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The idea of a liberal democratic peace

An impressive literature has developed in recent years dealing with the topic of a liberal democratic peace. A debate has been conducted in North American and British political science journals such as *International Security*, *American Political Science Review*, *Comparative Political Studies* and *Review of International Studies* about the validity of the hypothesis that the growth in the number of states with liberal-democratic polities will lead to a more stable and harmonious international order. In the literature on democratic peace Kant has been much referred to: it is true to say that he has become an emblem of the thesis. This is so to such an extent that authors need only cite Kant in their title to show that they are engaging with the debate. Others make play with Kant's name to demonstrate their topicality such as Christopher Layne's title to his article 'Kant or cant: The Myth of the Democratic Peace' in *International Security*.¹ 19 (1994). Accordingly we shall follow through the liberal-democratic peace thesis here in terms of the three main principles laid down in Kant's seminal essay *Perpetual Peace*. These are the requirements of his three definitive articles:

1. that the constitution of states should be republican
2. that the basis of international law should be a federation of free states
3. that each individual is entitled to be treated with hospitality when meeting the inhabitants of other states.

In these three articles we have a measure of the contemporary peace theory and also its main source. In the final section we shall look at the thesis through the perspective of Kant's guarantee of lasting peace.²

Michael Doyle

The debate on the democratic peace has its origins in a resurgence of interest in Kant's political philosophy and international relations which occurred in the early 1980s. One of the writers who most effectively caught on to this trend was Michael Doyle, who in two articles in *Philosophy and Public Affairs* in 1983 highlighted Kant's legacy to liberalism and internationalism which were then distilled into the one key article in the *American Political Science Review* 80 (1986) 'Liberalism and World Politics'. Although in the *APSR* article Kant is cited along with Machiavelli and Schumpeter it is clear that Kant forms the centrepiece of Doyle's argument. For Doyle Kant's views on politics not only have a valuable policy component in that they show how American foreign relations ought best to be framed but also have a significant empirical relevance in that Kant is 'a liberal republican whose theory of internationalism best accounts for what we are'. Doyle's object then is to put forward Kant's political theory as a model of good practice for liberal democratic states to follow.

Doyle's thesis has a moral and empirical side to it. The moral side is naturally that policy-makers should be informed by Kant's liberal internationalism and the empirical side is to show that where policy-makers have been informed by Kant's principles that in terms of peace it has turned out to be quite successful. In the liberal democratic thesis the behaviour of states that conform as near as possible to Kant's

¹ 'Kant or cant: The Myth of Democratic peace' *International Security*, 19 (1994), pp.5-49

² Kant, *Political Writings*, ed. H. Reiss, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991, pp.93-108

model of a republic comes under close scrutiny. The *APSR* article has a three page appendix where all the liberal regimes which have existed from 1700-1982 are listed and all the international wars since 1817 onwards are given chronologically. Doyle rests some of his conclusions upon this evidence. As he states in the abstract of his article, 'liberal states are different. Liberal states have created a separate peace, as Kant argued they would.'³ The evidence therefore is mixed but in no sense refutes the position Doyle believes Kant and other liberals to hold. Living by the rules outlined by Kant in his *Definitive Articles to Perpetual Peace* can pay in terms of the avoidance of war. Indeed Doyle seems to believe that even closer attention to Kant's arguments might have paid off because he fears that in some respects the rulers of liberal democratic states may have been prone to be 'trigger happy' contrary to Kant's pacific recommendations. Where contrary to their liberal beliefs liberal democratic states have got involved in wars to defend liberal causes this has often turned out badly. In so far as western democratic states have found liberal grounds for aggression Doyle thinks they have strayed from Kant's conceptions.

Fukuyama

Further credence has been given to the democratic peace thesis by Francis Fukuyama's writing on the *End of History*. Fukuyama gets to democratic peace via a very different route from Doyle. Fukuyama is particularly struck by the notion of a struggle for recognition that occurs in human history. He borrows this notion of a struggle for recognition from Hegel's philosophy. Fukuyama uses the notion of the struggle for recognition - a struggle which affects all human individuals - as a means of dismissing all but the democratic republic as a legitimate form of government. The difficulty with all non-democratic forms of government is that they prevent the struggle for recognition which always occurs between free human individuals from working itself out in a non-destructive form. Earlier, more authoritarian, forms of government stand in the way of such an equal form of recognition. They are based upon forms of recognition which elevate one individual or a group of individuals above the rest. Like Doyle Fukuyama provides his own list of democratic states in his writings.⁴ Fukuyama sees the spread of democracies as part of the universal history of mankind which is leading to the worldwide recognition of all individuals as equals. Fukuyama is highly optimistic about this course of events. In liberal democratic states no adults are excluded from the political process. This widening of participation in the political process takes the edge off the natural competition for preference amongst individuals. States that allow such full democratic civil competition fall outside history and those who fail to allow it are regarded as still within history. Fukuyama believes that Kant foresaw such a condition of universal peace in his political philosophy. Kant provided the basis for the development of a convincing liberal internationalism. Although it is Hegel who inspires Fukuyama's vision of the universal homogenous state Fukuyama gains his vision of a democratic world peace from Kant. Fukuyama is aware that many of the liberal internationalist movements inspired by Kant, such as the League of Nations, have ended in failure. But Fukuyama argues that 'what many people have not understood, however, is that the actual

³ 'Liberalism and World Politics', p1151

⁴ *The End of History and the Last Man*, Penguin, London, 1992, p49-50

incarnation of the Kantian idea have been seriously flawed from the start by not following Kant's own precepts.'⁵

Broadly speaking Fukuyama believes the movement towards peace and democracy represents an irreversible process. The leaders of states may make poor choices or fail properly to see the road ahead. Their desire for power and prestige may momentarily stand in the way of their seeking mutual recognition in the world. But Fukuyama believes that the growth of modern science and the technological improvement which follows from it mean that human desire and human reason point in the same direction. Economic efficiency flows from the adoption of liberal democratic practices and rules. No state can afford to go it alone in the modern world economy. To flourish states have to open their markets and encourage both trade and investment. In this respect Fukuyama envisages a kind of economic determinacy which forces people towards greater democracy and the opportunity of peace. This argument seems very similar to the 'guarantee' of eternal peace which nature provides which Kant puts forward in the first supplement to *Perpetual Peace*⁶. With Fukuyama the democratic peace theory ceases to be a hypothesis and becomes instead a reality.

'Liberalism and World Politics'

The empirical tone of the debate is most marked in both Fukuyama and Doyle. Their focus is upon the factual reality or otherwise of Kant's outline for perpetual peace. At the general philosophical level it should be borne in mind that Kant is more often regarded as a transcendental idealist rather than a straightforward defender of empiricism. Kant was very impressed by the empiricist philosophies of Locke and Hume but ultimately wished to differ with them about the importance of observation in the construction of human knowledge. Kant wanted to emphasize in his critical philosophy the active human part played in the production of knowledge as well as the passive part played by the absorption of data. This brings us to the most striking overall difference between Doyle/Fukuyama's approach to the growth of a peaceful world order and Kant's. In many respects Doyle and Fukuyama play the role of passive spectators in observing the role of liberal republican regimes in bringing about peace whereas Kant's main emphasis is on the role that the leaders of states and an enlightened public can play in realizing the goal. Kant's *Perpetual Peace* represents the most explicit kind of moral advocacy where facts are brought in to demonstrate that Kant's goals are not wholly unrealistic whereas Doyle and Fukuyama's work is directed more to showing the empirical feasibility of the goal of a democratic peace and its possible moral desirability. For Doyle and Fukuyama the lure of the democratic peace thesis lies mainly in its apparent present empirical validity whereas for Kant the allure of his thesis stands independently of particular present facts. For Kant we ought to aim at a world made up of free, republican states because this is the right thing to do even if present circumstances do not indicate with total clarity that this will bring lasting peace. Kant thinks that we have to work on the assumption that the thesis can be shown both morally *as well as* empirically to be correct.

Doyle's argument is therefore not at odds with Kant's arguments for peace. The criticism that might legitimately be levelled at Doyle and Fukuyama is that they tell only part of the story. As Doyle eloquently puts it, 'beginning in the eighteenth

⁵ *The End of History*, p281

⁶ Kant, *Political Writings*, pp.108-14

century and slowly growing since then, a zone of peace, which Kant called the 'pacific federation' or 'pacific union', has begun to be established among liberal societies. More than 40 liberal states currently make up the union. It is interesting to note that Doyle draws his argument primarily from one section only of Kant's essay on *Perpetual Peace*, this is the section in which Kant outlines the three definitive articles for a lasting peace. Doyle does have a strong justification in that the three definitive articles represent the main positive points that Kant wished to highlight with his essay. These stipulate the requirements for a republican form of government (1); for a federation of free states (2); and for cosmopolitan law to be limited to the right of universal hospitality. These three definitive laws provide the backbone for Doyle's argument and the first two are also highlighted by Fukuyama.⁷ Neither discuss in great detail the 'guarantee' for perpetual peace which Kant discusses in the first supplement and would seem, dealing as it does with the course of history upon the development of peace, to have an important bearing upon their arguments. Overlooked also are Kant's views on the role of the philosopher, his discussions of morality and politics and his reflections on the role of publicity in politics.

Doyle's account of Kant is therefore a highly selective one. But in those matters he chooses to discuss Doyle is accurate and persuasive. Indeed, in very many respects both Doyle and Fukuyama get Kant right. Doyle in particular provides a highly accurate report of the kind of internal social and political structure it is important to have in order to ensure the most rapid progress towards peace, and his discussion of Kant's cosmopolitanism is illuminating and valuable. Although Doyle's Kantian argument has been called the democratic peace theory Doyle himself sensibly stresses that Kant's main emphasis is upon the republican nature of the ideal form of government. This is in line with Kant's views. In fact we can add that in his original account of the kind of rule most suitable for bringing international harmony in *Perpetual Peace* Kant is quite hostile to the democratic form. Kant's republican ideal is intended to prevent all kinds of despotism, not only the despotism of one individual who rules arbitrarily from the top but also the despotism of a group of the people who might seek to rule arbitrarily from the bottom. In a republic, as Kant understands it, there has to be a proper separation of powers between the executive, legislature, and judiciary. Not only are the rulers not allowed to make the law they are also not allowed to interfere in the adjudication of infringements to the law. ***The First Definitive Article***

This very strict separation of powers rules out direct democracy as an ideal of government for Kant. Just as it would not be right if one individual sought to control each branch of the government order so also it has to be wrong if the people as a body seeks to control the executive, legislature and judiciary. As Kant puts it, 'any form of government which is not representative is essentially an anomaly.'⁸ Doyle stresses this point.⁹ But there is a large gap in Doyle's presentation of Kant's thesis in relation

⁷ *The End of History*, p281

⁸ Kant, *Political Writings*, p101

⁹ 'By republican Kant means a political society that has solved the problem of combining moral autonomy, individualism, and social order. A private property and market-oriented economy partially addressed that dilemma in the private sphere. The public, or political sphere was more troubling. His answer was a republic that preserved juridical freedom - the legal equality of citizens as subjects - on the basis of a representative government with a separation of powers. Juridical freedom is preserved because the morally autonomous individual is by means of representation a self-legislator making laws that apply to all citizens equally, including himself or herself. Tyranny is avoided because the individual is subject to laws he or she does not also administer. 'Liberalism and World Politics', p1158

to democracy. Although Doyle makes no attempt to suggest that Kant is an enthusiast about democracy Doyle does not bring out the objections Kant has. We cannot, for instance, glean from Doyle's discussion that Kant rules out democracy as a possible form of government. Kant thinks there are essentially only two forms of government: the despotic or the republican.¹⁰ It might be argued here that Kant has in mind here with his critique a more radical kind of direct democracy than is now usual in Western states Yet still, I would argue, there are elements of Kant's objections to democracy which have a bearing on the current practices of western democracies and on the application of Kant's peace theory. Although Kant's advocacy of the republican form of government can be read as very much favouring the kind of representative democracy to be found in countries such as the United States, Germany and France it can also be read as a warning against tendencies towards a majoritarian style of democracy which from time to time influence the government of these countries. Like Mill and Tocqueville Kant fears the tyranny of the majority and believes a genuinely rational form of government has to be properly structured to prevent it occurring. For example, it is difficult to see how Kant's republicanism might wholly embrace the kind of party politics now prevalent in Western States. It is conceivable that Kant's guidelines are compatible with parties competing for representation within legislatures and so with their success putting forward a certain legislative programme. However, it is difficult to see how Kant's principles might be used to endorse parties competing for sole executive authority, particularly if that dominance were matched by an equal dominance in the legislature. Where a party uses executive authority to press through its own programme, and this programme is willed by a certain section of the population and not all, then the government must, according to Kant, tend towards despotism. It is true that most parties in Western states are not monolithic structures and have their own internal representative features which mitigates the problem. But where such parties tend towards unity or uniformity the danger of straying towards despotism (as Kant understands it) must exist. Thus, peculiarly, from Kant's standpoint the more diverse, open, representative and pluralist a party the more it will conform to his ideal of government should it gain executive power.

That Kant's prescription for the ideal polity requires that majoritarian tendencies be kept in check has important implications for his peace thesis. Kant would regard states whose representative systems were liable to factional control as possibly more inclined to belligerence than other states where the republican model he outlines is more rigidly adhered to. Democratic states which allowed one party to control both its legislature and executive might be more prone to war than others; just as democratic states which allowed one set of opinions to predominate at the expense of others through inadequate public debate might be seen as less peaceable. Doyle and Fukuyama's optimistic approach to Kant's thinking seems to overlook these possibilities which surely would have exercised Kant. It is very important for Kant that all citizens should regard the rulers as acting on their behalf, and with their authority, even if in many respects they disagree with the policies being pursued. Should political structures within a state systematically exclude one section of the population (which might be seen as occurring where some discriminatory political principles are taken to their extreme) then they cannot be fully regarded as co-citizens.

The Second Definitive Article

¹⁰ Kant, *Political Writings*, p101

What Doyle also perhaps glosses over in his writings and the liberal treatment of Kant in general has to deal with carefully is Kant's attitude to the role of women as citizens. Essentially Kant excludes all women from active citizenship, as he does all dependants including waged workers, servants and those without jobs. Kant thinks that such independent individuals who form a republic will be unlikely to seek war with other states, first, because they would through their representatives be making the decision on their own behalf and, secondly, if there were any costs to be borne they themselves would have to bear them.

In this respect Doyle believe that 'the apparent absence of war between liberal states, whether adjacent or not, for almost 200 years thus may have significance.' In states where the Kantian features of a separation of powers, representative government and some form of adult suffrage have been absent there seems not to have been the same restraint shown in relation with other states. What Doyle finds particularly striking is the behaviour of liberal states (which best approximate to the Kantian model) when major wars actually occur. As Doyle puts it, 'when states are forced to decide on which side of an impending world war they will fight, liberal states all wind up on the same side despite the complexity of the paths that take them there.'¹¹

Doyle is correct to emphasize how the behaviour of non-despotic states tends to point in the same direction. But it is doubtful that Kant would see this as proof of his contention. Because even if the leaders of a republican state were to take the 'wrong' side in a world war (which Finland is alleged to have done at the time of the Second World War in some of the literature calling the democratic theory into doubt¹²) this would not absolve the leaders of all states from the duty of trying to hold to the project of perpetual peace in all their future actions. It is interesting that in *Perpetual Peace* Kant does not cite the behaviour of republican states to demonstrate the truth of his plan but rather he refers to such states from the standpoint of the example they might set to other states. He makes this clear in his comments upon the second definitive article where he states: 'If by good fortune one powerful and enlightened nation can form a republic (which by its nature is inclined to seek perpetual peace) this will provide a focal point for federal association among other states.'¹³

A great deal of the discussion in the democratic peace debate has focussed on the extent to which states with Kantian style constitutions form a pacific union. Enthusiasts for the proposition have discovered that states with liberal constitutions tend to keep the peace in relation to each other and those who question the peace theory suggest that there is a great deal of evidence that states with such constitutions are still liable to war. Doyle's thesis is that 'liberal republics will progressively establish peace amongst themselves by means of the pacific federation (foedus pacificum) described in Kant's Second Definitive Article'.¹⁴ In Doyle's view, 'most liberal theorists have offered inadequate guidance in understanding the exceptional nature of liberal pacification.' Where many fall down, in Doyle's view, is in their inability to explain the way in which some liberal states tend also to get embroiled in

¹¹ 'Liberalism and World Politics', p1156

¹² See B. Russett, 'Correspondence: The Democratic Peace', *International Security* 19:4, p168

¹³ Kant, *Political Writings*, p104

¹⁴ 'Liberalism and World Politics', p1158. Cf. M. W. Doyle, 'Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Affairs', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 12, 1983, p226

war. In this respect Doyle thinks, ‘Immanuel Kant offers the best guidance’.¹⁵ Kant is able to understand the tendency of liberal states to form with each other islands of peace and their tendency to be less at home with non-liberal states.

Doyle understands Kant to be recommending in his Second Definitive Article neither a formal federation nor any institutionalized form of co-operation. Mainly Kant is emphasizing a disposition of states with republican constitutions not to attack each other militarily. But Doyle does go a bit further to suggest that Kant ‘appears to have in mind a mutual nonaggression pact, perhaps a collective security agreement.’¹⁶ This seems very close to what Kant suggests where he states in his Second Definitive Article that the ‘law of nations should be based on a federalism of free states’.¹⁷ Particularly important in the way in which Kant formulates the Second Definitive Article is its markedly counterfactual nature. Kant is not speaking directly of any empirical state of affairs, present or future, in the article itself. He has in mind much more the intellectual presuppositions which form the basis for an effective international law.

Indeed, I think that the main thrust of Kant’s Second Definitive Article for perpetual peace is a criticism of prevailing conceptions of international law which ground international law in the unrestricted sovereignty of states. The recommendation that a pacific federation of free states be formed is one that flows from this initial objection. Kant holds that very little progress can be attained in international politics if the leaders of states behave as rulers of entirely self-contained and wilfully independent territories who can declare war whenever they see fit upon any other such sovereign entities. The very conception of an international politics based upon such wholly unrestricted sovereignty carries the seeds of its own destruction. As Kant sees it, ‘the concept of a law of nations becomes meaningless if interpreted as the right to go to war. Doyle is highly conscious of the federative aspect of Kant’s peace plan but does not bring out this indictment of the traditional notions of state sovereignty which underlie Kant’s critique of international law. Doyle notes that Kant’s ‘pacific union is not a single peace treaty ending one war, a world state, nor a state of nations. Kant finds the first insufficient. National sovereignty precludes reliable subservience to a state of nations; a world state destroys the civic freedom on which the development of human capacities rests.’¹⁸ It is indeed true that Kant rules out for the foreseeable future a world state resting upon a world-wide civil society but this is not because the pursuit of such a condition is morally wrong. In Kant’s view we ought to give up the total and arbitrary independence of our national state and seek to approximate to a world state. What prevents us from attaining the condition of world statehood which reason prescribes is the sheer physical difficulty of coordinating government over huge tracts of territory some of which are not developed (in Kant’s day this was of course a much greater problem than it is now) and the entrenched habits of the leaders of sovereign states. In Kant’s view the second poses the greatest difficulty. The attainment of state sovereignty is indeed a great step forward in the development of the human race, but it is not an absolutely valid arrangement. As Kant sees it, state sovereignty attains its proper validity when it merges over into a wider international

¹⁵ ‘Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Affairs’, p225

¹⁶ ‘Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Affairs’, p227

¹⁷ This is my own translation. Cf. Kant, *Political Writings*, p102: ‘The Right of Nations shall be based upon a Federation of Free States’

¹⁸ ‘Liberalism and World Politics’, p1158

sovereignty of free states. The splendid majesty of the absolutely unrestricted sovereign state is an obstacle to world peace:

We might thus expect that civilized peoples, each united with itself as a state, would hasten to abandon so degrading a condition as soon as possible. Fukuyama also does not realize the extent to which Kant's Second Definitive Article implies a critique of the traditional notion of state sovereignty and international law. Kant wants to rewrite the rules of international society in a rational form, whereas Fukuyama is more concerned to point out how international society has already taken on a rational form. In keeping with Kant Fukuyama argues that 'international law is merely domestic law writ large' yet there is no direct recognition of the kind of mutation of state sovereignty this might involve. In the kind of world Kant envisages no one state can prevail over another, each has always to accommodate itself to the next as though they were neighbouring citizens within a civil society and state. But Fukuyama and Doyle both realize that in a peaceful condition of the Kantian variety state sovereignty cannot play the role it once did. Without clearly stating it both imply that the kind of unrestricted state sovereignty that once prevailed in international society has had its day.¹⁹

The Third Definitive Article

One of the great virtues of democratic peace theory is its moral egalitarianism. Each human individual for the proponent of a democratic peace counts for as much as every other. With Fukuyama this moral egalitarianism is evident in his emphasis upon what he calls *isothymia*. Fukuyama defines the term in relation to its opposite *megalothymia*. This is the 'desire to be recognized as superior to other people' whereas 'its opposite is *isothymia*, the desire to be recognized as the the equal of other people.'²⁰ Francis Fukuyama's thesis is that the world must change, and is changing, to a situation where each person lives under a system of rule which fosters *isothymia* or equal recognition. He sees this happening, however, mainly within states. In drawing this picture of extending world-wide equality Fukuyama's inspiration is Hegel who in his conception of the state properly develops the idea of mutual democratic recognition.

By definition human individuals who are the only rational animals are equal. It is an offence against our dignity as human individuals to treat another human individual or group as inherently unequal to us. In this respect Doyle captures the spirit of Kant's philosophy well. Doyle sees that Kant's cosmopolitanism leads to a different style of international politics from that to which we are now accustomed. Kant's doctrine of right would provide no grounds for the western imperial project of the modern world nor for any missionary intention to civilize forcefully non-western countries. Kant

¹⁹ This is a fairly striking example from Fukuyama's *End of History and the Last Man* p283: 'The United States and other liberal democracies will have to come to grips with the fact that, with the collapse of the communist world, the world in which we they live is less and less the old one of geopolitics, and that the rules and methods of the historical world are not appropriate to life in the post-historical one. For the latter, the major issues will be economic ones like promoting competitiveness and innovation, managing internal and external deficits, maintaining full employment, dealing co-operatively with grave environmental politics, and the like.' What might be said from a Kantian perspective is that rulers should have attempted to overcome geopolitics just as much before the collapse of communism as before it.

²⁰ *The End of History*, p182

rules out a patriarchal approach to government both internally and externally.²¹ The development of societies outside Europe must possess a voluntary dimension. Natives have to play a part themselves in drawing towards civilization. This comes out in Doyle's interpretation of the Third Definitive Article to *Perpetual Peace*. 'Hospitality', Doyle says, 'does not require extending to foreigners either the right to citizenship or the right to settlement, unless the foreign visitors would perish if they were expelled. Foreign conquest and plunder also find no justification under this right.' Imperialism of any kind is ruled out. 'Hospitality does appear to include the right of access and the obligation of maintaining the opportunity for citizens to exchange goods and ideas without imposing the obligation to trade (a voluntary act in all cases under liberal constitutions'.²²

Doyle argues that liberal states, despite their internal liberal structures, have been prone to war with non-liberal societies. As he puts it: 'the historical liberal legacy is laden with popular wars fought to promote freedom, to protect private property, or to support liberal allies against nonliberal enemies'.²³ As Doyle suggests, Kant's position would be at odds with this outcome. Partly these wars have occurred because the leaders of liberal states have demanded more than hospitality for their citizens and subjects in their relations with other states. In seeking to promote the freedom and advantage of visitors to foreign territories they often have asked not simply for safe passage but that a certain form of life be respected which is contrary to native traditions. Kant believes we ought not to venture beyond peaceful persuasion in trying to advance the condition of other nationals in their own states. Similarly liberal states are in no position to guarantee the property of their nationals abroad simply through the exertion of their own powers. The civil order of a foreign state is primarily its own responsibility.

The Guarantee of perpetual peace

In one of the most interesting supplements to *Perpetual Peace* Kant outlines what he describes as a guarantee provided by 'the great artist nature herself'.²⁴ Kant argues here that the apparently unguided course of historical development tends in the direction of human improvement often against our will. Kant cites a number of mechanisms that helps brings this about such as our competitiveness, our self-interested pursuit of trade, the rivalry amongst nations and even war itself. Both Doyle and Fukuyama cite this mechanism of nature with approval. They approve of Kant's guarantee because it highlights an empirical process which can help underpin the liberal democratic peace. For Doyle the guarantee works not because we are politically moral beings but through our less agreeable side. Whereas it might be argued that Kant is quite happy to see human short-sightedness and downright evil inadvertently playing a progressive role and this conflicting with the moral spirit within us, Doyle wants to unify the two forces. Those who are entirely focussed on their selfish interests are also playing a moral role. With Doyle the 'hidden plan' of nature complements our ethical duty.²⁵ However with Kant the hidden plan steps in

²¹ Cf. H. Williams, *Kant's Political Philosophy*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1983, pp.129-137

²² 'Liberalism and World Politics', p1158

²³ 'Liberalism and World Politics', p1160

²⁴ Kant, *Political Writings*, p108

²⁵ 'Liberalism and World Politics', p1159

only where we fail in our ethical duty. For Kant the hidden plan is not right in itself, rather it provides us with an incentive to do what is right.

Kant argues that we cannot depend on the guarantee from a theoretical standpoint. We can rightly suppose that there are natural mechanisms at work which promote the aim of lasting peace. Despite the expressed aims of less scrupulous political leaders and their subjects we can discern over the longer term underlying trends which appear to be taking the human race forward. Perversely war itself might further these trends by bringing home to people the doleful effects of war. Societies who engage in this aggressive behaviour are forced to modernise quickly in order to employ the most advanced means for engaging in war. But this modernisation takes place with a concomitant growth in the potential and demand for freedom within the state. Self-interest is, above all, what brings the progressive mechanism of nature into play. The hard-nosed pursuit of economic gain may have peaceful consequences. Although primarily motivated by the pursuit of profit those professionally engaged in trade and commerce come to dislike the disruption caused by wars. Over the long term Kant thinks that business prefers peace to war.

Kant realizes that such projections about the progressive mechanism of history are not subject to clear empirical proof. Kant's object is not to create sufficient certainty from a scientific standpoint but rather sufficient certainty from a moral standpoint. He thinks there is enough evidence to justify us from a moral standpoint pursuing progressive policies. Doyle and Fukuyama tend to overlook the voluntary side of human progress which forms the essential part of Kant's guarantee. Both Doyle and Fukuyama are enthusiastic about the natural mechanism, especially Fukuyama who devotes several passages in his writings to the economic, social and political forces that drive us willy-nilly towards cooperation.²⁶ Successful material acquisition under a free market system requires long-term peace and security. According to Fukuyama, a preoccupation with acquiring more consumer goods diverts people away from aggressive foreign policies and war. In keeping with Doyle and Fukuyama's interest in the determinist side of Kant's 'hidden plan' the literature on democratic peace concentrates heavily on the empirical verifiability of the perpetual peace thesis.²⁷ This may not take us entirely off the Kantian track, since the more empirical evidence for the thesis which exists the fewer excuses there can be for refusing to seek progress in external policy, however, in the light of Kant's priorities the emphasis is still a little one-sided. Kant's main purpose is to bring morality and politics into accord, only then will perpetual peace be achieved.

Conclusion

What does our examination of the liberal democratic peace thesis advanced by Doyle and Fukuyama from the standpoint of Kant's original peace theory tell us? Our first conclusion might justifiably be that there is more to Kant's original view than the

²⁶ *The End of History*, see especially, Chs 1, 5 & 6

²⁷ Cf. 'New Tests of the Democratic Peace: Controlling for Economic Interdependence, 1950-85,' *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 50 (December 1997), pp751-775 & Edward D. Mansfield and J. Snyder, 'Democratization and the Danger of War', *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Summer 1995), pp.5-38. Note the conclusion of the second article: 'In the long run, the enlargement of the zone of stable democracy will probably enhance the prospects for peace. But in the short run, there is a lot to be done to minimize the dangers of the turbulent transition.' p38

democratic peace theorists convey. There are elements in Kant's argument, such as his powerful objections to forcible intervention in the affairs of other states, which are not fully considered. Just as Doyle and Fukuyama's new interpretations of Kant's thinking have uncovered many valuable ideas we might legitimately claim that there is even more to be discovered which might not only to the democratic peace thesis but also provide insights in other connected areas of politics. Classical political theory, such as Kant's essay on *Perpetual Peace*, provides a permanent source of new insight into current national and international issues.

Kant would have himself emphasized that we have to judge what constitutes knowledge and understanding ourselves. Kant's political writings should of course be treated with respect, but not slavishly followed. Doyle and Fukuyama are each in their own way critically receptive. Two particular issues stand out as problematic in Kant's account: 1. Kant's exclusion of women from politically relevant roles; 2. His apparently optimistic view of the role finance and trade (operating through self-interest) can play in the forging of international peace.

In terms of the first, it would be fair to say that empirically the facts run against Kant's exclusion of women. The seeds of wars seem often to lie in conflicts of economic interests. Although Doyle stresses once again the peaceful impetus brought about by overlapping economic interests²⁸ the optimistic Kantian picture has to be weighed against the ambiguous, if not entirely contrary, empirical evidence. It is true to say that Kant was not depending on the world economic system automatically to bring about peace. Kant's point is that in the long term contract – upon which trade and commerce rest – cannot function without trust and a sense of community. From an intelligible or logical standpoint war and trade are at odds. There is an irony here in that contemporary democratic peace theory has strongly emphasized the empirical dimension of Kant's thinking. Above all, the literature has concentrated on analyzing the behaviour of states with constitutions approximating to the one recommended to Kant. Their conclusion is that in relation to each other such states behave well, but they do not tell us it is because of the convergence of economic interests of these states or the peaceful intentions of their rulers. From a Kantian perspective the main gap in the contemporary literature is its tendency to underemphasize the moral side of Kant's argument. Kant's allusion to empirical developments is intended primarily to strengthen his moral argument rather than to provide conclusive proof. Those who require absolutely convincing proof of the viability of the peace project before signing up to it are precisely those Kant was not aiming to attract to his argument. His case for perpetual peace is made to those who already have moral intentions in politics. The liberal democratic peace will work only for those who aim to live in a morally regulated peace with others.

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²⁸ 'Liberalism and World Politics', p1161