

Article



Making liberal use of Kant? Democratic peace theory and *Perpetual Peace*

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Abstract

The work of Immanuel Kant has been foundational in modern democratic peace theory. His essay *Toward Perpetual Peace* gives three prescriptions for attaining peace between democracies: republican institutions, a pacific union between states, and an ethos of universal hospitality. Contemporary democratic peace theory, however, has warped the Kantian framework from which it draws inspiration: the third prescription has been gradually substituted for commerce and trade. I argue that this change in emphasis produces tensions between *Perpetual Peace* and the body of democratic peace theory literature it spawned. Moreover, I contend that a look back at Kant's essay sheds light on why this transformation occurred. Finally, I use this new look back at *Perpetual Peace* to reformulate the relationship between peace, democracy, and commerce so as to offer a new perspective on the democratic peace theory/capitalist peace theory debate.

Keywords

commerce, democracy, democratic peace theory, Kant, peace, trade

Ever since Michael Doyle's two-part essay *Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Affairs*¹ was published in 1983, the political philosophy of Immanuel Kant has been the cornerstone of what quickly became known as democratic peace theory (DPT): namely, that democratic states do not fight with each other (but do fight with non-democracies) because of their distinctive political institutions and propensity to externalize democratic norms. One Kantian work in particular, *Toward Perpetual Peace*,² is invoked frequently in the DPT literature because it outlines three 'definitive articles' of perpetual peace which, when taken together, explain the absence of war between democracies observed in the past 200 years. Over time, however, the image of Kant originally used as conceptual scaffolding for the theory began to warp, resulting in an account of the 'three definitive

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articles of perpetual peace' that is surely a departure from what Kant himself writes. A look back at Kant, however, may help address the issues that caused the departure in the first place.

In this essay, I proceed in three parts. First, I lay out the Kantian legacy in DPT as it stands in order to show that the third definitive article for perpetual peace has changed its meaning over time from 'universal hospitality' to the 'spirit of commerce'. Second, I look back at Kant's *Perpetual Peace* closely in order to argue that the imputation of a 'spirit of trade' to Kant's third definitive article not only misrepresents Kant, but produces conceptual tensions with other passages in *Perpetual Peace*. Finally, I give an account of *why* democratic peace theorists have found themselves emphasizing 'the spirit of trade' in a place where it does not exist, and what a fresh return to Kant can offer them.

In the final analysis, democratic peace theorists found themselves needing to account for the role of economic interdependence in peacemaking between democracies. The saliency of this theoretical element became clear when a competing 'capitalist peace theory' was reinvigorated by Weede in 2003, which claimed that democracy was an epiphenomenon of free trade.³ Given this, a look back at Kant's *Perpetual Peace* hints at a reciprocal relationship between the phenomena of democracy and capitalism, which is only beginning to be theorized in modern DPT literature, and only tangentially investigated by other scholars critical of Kant's uptake in DPT. Thus, Kant himself provides an account of this relationship that bypasses the crossroads at the heart of the DPT/capitalist peace theory debate.

Kant in democratic peace theory

Doyle's 1983 Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Affairs claims unequivocally that 'Immanuel Kant offers the best guidance' in explaining the robust finding that democracies do not fight each other, but tend to fight non-democracies: "Perpetual Peace', written in 1795, predicts the ever-widening pacification of the liberal pacific union, explains that pacification, and at the same time suggests why liberal states are not pacific in their relations with nonliberal states'.4 The first aspect, namely, the pacification of liberal states, is creditable to the three 'definitive articles' of perpetual peace, which Doyle then proceeds to lay out. The first of these articles stipulates that the 'civil constitution of the state must be republican', which he claims that Kant defines as having 'solved the problem of combining moral autonomy, individualism and social order'.5 This republic preserves juridical freedom by ensuring that each morally autonomous individual is also a self-legislator in that they and their peers are subject to laws they give themselves. For Doyle, the second definitive article for perpetual peace stipulates that states would form a 'pacific union', 'limited to "a treaty of the nations among themselves" which "maintains itself, prevents wars, and steadily expands". 7 Doyle points to two significant things at this level: first, that the pacific union steadily expands (despite some unavoidable backsliding at times) and second, that he believes Kant to have in mind some sort of 'mutual nonaggression pact'. The third definitive article as articulated by Doyle 'establishes a cosmopolitan law to operate in conjunction with the pacific union'. This cosmopolitan law establishes conditions for 'universal hospitality', or the "right of a foreigner

not to be treated with hostility when he arrives upon the soil of another [country]' which 'does not extend further than to the conditions which enable them [the foreigners] to attempt the developing of intercourse [commerce] with the old inhabitants'.8

Presaging DPT's eventual blurring of commerce and hospitality, Doyle explains later on in the same piece that cosmopolitan law 'adds material incentives to moral commitments. The cosmopolitan right to hospitality permits the "spirit of commerce" sooner or later to take hold of every nation, thus impelling states to promote peace and to try to avert war'.9 We should notice here the divergence between Doyle's first and second presentations of the third definitive article: in its first articulation, cosmopolitan right allows for 'universal hospitality', or the 'right of a foreigner not to be treated with hostility when he arrives upon the soil of another [country]'. The second articulation, however, emphasizes much more heavily the materiality that the possibility of commerce may contain. Doyle makes the explicit move of incorporating liberal economic theory, claiming that it 'holds that these cosmopolitan ties derive from a cooperative international division of labor and free trade according to comparative advantage'. Liberal economic theory, which Doyle holds to be implied by cosmopolitan law, creates peace 'since keeping open markets rests upon the assumption that the next set of transactions will also be determined by prices rather than coercion, a sense of mutual security is vital to avoid security-motivated searches for economic autarky'.11 In order to tie the three definitive articles together, Doyle explains that 'No one of these constitutional, international or cosmopolitan sources is alone sufficient, but together (and only where together) they plausibly connect the characteristics of liberal polities and economies with sustained liberal peace'. 12 This mutual necessity will notably be recast as the 'Kantian tripod' later by Russett.

In his 1986 *Liberalism and World Politics*, Doyle presents Kant, vis-a-vis Schumpeter and Machiavelli, in nearly identical terms to his 1983 article.¹³ One notable difference, however, emerges in his presentation of the third definitive article for perpetual peace. Doyle claims that 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)'.¹⁴ Here, the formulation is somewhat different: instead of running together hospitality and trade, hospitality looks like a necessary condition for engaging in trade, an optional endeavor among states.

As the literature on the democratic peace developed, there arose a need to articulate the operative logics in a way that could be empirically verified. In their 1993 *Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace*, Russett and Zeev Maoz attribute the normative logic of DPT to political thinkers like Kant and Woodrow Wilson, and argue that at least one potential cause for the democratic peace is that:

rich states do not fight one another because they have far more to lose than to gain by doing so. Rich states are often engaged in heavy trading with one another. The costs of a war would be enormous and the benefits would be little.¹⁵

Articles such as this demonstrate that the increasing acceptance of Kant as the fountainhead for democratic peace theorizing, even by proxy of Doyle, along with an increasingly central role for trade as a functional component in DPT. Russett and Harry Bliss's 1998 *Democratic Trading Partners: The Liberal Connection* continues this trend by once again invoking Kant as a foundational resource for DPT as well as emphasizing the effects of trade and economic interdependence – something Doyle had telegraphed some 16 years before. They conclude that 'democracy enhances peace directly, and indirectly by promoting trade'. ¹⁶ In this way, the 'material incentive' posited by Doyle as the Kantian third definitive article of perpetual peace inhabits a somewhat conceptually different location: there emerges an account in the International Relations literature of the interaction between democracy *and* trade rather than between peace and democracy *or* trade.

In an attempt to conceptualize this mutual necessity, Russet, John R. Oneal, and David R. Davis published a 1998 article based by and large on the three definitive articles present in Doyle's 1983 paper. The authors explain that:

Immanuel Kant's vision of 'perpetual peace', expressed more than two centuries ago, was built on a tripod of complementary influences: (1) 'republican constitutions' (in modern parlance, representative democracy) would constrain autocratic caprice in waging war; (2) a 'commercial spirit' of trade and economic interdependence would reinforce structural constraints and liberal norms by creating transnational ties that encourage accommodation rather than conflict; and (3) international law (and, in the contemporary era, international organizations), building on an understanding of the legitimate rights of all citizens and of all republic, would provide the moral and legal edifice for the perpetual resolution of conflicts. In Kant's view, it is not simply that each of the three legs of the tripod is useful; each is essential to maintaining the structure of stable peace.¹⁷

Once again a 'commercial spirit' is meant to take the place of cosmopolitan right which, we should recall, was first presented by Doyle as simply a right of fair treatment to foreigners. Aside from the less serious issue of reordering the articles/tripod legs (while the first leg corresponds to the first definitive article, legs two and three correspond to articles three and two, respectively), the authors build on the understanding of Kant that imputes to him a pacifying liberal economic theory. Only 3 years later, in their *Triangulating Peace* Russett and Oneal describe the third definitive article as "cosmopolitan law', embodied in *commerce and free trade*'. ¹⁸ In the same work, they describe the third point of Woodrow Wilson's post-WWI Fourteen Points as Kantian in nature:

Point three echoed Kant's notion of 'cosmopolitan law' in demanding 'removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.¹⁹

These passages, along with the authors' grouping Kant with Adam Smith and Richard Cobden as advocates of free trade, solidified Kant in their work as an advocate of liberal economic theory.

Doyle's 2005 response to Sebastian Rosato's 2003 *The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace*²⁰ extends and reiterates the tripod metaphor employed by Russett, Oneal, and Davis. Rosato's article critiques each institutional and normative logic claimed by democratic peace theorists in turn, to which Doyle responds that 'no one of these constitutional,

international or cosmopolitan sources is alone sufficient, but together (and only where together) they plausibly connect the characteristics of liberal polities and economics with sustained liberal peace'. ²¹ Crucially, this mutual dependence only heightens the indispensability of trade to the liberal peace: without it, the republican constitution and international right (whether enshrined in international law or IGOs) would be insufficient to achieve the observed democratic peace.

Without comparing this interpretation with Kant's original text, we can already see some distortion in the Kant of DPT literature. Doyle's 1983 piece articulated cosmopolitan right before later explaining that a 'spirit of trade' would take hold, but left the relationship between these two things unclear. His later 1986 article differentiated them in a somewhat clearer way: cosmopolitan right engenders a right of hospitality, which makes possible trade, an endeavor always held to be optional. After realist accounts of the democratic peace acknowledged the influence of Kant (e.g. Layne's 1994 Kant or Cant: The Myth of Democratic Peace²²), and other democratic peace theorists like Russett reformulated the Kantian definitive articles into three legs of a 'Kantian tripod' of which one was trade, we see Doyle in 2005 explain the third 'pillar' (presumably another formulation of tripod, but clearly derivative of the three definitive articles) solely in terms of material incentives. Instead of trade being an option made possible through the establishment of cosmopolitan right, Doyle's conclusion subverts the logic completely in this latest invocation of Kant, emphasizing trade's relative importance in DPT by referring to the 2001 Russett and O'Neal study of democratic institutions and trade as 'Kantian propositions' which produce peace.23

A 2008 article by Geoffrey S. Carlson and Doyle garbles the three definitive articles further by presenting them as representative republican government, a principled respect for human rights, and social and economic interdependence.²⁴ The third definitive article, described as 'social and economic interdependence' emphasizes explicitly a 'foreign economic policy of free trade', this time foregoing altogether the discussion of hospitality that was present in his previous renderings of *Perpetual Peace*.²⁵ To the extent that he does mention 'hospitality' later in the piece, he defines it immediately as 'permitting free trade'.²⁶ This qualification marks the final running-together of hospitality and free trade; previously, Doyle himself presented hospitality and trade as processes that were either contemporaneous or predicated upon one another. By this point, the language of 'cosmopolitan right' and 'hospitality' has been largely obscured by the gradual association of liberal economic theory with Kant's *Perpetual Peace*.

Given the 30-year unfolding of DPT, we might take stock of Kant's appropriation by briefly assessing the variance between the original and current scholarly definitions of Kant's third definitive article for perpetual peace, which undergoes the most significant change of the three. In the selection of articles mentioned above, the third definitive article began as cosmopolitan right, which supposedly brings about a feeling of hospitality that lets grow a spirit of commerce. As time progressed, however, the spirit of commerce came to be seen as the most important part of this definitive article, finally succeeding in eclipsing the cosmopolitan right and hospitality to which it owes its possibility. Seeing here that the 'Kant' of International Relations theory has changed over time, we should look back at the original text of *Perpetual Peace* in order to evaluate the

fidelity of the various 'Kants' of democratic peace theorizing, and to see whether or not what they take to be Kant hangs together coherently.

Back to Perpetual Peace

Kant's *Perpetual Peace* contains more than just the three definitive articles referenced at length above. Indeed, prior to the definitive articles is a list of six 'preliminary articles', which details prohibitions and guidelines states must embrace in order for the three definitive articles to guarantee perpetual peace. Before proceeding to the definitive articles, the preliminary articles are worth examining in that they bear on the usage of Kant in International Relations theory.

The first preliminary article, that 'no peace settlement which secretly reserves issues for a future war shall be considered valid' proves crucial because it defines what Kant means by 'peace' in International Relations and thereby frames the aim of the work. He distinguishes between a mere ceasefire and actual peace, which:

signifies the end to all hostilities, and even merely adding the adjective *perpetual* to the term renders it a suspicious-looking pleonasm. The existing causes of a future war, even if perhaps not yet known to the parties themselves, are nullified without exception by a peace settlement.²⁷

Kant sees peace not simply as a *modus vivendi*, but as a stable political environment achieved through the realization of his preliminary and definitive articles. In this way, Doyle and those who invoked Kant after him clearly pick up on the thrust of Kant's argument that achieving the goals of the three definitive articles results in a sustainable peace between similarly republican states.

However, this same preliminary article hints at the crux of DPT's idiosyncratic reading of Kant. While 'peace' for Kant is an ever-lasting goal to be striven for through the actualization of the definitive articles' normative prescriptions, the DPT literature that invokes *Perpetual Peace* largely treats the definitive articles as empirical conditions (i.e. the mere presence of 'republican' institutions, IGO participation, and free trade produces an absence of war). Here, I follow Terry Nardin's insight that this confusion of 'theory and practice' occurs because International Relations (IR) scholars read Kant as a theorist of peace rather than of right (*Recht*, which he translates as 'justice'). As Nardin points out, interpreting Kant in this way is incoherent: because states exist without some sort of overarching authority to enforce a genuine legal order between them, a truly 'perpetual peace' predicated on the existence of particular institutions cannot exist between states.²⁸ Ironically, by treating Kant's normative prescriptions as empirical checkboxes, the 'absence of war' that DPT concerns itself with is precisely the 'ceasefire' that Kant maintains is *not* the robust, normative, and perpetual condition that constitutes actual peace.

Of the five remaining preliminary articles, two in particular pose a larger problem to the image of Kant in DPT outlined above. Preliminary article three demands that 'standing armies shall gradually be abolished entirely', on the prescient grounds that such forces 'prompt other states to outclass each other in the number of those armed for battle, a number that knows no limits'.²⁹ While this concern was instantiated during the Cold War and its prisoner's dilemma-style mixture of fear and uncertainty that resulted in a

nuclear arms race, Kant proceeds to apply this logic to the 'hoarding of riches', 'since this would be viewed by other states as a threat of war and would force other states to carry out preemptive attacks'. He finds that the only reason this 'riches-racing' was not occurring at his time was because of the 'difficulty of assessing the extent of the wealth of the state'. Despite the fact that this worry does not appear to be obviously empirically borne out, Kant makes a judgment about the power of money that should give democratic peace theorists pause; for Kant, there are 'three types of power—military power, the power of alliances, and the power of money—the third may well be the most reliable tool of war'. Thus, Kant is clearly wary of the conflict-inducing capacities of money and links it explicitly with the onset of war. On these grounds, a reading of Kant which emphasizes a Smithian liberal political economy surely overlooks Kant's suspicions here.

The fourth preliminary article stipulates that 'the state shall not contract debts in connections with its foreign affairs', another condition that surely causes tension with liberal political economy. Continuing his analysis from the third preliminary article, Kant explains that 'as an instrument in the struggle of state powers with one another, the credit system, the ingenious invention of a commercially active people in this century, represents a dangerous monetary power'. His primary concern is the propensity of debts to 'grow without limit' within a credit system that 'can be used as a war chest that surpasses in size the wealth of all other states combined and which can be fully exhausted only by the eventual loss of tax revenues'. In this way, Kant moves beyond explaining the ills of money simply; he worries that the credit system can sustain insurmountable debts that 'can nonetheless be staved off for a long period of time by the stimulation of the economy through the effects that the credit system has on industry and commerce'.

Kant almost certainly has European colonial states like the Netherlands in mind, which was able to use external financing to build a considerable empire. It is no coincidence, after all, that the caption 'Toward Perpetual Peace' under a picture of a graveyard in Holland inspired the name of Kant's essay. The inclination to wage war, which he mentions 'seems to be an essential aspect of human nature', alongside a commercial economy capable of creating credit and staving off debt, appear to Kant as a 'great hindrance to perpetual peace'. As in the third preliminary article, the Smithian boon of commerce and capitalism may prove to aggravate tensions under conditions of anarchy rather than ameliorate them.

Beyond the empirical and conceptual troubles of the preliminary articles rest the three definitive articles, which receive effectively all of the attention of the democratic peace theorists when they invoke Kant's work. Because of their centrality to this literature, it is worth going through them one at a time.

The first definitive article declares that 'the civil constitution of every state shall be republican'. This republican constitution is established according to three things:

first, according to principles of the *freedom* of the members of a society (as human beings), second, according to principles of the *dependence* of all on a single, common legislation (as subjects), and third, according to the law of *equality* of the latter (as *citizens of the state*).³¹

Because Kant sees moral autonomy as the condition under which a citizen can obey the laws they give to themselves, a republican civic constitution provides institutions whereby citizens can legislate equally a law to which they are each bound. It is for this reason that Doyle explains that 'republican' for Kant means having 'combin[ed] moral autonomy, individualism and social order'.³² This article, which I mentioned above inspires much of the institutional logic of DPT, provides the guidelines for individual and group constraints on monarchical (or governmental) caprice:

if the agreement of the citizens is required to decide whether or not one ought to wage war, then nothing is more natural than that they would consider very carefully whether to enter into such a terrible game, since they would have to resolve to bring the hardships of war upon themselves.³³

In addition, democratic peace theorists pick up on Kant's claim that a head of state accountable to his or her constituency has personal reasons to avoid war: namely, re-election.

A number have scholars have, however, taken issue with DPT's empirical translation of the first definitive article. Georg Cavallar and John Macmillian, for instance, point out that Doyle's rigid distinction of 'liberal' states from 'non-liberal' states overlooks Kant's sensitivity to degrees of liberality between these two poles.³⁴ Taking a different tack, Antonio Franceschet makes the case that Kant is deeply skeptical about the 'compatibility of sovereignty and freedom', whereas Doyle implicitly assumes that Kant views them as consistent.³⁵ Finally, Luigi Caranti points out that Doyle ignores Kant's attempt to differentiate republican constitutions from despotic ones by detailing the separation of the executive power from the legislative power.³⁶ Republican constitutions ensure a strict separation between these two powers, whereas despotic states allow them to overlap. On Kant's terminology, a democracy is a 'despotism' because it:

establishes an executive power whereby 'all' make decisions over, and if necessary, against one (who therefore does not agree). Thus 'all' who are not actually all make decisions, which means that the general will stands in contradiction with itself and with freedom.³⁷

Despite DPT's relatively stable position that modern democracies satisfy the republican institutions Kant describes, the fact remains that an empirical translation of what Kant understood to be a normative prescription misses what is at the heart of the first definitive article: namely, the establishment of constitutional right.

As noted above, the second and third definitive articles underwent significant changes in definition throughout the lifetime of DPT. The second definitive article, defined at first by Doyle as a kind of pacific union, diverged between being understood as a principled respect for human rights (in Doyle's later work) and the existence of IGOs (in Russett's work). In the primary text of *Perpetual Peace*, however, Kant explains that 'international right shall be based on the *federalism* of free states'.³⁸ In the same way that people in the state of nature who 'bring harm to each other already through their proximity to one another' and 'for the sake of his own security, can and ought to demand of others that they enter with him into a constitution, similar to that of a civil one, under which each is guaranteed his rights', states are similarly forced due to their proximity to either war with each other or enter into a federation of states. The analogy breaks down, however, in that people come together under a state in a relation of superior to subject, whereas states cannot form a state of states (or a state of peoples).

On these grounds, republican states must become part of a 'continually expanding [by virtue of the gradual enlightenment of humankind] *federation* that prevents war' which can 'curb the inclination to hostility and defiance of the law' though there is the constant threat of its breaking loose again.³⁹

Russett's decision to use modern IGOs as a proxy for this pacific union among states again sidesteps Kant's normative prescription to cultivate a sphere of international right. While the language of the UN, which claims to 'maintain international peace and security ... and remove all threats to peace ... in conformity with the principles of justice and international law', and NATO, which purports to 'safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principle of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law', appear to reflect Kant's urge to end all wars permanently rather than to simply set up a *modus vivendi* or ceasefire, these organizations similarly misrepresent Kant's second definitive article as an empirical directive. Moreover, Caranati makes the additional point that by adopting IGOs as a mark of a pacific union, DPT has construed the second definitive article as producing a 'club of democracies, although Kant never meant to restrict access in the federation to republics only'.⁴⁰

Doyle's articulation of the second definitive article from the mid-2000s, namely, that it represents a 'principled respect for human rights', is only accurate to the extent that the pacific union is populated by republican constitutions which respect the moral autonomy of their citizens. In this way, entering a pacific union with other republican states demonstrates at some level an endorsement of a republican constitution's respect for its citizens. A significant divergence, however, centers around Doyle's omission of the 'pacific union' and idea of international right, presumably the central components of the second definitive article. Notably, Doyle's 2008 article *The Silence of the Laws* appears to transplant the substantive content of the third definitive article into the second, so as to leave (his conception of) the third definitive article open to being 'economic interdependence'.

In order to examine this movement further, we must look to the third definitive article as it appears in *Perpetual Peace*. It reads: 'cosmopolitan right shall be limited to the conditions of universal hospitality'. 41 Kant explains that hospitality means 'the right of a stranger not to be treated in a hostile manner by another upon his arrival on the other's territory', likening it to a 'right to visit'. In the same way that the second definitive article pointed to the finitude of the earth as a reason for needing to create a pacific union between peoples, Kant similarly sees this geographical horizon as a reason to adopt a cosmopolitan right which could bring about peaceful relations between peoples. Just as the second definitive article builds on the first given that pacific unions are made up of states with republican constitutions, the third definitive article builds on the second by showing that a pacific union does the negative duty of eradicating war, but not the positive duty of establishing peaceful, cosmopolitan relationships between peoples. Moreover, through all three forms of right (constitutional, international, and cosmopolitan) a community 'among the peoples of the earth has now reached a point at which the violation of right at any *one* place on the earth is felt in *all* places'.⁴² That is, republican institutions, a pacific union, and a right to visit work together in such a way that they produce care and respect for other autonomous moral beings.

Indeed, a considerable body of work (distinct from, and critical of, DPT) has arisen invoking Kant's conception of cosmopolitanism. Garrett Wallace Brown and Daniele Archibugi both point to the centrality of cosmopolitan law in Kant's thought, inasmuch as universal hospitality relies on a conception of cosmopolitan right.⁴³ Similarly, Pauline Kleingeld and Georg Cavallar argue that for Kant commerce has a role in cosmopolitanism, but only when broadly defined as peaceful interaction rather than narrowly construed as free trade.⁴⁴ Notably, Caranti has claimed that DPT's insistence on defining the third definitive article as a mandate for free trade has had the ill effect of overshadowing both the central position of cosmopolitanism in Kant's own work as well as the conceptual possibilities for modern international theorizing contained within this idea.⁴⁵

Kant concludes the third definitive article by explaining that cosmopolitan right 'is a necessary supplement to the unwritten code of constitutional and international right, for public human right in general, and hence for perpetual peace. Only under this condition can one flatter oneself to be continually progressing toward perpetual peace'.46 Russet et al. are right to point to the interconnectedness of the three definitive articles. Although their image of a 'tripod' is attractive because it demonstrates intuitively that all three legs are necessary in order to keep the structure standing, the work on Kantian cosmopolitanism cited above speaks directly to how DPT has misconstrued the third definitive article. As with the first and second definitive articles, the mere presence of free trade as an empirical indicator not only fails to capture the broad range of interactions implied by cosmopolitanism, but also misunderstands how Perpetual Peace attempts to lay out concentric spheres of normative right. We may more fruitfully think of constitutional, international, and cosmopolitan right as concentric circles which center around the first definitive article and billow out. This image maintains the way in which cosmopolitan right follows from international right, which in turn follows from constitutional right, rather than being mutually and simultaneously co-constitutive. In this way, the inadequacies of DPT's 'tripod' model become clear. Under Doyle and Russett's interpretation, the subtraction of (what they take to be) any definitive article would result in the loss of peaceful relationships between democracies. Kant, however, is making a much different point: constitutional, international, and cosmopolitan right are not distinct and unrelated empirical realities, but rather progressive spheres of normative right that develop historically and guide humanity toward peace (rather than 'mere ceasefires').

The larger issue at hand here is DPT's propensity to incorporate liberal economic theory as the 'third leg' of the Kantian 'tripod'. Given what has been said directly above, there is nothing contained within the third definitive article to defend substituting cosmopolitan right for liberal economic theory, or for running these two things together. Within the text of the third article, however, commerce is mentioned twice. The first is in relation to Kant's discussion regarding the finitude of earth's surface and the inevitability for peoples to come into contact with each other:

Uninhabitable parts of this surface, the sea and the deserts, separate this community, but in such a way that the *ship* or the *camel* (the ship of the desert) makes it possible to come into contact with one another across these regions that belong to no one, and to use the right to the *surface*, which is common to the human species, to establish commerce with one another.⁴⁷

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Here, commerce is certainly not held to be something coextensive with cosmopolitan right, nor is it even judged to be a material incentive for peace. Even on a generous reading of the DPT texts, in which we understand hospitality as something which is supposed to bring about the good of commerce, we find no support in this passage.

The second passage, however, draws a connection between commerce and *in*hospitality. It reads: 'if one compares with this the *inhospitable* behavior of the civilized states in our part of the world, especially the commercial ones, the injustice that the latter show when *visiting* foreign lands and peoples ... take on terrifying proportions'. 48 Here, democratic peace theorists run into a problem: namely, that Kant appears to believe that some commercial states externalize 'injustice' when 'visiting foreign lands and peoples', which for him is an impediment to the attainment of perpetual peace. Thus, Kant sees commerciality neither as something necessary nor sufficient for perpetual peace and explicitly decouples commerce from hospitality.

A growing body of research on Kant's attitudes toward colonialism sheds further light on this passage. Howard Williams, for instance, notes that the civilized states which Kant remarks acted inhospitably are the European visitors to other 'Asian, African, American and Australasian people'. On his account, Kant's conception of cosmopolitan right mandates that colonial Europeans approaching the residents of these 'uncivilized' states must nevertheless treat them as equals, rather than inferiors.⁴⁹ This reading of the third definitive article is corroborated by the contents of the second preliminary article: namely, that no states should acquire others 'through inheritance, exchange, purchase or gift' on the grounds that such an action would 'annul its existence as a moral person and ... treat this moral person as a mere thing'.50 Liesbet Vanhaute explicitly links Kant's view of commerce with his critique of colonialism, claiming that the third definitive article aims in part to ensure that colonizers do not force commercial interaction, but rather enter into it through contracts.⁵¹ In this vein, preliminary articles three and four (citing the ill effects of 'riches-racing' and foreign finance, respectively) similarly identify how colonial powers exploit commerce to the detriment of peace. Finally, Lea Ypi has perhaps gone furthest in evaluating the intersection between Kant's critique of colonialism and his views on commerce. She argues that over the course of Kant's career, his early optimism about economic interaction is inextricable from his endorsement of a racial hierarchy, whereas his later skepticism (which begins to appear in Perpetual Peace) about the positive effects of trade are tied to a more profound appreciation of its conflictual tendencies. Indeed, in Kant's later Critique of Judgment, 'the development of commercial sociability is itself seen as part of conflicts, both within the state (due to the dissatisfaction of oppression between classes) and between states (due to their ambition, greed, and commercial rivalries)'.52

While democratic peace theorists may attempt to counter Kant's decoupling of commerce and hospitality by pointing to the empty modality of commerce here (or, in other words, that commerce is not necessarily a material good or incentive for perpetual peace) and claiming that in concert with constitutional and international right it explains the peace they observe, they must still reckon with the implication of the above passage that a state can be *both* civilized (i.e. have a republican constitution and presumably be part of a pacific federation) and commercial without exhibiting cosmopolitan right. Simply put, DPT's conception of Kant is only possible assuming complete ignorance of the

nuanced critique of colonialism that emerges throughout Kant's oeuvre. As such, commerce (narrowly defined as free trade or economic interaction) cannot adequately substitute as the 'third leg' of the Kantian 'tripod', both because this once again conflates Kant's normative prescription with an empirical directive, and because Kant's position with regard to trade and commerce is complicated by his critiques of colonialism.

So far, of the three definitive articles in *Perpetual Peace*, the third appears to have undergone a transformation within the DPT literature itself (having moved from hospitality *and* commerce to commerce only) as well as with respect to the primary text (inasmuch as commerce is not described as a material good or incentive, nor is it tied to cosmopolitan right explicitly). Two other mentions of trade and commerce located in the First Supplement ('On the Guarantee of Perpetual Peace') to *Perpetual Peace* illuminate where Doyle, Russett, and others may be drawing from.

The Supplement describes a 'guarantee' of perpetual peace, whereby Kant means that the process of Enlightenment, humankind's asocial sociability, and the finitude of the earth will result inevitably in humanity's striving toward this desideratum. In his words, albeit phrased in rather deterministic language, 'what *guarantees* perpetual peace is nothing less than the great artist *nature* (*natura daedala rerum*). The mechanical course of nature visibly reveals a purposive plan to create harmony through discord among people, even against their own will'.⁵³ Knowing that the term 'nature' in the passage above appears fatalistic or metaphysical, Kant hedges by explaining:

The use of the word *nature* is also, when speaking here merely of theory (not religion) more appropriate for denoting the limits of human reason (as reason, regarding the relation of effects to their causes, must confine itself within the limits of possible experience) and *more modest* that the expression of a *providence* that is knowable to us.⁵⁴

Kant's project in this section of the work is to give a historical account, co-extensive with humanity's enlightenment, that demonstrates both how and why humanity is faced with the necessity of establishing perpetual peace, but also to implore states to embrace these demands, which in themselves respect the moral dignity of humanity. Kant goes so far as to offer this account in a straightforward list: first, 'she [nature] has made it possible for human beings to live in all the regions of the earth that they populate', second, 'through *war*, she has driven humankind in all directions, even into the most inhospitable regions, in order to populate them', and third, 'through war she has compelled them to enter into more or less legal relations with one another'.

In addition to justifying Kant's 'guarantee' of perpetual peace, trade and commerce appear in two places in the Supplement. The first mention describes the beginnings of contact between groups of people Kant might have called 'uncivilized'. Claiming that salt and iron were 'the first widely sought after articles of trade among different people', Kant explains that 'it was trade that first brought them into *peaceful relations* with one another and thereby into relationships based on mutual consent, community, and peaceful interactions even with remote peoples'. The DPT literature recognizes what appears to be the causal relationship between trade and peace implied here. What is misconstrued, however, is the role this relationship plays in the broader logic of *Perpetual Peace*. Kant here explains the first interactions of peoples who have found themselves in

contact with each other. Thus, trade is not something contemporaneous with the establishment of constitutional and international right, as the 'Kantian Tripod' seemingly implies. Moreover, it should be clear that trade is not interchangeable with hospitality and cosmopolitan right, given their basis in constitutional and international right. While Kant argues that this precivilized trade led to peaceful relations (importantly, not *peace* in the everlasting way he describes it), the peoples between which it took place can hardly be said to constitute republican states. Indeed, as we saw in the third definitive article, commerce or trade is not necessarily coextensive with justice. Given the first supplement, we should not necessarily group commerce or trade with civilization, or the existence of constitutional right or international right.

The second mention of trade appears to be couched temporally alongside the three definitive articles, but again is not meant to be conceptually coextensive with them. Kant explains that nature unites people even 'by means of mutual self-interest, peoples whom the concept of cosmopolitan right would not have secured against violence and war'. 56 That is, outside of the three concentric circles of right outlined in the definitive articles, mutual self-interest in the form of trade *can* serve a pacific role:

it is the *spirit of trade*, which cannot coexist with war, which will, sooner or later, take hold of every people. Since, among all of the powers (means) subordinate to state authority, the *power of money* is likely the most reliable, states find themselves forced (admittedly not by motivations of morality) to promote a noble peace and, wherever in the world war threatens to break out, to prevent it by means of negotiations, just as if they were therefore members of a lasting alliance.

Given this passage, two things should be clear: first, a spirit of trade, in this instance seemingly pacific, is not the same thing as hospitality. In fact, Kant points to this spirit of trade as something non-moral that could compel those who do not support cosmopolitan right. Second, there is no explicit causal relationship between trade and cosmopolitan right; they both bring about peace but are not reducible to one another, nor do they imply one another. In the final analysis, the spirit of trade appears in this instance to ensure progress toward peace precisely at the moments in which cosmopolitan right fails to be realized (or, in DPT parlance, the externalization of democratic norms fails). By conceptualizing the role of trade in this way, Kant makes explicit the conceptual distinction I made above; namely, that trade can be understood as a merely empirical institution but should not be confused with the normative sphere of cosmopolitan right. This passage alone demonstrates how DPT's definition of cosmopolitanism *as* trade is not only imprecise, but conceptually impossible.

Given what appears in the text of *Perpetual Peace*, DPT's conception of Kant most seriously misconstrues the third definitive article, which calls for cosmopolitan right and the extension of *hospitality*, by imputing to Kant a Smithian advocacy of liberal economic theory. Not only is it simply not the case that Kant's third definitive article is about trade or commerce, but Kant discusses trade as an empirical custom completely divorced from the normative sphere of cosmopolitan right. We see this both in the third definitive article, when he mentions that certain civilized states that engage in trade act unjustly and without hospitality, as well as in the first supplement when Kant points to trade as a possible pacifier for those who are not compelled by cosmopolitan right. Furthermore, Kant does not offer any clear causal story linking trade and hospitality, or vice versa.

Complicating matters further are Kant's differing accounts of trade, commerce, and money. We should recall that in the third preliminary article, Kant calls the power of money 'the most reliable tool of war' on the grounds that hoarding riches causes conflict, while in the first supplement, he explains that this same 'power of money' is 'most reliable' in promoting a 'noble peace'. Similarly, the fourth preliminary article cautions against the credit system, 'the ingenious invention of a commercially active people in this century', because it could become a 'war chest', while the first supplement claims that the spirit of trade 'cannot co-exist with war'. Here, even critics of Kant's association with trade in the DPT literature do not adequately explore the complexities I lay out here. Beate Jahn, for instance, concludes that while there is 'nothing inherently peaceful about economic interaction ... [it] can make a positive contribution if it is entered into voluntarily'.57 In the same way, Vanhaute and Caranti assert that Kant would endorse 'fair' international trade entered into 'voluntarily'.58 However, the tensions detailed above demonstrate that Kant's attitude toward trade is not reducible to a call for 'fairness'. Rather, commerce and trade for Kant must be understood in terms of his philosophy of history, critiques of colonialism, and conception of normative spheres of right.

These ambiguities, alongside the clear differentiation Kant makes between hospitality and trade, invites us to reassess the way in which DPT draws on Kant, and to explore whether or not Kant's own discussion of trade (rather than the one imputed to him) is conceptually beneficial for DPT.

Moving forward

Thus far, the aim of this article has been to examine the ways in which the portrayal of Kant in DPT has distorted over time with respect to itself as well as the primary text. An analysis of this transformation affords us valuable insight into both why the Kant of DPT has changed over time and what a look back at *Perpetual Peace* can offer us. Looking at Kant's historical and conceptual presentation of trade and democracy bears on both DPT's usage of trade, as well as the debate between DPT and the emerging body of literature under the umbrella of 'capitalist peace theory'.

Within DPT as such, there are obvious reasons to want to incorporate trade into the Kantian profile. Clear, declarative statements such as 'the spirit of trade ... cannot coexist with war' make this appropriation easy and persuasive, and moreover facilitate folding Kant in with liberal economic theorists like Adam Smith. As described above, democratic peace theorists have over time associated more and more closely the advocacy of liberal economic theory with Kant's project in *Perpetual Peace*, despite the conceptual ambiguity of trade that I outlined. This movement almost certainly is not malicious, careless, or even intentional, but it nevertheless underlies an important point: DPT needed to account for the relationship between trade and peace, and found that incorporating the notion of trade's pacific effects would bolster the argument as a whole. Moreover, assimilating trade into the picture provides democratic peace theorists with the ability to articulate their project in terms of a tripod, which came to fruition in Russett and Oneal's *Triangulating Peace*.

In addition, there were clearly academic reasons to include trade in the analysis, given the reinvigoration of capitalist peace theorizing in the early 2000s following a period of

relative dormancy after Russett and Wallensteen's 1967 and 1973 (respectively) studies featuring some key pacific features of capitalism.⁵⁹ Given the centrality of capitalism and open markets to capitalist peace theory, democratic peace theorists appeared to use the 'third leg of the Kantian tripod' (or, to them, trade, commerce, and economic interdependence) to provide their theory with more explanatory power. As this debate progressed, however, the scopes of these two research programs became more ambiguous, eventually to the point of overlapping. According to Gerald Schneider and Nils Petter Gleditsch:

empirically, the literature on the capitalist peace is often hard to distinguish from other research programs in the field. For instance, commercial liberalism, one of the established cornerstones of the Kantian peace tripod, never focused exclusively on trade, but encompassed all sorts of economic bonds between nations.⁶⁰

Trade's potential explanatory power, alongside DPT's unfolding entanglement with capitalist peace theory, has cemented trade and commerce as one of the foundational 'legs' of the 'Kantian tripod'.

Because of the way it transforms *Perpetual Peace's* spheres of right into modern 'tripod legs', DPT's appropriation of Kant rests on a fundamental confusion of normative and empirical theory. On these grounds, a conception of DPT true to *Perpetual Peace* is conceptually impossible. Having said this, however, a look back at *Perpetual Peace* should inform democratic peace theorists committed to invoking Kant on how to articulate a usage of trade that not only avoids the trappings of having to choose between hospitality *or* trade, but also affords the ability to distinguish its use of trade from capitalist peace theory. While Kant continues to serve as a central inspiration for democratic peace theorizing, there should be less focus on attempting to insert trade into the third definitive article and more on how trade holds a certain modality in Kant's thought with respect to its pacific qualities.

We should recall here the ambiguities with which I closed the preceding section of this article: Kant explains that commerce served both as a way to bring precivilized peoples into peaceful relations as well as a way to secure peace even for those who do not participate in cosmopolitan right, but simultaneously cautioned against the conflict-inducing power of 'riches hoarding' and a credit system, two things which are presumably inextricably bound up in trade and commerce. This modality forces us to reevaluate the conceptual role trade has in DPT.

Russett and Oneal present 'economic interdependence' as one of three tripod legs (the other two being IGOs and a republican constitution/democracy) supporting 'peace'. On their account, there is a reciprocal causal relationship between each of these legs as well as a similarly reciprocal relationship between each leg and 'peace' in the center. As I mentioned above, a restructuring of this conceptual model is necessary. Instead of Russett and Oneal's tripod legs, a more strictly Kantian construction would resemble something like a bulls-eye: three concentric circles, the smallest of which is republican institutions, surrounded by a larger circle denoting a pacific union, inside the largest circle denoting cosmopolitan right. In this model, the way in which cosmopolitan right builds on international right, which in turn builds on constitutional right, is apparent. More importantly,

however, this visualization emphasizes the relationship between the three domains of normative right and resists DPT's tendency to treat the three definitive articles as practically distinct empirical institutions.

Notably absent here is trade: because of the potentially conflict-inducing features of trade and commerce, as well as the place in Kant's teleological history it inhabits, trade and commerce figure into our conceptual picture at two specific points. First, given Kant's situating these phenomena among the first interactions of presocial peoples, trade and commerce serve as an indeterminate or ambiguous interaction which fostered an embryonic peace, subject to dissolution. We should recall here the distinction that Kant makes between a 'mere ceasefire' and *perpetual* peace, 'the end of all hostilities'.⁶² These proto-pacific interactions, instead of invariably resulting in peace, present the 'demand' that the three definitive articles of perpetual peace be realized. That is, by virtue of humanity's unfolding rationality and the finitude of space on earth's surface, the initial interaction of trade and finance presents the preliminary conditions after which the Kantian project can be realized. As he makes clear in *Perpetual Peace* as well as his later writings, riches and a credit system have a potentiality to be conflict-inducing, meaning that trade and commerce themselves are insufficient to produce peace.

The second appearance of trade and commerce is alongside the concentric circles of constitutional, international, and cosmopolitan right, but not within them. As per Kant's 'first supplement', the 'spirit of trade ... cannot coexist with war'. Much like the title of this section, however, Kant goes on to argue that the spirit of trade can act as a supplement when the spirit of hospitality fails. That is, if negotiations cannot be made on the grounds of mutual respect and hospitality, they can be made in a non-moral way based on material benefit. Once again, economic interdependence appears as a contingency plan for perpetual peace, rather than a weight-bearing 'leg'. Trade serves as conceptual bookends for the three definitive articles: both setting the grounds for the three definitive articles to be taken up and providing ad hoc supplementation should the three definitive articles falter. While this construction may sound similar to the many-arrowed triangle that Russett and Oneal describe, there is a distinct difference: trade and commerce, though potentially conflict-inducing, bring about the conditions under which democratic institutions, pacific unions, and hospitality can emerge. Moreover, the realization of the three definitive articles protect against the possibility of trade and commerce inspiring conflict. Thus, any causal relationship between economic interdependence and peace is necessarily mediated by the introduction of a republican constitution, pacific union, and spirit of hospitality, affording DPT a more nuanced position on free trade than capitalist peace theory.

On these grounds, democratic peace theorists can invoke Kant in order to distinguish themselves from scholars who claim that capitalist peace theory invalidates DPT, or that the democratic peace is merely an epiphenomenon of capitalism.⁶³ My restructuring of Kant speaks directly of this situation: trade and commerce *can* lead to peace, but only when mediated by the three definitive articles. That is, there is not a direct causal relationship between trade and peace; just because precivilized peoples traded in their first pacific interactions, this did not preclude the onset of conflict. Moreover, during the establishment of constitutional and international right a spirit of commerce

can have pacific effects, but only if those two spheres of right already exist (since it is a contingency measure for the third definitive article, hospitality, rather than all three definitive articles). In this way, democratic institutions, along with pacific unions and a spirit of hospitality, are central to ensuring that trade and commerce are pacific, rather than conflictual. In the final analysis, by framing the effect of trade on peace in terms of *Perpetual Peace*, democratic peace theorists can problematize the direct causal arrow between trade/commerce and peace (thus, rebuffing the claim that democracy is simply a consequence of capitalism) as well as show that democratic institutions are indispensable both in their own right in bringing about peace, but also in making trade and commerce pacific rather than war-inducing.

Conclusion

I have argued here that the appropriation of Kant in the democratic peace literature has warped over the past 30 years. His *Perpetual Peace* became a conceptual cornerstone of DPT, which invoked a 'tripod' made up of Kant's 'three definitive articles for perpetual peace'. Although the third of these was first described as a spirit of hospitality or cosmopolitan right, it soon became altogether replaced by economic interdependence, which in itself blossomed into something that resembled Smithian liberal economic theory. A look back at Kant's seminal work, however, casts doubt on this interpretation. The third definitive article mentions trade only in passing, and certainly does not offer a causal story between trade and peace. Other selections from *Perpetual Peace* render a more ambiguous picture: trade appears in some circumstances to be peaceful, which the democratic peace theorists have picked up on, but also conflict-inducing, which the same scholars let pass over in silence. This ambiguity, however, is rich with overlooked conceptual tools for democratic peace theorists.

Perhaps most striking are the resources *Perpetual Peace*, the original text used as the theoretical framework for DPT, contains within it to help adjudicate between DPT and capitalist peace theory. Kant's sustained relevance to this theoretical venture is underplayed, however, to both his and the theory's disadvantage. By imputing to Kant a Smithian liberal economic theory, Doyle, Russett, and other democratic peace theorists find themselves attempting to rebut capitalist peace theory's claim that democracy is a mere epiphenomenon of capitalism. Had they followed out Kant's analysis of the actual implications of trade, they would have been able to more precisely articulate the role of trade in their own theory: determinative of peace only to the extent that it is mediated by democratic institutions, pacific unions, and a spirit of hospitality. In this way, by using Kant's own views on trade and commerce instead of a broader classical liberal one, DPT can meaningfully and conceptually differentiate itself from capitalist peace theory on the very theoretical grounds from which it spawned.

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