *not* the case that any kind of *Völkerstaat* would be better than the natural condition of war between political communities. To wit, to the extent that *Völkerstaaten* are considered, the choice is stark: either it be a *Weltrepublik*, or nothing at all. Therefore, even though perpetual peace is “the highest political good” (*MdS* 6:355). It does *not* follow that it should be acquired by any means necessary, nor that peace should be bought at any price—the peace of “the graveyard of freedom”, for instance, would simply not do.<sup>215</sup> Thus, national differences, “by means of their equilibrium in liveliest competition” will safeguard a

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<sup>214</sup> This highlights a problem of *political technology* in *Perpetual Peace*: If what prohibits the establishment of the *Weltrepublik* is the problem of its territorial size and the fear that its laws will not reach all its citizens (since for Kant it is even more important that people live under a condition of law than perpetual peace—see next paragraph). Eliminating the debilitating effect of a large territory (e.g., through better communication and transport systems), may thus remove a serious obstacle for establishing the *Weltrepublik*.

This is what seems to guide Kant’s thinking in the *Idea*, where he writes about the proposed *Völkerbund* that “partly through the best possible arrangement of their civil constitution internally, partly through a common agreement and legislation externally, a condition is set up, which, resembling a civil commonwealth, can preserve itself like an *automaton*” (*Idee* 8:25). Then again, whereas political technology might solve the problem of establishing a republican *state*, as we shall below, it might be too risky to use it for creating a *world-republic*, if only because of the question of its size. The cost of a malfunction in the political machine may be too great to bear once it is in place—especially given the lack of an outside force to dismantle it.

<sup>215</sup> This advocacy of patience can be read as an indictment of political *Schwärmerei*: by prematurely trying to establish a *Weltrepublik* without proper moral development beforehand, people would be “jumping over their time”. Kant, despite his strive to observe it from a *weltbürgerlicher Absicht*, seems to recognize, and respect, the fact that he is a child of his time.



peace—albeit an imperfect one—which is preferable to the creation of a universal despotism and a descent into the “graveyard of freedom”, which will eventually collapse into anarchy.

Yet these are all utilitarian considerations. Furthermore, as an ideal, perpetual peace—it bears reemphasizing—is an external representation of the broader concept of the highest good *simpliciter*—the universal moral community, which includes perpetual peace as only a *secondary* facet of itself.<sup>216</sup> In other words, peace is a *pragmatic*, and not a moral, good—it is a means towards the end of moralization. So, “to the scandal of philosophy”, the puzzle regarding Kant’s admittance that in his political theory “what may be correct in it is yet invalid in practice” (*T&P* 8:277) still stands.

Herein lies an important part of my argument, which is that, despite this ostensible un-Kantian shift, once the pragmatic anthropological point of view is adopted, an inner coherence emerges. Treating the species as a whole reveals that Kant’s putative flexibility is a stalking horse—part of a maneuver to stay the species on course towards the fulfillment of its *Bestimmung*, which remains one and the same: the universal moral community. It may be resisted, or left unfulfilled, but it cannot be changed, and I contend that *the Weltrepublik, and the Weltrepublik alone, is a necessary condition for the universal moral community*. Hence, I further argue, Kant never really gave up on the “positive idea” of a *Weltrepublik*.<sup>217</sup> So although it is Kant’s own acceptance of the unfeasibility of a *Weltrepublik* that paves the way for the *Völkerbund*, his compromise is really about the length of time that history requires for its culmination—while the *Völkerbund* is an important part of reason’s long-term plan.

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<sup>216</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 187.

<sup>217</sup> Indeed, how could Kant give up on the only “positive Idea” correct *in thesi*? The only way where states can relate to each other “in accordance with reason”?

## 4.2 Origins: The Contingent Nature of States in their Development

As we continue to mirror the Kantian anthropological point of view—where the whole precedes the parts and the general determines the local—we can now turn to examine, having temporarily rejected the *Weltrepublik* in favor of establishing the *Völkerbund* as the only feasible guarantor of peace, how this pertains to states, and nations, within the Kantian cosmopolitan schema.

Unlike war, there is nothing *essentially* natural for Kant about the state. Like all other products of culture, political communities are natural only to the extent that that they have developed out of nature's machinations. The usefulness of the social contract in explaining the origins of the state, whether as an actual event or as a thought experiment, is categorically rejected in *Theory and Practice*. Furthermore, even if such an event *did* in fact take place in the past, it could never be binding on future generations:

it is by no means necessary that this contract (called *contractus originarius* or *pactum sociale*), as a coalition of every particular and private will within a people into a common and public will (for the sake of a merely rightful legislation), be presupposed as a fact (as a fact it is indeed not possible)—as if it would first have to be proved from history that a people, into whose rights and obligations we have entered as descendants, once actually carried out such an act, and that it must have left some sure record or instrument of it, orally or in writing, if one is to hold oneself bound to an already existing civil constitution (*T&P* 8:297).

The origins of the state should therefore be located elsewhere; and in *Perpetual Peace* Kant makes the claim that the state was established through the unjust exercise of force: “(in practice) the only beginning of the rightful condition to be counted upon is that by power, on the coercion of which public right is afterward based” (*ZeF* 8:371).

Thus, the existence of states, and nations, is yet another outcome of unsocial sociability—particularly of war. As war—beyond its social and unsocial effects—is the only way that Right may be asserted in the epoch of nature, given that “war is, after all, only the regrettable expedient for asserting one's right by force in a state of nature” (*ZeF* 8:346). The origins of the state thus lie

in the strong imposing their particular will upon the weak—whether as rulers who subjugated their own people, or whether as a particular political community dominating others—states and nations were all forged in the evil fires of war.<sup>218</sup>

It is *futile* to inquire into the *historical documentation* of the mechanism of government, that is, one cannot reach back to the time at which civil society began (**for savages draw up no record of their submission to law**); besides, we can already gather from the nature of uncivilized human beings that they were originally subjected to it by force... But it must still be possible, if the existing constitution cannot well be reconciled with the idea of the original contract, for the sovereign to change it, so as to allow to continue in existence that form which is essentially required for a people to constitute a state... the *spirit* of the original contract (*anima pacti originarii*) involves an obligation on the part of the constituting authority to make the kind of government suited to the idea of the original contract. **Accordingly, even if this cannot be done all at once, it is under an obligation to change the kind of government gradually and continually so that it harmonizes in its effect with the only constitution that accords with right, that of a pure republic**, in such a way that the old (empirical) statutory forms, which served merely to bring about the *submission* of the people, are replaced by the original (rational) form, the only form which **makes freedom the principle and indeed the condition for any exercise of coercion**, as is required by a rightful constitution of a state in the strict sense of the word. (*MdS* §52 6:339–40 bold emphases added).<sup>219</sup>

Therefore, states, all of which were conceived in sin and continue to retain, in various degrees, their despotic nature, make indeterminate objects as well. States straddle the boundary between the empirical and rational worlds; their origins are historical, *ipso facto* making them contingent and not fixed, yet they also have the capacity to become rightful if they undergo a moral conversion (*verwandeln*).<sup>220</sup> So, while the social contract lacks explanatory power (i.e., as a constitutive Idea), it *does* have utility as a regulative Idea; it is “*only an idea of reason*” (*T&P* 8:297) which provides the ideal conditions to which states ought to conform with.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Oddly, despite the many allusions to Thucydides in his work, some noted above, Kant does not reference the classic formulation in the Melian Dialogue, that “right, as the world goes, is only in question between equals in power, while the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must” Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, para. 5.89.

<sup>219</sup> Again, note the emphasis on the slow and gradual process.

<sup>220</sup> Guyer, “The Crooked Timber of Mankind,” 135 More about the moral conversion in (4.4).

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, 138–39.

Kant's use of the language of the social contract is thus analytical and not historical.<sup>222</sup> Here too, reason, which takes the form of the rational "spirit of the original contract", can provide the "Idea" which ought to regulate the remaking of contingent conditions. In this case, the regulative ideal of "a pure republic"—the only political constitution grounded in the principle of freedom and a *general* will—should replace all governments hitherto based on the forced submission to a *particular* will. Hence, if states are ever to become rightful, the light of reason should serve to guide their reform.<sup>223</sup> Another duty that, similarly to cosmopolitanism, Kant explicitly urges his audience to pursue—which suggests that he did not consider them to be mutually exclusive.

This makes both the state and the international order simultaneously both *products* of history and necessary *preconditions* for any further progress as well. We have seen above (3.5) that they are both means and ends, thus the state, which, as a "thing" lacks any moral value in itself, can therefore serve as a means of nature to advance the species' end. A solution to the linkage problem would thus initiate a mutually-reinforcing relationship and spark a "virtuous cycle" which will culminate with the *Bestimmung* of the human species—the universal moral community. Hence the difficulty, and significance, that Kant attaches to the problem. Converting the foundation of the state from a particular to a universal will—i.e., establishing a republican constitution—will create a necessary condition for the state to further fulfill its role of propagating enlightenment and administering justice towards its citizens, which, in turn, will cement peaceful relations with other states.

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<sup>222</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 150.

<sup>223</sup> Guyer, "The Crooked Timber of Mankind," 139–40.

Against the harsh, but necessary, division of the species in the epoch of nature, the human species must consciously strive to create a state of unity in the epoch of freedom that will guarantee cosmopolitan right. That is, if nature has divided the human species—albeit, for good reasons—it is the duty of reason to unify it. Yet, as unification must be done within the context of a humanity which is *already* divided by “language and religion”, the loci of the process of acculturation, and eventually, moralization must, at first, be the individual political communities themselves.

This brings us to the second, *positive* role that national differences—and the conflicts they necessarily beget—play in the Kantian cosmopolitan schema.<sup>224</sup> They are a further impetus to drive the development of the species’ pragmatic predisposition forward, which is always at risk of degenerating into indolent complacency, or, even worse—barbarism. Therefore, when war is suspended, even indefinitely in the form of a *Bund*, Kant emphasizes that it is crucial “to introduce a cosmopolitan condition of public state security, which is not wholly without dangers so that the powers of humanity may not fall asleep” (*Idee* 8:26). Through the application of the correct political technology national differences should be allowed to continue this role beyond the epoch of nature and through the Enlightenment. Over time, if culture continues to progress, it “leads to understanding in a peace that is produced and secured”, eventually inculcating the desire for peace in a *positive* sense—the abolition of war—and help set the epoch of freedom, where enlightenment is the sole principle of progress, in motion. The reformed nation-state therefore can, and should, be a vehicle for human development.

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<sup>224</sup> In contrast to the *negative* role of preventing a world tyranny discussed above.

#### 4.3 Understanding: Pragmatic Republics vs. Moral Communities

We have seen that conflict, rife in the epoch of nature, eventually spurs the unfolding of the pragmatic predisposition towards a civilized culture which externally exhibits a tendency to peace and concord. We have also seen (3.4) that civilization eventually develops a reciprocal moral *sense* of equality in people, by virtue of the mutual recognition of their shared rationality. As a result, a desire for an equal society (*societas aequalis*) begins to stir, one where everyone is equal before the law and has the right to pursue their happiness—so long as they do not interfere with the correlative rights of others.<sup>225</sup> This desire finds its legal codification in the form of laws of equality:

external (rightful) *equality* within a state is that relation of its citizens in which no one can rightfully bind another to something without also being subject to a law by which he in turn *can* be bound in the same way by the other (*ZeF* 8:350).

It is here that the *political* condition for the possibility of a non-antagonistic form of development, namely, enlightenment, presents itself—as this legal codification is consistent *only* with a *republican* constitution, “the sole constitution that issues from the idea of the original contract, on which all rightful legislation of a people must be based” (*ZeF* 8:350).<sup>226</sup> What is significant is that the constitution is a political expression of a people’s degree of culture:

With the advance of culture they feel ever more strongly the ill which they selfishly inflict on one another; and since they see no other remedy for it than to subjugate the private interest (of the individual) to the public interest (of all united), they subjugate themselves, though reluctantly, to a discipline (of civil constraint). But in doing so they subjugate themselves only according to laws they themselves have given, and they feel themselves

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<sup>225</sup> According to Beiser, this idea is already present in Kant’s earlier *Reflexionen* from the 1760s. *Enlightenment, Revolution, and Romanticism*, 30.

<sup>226</sup> It is important to emphasize that that this does not mean that the community *becomes* moral by adopting a republican constitution—only that its members have the desire, at least externally, to *conform* with morality.

ennobled by this consciousness; namely, of belonging to a species that is suited to the destiny of the human being, as reason represents it to him in the ideal (*Anth* 7:329).<sup>227</sup>

The republican constitution thus originates from the demand of a culturally advanced, or *civilized*, people for a constitution that will appropriately reflect their inherent equality. It is the degree to which they developed their pragmatic predisposition in common that determines their adequate constitution—not vice versa. A republican constitution *cannot*, therefore, be imposed on a people who do not voluntarily accept, or at least *profess* to accept, this basic moral sensibility.<sup>228</sup>

Hence the first definitive article of *Perpetual Peace* demands that “The civil constitution in every state shall be republican” (*ZeF* 8:349), given that the republican constitution is “the sole constitution that can lead toward perpetual peace” (*ZeF* 8:350). This is so, Kant believes, in part due to this moral sensibility as well, since a republic requires the people’s consent to go to war, and thus “nothing is more natural than that they will be very hesitant to begin such a bad game, since they would have to decide to take upon themselves all the hardships of war” (*ZeF* 8:350).<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> Cf. “Thus happen the first true steps from crudity toward culture, which really consists in the social worth of the human being; thus all talents come bit by bit to be developed, taste is formed, and even, through progress in enlightenment, a beginning is made toward the foundation of a mode of thought which can with time transform the rude natural predisposition to make moral distinctions into determinate practical principles and hence transform a *pathologically* compelled agreement to form a society finally into a *moral whole*” (*Idee* 8:21).

<sup>228</sup> There is an argument lurking here against “democratic peace” theory, which professes to trace its intellectual lineage back to Kant. To wit, it is not the constitution which defines the morality of a people, rather *it is the morality of the people which defines which constitution is appropriate for them*. In other words, people go to war—not constitutions. This, however, does not prohibit a mutually-reinforcing, literally virtuous, cycle between the constitution and the people. As we shall see, the constitution does indeed play a part in the moralization of the citizens, the point, rather, is that it is the people who must initiate this cycle. The “linkage problem” is thus not a chicken-or-egg problem of infinite regress, since it is clear that first *the people* need to attain a certain degree of civility before they choose, *freely*, to adopt a republican constitution, and it most certainly cannot be imposed ‘at the point of bayonets’. The classic exponent of this view, including its association with Kant, is Michael W. Doyle. See: Michael W. Doyle, “Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs,” *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 12, no. 3 (1983): 205–35; Michael W. Doyle, “Kant and Liberal Internationalism,” in *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History*, by Immanuel Kant, ed. Pauline Kleingeld, trans. David L. Colclasure, Rethinking the Western Tradition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 201–42.

<sup>229</sup> It is possible to develop a further argument along these lines that nations reinforce this conviction by adding an emotional safeguard of republic; if the members of a nation see themselves as an extended family or *patria*, and an ‘imagined community’ they will be more hesitant to send their children to war.

Yet, we have seen that the perfection of republics is a feature of the ‘linkage problem’—namely that they are simultaneously both a condition for, and dependent on, the creation of the *Völkerbund*. This, apparently, only aggravates the problem, since if a republic is not freely willed by a civilized nation, then it cannot provide a secure foundation for the *Völkerbund*. Presumably, the ‘linkage problem’ has now been confined merely to the prospect of creating a republic out of an *insufficiently* moralized people, and if so—how?

Fortunately, although mutual recognition and a desire for a republic are not, in themselves, sufficient conditions for success—neither is morality. *Reason*, however, even only in its instrumental mode, is indispensable for solving the organizational problem of establishing a republic.<sup>230</sup> So although the problem is an extremely difficult one, it is not insurmountable—it can be solved through the proper application of the political technology that only a well-developed pragmatic predisposition—a complex society such as the nation-state—can provide. This is required, primarily, to balance the self-interests of the citizens:

Now the *republican* constitution is the only one that is completely compatible with the right of human beings, but it is also the most difficult one to establish and even more to maintain, so much so that many assert it would have to be a state of *angels* because human beings, with their self-seeking inclinations, would not be capable of such a sublime form of constitution. But now nature comes to the aid of the general will grounded in reason, revered but impotent in practice, and does so precisely through those self-seeking inclinations, so that **it is a matter only of a good organization of a state (which is certainly within the capacity of human beings)**, of arranging those forces of nature in opposition to one another in such a way that one checks the destructive effect of the other or cancels it, so that the result for reason turns out as if neither of them existed at all and the human being is constrained **to become a good citizen even if not a morally good human being** (*ZeF* 8:366, Bold emphases added).

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<sup>230</sup> This includes reason in the original Greek sense of *logos* (speech) as well. As we shall see in the next subsection a common language is a necessity for establishing republics.



To wit, Kant’s insistence that being a good citizen does *not* depend on being a morally good human being, means that such a—quite conceivable—“pragmatic republic” will produce only a *semblance*, or analogy, of morality; although its citizens will *not* be motivated by a good will and mutual recognition, but rather by self-interest, the rational laws of the state will force them—even by coercion—to act *as if* they were. In a well-ordered pragmatic republic, “the citizens’ inclination to violence against one another is powerfully counteracted by a greater force, namely that of the government”, this rational ordering of the state applies a “moral veneer” to society, one that greatly *facilitates* “the development of the moral disposition to immediate respect for right”. Hence, through the establishment of such pragmatic republics “a great step is taken *toward* morality (though it is not yet a moral step)” (*ZeF* 8:375–76fn).<sup>231</sup> In the final account, therefore, the end of politics—the pragmatic predisposition, corresponds with the demands of morality—the moral predisposition. Hence “The problem of establishing a state, no matter how hard it may sound, is *soluble* even for a nation of devils (if only they have understanding)” (*ZeF* 8:366).

Effectively, the identical outcome makes a moral community *nonessential* for a good state. On the contrary—despite their external similarity, it is the pragmatic republic which forms a *condition* for the creation of a moral community. This it achieves by providing a space for the development of the *moral* predisposition (more on this below). But even more significantly, the implication is that no moral value *per se* can be ascribed *even to the republic—the best of all possible states—* which, therefore, affirms that the end of human history *cannot be political*.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> This includes the *Weltrepublik* as well. More about this below.

<sup>232</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 188–89 Yovel claims that many have erroneously “read *Perpetual Peace* as if it identified the goal of history with that of politics”, despite its clear retention of the distinction between morality and politics (p.188). He does not, however, provide examples of these misreadings.

Thus, Kant puts his faith in the civilizing impact that rational political institutions would have on their citizens. His hope is that the “moral veneer” that republican constitutions create will, over time, percolate into the body politic itself, to eventually convert the “merely” externally “good citizens” into internally “morally good human beings”, given that “one who loves the illusion of the good eventually is won over to actually loving the good” (*Menschenkunde* 25:931).<sup>233</sup> Since these are political communities where people already realize that they must accommodate each other’s freedom as co-legislators—and legislate accordingly—their moral predispositions will develop as a result:

[F]or it is not the case that a good state constitution is to be expected from inner morality; on the contrary, the good moral education of a people is to be expected from a good state constitution (*ZeF* 8:366).

So, although a republic is bereft of any intrinsic moral value—it does hold *moralizing* value. Significantly, Kant recognizes that a prerequisite for morality is a degree of civilization—a developed pragmatic predisposition—and that the rightfulness of the republican constitution does not, however, entail that it should be implemented *immediately*.<sup>234</sup> It is the state which is assigned the duty of civilizing its citizens, and its pedagogical task—in a manner reminiscent of Aristotle’s practical ethics—consists of gradually inculcating moral habits in the life of its citizens over time.<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> As translated in: Alix A. Cohen, “The Ultimate Kantian Experience: Kant on Dinner Parties,” *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (2008): 319 Original: “*Wer den Schein des Guten liebt, der gewinnt zuletzt das Gute wirklich lieb*”. Kleingeld translates a longer passage from Kant’s *Nachlass* on the transition from the Doctrine of Right to the Doctrine of Virtue that expresses the view that “that progress at the level of ‘external freedom’ (right) provides a context conducive to moral development”. See: Kleingeld, *Kant and Cosmopolitanism*, 165.

<sup>234</sup> On Kant’s arguments for gradualism in the context of the French revolution, see: Reidar Maliks, *Kant’s Politics in Context*, Reprint edition (Oxford University Press, 2018), chap. 2 especially pp. 64-66.

<sup>235</sup> “At the base of the modern social order stands not the executioner but the professor. Not the guillotine, but the (aptly named) *doctorat d’etat* is the main tool and symbol of state power. The monopoly of legitimate education is now more important, more central than is the monopoly of legitimate violence”. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 34; “[M]oral virtue comes about as a result of habit” (NE II:1, 1103a). Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. W. D. Ross, 2005.

However, it should be noted that, beyond the unqualified faith that Kant puts in the moralizing power of political institutions—effectively claiming that political technology has the capacity to convert devils into angels—two inconsistencies present themselves here: First, as we saw above (4.0), Kant claimed earlier (*ZeF* 8:344) that states *are in fact* moral beings, yet here he claims they are not. One way to avoid this inconsistency is to distinguish between moral *value* and moral *Personhood*, but it is difficult to see how the latter does not *ex vi termini* include the former. Yet perhaps a more fruitful way to resolve this is, again, to draw the modern distinction between the state and nation (which, as we saw, Kant himself did not clearly draw), and disentangle the nation from the (modern) state. It is more than plausible that it is the *nation* which Kant refers to as the “society of human beings”, while the *state* is the institutional mechanism which administers it—in this case—the republic.

Thus, it would then be quite consistent to say that, out of the two, it is the *nation*—and not the state—which is the “moral person”. The consistency also stands regarding the “moralizing”, or educational, role of the state—since the state is *not* a Person, but rather an institution, or “thing”, it therefore could lack moral value in-itself, while still having a *moralizing effect* through, amongst others, the educational apparatus which transmits culture from one generation to the next. This is further consonant with Kant’s claim for “a series of innumerable many generations” required for the human species to fulfil its *Bestimmung*.

The second inconsistency is that, by ascribing a pedagogical role to the state, it is hard to see how it can avoid ossifying into becoming, if not despotic, at least paternalistic, something which Kant was very keen to avoid. Even though it is “the people” who nominally are, and remain, sovereign.

And yet, there is only so much a well-ordered pragmatic republic, even a well-ordered *Weltrepublik*, can do, for it cannot substitute a truly moral community: “in so doing also to promote and secure peace within as well as without, so far as a state itself can do so” (*ZeF* 8:367). That is, so long as a pragmatic republic is not grafted onto “a morally good disposition”, then—no matter how well it externally conforms with reason—it will nevertheless remain “mere semblance and glittering misery” (*Idee* 8:26). The conscious conversion of the pragmatic republic into a free, *moral*, community is thus a crucial component of the relation between nationalism and cosmopolitanism in Kant’s political thought.

#### 4.4 Conversion: The Will to Communicate, or, *Königliche Völker*: Democratizing Plato

As we have seen, the purpose of the “pragmatic republic” is to create a redoubt for its citizens’ moralization. The adoption of a republican constitution creates institutional *conditions* that are conducive for the moral predisposition’s development, yet although it is “a step toward morality”, it is still not “a moral step” since it is still based on political expediency—and not mutual recognition. Therefore, even the best-ordered pragmatic republic cannot be considered the end of human history—even if its outcomes correspond to the demands of morality.<sup>236</sup>

One way to examine this process of moralization, or conversion, is through the concept of *Königliche Völker*.<sup>237</sup> The concept echoes a passage in the *Doctrine of Virtue* that identifies “Kingliness” with the possession of virtue (*MdS* 6:405) and appears in the second part of the appendix of *Towards Perpetual Peace*, subtitled *On the Agreement Of Politics With Morals In Accord With The Transcendental Concept Of Public Right*. There, Kant takes issue with the Platonic ideal of the philosopher-king, arguing that philosophy and politics ought to remain strictly separated:

That kings should philosophize or philosophers become kings is not to be expected, but it is also not to be wished for, since possession of power unavoidably corrupts the free judgment of reason (*ZeF* 8:369).

Kant does, however, endorse the Platonic notion that the *idea* of the good should rule public affairs. Reason, as we have seen (3.4), should ascend to the throne that dictates public life, and rule according to the regulative idea of the good. Kant proposes to reconceptualize the Platonic

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<sup>236</sup> The very division of the species into states and nations is indicative of the fact that the end of the species has not been achieved as well, this will be explored in more detail below.

<sup>237</sup> For a discussion of this concept see: Otfried Höffe, »*Königliche Völker*«: *Zu Kants kosmopolitischer Rechts- und Friedenstheorie*, Originalausgabe edition (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2001), chap. 8. For the benefit of the English reader, in what follows, I will cite according to Alexandra Newton’s translation: Höffe, *Kant’s Cosmopolitan Theory of Law and Peace*.

ideal by democratizing it, that is, by *popularizing* it. Those nations who choose to impose upon themselves the aforementioned “laws of equality” and establish a pragmatic republic, take the first step towards becoming a philosophical *people*:

But that kings or royal peoples (ruling themselves by laws of equality) should not let the class of philosophers disappear or be silent but should let it speak publicly is indispensable to both, so that light may be thrown on their business (*ZeF* 8:369).

For Kant, the title of “king” here is metaphorical, rather than literal, for a truly moral *person*.

As we have seen above, personhood can be ascribed to an individual (a “natural person”) or an *association* of persons such as the political community of the nation. In order to be bestowed with the honorific “Kingly People”, a nation must voluntarily choose to undergo a moral “transformation” (*verwandeln*) and govern themselves according to these laws of equality, where “they submit their coexistence to right and right to morals”.<sup>238</sup> That a nation *may even be* in the position to make such a decision and take its first steps in the epoch of freedom already implies a highly-developed pragmatic predisposition—and a degree of enlightenment as well.

To continue the Platonic analogy, *Popularphilosophie* is how the philosopher ought to engage with his chained brethren upon returning to the cave. The philosopher must first convince them that another world exists outside the cave, and, more importantly, that they ought not simply take his word for it. Rather than removing their chains and enticing them to follow his lead—whether to the outside world or in revolt against their captors—he ought to encourage them to go to see it for themselves. This inherently *social* process, will also, inevitably, take a lot of time.

Thus, the purpose of Kant’s distinct version of *Popularphilosophie* is to create a “kingly people” where every citizen is equally a “king”, that is, where each and every one possesses

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<sup>238</sup> Höffe, *Kant’s Cosmopolitan Theory of Law and Peace*, 148.

virtue.<sup>239</sup> A virtuous citizen is one who supports, and obeys, laws—which he either co-legislated, or *would* have given his consent to their legislation—that do not conflict with legal morals.<sup>240</sup> Hence the only constitution fit for a kingly people, where all citizens are co-legislators, is the *republican constitution*, which alone derives “from the pure source of the concept of right” (*ZeF* 8:350), and a nation may become worthy of the title “kingly” only when it has freely subjected itself to it.<sup>241</sup>

Thus, what primarily distinguishes a “kingly people” is their justice.<sup>242</sup> And, although Kant strongly condemns the “national delusion” (*Nationalwahn*) of believing that one’s nation is superior to others, he nevertheless *does* provide a yardstick for measuring one nation vis-à-vis another.<sup>243</sup> The measure of a people should therefore not be their cultural idiosyncrasies, nor their economic achievements, and certainly not their military conquests, but their *morality*. It is the degree to which their constitution conforms to the laws of equality, together with the extent to which they follow them from their own moral conviction. A highly developed moral predisposition, therefore, is the true mark of a kingly people.

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<sup>239</sup> Kant understood ‘democracy’ as *Athenian* democracy—i.e., majoritarian, not representative—which made it despotic: “[D]emocracy in the strict sense of the word is necessarily a despotism because it establishes an executive power in which all decide for and, if need be, against one” (*ZeF* 8:352). A recent resurgence in populism does much to affirm this criticism.

<sup>240</sup> “The good citizen must have the knowledge and the ability both to be ruled and to rule” (Pol. 3.1277b) Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library 264 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1944).

<sup>241</sup> Höffe, *Kant’s Cosmopolitan Theory of Law and Peace*, 148.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*, 149.

<sup>243</sup> This, Kant urges, in *Refl.* 15: 1353 (quoted in full in subsection 4.1) should be replaced with “Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism” [*an dessen stelle patriotism und cosmopolitism treten muss*]. Interestingly, this occurs under the heading “Of the German national spirit”. And not a general discussion of national spirit *as such*.

This moralization process consists of a transformation (*verwandeln*) of the source of the laws and their enforcement from self-interest and coercion to right and mutual recognition.<sup>244</sup> As this is a process of converting the will, it is reasonable to assume that for a long period of time—one which may span the course of many generations—some of the citizens will continue to obey the law out of self-interest, while others will come to do so out of observing the moral law within them, or both.

Therefore, although externally they may *seem* the same, the cardinal difference between the moral community and the pragmatic republic is an *internal* one: whereas even the best pragmatic republic is based on the pragmatic predisposition, which, regardless of how much it is developed, still treats citizens as means, a moral community, in contrast, would be based on a developed *moral* predisposition, on adherence to the moral law within, to never treat people merely as means.

This historical process of moralization—where the pragmatic republic is transformed into a moral community—requires that citizens accept a certain reform in thinking. One condition for becoming a “kingly people” is that the nation ground the laws of their republic in the moral law and heed the principles of legal morals. First and foremost these should comply with “the *transcendental formula* of public right” which states that: “All actions relating to the rights of others are wrong if their maxim is incompatible with publicity” (*ZeF* 8:381).<sup>245</sup> The call for the

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<sup>244</sup> One may, of course, speculate about whether a moral community might be anarchic and forgo laws entirely. However, such utopian thought does not square with the importance Kant attaches to the law and to his claim that the state is a normative demand *a priori* even for “well disposed and law-abiding human beings” (*MdS* 6:312). See: Kleingeld, *Kant and Cosmopolitanism*, 69 It stands to reason, therefore, that a moral community would require, at least, a minimal set of laws—derived from the moral law itself—to regulate itself, thus the state will not be *aufgehoben*; See also: Wood, “Kant’s Historical Materialism,” 28; Arthur Ripstein, “Bringing Rights and Citizenship under Law on a Globus Terraqueus,” in *The Court of Reason: Proceedings of the 13th International Kant Congress*, ed. Beatrix Himmelmann and Camilla Serck-Hanssen (De Gruyter, 2021), 230.

<sup>245</sup> “*Alle auf das Recht anderer Menschen bezogene Handlungen, deren Maxime sich nicht mit der Publizität verträgt, sind unrecht*”. Colloquially known today also as the “New York Times Test.”



public's freedom to examine state maxims makes this "principle of publicity" consonant with Kant's description of the public use of reason in *What is Enlightenment?*:

For this enlightenment, however, nothing is required but *freedom*, and indeed the least harmful of anything that could even be called freedom: namely, freedom to make *public use* of one's reason in all matters (*Aufklärung* 8:37).

According to Höffe, this principle makes sociability an integral part of Kant's political thought, which stands in contrast with those views that attributed to Kant an endorsement of free-floating individuality.<sup>246</sup> This is stated quite clearly by Kant himself in his definition of wisdom in the *Anthropology*, which includes not only the principal tenet of enlightenment—that of thinking for oneself (*Selbstdenken*),<sup>247</sup> but also holds *communication* as an integral demand of reason as well:

*Wisdom [Weisheit]*, as the idea of a practical use of reason that conforms perfectly with the law, is no doubt too much to demand of human beings. But also, not even the slightest degree of wisdom can be poured into a man by others; rather he must bring it forth from himself. The precept for reaching it contains three leading maxims: 1) Think for oneself [*Selbstdenken*], 2) Think into the place of the other (in communication with human beings), 3) Always think consistently with oneself. (*Anth* 7:200).<sup>248</sup>

It is only through this *public* use of freedom that a "true reform in one's way of thinking" (*wahre Reform der Denkungsart*) (*Aufklärung* 8:36) or, in the language of the *Religion*, a "revolution in one's disposition" (*Rel* 6:47) may be brought about, and the regency of morals established.<sup>249</sup> Kant goes even further, claiming that:

But that a public should enlighten itself is more possible [than an individual]; indeed, this is almost inevitable, if only it is left its freedom. For there will always be a few independent thinkers, even among the established guardians of the great masses, who, after having

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<sup>246</sup> Höffe, *Kant's Cosmopolitan Theory of Law and Peace*, 213.

<sup>247</sup> "Thinking for oneself [*Selbstdenken*] means seeking the supreme touchstone of truth in oneself (i.e., in one's own reason); and the maxim of always thinking for oneself is **enlightenment**" (*Denken* 8:146 original emphases).

<sup>248</sup> These maxims for enlightened reasoning can also be found in §40: "On taste as a kind of *sensus communis*" in the *Critique of the Power of Judgement* (5:294), and the *Jäsche Logic* (9:57) as well. The importance of sociability in Kant's thought has been addressed by other notable Kant scholars such as Onora O'Neill and Alan Wood as well. For O'Neill's discussion of the *sensus communis* see: O'Neill, "Reason and Politics in the Kantian Enterprise," 24–27; Wood, for instance, claims that Kantian ethics "is communitarian, not individualistic" Wood, "Unsociable Sociability," 342; As well as: Wood, *Kant's Ethical Thought*, 313–17.

<sup>249</sup> This is similar to Plato's idea that a "turning of the soul" [*periagoge*] is required in order to gain insight into the ideas and the idea of the good Höffe, *Kant's Cosmopolitan Theory of Law and Peace*, 148.

themselves cast off the yoke of minority will disseminate the spirit of a rational valuing of one's own worth and of the calling of each individual to think for himself (*Aufklärung* 8:36).

Thematically, *What is Enlightenment?* ties in with the second supplement of *Perpetual Peace*; both engage with Plato's *Republic*, particularly the allegory of the cave. The enlightened few—the “few independent thinkers”—who can educate the public, run in parallel to the (popular) philosophers who return to the cave to share the true nature of reality with their friends still chained inside. The significance of Kant's use of the term “universal... human reason” (*ZeF* 8:369), according to Höffe, lies in its allusion to the *Critique of Pure Reason*:

To this freedom, then, there also belongs the freedom to exhibit the thoughts and doubts which one cannot resolve oneself for public judgment without thereupon being decried as a malcontent and a dangerous citizen. This lies already in the original right of human reason, which recognizes no other judge than *universal human reason itself, in which everyone has a voice*; and since all improvement of which our condition is capable must come from this, such a right is holy, and must not be curtailed (*KrV* A752/ B780).

A constituent characteristic of “universal human reason” is therefore the universal freedom of speech—the ‘holy right’ to hear and be heard—precisely what the principle of publicity formally mandates.<sup>250</sup> And it is the philosophers, ostensibly immune to the corruption which comes with power of public office, who are the champions of this holy right.<sup>251</sup>

Most significant is that the public use of reason described here is clearly consistent with the *Popularphilosophie* imperative to enlighten the public, which is, essentially, their instruction in political life: “*Enlightenment of the people* is the public instruction of the people in its duties and rights vis-a-vis the state to which they belong” (*Streit* 7:89).<sup>252</sup> This highlights the fact that the

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<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

<sup>251</sup> Cf.: “Thus *freedom of the pen*—kept within the limits of esteem and love for the constitution within which one lives by the subjects’ liberal way of thinking, which the constitution itself instills in them (and pens themselves also keep one another within these limits, so that they do not lose their freedom)—is the sole palladium of the people’s rights” (*T&P* 8:304).

<sup>252</sup> I shall return to this point in Section V.

progress of the political community—from despotic state to a pragmatic *Weltrepublik* and everything in the middle—must all come about as the result of a *collective* effort, which necessarily implies cooperation between the (popular) philosophers and the public. Cooperation, in turn, relies on a degree of mutual intelligibility.

Hence, although the moral community *logically* precedes the political community, *temporally*, or historically, it is the political community which comes first. The cunning of nature merely provides the external conditions—such as political communities—for moral actions, which, by definition, must freely be done out of an internal conviction. Therefore, the conversion of a pragmatic republic into a *moral* community requires that the citizens deliberately conform their state institutions ever closer with the idea of morality.<sup>253</sup> These institutions, in turn, will have the moralizing effect of inculcating better and better moral habits (i.e., that emulate a good will) back into the citizens. The more the institutions conform with the demands of morality, the more moral the citizens will be, and the stronger their demand that their institutions conform even better with the moral law—and so on and so forth *ad moralitas*. Eventually, inner morality will eclipse state institutions to become the dominant principle for governing public life, and the pragmatic republic, as closely approximated to the ideal of a moral community as possible, will cease its pedagogical role and become relegated to a secondary status.

Yet several difficulties seem to arise from the application of the principle of publicity to create of a kingly people out of a historically contingent political community:

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<sup>253</sup> See above (*MdS*, §52, 6:339–40) in section 4.2: “so that it harmonizes *in its effect* with the only constitution that accords with right, that of a pure republic”

First is Kant's assertoric claim in *What is Enlightenment?* that "there will always be a few independent thinkers" (read: popular philosophers) able to enlighten the public. However, this statement is conspicuously questionable once we consider the "soulless despotism" and "graveyard of freedom" claims from *Perpetual Peace* as well. That is, can, or cannot, a world-despotism put paid to freedom and indeed destroy the "seed of good" and independent thinking forevermore?<sup>254</sup>

If we accept that the survival of a "few independent thinkers" hinges on the prevention of a despotic global *Völkerstaat*, then this would strengthen Kant's own argument for preserving national differences—if by 'public' we understand one of the *many* publics around the globe, divided by "language and religion", who serve as buffers against the creation of such a despotic *Völkerstaat*. This, in turn, would make nationalism a necessary, although by no means sufficient, condition for enlightenment as well; it fortifies the division which protects the species from this calamity. The nation, and especially language, should thus be seen as a dual-purpose buffer: not only does it *prevent* a global-tyrannical state on the one hand, but it also *preserves* the conditions for enlightenment on the other.

A second implication of enlightenment, thus understood, is that *ipso facto* it necessarily mandates, or tacitly presupposes, a degree of mutual intelligibility, to wit, that the "few independent thinkers" and the public be able to communicate with each other. The principle of publicity warrants this as well, otherwise, how else could maxims of the state be submitted for the philosophers' review? How could the people, in turn, be instructed regarding their conduct vis-à-

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<sup>254</sup> This recalls Plato's argument for preserving the *logos* at all costs, even at the price of life itself, in the *Phaedo* "...[B]ut today I will cut off my own hair and you too will cut off these locks of yours—if our argument [*logos*] comes to an end for us and we cannot bring it back to life again". Plato, *Phaedo*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, n.d., para. 89b.

vis the state? The holy right to freedom of expression is a dead letter if nobody would be able to *understand* what is being expressed.<sup>255</sup>

If this is correct, then it follows from Kant’s own definition of wisdom from the *Anthropology* (above) that an implicit condition for a public’s enlightenment to reform itself into a “kingly people” would be a *common idiom*—language and its social context.<sup>256</sup> Otherwise *Popularphilosophie*—the enlightenment of the people, their instruction in political life—which Kant himself is practicing in the *Anthropology* lectures—would be impossible.

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<sup>255</sup> For a discussion of the requirement of *scope* in Kantian reasoning see: Onora O’Neill, “Kant on Indeterminacy, Judgement and Interpretation,” in *From Principles to Practice: Normativity and Judgement in Ethics and Politics*, First Edition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 120–36 Which further refutes the charge of solipsism leveled against Kant and strengthens the “communitarian” interpretation.

<sup>256</sup> “For it is a natural calling of humanity to communicate with one another, especially in what concerns people generally” (*T&P* 8:305)

#### 4.5 Nations as the Foundation for a Kingly People

“If someone cannot prove that a thing is, he can try to prove that it is not” (*MdS* 6:354). Although there is nothing *logically* impossible about a public submitting *itself* to laws of equality without understanding the language in which they were written, this is nevertheless something quite difficult to imagine.<sup>257</sup> Obviously, it is not necessary to understand the language of the law firsthand to *obey* it, yet to *legislate* in a language in which you lack literacy would be quite a strange situation, to say the least. For how could someone “rightfully bind another to something without also being subject to a law by which he in turn *can* be bound in the same way by the other” if they do not speak the same language? How would the binding take place?

Whereas small tribal societies can, and do, remain illiterate; one need not accept Gellner’s theory of modernity *tout court* to recognize that mass illiteracy is impossible in the highly complex society—the modern state being its exemplar—that Kant believes is a prerequisite of a moral community. To propose, discuss, codify, and enforce laws without a common language would be an exercise in futility, *a fortiori* in a *republican* state—where public deliberation is part and parcel of political life.<sup>258</sup>

a citizen must have, with the approval of the ruler himself, the authorization to make known publicly his opinions about what it is in the ruler's arrangements that seems to him to be a wrong against the commonwealth (*T&P* 8:304).

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<sup>257</sup> Arguably this is the situation which immigrants experience. The condition is not that everyone would be able to *dictate* the law, but only that the laws be prescribed as if “one *can* be bound” by them. Understanding the law is, of course, not a requirement for complying with it.

<sup>258</sup> We can pass over the question of a situation where, within a multilingual state, the majority legislates laws that favor its own interests over the others. As this would constitute an immaterial empirical consideration, and, in any case, would violate the terms of equality. Nevertheless, even if this is not the case and the majority does legislate in accordance with the “laws of equality” it would plausibly still alienate, if not worse, minority groups towards these laws. This is, of course, a classical scenario for the emergence of modern national movements.

Furthermore, although laws may be amenable to translation; they still need to be articulated in, at least, *one* language.<sup>259</sup> However, when laws are codified in an inaccessible language, the citizen is artificially deprived from exercising *Selbstdenken* and making use of his “own understanding without direction from another” (*Aufklärung* 8:35), thus leaving him in a perpetual state of immaturity (*unmündigkeit*): “The (natural or legal) incapacity of an otherwise sound human being to use his own understanding in civil affairs” (*Anth* 7:208).<sup>260</sup> Immaturity, inevitably, leads to paternalism—the bogeyman of enlightenment—“the greatest *despotism* thinkable” (*T&P* 8:291). This spells disaster in political life:

[N]aturally it has not escaped leaders who know how to use this docility of the masses (because they hardly unite on their own); and to represent the danger of making use of one’s own understanding without the guidance of another as very great, even lethal. Heads of state call themselves fathers of the country, because they understand better how to make their subjects happy than the subjects understand; but the people are condemned to permanent immaturity with regard to their own best interest. (*Anth* 7:209).

So, from a pragmatic point of view, for a people to become “kingly”, they *must* be literate in a common language if they are to become co-legislators and fully participate in the political life of a republic.<sup>261</sup> A citizen’s capacity to become a *good* citizen, and eventually, a *morally good* human being, depends on his ability to employ his own reason unhindered, which, in turn, requires him to be literate—particularly in the language of the law. This is what allows him, in Gellner’s terms, to ‘breathe’ more easily.<sup>262</sup> Once again, we find a revolutionary vein of *Popularphilosophie* in Kant’s political and anthropological thought, one which shines especially brightly, since:

The most important revolution from within the human being is “his exit from his self-incurred immaturity”. Before this revolution he let others think for him and merely imitated

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<sup>259</sup> See also: Otfried Höffe, *Democracy in an Age of Globalisation*, trans. Dirk Haubrich and Michael Ludwig, 2007 edition, Studies in Global Justice (Dordrecht; London: Springer, 2007), 125–26.

<sup>260</sup> *Unmündigkeit* is sometimes also translated as “minority” (see above *Aufklärung* 8:36) and occasionally “nonage”. The German word refers to the condition opposite to maturity (*Mündigkeit*).

<sup>261</sup> An idea which goes back to Thomaisus and his choice to deliver his sermons in German and not Latin.

<sup>262</sup> Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 35.

others or allowed them to guide him by leading-strings. Now he ventures to advance, though still shakily, with his own feet on the ground of experience (*Anth* 7:329).<sup>263</sup> It is thus a matter of anthropological *fact* that enlightenment, and the transformation into a kingly people starts with a common language: if a kingly people is based upon the principle of publicity, and the principle of publicity is based on a common language, then a common language becomes a *necessary*—although by no means sufficient—condition for a people to even *attempt* to become “kingly”. Only when a common language underwrites a highly developed political community can it “advance, though still shakily” towards adopting a republican constitution and to reform itself into a rightful state.<sup>264</sup> In the modern world of complex societies, language forms the foundation, as well as the demarcation line, of social organization and development. In a multilingual reality, the limits of the common language become the limits of the social world.

Furthermore, much in the same way in which moral individuals can occasionally be found even in immoral societies, it is similarly possible for *a* single people to serendipitously convert itself into a kingly people. Yet if more nations do not follow suite, the long-term sustainability of this prospect is questionable, given that the “community of the nations of the earth has now gone so far that a violation of right on *one* place of the earth is felt in *all*” (*ZeF* 8:360) and that the fulfillment of man’s cosmopolitan *Bestimmung* can be found only in the *species*. The cosmological principle of totalization requires that it is the species, *in its entirety*, which must be transformed—what Yovel termed the “totalization of morality”.<sup>265</sup> And indeed, Kant saw the transformation of

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<sup>263</sup> Cf. “Enlightenment is the human being’s emergence from his self-incurred minority (*unmündigkeit*)” (*Aufklärung* 8:35). Cf. also *Critique of the Power of Judgement* 5:294.

<sup>264</sup> One could argue that a common language is precisely what a highly developed pragmatic predisposition (i.e., the modern nation) requires *in order* to reach the level of complexity that makes a republican constitution feasible.

<sup>265</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 170.



a single people as only one single step towards establishing, and expanding, the condition of right *between* nations—itself being only a *condition* for the moralization of the species:

The practicability (objective reality) of this idea of a *federalism* that should gradually extend over all states and so lead to perpetual peace can be shown. For if good fortune should ordain that a powerful and enlightened people [*ein mächtiges und aufgeklärtes Volk*] can form itself into a republic (which by its nature must be inclined to perpetual peace), this would provide a focal point of federative union for other states, to attach themselves to it and so to secure a condition of freedom of states conformably with the idea of the right of nations; and by further alliances of this kind, it would gradually extend further and further (*ZeF* 8:356).<sup>266</sup>

Thus far, it has been shown that within the Kantian cosmopolitan schema, nationalism provides two major benefits:

The first is the negative role that it has *between* states: nations and nationalism help prevent a world tyranny and the “graveyard of freedom”. Competition, and wars, between states and nations encourages the development of the pragmatic predisposition of the species as a whole. While the second, is the positive role *within* states: Nations, through the common idiom they create, provide a necessary, although not sufficient, condition for enlightenment, and by extension, for a republic as well. Thus, a nation-state—a political community based on a common idiom—stands a better chance of becoming moralized into a “kingly people”—*Popularphilosophie* is moralization.

It should be noted that the upshot in these cases is that for Kant, cultural diversity serves only a functional role—it is merely a *means* for promoting the *end* of perpetual peace, and eventually, moralization—it is *not* an end in itself.<sup>267</sup> Kant’s acquiescence to the species’ division along

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<sup>266</sup> Note that the people need to be both powerful *and* enlightened.

<sup>267</sup> I shall continue to discuss the question of cultural diversity as a means or ends below. However, in the present context, the question may be raised whether this is an ethical violation or not- as we saw, nature is not a moral being, but states, or more precisely, *nations*, are. What are the ethical stakes of using nations as means to a higher end? A possible response would be that, having already disentangled the state from the nation (above, 4.0). The use of the *state* as a means is acceptable because it is a *thing* (institutions, constitutions etc.). The republican constitution moralizes—it is not, in itself, moral. However, the nation, which is a moral being cannot be used as a mere means (such in Kant’s example of grafting it on to another trunk in *ZeF* 8:344).

cultural lines reveals not only a sensitivity to the importance of national identity, but, moreover, it demonstrates an attunement to what is necessary for the success of *Popularphilosophie*—which must be done in the vernacular—and it is only *in this sense* that national identity has value for him; so long as it advances humanity’s *Bestimmung* to develop a universal moral community.

However, the universal moral community requires its political, or pragmatic, analogy—a *Weltrepublik*. Therefore, I wish to press the argument further, and examine the less-obvious *positive* benefit that nationalism provides *between* states and submit the claim that it advances the creation of the *Weltrepublik* and the totalization of morality as well. Yet doing so first requires addressing Pauline Kleingeld’s “Kantian” argument for cultural diversity.

#### 4.6 Cultural Diversity—Means or Ends?

In *Kant and Cosmopolitanism* Pauline Kleingeld claims that cultural pluralism can be defended in “a distinctively Kantian way” which “neither reduces its value to a merely instrumental one, nor elevates pluralism itself to an intrinsic value”.<sup>268</sup> This argument hinges on a key tenet of Kantian *Rechtsphilosophie*, “The Universal Principle of Right” (*Allgemeines Prinzip des Rechts*) which appears in *The Metaphysics of Morals*:

Any action is *right* if it can coexist with everyone’s freedom in accordance with a universal law, or if on its maxim the freedom of choice of each can coexist with everyone’s freedom in accordance with a universal law (*MdS* 6:230).

The intrinsic importance of freedom for Kantian moral philosophy derives from its status as the *sine qua non* of any moral act.<sup>269</sup> According to Kleingeld, the empirical fact of anthropological diversity demonstrates that people make different choices regarding how to live their lives, and that their freedom to do so should be valued as an instantiation of their intrinsic freedom—so long as these choices do not transgress any principles of morality. She thus concludes that “cultural pluralism is what freedom demands given that humans differ in their legitimate preferences”.<sup>270</sup>

Kleingeld claims that this ‘third way’ of defending cultural diversity is implicit in how Kant, in a separate passage from *The Metaphysics of Morals*, seems to accept a plurality of societies; be they hunting, pastoral, or agricultural ways of life. There, after contemplating whether it would be acceptable for one people to resist another in the use of their land (e.g., if a hunting people may resist a farming people from planting orchards on their land), Kant response is that “as long as they keep within their boundaries the way they want to *live* on their land is up to their own discretion

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<sup>268</sup> Kleingeld, *Kant and Cosmopolitanism*, 121.

<sup>269</sup> This is also why giving up freedom for world peace, as mentioned above, is a nonstarter for Kant. As we have seen, even a condition of war is preferable to a peace bought at the price of “the graveyard of freedom”.

<sup>270</sup> Kleingeld, *Kant and Cosmopolitanism*, 121–22.

(*res merae facultatis*)” (*MdS* 6:266). This Kleingeld extrapolates into a defense of cultural pluralism that is neither instrumental nor intrinsic—but rather is done in the terms of *the value for the people involved*, who should be free to make their own choices about how they want to live.

Yet Kleingeld herself concedes that this defense of cultural pluralism in Kantian terms “must remain within the limits indicated by the principles of morality and right, principles which both uphold and circumscribe freedom”, such circumscription, she continues, is clear from Kant’s unequivocal condemnations of what he sees as immoral cultural practices, as well as the conclusion that the only constitution in accordance with right is the republic. The room allotted for cultural pluralism is thus strictly confined to within these boundaries, even though, according to Kleingeld, it is “as important as freedom itself”.<sup>271</sup>

This ostensible Kantian defense of cultural pluralism brings several points to the fore:

First, as Kleingeld accurately states, Kant’s primary concern is with morality and its foundation in freedom. But, as the passage from the *Metaphysics of Morals* makes clear, this particular freedom can be constituted only *after* the rightful condition of property—in this case over land—has been established. So, the freedom she claims for people “to live their lives in different ways” is, as it were, residual—it effectively amounts to the remainder of the sphere of negative liberty, once the constraints of Right have been subtracted from it. Hence it is hard to determine what exactly qualifies this freedom’s importance in a *positive* manner; such freedom is tantamount to the aesthetic freedom Henry Ford granted to his Model T customers.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> Ibid., 122 Strictly speaking, it is not clear how cultural pluralism can be “as important as freedom itself”, if, as she writes earlier in the same page “the only thing that is intrinsically important is freedom”.

<sup>272</sup> “Any customer can have a car painted any colour that he wants so long as it is black.” Henry Ford, *My Life and Work*, 2005, <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/7213>.

This is by no means to discount the importance of such negative freedom, only to iterate that its importance for Kant is only *secondary* to right (in this case, rightful property relations). So, if happiness is only secondary to morality, as Kleingeld herself admits, then the freedom of a moral person—whether individual or collective—to establish, and assert, its identity, or particularity, is secondary to Right *in this sense as well*, if we accept that taste is a constituent of identity, such as choosing between a hunting or pasturing way of life.

What makes a political community “worthy of happiness”, in Kantian terms, as we saw, would be their collective effort to establish a just state. A key tenet of Kant’s ethics—the confinement of happiness, and empirical identity, to a status secondary to morality—is here writ large. People can, and should, be left to pursue their identities, be they personal (e.g., happiness), or public (e.g., a distinctive culture) but only *after* a moral framework has been established: “that political maxims must not issue from the welfare and happiness of each state that is to be expected from following them” (*ZeF* 8:379).

Second, as a corollary of the above, even if we grant that this position may be inferred from Kant’s philosophy, it remains the case that even when he does explicitly discuss the importance of cultural diversity, such as in preventing a tyrannical *Völkerstaat* or, as, in the case of the Lithuanian minority (below), it is nevertheless still couched in instrumental, and *not* substantive, terms. So, while this implicit ‘third way’ may ascribe *some* value to cultural diversity in terms of freedom, that it remains implicit seems to speak volumes as to its importance for Kant. It therefore begs the question of why he thought it unnecessary to make an *explicit* case for the intrinsic value of cultural pluralism—was there anything that prevented him from doing so? That Kant did explicitly address the matter makes censorship an unlikely explanation, so, more likely than not, he simply did not

deem the subject important enough to merit elaboration.<sup>273</sup> Kleingeld’s claim, therefore, that “it seems that Kant subscribed to this third view” seems to require somewhat stronger evidence.<sup>274</sup> So, while she may be right that the “commonly held view” that Kant saw cultural diversity *only* as a means to an end, does indeed require correction, it would be more precise to say that Kant saw it *mainly* as a means to an end.<sup>275</sup>

What bears stressing, however, is that in his explicit discussions of the subject, Kant most certainly did ascribe *some* value to cultural diversity, even if not as an intrinsic good; not only on the international level—as a bulwark against world tyranny, as we have already seen—but internally within the state as well.<sup>276</sup> Consider, for instance, the *Postscript to Mielcke’s German–Lithuanian Dictionary* in 1800.<sup>277</sup> There, Kant discusses the value of preserving the language of the cultural minority—here the Lithuanians in Prussia—as a means for preserving their culture:

From the preceding description of the Prussian Lithuanian one can see that he very much deserves to be preserved in the peculiarity (*Eigentümlichkeit*) of his character and, since language is an excellent means of guiding the former’s formation and preservation, also in

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<sup>273</sup> And even if it would have been a subject for censorship, Kant was certainly willing to take risks to express his views, some of which, like his writings on religion, even temporarily landed him in hot water with the Prussian censorship. See: Kuehn, *Kant*, 366–85.

<sup>274</sup> Kleingeld, *Kant and Cosmopolitanism*, 121.

<sup>275</sup> But even if this is incorrect—what would be wrong with that? Faulting Kant for failing to see the intrinsic value of diversity, or alternatively, trying to impose an interpretation that stretches to do so, seems to be a somewhat forceful attempt to project contemporary sensitivities and anachronistic standards.

It is also worth asking whether those who *do* accept cultural diversity as an intrinsic good do not also implicitly see it as a means for a further end as well (e.g., a more tolerant society, a more productive business, and so on) and not necessarily a good-in-itself. If cultural diversity is indeed a final, intrinsic, good, this entails that anything that contributes to diversity would *ipso facto* be good, which in turn makes *all* cultures good (since every culture contributes to the final end of diversity). This line of reasoning, of course, ends with cultural and moral relativism.

<sup>276</sup> As Loudon remarks: “Kant is not as paranoid as Rousseau and Herder are when it comes to national character; he does not fear that the forces of globalization will obliterate the varieties of national character”. Loudon, “National Character via the Beautiful and Sublime?,” 162.

<sup>277</sup> A mere page in length, *The Postscript* would be the very last work which Kant himself had published (*The Anthropology* was the last major work). For the background of Mielcke’s project, including an historical overview of Prussian Lithuania see: Susan Shell, “‘Nachschrift Eines Freundes’: Kant on Language, Friendship and the Concept of a People,” *Kantian Review* 15, no. 1 (March 2010): 88–93; As well as: J. D. Miniger, “‘Nachschrift Eines Freundes’: Kant, Lithuania, and the Praxis of Enlightenment,” *Studies in East European Thought* 57, no. 1 (2005): 4–12.

the purity of his language in the instruction in schools as well as from the pulpit (*Nachschrift* 8:445).

Kleingeld argues that Kant believed that the ground for preserving the Lithuanian language lies in utility and not for the sake of any intrinsic value of pluralism *per se*.<sup>278</sup> Preserving the language, the argument goes, would help preserve the Prussian Lithuanians' noble characteristics, which in turn, benefit the Prussian state. However, even such a functional argument should not be written off lightly, since it should also be asked who else, besides the Prussian state, stands to benefit from it? i.e., towards what end would the preservation of the language serve as a mean? At least in this case, Kant makes the point that the benefits *do* extend beyond the Prussian state—not only to science itself, but to the Lithuanian (and Polish) minorities *themselves*, with the purpose, again, of popular enlightenment:

But even apart from the usefulness which the state can draw from the assistance of a people of such character, it is to be considered no small advantage which the sciences, especially the ancient history of the migrations of peoples, can draw from the still unmixed language of a very old tribe of people (*Völkerstamm*) that is now restricted to a small area and, as it were, isolated. *Hence to preserve its peculiarity is in itself already of great worth...* In general, even if such great yield were not to be expected from every language, it is still of importance for the formation of every small people (*Völklein*) in a country, e.g., in Prussian Poland, to instruct it in the schools and from the pulpit according to the model of the purest (in this case, Polish) language, even if the latter were spoken only outside the country, and *to make this language more and more current, because thereby the language becomes more suited to the peculiarity of the people and the latter's comprehension becomes more enlightened* (*Nachschrift* 8:445 emphases added).

Third, the full extent of Kleingeld's claim that "cosmopolitan egalitarianism trumps cultural pluralism if the two come into conflict" does, however, raise a pertinent question.<sup>279</sup> Which is, what happens when cultural homogenization, understood as change towards *less* cultural diversity, becomes a catalyst for egalitarianism? In other words, does establishing the condition of Right

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<sup>278</sup> Kleingeld, *Kant and Cosmopolitanism*, 122.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid. Kleingeld's use of the modifier "cosmopolitan" before "egalitarianism", stands out as a bit odd, since here it is not imbued with the conventional political sense that she uses elsewhere. "Universal egalitarianism" seems more apt for retaining Kant's original use of the term.

sanction, in Herder’s words, the cramming of “all the four quarters of the Globe... into the belly of a wooden horse”?<sup>280</sup>

With the necessary caveats (discussed below), this, indeed, would be the process that Gellner’s theory of nationalism describes—nations are the result of the imposition of cultural homogeneity, a condition warranted by the global spread of industrialization.<sup>281</sup> Per Gellner, one result of such cultural homogenization is that modern society becomes more egalitarian, and, therefore, more mobile.<sup>282</sup> As it were, egalitarianism and social mobility are two tenets of the principle of Right which undergirds the republican constitution, *ipso facto* making it a more just society (see 4.3 laws of equality). Kant makes a striking case for social mobility and meritocracy in several places:

But as regards the right of equality of all citizens of a state as subjects, the answer to the question, whether a *hereditary nobility* is allowable, turns only on whether the *rank* granted by a state (of one subject being above another) would have to precede *merit*, or whether the latter would have to precede the former. Now it is obvious that if rank is connected with birth, it is quite uncertain whether merit (skill and fidelity in one’s office) will follow; hence it will be just as if rank (being in command) were granted to a favorite without any merit, and the general will of a people in the original contract (which is yet the principle of all rights) will never decide upon this. For a nobleman is not necessarily a *noble* man (*ZeF* 8:351 fn).<sup>283</sup>

Therefore, although it does not follow that cultural homogenization by itself is sufficient to create a republic, it could still be argued that it forms a necessary condition for a republican

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<sup>280</sup> Johann Gottfried von Herder, *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man*, ed. David G. Payne, trans. T.O. Churchill (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016), 191.

<sup>281</sup> Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 56.

<sup>282</sup> Such a change implies a change of identity, which also correspond to the “turning of the soul” (*periagoge*) or the “reform in thinking” (*verwandeln*) discussed above, with all the ramifications for national identity. Gellner’s theory of nationalism is only part of his philosophy of modernity, which argues that with the onset of industrialization, humanity has transformed itself into something qualitatively different. These ideas were first laid out in Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change*, First Edition (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1964) and developed further in his later works.

<sup>283</sup> Cf. “Every member of a commonwealth must be allowed to attain any level of rank within it (that can belong to a subject) to which his talent, his industry and his luck can take him; and his fellow subjects may not stand in his way by means of a *hereditary* prerogative (privileges [reserved] for a certain rank), so as to keep him and his descendants forever beneath the rank”. (*T&P* 8:292).



constitution.<sup>284</sup> This is crucial for the argument advanced in section V—Indeed, if justice trumps diversity, cultural homogenization can be justified according to the end it seeks to accomplish.<sup>285</sup> Therefore, if, *and only if*, cultural homogeneity will bring more people under a condition of Right and help advance the cosmopolitan *Bestimmung* of the human species, then it would indeed be justified.<sup>286</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> The obverse is of course also true: republican states are not the only states that require a degree of cultural homogeneity—fascist states, for example, require one as well.

<sup>285</sup> Of course, this is not to make Kant to claim that ends justify the means. Yet we have seen that he was “no pacifist” either. Someone who acknowledges the benefits of war would have no trouble eliminating cultural differences.

<sup>286</sup> We have seen that a Kantian republic requires a highly developed pragmatic predisposition—i.e., a complex society. Therefore, if the *Weltrepublik* is indeed a feasible endeavor, then as a republic writ large it would *a fortiori* require an even *more* complex society with an even *higher* degree of pragmatic development, then some degree of global cultural homogeneity, therefore, would probably be warranted as well.

In section 5.2 this study will briefly examine the implications of this hypothesis for cosmopolitanism—if the nation, or cultural homogeneity, is indeed the soundest basis for a republic—does that entail that a homogenous world culture, (a “nation of humanity” of sorts) would be the soundest basis for *World* republic as well? The thesis that, indeed, given that, in all likelihood, the *Weltrepublik* requires the same conditions that states-republics do, in turn, makes the only viable *Weltrepublik* a ‘global-republican-nation-state’ will be examined as well.

#### 4.7 Reconsidering the *Weltrepublik*

All the above should help us explain Kant's willingness to cede the *Weltrepublik* and consider the *ersatz* option of a *Völkerbund* instead. First, it should be noted that Kant, significantly, contemplates the *Weltrepublik* even as late as in *Perpetual Peace*. Consider the claim that, for international security, each nation, as a state:

can and ought to require the others to enter with it into a constitution similar to a civil constitution, in which each can be assured of its right. This would be a *league of nations*, which, however, need not be a state of nations [*der aber gleichwohl kein Völkerstaat sein müßte*]. That would be a contradiction, inasmuch as every state involves the relation of a *superior* (legislating) to an *inferior* (obeying, namely the people); but a number of nations within one state would constitute only one nation, and this contradicts the presupposition (since here we have to consider the right of *nations* in relation to one another insofar as they comprise different states and are not to be fused into a single state). (*ZeF* 8:354)

Note that *Kant does not rule out the possibility that the civil constitution might be a Völkerstaat*, only that, strictly speaking—there is no such thing. Within a framework where nations wish to keep their cultural distinctiveness, it is irrelevant to sketch out the details of how a *Weltrepublik* would look like, since a *Weltrepublik* is predicated on the possibility that nations will fuse out of their own volition—which at the historical moment “they do not at all want”. So long as this remains the case, Kant's prudent proposal (“we have to consider”) is to accommodate this wish—no matter how unreasonable it may be—so that a premature *Völkerstaat* would not end up as the graveyard of freedom. Nothing, however, precludes the possibility that in the future nations *would* want to do the rational thing and opt to fuse themselves into a *Völkerstaat* with a republican constitution, and thus create the *Weltrepublik*.<sup>287</sup>

Second, this suggests, by extrapolation, that the difference between a state-republic and *Weltrepublik* is not of kind, but of degree, that is, of *size*. Thus, a *Weltrepublik* would, *mutatis*

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<sup>287</sup> See also: Cavallar, “Kant's Society of Nations,” 473–74; Kleingeld, *Kant and Cosmopolitanism*, 51.

*mutandis*, be a state-republic writ large—requiring the same conditions, and exhibiting the same characteristics, only on a much larger scale. As will be shown, both the state-republic and the *Weltrepublik* require the prerequisites of culture and civilization, and they share the task of moralizing their citizens, via the “virtuous cycle” so that they can be converted from pragmatic republics into moral communities.

Third, if a state republic “is certainly within the capacity of human beings” (*ZeF* 8:366), then, by extension, the *Weltrepublik* should be within its capacity as well. This for the following: if, as we have seen (4.3), the *sine qua non* for the creation of a pragmatic state-republic is merely the possession of reason, whereby it is soluble “even for a nation of devils”, then, *ceteris paribus*, the establishment of a pragmatic *Weltrepublik* must be soluble even for a *species* of devils.<sup>288</sup> Should this be the case, then *a fortiori* a pragmatic *Weltrepublik* must be soluble for the *human* species, that “species of rational being that strives among obstacles to rise out of evil in constant progress toward the good” (*Anth* 7:333), which, although certainly not a species of angels, is definitely not an *evil* species—let alone one of devils.<sup>289</sup> Furthermore, despite its members’ “propensity... to be evil-minded toward one another”, the human species still possesses that which devils lack: “a moral predisposition... an innate demand of reason, to also work against this propensity” (*Anth*

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<sup>288</sup> Setting aside, for the moment, the question of national differences (“language and religion”), which I shall deal with in the following section. The pertinent point here is that morality is *not* a condition for a republic—state or global.

<sup>289</sup> Indeed, if one would try to make that case, effectively it would be the immoral case for *misanthropy* (*MdS* 6:402).

7:333) *in addition* to its capacity for understanding, as an *animal rationabile*. This ought to make the human species much better-disposed than a species of devils for creating a *Weltrepublik*.<sup>290</sup>

This lends itself to a further, fourth claim for the feasibility of the *Weltrepublik*, which can be derived from the Kantian moral principle that “ought” implies “can”.<sup>291</sup> Since an anthropology done from a pragmatic point of view reveals that the human species possesses a moral predisposition, it follows that, in order to fulfill their *Bestimmung*, its members *ought* to promote the conditions for its full development—which includes a republican constitution.

Now, since a republican nation-state can only moralize its citizens in its respective idiom, this “national” moralization will always remain partial, insofar as the species, *qua* species, is concerned. Indeed, while the process of moralization may have already commenced several times in human history, these have all proved to be false starts, which suggests that the totalization of morality ultimately depends on a *Weltrepublik* as its guarantor (more about this below). In other words, *if* the *Weltrepublik*, by virtue of its republican constitution, is the only kind of *Völkerstaat* that can provide the conditions for the entire human species to develop its pragmatic and moral predispositions *qua* species, then the species *ought*, and therefore, *can*, be capable of creating it.<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> Cf.: “[The homage] that every state pays the concept of right (at least verbally) nevertheless proves that there is to be found in the human being a still greater, though at present dormant, moral predisposition to eventually become master of the evil principle within him (which he cannot deny) and also to hope for this from others” (*ZeF* 8:355). Also: “...account is also taken of human nature, in which respect for right and duty is still alive, so that I cannot and will not take it to be so immersed in evil that morally practical reason should not, after many unsuccessful attempts, finally triumph over evil and present human nature as lovable after all” (*T&P* 8:313)

<sup>291</sup> This principle finds its most notable formulations in the *Critique of Pure Reason*: “Now of course the action must be possible under natural conditions if the ought is directed to it” (A548/B576) as well as: “Pure reason thus contains—not in its speculative use, to be sure, but yet in a certain practical use, namely the moral use—principles of the **possibility of experience**, namely of those actions in conformity with moral precepts which **could** be encountered in the **history** of humankind. For since they command that these actions ought to happen, they must also be able to happen, and there must therefore be possible a special kind of systematic unity, namely the moral (A807/B835 emphasizes in original). For a survey of the different formulations of this principle in Kant’s writings see: Robert Stern, “Does ‘Ought’ Imply ‘Can’? And Did Kant Think It Does?,” *Utilitas* 16, no. 1 (March 2004): 53–55.

<sup>292</sup> i.e., “To him who does not consider what happens in just some one nation but also has regard to the whole scope of all the peoples on earth who will gradually come to participate in progress” (*Streit* 7:89 more on this passage below)

Just as pragmatic state republics serve as local, temporary, redoubts for the moralization of individual nations, so should the pragmatic *Weltrepublik* provide the necessary conditions for the moralization of the species *as a whole and in perpetuity*. By transcending its divergent political communities, it is the pragmatic *Weltrepublik* which forms the “cosmopolitan condition”, the “womb in which all the original predispositions of the human species will be developed” (*Idee* 8:28). It in this womb that the gestation of the *universal moral community* takes place, and once completed, the *Bestimmung* of the species will finally be fulfilled.<sup>293</sup>

Thus, when considering the conditions for a republic—understanding, will, and communication—the ostensible unfeasibility of a *Weltrepublik* can therefore be attributed either to (A) a lack of will, or (B) to the lack of a commonly-developed pragmatic predisposition of the species *qua* species (i.e., a *world-civilization*), or (C) that *both* conditions have not been met. That the species does not meet the condition (A) is clearly pointed out (“They do not at all want this”), yet, as mentioned above (4.1), this putative lack of will—which demonstrates that the species also lacks sufficient ‘understanding’, i.e., that its rational capacity is still underdeveloped—is a product of the cunning of nature and thus historically contingent—making it, therefore, susceptible to conscious rational change. And although the failure to meet condition (B) may be self-evident, nevertheless, the same applies: that hitherto—in the epoch of nature—the species has failed to produce a common culture it does not follow that it is an impossible endeavor, nor does it preclude it from happening in the future—in the epoch of freedom—as well.<sup>294</sup> Therefore, it is crucial to

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<sup>293</sup> The consummation of the moralization process of the species thus coincides with the abolishment of the moralizing role of the *pragmatic Weltrepublik*. However, the state apparatus will, in all likelihood be retained, but relegated to its secondary status, as noted above (fn. 239), the moral community, which cannot be expressed perfectly in the empirical world, will still need laws to regulate its members. More about this below.

<sup>294</sup> Although Kant could have, perhaps, observed its first flickers in the Enlightenment, especially in the nascency of world literature.

emphasize that the failure to meet these conditions, presumably rendering the *Weltrepublik* unattainable, is a *historical contingency*:

For, that what has not succeeded up to now will therefore never succeed does not even justify abandoning a pragmatic or technical purpose... still less a moral purpose that, if only it is not demonstratively impossible to effect it, becomes a duty (*T&P* 8:309/10).

The obstacles that the species would face, should it attempt to establish a *Weltrepublik*, are indeed colossal, but nevertheless it does not lie beyond the realm of human possibility—it simply does not follow that this prospect, drawn from reason *a priori*, is unattainable, nor should empirical considerations—such as its formidability—be allowed to deter the species from its duty to create it.

This further reinforces our claim from above (4.1) that the reluctance to form a *Weltrepublik*—although ostensibly *unreasonable*, must be understood yet as another instance of the cunning of nature—it is this very reluctance itself which demonstrates that the species is not yet ready for the *Weltrepublik*. To wit, nationalism encourages people to consciously try to preserve their unique languages, religions, cultural idiosyncrasies and so on, yet by doing so, they are, in fact, *unconsciously* preventing the creation of a tyrannical *Völkerstaat* on the one hand, while preserving the conditions for enlightenment—and laying the grounds for a republican *Völkerbund* in the process—on the other:

Just as nature wisely separates states that the will of each state, and even on grounds of the right of nations, would like to unite under itself by cunning or force, so on the other hand it also unites nations that the concept of cosmopolitan right would not have secured against violence and war, and does so by means of their mutual self-interest (*ZeF* 8:368)

That the human species does not meet condition (B) either helps to further explain Kant's reluctance to advocate more forcefully for the *Weltrepublik*; despite the concomitant availability of both modes of development—the cunning of nature and enlightenment—in his own age. *Ceteris paribus*, just as a nation which has not acquired a certain degree of culture—i.e., pragmatic development, civilization—cannot sustain a forcefully imposed republican constitution, neither

could a species of rational beings, which lacks a well-developed common culture—a *global* civilization—force a *Weltrepublik* upon itself.<sup>295</sup> In the final account, the *Weltrepublik* must arise out of “people’s demand”—that is, from humanity itself, and *only* from it.<sup>296</sup>

Yet this demand ought to be qualified; Kant seems to accept that as long as the cunning of nature will continue to eclipse enlightenment as the dominant form of development in human history, it would be futile to try to influence, or accelerate, history, such as by declaring the *Weltrepublik* as the inevitable end of nature—thereby inducing a sense of fatalism in people, who may feel absolved of the duty to actively pursue it.<sup>297</sup> A premature attempt to establish a *Weltrepublik*, such as by force, would also spell disaster:

But woe to the legislator who would want to bring about through coercion a polity directed to ethical ends! For he would thereby not only achieve the very opposite of ethical ends, but also undermine his political ends and render them insecure. (*Rel* 6:96)

A premature *Weltrepublik* established by revolutionary force would eventually meet the same fate of any other *Völkerstaat* that does not accord with Right—it would either collapse into anarchy, or, more horrifically, through the combination of its highly-developed technical predisposition and the lack of external threats, may degenerate into an eternal “soulless despotism”.<sup>298</sup> Gradual reform should always be preferred:

The attempt to realize this idea should not be made by way of revolution, by a leap, that is, by violent overthrow of an already existing defective constitution (for there would then be an intervening moment in which any rightful condition would be annihilated). But if it is attempted and carried out by gradual reform in accordance with firm principles, it can lead to continual approximation to the highest political good, perpetual peace (*MdS* 6:355).<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>295</sup> The global ‘moral culture’ and its relation to cosmopolitan right—as universal hospitality, is discussed in 5.4.

<sup>296</sup> More about this below in 5.2.

<sup>297</sup> *fata volentem ducunt, nolentem trahunt...*

<sup>298</sup> Barring, of course, an extra-terrestrial invasion.

<sup>299</sup> The amount of time such “gradual reform” entails will be discussed in 5.6.

Hence, beyond the personal risk involved for Kant himself, and his categorical rejection of revolutions, a call for revolution would simply not be a sound course of action.<sup>300</sup> Similar to wars, revolutions are a product of the cunning of nature, since they assert right by means of force, and, at best, may only demonstrate *ex post facto* that which may have been derived from reason *a priori*.<sup>301</sup> Instead, Kant opts for the alternative, more viable, mode of development, which is the gradual propagation of enlightenment—such as by *Popularphilosophie*. Enlightenment, by no means any less radical in its aspirations, is nevertheless more viable than a revolution, and crucially, it is *legitimate*:

Thus political wisdom, in the condition in which things are at present, will make reforms in keeping with the ideal of public right its duty; but it will use revolutions, where nature of itself has brought them about, not to gloss over an even greater oppression, but as a call of nature to bring about by fundamental reforms a lawful constitution based on principles of freedom, the only kind that endures (*ZeF* 8:374fn).

But national propagation of enlightenment will, by definition, always remain partial, it being delimited, if not by political borders, then by those of the vernacular. For the entire species to become moralized, *qua* species, a global civilization, where *all* individual members mutually recognize each other as ends in themselves, is warranted.<sup>302</sup> This is somewhat analogous to how a single religion will emerge out of the historically different creeds:

*Different religions*: an odd expression! just as if one could also speak of different *morals*. There can indeed be historically different *creeds*, [to be found] not in religion but in the history of means used to promote it, which is the province of scholarship, and just as many different *religious books* (the *Zendavesta*, the *Vedas*, the *Koran*, and so forth), but there can be only one single *religion* holding for all human beings and in all times. Those can therefore contain nothing more than the vehicle of religion, what is contingent and can differ according to differences of time and place (*ZeF* 8:368 fn.).

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<sup>300</sup> There is another indication of Kant anthropomorphizing the species here as well: the demand for self-discipline is extended to the species as a whole—the delay of the immediate gratification of creating a *Weltrepublik* by means of revolution is done in the name of achieving a larger goal—a sustainable universal moral community.

<sup>301</sup> See Yovel above fn. 163.

<sup>302</sup> Such a global civilization would include the empirical world history Kant calls for in the *Idea*—a *Weltgeschichte*.



Similar to how different creeds prepare their believers for the single religion, nationalism creates the conditions whereby pragmatic republican nation-states can enlighten their respective nations. Once religious concepts are purified from their contingent historical vehicles and have come to resemble each other to the extent that “Enlightened Catholics and Protestants”—and even Jews—“while still holding to their own dogmas, could thus look upon each other as brothers in faith, in expectation... [that] time will gradually bring the formalities of faith closer to the dignity of their end, religion itself” (*Streit* 7:52).<sup>303</sup> In the same manner, different nations become more similar in their external conduct—in their civilizations—by gradually conforming to the same moral law, albeit in their own distinctive cultural mode.<sup>304</sup>

Gradually, the “agreement in principles” will come to displace the disagreement in national cultures, out of which a *Völkerbund* of republics will be formed. Eventually, this *Völkerbund* will coalesce into a *Weltrepublik*, which, to return to the metaphor of the oak, will have deeply grounded, albeit nationally variegated, moral predispositions to draw from as its roots.<sup>305</sup> Thus nationalism, rather than impeding the creation of the *Weltrepublik*, in effect helps *facilitate* it.

In fact, Kant claims that this civilizing process *between* nations is already underway, as it “can be seen even in actually existing states, still very imperfectly organized, that they are already closely approaching in external conduct what the idea of right prescribes, though the cause of this is surely not inner morality” (*ZeF* 8:366). Slowly, but surely, these similarities will eventually

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<sup>303</sup> I would like to thank Heiner Klemme for pointing out this analogy.

<sup>304</sup> If Kant can foresee a unified religion, it stands to reason that the same will happen to language. Thus, the historic role of differences in language and religion “the propensity to mutual hatred and pretexts for war”, like all other devices of the cunning of nature, will come to an end.

<sup>305</sup> As Gellner reportedly said, “people still speak different languages, but they say pretty much the same things”. Quoted in: Thomas Hylland Eriksen, “After Kokoschka and Modigliani,” *3:16* (blog), 2021, <https://www.3-16am.co.uk/articles/after-kokoschka-and-modigliani> This may lay the grounds for experimenting in different varieties of nation-state based republicanism.

draw them closer to each other and pave the way for them to unify into a single political—although not yet *moral*—community. This is the third, *positive*, role that nationalism has in advancing the cosmopolitan *Bestimmung* of the human species—if it is done within the constraints of cosmopolitan right, nationalism can advance the creation of the *Weltrepublik*.<sup>306</sup>

Yet, although the moralization of the species—even most of it—may occur in republican nation-states, it *cannot* be concluded in them, since it will remain limited by their distinctive pragmatic predispositions—that is, their national cultures. Individual nations may indeed become moralized *qua* nations into *Königliche Völker*, yet the concern is, and always will be, with the species *as a whole*.<sup>307</sup> The consummation of moralization thus requires a political community where all the species’ predispositions—especially the moral one—can be developed in common.<sup>308</sup> This can only be the *Weltrepublik*.

In the final account the *Weltrepublik* will be assigned the same moralizing role that state republics hold—but for the totality of the species. So long as “inner morality” remains exclusively confined to members of one’s particular *Königliches Volk*, while members of other nations—regardless of them being *Königliche Völker* or not—are met, at best, only with propriety—that

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<sup>306</sup> I will return to this point in when discussing cosmopolitan right in 5.3 and 5.5

<sup>307</sup> This is not to say that Kant does not comment on specific peoples, or races, such as in the early *Observations on the feeling of the beautiful and sublime* (1764) and even in the *Anthropology* itself, such as in the section on “The character of the peoples” (7:311-320). However, in the *Anthropology*, which we accepted as Kant’s final say in the matter, this is always done within the cosmopolitan, ‘general’ framework of the species itself, i.e., the attempt is to understand why certain groups within the species differ from another.

<sup>308</sup> This should be distinguished from Kant’s claim that “what holds in accordance with natural right for human beings in a lawless condition, ‘they ought to leave this condition,’ cannot hold for states in accordance with the right of nations (since, as states, they already have a rightful constitution internally and hence have outgrown the constraint of others to bring them under a more extended law-governed constitution in accordance with their concepts of right) (*ZeF* 8:355). Here, Kant is making the claim for establishing *peace*, which, in turn, is only a *condition* for enlightenment. Enlightenment, as a principle of development, will eventually lead to the recognition that a *Weltrepublik* is necessary for the moralization of the species, which is the larger claim we are making here.

“external conduct” which emulates morality—*the species cannot be considered fully moral*, and its *Bestimmung* will remain unfulfilled.

The charge of the pragmatic *Weltrepublik* is thus to convert these various “external conducts” into one, single unified “inner morality” where the totalization of morality is completed. In this capacity—since justice trumps diversity—its primary task will therefore be to mediate, and perhaps transcend, national differences; to create, as it were, a unified *Königliche Gattung* out of a multitude of *Königliche Völker*. This will mark the final step of the moralization of the species—or the graduation ceremony of the education of mankind.<sup>309</sup>

The *Völkerbund*, and the condition of perpetual peace, should therefore be seen as an *ad hoc* solution for the *negative* purpose of the prevention of war (“the negative surrogate”)—an interim stage in the education of mankind—to be eventually superseded by “the positive idea of a world republic”.<sup>310</sup> Yet it is necessary to point out that this pragmatic *Weltrepublik* would mark only the end of pragmatic history—not of history *per se*. This because the pragmatic *Weltrepublik* bears resemblance to the pragmatic state-republic in one further, crucial, manner—which is that just as

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<sup>309</sup> Whether this necessarily implies the complete cultural homogenization of the entire human species, i.e., a new tower of Babel, is hard to tell. Moralization does *not* necessarily imply homogenization, and this is a critical difference between nations and religions, which, perhaps, marks the end of the analogy between them. Kant believed that religious pluralism will ultimately be dissolved, as “this division of sects, too, must disappear in time, leading, at least in spirit, to what we call the conclusion of the great drama of religious change on earth (the restoration of all things), when there will be only one shepherd and one flock” (*Streit* 7:53). Although from our standpoint of history, it seems, at least for the present author, difficult to speculate how it could be otherwise—but in any case, it is *not* imperative that the same need happen in the realm of culture. As the discussion above (4.6) on cultural diversity revealed, cultural homogeneity is warranted *only insofar that it is required for establishing a condition of right*, which the *Weltrepublik* undoubtedly is. Yet if there would be a way of doing so while maintaining national differences (say, through the application of some yet unknown technology—political or otherwise) then it would be a moral duty to do so. More detail in the next section.

<sup>310</sup> This is a classical progressive schema, typical of the enlightenment: first states emerge, then, one by one, they convert themselves into republics, which then come together to form a defensive league, which gradually hardens into a federal *Völkerbund*, which coalesces into a single pragmatic *Weltrepublik*, which eventually will be minimized, or even completely abolished, into the moral cosmopolitan community.

no moral value can be attributed to the best possible *state*, neither can any moral value be attributed to the best possible *world-state*:

Gradually violence on the part of the powers will diminish and obedience to the laws will increase. There will arise in the body politic perhaps more charity and less strife in lawsuits, more reliability in keeping one's word, etc., partly out of love of honor, partly out of well-understood self-interest. And eventually this will also extend to nations in their external relations toward one another up to the realization of the cosmopolitan society, *without the moral foundation in humanity having to be enlarged in the least*; for that, a kind of new creation (supernatural influence) would be necessary (*Streit* 7:91/2 emphasis added).<sup>311</sup>

As much as the moralization process is slow and gradual in the state, it will be infinitely slower when transposed to the global scale. Thus, although the species will be more than “halfway through its formation”, the pragmatic *Weltrepublik* only marks the penultimate stage of universal history—it occupies the point right before the human species achieves its cosmopolitan *Bestimmung* in the universal moral community. The *Weltrepublik*, therefore, is attainable from a pragmatic point of view and *necessary from a moral one*.

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<sup>311</sup> Note, again, how slow, and gradual the process is.

#### 4.8 The Challenge of Diversity and the Moral Necessity of the *Weltrepublik*

The previous discussion obviously begs the question of whether the *Weltrepublik*—the rightful *pragmatic* universal community—is necessary, or even desirable, for the moralization of the species. Is indeed the *Weltrepublik* the only way to moralize the species? Consider an alternative: would it not be preferable if the entire human species were to be organized in a *Völkerbund* of republican nation-states—instead of a single *Weltrepublik*—since such a *Völkerbund* would hold the added value of preserving its composite nations’ cultural idiosyncrasies? If both “encompass all the nations of the earth” what makes the *Weltrepublik* preferable? In other words, why shouldn’t history end with a *Völkerbund* of moral communities?

Part of the response would be that, given that “ought implies can”, as *the sole global political community* in accordance with reason, it is incumbent upon the human species to promote the *Weltrepublik*, as part of its duty to promote the highest good—all the more so once its viability has been demonstrated. The imperative that “all politics must bend its knee before right” demands that we dutifully work towards right—no matter the costs this may incur, including a change of identity. It thus follows that, ultimately, the final polity of the species *must* be the *Weltrepublik*.

The choice between a *Bund* of moral communities and a single universal moral community is, therefore, essentially false. Treating the *Völkerbund* as anything else beyond an interim solution—as a means towards the higher end of the creation of the *Weltrepublik*—is a nonstarter. Yet there are good reasons for preferring the *Weltrepublik* over the *Völkerbund* on its own merits; arguments can be made that the *Weltrepublik* is more sustainable, more efficient, and, fortunately for those

who *do* cherish cultural diversity, that it need *not* entail total cultural homogeneity.<sup>312</sup> Let us consider them in order.

*Sustainability*: While it may be possible that a single *nation* may become moralized by adopting a republican constitution—similar to how moral individuals may be found in immoral societies,<sup>313</sup> the long-term viability of a lone moral nation is questionable. As late as 1799, Kant stated that “outside the [world] republic there is no salvation, only perpetual war” and the threat that immoral nations, or barbarians “who threaten it with attacks” (*Refl* 8076 19:603)<sup>314</sup> pose towards a moral nation—of imposing their right through force on it—should be accounted for.<sup>315</sup> Thus, in a highly globalized, interlinked, world, no political community is an island entire to itself and “the (narrower or wider) community of the nations of the earth has now gone so far that a violation of right on *one* place of the earth is felt in *all*” (*ZeF* 8:360) necessitates that the *Weltrepublik* constantly expand for its own protection.<sup>316</sup>

Moreover, this ostensible predicament is rooted in a misperception that ignores Kant’s anthropology. The cosmological principle requires that the species takes precedence over its parts. Thus, it would be wrong to treat a certain part of the species as “moralized” as that would be tantamount to claiming that a part is independent of the whole. Ontologically, it would not be the *nation* which has been moralized, but rather only a part of the *species* which has become so. The

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<sup>312</sup> Although, strictly speaking, consequential arguments are immaterial to a Kantian moral argument, they may prove *ex post facto* the truthfulness of the argument. But beyond that, these have been included since they reveal important insights for the rest of the argument.

<sup>313</sup> Socrates being the classic example.

<sup>314</sup> I have translated this *Reflexion* with the help of Frank Grunert.

<sup>315</sup> Not to mention its annihilation if the Socratic analogy is taken to its logical conclusion. Gibbon’s dictum that “All that is human must retrograde if it does not advance” holds true here—nations must slowly unify into a single *Weltrepublik* if they are not to fall for the predation of immoral states, put differently: No nation is moral until *all* nations have been moralized. I will discuss how this will happen in more detail in the next section.

<sup>316</sup> Not, however, through military conquest. The *Weltrepublik* is an “anti-imperial Empire”, and states will join by invitation. More below.

totalization of morality must be considered vis-à-vis the species, *qua* species. This is only possible when the species' common pragmatic predisposition develops, in continuity, to create the conditions for its own moralization—which include a universal 'moral culture' and its political *unity*. As argued above, the pragmatic *state* republic requires, at a minimum, a common idiom for the moralization of its citizens. The same applies, *mutatis mutandis*, for the *Weltrepublik* as well.<sup>317</sup>

*Efficiency*: To this we may add a more pragmatic (in the conventional sense) consideration, which is that a well-ordered *Weltrepublik*, being comprised of a politically unified human species, would be more efficient in moralizing its citizenry. Essentially, these would be the same advantages that a unitary, centralized, state has over a federal one.<sup>318</sup>

The high degree of pragmatic and technical development already inherent in a pragmatic *Weltrepublik* suggests that any advantage that a *Völkerbund* may have regarding efficiency, vis-à-vis the population and territorial sizes of its composite political units, may possibly be overcome through the proper administration of both material and political technology. It is possible, for instance, that such a centralized *Völkerstaat* would be able to reach all its citizenry—the entire species—directly via a wide-ranging means of communication, as well as an extensive bureaucratic apparatus.<sup>319</sup> Such access to its citizens would in effect grant a centralized *Weltrepublik* a clear advantage over a diffused *Völkerbund*; as it would bypass the vertical

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<sup>317</sup> This universal 'moral culture', founded on the mutual recognition of the principle of equality of all humanity, is acquired through hospitality, and will be discussed in 5.4. Here it should be pointed out that it is also necessary for preventing nations from creating a culture distinct from these principles (which, *eo ipso*, implies that they are *not* equal to the rest of the species), since their will reveals a maxim that cannot be universalized. This may facilitate their breaking away from the *Weltrepublik* and their retrogradation into barbarism. In other words, it can create a condition in which, while most of the species sees itself as equal to one another, a certain minority regards itself as superior by virtue of their culture, race, religion and so on.

<sup>318</sup> There are disadvantages as well of course, but here we are considering the case *for* a *Weltrepublik*.

<sup>319</sup> Yet another reason why it should not be established prematurely, the potential abuses of such capabilities on a global level would certainly result in the "graveyard of freedom".

obstacles of a federative government, as well as the horizontal borders between states—regardless of how porous these may already be in a *Völkerbund*—moralization would thus become a streamlined process.<sup>320</sup>

*Diversity*: Finally, it is important to reiterate that, although a common pragmatic predisposition developed by the species *qua* species is a necessary condition for a *Weltrepublik*, it does not necessarily entail the *total* cultural homogenization of the species.

As demonstrated in the previous subsection (4.7), a republican constitution and cultural diversity are *practically*, yet not *logically*, contradictory—they are incompatible only insofar as cultural diversity impedes enlightenment—if the two should come into conflict, then diversity must yield before right—cultural homogeneity *per se* is *not* integral to Kant’s argument.<sup>321</sup> A common idiom derives its importance only from the species’ duty to moralize itself *qua* species—by developing a common pragmatic predisposition, establishing the *Weltrepublik*, and, eventually

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<sup>320</sup> It is important to point out that this should be distinguished from the totalitarian nightmare of a “universal homogenous state” of thinkers such as Alexandre Kojève—centralized does not mean authoritarian. Since the *Weltrepublik* is, by definition, a republic writ large, it will not be bereft of institutional checks and balances—and will maintain a separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches of government. Furthermore, nothing prohibits the diffusion of power through regional administrative units in this polity as well.

<sup>321</sup> Neither, for that matter, is Kant’s racism. I contend that the morally repugnant elements of Kant’s thought are immaterial to the validity of his argument for a cosmopolitan society, which is why I consciously chose not to address them. In other words, ejecting Kant’s racism from the account does not detract from the validity of his arguments, which can, and should, be scrutinized according to their own merits. For a (very) brief overview of the different explanations for the tension between Kant’s cosmopolitan and racist statements see: Cavallar, “Cosmopolitanisms in Kant’s Philosophy,” 97–98; For a different interpretation see: Todd Hedrick, “Race, Difference, and Anthropology in Kant’s Cosmopolitanism,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 46, no. 2 (May 7, 2008): 245–68; In any case, by the time of publication of the *Anthropology*, Kant abandoned race as a concept, since it is useless for pragmatic anthropology: “even knowledge of the races of human beings as products belonging to the play of nature is not yet counted as pragmatic knowledge of the world, but only as theoretical knowledge of the world” (*Anth* 7:120) and, contrary to the previous anthropology manuscripts, the attempt to characterize different races is indeed absent in the *Anthropology*. See: Pauline Kleingeld, “Kant’s Second Thoughts on Race,” *The Philosophical Quarterly* (1950-) 57, no. 229 (2007): 589–91; As well as: Pauline Kleingeld, “On Dealing with Kant’s Sexism and Racism,” *SGIR Review* 2, no. 2 (2019): 3–22.



converting it into a universal moral community. A common idiom is merely a condition for the propagation of enlightenment—a means to the end of right—and not an end in itself.

However, the *Königliche Völker* problem—of fostering mutual recognition between citizens who cannot communicate with each other—acquires such an enormous order of magnitude when *the entire species* is concerned that its resolution seems utterly fantastical. Yet even if its solubility defies belief, if a way could be found to satisfy the condition that all citizens will enjoy equal participation in the *Weltrepublik* while preserving their distinctive languages and cultures, then, as the discussion of the Lithuanian minority demonstrates, it would be a *moral duty* to sustain it.

Since the retrogradation of the species to barbarism or minority is a persistent danger in the history of the species “the condition, apart from the [world] republic, is one of chaos” (*Refl* 8076 19:603). The *Weltrepublik* therefore holds a further advantage over a *Völkerbund*; by creating, and sustaining, a universal ‘moral culture’, it provides a stronger guarantee of *Cosmopolitan Right*. *Cosmopolitan Right*—the political analogy of universal hospitality—holds a moralizing role as well, which is to establish *trust* between the citizens of the *Weltrepublik*.

#### 4.9 Political Philosophy: Conclusion

This section demonstrated that Kant's quick dismissal of the *Weltrepublik* in *Towards Perpetual Peace* is misleading. While the fast change of gears to discuss the *Bund* may offer the impression that Kant did not seriously consider the *Weltrepublik*—it is the opposite which is true. The *Weltrepublik* is the final form of the universal political community, as it is derived from reason *a priori*. Other forms of global political communities—such as the *Bund* in all its forms—are, at best, temporary means towards the end of the *Weltrepublik*. “Thus on the cosmopolitan level, too, it can be maintained: What on rational grounds holds for theory also holds for practice” (*T&P* 8:313).

To this end, the nation-state plays a decisive role. The thing/person distinction helps clarify and disentangle the state from the nation in Kant's political thought. By Kant's own terms, the morality of nations, is not given *tout court*—but is the result of a *process*. Pragmatic progress is mainly driven by nature and war, but *moral* progress requires enlightenment, which requires, in turn, the condition of suspension of hostilities that the negative surrogate of the *Bund* can provide. Once perpetual peace is achieved and enlightenment is asserted as a rival principle of progress to nature, moralization, whereby pragmatic republics—who exhibit only a *semblance* of morality—are converted into moral communities (*Königliche Völker*) will commence in their respective political communities. Key to all this is the presence of a *common idiom* for the propagation of enlightenment; initially for creating pragmatic republics and later for the moralization process itself.

However, such moralization remains partial, as it is limited to the members of one's particular nation, whereas Kant's concern is with the species as a *whole*, hence the imperative of creating the

*Weltrepublik*—whose main charge will be to mediate between the different idioms of its composite members into the universal moral community.

## V: Ethics

### 5.0 Introduction: The Universal Moral Community

Hitherto we have dealt mainly with the *political* dimension of Kant's anthropological cosmopolitanism. To recap: the final end of the species' political, or natural, history is the *Weltrepublik*, the universal political community. This history, in itself, will take an inordinate amount of time, since it is not about how "local" political communities develop, but rather the "general" political community of the species itself. Political progress will continue, at an uneven and glacial pace, until every member of the species becomes a member of this community.

Yet, we must keep in mind the distinction between the pragmatic and the moral. As it is the culmination of political history, the *Weltrepublik*, by definition, *cannot* be the fulfillment of humanity's moral *Bestimmung*. Morality *per se* is immaterial to progress in pragmatic history—as argued above (4.7), a *Weltrepublik* may be entirely devoid of moral content, as even a species of devils can form a *Weltrepublik* "if only they have understanding".

As we have seen (4.5), the particularity of a political community—its distinctive common pragmatic predisposition, with nation-states being the case in point—makes it more amenable to moralization. Yet, a particular political community could, at best, be only an analogy of a particular *moral* community or, as a *Königliche Volk*—a close approximation. Moralization cannot, by definition, be concluded in a particular community—but only in the species. This, for pragmatic reasons as well—since the morality of an isolated community will remain precarious so long as the rest of the species has not entered into a universal moral community with it.

So, although its origins may lie in happenstance, given the constant threat of the species' retrogradation into barbarism, the very survival of the moral community depends on it being "an enduring and ever expanding society, solely designed for the preservation of morality by

counteracting evil with united forces” (*Rel* 6:94).<sup>322</sup> This is moral progress, or *moral history*. Moral progress will be achieved through the means of moral education, hospitality, and enlightenment—especially political reform—which will eventually encompass the entire species.<sup>323</sup> These depend, in turn, on the willingness of the community’s members to fulfill their duty to promote the ‘highest good’, with its two distinct moments of the *Weltrepublik* and the universal moral community.<sup>324</sup>

This section will examine the dialectical relations between these moments, namely the universal political and moral communities. It will also demonstrate how *Popularphilosophie* and cosmopolitan right—the universalization of the right to hospitality—combine to create another, powerful, means for the totalization of morality. Important clues regarding the viability of this process can be gleaned from Kant’s discussion of hospitality in the *Anthropology*. The section will close with a discussion of the amount of time that the totalization of morality entails.

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<sup>322</sup> It is in this narrow sense, i.e., that the moral community *must* continuously expand in order to preserve itself, that, perhaps, enlightenment can indeed be perceived as intolerant and imperialist.

<sup>323</sup> Another important means for the creation, and expansion, of the moral community is rational religion, however, a proper discussion is beyond the scope of this study. Cavallar, “Cosmopolitanisms in Kant’s Philosophy,” 108; Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 172.

<sup>324</sup> Also known as “the moral whole”, “the cosmopolitan society”, and the “kingdom of ends”, for the various titles of the moral community see fn. 180. Wood, for instance, claims that “Its model is not a political state but a rational and enlightened form of religious community” “Kant and the Problem of Human Nature,” 55.

## 5.1 The Universal Moral Community is Distinct from the Cosmopolitan Political Community

Similar to the *Weltrepublik*, Kant was quite reticent about the details of the universal, or cosmopolitan, moral community. In the *Starke* manuscript from 1790-91 he states:

The most difficult condition of the human race is the crossing-over [*Übergang*] from civilization to moralization...[O]ne must try to enlighten human beings and to better establish international law [*Völkerrecht*] (*Starke II*. 124-25).<sup>325</sup>

As the moral law forms the foundation for the moral community's laws, in the *Groundwork*, where it is called the "Kingdom of Ends", they must stipulate that citizens treat each other not merely as means, but as ends as well:

For, all rational beings stand under the *law* that each of them is to treat himself and all others *never merely as means* but always *at the same time as ends in themselves*. But from this there arises a systematic union of rational beings through common objective laws, that is, a kingdom, which can be called a kingdom of ends (admittedly only an ideal) because what these laws have as their purpose is just the relation of these beings to one another as ends and means (*Gr* 4:433).

The duty to treat others as ends patently runs counter to utilitarian self-interest, and cannot, therefore, be a result of individual instrumental rationality—the animalistic form of rationality—which views the other precisely as nothing but a mere mean for the satisfaction of desires. The unity of the moral community—the mutual recognition of each other's freedom and equality as rational beings—can thus be realized only through the *collective exercise of substantive rationality*. The moral community, therefore, must be voluntary rather than coercive.

Thus reason, in its substantive mode, is what will ultimately displace the dictates of nature.<sup>326</sup> Even the most civilized pragmatic community, which conforms with the Idea of morality to the highest degree, would still have to contend with regulating people who view each other's wills as

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<sup>325</sup> Translated in: Robert B. Louden, *Kant's Impure Ethics: From Rational Beings to Human Beings*, First Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 42.

<sup>326</sup> This view finds itself on the side of reason regarding Kant's ambiguity on whether it is reason, or nature, (i.e., freedom or teleology) which is the guarantor of progress in the species (see above fn. 72).

obstacles; whose behavior, while civilized, amounts *at best* to propriety—a semblance of morality (“partly out of love of honor, partly out of well-understood self-interest”). In contrast, in a moral community, *all* wills are compatible with each other since they have been voluntarily submitted to accord with a universal principle—the moral law—and, crucially, *are mutually recognized as such*.<sup>327</sup> I contend that this predicates, if not a universal idiom, then at the very least, a universal condition of *trust* among the universal moral community’s members. The culture of a community grounded in the moral law would have to rest on the faith that such treatment would be duly reciprocated—and not exploited.<sup>328</sup>

The moral community, if it is indeed “admittedly only an ideal” cannot be perfectly expressed in the empirical world.<sup>329</sup> Yet the imperative to promote the highest good entails a moral duty to produce its empirical analogues—to remake the world—and not merely the self.<sup>330</sup> Hence, embodying the moral law into the organization of the social world, and, accordingly, to reshape existing political institutions, is a cardinal element of this moral duty.<sup>331</sup>

This embodiment follows the progressive stadal scheme mentioned above—which starts with reforming political communities into republics—and culminates with “a society which reason makes it a task and a duty of the entire human race to establish in its full scope” (*Rel* 6:94). The

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<sup>327</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 172; Also: Cavallar, “Cosmopolitanisms in Kant’s Philosophy,” 99.

<sup>328</sup> Not that the *expectation* for reciprocity should be a *condition* for acting morally—given the unconditional duty to act in a moral manner. Rather the point is that trust is a condition, and product, of ‘moral culture’. More below.

<sup>329</sup> Thence, this bifurcation between the political and the moral is necessary since “The moral idea cannot, by definition, find an empirical setup that perfectly expresses its content, and all institutional arrangements can only be analogous to it, as a mere simulacrum”. Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 173.

<sup>330</sup> “[T]he moral law alone must be viewed as the ground for making the highest good and its realization or promotion the object” (*KpV* 5:109). For more on the highest good and the duty to promote it see: (*KU* 5:450, *KpV* 5:107-114).

<sup>331</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 173.

embodiment of the universal moral community in the *Weltrepublik* is thus *the moral duty of the human species towards itself*:

Now, here we have a duty *sui generis*, not of human beings toward human beings but of the human race toward itself [*des menschlichen Geschlechts gegen sich selbst*]. For every species of rational beings is objectively—in the idea of reason—destined to a common end, namely *the promotion of the highest good as a good common to all*. But, since this highest moral good will not be brought about solely through the striving of one individual person for his own moral perfection but *requires rather a union of such persons into a whole toward that very end*, [i.e.] toward a system of well-disposed human beings in which, and through the unity of which alone, the highest moral good can come to pass, yet the idea of such a whole, *as a universal republic based on the laws of virtue* [*als einer allgemeinen Republik nach Tugendgesetzen*], differs entirely from all moral laws (which concern what we know to reside within our power), for it is the idea of working toward a whole of which we cannot know whether as a whole it is also in our power: so the duty in question differs from all others in kind and in principle. (*Rel* 6:97/8 emphases added)

The recognition of the duty to promote the highest good and to create the *Weltrepublik*—as the closest empirical approximation of the universal moral community—is thus an outcome of the species exercising its own substantive rationality *qua* species.<sup>332</sup> Yet even more importantly, this collective effort—the creation and maintenance of a *Weltrepublik*, is only a *means* for the fulfillment of the species’ moral *Bestimmung*—the universal moral community. The universal political and moral communities are therefore not the same—the former is a means to the latter.

That the *Weltrepublik* is distinct from the universal moral community is also supported by the *Anthropology*. There, it should be recalled, it is the regulative ideal of the moral community—the “cosmopolitan society”, and not a *Weltrepublik*, which is “the destiny [*Bestimmung*] of the human race” that must be pursued “diligently” (*Anth* 7:331). Presumably, since the species cannot have two distinct destinies, the *Weltrepublik* and the cosmopolitan society cannot be *identical*, yet, as both are prescribed by reason, they cannot be *contradictory* either. From this it follows that the

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<sup>332</sup> More elements of the duty to promote the highest good—enlightenment, hospitality, education and *Popularphilosophie* are discussed below.



*Weltrepublik*, the universal *political* community, is not an end-in-itself, but also a means towards the higher, final end of the universal moral community.

The nonidentity of the universal political and moral communities having been established—  
The *Weltrepublik* being the only form in which the universal moral community can constitute itself. The question now turns to the relations between them.

## 5.2 Relating the Universally Moral to the Politically Cosmopolitan

A political community, or state—the system of laws, institutions, constitutions and so on—assumes a moral *form* i.e., is civilized, when it conforms to the moral idea. This external embodiment of the moral idea in the empirical world is necessary for governing the empirical relations among its citizens. As such, the scope of a civilized state is limited to mediating its citizens' external behavior, or freedom, without determining their good or evil will. Yet for realizing the ideal of the *moral* community—which *does* determine the good will of its members—it is vital. The derivative value of the political community stems from it being the empirical analogy—a *means* to the end—of the moral community, which *is* a good-in-itself. Thus, the moral will always assume logical primacy—and the political will always remain secondary.<sup>333</sup>

The dynamism of the virtuous cycle (4.5) found on the particular state level—whereby a republican constitution and a *Königliche Volk*, or the state and the nation, mutually reinforce one another—can also be found on the universal species level:

An association of human beings merely under the laws of virtue, ruled by this idea, can be called an *ethical* and, so far as these laws are public, an *ethico-civil* (in contrast to a *juridico-civil*) society, or an *ethical community*. It can exist in the midst of a political community and even be made up of all the members of the latter (*indeed, without the foundation of a political community, it could never be brought into existence by human beings*). It has however a special unifying principle of its own (virtue) and hence a form and constitution essentially distinct from those of the other. There is nevertheless a certain analogy between the two, when considered in general as two communities, and with respect to this analogy the ethical community can also be called an *ethical state*, i.e. a *kingdom* of virtue (of the good principle). The idea of such a state has an entirely well-grounded, objective reality in human reason (in the duty to join such a state), even though we cannot subjectively ever hope of the good will of human beings that these will work harmoniously toward this end (*Rel 6:94-95* emphasis added)

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<sup>333</sup> Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 174.

The universal political and moral communities, while incongruous in the beginning, are nevertheless codependent—while the civilized political community requires the regulative *idea* of a moral community, the moral community depends on the political community for the totalization of morality—its mediation and propagation—whereby the idea of morality is extended, initially from the philosophers to the masses, via, amongst others, the praxis of *Popularphilosophie*. Moral progress requires cultivation; its success hinges on the prevalence of certain rational institutions—e.g., an education system, the protection of free speech—the aforementioned (4.4) “freedom of the pen”—property rights and so on—within the political community.<sup>334</sup>

It is thus important to note that, since morality is an end-in-itself, the cunning of nature is also irrelevant to it. A moral community can come about *only* as a consequence of the good will of its citizenry—if devils voluntarily decide to become angels, as it were, and not merely to emulate them out of self-interest. The cunning of nature’s scope is confined to pragmatic development—it can facilitate the progress of the political community, such as by removing impediments to its expansion—for instance, by using war as a device to unify and centralize political communities—but strictly speaking, it cannot be responsible for any progress *in morality itself*.<sup>335</sup>

That a single political community will uphold these enlightened institutions—if only in minimal compliance with morality—is sufficient to initiate the moralization process. That it is the *political* community—the republic—which is the “mother” of the nation “in an intellectual sense” (*MdS* 6:343) which initiates this process has significant implications for the claim made above that the pragmatic *Weltrepublik* is required for the universal moral community. Although the *Weltrepublik*

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<sup>334</sup> Ibid.

<sup>335</sup> Ibid., 175.

need not be established before *any* moralization can occur—as the species’ moral and pragmatic development can, in fact, progress *pari passu*—it will nevertheless be necessary for the *final* stage of pragmatic development (4.7), where it forms the locus of the final stage of the totalization of morality.<sup>336</sup>

This stipulates that—similarly to a pragmatic state-republic—a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for the establishment, and conversion, of the pragmatic *Weltrepublik* would be a common pragmatic predisposition—a *world-culture*—which, in turn, will require some degree of cultural homogeneity—only on a global scale.

There is a certain parallel with nationalism here, if we keep in mind Gellner’s definition of nationalism as “a political principle, which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent”.<sup>337</sup> The totalization of morality can, in effect, be seen as globally-writ nationalism—only that the political and national units would be made of, respectively, the entire surface of the earth, and all its inhabitants.

Similar to how a successful nationalist movement depends on the popular demand of the nation—the cultural unit—to achieve this congruence in a nation-state, such “nationalism”—or “humanism”—of the species, will require that the ‘nation of humanity’, which has become a single and complete cultural unit in itself, make a similar demand for the *Weltrepublik* as a ‘global-republican-state’.<sup>338</sup> As we have seen, a *Weltrepublik* can only emerge from the species’ free

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<sup>336</sup> As opposed, for instance, to one, or several, divergent particular pragmatic communities moralizing themselves and then gradually converging and extending membership of their moral community to other members of the species. This question, of whether natural history *must* be concluded before moral history can commence, seems to be a major source of apprehension for Kant. More about the claims in favor of creating a pragmatic *Weltrepublik* prior to the universal moral community below in 5.6.

<sup>337</sup> Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 1.

<sup>338</sup> In the same sense that “It is nationalism which engenders nations, and not the other way round” *ibid.*, 54. It is the world culture which creates the nation of the species.

volition, when it recognizes its duty—*qua* species—to fulfill the highest good. Much in the same way that national liberation movements are successful when they achieve this congruence, a *Weltrepublik*, if successfully established, would mark the achievement of what a universally common pragmatic predisposition demands.

In effect, the universal moral community reveals itself to be a synthesis of nationalism and cosmopolitanism. Although it is a *single* nation, the ‘nation of humanity’, by virtue of its shared pragmatic predisposition—which encompasses the entirety of the human species—it is not a ‘particular’ nationalism.<sup>339</sup> Yet, neither is it an ‘abstract’ or rootless, cosmopolitanism, given its foundation on a shared idiom and the political participation a republic enables.

In other words, the only rightful *Weltrepublik* would be an outcome of the collective demand of a unified species, one which recognizes its necessity for the fulfillment of its moral *Bestimmung*. *Popularphilosophie* and enlightenment can, and should, play the same role on the cosmopolitan level which they do on the national level—and create a common pragmatic predisposition of humanity. As will be shown, part of the significance of cosmopolitan Right lies in its ability to secure the means for developing the universal pragmatic disposition, as well as facilitating this voluntary unification. Crucially, I contend that the same distinction, and relations, between political and moral communities exists in cosmopolitan right. As a formal *law*, cosmopolitan right forms the empirical analogy to the moral *idea* of hospitality, which is predicated on *trust*. This enables the condition of commerce (*Verkehr*) and creates a ‘moral culture’ in the process—making it simultaneously both a means and an end of moral progress.

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<sup>339</sup> Let alone xenophobic nationalism, simply because there is literally no *xenos*.

### 5.3 Cosmopolitan Right: A Means, an End

The following will demonstrate how, similarly to state right, cosmopolitan right is bifurcated into mutually reinforcing political and moral moments. Much in the same way that political state right—the republican constitution, the empirical analogy of the “pure republic”—has a moralizing role in the lives of its citizens, *political* cosmopolitan right—the right to hospitality—has one as well; in its *formal-political* moment it complements the republican constitution, helping to establish a condition of Right *between* states and individuals (thus replacing the right of nations), and is a driving force for extending, and gradually centralizing, the cosmopolitan *political* community by developing the universal pragmatic predisposition, which culminates in the *Weltrepublik*. Concomitantly, in its *moral* moment, cosmopolitan right helps to transform the cosmopolitan political community into the universal *moral* community by creating a ‘moral culture’ predicated on trust.

*As an end:*

Famously, the third definitive article for *Perpetual Peace* states that “Cosmopolitan right shall be limited to conditions of universal *hospitality*” (*ZeF* 8:357). Whereas ‘hospitality’ consists of “the right of a foreigner not to be treated with hostility because he has arrived on the land of another” (*ZeF* 8:358). This, Kant emphasizes, is not “the right to be a guest”, but rather, only the “right to visit”:

    this right, to present oneself for society, belongs to all human beings by virtue of the right of possession in common of the earth’s surface on which, as a sphere, they cannot disperse infinitely but must finally put up with being near one another; but originally no one had more right than another to be on a place on the earth (*ZeF* 8:358).

Although this right is derived by reason from the (ostensible) original common possession of the earth, it will remain meaningless so long as legal institutions to enforce it have not been established. Cosmopolitan right—as all public rights—is derived from the postulate that “all men

who can mutually affect one another must belong to some civil constitution [*bürgerlichen Verfassung*]” (ZeF 8:349).

That political communities historically precede moral communities has already been noted.<sup>340</sup> And the implementation of cosmopolitan right is no exception; to fulfill its cosmopolitan *Bestimmung* the entire species would first have to belong “to some civil constitution”. Furthermore, moralization—whereby the political community is converted into a moral community—requires that the political community’s laws conform to some degree with morality, i.e., that it has attained some degree of civilization. In the cosmopolitan case, for the global political community to have a *rightful* constitution [*rechtliche Verfassung*] and not merely a *civil* one, it must accord with:

the *right of citizens of the world* [*Weltbürgerrecht*], insofar as individuals and states, standing in the relation of externally affecting one another, are to be regarded as citizens of a universal state of mankind [*allgemeinen Menschenstaats*] (*ius cosmopolitanum*). (ZeF 8:349).<sup>341</sup>

It should be noted that ‘a universal state of mankind’ does not necessarily imply the immediate creation of a *Weltrepublik*—similar to the state republic, a *Weltrepublik* requires a degree of civility before it can be established. Hence, at least in the beginning, the cosmopolitan political community will have a more rudimentary, and less sovereign, form—such as a league of nations. Yet it should also be emphasized that, naturally, the more expansive the political community is—

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<sup>340</sup> See above: 4.0: the constitution as “the mother of the nation” metaphor, 4.4, 5.2: *Rel* 6:94-95 passage comments.

<sup>341</sup> Note that this, therefore, does not exclude a global civil constitution which is not *rightful*—such as a global empire—thus *ius cosmopolitanum* is meaningful “Only under the presupposition of some kind of *rightful* condition” (ZeF 8:383). As Cavallar notes: “Kant carefully uses the notion ‘*rightful* [*rechtlich*].’ Constitutions are usually not, or only to some extent, ‘*lawful* [*rechtmässig*]’ or just, that is, corresponding to the *a priori* principle of rights”. Cavallar, “Kant’s Society of Nations,” 467 Thus: “for some *rightful* [*rechtliche*] constitution or other, even if it is only to a small degree in conformity with right [*rechtmäßige*], is better than none at all” (ZeF 8:373); Cavallar further claims that “The quote hides a small revolution: unlike 18th and 19th-century international law, individuals are full juridical persons in Kant’s international legal theory”. Cavallar, “Cosmopolitanisms in Kant’s Philosophy,” 99.

the wider the scope of cosmopolitan right.<sup>342</sup> Similar to the implementation of the rightful state constitution, implementing cosmopolitan right would be an arduously long historical process, the length of which would probably be increased manifold.<sup>343</sup>

Additionally, that it is the spherical shape of the earth which determines the conditions for cosmopolitan right can be taken as another instance of the cunning of nature: “Since the earth’s surface is not unlimited but closed, the concepts of the right of a state and of a right of nations lead inevitably to the idea of a *right for a state of nations (ius gentium)* or *cosmopolitan right (ius cosmopoliticum)*” (*MdS* 6:311). Thus, although nature itself has created the conditions for the division of the species, by creating the conditions where the Idea (although *not* the realization) of cosmopolitan right is imaginable, it has also created the conditions for the species’ unity as well.<sup>344</sup>

*As a means:*

Yet since cosmopolitan right also has two moments, its role cannot be concluded with the creation of a fully global ‘rightful condition’ of a cosmopolitan *political* community (i.e., a “global rightful constitution”). Cosmopolitan Right is not only the *Idea* of an end of the moral community (as *ius cosmopoliticum*; universal hospitality), but, as a political *institution* it is a means for

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<sup>342</sup> Provided, of course, that the force of the laws has not weakened as a result of this expansion.

<sup>343</sup> There is, however, a key difference between the state and global level, which Kant himself points out: “what holds in accordance with natural right for human beings in a lawless condition, ‘they ought to leave this condition,’ cannot hold for states in accordance with the right of nations (since, as states, they already have a rightful constitution internally and hence have outgrown the constraint of others to bring them under a more extended law-governed constitution in accordance with their concepts of right)” (*ZeF* 8:355). The aspiration at least, is that the *Völkerstaat* will not have to start off as a monarchy or aristocracy, but, since it will be formed out of a *Bund* of republics, its historic task would be to contend with the centralization of many republics into a single global one, a long process in its own right. The length of this historical process and its implications will be discussed in 5.6.

<sup>344</sup> Naturally, this gives more weight to nature as the guarantor of the species *Bestimmung* in the nature vs. reason debate.



creating, expanding, and centralizing the cosmopolitan political community itself.<sup>345</sup> Kant says as much, stating that cosmopolitan right is a *means* to a different end:

this right to hospitality [*Hospitalitätsrecht*]*—*that is, the authorization of a foreign newcomer—does not extend beyond the conditions which make it possible to *seek* commerce [*Verkehr*] with the old inhabitants. In this way distant parts of the world can enter peaceably into relations with one another, which can eventually become publicly lawful and so finally bring the human race ever closer to a cosmopolitan constitution [*weltbürgerlichen Verfassung*] (*ZeF* 8:358).

In its political mode, cosmopolitan right, “because of its analogy with the right of nations” (*ZeF* 8:384), will help, at first, to replace the morally deficient right of nations—the *ius gentium*—with some form of rightful *Völkerbund*, one which “would gradually extend further and further” (*ZeF* 8:356). Eventually, this *Völkerbund* will be transformed, gradually and slowly, into the *Weltrepublik*—the only “*right for a state of nations*” or *weltbürgerlichen Verfassung*—which is in accordance with right. Thus, cosmopolitanism is not merely a moral condition [*Zustand*], or point of view [*Absicht*], but a regulative ideal for a *political* constitution [*Verfassung*] that is, for a *political* community as well.

This gradual phasing out of the *ius gentium* in favor of the *ius cosmopolitanicum* corresponds to the historical process of the transitional period between the epoch of nature to the epoch of freedom. As we noted above, the shift between these two distinct epochs is not sudden and revolutionary, but rather, given its inherent irregularity, is a gradual and prolonged process, which includes a considerable overlapping period between the two—Kant’s age, and, arguably, our own—the Enlightenment. Thus, these two forms of public rights can, and *do*, exist simultaneously; whereas cosmopolitan right, “insofar as individuals and states” pertains to those member-states

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<sup>345</sup> And, crucially, *its eventual moralization*. To be discussed in the following subsection (5.4).

*within* the *Völkerbund* and their citizens, the right of nations will continue to govern the conduct *between* the *Völkerbund* and non-member states, as well as how they relate to each other.

Yet, cosmopolitan right has a further, moralizing mode *within* the cosmopolitan political community—one which is key to the fulfillment of humanity’s *Bestimmung*. In the same manner by which republican constitutions facilitate the moralization of their respective citizenries, the cosmopolitan *political* community—by enshrining the right to hospitality in its constitution—creates a further means for the moralization of the species.

In other words, I submit that it is only when morality is totalized in the species—and *not* with the creation of the *Weltrepublik*—that *ius cosmopolitanicum* becomes fully realized. Like state right, cosmopolitan right finds itself similarly bifurcated into mutually reinforcing political and moral moments—the “right to hospitality” is but the political analogy of the ‘moral culture’. As such, cosmopolitan right will keep its moralizing function until all citizens of the *Weltrepublik* recognize each other as ends and not means—thus facilitating its transformation into the universal *moral* community—which will finally be accomplished through the establishment of *trust* among them. The discussion of hospitality in the *Anthropology* offers a rare glimpse into the culture of the moral community.

#### 5.4 Hospitality in the *Anthropology*

The discussion of hospitality in the *Anthropology* reveals that it functions, among other things, as a facilitator of *trust*. In paragraph §88 of the *Anthropology*, titled *On the highest moral-physical good* Kant observes that:

The way of thinking characteristic of the union of good living with virtue in *social intercourse is humanity* (*Anth* 7:277).

*Humanity* consists of sociability, which, later in the passage, is also equivocated with virtue.

*Sociability*, however, has varying degrees of quality, with the best kind being a—properly conducted—dinner party:

The good living that still seems to harmonize best with true humanity is *a good meal in good company* (and if possible, also alternating company). Chesterfield says that the company must not number fewer than the *graces* or more than the *muses* (*Anth* 7:278).<sup>346</sup>

The purpose of dinner parties is not “physical satisfaction which each guest can have by himself alone—but also social enjoyment” (*Anth* 7:278), to this end, Kant lays out in the section what he refers to as “laws of refined humanity” (*Anth* 7:282) which provide a framework for creating a ‘moral culture’ at the dinner table.<sup>347</sup> My focus will be on the atmosphere of *trust* these laws foster—which ‘moral culture’ is reliant upon:

It goes without saying that in all dinner parties, even one at an inn, whatever is said publicly by an indiscreet table companion to the detriment of someone absent may not be used *outside* this party and may not be gossiped about. For even without making a special agreement about it, any such symposium has a certain holiness and a duty of secrecy about it with respect to what could later cause inconvenience, outside the group, to its members; for without this trust, the healthy enjoyment of moral culture within a social gathering and the enjoyment of this social gathering itself would be denied (*Anth* 7:279).

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<sup>346</sup> In the footnote Kant adds: “Ten at a table; because the host, who serves the guests, does not count himself along with them”. There are three graces and nine muses.

<sup>347</sup> In her insightful essay on the subject, Alix Cohen has noted that some of these rules (e.g., “Not to let *dogmatism* arise or persist”; “A topic that is entertaining must almost be exhausted before proceeding to another one”; “not to change the topic unnecessarily or jump from one subject to another” [*Anthr* 7:281]) resemble those of the *sensus communis* mentioned above (fn.234): “the cognitive rules that guide the exchange of thoughts at dinner parties are the conversational counterpart of the *sensus communis*—a “sensus conversationis””. Cohen, “The Ultimate Kantian Experience,” 326 As I noted (4.4), the maxims for achieving wisdom in the *Anthropology* resemble them as well.

This is not idle speculation. Kant himself claims that dinner parties, when properly conducted, embody rituals akin to the ancient customs which formalize the safety that hosts ought to confer upon their guests.<sup>348</sup> They form what Alix Cohen has called “an oasis of trust” or a “republic of diners”.<sup>349</sup> One can therefore extrapolate that the cardinal importance that trust holds, *mutatis mutandis*, has to be maintained in the culture of moral communities as well. That is, the *culture* of the *Weltrepublik* will be predicated upon trust as well—while cosmopolitan right builds upon, and legally codifies, these “laws of refined humanity”.<sup>350</sup> The bifurcation of the right of hospitality is exhibited here, *in nuce*, in communal eating. It is both a ritual—a facilitator of moral culture—as well as an embodiment of the right to hospitality itself. It is cosmopolitan *right* which determines the moral culture which trust can instantiate; as such, it forms its empirical complement:

There is something analogous here to ancient customs in the trust between human beings who eat together at the same table; for example, those of the Arab, with whom a stranger can feel safe as soon as he has merely been able to coax a refreshment from him (a drink of water) in his tent; or when the deputies coming from Moscow to meet the Russian Tsarina offered her *salt* and *bread*, and by the enjoyment of them she could regard herself as safe from all snares by the right of hospitality [*Gastrecht*].—Eating together at one table is regarded as the formality of such a covenant of safety. (*Anth* 7:279).<sup>351</sup>

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<sup>348</sup> There is a certain precedent to the importance of social gatherings for morality in the second part of the *Critique of Practical Reason*. There, Kant claims that, arguments over the moral worth of an action or person—besides enlivening the conversation—are a crude form of making moral judgements. Thus, they indicate a rudimentary “moral interest” which lies in everyone—even “business people or women” (*KpV* 5:152-154) that evinces the moral disposition in human beings and helps exercise it—which makes it a popular form of moral education. Similarly, hospitality, as the praxis of cosmopolitan right, helps exercise the practice of the moral law, thus playing a role in creating the trust necessary for a moral community. Therefore, it is a form of moral education as well.

<sup>349</sup> Cohen, “The Ultimate Kantian Experience,” 329.

<sup>350</sup> As it were, a moral community can be seen as a dinner party, and the universal moral community as a global one. Although it would be somewhat difficult for the ‘laws of humanity’ to be codified into the constitution of the *Weltrepublik*. Clearly, the members of the human species outnumber the muses...

<sup>351</sup> It is somewhat interesting to note that in *Perpetual Peace*, in contrast to this passage, the same ethnological cases that Kant provides are examples for *inhospitable* behavior. Somewhat strikingly, Arabs are mentioned there in the opposite manner: “The inhospitableness of... the inhabitants of deserts (the Arabian Bedouins) in regarding approach to nomadic tribes as a right to plunder them, is therefore contrary to natural right” (*ZeF* 8:358)

Hospitality is thus *conscious sociability*.<sup>352</sup> The grounding of cosmopolitan right as a right to hospitality, together with its enshrinement in the rightful constitution of the cosmopolitan *political* community—the *weltbürgerlichen Verfassung*—suggests that at least *part* of the moralization process includes the instantiation of moral culture on an international scale, via legal institutions that would create favorable conditions to its promulgation.<sup>353</sup> In this sense cosmopolitan right, the right to hospitality, is concerned with cross-cultural and political interaction—*Verkehr*:

This right, since it has to do with the possible union of all nations [*aller Völker*] with a view to certain universal laws for their possible commerce [*allgemeine Gesetze ihres möglichen Verkehrs geht*], can be called *cosmopolitan right (ius cosmopolitanicum)* (*MdS* 6:352).<sup>354</sup>

The cosmopolitan constitution will thus serve the same moralizing function for the species that the republican constitution does for the nation. It will provide a formal *condition* for the creation of a universal *moral* community through the inculcation of moral habits—in this case, hospitality and trust—in its members, which will consist, eventually, of the entire human species. The development of the common pragmatic predisposition of species will allow it, in the language of

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<sup>352</sup> Or “sociable sociability” as Cohen refers to it, which is made possible by adhering to these “laws”. Some of Kant’s rules on how to govern a dinner party (e.g., “always provide someone with the opportunity to add something appropriate”, or “maintain discipline over oneself and one’s emotions, so that mutual respect and benevolence always shine forth” [*Anthr* 7:281]) can be expressed politically as rules that “crucially refer to the features of a good, just and enlightened society; namely, freedom, respect and companionship”. Building on their connection with the *sensus communis*, these political rules, Cohen says, “could be called the rules of ‘sensus communis’—for what they enable is a peaceful community achieved through social cooperation and mutual respect”. Cohen, “The Ultimate Kantian Experience,” 328 More pertinent to our point is that all the laws presuppose that all the guests would be able *to converse with each other*. Imagine hosting a dinner party where the guests not only speak different languages, but also have radically different table manners.

<sup>353</sup> This further suggests that the rightful political community will not only bring the inherent “unsociability” of mankind under control—but will effectively eliminate it.

<sup>354</sup> Kleingeld, crucially, points out that in the context of cosmopolitanism translating the German word *Verkehr* to denote only ‘commerce’ is restrictive, and somewhat misleading, when in fact the meaning is much broader in German. *Verkehr* can apply to “travel, migration, intellectual exchange, as well as to commercial endeavors”. Kleingeld, *Kant and Cosmopolitanism*, 75. Other translations of the word include: ‘contact’, ‘communication’, ‘intercourse’, ‘dealings’, ‘association’, and in the imperative form—*Verkehren*—‘to socialize’. Today, in modern German, *Verkehr* is commonly used to denote ‘(road) traffic’. Thus, the German *Verkehr* retains the original range of meaning of the Latin *commercium*. Nevertheless, to all these meanings, not the least of which is commerce, it should be noted that *trust* is a common prerequisite.

the *Anthropology*, to become civilized through this global moral culture of *Verkehr*.<sup>355</sup> As *Verkehr* is predicated on trust in all its forms—e.g., trade, by definition, requires a degree of trust that all parties will honor their transactions—part of its charge would be, therefore, to establish a condition of trust between all members of the species—regardless of their different national cultures—to create a single global civilization out of the many national ones.<sup>356</sup>

The moral culture of the *Anthropology* thus complements the description of cosmopolitan right in the *Metaphysics of Morals* and *Towards Perpetual Peace*. In line with the propaedeutic character of the *Anthropology* lectures, in all likelihood this was Kant’s way to retain the discussion of ethics on a ‘popular’ level, while refraining from a “dry academic” discussion of concepts such as the categorical imperative.<sup>357</sup> Hospitality is a way of enacting the moral law—offering respite to a traveler so that he may safely continue to his destination, is a clear example of how to treat someone not as a mere means—but as an end as well.

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<sup>355</sup> See 2.2. and 3.3 above for *Anth* 7:323.

<sup>356</sup> Thus, a further key difference between political and moral communities is revealed: a race of devils may be hospitable to each other out of utilitarian calculations, since legislating laws that guarantee their safety would be in their self-interest, yet it is precisely in the *law*—and not *in one another* in which they place their trust. Their actions would therefore be *lawful*, but not *moral* (*MdS* 6:219), which, given their lack of a moral predisposition, they are incapable of anyway, and their incentive is “nevertheless evil” (*Rel* 6:31).

<sup>357</sup> The categorical imperative, nor the rest of Kant’s technical moral apparatus, is not mentioned at all—by name or otherwise—in any of the versions of the *Anthropology* Reinhard Brandt, *Kritischer Kommentar zu Kants “Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht,”* Kant Forschungen 10 (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1999), 14–16; See also: Brandt, “The Guiding Idea of Kant’s Anthropology.”

## 5.5 Cosmopolitan Right and *Populärphilosophie*: Creating a Global Civilization

Characterizing hospitality as central to the *culture* of the moral community demonstrates how to substantiate the abstract formalism of the categorical imperative. It affords a glimpse into the future Kant envisioned, where nations, having recognized the similarity in their ‘external conduct’ will become closer to each other through the mutual understanding that *Verkehr*—the free exchange of ideas, or global enlightenment—can bring about. This will lay the foundations for integration into the cosmopolitan political community—the *Weltrepublik*—which reveals, if only “a little”, how a universal *moral* community would actually look like:

...they [all the nations of the earth] stand in a community of possible physical *interaction* [*Wechselwirkung*] (*commercium*), that is, in a thoroughgoing relation of each to all the others of *offering to engage in commerce* with any other [*sich zum Verkehr untereinander anzubieten*], and each has a right to make this attempt without the other being authorized to behave toward it as an enemy because it has made this attempt (*MdS* 6:352).

The enjoyment of the right “to present oneself for society” without being “treated with hostility” guarantees the bare minimum necessary for a free exchange of ideas—including those of the universal moral community and cosmopolitan right *themselves*. This should be seen as a further extension of the right to *communicate*, the *sine qua non* of enlightenment—and a *Königliche Volk*—which is derived from the innate right to freedom. As such, any human being is:

authorized to do to others anything that does not in itself diminish what is theirs, so long as they do not want to accept it—such things as merely communicating his thoughts to them, telling or promising them something, whether what he says is true and sincere or untrue and insincere (*veriloquium aut falsiloquium*); for it is entirely up to them whether they want to believe him or not (*MdS* 6:238).

It is incumbent on philosophers—the cosmopolitan concept personified—to propagate enlightenment, and their endeavor to do so ought not be hindered by national boundaries.<sup>358</sup> As

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<sup>358</sup> “a **cosmopolitan concept** (*conceptus cosmicus*) that has always grounded this term, especially when it is, as it were, personified and represented as an archetype in the ideal of the **philosopher**” (*KrV* A 838/B 866 quoted in 2.1)

much as all other citizens of the world, they are beneficiaries of the *right* to try and establish this community in foreign countries:

However, visiting these coasts, and still more settling there to connect them with the mother country, provides the occasion for troubles and acts of violence in one place on our globe to be felt all over it. Yet this possible abuse cannot annul the right of citizens of the world [*Recht des Erdbürgers*] to try to establish community [*die Gemeinschaft mit allen zu versuchen*] with all and, to this end, to *visit* all regions of the earth. (*MdS* 6:353).

By detailing the use and abuse of the right of hospitality for the species, Kant is reiterating that cosmopolitan right—as a means—can only be rightfully employed for facilitating the end of the universal moral community.<sup>359</sup> Philosophers, bearers of universal reason, would undoubtedly be aware of this moral imperative and hence, would certainly not abuse this right.<sup>360</sup>

Bringing the cosmopolitan political constitution to comply with the idea of cosmopolitan right thus formalizes not only the free movement of people and goods; *but sanctions the free movement of ideas as well.*<sup>361</sup> Cosmopolitan right is a means to guarantee cosmopolitanism in the dual sense of both the ‘cosmopolitan concept’ *as well as* the philosophers who are its personification; it secures the right to pursue cosmological knowledge—including the creation of a ‘general anthropology’—which makes it integral for safeguarding “universal human reason” (see 4.4).

Simultaneously, it confers upon philosophers—the champions of the “holy right” to hear and be heard—the legal protections they require to fulfill their duty of propagating enlightenment

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<sup>359</sup> This is another example of Kant’s interest in the application of pragmatic knowledge towards moral ends.

<sup>360</sup> Although, of course, the peoples with whom they attempt to establish community, may, rightfully, refuse to listen to them, yet they must still guarantee the safety of their guests. Or, as Arthur Ripstein puts it: “Saying what you think, and proposing terms of interaction to others with whom you seek to interact, is not a wrong against those others; it remains up to them to decide for themselves what to make of your proposal” Ripstein, “Bringing Rights and Citizenship under Law on a Globus Terraqueus,” 238.

<sup>361</sup> It seems that this particular understanding, and significance, of cross-border *Verkehr*, and the importance of cosmopolitan right for guaranteeing its safety, has gone somewhat unnoticed.



globally, which, strikingly, seem especially suited to ensure that their duty will be fulfilled.<sup>362</sup> This is how cosmopolitan right—as one of the three forms of public right—relates to the appendix of the “principle of publicity” in *Perpetual Peace*—by making it a right of philosophers to try and establish community with foreign lands, it safeguards the ‘principle of publicity’, not only on the state level, but *on the global level as well*.<sup>363</sup> Hence, although the means are not unique—cosmopolitan right is not a special privilege solely reserved for philosophers to enjoy—the *ends* to which philosophers exercise their cosmopolitan right are very much so. It is the entire species which stands to benefit from their attempts to establish community. Cosmopolitan right is therefore the continuation of *Popularphilosophie* by other means.

Cosmopolitan right thus undergirds the global spread of enlightenment. It therefore provides a means, via *Verkehr*, for developing the common pragmatic predisposition of the species—after nationalism has developed national pragmatic predispositions—whereby the disparate parts of the species slowly become acquainted with its manifold cultural units and eventually integrate into a global civilization.<sup>364</sup> Granted, familiarity may breed contempt—but universal reason may also lead, for instance, to the recognition that perpetual peace is an interest common to all nations, and the need to establish a condition of Right between nations—a *Völkerbund*—to that end.<sup>365</sup>

Therefore, increasing the role of reason in public affairs is imperative for avoiding all the sorrows of war; once it becomes evident in the Enlightenment that, indeed, reason can constitute a viable alternative to the cunning of nature. Hence, pragmatic history need not run its violent

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<sup>362</sup> It is thus consistent with the view of cosmopolitan right as an *individual* right of the philosophers, who are “citizens of a universal state of mankind (*ius cosmopoliticum*)” (*ZeF* 8:349 quoted above 5.3). Kleingeld, *Kant and Cosmopolitanism*, 74.

<sup>363</sup> One could speculate that this is the reason why Kant decided to “pass over in silence” (*ZeF* 8:384).

<sup>364</sup> See the third positive role of nationalism discussed in 4.7.

<sup>365</sup> Hence, also, the importance of abolishing war for the *rational* expansion of the borders of political communities.

course before moral history can commence, indeed, nothing prohibits the progression of pragmatic and moral history *pari passu*. Yet the prospect that this tragedy may be unavoidable—and that their development need be sequential after all—seems to be a major source of Kant’s discontent.

## 5.6 Predictions are Hard, Especially about the Future...

It is fitting to bring our study to a close with an attempt to answer Louden's call "to factor in yet another key component of Kant's analysis—his prognosis regarding how long it will take us to reach our *Bestimmung*".<sup>366</sup> One of the few things that can be said with certainty is that the totalization of morality will take an inordinate amount of time. To properly situate the relation between nationalism and cosmopolitanism in Kant's political thought, it is necessary to come to terms with this fact, and the paradigm shift entailed by adopting *eine weltbürgerlicher Absicht* in its strictest sense—that of the species. Hence, we circle back to the *Anthropology*.

As Louden notes, and as we have seen above (fn.83), whether moral progress is in fact guaranteed, and if so, precisely *how*, remains neuralgically ambiguous in Kant's writings. There is a certain duality between Kant the natural scientist, and Kant the moral anthropologist; the former, when stating that "what affords this *guarantee* (surety) is nothing less than the great artist *nature* (*natura daedala rerum*)" (*ZeF* 8:360), effectively claims that the human species, by virtue of an inherent moral predisposition, is biologically predisposed towards fulfilling its cosmopolitan *Bestimmung*. And yet, the moral anthropologist, who posits cosmopolitanism as "only a regulative principle", that is, an ideal to orient our thinking, makes it the species' duty, "to pursue this diligently as the destiny [*Bestimmung*] of the human race, not without grounded supposition of a natural tendency toward it" (*Anth* 7:331) once it has been recognized through the peculiar human exercise of substantive rationality in the age of Enlightenment.<sup>367</sup>

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<sup>366</sup> Louden, "Cosmopolitical Unity," 227.

<sup>367</sup> *Ibid.*, 228.

However, both the natural scientist and the moral anthropologist concur that moralization is an extremely slow and tortuous process since:

One readily sees that while enlightenment is easy *in thesi*, *in hypothesis* it is a difficult matter that can only be accomplished slowly (*KU* 5:294).<sup>368</sup>

Whether if driven by nature, which “perhaps needs an immense series of generations, each of which transmits its enlightenment to the next, in order finally to propel its germs in our species to that stage of development which is completely suited to its aim” (*Idee* 8:19). Or whether through the repeated conscious attempts to regulate public life in accordance with reason and the idea of the good, as “all politics must bend its knee before right, but in return it can hope to reach, though slowly, the level where it will shine unflinching” (*ZeF* 8:380).<sup>369</sup> The concession that enlightenment is not a smooth process, that it is precarious, given the constant danger that progress may slacken, stall, or even retrograde—to the point that it seems altogether impossible—remains ever implied in Kant’s anthropological thought.

In the *Anthropology Friedländer* transcript, Kant resolutely defends the viability of the cosmopolitan condition, as “This state of affairs cannot be destroyed, but [would] last as long as it pleases God to preserve our earth”, the claim being that its desirability stems precisely from its feasibility, as “This contemplation is very agreeable, since it is an idea which is possible”, yet in

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<sup>368</sup> Cf. “But to enlighten an *age* is very slow and arduous; for there are external obstacles which in part forbid this manner of education and in part make it more difficult” (*Denken* 8:146).

<sup>369</sup> Cf. above: “Right must never be accommodated to politics, but politics must always be accommodated to right” (*Menschenliebe* 8:429).

the same breath is the admission that, for its realization “thousands of years will still be required” (*Friedländer* 25:696).<sup>370</sup>

This cautious optimism—albeit in an even more guarded tone—is present as well in the final page of the *Anthropology Mrongovius* transcript. Here, Kant maintains that “The final destiny of humanity will then be reached, if we have a perfect civil constitution , i.e., if we find ourselves in the highest degree of cultivation, civilization, and moralization”, that is, that one day the human species will attain the condition where “the state of nature will no longer stand in opposition to the civilized one... can certainly be hoped for.” However, here Kant is even more circumspect regarding the *means* for attaining this condition—and refuses to provide a time frame altogether—not even one as remote as ‘thousands of years’: “But what Providence will use as a means thereto remains inscrutable and completely impossible for us to discover” (*Mrongovius* 25:1429).<sup>371</sup>

Yet, once it is recalled that Kant’s anthropology is done from a *pragmatic* point of view, we ought to forgive this shifting of the moral goalposts—even more so when viewed from a *moral* point of view. Although this may have been done for the sake of preserving hope, it would be more accurate to view it as Kant’s attempts to calculate, and recalculate, the trajectory of the species’ development.<sup>372</sup> What is pertinent to our purposes is to note the orders of magnitude which Kant

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<sup>370</sup> In the *Friedländer* lectures on anthropology, the cosmopolitan ideal takes the form of a “senate of nations”: “In order, however, that all wars would not be necessary, a league of nations would thus have to arise, where all nations constituted a universal senate of nations through their delegates, [a league] which would have to decide all disputes of the nations, and this judgment would have to be executed through the power of the nations; then the nations would also be subject to one forum and one civil constraint. This senate of nations would be the most enlightened that the world has ever seen” (*Friedländer* 25:696).

<sup>371</sup> See also: Louden, “Cosmopolitical Unity,” 227–28.

<sup>372</sup> The importance of maintaining hope (i.e., the third question of the *Jäsche Logic* epigraph: “what may I hope?”) for Kant’s ethics is beyond the scope of this study. Yet within this context, by doing “moral anthropology”, Kant may be seen as recruiting anthropology itself for the sake of hope, by demonstrating that the human species is progressing after all. In other words, Kant is using his popular anthropology lectures as a way to disseminate hope.

is contemplating, that is, that it will take, *at the very least*, thousands of years—if at all—for the species to reach its *Bestimmung*.

Such is the time frame implied by the “totalization of morality”, and it should be reiterated that the moralization of the species should thus be considered in the strictest possible sense—not for part of the species all the time, nor the whole species for part of the time, *but for the whole species in perpetuity*. This is the underlying reason for Kant’s refusal to address the length of the process of moralization, while continuing to emphasize its glacial pace; certainly, it will be long and slow, but precisely *how* long, and *how* slow, is unknowable:

[T]he human race has always been in progress toward the better and will continue to be so henceforth. *To him who does not consider what happens in just some one nation [Volk ] but also has regard to the whole scope of all the peoples on earth [alle Völker der Erde] who will gradually come to participate in progress, this reveals the prospect of an immeasurable time*—provided at least that there does not, by some chance, occur a second epoch of natural revolution which will push aside the human race to clear the stage for other creatures, like that which (according to Camper and Blumenbach) submerged the plant and animal kingdoms before human beings ever existed. For in the face of the omnipotence of nature, or rather its supreme first cause which is inaccessible to us, the human being is, in his turn, but a trifle. But for the sovereigns of his own species also to consider and treat him as such, whether by burdening him as an animal, regarding him as a mere tool of their designs, or exposing him in their conflicts with one another in order to have him massacred—that is no trifle, but a subversion of the *final end* of creation itself. (*Streit* 7:89 emphasis added)

Hence why it is vital for Kant—in the eighth proposition of the *Idea*—to provide an account for the apparent failure of the species to make any progress at all, as a misperception derived from flawed optics. The species’ progress is likened to those celestial bodies which appear motionless to the naked and untrained eye. Analogously, observing hitherto human history without the moral map of pragmatic anthropology might lead to the misconception that moral progress has not been made either. But just as Kant, the natural scientist, can plot the trajectory of heavenly bodies, so can Kant, the moral anthropologist, discern moral progress:

I say: it reveals *a little*; for this cycle appears to require so long a time to be completed that the little part of it which humanity has traversed with respect to this aim allows one to

determine the shape of its path and the relation of the parts to the whole only as uncertainly as the course taken by our sun together with the entire host of its satellites in the great system of fixed stars can be determined from all the observations of the heavens made hitherto; yet from the general ground of the systematic constitution of the cosmic order and from the little one has observed, one is able to determine reliably enough. Nevertheless, in regard to the most distant epochs that our species is to encounter, it belongs to human nature not to be indifferent about them, if only they can be expected with certainty. This can happen all the less especially in our case, where it seems that we could, through our own rational contrivance, bring about faster such a joyful point in time for our posterity. (*Idee* 8:27).<sup>373</sup>

This *très longue durée* perspective affirms the notion that Kant never really conceded the idea of the *Weltrepublik*—it does not follow that the only correct idea *in thesi* has been abandoned just because the *Bund* is offered as an alternative. Rather, this should be taken as a display of pragmatism (in the conventional sense), or even cunning, on Kant’s behalf, who acknowledges that politics must “bend its knee before right”, but that it will, however, take a *very* long time before it “will shine unfailingly” in return. In the context of an anthropology done from a pragmatic point of view, this is more of a tactical retreat, less a strategic volte-face.<sup>374</sup> Moreover, this display of political *nous* ought to be seen as a conscious deployment of the cunning of *reason*, with the intent of harnessing the frenetic cunning of *nature* for its purposes.

Instead of shifting the goalposts, the ostensible inconsistency of the infamous passage in *Perpetual Peace* should be seen as part of Kant’s reconsideration of the extent to which the cunning of nature can drive the species’ pragmatic development on its own. That is, his attempt to ascertain

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<sup>373</sup> To illustrate the orders of magnitude that Kant has in mind here, consider that since 1784—the year in which Kant wrote this passage—the light emanating from Betelgeuse, one of the brightest objects in the “starry heavens” that filled him with increasing admiration, has so far only crossed half the distance it needs to reach Earth (Betelgeuse is 430 lightyears away from Earth). Or consider that Pluto, a much closer object than Betelgeuse, had not yet completed a single orbit around the sun since that very same year either. One Pluto year ago (248 Earth years), in 1773, Kant was in the midst of the “silent years”, presumably working on the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Hume, Rousseau, and Voltaire were all very much alive, Napoleon was four years old, and the Boston tea party would take place in December of that year—an astronomical amount of time indeed.

<sup>374</sup> This, perhaps, may help clarify the “terminological indecisiveness” of Kant’s later writings and offer some resolve for the ostensible tension between the Right of nations and cosmopolitan Right. As quoted in: Pagden, “From the ‘Right of Nations’ to the ‘Cosmopolitan Right’: Immanuel Kant’s Law of Continuity and the Limits of Empire,” 207.

the upper limit for the species' natural, unconscious, development, when thereafter any further progress will require conscious, rational action. That is, how much of the 'orbit' of the species is defined by the force gravity, and how much is made by the force of free will. After all, even Kepler's laws were determined through repeat observations—and adjusted accordingly.<sup>375</sup>

Kant's oscillations reveal the depth of the interplay between reason and nature, hospitality and war, sociability and unsociability in his anthropological and political thought.<sup>376</sup> What draws the boundaries of political communities in the epoch of nature, it should be recalled, is the ultimate arbiter—war.<sup>377</sup> States at war, in contrast to those at peace—even if only in a “suspension of hostilities”—do not engage in commerce: “the *spirit of commerce*, which cannot coexist with war” (*ZeF* 8:368), nor do their citizens offer hospitality to one another, even if they do share the same kind of political constitution. Thus, in an era of multiple, diverse, political communities, moralization—if it is indeed to happen—is delimited by the borders of the political community, which are always susceptible to change through war. Moralization can thus expand only within the boundaries of a political constitution that conforms, however minimally, with right.

In pragmatic terms, the question is whether it is necessary for natural history to run its course—from state to republic to *Weltrepublik* via the myriad interim international arrangements—before the *Weltrepublik* will be transformed into the universal moral community. Or, whether moralization can commence even *before* the cunning of nature has run its course, whereby a particular political community—by some happy accident—would become as moral as a segment

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<sup>375</sup> “Thus it did produce a *Kepler*, who subjected the eccentric paths of the planets in an unexpected way to determinate laws, and a *Newton*, who explained these laws from a universal natural cause” (*Idee* 8:18).

<sup>376</sup> All of which are part of the larger critical effort to demarcate the boundary between the noumenal and phenomenal.

<sup>377</sup> Heraclitus: “War is the father of all and king of all”.



of the species possibly can, and will expand spatially—uniting with other similar communities. Thus, the more this community will expand, the cunning of nature will contract.

For that to happen, it would be necessary to convince as many parts of the species as possible to agree on *something*, even if only for purely utilitarian purposes, which explains Kant’s continuous “compromise” on the degree of integration and sovereignty—from a *Weltrepublik* to a federation to a league—he posited as necessary for creating the conditions for moral progress.

Kant’s ostensible movement of the moral goalposts, therefore, is emblematic of the pragmatic approach in the *Anthropology*: the answer to the question of what can be made of people *changes over time as well*; if not a *Weltrepublik*—then a federation, if not a federation—then a league, and so on. Hence the constant shift in his suggestions, or hypotheses, as to that which everyone can universally agree to, until he finally reaches what he considers to be the bare minimum—the abolition of war, the chief impediment to moral progress.<sup>378</sup> However even this urgent, and reasonable, goal can be achieved only gradually:

but for that which can be expected and exacted from *human beings* in this area toward the advancement of this aim, we can anticipate only a negative wisdom, namely, that they will see themselves compelled to render the greatest obstacle to morality—that is to say *war* which constantly retards this advancement—firstly by degrees more humane and then rarer, and finally to renounce offensive war altogether, in order to enter upon a constitution which by its nature and without loss of power is founded on genuine principles of right, and which can persistently progress toward the better. (*Streit* 7:93)

Yet, as Kant clearly states here, although the decrease in war is *not* tantamount to an increase in morality, it does, however, create the *conditions* for further moral progress—such as a rightful constitution between nations—although it does not produce morality itself. Yet perpetual peace does not merely put an end to war—it is also the *sine qua non* of the cosmopolitan political

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<sup>378</sup> Thus, on the international level, due to the lack of a central state and enforceable law, the Hobbesian state of nature, and the need to exit it—although not by creating a world-leviathan—prevails.

community. Thus, the creation of these conditions *out of an international agreement* would already be a big step—which may lead to further ones, conscious or not—such as creating a *Völkerbund*, and later, *much* later, even a *Weltrepublik*—all of which would be great steps towards morality (yet not ‘moral steps’).<sup>379</sup> Reason does not lack cunning either—it can be deployed to harness the natural antagonism of the species for its own ends as well.

Political communities—from the tribe to the pragmatic *Weltrepublik*—can come about consciously or unconsciously, through reason or through the cunning of nature. They can “aggrandize themselves by cunning or violence at the expense of others” (*T&P* 8:311), or by voluntarily unifying themselves, but *moral* communities can *only come about through the free, conscious, acts of their members*. Whatever route history will take, at its very best, the cunning of nature can only bring it to produce a *pragmatic* cosmopolitan community—the *Weltrepublik*—the final means for the moralization of the species, *but only cosmopolitan right* can bring the species, *qua* species, to the totalization of morality.

Hence, although the civilizing effects of hospitality may already be present in history and can offer a rational alternative to war for the purpose of expanding and centralizing political communities, it is only during the final transitory stage—between the pragmatic and moral cosmopolitan communities—that hospitality truly becomes a necessity. Until then, reason will continue to operate in tandem with the cunning of nature.

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<sup>379</sup> One could say that, in the manner of Israeli statesman Levi Eshkol, Kant keeps “compromising and compromising—until he gets *exactly* what he wants”.

## 5.7 Ethics: Conclusion

Reason seeks to subsume nature.<sup>380</sup> Thus the scope of the cunning of nature is inversely related to the cunning of reason. If, and when, reason will overtake nature as the prime mover of history, then the scope of the cunning of nature will be confined to the boundaries that reason will impose upon it. There is no necessary finality to this process, nor does it mean that nature will cease its machinations immediately, and—as indeed has happened several times before—there may very well be reversals in the balance between the two. But within the perimeter reason has allotted, as expressed in the legal parameters dictated in the definitive articles of *Perpetual Peace*—in republican constitutions, the right of nations, and cosmopolitan right—unsocial sociability will continue its workings in a restricted, and ever-shrinking sphere, where people will continue to act unconsciously to further *nature's* aim.

This will relieve the species from having to naturally self-regulate its boundaries through war. Within these legally-defined spheres, in political communities whose constitutions conform, however minimally, with right, the unsociable acts of citizens, ostensibly for their own selfish reasons—such as in *laissez-faire* commerce—will make them *more* sociable.<sup>381</sup> Realizing the

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<sup>380</sup> This view is crucial to Kant's practical philosophy. If reason is derived from within the world instead of imposing its transcendental concepts from without, the Kantian ethical system will collapse as everything will become heteronomy. Hence the inevitable split between rational and natural (empirical) history. Yovel, *Kant and the Philosophy of History*, 279.

<sup>381</sup> Kant believed that social inequality was also a price that nature demanded for fulfilling its end: Skill cannot very well be developed in the human race except by means of inequality among people; for the majority provides the necessities of life as it were mechanically, without requiring any special art for that, for the comfort and ease of others, who cultivate the less necessary elements of culture, science and art, and are maintained by the latter in a state of oppression, bitter work and little enjoyment, although much of the culture of the higher class gradually spreads to this class. But with the progress of this culture (the height of which, when the tendency to what is dispensable begins to destroy what is indispensable, is called luxury) calamities grow equally great on both sides, on the one side because of violence imposed from without, on the other because of dissatisfaction from within; yet this splendid misery is bound up with the development of the natural predispositions in the human race, and the end of nature itself, even if it is not our end, is hereby attained (*KU* 5:432).

injustices they inflict on each other may bring them closer together to demand a more just constitution, eventually forming republics. These republics will form one, or several, *Bünde* which in turn, will gradually integrate enough so that finally—as a rightful *Weltrepublik* can only be an outcome of a species that recognizes its duty to fulfill its *Bestimmung*—a call for a pragmatic *Weltrepublik* will be made. Cosmopolitan right, as *Verkehr* built upon trust, holds the key to transform the “negative surrogate” of a *Bund* into the “positive idea of a world republic”.

Once the pragmatic *Weltrepublik* is established, the final stage of moralization of the species, will commence, since a “a number of nations within one state would constitute only one nation”, yet, given that in this situation the *Weltrepublik* encompasses *all* the nations within it, *it is the entire species itself which would constitute one nation*—a “universal nation of humanity” as it were. The task of the singular, cosmopolitically united, political community (the means) to create the universal moral community (the *Bestimmung*) would be fulfilled. Naturally, this whole historical process—pragmatic and moral, of nature and freedom—will take an immense amount of time.

Nevertheless, in face of all the misery and evils to which the human species subjects itself, in the closing lines of his last major work, Kant retains a sense of optimism and level-headed hope. His final message to his students is an imploration—not to resign themselves to the despondent notion that, indeed nothing entirely straight can ever be built out of the “crooked wood” (*Idee* 8:23, *Rel* 6:100) of the human species—but rather to see that:

In this its [the human species] volition is generally good, but achievement is difficult because one cannot expect to reach the goal by the free agreement of individuals, but only by a progressive organization of citizens of the earth into and toward the species as a system that is cosmopolitically united (*in und zu der Gattung als einem System, das kosmopolitisch verbunden ist*) (*Anth* 7:333).

As a *theoretical* philosopher Kant lays down his critical philosophy, as a *popular* philosopher, he lays down his anthropology from a pragmatic point of view. Hospitality is a form of praxis for the

study of human beings and advocating enlightenment for the common good. By enlisting *Popularphilosophie* for cosmopolitan, rather than national, purposes, Kant provided not only a moral map, but a blueprint for building the ship which will carry humanity during its long and hazardous voyage towards its destination.

## *Conclusion*

In this study, I aimed to demonstrate that reclaiming Kant’s anthropology back to its rightful place as the bedrock of his political thought yields significant insights. Chief among them is that the cosmopolitan *Bestimmung* of the human species consists of the universal moral community and its empirical political counterpart—the *Weltrepublik*. History, in its two major phases, or modes, is the development of the species, over an immense amount of time, towards the fulfillment of this *Bestimmung*, with the Enlightenment marking the watershed moment between the two—as it is then that the species can autonomously posit ends according to the moral law.

This further reveals how nations and nationalism ought to be treated within the Kantian cosmopolitan schema. To wit, by observing the cosmopolitan *Bestimmung* of the species, as well as the immense amount of time required to achieve it, it is argued that, although nations, nationalism, and nation-states, are all pragmatic products of unsocial sociability and the epoch of nature, if they are reformed with a “cosmopolitan aim”, then not only are they *not* antithetical to the Kantian cosmopolitan scheme, but they are conducive, even crucially so, for its success. To this end they provide the following benefits:

The first is negative, in that they prevent the establishment of a world tyranny and keep a balance of powers between any *Völkerbund* that will be established.

The second is positive, which arises out the anthropological fact that man’s rationality, and morality, is not given, but must be cultivated in the state to fulfill humanity’s *Bestimmung*. Enlightenment, such as through the means of *Popularphilosophie*, arouses a demand for a state which accords better and better with Right, yet is still reliant on a common idiom. This, in turn, sparks a virtuous cycle, since the more the republican constitution conforms with right, the more civilized the nation will be—and the more civilized the nation, the stronger the demand for a

rightful state. As such, nation-states, by virtue of their commonly developed pragmatic disposition, provide the most solid foundation for a republican constitution.

The third arises from the above, which is that nation-states are not only advantageous for developing and moralizing their respective political communities, but, as they become more similar in their external conduct, they become more amenable to the establishment of perpetual peace by means of a *Bund* of republics. Yet although the purpose of the *Bund* is to ostensibly suspend all wars, the hope is that national barriers will be overcome in the process, and member-states will slowly be drawn into an ‘ever closer Union’, until, finally, the species will be fully integrated under the *Weltrepublik*—the only rightful *Völkerstaat* derived from a “pure concept of right”, where the species can fulfil its unique duty towards itself to fulfill its *Bestimmung*, the universal moral community. If nature has divided the species—albeit for good reasons—it is reason that will unify it.

To this end Kant deploys the cunning of reason against that of nature—cosmopolitan right is Kant’s way of insisting on the *Weltrepublik* and not the *Bund* as the final universal political community. By positing the importance of the global freedom of movement between states, Kant is—quite cunningly as well—ensuring the free flow of ideas. Commerce is merely a means of, and incentive for, communication, and the enshrinement of cosmopolitan right will guarantee the universal spread of enlightenment. The successful codification of cosmopolitan right into law would thus be a key moment in history, as it would signify that the scales between nature and reason—as the prime mover of history—have finally been tipped in favor of the latter. Henceforth reason and enlightenment—instead of nature and war—will become the dominant form of development, and this, therefore, would make the legal protection of cosmopolitan right the *coup de grâce* against the cunning of nature, which will continue to operate in an ever-shrinking sphere.

Perpetual peace should thus be seen through this lens—peace creates the condition for the establishment of an international community for the purpose of commerce—nations that trust the good will of each other not to go to war with each other. Out of this condition, eventually, a positive universal moral culture will develop—people may think that they are advancing their own material interests—such as in trade—but in effect, even if unintentionally, they will be spreading enlightenment, fortifying the condition of trust, and developing the pragmatic disposition of the species *qua* species. Thus, Kant is harnessing the cunning of nature to the long-term end of the *Weltrepublik*.

Hospitality is conscious sociability. When it underpins sociability, trust creates the moral culture which finally allows to eliminate the unsociability inherent in human nature. Hence cosmopolitan right is both a means and an end; it is a moral end that must be strived for, and as a means, by guaranteeing hospitality, it engenders trust. This makes it part of the virtuous cycle—Kant envisioned that the more people from different cultures are able to trust each other, the greater the chance that they would be willing to overcome their initial rejection of the *Weltrepublik*, dispense with the borders of their political communities, and integrate themselves more fully with each other. This, in turn, would strengthen the moral culture of humanity, as more and more national cultures will be brought into its fold.

All of these demonstrate an immense faith in the power of political institutions: constitutions, international law, education and so on. And the *Weltrepublik*, the final *political* community, hinges on the hope that, eventually, Right will be able to transcend nations and cultural identities, and that people will come to care less about their differences. Then, and *only* then, the totalization of morality would be concluded. The *Weltrepublik* is therefore still very much alive in Kantian



political thought once the anthropological point of view is adopted, and nations have a crucial role for the success of this project.

Kantian anthropology is therefore intrinsically political, as exemplified by the very lectures that Kant himself delivered on the subject for thirty years. As philosophers embody the idea of cosmopolitanism, these lectures, popular in form and audience, were a vehicle for bringing enlightenment to a new strata of society, thus advancing the creation of the moral community.

Unifying theory and practice, Kant practiced what he preached, and preached what he practiced:

we must act as if it [perpetual peace] is something real, though perhaps it is not; we must work toward establishing perpetual peace and the kind of constitution that seems to us most conducive to it (say, a republicanism of all states, together and separately) in order to bring about perpetual peace and put an end to the heinous waging of war, to which as their chief aim all states without exception have hitherto directed their internal arrangements. And even if the complete realization of this objective always remains a pious wish, still we are certainly not deceiving ourselves in adopting the maxim of working incessantly toward it. For this is our duty, and to admit that the moral law within us is itself deceptive would call forth in us the wish, which arouses our abhorrence, rather to be rid of all reason and to regard ourselves as thrown by one's principles into the same mechanism of nature as all the other species of animals (*MdS* 6:354/5).

The success of the species in fulfilling its *Bestimmung* relies on its ability to create institutions that reflect its universal character. This cannot be left in the hands of nature, providence, or “enlightened despots”, but must be attained gradually through conscious, progressive, political action. Towards this cosmopolitan goal, the nation-state is a good place to start.

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