

Kant

There is something of a progression in these works such that the early works form the building blocks for the more complex forms of political organization. To a certain extent the micro-level phenomena also serve as microcosms for the more aggregated form of interaction (e.g. states sort of behave like individuals).

The Phases (corresponding to the four readings respectively) of Human History Starting with the Formation of Man through the Creation of the Universal Federation of Peoples

Emergence of Rationality -> Obligations of Individuals Within a Society -> Interaction of National and International -> The Perpetual Piece

“Speculative Beginning of Human History”

Speculating about the origins of humans can aid in ascertaining nature’s laws regarding human development. This essay delves into the details of the evolution of human nature and desires that form the basis for more complex societal and inter-state relations.

Primitive man begins with instinct (the voice of God). Fulfillment of most basic needs done on the basis of sensory and physical information. Reason is used to extend beyond instinct, initially by creation of desires and greediness. Man is driven by reason in each stage. Man would prefer to be lazy and primitive but cannot “forget” what he learns by reason and thus is driven to further develop reason to cope. This use of reason distinguishes man from other animals.

Progression of Reason/Progression from Guardianship of Nature to State of Freedom:

- Exercise of comparison and comprehension of choice (man understands that choice exists but has no knowledge with which to make choices)
- Refusal of impulse (enhancement and increase of pleasure with use of reason rather than immediate fulfillment of impulses). This formed the basis for more complex emotions (love vs. lust). Also the basis for decency – concealing primitive desire. Decency – using behavior to influence other’s respect for the individual, is the basis for sociability
- Reflective expectation of the future – anticipation of future burdens encouraged the development of the family as a unit of social organization
- Realization as man as the true end of nature and by implication all men are created equally by nature

Morality: in the pure state of nature man is moral because God creates him. With the rise of reason comes vice and evil. The progression of the use of reason towards enlightenment is the process by which moral man is ultimately realized.

Property and the Primitive Communities: communities are formed to protect territorially-defined property (like agricultural lands) from nomadic peoples. The need for security begins the process towards a civil constitution. Inequality also emerges. The desire for luxury and wealth drives nomadic types into communities.

Source of Discontent (why discontent is good or at least tolerable)

War (greater appreciation for humanity)

Shortness of Life (limits miseries of life, heights of human vice, no generational progression of towards moral man)

Happiness/satisfaction in primitive pleasures (would never be satisfied because have knowledge of what else can be)

“An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?”

“Enlightenment is man’s emergence from his self-imposed immaturity.” (33)

[immaturity – inability to use one’s understanding without guidance from another]

- immaturity is self-imposed, does not require special understanding so much as courage, its roots lie in laziness
- formulaic, rule-based thinking encourage laziness
- public use of reason the only means to bring about enlightenment (public use – like the use of reason by a scholar in front of the literate world vs. private reason – used in the context of a post entrusted to him like a civic or religious post)
- it is ok to espouse a doctrine with may seem incorrect in the private context as long as it is possible that there is some truth in it. If the scholar has doubts on this score it is incumbent upon him to question this as a scholar in the public context
- individuals have obligations to obey duties by virtue of their membership in a political community but as scholars they are justified in publicly voicing opposition to that which he deems unjust or wrong (inconsistent with reason?)
- A society cannot bind itself to a given symbol/oath for all of time “Such a contract, whose intention is to preclude forever all further enlightenment of the human race, is absolutely null and void, even if it should be ratified by the supreme power, by parliament, and by the most solemn peace treaties,” Such measures can be rejected by future generations because they stultify progress towards enlightenment. Denying the rights of others to progress towards enlightenment is a violation of their divine rights.
- The monarch may not impose on the people that which they would not decree for themselves because “his lawmaking authority rests on the unification of the people’s collective will in his own.” It is in the interest of the monarch not to interfere with the pursuit of enlightenment because progress towards enlightenment “lends value to his conception of government.”
- An enlightened prince is one who allows his subjects complete freedom in religious matters. They should not interfere with open discussion/questioning of religious precepts
- A government should have some restrictions on civil freedoms and total spiritual freedom to encourage the development of enlightened men. Limits on civil freedoms are justified for the protection of other individual’s freedom. Through the progression towards enlightenment government can come to be based on complete civil and spiritual freedom.

“Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Intent”

- ❖ Human actions are determined in accordance with universal natural laws. What is the ultimate objective of human affairs?

“[W]hile each according to his own ways pursues his own end – often at cross purposes with each other – they unconsciously proceed towards an unknown natural end, as if following a guiding thread; and they work to promote an end they would set little store by, even if they were aware of it.”(15)

Theses Regarding Laws of Nature

- 1) all of creature’s natural capacities are destined to develop completely and in conformity with their end
 - 2) In man those natural capacities directed toward the use of his reason are to be completely developed only in the species, not in the individual.
reason – faculty to extend the rules and objectives of the use of all of its powers far beyond natural instinct, knowing no limits
- full use of reason realized only over generations not by an individual

- 3) nature has willed that man partake in no other happiness of perfection than what can be secured through his reason (as opposed to instinct)
- 4) nature encourages the full development of man's capacities through "antagonism" among men in society.
 - the contradictory forces of sociability and unsociability, both present in man, drive the process of enlightenment in the individual. Man is inherently a social animal but also experiences the unsociability because of conflicting preferences from others in society. The desire to have his preferences (for power, property, and honor) realized will encourage him to develop his reasoning abilities.
- 5) The greatest problem for humans is the establishment of a universal civil society
 - the achievement of nature's highest objective – highest attainable development of man's capabilities requires there be a universal civil society within which the contradictory forces of sociability and unsociability can have the effect of encouraging pursuit of enlightenment.
 - Humankind's supreme task as a collective is the establishment of a "civil constitution" under which freedoms for all can be protected and transgressions punished.
- 6) Man is in need of a master to break his tendency to want exception to universal laws and force him to obey universally valid laws. Such a guarantor is difficult to find because he himself is a man subject to man's tendencies. Guarantor can be an individual or a group but finding one that works will be difficult and will be happen only after extensive trial and error.
- 7) The problems of external relations between nations has to be resolved prior to the establishment of a perfect civil constitution
 - relations between nations are analogous to relations between individuals in a society (states collectively hold vis-à-vis other states the same preferences as individuals do within a society – the result is antagonistic relationships)
 - after extensive conflict between states, they will end the state of war and enter into a federation of peoples. Rights of states in the federation derive from the united might and will of the member nations.
 - The relationship between internal and external order: for states to be organized according to a civil constitution it cannot be in a constant state of war/preparation of war cannot encourage the development of man's natural capacities. There can be no internal movement towards a moral society when there is a constant state of savagery externally. [See the PP for an elaboration of this]
- 8) It is a natural progression of nature to develop both internally and externally perfect national constitutions – both are needed for development of human capacity

"If one hinders the citizen from pursuing his well-being in whatever ways consistent with freedom of others he chooses, one hampers the liveliness of enterprise generally, and along with it, the power of the whole" (37).

 - states are linked by trade such that states have an interest in the organization and functioning of the internal matters of other state. This mutual interest in internal and external harmony of states is the basis for the eventual development of a *universal cosmopolitan state*.
- 9) A philosophical attempt to establish the universal history of the world is helpful in our actual progress towards a universal state

"To Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch"

Preliminary Articles for the Perpetual Peace

- 1) No treaty of peace that tacitly reserves issues for a future war shall be held valid
 - includes those issues not explicit stated or that the parties may even be aware of
- 2) no independent nation, be it large or small, may be acquired by another nation by inheritance, exchange, purchase, or gift

nation – society of men whom no other than the nation itself can command or dispose of.

- Nation (unlike land) is not property, the people of a nation have rights
- 3) Standing armies shall be gradually abolished
 - too expensive, should focus energies on earning more money as money is the best tool for war
- 4) No national debt shall be contracted in connection with the foreign affairs of the nation
 - use of credit makes it easier to finance wars
 - innocent creditor nations get drawn into conflicts
- 5) No nation shall forcibly interfere with the constitution and government of another
 - would render all states' autonomy vulnerable
- 6) No nation at war shall permit such acts of war as shall make mutual trust impossible during some future time of peace (no assassins, instigation of treason, breach of surrender, etc.)

Definite Articles of Peace

- 1) The civil constitution of every nation should be republican
 - all men are free, subject to the same laws, and equal citizens
 - separation of executive and legislative power as a check on despotism
 - where the consent of citizens is needed to wage war, war is less likely (citizens have to pay the financial costs of war and actually fight)
 - republicanism combine benefits of need for popular consent and the coherence needed to singly pursue that which is right
 - note: democracies are the worst possible form of govt for PP – too many people want to rule
- 2) The right of the nation shall be based on a federation of free states
 - a “nation of nations” would create an additional external authority and would be an injury to the civil constitution
 - a federation of equal states harnesses the reason-driven desire of states to seek peace by having all nations in the federation be guardians of other nation's autonomy
 - this federation would be based on a set of agreed-upon statutes
- 3) Cosmopolitan right shall be limited to conditions of universal hospitality
 - based on the Earth being the common heritage of all men, citizens of other states have the right to enter other states' territory and have his rights protected
 - cosmopolitan rights necessary for conduct of commerce

Guarantees of PP come from the force of nature that inevitably force men to act in the service of peace. There is an evolution (not totally linear) from the formation of a civil constitution, an international system, and finally a cosmopolitan society. Man's selfishness (manifests itself as trade between states) will ultimately prevail over the inclination of wage war as trade and war are incompatible.

Implicit in the PP is the need to consult the people before waging war by allowing them to speak out freely on the desirability of war. The decision lies in the hands of the leaders as they can couple popular concern with an greater understanding of the implications of war for the fundamental principles of peace and the civil constitution.

Appendix: morality is practical, therefore consistent with politics. Politicians often distort morality for their own selfish purposes Politicians that do not uphold morality will eventually self-destruct. The state eventually gets to republican government through trial and error.

A criterion for a moral constitution is that it be public, this makes all rights and obligations clear. That which cannot be made public is usually incompatible with the preservation of rights.