

**Kant II: Towards Perpetual Peace
 or, The Dutch Innkeeper's Joke**

I. The first sentence of *Perpetual Peace*:

Whether this satirical inscription on a Dutch innkeeper's sign, on which a churchyard cemetery has been painted, concerns mankind in general, or in particular the leaders of states, who can never be sated of war, or simply the philosophers, who dream this sweet dream – [is a question that] may be better set aside here.

Two shifts in the meaning of peace:

Representation of peace	Image: the churchyard cemetery	Text: "Towards perpetual peace"	Sign: Combination of text and image on the Dutch innkeeper's sign
Object of peace	Mankind in general	States	Philosophers
Meaning of peace	Death	Absence of war	Positive cosmopolitanism

II. The first shift in the meaning of peace:

the absence of war (a possible condition for the living)

- Our crooked nature, and politics for intelligent devils
- Kant's contract theory
 - states in a state of nature with one another
 - the analogy between individual and state
 - the autonomy of states: the state as "moral person":

A state is not, like the ground it occupies, a piece of property (patrimonium). It is a society of men whom no one else has any right to command or to dispose except the state itself. It is a trunk with its own roots. But to incorporate it into another state, like a graft, is to destroy its existence as a moral person, reducing it to a thing; such incorporation thus contradicts the idea of the original contract without which no right over a people can be conceived.

- Preliminary Article 2.

- Perpetuating peace as the absence of war
 - peace treaties with provisions for future wars don't count
 - abolishing standing armies
 - the rules of war

III. The second shift in the meaning of peace:

cosmopolitan peace (not merely the absence of war between states)

- Republicanism
 - certain political arrangements inhibit morality; removing them is enabling
 - absence of fear, which inhibits will; fear is mortifying
 - laws govern external action not inner life; leaves us to be self-legislating
 - "the discipline of culture"
- Federation of free states
 - Kant as a forerunner to democratic peace theory
- Universal hospitality
- The role of the philosopher

IV. *Towards perpetual peace*

GOV 1061: The History of Modern Political Philosophy

Week 9, Lecture 1 – Tuesday, March 27, 2012

Kant II: Towards Perpetual Peace**or, The Dutch Innkeeper's Joke**

I.

When Professor Rosenblum offered to let me fill in for this second Kant lecture, I decided I had to read *Perpetual Peace* really, really closely and well. Except I didn't quite make it past the first sentence. So in a way, this entire lecture is on the first sentence of *Perpetual Peace*.

Here's the sentence – and please read along with me off your lecture handout:

Whether this satirical inscription (referring, of course, to the title of the essay, *Towards Perpetual Peace*)

Whether this satirical inscription on a Dutch innkeeper's sign, on which a churchyard cemetery has been painted, concerns mankind in general, or in particular the rulers of states, who can never be sated of war, or simply the philosophers, who dream this sweet dream – [is a question that] may be better set aside here.

And so Kant's meditations on perpetual peace begin mid-sentence, with a conjunction. "Whether." This "whether" raises an indirect question: with whom does this inscription, also the title of Kant's essay, concern? Who is perpetual peace for?

The political theorist Hannah Arendt saw the irony of this rhetorical opening – why raise a question one will dismiss in the same sentence? This irony, she wrote, was evidence that Kant himself did not see *Perpetual Peace* as a serious work of political philosophy, and in fact, she continued, Kant had in fact never written a work that fits that description.¹

Last Thursday, Professor Rosenblum presented a way for us to agree with Hannah Arendt. According to this interpretation, Kant is primarily a moral philosopher, and what thoughts he had about history and politics bore no real connection to his moral philosophy. *Idea for a Universal History* told a story about how nature makes use of our selfishness, not our moral capacity, for the purposes of a progressive history. *What is the Enlightenment* described a process in which man breaks free of his own immaturity and comes to think for himself – but being enlightened isn't necessarily being moral.

I want to spend today's lecture looking at the other answer to the puzzle of how Kant's moral philosophy relates to his thoughts on politics. And the opening sentence of *Perpetual Peace* will be our guide – for, the question it asks and puts away contain the divisions of meaning that frame Kant's conception of the individual and of the state, and the movement between these divisions will allow him to anchor his political philosophy to his moral philosophy.

So. The Dutch innkeeper's sign. The sign features a "satirical" pairing of two elements: the inscription that inspires the title of Kant's essay, and the painting of a burial ground. The

¹ "And the ironical tone of *Perpetual Peace*, by far the most important of [the essays included in the Cambridge University Press collection called *Kant's Political Writings*], shows clearly that Kant himself did not take them too seriously." Hannah Arendt, *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*, ed. Ronald Beiner (University of Chicago Press, 1982), 9.

juxtaposition of these two elements is not new: pairing some variant of the words “perpetual peace” with the image of a cemetery had been something of a German trope. That’s the satire: what is *really* meant by perpetual peace turns out to be death.

But Kant takes the text, and the image, and puts it on the sign of a Dutch innkeeper. If the cemetery is where you can expect to find perpetual peace, the innkeeper can help you out as well, by providing the drinks that can bring you to this state of stupor, even in this life.² This is the Dutch innkeeper’s joke.

So now the satire extends over three, and not two, representations of peace: those contained in the image, the text, and the sign on which the two are juxtaposed. The three representations of peace, in turn, correspond to the three possible objects of peace: “mankind in general,” “the rulers of states in particular,” or “philosophers.” As he moves between these three candidates, then, the meaning of perpetual peace also shifts according to its object.

II.

The image of the burial ground concerns mankind in general. The most general trait that can unite the individual members of this group is the bleak fact of our mortality. Here, as we’ve established, perpetual peace is merely death. “Mankind in general” then, does not refer to any community of people beyond that found beneath a burial ground, and the peace that they have in common is something neither established nor earned, but a mere property of the state in which they will each eventually find themselves as individuals. As such, “mankind in general” is then the most basic reduction of humanity down to its most typical or generic individual unit. The pessimism of the suggestion that perpetual peace may be found in a burial ground, lies in the implication that death is not just one, but the *only* common property that may bind individual human beings into any genuinely peaceful relationship with one another.

This changes with the introduction of the next possible object of eternal peace: “the rulers of states in particular, who can never be sated of war.” Though Kant now singles out particular individuals from mankind in general, these rulers are not discrete entities, but must be identified in association with their communities – their states. With this shift of focus, from mutually unrelated individuals (considered collectively) to mutually unrelated states (considered as individuals), the topic of war enters the discussion and altogether turns around the meaning of peace. The kind of perpetual peace that can have the rulers of states as its object can only be the direct opposite of the endless wars caused by them. Peace now takes on a familiar meaning, the one we understand in contrast to war.

But in addition, peace also comes to mean the opposite of what it meant formerly, when it had an undifferentiated mankind at large as its object. Just as the common fate of mankind in general leads to the burial ground, so does the ultimate outcome of the wars waged by states and the powerful individuals who act in their name. War causes death; as the opposite of eternal war, eternal peace then becomes the opposite of death as well – it becomes a possible state for the living. The perpetual peace with which rulers of states ought to be concerned, then, is represented by the text of the inscription as it is considered separate from, and in contrast to, the image that came with it. The corresponding movement of thought, whereby members of a general mankind are reformulated as members of states, demands to establish a kind of artificial peace that runs against the natural current towards death.

² Arendt, 52.

So how do we make such a transition, from thinking about the peace when it has as its object the most generic member of mankind, to when it concerns the individual who represents a state – from thinking about peace as death to its opposite, from the state of war to a warless state?

Kant subscribed to the general theory of his predecessors that individuals came together to form states via a contract. He drops some familiar terms in *Perpetual Peace*: he talks about the original contract, and about the rights that depend on it. He tells us that “the state of peace among men living side by side is not the natural state; the natural state is one of war.”³

Kant was not theorizing about a politics for moral persons. Politics had to assume the worst in human nature, and we saw this in his *Idea for a Universal History*. “Out of the crooked timber of humanity,” he wrote there, “no straight thing has ever been made.” And yet, under the right, rational conditions, the crookedness of our natures could be tempered. And so he tells us in *Perpetual Peace* that “The problem of organizing a state, however hard it may seem, can be solved even for a race of devils, if only they are intelligent.” This is the role of politics: it finds a way for intelligent devils to live together.

So if Kant’s moral philosophy imagines ideal human beings who have fully realized their capacity to be moral, Kant’s political philosophy asks: given our crooked nature, how shall we then proceed?

But what is it exactly that makes us so crooked? Kant would answer: anything that keeps us from acting out of duty – that is, morally – and instead for other interests. This includes our appetites, our competitiveness, the need to feel good about ourselves, and the kind of calculative reason with which Hobbes had characterized our nature. All these imperfections were a result of our inhabitation in *this*, natural and physical world, and not the ideal world Kant’s moral philosophy allowed us to imagine.

Here I want to say something about Kant as a person and the perfect unity of his philosophical system and the way in which he led his life. One might say our 80-year old virgin devoted his entire life to suppressing and overcoming the imperfections of our physical existence. He notoriously compared sexual intercourse to cannibalism: the only difference between sex and cannibalism was that the latter simply happened to be a more thorough enjoyment of the other person.

Those who knew him said of Kant that he never perspired. One contemporary, the German composer and music critic Johann Reichardt, described him as “drier than dust, both in body and mind.”⁴ The citizens of Königsberg famously set their watches by the time that Herr Kant set off on his daily walks. If bootcamp workouts are a thing now, Immanuel Kant had thought of it first: he employed a former army man to march into his room, precisely at five minutes before five o’clock every morning, winter or summer, and cry out in a military tone, “Herr Professor, es ist Zeit! The time is come!” And like a soldier obeying a command, Kant would spring out of bed without a moment’s delay and get his day started.⁵

I don’t mean to suggest that Kant was an unsympathetic robot. On the contrary, I like to think that being Immanuel Kant was a rather difficult project, even for Kant himself. He was the kind of person who had a weakness for food and drink, especially for coffee, but worked from five in the morning until dinnertime without eating – the kind of person who spoke abstractly about

³ *Toward Eternal Peace*, Section II; and *Zum ewigen Frieden*, 203.

⁴ Thomas De Quincey, *The Last Days of Immanuel Kant*

⁵ *Ibid.*

death as a release from the anxieties of life, as philosophers often do, but allowed all this philosophical heroism to give way to “tumultuous,” inconsolable grief at the death of a young friend.⁶ In other words, Kant believed in living by self-imposed rules, but abiding by these rules took an enormous strength of will. He spoke of himself often as a kind of gymnastic acrobat, who – I quote – “had continued for nearly fourscore years to support his balance upon the slack-rope of life, without once swerving to the right or to the left.”⁷

Did Herr Professor Kant believe we could do for politics what he practiced in his own life? Could we temper our natural imperfection in order to lead a balanced existence in a *political* society?

As I mentioned earlier, Kant subscribed to a kind of contract theory by which intelligent devils come together to form a state. In such a state, men would see the advantages, the personal benefits, of cooperating and agreeing upon government, so they would not fight with each other as they would have in the state of nature.

So far, this is all familiar and good. We’ve known as much about state formation from Hobbes. But is being in a state a guarantee of peace?

Remember Hobbes had also told us that states are in a state of nature against one another. Kant also adopted this cold, sober view. “Peoples, as states, like individuals,” he writes in *Perpetual Peace*, “may be judged to injure one another merely by their coexistence in the state of nature (i.e., while independent of external laws.”⁸ Conflict between states, then, was to be expected. War did “not always mean open hostilities, but at least an unceasing threat of war.”⁹ Where there is no higher judicial authority, individual nations have to judge for themselves if their own preservation as states was at risk, and if one state were to protect itself from another by arming itself, or by attacking preemptively, no one could call that unjust – only a “sad recourse”.

Unless we find a way out of this state of nature – not only between individuals but between states – the only peace available to us is the peace of the burial ground. A law of nature that granted nations the right to make war could only mean, Kant writes, “that it serves men right who are so inclined that they should destroy each other and thus find perpetual peace in the vast grave that swallows both the atrocities and their perpetrators.”¹⁰

Notice that Kant is working off an analogy between the individual and the state: if individuals in the state of nature are in a state of war with one another, so are states. As so long as this state of war prevails, we’re stuck with our first, primitive meaning of peace.

But there is a flip side of the analogy between individual and state, and it’s something that comes out of his moral philosophy to attach itself to his contract theory.

The second preliminary article for perpetual peace, which I’ve copied out for you on your lecture handout, asks that states do not come to rule other states by “inheritance, exchange, purchase or gift.” Because, Kant writes, a state is not a piece of property. To treat it as such would be “to destroy its existence as a moral person, reducing it to a thing; such incorporation thus contradicts the idea of the original contract without which no right over a people can be conceived.”¹¹

What’s going on here? What does it mean for a state to be a moral person?

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ *Towards Eternal Peace*, Second Definitive Article.

⁹ *Towards Eternal Peace*, Section II; and *Zum ewigen Frieden*, 203.

¹⁰ *Towards Eternal Peace*, Second Definitive Article.

¹¹ *Towards Eternal Peace*, Section I: Preliminary Article 2.

We remember from Professor Rosenblum's lecture last week that Kant wanted us, as moral agents, to treat others never merely as means to an end, but always at the same time as ends in themselves. This meant not only recognizing that other people also have wants, and reason, as I do, but also that they, too, have the capacity to be moral. They, too, can act as though they were, through their maxims, always legislating members in the universal kingdom of ends. They are themselves moral persons, and not to be reduced to a thing, or a piece of property. When we think of Kant as an early champion of human rights, we don't think of Kant the contract theorist, we think of Kant the moral philosopher who told us to treat humanity this way.

Now, Kant is telling us that, if individual human beings have the right to be treated a certain way, the same goes for states. States ought to treat other states the way individual moral agents ought to treat other individual moral agents. States ought to respect the autonomy of other states.

So one state shouldn't subsume another state through something as arbitrary as a royal wedding or a financial transaction. If you buy Louisiana from France, you're buying land, not the right to rule over its citizens.

A state shouldn't buy out the people of another state as mercenaries.

It shouldn't intervene in the government of another state except in the most extreme circumstances. Even if all hell is breaking loose, the people of that state need to heal itself of its own internal illness. In fact, a struggling might even serve as an example to other states of "the great evil that a people falls into through its lawlessness."¹² The only case in which foreign intervention might be okay is if the state in question is undergoing civil war, and is no longer one autonomous state. But deciding what constitutes as civil war is not so straightforward either, and the question of if and when foreign intervention is justified remains a fuzzy issue among Kantians today.

[So, why does this analogy between the autonomous individual and the autonomous state work?

One answer is that states are made up of autonomous individuals, so protecting state rights is a way of securing *their* rights. The prohibition on buying and selling states can be understood in these terms: it is a moral prohibition on treating the citizens of states as means to an end and not ends in themselves.

Or, more immediately, when states go to war it's the people who actually bear the costs. They are the ones losing lives and getting taxed to finance the war. So getting leaders of states, who are the ones calling the wars, to respect the autonomy of other states, could be a way of reducing the potential costs of war for individual citizens.]

A final useful application of the analogy between the individual and state is that the social contract between individuals can be extended to states. That is, if individual human beings can contract into a state to escape the state of war, states might be able to do the same.

But here, Kant wants us to be extra-cautious. *Perpetual Peace* is not about the formation of a gigantic world-state. Not only would that be impractical, but Kant seems to think that it would more likely be a world dictatorship, in which one state has subsumed all other states in a direct violation of their autonomy as states.

So while individuals can contract to form a state, states do not contract to form a super-state. That way, states get to keep their autonomy, just like individuals in civil society.

What states *can* do, however, is to come together in a *voluntary* federation, a league of nations that simply agree on certain external rules, while respecting the internal constitutions of each

¹² *Towards Eternal Peace*, Section I: Preliminary Article 5.

member state. According to this arrangement, states will have an international right not to suffer war at one another's hands.

Getting states to stop fighting each other this way gets us to a certain kind of peace, as the absence of war. For this particular kind of peace to be *perpetual* peace, Kant provides us with a few prescriptions.

First, peace treaties with provisions for future wars don't count. One truce doesn't make peace. Treaties to peace must be made with the view that it will last.

Second, we eventually need to get rid of standing armies. As long as a state employs a constant stream of professional soldiers to serve in the army, that state is sending out the message to its neighbors that it is ready to go to war.

Third, and perhaps most important: even when states do end up recouring to war, their leaders must respect certain rules of war. That is, even war must be made with a view toward peace. Assassins, poisoners, breach of surrender, and incitement to treason in the enemy state – such acts of hostility destroy the kind of confidence states can have of each other to keep peace, even when they are no longer fighting. This means that war, and even victory, must be temporary and limited. It must be possible, when the fighting is all over, to bring both the victors and the defeated back to pre-war relations. Wars that exterminate entire races, then, are absolutely forbidden. If the kind of peace we eventually want to establish is the perpetual absence of war – *even if* it takes us a few wars to get there – we absolutely cannot return to a state of affairs in which the peace of the burial ground is the only peace mankind can have in common.

III.

But there is another kind of peace available to us, one that transcends not only the burial ground but also the kind of peace understood as the mere absence of war. So now I want to spend our remaining time examining what I consider the second shift in the meaning of peace in this work. You see, I'm still not done with the first sentence of *Perpetual Peace*.

So. The first shift in the meaning of peace had taken us from the burial ground, painted on the innkeeper's sign, to the absence of war between states. The former had had as its object an undifferentiated mankind in general, whereas the latter appealed to the leaders of states in particular.

Now I want to argue that the mere absence of war was not good enough a conception of perpetual peace for Kant. The second shift in the meaning of peace will bring us to a positive conception of peace, one that grows out of the absence of war guaranteed by a federation of states.

I'll begin by throwing out some questions.

We had taken apart the Dutch innkeeper's sign into its component parts – the image, the inscription – but we hadn't yet considered the sign itself. Why does it have to be the sign of an innkeeper? And what is it doing all the way in Holland?

Kant had also suggested for us three possible candidates with whom peace might be concerned, and we had looked at two of them: mankind in general, and the rulers of states in particular. What would it mean for peace to pertain to philosophers? What is the sweet dream of the philosopher?

Let's talk about the peace of the philosopher. If Kant, the moral philosopher, had anything to request of politicians, it would be the closing of that gap we talked about, between the real world of history and politics and the ideal world of morality.

Recall that the puzzle posed in Professor Rosenblum's lecture last week concerned the relationship between Kant's moral philosophy and his thoughts on history and politics. Here in *Perpetual Peace* we find a different answer from the one we came to last week. *Perpetual Peace* tells us that Kant dreamed of a politics that enabled morality.

Such a politics had to take the form of republicanism. In order to have perpetual peace, goes the First Definitive Article for Perpetual Peace, the civil constitution of every nation had to be republican. This meant a political order based on a system of rights and mutual respect. It required a limited government bounded by a single legislation, and guarantees of civic freedom and legal equality for all citizens.

Note how Kant's republicanism differs from Rousseau's or Machiavelli's. Kant's republic does not care for worldly glory, as does Machiavelli's ideal of Rome, nor does it elevate civic virtue, as does Rousseau. Kant does not emphasize political participation, and in fact prefers representative democracy. Instead, he emphasizes legalism.

How does this brand of republicanism help morality?

Kant believed that there are political conditions that inhibit morality. Acting morally is dependent on having a free moral will, and this is impossible under conditions of terror. You can't be forced or intimidated to be moral, because morality requires self-legislation. Violence and fear, then, inhibit moral will, and a steady rule of law, where there is no terror, enables it.

This is also why Kant is so opposed to war and revolution. When those who hold political power risk turning into tyrants, Kant encourages citizens to "argue but obey." Kant wanted citizens to seek reform through peaceable means, not violent revolution. Fear, especially of violent death, is not only painful, as it was for Hobbes, but it demeans, terrifies, and paralyzes the "rational self-esteem" we need in order to think and legislate for ourselves.

Legal order is enabling of morality in a second sense. The order imposed by law is purely external – it coerces and punishes. Of course, like fear and violence, coercion does not promote morality; it does not try to make us good. But it makes us law-abiding, and creates an external order that does not trespass on our inner life, which is where morality resides. Against the background of this external order created by legal coercion, we can concentrate on our own inner moral struggles.

Finally, there is a third connection between legalism and morality. Rule-making and rule-following provides what Kant calls the "discipline of culture." A republican culture gives us experience with the authority of general laws. Again, these laws are not themselves moral, nor can they make us moral. But they approximate the form of duty when we obey general laws, just as morality requires us to act out of duty. At the same time, in a republic we recognize that we are under the same laws, and hold the same legal rights as citizens. The discipline of culture, then, can be a kind of education in acting, in our maxims, as legislating members in the universal kingdom of ends. General laws are the way in which politics pay homage to morality.

And so, Kant's legalistic brand of republicanism doesn't make us moral. But they can remove the worst obstacles to free self-legislation, and thereby enable morality.

Kant envisioned that the aforementioned league of nations as a federation of republics. This is his Second Definitive Article for Perpetual Peace.

Kant believes that a federation of republics can guarantee world peace in a number of specific ways we can talk about in section. But the most striking thing about this claim is how it holds up empirically. Those of you who have taken courses in IR should be familiar with democratic peace theory – the thesis that democracies don't go to war with each other. The theory itself has its own controversies and conflicting explanations, but we can say it was first articulated by Kant in a way that is still relevant to us today.

But I want to come back to the questions we left hanging earlier. What is the dream of the philosopher? Why is our peace sign on an innkeeper's door, all the way in Holland?

Kant's Third Definitive Article for Perpetual Peace grounds cosmopolitan right in conditions of universal hospitality.

If we glance back at the Second Preliminary Article on the lecture handout, we'll see that Kant makes a stark distinction between a state and its land, likening it to the distinction between a moral person and a thing. Here, in Kant's call for universal hospitality, that distinction spills over to a cosmopolitan right of individual persons to be prioritized over mere things – namely, national and natural boundaries. Citizens of the world have the cosmopolitan right of temporary sojourn and association in foreign lands, and the right to be treated hospitably during their stay. Technological advances have allowed us to overcome the natural boundaries that had formerly divided the “community of men,”¹³ and now national boundaries must similarly be transcended so that they pose no obstruction for persons to “establish communication” with each other.¹⁴ For communication allows for the free exchange of ideas between rational agents, and Kant firmly believes that such activities promote both peace and world citizenship.

Kant's call for universal hospitality thus emerges out of a firm distinction between persons and things, between rationality and materiality. The imperative to treat persons as ends in themselves comes with a sub-clause: one must leave mere things to be only that and nothing more. “*Respect*,” Kant tells us, “is always directed only to persons, never to things.”¹⁵

The resulting freedom of mobility, for Kant, is closely related to the freedom of thought.

Kant famously never left his native Königsberg – and the one time he considered leaving on a trip, the rumor spread instantaneously that Kant had gone out, and the streets were immediately choked up with people who wanted to catch a glimpse of him in the act.

Yet Kant, who failed even in his one attempt to travel beyond his own city, taught geography at the university and eagerly devoured travel reports. He traveled the world from the confines of his study in Königsberg, he knew the regions of Italy and the streets of London. He is said to have “had no time to travel precisely because he wanted to know so much about so many countries.”¹⁶ It is precisely this powerful imagination that equips him to place the starting point of his essay on eternal peace above the door of an innkeeper in the Netherlands, whose eastern border lay more than a thousand kilometers from Königsberg – more than ten times the greatest distance Kant had ever ventured out of his native city.

¹³ *Towards Eternal Peace*, II.iii.

¹⁴ *Towards Eternal Peace*, II.iii.

¹⁵ *Metaphysics of Morals*, 66 [5:76].

¹⁶ Arendt, 44.

The choice of the Dutch innkeeper's sign as his final representation of perpetual peace represents Kant's commitment to universal hospitality. The foreign innkeeper offers temporary hospitality to those who travel across the boundaries of his country, and the modest peace found at his inn points toward the desire that it is extended around the globe, towards universal hospitality.

But it is also testament to the capacity of the mind that could travel there in an instant, as though physical boundaries and distances did not matter in the slightest. Freedom of physical mobility is only important for Kant to the extent that it allows for the freedom of the mind to travel the world, as he did, and communicate with other minds. It represents the philosopher's disregard for the physical world, and his faith in a world of ideas where thoughts are allowed to travel freely, in a politics where a "Secret Article for Perpetual Peace" secures the philosopher's freedom of speech.

IV.

So today we took apart the first sentence of *Perpetual Peace*. We talked about how shifts in the representations of peace – image, inscription, sign – and the object of peace – mankind, states, philosophers – correspond to shifts in the meaning of peace.

The first shift occurred between the peace guaranteed to mankind in death, and a negative conception of peace as the absence of war between states.

As the concern of perpetual peace turns from state politics to philosophy, from the local citizen of the state to the world citizen with his farsighted eye – so the meaning of perpetual peace seeks to move toward a physical, and not temporal, redefinition. Peace here is not merely what is established against war, but what comes of such a state. It finds expression in a kind of freedom and a right not to be bound to a place, but to own the spherical earth in its perpetual entirety.

I'd like to say something about the title of this essay, which is *Zum ewigen Frieden – Towards eternal or perpetual peace*. If I've spent this lecture telling a narrative of sorts about the evolution of peace, Kant believed the true, eternal cosmopolitan peace had yet to come. Our politics was not yet good enough to support this kind of peace, and *we* weren't good enough to reside there, in the republic of rational moral agents, in the kingdom of ends. All we can do for now is to approach this ideal slowly, asymptotically, through constant and perpetual struggle.

As we will learn on Thursday, Hegel will find this gradual struggle toward perfect peace all very dissatisfying. Hegel will instead find us at the end of history, not inching slowly towards it, and he will challenge Kant's insistence that the best human life has to be a struggle.

I wonder if Kant would have had an answer for Hegel, had he been able answer. I don't think Kant by any means underestimated the intensity or the pain involved in the kind of moral struggle he prescribed in his philosophy, nor was he unaware of the enormous difficulty of simply resigning oneself to *waiting*, in history.

But for now, I will close with a small anecdote about Kant.

I mentioned earlier that Kant had a weakness for coffee. He resented above all the time he spent waiting for his coffee to boil, and he would say to his companions:

'Well, one can die after all: it is but dying;
and in the next world, thank God! there is no drinking of coffee, and
consequently no -- waiting for it.'
Sometimes he would rise from his chair, open the door, and cry out
with a feeble querulousness --'Coffee! coffee!'

the coffee was ground; the water was boiling; and the very moment
the word was given, his servant shot in like an arrow, and plunged the
coffee into the water. All that remained, therefore, was to give it time
to boil up. But this trifling delay seemed unendurable to Kant. All
consolations were thrown away upon him: vary the formula as we
might, he was never at a loss for a reply. If it was said—

'Dear Professor, the coffee will be brought up in a moment.'

he would say,

**'Will be! but there's the rub, that it only will be:
Man never is, but always to be blest.'**¹⁷

¹⁷ *Last Days of Immanuel Kant*