

## **Advancement of Global Peace Building from the Periscope of Kant's Philosophy of Perpetual Peace**

Eyo, Emmanuel Bassey Ph.D

*Department of Philosophy University of Calabar Calabar.*

*Corresponding Author: Eyo, Emmanuel Bassey Ph.D*

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**ABSTRACT:** The topic of discourse titled “Advancement of Global Peace Building from the Periscope of Kant’s Philosophy of Perpetual Peace” is centered on the clarion call for the placement of the study of Arts and Humanities at the forefront of human existential candescence. Global peace is a phenomenal thrust in Arts and Humanities, which if jettisoned could affect our existence. Within this frame of conception, Kant’s Philosophy of perpetual is examined in Arts and Humanities to proffer to solution to man. Kant’s perpetual peace as an expository and critical adumbration reveals the indispensability of Arts and Humanities in all facets of man’s endeavours. Kant’s indulgences in the philosophy of perpetual peace was a call for nations and individuals to pursue peace and build on it for existential benefits and global peace. His insistence on “love, virtuous duty to others and respect” where founded on dignity on man. The objective of the work is to reemphasis that within the ambience of Kant’s philosophy of peace adequate interest into ought to be placed to the study of Arts and Humanities. Contemporaneously, man has experienced terrorism, kidnappings, wars and other forms of conflicts which has impeded peace building and universal harmony. The critical and analytical methods of philosophy as reflected in this work educe that through the instrumentality of Arts and Humanities, advancement of global peace is a possibility through Kant’s perpetual peace. Man therefore needs and desire peace, build on peace for continuous enjoyment of nature’s beneficence.

**KEY WORDS:** Peace, Global Peace, Perpetual Peace.

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

In recorded history of man, there had been rapid and radical experiences which have threatened the existence of man and other creatures of the world. Most of these threats are natural, others are man-made. But man faced with this dilemma of possible annihilation of his existence seeks and creates avenues for harmony and peace. These efforts becomes the fulcrum upon which man looks for peace and advance peace which has been conceived as global, personal and spiritual phenomenon.

Pertinently, most scholars and philosophers have consistently propounded theories on peace which have characterized and guided our life endeavours. One of these philosophers who have painstakingly adumbrated extensively on peace is Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher, whose work on peace is deduced from an essay entitled “Toward Perpetual Peace” a philosophical sketch published in 1795. The occasion for this essay emanated from the endorsement of the Treaty of Base by Prussia and Revolutionary France in Mach 1795.

According to Kant, this ‘Treaty’ is not associated with peace but its thrust is hinged on the suspension of hostilities. By implication, suspension of hostilities is a temporary exercise which can be eroded when the parties decide to denigrate an accord freely entered into by them. Kant further argues that citizens of nations and “mankind” in universal terms must dutifully solve the problem of violence and enter into the cosmopolitan ideal of a universe community of all people governed by the rule of law (Bohman and Lutz – Bachmann – <http://nitpress.mit.edu>)

At this juncture, one stresses that global peace could be advanced from the periscope of Kant’s Philosophy of perpetual peace and importantly peace initiative of Kant is presently enjoying general acceptance globally. Again, it is the contention of this paper, that Kant’s theory of perpetual peace was never a scientific enterprise. It was squarely placed within the ambience of Arts and Humanities which is central in the construction of the imaginativemodel of experience and primarily in verbal disciplines,

The sentiment of this paper is that the topic of this discourse being Arts and Humanities inclined, gives mankind full value and support to knowledge in order to achieve a better understanding of the past, a better analysis of the present and a better view of the future. These temporal orderings makes man a master of his world and a problem solver of his predicament.

### **Conceptual Constructions**

**Peace:** different lexical meanings colour our constructions of peace and other relevant concepts in this paper. Primarily, the Chambers 20<sup>th</sup> Century Dictionary defines peace viz, “as a state of quiet, freedom from disturbances from near cessation of war, a treaty that ends war, freedom from contention, ease of mind or conscience, tranquility” (852).

These constructions are synonyms but clearly educe social, global and natural dimensions of peace. From social dimensions, peace pre-empt harmony and concordance within the perspective of human socio-political volitions and their interactions. From global perspectives, peace is conceived as the universalization of harmony among nations and continents. The synonym of global peace is world peace. Which betrays a totality of serenity among creations, creatures and existences.

Peace from the natural dimension is represented by the state of calm and freedom from disturbances; by extension it includes normalcy of environmental conditions and even absence of natural disasters.

Philosophically, peace as a concept becomes a difficult one to define. But from some theories and postulations of philosophers, philosophical meaning becomes apposite. Dukor presents a succinct picture of variations of the concept, ‘peace’ as couched by philosophers. In his words “Plato, in his *Republic* argues that the peace within his tripartite components of the soul is analogous to the peace within his three categories of individuals in the society. Great philosophers of contractarians, as they are often called, like Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau, postulated peace as the reason for the emergence of civil society. Statesmen, diplomats, Imams, Clergymen and even security men preach about peace as the *sine-quo-non* for the progress of the society.

Benedict de Spinoza asserted that “peace is no more absence of war, but is a virtue that springs from forces of character”. Peace however pervades all cultures and religion. Judeo-Christian religion, (Bible), the Holy Quran conceive peace variously as the function of mind, culture and society.

### **Peace Building**

This concept was popularized by a widely cited publication of a former UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali in his Agenda for peace. This publication came into existence in 1992. But in 1995 he identified and modified a dimension of peace building under the umbrella “pre-conflict peace building”. These include such measures like de-militarization, the control of small arms, institutional reforms, improved police and judicial systems, the monitoring of human rights, electoral reforms and social and economic development” (Eyo, Udofia&Edor 8).

Again the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA) defines pre-conflicts peace building as a proactive process that requires identification of conflict incidences, analysis of conflict structure, actors and trends, adoption of relevant responses and management mechanism, and restoration of trust and confidence of conflict parties in each other (Eyo, Udofia&Edor, 8).

By implication, peace building generally aims at creating and ensuring the conditions of mere absence of violent conflicts management and a more comprehensive process of sustainable peace (Eyo et al 9).

### **Kant's Philosophy of “Perpetual Peace”.**

These dimensions of societal, inter-societal, international and global peace appear to be the total contents of Kant's essay on perpetual peace. On this note, we are poised to critically attempt an exposition of Kant's theory on peace.

### **Perpetual Peace: Socio-Political Considerations.**

Kant described his proposed ‘Peace Program’ as containing two steps, the “Preliminary Articles” and the “Definitive Articles”.

Going through his essay entitled “Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch” one identifies six steps proposed by Kant to be taken with all deliberate speed by the international communities of his time. These include:

1. “No treaty of peace shall be held valid of which there is tacitly reserved matter for a future war”.
2. “No independent state, large or small, shall come under the domination of another state by inheritance, exchange, purchase or donation”.
3. “Standing armies shall in time be totally abolished”.
4. “National debts shall not be contracted with a view to the external friction of state”.
5. “No state shall by force interfere with the constitution of government of another state”.
6. “No state shall, during war, permit such acts of hostility which would make mutual confidence in the subsequent peace impossible such are the employment of assassins (precursors), prisoners (venefici), breach of capitulation, and incitement of treason (perduellio) in the opposing state” (Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch <http://www.mtholyoke.edu> ).

Kant proceeds to propose what could be referred to as the prognoses for the ideal state in his definitive articles I, II and III. The first distinctive article argues that “the civil constitution of every state should be republican”.

The mode of governments however, is incomparably more important to the people than the form of sovereignty, although much depends on the greater or lesser suitability of the latter to the end of (good) government. To conform to the concept of laws, however, government must have a representative form, and in this system only a republican mode of government is possible, without it, government is despotic and arbitrary, whatever the constitution may be. None of the ancient so called “republics” knew this system, and they all finally and inevitably degenerated into despotism under the sovereignty of one, which is the most bearable of all forms of despotism (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu>).

Indeed, for Kant, it is the “Republican Constitution” that is authentically derived from the idea of the original compact. This is because the constitution is established, firstly, by principles of the freedom of the members of a society (as men); secondly, by the principles of dependence of all upon a single common legislation (as subject); and thirdly, by the law of their equality (as citizens). Kant therefore underscores state freely established by collective harmony of the will of the citizens.

The notion of freedom is further emphasised in the second definitive article for a perpetual peace which argues that “the law of nations shall be founded on a federation of free state”. Free states according to Kant, are a league of nations, which enter into a constitution similar to the civil constitution for the sake of security and right. “Free States” do not mean a state consisting of nations since a state implies a relation of a superior (legislation) to an inferior (obeying). A league of nations is like a people saying “there ought to be no war among us, for we want to establish a supreme legislative, executive and judicial power which will reconcile our differences peaceably.

The third definitive article for perpetual peace argues that the law of world citizenship shall be limited to conditions of universal hospitality. This notion of universal hospitality is anchored on tolerance of co-habitations as no one, originally had more right than another to a particular part of the earth. Kant in this third article condemns piracy in seas and deserts, slavery on stranded traders, as these goes against the duties of hospitality. On the same note, Kant condemns colonialism by the so called “World Powers” as a great vice of inhospitality. Western colonialism is interpreted by Kant as an evil, a great obstacle to perpetual peace. He says “the injustice which they show to lands and people they visit (which is equivalent to conquering them) is carried by them to terrifying lengths”.

America, the lands inhabited by the Negro, the Spice Island, and the cape, were at the time of their discovery considered by these civilized intruders as lands without owners...under the pretense of establishing economic undertakings, they brought in foreign soldiers and used them to oppress the natives, excited widespread wars among the various states, spread famine, rebellion... (Kant, Perpetual Peace; A Philosophical Sketch, <http://www.mtholyoke.edu.ucad/intrel/kant> )

From the foregoing, Kant accuses the colonial masters of history as those who sowed the seed for widespread war among the states on grounds of economic exploitation and extortion. For Kant each atrocities are against his principles of morality as explicated by the formula of the kingdom ends.

The *Essay on Perpetual Peace* also in its content is a discourse on the opposition between morality and politics with respect to perpetual peace. Kant conceive morality in politics as a necessary condition for perpetual peace and condemns the idea of political morality. If there is no freedom and no morality based on freedom and everything which occur happens by more mechanism of nature certainly politics (which is the art of using this mechanism for ruling men) is the whole of practical wisdom, and the concept of right is an empty thought. But if one finds it necessary to connect the later with politics and even to raise it as a limiting condition thereon, the possibility of their being united must be conceded. “I can easily conceive of a moral politician, that is, one who chooses political principles that are continent with those of morality, but I cannot conceived of a political moralist, one who forges a morality in such a way that it conforms to the state advantage” (Kant, Perpetual Peace; A Philosophical Sketch, <http://mtholyoke.edu/ucad/interl/kant>).

However, Kant admits that there is a tension between the situation of acting morally and acting legally. The tension lies in the fact the acting legally accommodates the presence of some forms of constraints, as not all willfully consider obeying civil laws as a duty that should be freely performed. Morality based on freedom, if it were to be pursued by all politicians, then even at the level of international politics, there will be efforts to resolve conflict by an appeal to a moral maxims of autonomy, natural law and the kingdom of ends. His representative republican state, therefore, should have a ruler who tries to resolve conflict and disputes, dutifully, in accordance with the moral maxims of a categorical imperative. However, since the human nature displays the tension between moral choice and immoral as well as the freedom to settle either, the plausibility of law arises.

Civil laws generally act as consequence of the need to keep the state intact. To this extent, legal morality at times appears as a forced morality. Kant's position is that just as it is with the citizen of the state, international citizenship can as well display the necessity of legal morality. In this regard, states could be made

to forcefully conform to laws that have the stamp of categorical imperatives, in view of sustaining peaceful co-existence in a global manner. Such laws are championed by the international sovereign bodies that have the character of republican settings – international sovereignty freely established by the League of Nations.

### **Advancement of Global Peace Building from Kant's Philosophy of Perpetual Peace**

This thematic discourse as espoused in this paper reveals that, advancing of global peace building with the aid of Kant's Perpetual Peace unravel the increasing value Arts and Humanities provide to the benefit of man and his society. From Kant's paradigm of Perpetual Peace, one realises that he has pre-empted the initiatives which ought to be promoted by the United Nations (in Kant's word "League of Nations"). Kant's ideals were proposed to ensure global peace which could help protect human dignity and peaceful relations among nations. Facilitate this, Kant attempted to contribute towards a vision that can foster pluralism, mutual understanding and equal participation of citizens and nations of the world, rather than discrimination and marginalization. Apparently, inclusiveness of "others" in world activities becomes the bedrock of global peace. It is understandably imperative to note that, cultural, religious and political hegemonies cause disaffection and exacerbate levels of mistrust which had been the bane of global disharmony.

The six steps of Kant's proposal of perpetual peace excite respect for cultural, religious and political diversities which are the major challenges against world peace. By the standard of these six steps, global peace becomes prerequisite for productive discourse which could lead to fruitful exchanges that are beneficial to all of humanity. In addressing and building on peace initiatives globally, man and nations collective efforts should focus on drawing citizens of the world together rather than dividing them.

In the course of advancement of global peace building, more emphasis should be placed on promoting universal values, respect for human rights and dignity, including the collective heritage of humankind. Modern appraisal of Arts and Humanities can facilitate greater exchange of ideas, which could contribute towards bolstering dialogue among and within cultures and civilizations.

In this context and cognizance of basic thrust of Kant's perpetual peace and global peace building, one could create bulwarks to protect and encourage creativity, support peaceful endeavours, artistic expression in all fields and to give room for cultural, social, religious and political dissemination and exchange. Also in a world of increasing diversities where more and more people of different backgrounds are interacting and living together, it is crucial that social and political policies encourage confidence in a free, respectful and tolerant peaceful environment. Advancement of global peace from the perspective of Kant's perpetual peace bespeaks that nations and continents of the world ought to enhance mutual understanding and emphasise a culture of peace to support harmonious relationship among people and uphold human dignity for all.

## **II. CONCLUSION**

To this extent of discourse, one could plausibly say with vehemence that Kant's perpetual peace in global peace building is necessarily dependent in his categorical imperatives freely choose or forcefully imposed through civil laws and international laws. Kant's perpetual peace urges that where morality is pursued by politicians and citizens, whether intra-state, inter-state there will be no need for war, arms in their sophisticated dimensions of neither complexity nor even soldiers. War for him is in itself an evil that has no moral justification (Eyo et al 190)".

The thrust of the paper utilises Kant's perpetual peace as a foundation for global peace. Again collective security requires concerted efforts of bringing together expertise, capacities and competencies of citizens at the local, national, regional and international levels. Institutional and policy frameworks that foster greater understanding can form elements of more effective confidence and peace building measures that contribute to global peace and security. This work on Kant's philosophy of perpetual peace as a paradigm for global peace has emblazoned the indispensability and importance of Arts and Humanities in our epistemic existential contours.

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