

Taking Action as a World Citizen: Reinterpreting Kant's Cosmopolitan Right

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Abstract

This article proposes a novel interpretation of Kant's cosmopolitan right, emphasizing the moral obligation toward others in difficult situations. Its theoretical foundation rests on two concepts from Kant's thought. The first involves the historical origin of the conception of cosmopolitan rights. Kant held that individuals have the right to travel freely and believed that interaction through travel fosters tolerance of other cultures. The second, borrowing from C. M. Korsgaard, involves plight and the conception of practical identity. First, the article will briefly explain the conception of practical identity, the capacity of humanity derived from Korsgaard's constructivist interpretations. This section will explore how individuals understand the happiness of others and how to integrate it with the discussion in *Doctrine of Virtue*. Second, the article will examine various scholarly opinions on how individuals evolve into world citizens. It will also highlight the critical role of philosophers and intellectuals in leading society towards enlightenment, outlining their responsibility to educate and guide the public. Finally, the article will address any potential objections to the arguments presented therein.

Keywords: cosmopolitan rights, global justice, Kant's political philosophy, Korsgaard's constructivist interpretations, world citizen

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如世界公民般行動： 再探康德世界公民法權

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摘要

本文針對康德世界公民法權提出一種新穎的詮釋——康德世界公民法權強調對於他者艱困的處境具備道德義務。該詮釋的理論基礎奠基於康德思想的兩種概念。第一點涉及康德世界公民法權的歷史溯源。康德主張，個體具有自由遷徙的權利，並且認為由遷徙所發生與他者之間的互動能夠促進行動者對於他者文化的寬容。援引於 C. M. Korsgaard，第二點涉及人的特性與實踐認同的概念。首先，本文將奠基於 Korsgaard 建構論詮釋，簡要闡述實踐認同的概念以及人性能力。在該節中，本文將會探討個體如何在《德行論》的框架底下理解他者的幸福；接著檢視當代不同研究者對於個體如何轉變為世界公民的觀點。本文將強調哲學家與知識份子扮演領導社會思辨以臻至公眾啟蒙的重要角色，同時重述知識份子陶冶並領導公眾責任。最後，本文將針對潛在的質疑與挑戰進行回應。

關鍵詞：世界公民法權、全球正義、康德政治哲學、柯斯嘉德建構論詮釋、世界公民

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I. Introduction¹

This article proposes a novel interpretation of Kant's cosmopolitan rights, emphasizing the moral obligation toward others in difficult situations. Its theoretical foundation rests on two concepts from Kant's thought. The first involves the historical origin of the conception of cosmopolitan rights. Kant held that individuals have the right to travel freely and believed that interaction through travel fosters tolerance of other cultures.

The second, borrowing from C. M. Korsgaard, involves plight and the conception of practical identity. As a leading Kantian theorist, Korsgaard's constructivist interpretation suggests that individuals are compelled to take benevolent actions, producing principled maxims. Through the categorical imperative, the actions of an individual are regulated according to objective universal principles. By adhering to these principles, an individual develops a practical identity that embodies their duties and ethical commitments.²

Our discussion of Korsgaard's interpretation of Kant's philosophy connects arguments about global justice with the cosmopolitan right and provides an explanation for the motivations of individuals to abide by principled duties. To draw upon our statement, we will concentrate on the recent deficiency of global injustice studies, unevenly emphasis on the constitution of international institutions rather than taking the motives of agents into consideration, at first and further point out Kant's arguments from *Doctrine of Virtue* effectively incorporate with cosmopolitan rights.

Speaking of the recent studies of global justice, Kantian scholars and global justice

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² Contemporary Kantian interpretations debated whether we can isolate the influence of Kant's moral philosophy on political philosophy, see Chou (2017, pp. 9-12). This article offers an ethical explanation, that is, taking Kant's moral philosophy as an approach to deal with puzzles in his political philosophy. However, it is important to clarify that the objective of this article is not to subordinate the moral philosophy to political philosophy or imply any hierarchical relationship between them. Instead, this article suggests that Kant's moral philosophy and political philosophy overlap with each other on the topics of cosmopolitan rights and the concept of virtue.

researchers tend to emphasize the crucial role of states and global institutions in solving global problems (Reglitz, 2019). Within Kantian studies, there are differing viewpoints regarding the ideal international regime. Some scholars infer from the teleological assumptions in Kant's writings that the optimal structure at the international level would be an organization with coercive power capable of maintaining global order, essentially a world government (Formosa, 2014; Ulaş, 2021, pp. 436-439). However, other scholars contest the notion of world government, arguing that global issues can be more effectively addressed by strengthening the sovereignty of individual states (Rostbøll, 2020, p. 258). A leading figure in this debate, K. Flikschuh, presented the following argument in her controversial article, "Kant's Sovereignty Dilemma: A Contemporary Analysis":

On both counts, Kant's position diverges from current cosmopolitan theories more radically than tends to be recognised. Methodologically, he cannot reason by analogy from the domestic to the global context: his is instead what I shall call a "systemic" approach to global theorising. Substantively, Kant's acknowledgement of states as a distinct type of moral agent puts pressure on the moral individualism often associated with his name by current positions. Surprisingly, from a Kantian perspective, meeting aspirations towards global justice may require a strengthening, not a curtailment, of sovereign statehood. (Flikschuh, 2010, p. 472)

Flikschuh's analysis acknowledged the differing views on state sovereignty between the Anglo-American perspective, advocated by C. W. Morris, and the continental tradition, emphasizing that "Kant's essentially benign juridical sovereignty conception is closer to the continental than to the Anglo-American tradition" (Flikschuh, 2010, pp. 473-474). According to this view, the state manifests the collective will of its citizens. Flikschuh (2010, pp. 478-482) highlighted a paradox within Kant's framework: the state, characterized by moral personality, must reconcile its role as a domestic law imposer with its status as a sovereign entity, leading to what she terms the "sovereignty dilemma." To navigate this dilemma, Flikschuh examined the case of humanitarian intervention, proposing that in certain situations, deviation from universal principles might be justifiable. This perspective implies that strengthening the sovereignty of states can be a

pragmatic approach to addressing global challenges (Flikschuh, 2010, p. 489).

Global justice researchers have also emphasized the crucial role of states, particularly affluent states. In the book *Cosmopolitan War*, C. Fabre incorporated humanitarian intervention and global justice within a cosmopolitan theory of justice. Typically, humanitarian intervention is associated with war or military action. However, Fabre views humanitarian intervention from an egalitarian perspective, asserting that every individual has the right to a decent life, which goes beyond the mere preservation of liberty. Fabre (2012, pp. 16-38) also argued that it is the responsibility of every individual to alleviate the dire conditions of others. On this basis, Fabre linked the issue of poverty with the concept of a just war:

severe deprivation also arises as a result of policies which contribute to causing it (in violation of the right not to be subject to severe deprivation), and policies which consist in a refusal to help its sufferers (in violation of the right to receive assistance). (Fabre, 2012, p. 105)

In other words, to resist severe poverty, those suffering from deprivation have the right to launch a war against the affluent when these two types of rights are violated (Fabre, 2012, p. 107). Thus, from Fabre's perspective, the concept of humanitarian intervention is not necessarily related to military action; instead, humanitarian intervention is an alternative approach to resolving severe deprivation problems (Nili, 2019).

However, employing "strengthening sovereign statehood" as a strategy to address global justice issues, particularly in the context of world poverty and humanitarian intervention, may result in a gap between expectations and reality.

The primary factor influencing a state's decision to intervene is not the strength of its sovereignty but the willingness of the sovereignty. Particularly, when taking the case of world poverty as an example, we will see "most people do not believe that they are morally responsible for the persistence of world poverty, or even mistakenly believe, in my view, that they are not morally responsible for the persistence of world poverty" (Shei, 2005, p. 140).

In short, the effectiveness of states in addressing global issues such as world poverty hinges on whether their citizens perceive a moral obligation to improve existing

conditions. Consequently, even if we accept Flikschuh's argument advocating the strengthening of sovereign statehood as a solution, it presupposes a collective willingness to actively address unjust poverty – a premise that often proves untenable.

Furthermore, considering humanitarian interventions in East Asia, such as the 2014 Hong Kong Umbrella Movement, the situation becomes more complex. Even in a hypothetical scenario where powerful states possess the right to intervene for the protection of Hong Kong citizens' rights, the complex dynamics of realist politics, which are pivotal for powerful states, still play a significant role in global affairs (Chen, 2019, pp. 141-143). Hence, to alleviate the incumbent global injustice, we have to deal with the motives for human actions firstly.

This article will reinterpret Kant's conception of cosmopolitan right based on Korsgaard's constructivist articulations such as conception of practical identity and Kant's words for *Doctrine of Virtue* as an interacting procedure for an individual to cultivate oneself into a World Citizen. Before drawing upon Korsgaard's constructivist articulations, we have a penchant for understanding the conception of cosmopolitan right:

This right, since it has to do with the possible union of all nations with a view to certain universal laws for their possible commerce, can be called cosmopolitan right (*ius cosmopolitanum*). (Kant, 1797/2017, p. 131 [6: 352])

Textfully speaking, while reading Kant's following paragraphs of citation, we find that cosmopolitan right as a protection for mutual visiting of people living in different surroundings. Particularly, the "commerce" mentioned in the citation refers to "Wechselwirkung" in the Duetsch, interaction or intercourse. Based on historical viewpoint, the cosmopolitan right, for Kant, also represent the legitimacy of land-appropriation or occupation between European society and other areas (Kant, 1797/2017, p. 132 [6: 353]). Given the expectations to establish a rightful condition for mutual visiting, cosmopolitan right was proposed by Kant. In contemporary, the affluent states have duties to ensure the global institutions be just for the poverty and to integrate the poverty into global cooperations are based on the samiliar logic. To avoid economic deprivation among sovereign states and to invigorate motives of the citizen of sovereign states to voluntarily help the poverty, we should reinterpret Kant's cosmopolitan right on

the basis of Korsgaard's constructivism.

In fact, if we take Kant's illustrations of imperfect duties and cosmopolitan right into consideration, we find there is a theoretical similarity with his description of the duty of virtue:

It is a duty to oneself as well as to others not to isolate oneself (*separatistam agere*) but to use one's moral perfections in social intercourse (*officium commercii, sociabilitas*). While making oneself a fixed center of one's principles, one ought to regard this circle drawn around one as also forming part of an all-inclusive circle of those who, in their disposition, are citizens of the world – not exactly in order to promote as the end what is best for the world but only to cultivate what leads indirectly to this end: to cultivate a disposition of reciprocity – agreeableness, tolerance, mutual love and respect (affability and propriety, *humanitas aesthetica et decrum*) – and so to associate the graces with virtue. To bring this about is itself a duty of virtue. (Kant, 1797/2017, p. 235 [6: 473])

In Kant's moral philosophy, Kant distinguishes between perfect and imperfect duties and mentions duties of virtue to oneself as well as to others. Specifically, in terms of perfect duties to oneself and others, people cannot commit suicide and lie against another. Conversely, imperfect duties to oneself and imperfect duties to others refer to pursue own self-perfection and promote other's happiness. According to Kant's explanations in *Groundwork*, people have to positively practice imperfect duties while taking actions to harmonize with formula of humanity (Kant, 1785/2012, pp. 38-39 [4: 430]). From the citation and Kant's conceptions of perfect/imperfect duties, we observe, by fulfilling the duty of virtue, individuals cultivate their dispositions as citizens of the world. Particularly, constructivist perspective offer sufficient justification for the formation of identity. Consequently, from Korsgaard's constructivist interpretation, Kant's cosmopolitan right is not merely as a right of resort, but a right for human beings to pursue self-perfection and promote other's happiness, and a transformation of political rights into a universal right of humanity to deal with global challenges (Muthu, 2012, pp. 199-200).

The idea of a cosmopolitan right is therefore not fantastic and overstrained; it is a necessary complement to the unwritten code of political and international right, transforming it into a universal right of humanity. Only under this condition can we flatter ourselves that we are continually advancing towards a perpetual peace. (Kant, 1970/1991, p. 108 [8: 360])

We can observe that the role of the cosmopolitan right rests on fostering perpetual peace, which cannot be achieved through the rights of nations alone. Fundamentally speaking, in order to present Kant's concept of cosmopolitan right and its application to global justice issues, this article suggests a Kantian interpretation from an individual perspective. Specifically, we posit sovereign states play intermediate agents when dealing with global injustice issues. Through constructivist articulation of Korsgaard, we view cosmopolitan right as an abstract objective principle governing all parties. Even though sovereign states are intermediate agents, their existence and institutions are still vital for maintaining domestic justice which operate with a rightful regulations and ensure cosmopolitan right, mutual visiting, plausible. Once interactions among human beings much more frequent, people can recognize others' struggles and further cultivate their own perfection and promote others' happiness via building a just institution. Simultaneously, the binding and motives between principles and agents can be more strengthened that is helpful to alleviate the existing gap of global injustice.

Besides, according to the above literature review, we found that global justice studies less concern with the motives of human actions. We believe this article can mitigate the phenomenon by incorporating constructivist illustration with cosmopolitan right. This article is structured as follows. First, we will briefly explain the conception of practical identities derived from Korsgaard's constructivist interpretations. This section will explore how individuals understand the happiness of others and how to integrate it with the discussion in *Doctrine of Virtue*. Second, we will examine various scholarly opinions on how individuals evolve into world citizens. It will also highlight the critical role of philosophers and intellectuals in leading society towards enlightenment, outlining their responsibility to educate and guide the public. Finally, the article will address any potential objections to the arguments presented therein.

II. The Basic Abilities to Take Actions as a World Citizen

This article adopts Korsgaard's constructivist interpretation to constitute a human being with morality. In the following sections, we begin by examining two foundational concepts proposed by Korsgaard to understand Kant's moral philosophy. These are "the capacity of humanity for conferring value" (Korsgaard, 1996, p. 123) and "practical identities" (Korsgaard, 2009, p. 21).

A. The Capacity of Humanity for Conferring Value

Kant's theory highlights the difference between maxim and principle. Broadly speaking, unlike a maxim, a principle is governed by the procedure of categorical imperative and regulates all human beings due its universal and objective qualities. As Kant outlined in the *Groundwork of Metaphysics of Morals*, three formulas, the Formula of Universal Law, the Formula of Humanity, and the Principle of Autonomy are used to assess the universal validity of a subjective maxim. When a maxim aligns with all these formulas, the action of an individual will be regulated by the universal and objective principles, which also regulate the actions of others. This implies that every individual has a duty to act in accordance with these universally applicable principles.

However, this explanation remains controversial among Kantian scholars. A fundamental question arises: why should we assume that an individual inherently tends towards following these principles and practicing their associated duties when taking action? In fact, this conundrum posed a challenge for Kant himself.

In the 18th century, as the sentimentalists debated the motivations behind human actions, Kant put forward his own perspectives. Kant aimed to solidify the concept of a principle by addressing not only the motivation behind actions but also the binding relationship between principles and agents. According to Korsgaard's statement, Kant critiqued the sentimentalists for effectively explaining why people are motivated towards certain ends but not adequately addressing how these motivations bind individuals to moral principles (Korsgaard, 1996, pp. 47-48). In Kant's view, the sentimentalists attributed motivation to arbitrary factors such as personal inclinations or preferences,

which do not suffice to legitimize an objective principle, much less to ensure actions conform to universal principles. Kant argued that any principle effective in regulating action must encompass two elements: motivation and binding force (Korsgaard, 1996, pp. 43-44). Kant believed that sentimentalists failed to explicitly clarify how binding could be achieved. From Korsgaard's perspective, Kant successfully identified and resolved this gap.

To clarify the reasons why agents take action towards an end and tend to accept the Formula of Humanity, which emphasizes treating others as the end in itself and is a crucial aspect of the categorical imperative process in legitimizing an objective principle, we must consider the role of the Formula of Humanity in the process of moral legislation. This involves understanding that the capacity of individuals is a fundamental prerequisite for individuals to assess whether their maxim can be elevated to a universal principle through the application of the categorical imperative.

We begin with the Formula of Humanity, described by Kant (1785/2012, p. 38 [4: 429]) as follows: "So act that you use humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means." This not only serves as the substance of a formal principle but also positions individuals as agents capable of respecting others in accordance with the principle. However, accepting the capacity of humanity to establish an end for a maxim raises a question: How can we ensure that an agent's reasoning for setting up and conferring value to this end constitutes an objective and universal action?

Korsgaard explains the characteristics of the Formula of Humanity as follows:

The argument for the Formula of Humanity depends upon the application of the unconditioned/conditioned distinction to the concept of goodness. (Korsgaard, 1996, p. 117)

From the above, we see the value an agent confers to an end must be considered as conditioned goodness since, for Kant, the only unconditioned goodness is "good will" (Kant, 1785/2012, p. 7 [4: 393]). When agents act without good will, their actions merely manifest the moral endowment of human beings, which means the actions do not have any morality in themselves (Kant, 1785/2012, p. 8 [4: 394]). Conversely, when an agent

motivated by good will confers conditioned goodness onto the end of their action, there is a substantive reason for this conferral, and the end itself is imbued with conditioned goodness.

According to Korsgaard, each individual sets up and confers value to the end of their actions because people have a belief that their end is objectively good (Korsgaard, 1996, p. 120). In this way, agents accept their end as a given, and a binding connection between the agent and the principle is formed. Additionally, it is important to remember Kant's distinction between unconditioned and conditioned goodness. Applying this distinction to the concept of goodness, Korsgaard further elaborates this point:

If you view yourself as having a value-conferring status in virtue of your power of rational choice, you must view anyone who has the power of rational choice as having, in virtue of that power, a value-conferring status. (Korsgaard, 1996, p. 123)

Indeed, some may question whether there are subjective factors that influence an agent's conferral of value when setting up an end. To address this concern, Korsgaard (1996, p. 120) asserts that "a rational action must be done with reference to an end that is good, and a good end is one for which there is a sufficient reason."

As the capacity of humanity develops, the binding between the principle and the agents is formed by setting an end to the agent's maxim. At the same time, the end of their actions aligns with the concept of conditioned goodness, which is conferred by the capacity of humanity. The process of setting ends to one's own actions cultivates individual practical reason and reinforces equality among people through the value-conferring procedure.

In this way, the capacity of humanity as the prerequisite step confirms the possibility of the application of the Formula of Humanity. Meanwhile, the Formula of Universal Law provides a sound binding relationship between the objective principle and the agents.

B. Practical Identities

In addition to the capacity of humanity, the concept of individual plight is another

crucial factor in motivating agents to act, according to Korsgaard's arguments. Essentially, by fulfilling their duties according to moral principles, agents develop a sense of identity and further self-constitute to embody specific roles, such as a father, an employee, or a world citizen. As Kant put it:

While making oneself a fixed center of one's principles, one ought to regard this circle drawn around one as also forming part of an all-inclusive circle of those who, in their disposition, are citizens of the world – not exactly in order to promote as the end what is best for the world but only to cultivate what leads indirectly to this end: to cultivate a disposition of reciprocity – agreeableness, tolerance, mutual love and respect (affability and propriety, *humanitas aesthetica et decrum*) and so to associate the graces with virtue. To bring this about is itself a duty of virtue. (Kant, 1797/2017, p. 235 [6: 473])

Upon closely examining the text, we might be surprised to discover that the internal motivation to act in accordance with objective principles is a crucial aspect of Kant's theory of moral constitution. Therefore, before delving into the concept of "practical identity" as developed by Korsgaard, it is worth rethinking the relationship between individual rights, the state, and moral principles.

We have to make a clarification about Kant's conception of a state. Actually, we tend to represent a belief Kant's state aims at protection of human rights is a narrow narrative when merely understanding from *Doctrine of Right*. We believe, even though cosmopolitan right is a part of public rights, we can realize cosmopolitan right as a framework for fostering human beings to practice imperfect duties, cultivating themselves perfection and promotion of others' happiness; especially, from the perspective of *Doctrine of Virtue*.³ As one of Kant's significant political writings, *The Metaphysics of*

³ I would like to present my gratitude to one of anonymous reviewers who suggests to clarify the function between *Doctrine of Right* (DR), and *Doctrine of Virtue* (DV). As the paragraphs, articulated in this article between pp. 12-15, point out, a well-ruled state, people respect with the principles, only exists theoretically, which is acknowledged by Kant when he illustrated the preface of DV. He said it is essential to consider the motives of human actions. By his words, we tend to establish a binding relationship between the agents and the establishment of rules and prudentially reconsider the motives of human actions. Otherwise, even though people take actions by the rule, their actions may be taken *by duty* instead of *from duty*. That is,

Morals comprises two parts: the *Doctrine of Right* and the *Doctrine of Virtue*. Within the *Doctrine of Right*, there are two intricate and profound concepts concerning the state of nature. The first is the stage in which individuals are not subject to the authority of the state. Prior to the formation of a civil state, tasked with safeguarding individual rights and citizenship under universal principles, all claims over external objects by individuals were provisional (Kant, 1797/2017, pp. 50-51 [6: 257]; Varden, 2020, p. 270). For these acquisitions to become permanent possessions, there exists a duty for individuals to leave the state of nature and become subjects of a state. This state, vested with authority and power, is responsible for protecting the property rights of its members through the enforcement of public law (Kant, 1797/2017, p. 93 [6: 306-307]). A cursory understanding of Kant's state of nature reveals it as an unjust condition characterized by a lack of public law regarding individuals' rights and properties (Kant, 1797/2017, pp. 57-59 [6: 264-266]).

The second expression of Kant's state of nature historically reflects the actual circumstances of the 18th century. This period, marked by burgeoning trade activities, saw an escalation in conflicts of interest, intensifying tensions between nations and often leading to wars. Notably, during these international interactions, even in the absence of "public law" to ensure the rights of nations, the states, as moral agents, continued to view themselves as equal (Kant, 1797/2017, pp. 97-98 [6: 312], 124-125 [6: 343-344]).

Analyzing Kant's exploration of the state of nature reveals a fundamental premise: before the establishment of the civil state, each individual, in the state of nature, inherently possesses values of equality, freedom, and independence. Kant's conceptual journey starts from the notion of private law. Due to the demand for an external authority to resolve the unjust conditions in the state of nature and fulfill the duties of individuals, a state inevitably emerged to secure the achievement of distributive justice that was lacking in the state of nature (Kant, 1797/2017, pp. 92-93 [6: 306]). The authority of this state plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the innate values of equality, freedom, and independence that individuals hold in the state of nature. The presence of a state leads to

they just negatively complete the regulations, from Kant's perspective, such actions can not be read as moral actions but also not helpful for people to pursue self-perfection, not to mention promotion of others' happiness. Thus, from my personal viewpoint, reading *The Metaphysics of Morals* from DV can assist us to rethink the function of agents comprehensively.

an intriguing and deeply significant question: if the state already protects all individual rights, why did Kant still assert that individuals have a duty of virtue towards others and oneself in *Doctrine of Virtue*? That is the reason why we have to read cosmopolitan right from *Doctrine of Virtue*.

First, all the objective principles are the consequences of the categorical imperative, which means they all comply with the Formula of Universal Law. However, Kant does not attribute the process of the formation of the principles to democratic deliberation, as Rousseau argued. Instead, Kant differentiates between perfect and imperfect duties and uses four examples – cases of suicide, lying, personal cultivation, and promoting others' happiness – to illustrate the three formulas of the categorical imperative (Kant, 1797/2017, p. 163 [6: 390], 1785/2012, pp. 31-33 [4: 421-423]; Taylor, 2005, pp. 612-614). In Kant's analysis, the maxim of one's action should be evaluated by the agents themselves. The approach implies that all the agents are capable of willing their maxim to become a universal law; thus, agents will not theoretically hesitate to take actions in accordance with the rule. While, in the real world, people do not necessarily take actions in accordance with principles but might sometimes violate the rules and derive happiness from these violations (Kant, 1797/2017, p. 155 [6: 379]). Just like our discussions regarding global poverty issues, there is a gap between expectations and reality. Hence, a well-ruled state, people respect with the principles, only exists theoretically. For a just state to become possible in practice, it is essential to establish a binding relationship between the agents and the establishment of rules and prudentially reconsider the motives of human actions. On the other hand, even though people take actions by the rule, their actions may be taken *by duty* instead of *from duty*. That is, they just negatively complete the regulations, from Kant's perspective, such actions can not be read as moral actions but also not helpful for people to pursue self-perfection, not to mention promotion of others' happiness. Once human actions cannot manifest morality, they cannot become the ideal moral beings, which violate a duty:

A human being has a duty to carry the cultivation of his will up to the purest virtuous disposition, in which the law becomes also the incentive to his actions that conform with duty and he obeys the law from duty. (Kant, 1797/2017, p. 161 [6: 387])

The establishment of a sense of identity plays a crucial role in motivating individuals to voluntarily and positively fulfill their duties. Within the framework of the state, a potential puzzle arises: an individual might live comfortably and without concern, even when the rights of others are threatened or when others live in extreme poverty without adequate care. Therefore, when personal rights are sufficiently protected by the state, the agent may not concern with the situation of others.

The conception of practical identity offers a potential solution to this puzzle. Through practicing the imperfect duty to themselves, one of the duties of virtues, agents will gradually recognize themselves as world citizens, in terms of *Doctrine of Virtue*, “a fixed center of one’s principles” (Kant, 1797/2017, p. 235 [6: 473]). Simultaneously, agents have an imperfect duty to others, that is, promotion of other’s happiness.

In terms of contemporary concept of social justice, we believe human beings’ imperfect duty to promote others’ happiness can be realized as states’ moral obligations to their subjects. Of course, we all know Kant did not view the achievement of happiness of subjects as states’ end (Kant, 1797/2017, pp. 99-100 [6: 313-315]). While, the state has duty to provide its subjects with a just environment to pursuit their own happiness (Wood, 2008, pp. 196-197). Hence, from descriptions about imperfect duties within *Doctrine of Virtue*, how a state establish a civil society with justice for personal protections of rights and achievement of happiness rests on every individual acknowledge and practice its imperfect duties which let *Doctrine of Right* be plausible.

C. How to Know the Happiness of Others

Having delved into the constructivist explanation and explored the characteristics of Kant’s cosmopolitan rights from a historical perspective, in this section, we focus on the *Doctrine of Virtue* to further elaborate on why, according to Kant, an individual possessing virtue would inherently be considered a world citizen.

As discussed previously, Kant metaphorically describes the duties of virtue as a circle, with the agent at its center. The conception of practical identity shows that agents recognize themselves through the practice of their duties. Besides, drawing from *The Metaphysics of Morals*, we can reaffirm that the duties of virtue are equivalent to the duties of a world citizen (Kant, 1797/2017, p. 253 [6: 473]). Specifically, the duties of

a world citizen entail promoting others' happiness. In contemporary terms, this would include aiding those facing extreme poverty or famine or those living under constant threat, such as human rights lawyers in totalitarian regimes. To understand Kant's rationale for the duty to others more fully, we can examine his own words on the subject.

Kant's explanation of the Formula of Humanity includes a critical distinction between perfect duties and imperfect duties, each carrying distinctive meanings. The perfect duty to others is that people cannot make a false promise to others because this lying behavior might treat others as a means rather than an end. Thus, human beings cannot make a false promise to others owing to agents' personal interests. The imperfect duty to others is the duty to promote others' happiness. Specifically, Kant explicitly points out that even if an individual does not directly contribute to the happiness of others, the spirit of *humanity as an end in itself* can still be upheld, albeit in negative form. In other words, to cultivate their own virtue and to manifest the positive dimension of humanity, people have to practice their imperfect duties to others, which includes actively promoting others' happiness (Kant, 1785/2012, p. 39 [4: 430-431]). Most importantly, when human beings take actions to promote the happiness of others, individuals manifest their own positive humanity, cultivate their own perfection, and, most importantly, transcend their own inclinations, becoming moral beings.

This discussion leads to an important question. What is the conception of happiness? For Kant, happiness is an idea rooted in imagination, one that necessarily draws on experiences (Kant, 1785/2012, pp. 28-29 [4: 418]). Considering the nature of happiness, Kant argues that agents cannot make their own happiness the ultimate goal of their actions. If they do so, the resulting principle falls under the category of a hypothetical imperative; that is, the action is not guided by a true objective principle applicable to all, and the individual engaging in such action cannot cultivate their virtue. Therefore, according to Kant, happiness should be regarded as an additional consequence of one's actions, not the primary end or objective.

While agents have a duty to contribute to the happiness of others, they cannot presume to define what constitutes happiness for others. Kant emphasizes the importance of the relationship between principles and agents, particularly how the setting of ends for their maxims is crucial for establishing this bond. Additionally, if agents were to decide what constitutes others' happiness or set ends for others' actions by speculation, this

would constitute heteronomous obedience to principle. The key here is that every rational being is actually a member of the “Kingdom of Ends.” In this kingdom, each individual, as a sovereign entity, is not subject to the will of others while engaged in the process of lawgiving (Kant, 1785/2012, p. 41 [4: 434]). This implies that while people have a duty to promote the happiness of others, this duty should not be based on their own speculative understanding of what happiness is for others. Moreover, happiness should not be set as the primary end or objective in itself.

The question of how an individual can understand another's happiness and, at the same time, enact objective principles to promote it poses significant challenges. If an individual imposes own purposes on others through the formulation of principles, this leads to the heteronomous will of the individual over others. Kant explains this point in *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. On the one hand, Kant acknowledges that individuals can respect the rights of others while remaining indifferent to their needs, allowing the world to function in a negative sense. However, this approach to action cannot be elevated to a universal law applicable to everyone through the test of the categorical imperative. The reason is that each person will have moments when they need help from others. Hence, if this principle of action becomes a universal law, individuals will undoubtedly find themselves unable to receive assistance from others in unfavorable situations.

On the other hand, Kant also states that unless each individual promotes the happiness of others, a truly harmonious relationship, as envisaged by the positive aspect of the criterion of humanity, cannot be realized. Given that individuals naturally seek their own happiness, fulfilling the positive aspect of the criterion of humanity requires aligning one's goals with those of others (Kant, 1785/2012, p. 39 [4: 431]). This means that promoting others' happiness should not be solely reliant on an individual's conscious effort or cognitive ability. Instead, it involves establishing principles that ensure the fundamental well-being of others. More precisely, individuals must respect the humanity of others, which encompasses recognizing and valuing their capacity to act with good intentions. Additionally, when individuals transcend the animalistic stage to attain moral personality, it signifies that the good will of others is fully developed, and the unconditional value of the good possessed by others as human beings are recognized (Korsgaard, 1996, pp. 123-124).

We might find the answer in Kant's writings or in the interpretations of contemporary scholars. As previously mentioned, Kant emphasizes the importance of mutual visits between people. Based on the assumption of human sociability, he posits that interactions lead to a deeper understanding between individuals. Consequently, cosmopolitan rights, conceptualized as rights of resort, facilitate the creation of primary knowledge about others.

Ultimately, people naturally want assistance in dire moments, meaning the maxim, "leave another alone," cannot become a universal principle valid to all. For Kant, when an individual exercises their rational capacities to set ends and form principles in the process of legislation, the moral principles generated by using the criterion of humanity serve not only to highlight the individual's humanity but also contribute to the elevation of others' happiness. In other words, as long as individuals act following moral principles, their actions can lead to an increase in the happiness of others.

In this regard, Kant presents the scenario that although the promotion of others' happiness cannot become a universal law to forcibly regulate everyone, individuals can still, through the formulation and enforcement of principles, passively restrain others from engaging in actions that cause harm. In broad terms, individuals acting by principles that align with the criterion of humanity undoubtedly serve as a means to enhance the happiness of others.

III. Sphere of Public Discussion Is Needed to Create World-Citizens

In the essay "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose," Kant describes the historical viewpoint of human progress as "the realization of a hidden plan of nature" (Kant, 1970/1991, pp. 50-51 [8: 27-28]). Some researchers even attribute the development of humanity towards the identity of world citizenship entirely to the influence of natural providence (Patrone, 2014, pp. 133-136, 141). However, such interpretation seems to deliberately overlook the possibility of developing individual practical rational abilities within Kant's theory and ignores Kant's concept of historical progress is not the result of linear development. It erroneously takes natural providence as the sole basis of Kant's teleology (Marwah, 2016).

According to “Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose,” individuals cannot recognize that they are gradually becoming world citizens in the process of achieving perpetual peace. Thus, the process of human beings realizing perpetual peace is driven and guided by natural forces. Individuals sequentially learn the meaning of freedom, understand the purposiveness of nature, and fully develop their natural talents to become world citizens under the enlightenment of nature, thereby achieving a cosmopolitan state. The viewpoint that natural forces drive individuals to become world citizens is also discussed in ‘the Supplement’ of Perpetual Peace. While, the limitations of individual rationality cannot surpass the scope of reason, the guidance and propulsion of natural forces are beyond the rational scope of individuals with limited rational abilities (Kant, 1970/1991, pp. 108-109 [8: 360-362]). Thus, before human beings develop their capability for self-constitution, Kant confers philosophers with a task to illuminate the public.

Actually, we can elaborate on the statement from the fact although Kant's advocacy for cosmopolitan right carries a teleological tone, he subtly reduces the “providential design” to the guidance of natural forces and does not explicitly define the theoretical basis of cosmopolitan rights as teleology (Nussbaum, 1997, pp. 15-16).

In fact, Kant's description of humanity being guided by natural providence in the text lacks consistency in discourse, instead leaving room for the transcendence of individual rational abilities. In “An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?,” Kant says:

For enlightenment of this kind, all that is needed is *freedom*. And the freedom in question is the most innocuous form of all – freedom to make public use of one's reason in all matters. [...] All this means restrictions on freedom everywhere. But which sort of restriction prevents enlightenment, and which, instead of hindering it, can actually promote it? I reply: the public use of man's reason must always be free, and it alone can bring about enlightenment among men; the *private use* of reason may quite often be very narrowly restricted, however, without undue hindrance to the progress of enlightenment. (Kant, 1970/1991, p. 55 [8: 37])

According to this text, Kant affirms the individual's rational use and considers the

value of enlightenment to be that each individual can freely use reason to think boldly and pursue knowledge courageously. While affirming the use of reason, he also emphasizes the benefits of rational thinking for free action (Kant, 1970/1991, pp. 57-60 [7: 89]).

In terms of Korsgaard's constructivism, which serves as the theoretical basis for explaining how individuals become world citizens, highlighting the use of individual practical rational abilities, if we agreed with Korsgaard's constructivism in describing the development of individual rational abilities, we would agree individuals should possess the ability to self-construct. This ability allows individuals, under the identity of world citizens, to develop moral principles with a cosmopolitan spirit and act according to these principles. However, the narrative of philosophers' task in enlightenment seems to deny the individuals' ability to independently develop practical rationality and self-constructing abilities, attributing the cultivation of these abilities to the contribution of philosophers instead.

To obtain clear answers to the doubts and misunderstandings, we should examine Korsgaard's interpretation of teleology. As a constructivist Kantian scholar, Korsgaard does not ignore the importance of teleology:

A teleological conception of the world is essential to our functioning as agents. We need the world to be organized into various objects in order to act. To recognize an object as doing something or as producing a result of some kind is to identify it with reference to our own purposes and powers of action. (Korsgaard, 2009, pp. 39-40)

In examining the discussions of teleology, she conceptualizes it as an important ability of individuals, defining the intrinsic functions of both artificial and natural objects on one hand, and on the other hand, granting individuals the ability to conceptualize the world (Korsgaard, 2009, p. 38). Under Korsgaard's teleological proposition, animals as natural products do not exist for the purpose of becoming human food or riding carriers (Korsgaard, 2009, p. 39). At the same time, animals and stones as natural products do not possess the intrinsic functional purpose of teleology. Only individuals, as beings who continuously act and replicate actions in time and space, grant intrinsic functional purposes of good and evil judgments through normative construction principles, giving

purpose meaning only to individuals. In this sense, self-conscious actions conceived of oneself teleologically have significant meaning for the individual's development towards world citizenship. As rational beings, by continually engaging in actions that make themselves world citizens, individuals will develop a set of moral principles aligned with a state of perpetual peace through normative construction principles. By granting the ability of purpose value to these principles and constructing world citizenship identity through actions, individuals will unfold their ability to conceptualize the world (Korsgaard, 2009, pp. 41-43). In the process of publicly using reason to think, the innate nature of free thought that exists within everyone gradually becomes liberated and enlightened. This leads individuals to extend the application scope of their rational abilities from their internal being to the construction of their external living environment.

Given the discussions about human capacity to self-constitution and providence design, we emphasize constructivist arguments and also view intellectuals a crucial role in ensuring people develop their humanity, promote the happiness of others, and ultimately become world citizens committed to advancing global justice. In the procedure of mutual visiting, people establish a better understanding for each other and self-constitute a practical identity as a world citizen when we positively read the cosmopolitan rights. Thus, before elaborating on the function of intellectuals, we should review previous literatures on becoming a world citizen.

A. Previous Viewpoints on Becoming a World Citizen

Facilitating an individual's journey to becoming a world citizen, or specifically, helping individuals realize that they have a responsibility to others, remains a challenge. Several researchers have focused on this issue and offered useful insights. Borrowing the conception of civic education from Roman Stoics, Nussbaum has proposed that cosmopolitan education can help individuals gain better self-knowledge. In this way, people can understand their obligations to the world and cooperate to solve global issues (Nussbaum, 1996, pp. 8, 11, 15). Conversely, Muthu proposes the concept of productive resistance, emphasizing the equal self-worth of individuals. Muthu (2014, pp. 70-73, 86) explores 18th-century nomadic conflict to address injustices, domination, and oppression. As interactions become more frequent, the potential for injustice may increase. However,

through productive resistance against domination acknowledging the equal worth of every person, human dignity can be upheld globally. Additionally, this interconnection can motivate aggressors to pursue peace, fostering equality and mutual respect. Hurrell (1990, pp. 195-196) emphasizes the function of the state in making perpetual peace possible. He notes that domestically, in the process of decision-making, people often influence the behavior of their rulers. With a focus on security and peace, the realization of a peaceful world becomes a more attainable goal.

These perspectives are persuasive and useful for considering the approach to becoming world citizens. However, we should also reflect on Kant's own views about human beings becoming world citizens. Notably, Kant expressed concern about human passion in relation to the achievement of perpetual peace. In his work "A Renewed Attempt to Answer the Question: 'Is the Human Race Continually Improving?'" Kant specifically comments on people during the French Revolution:

All this, along with the *passion* and *enthusiasm* with men embrace the cause of goodness (although the former cannot be entirely applauded, since all passion as such is blameworthy), gives historical support for the following assertion, which is of considerable anthropological significance: true enthusiasm is always directed exclusively toward the ideal, particularly towards that which is purely moral (such as the concept of right), and it cannot be couple with selfish interests. (Kant, 1970/1991, p. 183 [7: 86])

From the above, we find that although Kant had reservations about the political upheaval caused by the French Revolution, he was deeply drawn to the people's passion and enthusiasm for pure morals. This is significant because Kant considered these qualities – passion and enthusiasm – as crucial for human beings in their progression toward becoming world citizens. This perspective remains relevant in addressing contemporary global justice issues, where there seems to be a general reluctance or lack of motivation toward the plight of others. The essence of becoming world citizens, according to Kant, is less about debating the most effective strategies for fostering self-recognition and more about ensuring any efforts to redress injustices are grounded in the morality of agents. Therefore, agents who recognize themselves as world citizens and are aware of their

duties (of virtue) to others can start to work for others' happiness. In other words, from the perspective of rigorist cosmopolitanism, we cannot endorse a maxim that allows one to consistently disregard the plight of others or to willfully accept a world where injustice prevails (Lu, 2023; Nili, 2013, pp. 274-277).

Theoretically, our statement human beings self-constitute themselves as world citizens is similar with Cavallar's arguments. Cavallar (2015, p. 40) claims educations are significant to human race because, from Kant's philosophy of history, "a cosmopolitan legal society of individuals" as politically the highest good can be seen as a collective learning procedure. Thus, Cavallar differentiates Kant's philosophy of history into two divergent explanations. The second approach proposed by him is human beings would educate themselves to achieve the politically highest good (Cavallar, 2015, p. 42). Based on the belief, Cavallar (2015, pp. 138-139) further points out the importance of cosmopolitical education to Kant. While, we partially agree with Cavallar's viewpoint because the "providential design" still play a vital role in Kant's theory. Even though we agree with the importance of cosmopolitical education, Cavallar's argument that people have a capacity to self-educate without external assistance is overtly contradicted Kant's theory on the limitations of human rationalities.

From Kant's reflections on the French Revolution, we can see his appreciation for human passion in the process of enlightenment as well as his concern for its potentially disruptive consequences. In order to strike a balance between human passion for morals, the happiness of others, and justice with the potential risks to democratic institutions, we believe, Kant introduces the role of philosophers, who can also be viewed as intellectuals, in guiding human passion toward moral ends.

B. The Tasks of Philosophers and Intellectuals

Kant's discourse on the public use of reason highlights that perpetual peace is attainable only when members of a community are free to engage in rational discourse advocating for its principles. Kant further emphasizes the importance of freedom by stating, "The freedom of the pen is the only safeguard of the rights of the people" (Kant, 1970/1991, p. 85 [8: 304]).

In this regard, Kant assigns two critical roles to philosophers in relation to the

general public. The first role is to safeguard the right to engage in public discourse, thereby stimulating the intellectual development of the people. The second role is to persuade rulers to uphold the natural rights of the people. However, Kant is pessimistic about the role of philosophers and societal recognition of them. He notes that rulers often perceive philosophers acting under the guise of enlightenment as potential threats to the stability of state governance. Similarly, despite the tireless writing of philosophers, people may not be interested in their ideas, leading to a persistent state of unenlightenment. Notwithstanding these challenges, Kant maintains that it is imperative for philosophers to continue enlightening the public as part of a universal historical progression. A key aspect is persuading rulers to guarantee the rights of the people through laws, with the right to public discourse being of particular importance. The right to public discourse is equivalent to the contemporary understanding of freedom of speech (Kant, 1970/1991, p. 186 [7: 89-91]). Kant argues that it is not just a right granted by the ruler to the people; it is also a necessary condition for philosophers to fulfill their mission of enlightening the masses. According to Kant, after the right to public discourse is guaranteed, philosophers can use public discourse to inform every community member about their inherent natural rights. This enables individuals within the community to use practical reason to evaluate whether the actions of the state infringe upon their rights.

Furthermore, as individuals gradually develop their sense of rights and duties, a morally progressive nation will refrain from resorting to radical democratic measures that threaten the life of the ruler. Kant believes that with the gradual enlightenment of the general public and growing individual awareness of rights, philosophers need to convince rulers to gradually broaden the scope of safeguarding the people's rights.

Once the right to public discourse is established, the most important task for philosophers is to assist the general public, who possess legislative authority, in thinking about how to move the political community towards a state of perpetual peace. In this process, philosophers play a crucial role in guiding how laws should be formulated to lead the nation toward perpetual peace. According to Kant, "The maxim of the philosophers on the conditions under which public peace is possible shall be consulted by states which are armed for war" (Kant, 1970/1991, p. 115 [8: 368]).

In fact, the state is responsible for providing philosophers with a free environment. Specifically, the state must ensure the right of philosophers to engage in public discourse.

However, analyzing Kant's view of philosophers' role in enlightening the public, the right to public discourse should not be a privilege of philosophers but a right that all people should enjoy. Nevertheless, since philosophers are more accustomed to using reason than the general public, when rulers agree that the right to public discourse is a right for all, it benefits philosophers to use their reason publicly to propose principles for promoting peace and guiding the internal discourse and deliberation of the general public. Once the "right to public discourse for all" is guaranteed, the goal of achieving a state of perpetual peace through gradually enlightening the general public is no longer out of reach.

Therefore, Kant suggests that philosophers have the function of guiding the masses, acting as torchbearers of enlightenment, directing the dimly lit public with the light of reason. For Kant, only when philosophers publicly use reason can the general public begin to think about the principles of perpetual peace. The philosopher's role in the community is to observe and point out the shortcomings of existing laws. The difference between jurists and philosophers lies in their attitude toward the law: jurists work to maintain the operation of the law, while philosophers constantly think about how to improve the legal system itself. Kant recognizes the potential for rulers to be apprehensive about philosophers' influence. He reassures rulers that philosophers, as a distinct intellectual class, lack the organizational power to form oppositional forces. Thus, rulers do not need to fear the public discussions organized by philosophers. On the contrary, through the public role of philosophers, rulers can enable the enlightenment of the general public, enabling them to use their rational capabilities to move towards perpetual peace.

In conclusion, Kant's view is that philosophers have the role of guiding the public, acting as torchbearers of enlightenment. Public engagement in rational discourse is essential for achieving perpetual peace as it allows philosophers to use public discourse to propose principles for promoting peace and guides the general public in their deliberation.

However, we might anticipate objections from researchers. For L. Caranti, the application of cosmopolitan rights can accustom people to interaction with one another. Frequent visiting cultivates a sense of respect toward strangers and a global conscience. Through evolving global conscience and growing economic interdependence, people will respect human rights and recognize themselves as members of a community (Caranti, 2016, pp. 464-465). Caranti believes that republicanism, as an ideal regime at the domestic level, can support the mutual visiting and interaction necessary for developing a

global conscience. In addition, Ypi proposes the concept of a League of Nations operating on objective principles that embodies the value of cosmopolitan rights and can help individuals act as world citizens. Such a league, even when it has less regulatory power than entities like the European Union, could still play a vital role in shaping individuals' self-perception as world citizens (Ypi, 2008, pp. 350-351, 359).

In response to these objections, there are several key points to consider. While Caranti's argument is eye-catching, it contains a fundamental flaw. In Kantian philosophy, the object of respect (*achtung*) is moral law itself rather than any individual. The key is that respect for the law motivates agents to act according to the law. Through the process of respecting the moral law, such respect becomes a form of self-respect (Kolomý, 2023, pp. 116-117). When an agent respects moral law and exercises choice (*willkür*), the agent not only demonstrates self-respect but also fulfills an imperfect duty to oneself, which Kant regards as a form of moral perfection. Moreover, even if a league operates according to principles that uphold cosmopolitan values, this does not necessarily mean that individuals within its jurisdiction will act as world citizens. For example, Martell points out that while people in Europe may be supportive of immigration, this support does not extend to actively assisting newcomers (Martell, 2011).

Hence, when thinking about how people become world citizens, we should emphasize the role of philosophers and intellectuals in guiding the masses to engage in reasoned thought and gradually evolve into world citizens.

IV. Conclusion

How can we address global injustice issues as posed in the introduction? The indifference to extreme poverty, famine, or inequality may find a theoretical solution in Kant's philosophy. Kant's concept of cosmopolitan rights, for instance, advocates for the right to interact, which enhances opportunities for human connections. When individuals act in accordance with cosmopolitan rights, simultaneously their actions manifest imperfect duties of virtue such as self-perfection and promotion of other's happiness, they will create a practical identity and gradually view themselves as world citizens. As Kant posits, becoming a world citizen is the prerequisite stage of the achievement of perpetual peace. In order to realize this, an effective political regime is essential. Under this regime,

intellectuals play a key role in fostering individuals to become global citizens. Upholding freedom of expression enables philosophers and intellectuals to lead the masses, akin to lighting the way in the darkness, thereby guiding citizens towards enlightenment. Kant emphasizes that only through public reasoning by intellectuals can the community aspire to perpetual peace.

Kant asks, “we are told, for instance, that philosophy is the handmaid of theology, and something similar in relation to the others. But it is far from clear whether this handmaid bears the torch before her gracious lady, or carries the train behind” (Kant, 1970/1991, p. 115 [8: 369]). The answer seems clear: the world needs intellectuals to keep writing, thinking, and motivating the masses to awaken from isolation and guide them towards global citizenship and the promotion of mutual happiness.

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