

**Kant's Trickster Quotient -
A Non-State Actor Accesses
International Relations Anarchy
From The Internet**

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Evidence that a “democratic peace” holds between and among states that are understood to be, or at least approximate, liberal democracies, has given rise to the “democratic peace” theory of international relations since the end of the Cold War. Based on Immanuel Kant’s 1795 essay “Toward Perpetual Peace”, democratic peace theory posits that constitutional republics, which guarantee their citizens certain rights, and the citizens of other states certain cosmopolitan rights, over time, will form a pacific federation of states which do not make war with each other¹. As all enlightenment philosophy, Kant’s theory is based on a metaphysical and logical conclusion of reason – that man is born with reason, and reason not only *can* lead to perpetual peace, but in fact *must*.

Central to Kant’s theory of perpetual peace is the concept of “publicity”, what we today would call “transparency”. In Kant’s words, “All actions affecting the rights of other human beings are wrong if their maxim is not compatible with their being made public.”² Publicity to Kant provides a test of justice, a check on injustice, a measure of enlightenment under reason, and a coordinating function in steps toward morality, virtue,

¹ Doyle, Michael, Liberalism and World Politics, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 80, No.4, (Dec. 1986), p.1151-1169.

² Reiss, Hans, ed. (1991). Kant Political Writings, *Cambridge University Press*, p.112.

“the highest good”, and thus, perpetual peace,³ “a foundation stone for an otherworldly edifice constructed with the bounds of mere reason.”⁴

Post Cold War international relations theory does not place publicity in such a central role. Communications and information as factors, causes, or non-state actors in international relations thought are most often cited by theorists in the way economists cite “perfect information” as an assumption in market theory; one with no basis in lived reality, upon which rests nonetheless the entire argument. Treated as a weapon of war, or a mere measurement of state capabilities in balance of power equations, communications and information are throwaway concepts at the theoretical level⁵.

State actors, of course, have never minimized communications and information in this way, with political scientists for perhaps a century seeing the control of information flow as critical to national security and sovereignty⁶, in particular during the Cold War primacy of realist thought, and more acutely as the internet has grown to dominate our world. Born of the international relations anarchic survival calculus itself, the internet was created specifically as the final trump card. In the event of total nuclear war, the internet was designed to be the one surviving state capability. Over time, the internet has become ubiquitous, well beyond a mere communications & information tool, what realists would call an “old wine in new bottles” measure of state power⁷, whose survival was the final line of defense for states amid anarchy. The internet is now “cyberspace”, a

³ Taylor, Robert S., Kant’s Political Religion: The Transparency of Perpetual Peace and the Highest Good, *The Review of Politics*, 2010 pp.18-19.

⁴ Ibid, 24.

⁵ Eriksson, J., & Giacomello, G. (2006) The information revolution, security, and international relations: (IR)relevant theory? *International Political Science Review*, 27(3), p. 222.

⁶ Ibid, p.224

⁷ Ibid, p.229

“virtual reality”, “the cloud”, an omniscient and interactive Library of Alexandria connecting every human being to each other and the entirety of human thought on demand, constantly, in perpetuity. If the internet is not anarchy itself, certainly *via* the internet, “anarchy, as the defining feature of international relations, has become directly accessible to non-state actors as never before.”⁸

In describing publicity in the 18th century, Kant describes the outer reaches of the internet in the 21st. Kant’s concept of publicity in the context of perpetual peace demands that *secret* information, if it contradicts or violates conditions toward perpetual peace, must eventually be exposed. For it is the nature of Kant’s state, the constitutional republic, that such information cannot be allowed to be secret if a constitutional state is to complete its purpose, namely, the guarantee of rights of citizens; or if a state not yet a constitutional republic is to make the transition necessary for all states to form a pacific federation of constitutional republics guaranteeing perpetual peace. Information required for a constitutional republic to function will never stay secret to Kant – it has a target on its back.

Beyond publicity, Kant posits an evolutionary enforcement mechanism anticipating Darwin; states experience a form of human learning⁹, akin to a child touching a hot stove – man will learn over time, through “great and sad experience”¹⁰, that states *must* evolve toward certain characteristics in order to survive themselves, not because men are moral, normative, or ethical agents, but because they are “rational

⁸ Fidler, David P. (2008). A Theory of Open Source Anarchy. *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, 15(1), 259-284, p.263.

⁹ Layne, Christopher, Kant or Can’t, The Myth of the Democratic Peace, *International Security*, Vol. 19, No.2, (Fall 1994), p.10.

¹⁰ Doyle (1986) p.1158.

devils”.¹¹ Beyond this Darwinian evolutionary imperative, Kant goes a step further. Whether or not Kant himself believed in any God is hotly debated to this day¹². Arguing that perpetual peace is “a condition for ethical action” because “it is only under conditions of peace that all men can treat each other as ends, rather than means to an end”¹³, Kant’s theory does not rely on men to do the right thing. Kant posits a stick – “nature” or “providence”.

“This does not mean that nature imposes on us a duty to do it, for duties can only be imposed by practical reason. On the contrary, nature does it herself, whether we are willing or not.”¹⁴

Kant’s theory is manifesting as fact 200 years later, not just in a pacific federation of constitutional republics, but even in the willingness of developed states to engage in war at all¹⁵. Given that the end result of Kant’s theory of perpetual peace, namely, a pacific federation of constitutional republics which do not war with each other, has been in evidence and growing for at least three decades, did Kant foresee publicity as his “nature” and “providence”? Have Kant’s “nature” and “providence” been acting upon international anarchy by imposing publicity upon states whose nature makes them threats to perpetual peace?

¹¹ Ibid., p.1162.

¹² Taylor, (2010), p.9.

¹³ Doyle (1986), p. 1159.

¹⁴ Reiss, p.112.

¹⁵ Mueller, John (1988). The Political Utility of Nuclear Weapons, *International Security*, Fall 1988 (Vol 13, No. 2, pp. 205-217). Mueller argues on page 216, “As a form of activity, war in the developed world may be following once fashionable dueling into obsolescence: The perceived wisdom, value, and efficacy of war may have moved gradually toward terminal disrepute. Where war was often casually seen as beneficial, virtuous, progressive, and glorious, or at least as necessary or inevitable, the conviction has now become widespread that war in the developed world would be intolerably costly, unwise, futile, and debased.”

First, this paper will argue that a Kantian non-state actor with the capacity to threaten the survival of states in international anarchy can arise from the internet based on Kant's moral imperative of publicity functioning as the enforcement mechanism Kant describes as "nature" or "providence". Second, the paper will argue that Kant's "nature" or "providence" did arise, manifested as a mythical trickster god of folklore drawing its power from this same normative global consensus during the Arab Spring to enforce Kant's theory of "publicity". Third, the paper will introduce a new measure of Kant's trickster, "T", that will find enumeration and quantification in the political risk industry. In conclusion, the paper will address how Kant's "T" affects international relations theory.

Kant's Trickster & the Arab Spring

As "cybersecurity" has become a 21st century high growth industry, study of information technology in the context of international relations theory is largely confined to treating "cyberwar" as a threat to firms, an organized crime problem, or a military security issue.¹⁶ The internet, however, since at least 2009, has been actively accessing international relations anarchy to threaten, and end, the survival of states themselves, by descending on secrecy that threatens Kant's perpetual peace like white blood cells onto a contaminant in the blood stream. Kant's "great and sad experience" of man working toward perpetual peace over time, after the internet, has transitioned from passive lessons

¹⁶ Eriksson, J., & Giacomello, G. (2006), pp.225-226.

learned to norms enforced by action, beginning in 2009 with the most anti-Kantian, closed, opaque states in the Middle East.

Before the Arab Spring, Iran convulsed in 2009 with the Green Movement protests of the 2009 presidential election, first relying on the internet for organization, then moving almost exclusively online as the regime cracked down on street protests. During this non-street, online-only period of the Green Movement, the internet created in Iran “spheres of strife (protest) and hegemony (power), wherein claims to information, ideas, values, and identities are contested and *ruptured*...”¹⁷ (emphasis added). From the ground, a scholar observed of Iran’s Green Movement online, “Cyberspace presents a social space with *mythic* force...the case of Iran demonstrates that cyberspace can not only challenge state power, but also produces new senses that often *reveal* a new way of doing politics.”¹⁸ (emphasis added). Kant’s “nature” and “providence” had stirred.

After Iran, in December, 2010, Wikileaks, an online portal for leakers and whistleblowers to submit secret information, published its massive mother lode of 250,000 leaked diplomatic communications. The fuse of the Arab Spring, which first flickered online in Iran in 2009, had now been properly lit. “The United States government believes, with reason, that certain of the documents unleashed by Wikileaks are responsible for an almost unparalleled shift in power and stability in the Muslim world...”¹⁹ Within months, several states had not survived, beginning in Tunisia, leaving some states in fact nonexistent, mere tracts of land with sovereignty giving way to

¹⁷ Rahimi, B. (2011). The agonistic social media: Cyberspace in the formation of dissent and consolidation of state power in postelection Iran. *Communication Review*, 14(3), p.161.

¹⁸ Ibid. p173.

¹⁹ Bachrach, Judy. (2011). Wikiphistory – Did the leaks inspire the Arab Spring? *World Affairs*, 174(2). p.37.

anarchy in Libya and most vividly Syria, itself now a Hobbesian nightmare consuming the attention of the hegemon.

Kant's concept of "publicity" anticipated the internet's defining role in the Arab Spring. "Wikileaks exposes the tensions between democratic and hegemonic transparency. Hegemonic transparency is top down transparency, transparency for 'others'... Wikileaks *upsets* the *etiquette* of hegemonic transparency..."²⁰ (emphasis added). The internet had begun acting *upon* and *within* anarchy as an enforcement mechanism to *deter the survival of states* that fail Kant's definition of constitutional republics acting toward perpetual peace.

Whether or not Kant believed in a god, human beings have created precisely such a god over the millennia – a *mythic* god that acts to *upset etiquette*, to *rupture* and *reveal* - the trickster myth. Comparative mythologist Joseph Campbell described the trickster myth thus;

Almost all non-literate mythology has a trickster hero of some kind. American Indians had the great rabbit and coyote, the ravens, and blue jay. And there's a very special property in the trickster: he always *breaks in*, just as the unconscious does, to *trip up* the rational situation. He's both *a fool* and someone who's *beyond the system*. And the trickster hero represents all those possibilities of life that your mind hasn't decided it wants to deal with. The mind structures a lifestyle, and the fool or trickster represents another whole range of possibilities. He doesn't respect the values that you've set up for yourself, and *smashes them*.²¹ (emphasis added)

If a common mythical god created across all cultures of the earth by human evolution is included in Kant's "nature" or "providence", it would need to provide the

²⁰ Pieterse, Jan Nederveen, (2012) Leaking Superpower: Wikileaks and the contradictions of democracy. *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 33 Issue 10, p.1917.

²¹ Campbell, Joseph (1988) An Open Life; in Conversation With Joseph Campbell in conversation with Michael Toms, *New Dimensions Foundation*, p.39.

enforcement role Kant posits upon mankind's journey toward perpetual peace; and the trickster indeed does.

The fool really became the *instructor of kings* because he was careless of the king's opinion, careless of the king's power; and the king allowed this because he got *wisdom* from this uncontrolled source. The fool is the *breakthrough of the absolute* into the field of controlled social orders.²²

Trickster gods evolved enough commonality across disparate and unconnected cultures over the millenia to exhibit certain characteristics. According to William J. Hynes and William G. Doty, common trickster characteristics include (1) ambiguous (often sexually) and anomalous, (2) deceiver and trick-player, (3) shape-shifter, (4) situation invertor, (5) messenger/imitator of the gods, and (6) simultaneously sacred and lewd. Lewdness in the trickster includes scatological use of excrement, sex, all manner of foul, juvenile behavior, often directed at other gods. In Native American cultures tricksters are often depicted with an abnormally large penis, endowing the trickster as a divine source of life. Combined, these characteristics imbue in the trickster a truth telling, life-giving creator deity.²³ Even the Judeo Christian God exhibits trickster tendencies; the Tower of Babel, Jonah being swallowed by a whale, the flood.

Trickster characteristics in myth also happen to describe the furthest nether reaches of the internet, and it is not possible to find a more ambiguous, anomalous, deceitful, shape shifting, situation inverting, message sending/god imitating, and lewdly foul nether reach of the internet than the online space that gave rise to the hacker collective Anonymous – 4Chan. Created in 2003, 4Chan is an uncensored message and

²² Ibid.

²³ Hynes, William J., Doty, William G. (1993) Mythical Trickster Figures; Contours, Contexts, and Criticisms, *University of Alabama Press*, p.34.

image online community where there are no rules, anyone can join, and mischief is encouraged and rewarded. Closely mirroring the trickster myth from birth, the most offensive content proliferated under the name “Anonymous”, giving rise to members knowledge of each other as little more than “all the same, or all as one.”²⁴ From 4Chan’s beginning, members engaged in targeted “trolling”, an internet specific pranksterism, which “almost always entails an unpredictable combination of trickery, defilement and deception.”²⁵ True to trickster mythology, 4Chan morphed the internet term “LOL” (laugh out loud) into “lulz”, which became the motivation for any activity at all, “for the lulz”, i.e. for laughs.²⁶ By 2007, Anonymous became an elusive, but clearly identified entity or group so notorious Fox News had dubbed it the “internet hate machine”²⁷.

In 2008, Anonymous made the evolutionary leap from its primordial ooze virtual reality to reality itself, via a protest campaign against the Church of Scientology. “Project Chanology” took on all the tactile, observable manifestations of street demonstration, while maintaining the DNA of the trickster ethic. Anonymous’ sharp end featured a 21st century-specific online set of tactics – hacking a target’s computers & documents, defacing and disappearing the target’s online presence with distributed denial of service attacks (DDoS), “doxing”, i.e. exposing the target’s disemboweled secrets to the entire internet, all from a cloak of anonymity. The now universally recognizable traits of this trickster took hold during the Scientology campaign – use of the Guy Fawkes mask,

²⁴ Krauth, Alinta (2012). Anonymous in portmanteaupia. *Social Alternatives*, 31(2), p.27.

²⁵ Coleman, Gabriella (2013), Anonymous in context: the politics and power behind the mask, Centre for International Governance Innovation, p.4.

²⁶ Ibid, p.3

²⁷ Ibid, p.5

video warnings and manifestos, and the now ubiquitous Anonymous call to action, “We are Anonymous. We are Legion. We do not forgive. We do not forget. Expect us.”²⁸

By the Arab Spring in 2011, Anonymous & Wikileaks were two sides of this trickster’s coin, a non-state actor imposing on state after state Kant’s “publicity”, successfully threatening the survival of very specific kinds of states – states which, due to their nature, do not belong in, and are a threat to, Kant’s pacific federation of constitutional republics pursuing perpetual peace. Did street vendor Mohammed Bouazizi know what Wikileaks & Anonymous exposed two weeks earlier about his Tunisian government before his self-immolation touched off the Arab Spring?

“Tunisia happens to have the highest percentage of Facebook users in the world...it is almost inconceivable that the fruit seller Bouazizi, a frustrated university graduate of twenty-six, didn’t know...”²⁹

Philip Howard & Muzammil Hussain of the University of Washington have done extensive research proving that whether or not Bouazizi knew it, the internet die had already been cast. Studying millions of data points across social media in the months before and after Bouazizi’s death³⁰, Howard & Hussain have shown that “digital media were critical during the short-term cascade of street protests of the Arab Spring.”³¹ Further, “...the overwhelming evidence of what did happen concretely illustrates that the patterns of political change in these protests were digitally enabled.”³² Howard & Hussain find that “Digital media had a causal *role* in the Arab Spring by providing the

²⁸ Krauth (2012), p.28

²⁹ Bachrach (2011), p.36.

³⁰ Howard, Philip N., & Hussain, Muzammil M., The Upheavals in Egypt & Tunisia; The Role of Digital Media, *Journal of Democracy* Vol. 22, Number 3, July 2011, pp. 35-48.

³¹ Hussain, Muzammil M. & Howard, Philip N., What Best Explains Successful Protest Cascades? ICT’s and the Fuzzy Causes of the Arab Spring, *International Studies Review*, (2013) 15, p.48-66, p.57.

³² Ibid, p. 61.

very infrastructure that created deep communication ties and organizational capacity in groups of activists before the major protests took place.”³³ And further, “In every single case, the inciting incidents of the Arab Spring were digitally mediated in some way.”³⁴

Across the planet from Tunisia, the month after Bouazizi’s death, American Barrett Brown, one of the highest profile members of Anonymous who as of this paper awaits sentencing in federal court for his hacktivist activities, responded to this digital storm and stirred the trickster.³⁵

“In January, 2011, Doyon contacted Barrett Brown, the journalist and Anon. ‘What are we going to do next?’ Doyon asked. ‘Tunisia,’ Brown said. ‘Yeah, it’s a country in the Middle East,’ Doyon said. ‘What about it?’ ‘We’re gonna take down its dictator,’ Brown said. ‘Oh, they have a dictator?’ Doyon said.’

Utopian arguments that the internet creates such opportunities for human beings to join across thousands of miles, language & cultural barriers, even time and space, to exercise this survival threat to states from non-state actors in anarchy are not new. Pierre Lévy first wrote of “collective intelligence” in 1995, “Cyberspace could become the locus for a new form of direct, broad based democracy.”³⁶ Lévy anticipated cyberspace would form a “collective voice”³⁷ capable of a “political symphony”³⁸ that acts at the global level. By 2005, Lévy wrote, “I foretell the coming of one planet-wide civilisation

³³ Ibid, p.62.

³⁴ Ibid, p.64.

³⁵ Kushner, David, The Masked Avengers – How Anonymous incited online vigilantism from Tunisia to Ferguson, *The New Yorker*, September 8, 2014.

³⁶ Lévy, Pierre, (1995) *Collective Intelligence*, Plenum Press, p. 63.

³⁷ Ibid., p.66.

³⁸ Ibid., p.67.

based on the practice of collective intelligence in Cyberspace³⁹ ... No reference, authority, dogma or certitude will remain unchallenged by the future which awaits us. We are now discovering that reality is a collective creation. *We are all in the process of thinking within the same network.*”⁴⁰ Transparency drives utopian theories based on the internet. “Cyber-democracy equally requires that public administration, whether it be at a local, regional, national or international level, follow the example of e-commerce enterprises. That is to say, it must become more transparent, be accessible night and day...”⁴¹ Scholars & commentators have begun to compare Anonymous to the trickster deity⁴², and drawing on Lévy, one of the few peer-reviewed journal articles studying Anonymous (which is notoriously difficult to study, being new, often invisible, and at its most powerful operating outside law), writes in 2012, “Although not quite there yet, Anonymous may be a beta version of Lévy’s hopeful beginning of a planet-wide civilization. Anonymous may use limited ‘poetic grace’ but are certainly an example of an anti-statist, world-wide political entity.”⁴³

³⁹ Lévy, Pierre, (2005) *Collective Intelligence, A Civilisation: Towards a Method of Positive Interpretation*, *International Journal of Politics, Culture, & Society*, v.18, p.189

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.191.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.193.

⁴² Chen, Adrian, Dec. 1-8, 2014, *The Truth About Anonymous’s Activism*, *The Nation* (available at <http://www.thenation.com/article/190369/truth-about-anonymouss-activism#>). Highlighting the many failures and dark side of Anonymous, Chen critically reviews Gabriella Coleman’s recently released history of Anonymous (Coleman, G., *Hacker, Hoaxer, Whistleblower, Spy: The Many Faces of Anonymous*, *Verso*, 2014), “Coleman repeatedly interprets Anonymous’s most bewildering and troubling actions with ham-fisted analogies to legendary tricksters like Loki and Eshu, placing Anons in the realm of myth and outside responsibility.”

⁴³ Krauth, Alinta, (2012). *Anonymous in portmanteaupia*. *Social Alternatives*, 31(2), 27-32, p.29.

Introducing the Trickster Quotient - “T”⁴⁴

Political upheaval that threatens a state’s survival arises out of countless factors, whether or not the factors have anything to do with Kant’s theory, the “collective intelligence” of the internet, the exercise of a collective normative voice arising from the internet, or an outlaw trickster on the loose among it, distributing secrets like a giddy Promethean Bre’er Rabbit. However, the trickster myth evolved in human thought to *teach lessons* to gods and kings in a very specific way. Kant’s “great and sad experience”, Kant’s “nature” or “providence”, is the lesson the trickster will teach. A trickster will only emerge if a specific opportunity also emerges to teach man, or the gods, but specifically *states*, Kant’s Darwinian lesson toward perpetual peace.

Nor will Kant’s trickster necessarily threaten the survival of every state target, or the interests within it, be they economic or political. Political groups, individuals, and hacktivists attack constantly every day – Anonymous most recently has been active in imposing Kant’s publicity to cases involving a high school rape cover up in Stuebenville, Ohio⁴⁵, the police killing of unarmed black teenager Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri⁴⁶, and continues evolving and accessing international anarchy despite arrests and jail terms for the rarely identified and prosecutable individuals states can locate across the globe. Edward Snowden’s exposure of the most secret surveillance practices of

⁴⁴ “K” for Kant would apply, but “k” is realist Joseph Grieco’s relative gains quotient, which determines a state’s willingness to cooperate with other states based on which state gains more relative to the other state. Thus the author posits “T” for trickster.

⁴⁵ Levy, Ariel, Trial by Twitter, *The New Yorker*, August 5, 2013.

⁴⁶ Kushner, 2014.

the United States has applied Kant's publicity to the hegemon, but no one would argue that the hegemon's survival is at stake.

Combined, all these attributes of Kant's trickster, evolved out of the omniscient cloud of the internet, present an unprecedented non-state actor with power to threaten state survival *only* when a *normative global consensus* forms from the cloud, the cloud gathers a storm, lightning (Kant's publicity) flashes, a funnel emerges, is channeled to the target state, and tears the target state into pieces. The trickster is only at work *if*, for example, a grandmother in 2011 clicks "like" on a picture of a Syrian protestor between sips of tea in her free time from North Dakota, then thinks nothing of Syria again, while forces loosed at every level, drawing their own power from the same *normative global consensus*, descend upon Syria to end it.

"T" then, is the extent to which a state differs from Kant's definition of a constitutional republic that will join with other such states to create a pacific federation of states guaranteeing perpetual peace. States, or the interests therein, are vulnerable to Kant's trickster to the extent of "T". If "T" is low, as it might be argued for the US, attacks by the trickster from the cloud will impose Kant's publicity to the extent it is required by whatever normative consensus the global collective voice decides. If "T" is high, an attack by the trickster has the potential to emerge from the normative global consensus to threaten a state's survival. Future scholarship will almost certainly identify and quantify "T" over time, since "T" is based on the omniscient collective knowledge and intelligence resident in the cloud. "T" is already there, and merely awaits measurement.

“T” will most likely be enumerated, quantified, and eventually monetized, by political risk insurance, a rapidly growing industry in need of new predictive data. Since World War II, and accelerating after the Cold War, multinational corporations have purchased political risk insurance (PRI), from state and multilateral organization providers seeking to encourage foreign direct investment in developing states, and on the private insurance market from brokers and underwriters.⁴⁷ The Berne Union (BU), a global consortium of PRI providers, estimated 2012 demand for PRI among BU members at \$100 billion, three times the volume issued in 2005. The World Bank estimates the non-Berne Union private market based in Lloyds’ London insurance brokerage at similar levels and trends.⁴⁸ PRI generally covers losses caused by war/political violence, expropriation/breach of contract, and transfer/currency convertibility risk.⁴⁹

Being a rare direct confluence between economics and politics, PRI has long been bedeviled by a debate between the quantitative needs of business and the qualitative nature of political analysis, which scholars have wrestled with for decades. Jeffrey Simon in 1984 referred to the “soft” nature of political and social data in an article on theory in political risk, noting that political risk was often seen to be “too amorphous and subjective a concept to be exposed to systemic quantitative analysis.”⁵⁰ Ten years later, Llewellyn D. Howell compared three widely used political risk index models to test their reliability in predicting losses, and came up short. “Risk projection, if it in fact has

⁴⁷ Baublyte, L., Mullins, M., & Garvey, J. (2012). Risk selection in the London political risk insurance market: The role of tacit knowledge, trust and heuristics. *Journal of Risk Research*, 15(9), 1101-1116, p.1101.

⁴⁸ World Investment & Political Risk, MIGA World Bank Group (2013), p. 30.

⁴⁹ Jensen, N. (2008). Political risk, democratic institutions, and foreign direct investment. *Journal of Politics*, 70(4), 1040-1052, p.1043.

⁵⁰ Simon, Jeffrey D. (1984) A Theoretical Perspective on Political Risk, *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol.15, No.3, p.123-143, p.144.

appropriate theoretical underpinnings and accurate data, should correlate with subsequent losses...if the theory and data are appropriate, there should be at least some significant correlation between the projection and actual losses in the following five year period. This, however, was not the case in the three methods we evaluated.”⁵¹

Howard & Hussain’s research on social media and the Arab Spring found that a popular measure of political risk, *The Economist’s* index, which, like all PRI measures does include Kantian measures of constitutional republicanism, actually failed utterly to predict the Arab Spring. “Perhaps the most compelling reason for not dismissing the important causal role of digital media in the Arab Spring is that the traditional analysis, privileging other factors, yields unconvincing explanations...indexes like these suggested that Yemen, Libya, Syria, and Iraq were the most vulnerable. Yet they are neither the inciting nor defining cases of the Arab Spring...The countries that experienced rapid and relatively peaceful regime collapse, or where regimes made major concessions, did not appear particularly vulnerable...”⁵²

Ten years after Llewellyn first researched the link between political risk indices and loss, in 2014 Llewellyn returned to the issue this past summer, again lamenting the problem of “soft” data inherent in political risk since the concept began. “Many, both inside the commercial political risk business and outside of it, argue that the numerical ratings are not the real meat of risk assessment in any case. Rather, they contend, it is the text that is provided with the ratings that is the real product and that takes the real expertise in the political risk field. I disagree...Risk does not call for nuance but for

⁵¹ Howell, Llewellyn D. & Chaddick, Brad (1994) Models of Political Risk for Foreign Investment and Trade, An Assessment of Three Approaches, *Columbia Journal of World Business*, Fall 1994, pp.70-90, p.89.

⁵² Hussain & Howard (2013), p.63.

precision...It involves setting a point on a continuum and defending it, words to support numbers, not vice versa.”⁵³

Despite this decades long consternation over “soft” analysis, it persists in the PRI industry. Based on a 2012 study interviewing the brokers and underwriters of the Lloyd’s London market, the PRI industry at its core continues to base basic pricing decisions on hunches, intuition, reputation, personal relationships, and trust. “It is clear that alongside more conventional information flows, market participants rely to a large degree on how they feel about particular opportunities and that these feelings are based upon such phenomena as trust and heuristics as well as their own tacit knowledge. The fact that, in the main, market participants are expected to serve long apprenticeships before writing PRI is testament to an awareness within the industry of the importance of experience and so-called soft skills to this activity...the subjective judgment of a relatively small group of individuals is at the heart of this line of insurance business...”⁵⁴

Four factors will thus give “T” a home in the political risk market. First, growing risk and uncertainty arising from cyberspace across the international state of anarchy creates an urgent demand for predictive forecasting with a basis in international relations theory, in particular a theory with facts in evidence that the theory is working (in this instance, Kant’s prediction that a pacific federation now exists among democratic states). Second, the explosive growth in political risk insurance and analysis has monetized a worldwide market for “T”. Third, the failure of existing models of political risk to predict loss with any confidence creates demand for more accurate quantitative data. Finally, a

⁵³ Howell, Llewellyn D. (2014), Evaluating Political Risk Models: What Works? *Thunderbird International Business Review*, Vol.56, No.4, July/August 2014, pp.305-316, p.315.

⁵⁴ Baublyte & Garvey (2012), pp.1114-1115.

permanent tension between quantitative data and qualitative analysis inherent in the PRI market creates further demand for “T”, which is both quantitative and qualitative by its nature.

For example, current PRI indices of states do measure some Kantian “T” factors, such as transparency⁵⁵, i.e. Kant’s “publicity”. The trickster, of course, relies on the internet, so a better measure of transparency for the purposes of quantifying “T” would include internet penetration into the population – whether or not average consumers have access to broadband mobile video, how many people within a state use Facebook and Twitter, whether or not access to controversial sites like Wikileaks is blocked, whether or not, and to what extent Anonymous has been active within the state, how many hours a day the people within the state spend online, the responsiveness of the state to online political advocacy, etc. Because “T” emerges from an omniscient, Library of Alexandria type cloud, all of this information is extant, and available for calculation of a “T” quotient for a state’s ability to survive a visit from the trickster. Future scholarship has fertile ground, largely as yet untilled by the PRI market.

In fact, we may find that “T” creates an entirely new insurance product, one more like basic car insurance rather than specifically tailored policies written for hundred million dollar investments among hushed London colonnades by a small group of Brahmins. For example, when I drive a car, I know there is a certain, measurable, quantifiable risk that no matter how well I drive, another driver may destroy my car – this is called collision insurance. Or if I own a home, there is the same measurable, quantifiable risk that a tornado destroys my home. Similarly, the trickster can visit a

⁵⁵ Jensen (2008), p.1041.

tornado upon a state that is a threat to perpetual peace at any moment, and the trickster will remain capable of doing so as long as the cloud produces the conditions for a tornado to descend from the heavens directly on top of the insured. “T” may democratize political risk insurance beyond high stakes multinational business investments, because “T” is bound by neither land, borders, time, or space. Very like the weather, some states’ “T” quotient will reveal them to be sitting ducks, while other states will be able to weather the repeated storms.

Conclusion

Kant’s trickster stands in direct contrast to settled international relations theory based in realism and neorealism. That carrots and sticks guide international state behavior toward normative ends, rather than purely survivalist ends amidst the international state of anarchy, has framed the debate between realists and liberals in international relations theory since the end of World War II. Realists argue that normative ends have no role in the decisions states make in anarchy, arguing that normative ends create war, not prevent it. Kant argues that politics at every level, international included, must be moral;

“...there can be no conflict between politics, as an applied branch of right, and morality, as a theoretical branch of right (i.e. between theory and practice); for such a conflict could occur only if morality were taken to mean a general doctrine of expediency, i.e. a theory of the maxims by which one might select the most useful means of furthering one’s own advantage – and this would be tantamount to denying that morality exists.”⁵⁶

Both realists and Kant base their opposing arguments on the assumption of international anarchy. Anarchy in international relations describes a lack of government

⁵⁶ Reiss (1991), p. 116

authority that all states recognize, but more operatively for international relations theory, anarchy is also the absence of an authority that can prevent attack. Realist international relations theory holds that the only survival threat of anarchy comes from *states' response* to anarchy, not from anarchy *itself*. It is *states* that pose an existential risk against survival of other states in realism. Liberalism's concept of anarchy is criticized by realists as focusing too much on anarchy's prevention of states enforcing norms amongst each other, and anarchy's mitigation against cooperation, agreements, regimes, or international law.⁵⁷

Realists also exclude non-state actors from acting within or upon anarchy, privileging states into anarchy as a closed system accessible only to states.⁵⁸ Largely to shy away from naively exaggerating the power of widely understood existing non-state actors, by alleging such non-state actors (for instance, the UN) could threaten a state's survival, liberals cede this ground, allowing non-state actors access to anarchy only through states⁵⁹, leaving the realist concept of a closed, state-only anarchy untouched as an assumption as basic to international relations theory as reason is to Kant.

Non-state actors, however, can indeed threaten a state's survival in the 21st century by entering and acting upon anarchy as states do, not least because they can themselves arise out of anarchy, as actors within it. Terrorism is the most often cited example of a non-state actor threatening survival of a state. But the trickster, too, arises from international anarchy, from the internet, its power derived from and exactly

⁵⁷ Grieco, Joseph M., Ch.5, Baldwin, David A (ed.), *Neorealism & NeoLiberalism, The Contemporary Debate*, (1993), Columbia University Press, p. 126.

⁵⁸ Fidler, David P. (2008). A Theory of Open Source Anarchy. *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, 15(1), p265.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.269.

proportional to Kant's concept of publicity. Thus the trickster, a non-state actor in democratic peace theory, with its origins in the metaphysics and logic characteristic of the height of enlightenment philosophy, challenges realist thought to its anarchic core – that anarchy not only *can* give rise to normative relations among states, but in fact *must*.

Perhaps sensing that normative motives might actually be encroaching on realist international relations theory, the high priest of realism, Kenneth Waltz himself, appeared in *International Security* in 2000 mounting a vigorous defense of realism and its progeny against democratic peace theory, declaring, “If the democratic peace thesis is right, structural realist theory is wrong.”⁶⁰ The Cold War had ended, thus rendering realism impotent, if not buffoonish, both for failing to anticipate the collapse of the Soviet Union, then having little new to say about the world thereafter. But international anarchy does not end, so Waltz falls back on it. “Proponents of the democratic peace thesis write as though the spread of democracy will negate the effects of anarchy.”⁶¹ To the contrary, and quite the opposite, Kant's trickster is only possible within international anarchy, and only acts in defense of, and to enforce transition to, democratic peace.

The trickster seems a parlor game flight of fancy only because the normative has been utterly banished from international relations thought. Moral motives on the part of states are inherently suspect because throughout human history hideous examples remind us that war so often results from moral motives. To argue that war does not *always* result from moral motives is perfectly within enlightened reason, yet has become so taboo among international relations theorists, we now wander through human history in a kind

⁶⁰ Waltz, Kenneth, (2000) Structural Realism after the Cold War, *International Security*, Vol.25, No.1, pp 4-41, p.13.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, p.8.

of blind self-imposed ignorance to our own nature. Kant would find this not only humorous, but sad – ambiguously anomalous. Very like the trickster.

Similarly, it would be easy to dismiss that a non-state actor in international anarchy could threaten and end a state actor's survival in the blink of an eye, let alone Kant's "nature" or "providence", much less its manifestation out of the internet as a mythic god-like trickster, if the *conclusion* of Kant's perpetual peace theory, a pacific federation of constitutional republics that do not war with each other, were not already in evidence for at least three decades. Kant's theory has been at work for over 200 years now, has produced an observed result, which he in fact predicted. It would be odd indeed if the rest of his theory, or any part of it, in particular, the enforcement mechanism of publicity, "nature," and "providence" were not also working. Kant even anticipated this evolutionary, Darwinian rhythm, all the way down to hoping that something like the internet might accelerate his theory;

"If it is a duty to bring about in reality a state of public right (albeit by an infinite process of gradual approximation), and if there are also good grounds for hoping that we shall succeed, then it is not just an empty idea that perpetual peace will eventually replace what have hitherto been wrongly called peace treaties (which are actually only truces). On the contrary, it is a task which, as solutions are gradually found, constantly draws nearer fulfillment, for we may hope that the periods within which equal amounts of progress are made will become progressively shorter."⁶²

Two centuries after Kant wrote Perpetual Peace from his hometown of Prussian Kronigsberg, Konigsberg is today Russian Kaliningrad, its medieval landscape wiped out by British bombing in World War II, now a grim concrete and steel remnant of the

⁶² Reiss, p. 130

former Soviet Union, tucked between NATO states and the Baltic Sea, as close to a state that hasn't survived these "great and sad experiences" as Kant could imagine.⁶³

Kant wrote *Perpetual Peace* in 1795, at age 71, when most men of his age would be long dead, after a lifetime theorizing the origins of the universe, the rotation of the earth, its place in the Milky Way galaxy, the formations of other galaxies, mathematics, metaphysics, morals and ethics, even the existence or non-existence of a god. In his introduction to *Kant's Political Writings*, Reiss declares, "He ought to be ranked among the leading political thinkers of all times. Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes are his peers."⁶⁴ Kant's theory of international relations is informed, influenced, and even based on all of Kant's previous work as a titanic renaissance mind of the Enlightenment.

With "T", we can measure, even observe in real time, what Kant himself predicted; a new non-state actor threatening the survival of specific kinds of states within anarchy, whose power is drawn from a normative global consensus, only capable of mobilizing to impose normative ends on international relations since the dawn of cyberspace. It took Kant's theory 200 years to realize an observable pacific federation of states who do not make war with each other. With "T", the rest of Kant's theory is likely accelerated dramatically. What may have taken another 200 years now can happen overnight. The trickster teaches us it is not a matter of if a state incompatible with perpetual peace will be rubbed out, but when.

⁶³ The author visited Kaliningrad in 1999 on two occasions to train political parties.

⁶⁴ Reiss (1991), p.39

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