

# The Forgotten Prophet: Tom Paine's Cosmopolitanism and International Relations

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The recent questions about the viability of political realism highlight a need for alternative theoretical frameworks to guide international relations research. These alternatives, however, have been slow to emerge, due in part to the field's traditional neglect of political theory. In this essay I present an alternative based on a survey of Paine's international thought. Sir Michael Howard referred to Paine as the most important internationalist writer of all time, but his contributions have been largely ignored by students of international relations. Paine was a classic second image theorist who first posited how democratic governance would promote a peaceful world. Paine's works leave us with all the features of cosmopolitan thinking in international relations: Faith in reason and progress, the evils of authoritarian regimes, the democratic peace, the peaceful effect of trade, nonprovocative defense policies, open diplomacy, obsolescence of conquest, the universal respect for human rights, and the democratic propensity to engage in messianic interventionism. I conclude with a comparison of Kant and Paine where I argue that Paine is the more faithful representative of the Enlightenment for students of international relations.

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*Poor Tom Paine! there he lies:  
Nobody laughs and nobody cries.  
Where he has gone or how he fares  
Nobody knows and nobody cares.*

—An Old Nursery Rhyme

## Introduction: Political Theory and International Relations

When Thomas Paine died in 1809, he was a man nearly forgotten and surely abandoned by those who played important roles in the American and French revolutions. In a quiet ceremony, he was laid to rest in a simple grave on his farm in New Rochelle, New York. He did not, however, rest in peace. In 1819, William Cobbett, a zealous admirer of Paine's political thought, secretly disinterred the remains and transported them back to England. Cobbett wanted to commemorate Paine's life with a fitting monument and final resting place. But the mon-

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Epigraph cited in Fruchtman, 1994, p. 441.

ument was never built and what became of the remains has been reduced to speculation. One account tells of how the remains were refused for sale at auction in 1835, so a Unitarian clergyman kept Paine's skull and right hand in his library (Ayer, 1988:182). Another tells of an old woman who played with Paine's jawbone when she was a child (Fruchtman, 1994:435). These stories have a remarkable parallel in international relations research: those who pick up Paine's work are never quite sure how to incorporate it or how to dispose of it. So Paine's contributions to the field of international relations, though significant, are left quietly in doubt.

Paine was the first to offer an integrated, modern, cosmopolitan vision of international relations. Cosmopolitanism consists of more than a defiance of strict national attachments and a commitment to world citizenship. Drawn from the Greek *kosmos*, it conveys a universe of order and harmony. One of the early English translations depicts *kosmos* as a "beautiful world order." Of all the cosmopolitan writers of the Enlightenment, Paine's international thought is one of the most coherent. And basking in the glow of the Enlightenment are Paine's visions of peaceful, democratic, and egalitarian societies interacting within a cosmopolitan international order based on reason and justice. Paine's worldview included the most enduring strands of cosmopolitan thought in international relations: democratic governance, free trade, high degrees of interdependence, nonprovocative defense policies, a recognition that conquest cannot be profitable, and a universal respect for human rights.

At the core of Paine's international thought was an irrepressible optimism regarding human goodness and democracy. That democracies are better able to avoid war was a frequently echoed theme of the Enlightenment, yet Paine was the first to predict that peace would be assured only within a democratic union. Only when France has republican neighbors, Paine [1791-92:174] wrote to Lafayette, will she "be in peace and safety." This assertion has been empirically demonstrated in the widely cited finding that democracies are no less war prone, rather they have never engaged in war against one another. Levy (1988:662) noted that the "absence of war between democratic states comes as close as anything we have to an empirical law in international relations." Similarly, Russett (1990:123) stated that the peace between democratic states "is one of the strongest non-trivial or nontautological generalizations that can be made about international relations." Much of the subsequent research on the question revolves around trying to identify anomalies to this pattern of peace, to better develop causal connections, or to highlight other forms of conflict between democracies.<sup>1</sup> But none of these efforts have cast doubt on the empirical pattern of peace between democratic states. The form of government, however, was only one aspect of the peace that Paine prophesied more than 200 years ago.

Perhaps the most noteworthy of Paine's contributions rests in his explanations of why democracies will be peaceful with one another. Paine claimed that democracies will be more economically productive and will pursue free trade policies. Increased trade will lead to increased understanding and peace between nations. Democracies will also pursue nonprovocative defense policies and will tend to devote less resources to the military. Democratic foreign policies, according to Paine, will be characterized by open diplomacy, eschewing arms races and mili-

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<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, the edited volume by Elman (1997). Farber and Gowa (1992) is one of the rare empirically based studies to challenge the democratic peace. Farber and Gowa, however, concentrate on Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID) frequency between democratic states, not on frequency of war. MIDs are useful measures of harmony and discord between states, not war and peace. The fact that these situations of democratic discord never escalated to war further reinforces the democratic peace finding. However, in the absence of a clearly articulated causal explanation, the healthy skepticism over the democratic peace is not surprising.

tary alliances, and commitment to human rights on a global level. Such commitments may require intervention into the domestic politics of other states. Paine's thought on these unique characteristics of democracy may help inform future studies of regime type and foreign policy, thereby enlarging the discussion of what makes democratic foreign policy different from other types.

After reviewing Paine's international thought, I conclude this article with a concise comparison of Paine and Kant. Paine is best characterized as a cosmopolitan, and distinct from Kantian liberalism. This distinction between cosmopolitans and liberals is based on a long-standing tension within the broader conceptualization of liberalism. Depictions of liberalism within international relations frequently differ on questions of human nature, the harmony of interests, the role of the state and nationalism, questions of interventionism, and the nature of the international system. For instance, in a recent discussion of non-interventionism, Doyle (1997:396) distinguished between "national liberals" and "cosmopolitan liberals." The latter remain "radically skeptical of the principle of noninterventionism." Similarly, Waltz (1962:331) noted that besides the liberalism of "humane philosophers" and "pacifistic economists," there are "other" liberals like Kant who make "no easy assumptions about the rationality and goodness of man." These "other" liberals, according to Waltz, do not assume a simple harmony between all men. Paine's cosmopolitanism can indeed be characterized by easy assumptions on the goodness of human nature, inevitable progress, and the perfectibility of the international system. Through careful analysis of Paine's thought on international politics, the differences between his cosmopolitanism and Kant's liberalism boldly stand out and a better understanding of two alternative frameworks to realism becomes possible.

### **Realism, Political Theory, and Paine**

There are several reasons for the discipline's neglect of Paine. The first has to do with the dominant role played by political realism over the last fifty years. Many elements of Paine's cosmopolitanism stand in stark contradiction to realism. Realism's dominance of the field, however, has been challenged on many fronts. Most recently, the end of the Cold War and the long-standing peace among democracies have contributed to a growing dissatisfaction with realism. Since realism considers domestic politics and regime type irrelevant, neither of these prominent international developments can be placed within a realist framework. In addition to its failure to account for the democratic peace and the end of the Cold War, proponents of realism cannot explain the apparent rarity of balancing among major powers (Schroeder, 1994), as well as the declining frequency and intensity of war—not only among major powers (Mueller, 1989), but throughout the international system (Levy et al., 1999). In a more comprehensive review, Vasquez (1983) documented how the vast majority of realist hypotheses have failed to demonstrate statistical significance. Taken cumulatively, these studies raise doubts about the effectiveness of realism as a guide to international relations enquiry.

To many, the recent scrutiny of realism is of little import. One scholar claimed that the end of the Cold War was "a mere data point," and therefore of little consequence for political realism (cited in Lebow and Risse-Kappen, 1995:xi). What this scholar neglected is that another mere data point—the collapse of the League of Nations and the onset of World War II—has been frequently used to dismiss cosmopolitan and liberal thinking in international relations.

In spite of the mounting questions over the adequacy of realism as a guide to research, most critics have failed to put forth coherent alternative frameworks. For instance, John Vasquez's (1997) highly critical review of neorealism in the

*American Political Science Review* was accompanied not by an alternative theoretical framework, but rather by rebuttals from several entrenched realists.<sup>2</sup>

All this points to the importance of exploring different theoretical frameworks like cosmopolitanism. Alternative theoretical frameworks, however, have been slow to emerge because international relations has a long tradition of neglecting political theory. Arnold Wolfers (1956:ix) noted that whereas the study of political philosophy serves as the foundation for students of government and politics in general, a rich and sustained discussion of it has been absent from the study of international politics. J. David Singer (1961:334) had the admitted temerity to call for a "moratorium on 'theorizing about theory,' on grounds that this discussion has been so ephemeral and vague as to be no longer intellectually fruitful." Gallie (1979:484) bluntly concluded that "there is no academic tradition of philosophy in international relations."

When students of international relations do draw from the well of political theory, they do so in an incomplete, if not irresponsible, manner. Mayall (1990:8) claimed that international relations scholars "have tended to plunder the major works of western political thought for texts which seem to illustrate one or another aspect of human nature or behavior." The end result is the reduction of complex theoretical frameworks to easily digestible morsels. In so doing, students of international relations have come to cite Hobbes for the nastiness of individuals in the state of nature, Kant for the democratic peace, Rousseau for the difficulties of cooperation in anarchy, Thucydides for hegemonic war, and so forth. In almost every case an appreciation for complexity is lost. Also dissipated is a clear understanding of the causal arguments—and hence testable hypotheses—that each theorist was trying to establish.

A more particular reason for the neglect of Paine by students of international relations may be the sheer diversity of Paine's work. Paine's topics ranged from politics and morality to building bridges and designing engines fueled by gunpowder. Given this eclectic subject matter, Paine's ideas are often difficult to categorize in an orderly manner. C. B. Macpherson noted the difficulty of placing Paine in "the standard terms of modern political thought" (quoted in Keane, 1995:xxii). John Pocock agreed that Paine was too diverse to "fit into any kind of category" (quoted in Fruchtman, 1994:3). Although this diversity can be overwhelming to those seeking a synthesis of Paine's extensive works, the more structured arena of international relations actually provides a certain coherence to his thought.

Paine was a pioneering radical progressive in international relations, yet references to his work are extremely rare. While Ishay (1995) frequently referenced Paine as a guiding force in early internationalist thought, Sir Michael Howard is unique in noting the enduring importance of Paine's contributions. In his George Macauley Trevelyn Lectures at Cambridge in 1977, Howard honored Paine's *Rights of Man* as one of the most forceful and lucid works written on liberalism and international conflict. Every liberal, Howard (1978:29) contended, "who has written about foreign policy since [the publication of *Rights of Man*] has been able to provide little more than an echo of Paine's original philippic." But even Howard's treatment of Paine relied only tangentially on *Rights of Man*. He made no effort to bring coherence to Paine's diverse writings on democracy, commerce, revolution, and military policy. Instead, Howard used Paine's rebuttal to Burke as a backdrop for his discussions of cosmopolitan and liberal thinking on war. While appropriately reverential, Howard's discussion did not directly address the complexities of Paine's international thought.

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<sup>2</sup> Vasquez's (1997) failure to offer an alternative is rendered more conspicuous by his use of a Lakatosian criterion. The prime concern for Lakatos (1970) is how scientific communities choose between *two* rival research programs. Without a coherent alternative to realism, Lakatos cannot be applied to international relations.

With Howard's brief exception, few students of international relations have noted Paine's contributions. Morgenthau's (1948) classic did not mention Paine at all. After lengthy discussions of secondary figures like Penn, Bellers, Bentham, and James Mill, Hinsley's (1963) rich discussion of important thinkers in international politics barely noted Paine. Knutsen's (1992) textbook, which serves as a *who's who* of political theory in international relations since the High Middle Ages, completely ignored Tom Paine. Doyle's (1997) masterful and wide-ranging study of political philosophy and international relations made two passing references to Paine. Waltz (1959:101) did cite Paine's argument that if all states were democratic "the cause of war would be taken away." Then, curiously, in the very next paragraph Waltz noted that Immanuel Kant initially developed the idea that democracies would be more peaceful.

Waltz neglected to point out that Paine's prophecy of democratic peace preceded Kant's. While Paine noted in *Common Sense* [1776] that democracies would be more peaceful with one another, his most prominent statement on the democratic peace can be found in *Rights of Man*, published in two parts in 1791 and 1792. The immediate success and influence of *Rights* was unprecedented. Hundreds of thousands of copies in several languages were circulating throughout Europe in its first year. E. P. Thompson (1963:111) noted that "in twelve months his [Paine's] name became a household word. There were few places in the British Isles where his book [*Rights of Man*] had not penetrated." Kistler (1962) has documented Paine's profound influence on German liberals and radicals. So by the time a relatively obscure Immanuel Kant penned his ideas on the democratic peace in 1795, *Rights of Man* was already an international best-seller that was often read aloud to the illiterate (Keane, 1995:301–8). Waltz's wayward attribution of the democratic peace to Kant is by no means rare. Collectively, the field of international relations has come to celebrate Kant as the originator of the idea while Paine's thinking on the subject remains largely ignored.

The discipline's adherence to Kant's "Perpetual Peace" [1795] as the most prominent statement of cosmopolitanism and the democratic peace becomes even more surprising when one acknowledges the difficult inconsistencies posed by Kant's work. Holsti (1985:26) pointed out that "what exactly Kant had in mind as the ultimate shape of the world remains a matter of some disagreement among experts." Less generous was Goethe who sarcastically noted that in "Perpetual Peace," "Kant out-Kants himself" (quoted in Gallie, 1978:11). Kant's lack of clarity in "Perpetual Peace," according to Gallie (1978:9), has led "to a proliferation of contradictory interpretations which can hardly be matched in the history of political thought." Unfortunately, the difficulties of interpreting Kant have not deterred students of international relations from relying on Kant as the prime spokesman for liberal and cosmopolitan thought, sometimes with neither elaboration nor citation.<sup>3</sup> This simplification of Kant and the neglect of Paine is part and parcel of international relations' relatively shallow treatment of political philosophy. I will now turn to describing Paine's international thought.

### Paine and the Levels of Analysis

Like most cosmopolitans, Paine was primarily a second image theorist, emphasizing factors at the state and society levels of analysis. In a prescient passage Paine [1791–92:168] directly addressed the relative importance of Waltz's (1959) levels of analysis: "Instead, therefore, of exclaiming against the ambition of Kings, the exclamation should be directed against the principle of such Govern-

<sup>3</sup> Russett and Oneal's ISA paper "Third Leg of the Kantian Peace" (1997) is one recent example of where Kant's ideas are loosely put forth without quotation, interpretation, or even citation.

ments; and instead of seeking to reform the individual, the wisdom of a Nation should apply itself to reform . . . of [nondemocratic] Governments which are still in practice." He [1791–92:183] concluded, "If universal peace, civilization, and commerce, are ever to be the happy lot of man, it cannot be accomplished but by a revolution in the system of governments." If any meaningful changes are to take place at any level of analysis, Paine reasoned, they must spring from democratic revolution. In spite of his emphasis on reforming governments, some discussion of how Paine viewed the individual and the international system is in order.<sup>4</sup>

Paine viewed the individual as essentially good and moral in nature. "The moral duty of man consists in imitating the moral goodness and beneficence of God manifested in the creation toward all his citizens" [1794:83]. For Paine, this moral duty was facilitated—if not ensured—by the harmony of interests that reigns among all people. In *Rights of Man* Paine [1791–92:186–89] spoke of the harmonious association between all individuals and how this "common interest produces common security." For Paine, America was a tough case for a naturally emerging harmony. But if harmony, peace, and cooperation could come about naturally in America, Paine reasoned, they could come about anywhere:

If there is a country in the world, where concord, according to common calculation, would be least expected, it is America. Made up, as it is, of people from different nations, accustomed to different forms and habits of government, speaking different languages, and more different in their modes of worship, it would appear that the union of such a people was impracticable.

Despite these divisions, Paine saw a peaceful harmony in America because government was based on the rights of man. When such rights are respected, "all difficulty retires, and all parts are brought into cordial unison." Paine noted that even during the American Revolution, where all government control was lacking, "order and harmony were preserved." The order and harmony that Paine witnessed in America was merely the reflection of his belief in mankind's natural goodness.

However, Paine was not entirely ignorant of human capacity to do evil. "We do not live in a world of angels," he once warned his Quaker brethren [1775:181]. When people are led astray, it is usually a result of living under false systems of government. Monarchy corrupted its subjects, drawing men away from their natural goodness. The "inhabitants of a monarchical country," Paine [1792:286] pointed out, "are often intellectually degenerate." Democratic governance, on the other hand, nurtured intellectual growth: "Instead of placing his ideas of greatness in the rude achievements of the savage, he [the enlightened democrat] studies arts, sciences, agriculture and commerce, the refinements of the gentleman, the principles of society, and the knowledge of the philosopher" [1782:239]. This vivid distinction between democracy and monarchy is repeated throughout Paine's writings.

Just as democracy transforms the individual, it will also work to transform the international system. Paine's discussion of an international system composed of monarchies resembled Hobbes's state of nature. The monarchies of Europe, Paine [1782:236] argued, "are like individuals in a state of nature. They are regulated by no fixed principle, governed by no compulsive law, and each does

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<sup>4</sup> Stanley Hoffmann (1968:317) has warned against the use of the levels of analysis with political philosophers: "any sharp separation between their [individual philosophers'] conceptions of human nature, of the state and the international milieu, destroys the unity of their philosophy." Here, however, by addressing all the levels, I have consciously tried to avoid any sharp separations that might harm the unity of Paine's thought.

independently what it pleases or what it can." For Paine [1776:119], international conflict is sparked by royal conceit and resolved only by armed force. Right matters little and "cannon are the barristers of crowns; and the sword, not of justice, but of war, decides the suit."

An anarchic international system of democratic states, however, was not a stark and dangerous world for Paine. Indeed, his faith in natural goodness and harmony led Paine to positions approaching those of the anarchist. "All the great laws of society," Paine [1791-92:187] argued, "are followed and obeyed, because it is the interest of the parties so to do, and not on account of any formal laws their governments may impose or interpose." Unlike neorealists mired in Hobbesian trappings, anarchy posed few problems to Paine's enlightened individual, just as it would pose few problems to the democratic nation-state in an anarchic system. Paine did not ignore anarchy; he simply assumed that man's innate goodness and reason combined with democratic governance would render it unproblematic.<sup>5</sup>

As a second image theorist, Paine maintained that both the individual and the international system would undergo a massive transformation with the establishment of democratic regimes. Through reason and discourse, a society of free individuals can uncover the divine plans that have been long obscured by oppression and superstition. For Paine, democracy was essential to uncover the grand design of Providence. The greatness of humanity would rise up with open discussion and enquiry as well as unfettered political rights. Enlightened individuals would abandon the evil and crass dispositions that tyranny tended to promote; they would come to understand that each individual's interests were intertwined with the interests of their fellow men. The international system would witness a similar transformation. Peace, which is the interest of all enlightened individuals, would thrive in a system of democratic states. But before any of this could take place, the monarchical system of government must be abolished.

### Monarchy, Bad Decision-Making, and War

Paine's critique of hereditary privilege has become a classic, more for its poignancy than its novelty. Why, Paine [1791-92:105] asked in *Rights of Man*, should the most powerful decision-maker in the realm come to his position by inheritance? The idea of a hereditary leader is "as absurd as an hereditary mathematician, or an hereditary wise man; and as ridiculous as an hereditary poet-laureate." This means of selecting leadership almost always ensures that monarchs will be inept decision-makers. "The state of a king shuts him from the world," Paine [1776:69,79] argued in *Common Sense*, "yet the business of a king requires him to know it thoroughly." At an early age, heirs to the throne have their minds "poisoned by importance." When they ultimately rise to power, monarchs are among "the most ignorant and unfit of any throughout the dominion."

For Paine, monarchs not only make poor leaders, they demand a high price for doing so. Who but a monarch, Paine [1776:81] sarcastically asked, can earn "eight hundred thousand sterling a year, and be worshiped into the bargain!" One consequence of monarchy is costly and irrational warfare. More than any other factor in world politics, monarchy and succession has left "the world in blood and ashes" [1776:80]. In an analogy often drawn by cosmopolitans, Paine [1777:204] noted that the "spirit of dueling, extended on a national scale, is a

<sup>5</sup> See Joll, 1964:ch. 2, for a careful review of how many principles of the French Revolution—the very same principles that were current throughout Paine's writings—would come to inform the anarchist movements that followed.

proper character for European wars.” Unlike a party to a duel, monarchs do not risk suffering the immediate consequences of war. It is the people who ultimately pay for the “pride of their king.”

In addition to the wars that incompetent or prideful monarchs embark upon, kings also pursue wars that serve their particular interests in the domestic realm. While not a new claim, Paine noted how war was waged to benefit the crown at the expense of the people. “War involves in its progress such a train of unforeseen and un-supposed circumstances, such a combination of foreign matters, that no human wisdom can calculate the end. It has but one thing certain, and that is increase of TAXES” [1787a:12]. Later Paine [1791–92:99] noted that “taxes were not raised to carry on wars, but that wars were raised to carry on taxes.” This use of war to improve a monarch’s domestic standing is what Paine termed “the art of conquering at home.”

Paine was convinced that certain sectors of the nation also stand to benefit from wars while the common people will endure the losses. More than a century before talk of the “merchants of death,” Paine reported that a “few men have enriched themselves by jobs and contracts, and the groaning multitude bore the burden” [1787a:10]. Since the already-privileged will benefit from war, it is these privileged few who lead the unwitting multitudes into costly and destructive wars. Wars would not occur, Paine [1791–92:57] claimed, if the people were “enlightened enough not to be made the dupes of courts.” Waging war will only enrich the wealthy and powerful, while further impoverishing the downtrodden. Wars, then, actually exacerbate inequalities within the state and will be pursued by those few who stand to benefit from them. And after each war the elite are better positioned to wage another. For Paine, the relationship between inherited privilege and war-making was self-perpetuating and self-reinforcing.

Paine’s solution to the problem of warmongering monarchs was based on the formation of democratic states, and would require wresting power from the incompetent, self-seeking, and capricious monarchs. With democratic governance of foreign policy, all would be transformed. Paine [1791–92:98] acknowledged: “The right of war and peace is in the nation. Where else should it reside, but in those who are to pay the expense.”<sup>6</sup> Given the opportunity, the people would choose peace over war.

Yet well before the fame that greeted him in France, Paine argued that democracies would be a force for peace. In *Common Sense*, Paine [1776:80] was keen to point out that the few republics of the world tended to be peaceful: “Holland and Swisserland are without wars, foreign or domestic.” According to Paine [1776:95], this peace results from the democratic tendency to “negotiate the mistake” rather than let regal pride swell “into a rupture with foreign powers.” But no democracy could be safe from the troubles that monarchs could spread about. So Paine advocated the revolutionary expansion of democratic governance.

Paine thought that republican government on the American model would be emulated rapidly, leading to a proliferation of peaceful democracies. “I do not believe,” Paine [1791–92:178] prophesied, “that monarchy and aristocracy will continue seven years longer in any of the enlightened countries in Europe.” Finally, Paine believed that the advent of republican governments would be met with a “morning of reason” among individuals and cosmopolitan peace among nations.

Key to proliferation of this democratic, cosmopolitan awareness was education. Paine, therefore, “relied upon education as the chief means of putting away

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<sup>6</sup> The similarity of Paine’s passage to Kant’s later passage is striking. Four years after Paine, Kant (1795:100) wrote that “the consent of the citizens is required to decide whether or not war is to be declared, it is very natural that they will have great hesitation in embarking on so dangerous an enterprise. For this would mean calling down on themselves all the miseries of war.”



the works of darkness" (Clark, 1933:142). Open enquiry and education in matters of society, economics, and politics were essential to democracy. The study of politics, Paine [1795:242] argued, had stood still until the American Revolution. Now the "complicated science of government" was no longer limited to the realm of "practical politicians or the speculations of individual theorists." Politics should be a popular and rigorous pursuit. To this end Paine [1787b:2] advocated a society for the "improvement in the knowledge of government, and for the advancement of political science."

Like other cosmopolitans Paine sought to resolve international conflicts by enhancing understandings between nations. Paine recognized that not all wars are intentionally embarked upon by power-seeking monarchs. Sometimes wars are stumbled into by well-meaning but ignorant leaders and their followers. "The little which nations know or are sometimes willing to know of each other, serves to precipitate them into wars which neither would have undertaken, had they fully known the extent of the power and the circumstances of each other" [1787a:30]. Paine believed that a sound education concerning other nations might help avert unintentional wars. The pursuit of peace by casting off ignorance and misunderstanding has been a mainstay of cosmopolitan thought. For Paine and for many subsequent cosmopolitans, one of the best ways to avoid international misunderstanding was to encourage interactions through international trade.

### **A Friend of Commerce: Peace Through Free Trade**

Whereas ideas concerning the capacity of trade to promote peace and justice between states can be traced back to Roger Coke and John Houghton in the late seventeenth century and became better known with the publication of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* [1776], it was Paine's writings that undoubtedly popularized the idea (Appleby, 1991). In *Common Sense*, Paine [1776:107] noted how "commerce diminishes the spirit, both of patriotism and military defense." According to Paine, trade enhances peace between nations in three ways. First, he argued that increased trade surely renders conquest an inefficient way of extracting resources. Second, Paine echoed the belief that as the value of international exchange rises, so too will the motivation to avoid wars disruptive to those exchanges. Third, trade fosters peace through improved cosmopolitan understandings that emerge from increased interaction and exchange between nations.

Paine [1791-92:234] noted: "In all my writings, where the matter would permit, I have been a friend of commerce, because I have been a friend to its effects. It is a pacific system, operating to cordialize mankind, by rendering nations, as well as individuals, useful to each other. . . . If commerce were permitted to act to the universal extent it is capable, it would extirpate the system of war." Once monarchies—with their burdensome taxes and needless wars—were replaced by republics, greater economic efficiency will produce such abundance that new markets and trade would necessarily be sought after. Paine [1791-92:233] estimated that "more than one fourth of the labour of mankind is annually consumed by this barbarous system [of war between monarchies]." With the prosperity that follows democracy and peace, nations will trade with one another because of the mutual advantages to be gained. Criticizing mercantilist ideas, Paine [1791-92:236] argued that "there can be no such thing as a nation flourishing alone in commerce" and that the benefits of trade will always be mutual. So when commerce is disturbed by war, all parties lose in the end. Individuals within society will come to measure the costs of war according to their own commercial interests, the majority of which could never prosper from war. And this recognition of commercial interests will lead to popular support for foreign policies that do not aggravate trading partners.

The second salubrious effect of commerce, according to Paine, was the fact that free trade makes available through the market what was previously available only through conquest. With an open world market, “he [Paine’s “unenlightened man”] trades with the same countries, which in former ages, tempted by their productions, and too indolent to purchase them, he would have gone to war with.” Why would nations engage in conquest and plunder when the same goods can be gotten more cheaply through trade? “The idea of conquering countries, like the Greeks and Romans, does not now exist; and experience has exploded the notion of going to war for the sake of profit” [1782:240]. The belief that the costs of war outstrip any of its benefits is a central tenet of cosmopolitan theorists.

The third and perhaps the most important benefit of trade is the cosmopolitan understanding that will inevitably develop between nations engaged in commerce. Here Paine echoed a theme that David Hume eloquently put forth a half century before. In an often cited passage, Hume [1741] claimed that “nothing is more favorable to the rise of politeness and learning, than a number of neighboring and independent states, connected together by commerce and policy” (quoted in Onuf and Johnson, 1995:191). Like many Enlightenment thinkers, Paine saw how interaction and experience would prompt learning and understanding between different nations. Economic interaction would work to acquaint nations with one another and this heightened awareness would expose the natural harmony shared by all humanity. Once realized, this harmony would render war between free-trading, republican states highly improbable, if not impossible.

### **Cosmopolitanism Versus Nationalism**

There can be little confusion over Paine’s view of nationalism. He scorned extreme nationalist attachments as did many thinkers of the Enlightenment. Although Paine [1791–92:250] made what is perhaps his most famous statement amidst the revolution in France: “my country is the world, and my religion is to do good,” his cosmopolitan views can be dated prior to *Rights of Man*. In his “Letter to Abbé Raynal,” Paine [1782:219] shunned the emphasis on the advancements of particular nations and he argued that all people must work to develop a “universal society, whose mind rises above the atmosphere of local thoughts and considers mankind, of whatever nation or profession they may be, as the work of one creator.” In “Crisis 7” during the American Revolution, he [1777:191] noted that “my principles are universal. My attachment is to all the world, and not any particular part.” For Paine, there was a unity between the individual and mankind. Particular national attachments should carry little weight with enlightened men and women.

Much of the optimism regarding a cosmopolitan family was a consequence of what Paine witnessed in America. While never acquiescing to slavery or injustice to native Americans, Paine still thought of America as a relatively harmonious society in spite of its different nationalities. “This new world,” Paine [1776:85] acknowledged shortly after his arrival in Pennsylvania, “hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from every part of Europe.” Paine dismissed the supposed importance of emigration from England on the settling of America. “Not one third of the inhabitants, even of this province, are of English descent.” From France, Paine [1791–92:182] painted an even rosier picture of the insignificance of nationalism in the new world. America’s “settlers are emigrants from different European nations, and of diversified professions of religion, retiring from the governmental persecutions of the old world, and meeting in the new, not as enemies, but as brothers.” The peaceful diversity that Paine observed in America would serve as his model of a new democratic world founded on international brotherhood.

Paine envisioned the growth of democracy resulting in the abandonment of blind pledges to God, King, and Country. Instead, individuals would pursue their own best interest and—given his assumption of a divinely wrought harmony—Paine thought that such pursuits would ultimately serve the interests of all mankind. This recognition of a harmony of interests would work to transform the world. Early in the American Revolution, Paine [1776:49] exhorted, “We have it in our power to begin the world over again. . . . The birthday of the new world is at hand.” The new world to which Paine was referring consisted of free individuals living within a family of republics—*retired from the governmental persecutions of the old world*.

Paine’s cosmopolitanism, however, does not translate to any design on world federalism. Nowhere did Paine propose world government. For Paine, a system of autonomous, democratic nation-states which share a recognition of the rights of man would be enough. As Beitz (1979:183) rightly noted, “a cosmopolitan conception of international morality is not equivalent to, nor does it necessarily imply . . . world federalism.” Autonomous nation-states can pursue cosmopolitan ends. Paine’s vision of an enlightened, democratic world society of distinct nation-states pursuing universal goals has served as one of the most enduring pillars of cosmopolitan thought in international relations.

### Obsolescence of Conquest, Democratic Defense, and Open Diplomacy

Many cosmopolitans have tended to neglect issues of national security and war. War was often assumed to be an irrational undertaking because the spoils of war could never rise above the costs of attaining them. Cosmopolitans also assumed that high levels of military preparedness and war could corrupt the liberal values that were essential for an open, democratic society. One of the earliest cosmopolitan statements on the perils of war can be found in Thomas More’s sixteenth-century classic. In *Utopia*, More [1516:28] told the imaginary tale of a people who “once waged a war to obtain another kingdom for their king.” More continued:

When they finally won [a new territory], they saw that they had just as much trouble holding on to it as they had endured in gaining it. And seeds of rebellion were ever springing up within, or invasion from without. So they always had to fight either for the people they had conquered or against them. They never had an opportunity to dismiss their army and all the time their resources were being drained and their money going abroad. Their blood was being spent on others’ glory and peace was no safer. At home characters had become corrupted by war, people had tasted the joy of robbery, boldness was strengthened by slaughter, the laws were held in contempt.

Paine shared many of these cosmopolitan concerns. For instance, Paine [1777:188] argued that tax revenue extracted through coercive methods would amount to very little because this revenue “could never be worth the charge of obtaining it by arms.” Paine was also concerned with how a military ethos might come to harm democratic values. However, unlike many cosmopolitans, Paine did not go on to ignore national security issues and the problem of international war. Paine separated himself from those who believed that the practice of war would naturally disappear and was therefore a problem of diminishing salience.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Like early cosmopolitans in international relations, many sociologists ignored the problem of war. Michael Mann (1987:55) noted that “most sociologists omitted war from their central problematic. This was not neglect; it was quite deliberate. They believed that future society would be pacific and transnational.”

Paine saw the lingering danger of war and therefore paid considerable attention to defense policy and national security. Although he was influenced by his Quaker mother, there is nothing to indicate any pacifist leanings in his thought. Paine [1775:181] admitted that he would happily lay down his weapons, “but unless the whole will [do likewise], the matter ends, and I take up my musket and thank heaven He has put it in my power.” Paine never ignored the need for military preparedness. If “the peaceful part of mankind” neglected the means of self-defense, Paine [1775:182] warned on the eve of the American Revolution, they “will be continually overrun by the vile and the abandoned.” As Fruchtman (1993:142) pointed out, for Paine “all articles of war were evil. If people, however, used them for good purposes, such as defense of rights, then a particular war was just and virtuous.”

Paine considered himself somewhat of an expert in military strategy. His expertise in naval affairs was forged during his service on the privateer *King of Prussia* during the Seven Years War (Ayer, 1988:2). In the American Revolution he served as aide-de-camp for General Nathanael Greene at Fort Lee (Fruchtman, 1994:89). In the dedication of the second part of *Rights of Man*, Paine promised to join Lafayette—undoubtedly as an advisor—for the spring campaign against Prussia and help establish “freedom for all of Germany” [1791–92:174]. These experiences informed Paine’s thinking on national security policy.

In Paine’s view, large military outlays will harm domestic society and may come to agitate or threaten one’s neighbors. Paine’s solution was to design a defense that would be both inexpensive and effective. A democratic nation of enlightened citizens provided Paine with just such a force. On land, this meant a reliance on a civilian militia rather than a standing army. At sea, there would be a reliance on small gunboats rather than a large, expensive blue-water navy with ships of the line that might come to threaten other states. Gunboats and the militia would compose the core of Paine’s democratic defense.

Paine’s faith in the militia’s effectiveness was firmly based on the citizen’s enlightened self-interest. During the American Revolution Paine remarked that the most effective militia fighting took place from the citizen’s own backyard. “Here, Government, the army, and the people, are mutually and reciprocally one. In other wars, kings may lose their thrones, and their dominions; but here, the loss must fall on the majesty of the multitude, and the property they are contending to save. Every man being sensible of this, he goes to the field, or pays his portion of the charge, as the sovereign of his own possessions; and when he is conquered a monarch falls” [1782:216]. Paine’s democratic soldiers will not fight for abstractions like God, King, and Country. Instead they fight for their independence and property—so the closer to home, the more effective their fighting. Later Paine [1787a:32] estimated that as a general rule the fighting prowess of a democratic nation would be “twice the value” of a similar nation fighting under monarchy.

The militia system ensured that republics would take up arms only in cases where the national security was directly under siege. Paine [1776:124] noted that republican governments would not be “insulting the world with [their] fleets and armies, nor ravaging the globe for plunder.” Since plunder and conquest no longer paid, militia men would have no interest in straying far from their homes in pursuit of gains. With the advantage resting so firmly in favor of defense, there would be few incentives and very little capability for a republic to engage in distant wars against other republics. The militia would become a formidable fighting force only when invaded. “If they are made war upon, their country invaded, or their existence at stake,” Paine [1777:189] argued, it is the militia’s “duty to defend and preserve themselves, but in every other cause, is war inglorious and detestable.” In Paine’s view, the citizen army was an effective fighting

force only in defense of their own immediate interests. If the events of the revolution in France altered this view, it is not apparent from his writings.<sup>8</sup>

In the late eighteenth century many Americans shared Paine's enthusiasm for a militia in lieu of a standing army. After the Revolution, George Washington saw little need for a large peacetime army and advocated a militia: "every Citizen who enjoys the protection of a free Government owes not only a proportion of his property but even of his professional services to the defense of it." In one of its first acts regarding peace-time defense policy, the American Congress dismissed nearly the entire American Army because "standing armies in time of peace are inconsistent with the principles of republican governments" (quoted in Millis, 1956:44–46). Another attractive feature—and one not lost on either Paine or the financially strapped American Congress—was the relative pittance a militia demanded from the treasury. Yet there were other reasons the militia was preferable to a standing army.

Paine feared that large military outlays may perpetuate certain military values within a larger society and this would prove detrimental to republican values. Paine [1782:281] argued that "navies add nothing to the manners and morals of a people. The sequestered life . . . prevents the opportunities of society, and is apt to occasion a coarseness of ideas." A common fear shared by cosmopolitans is that a large standing army might possibly undermine democratic governance. With vast resources being spent on military institutions, military leaders could gain undue influence in political decisions, and military force could then be used to subvert democratic rule. Yet any subversions of power would be unlikely with a well-poised democratic militia. A democratic militia would defend against all threats to freedom, domestic as well as foreign.

There is yet another danger posed by a large standing army. Because of its threatening posture, cosmopolitans reason, a large standing army might provoke a war that would have otherwise been avoided. Before Paine, Voltaire [1731:204] noted how standing armies often "brought about the war they were pretending to prevent." Paine viewed peacetime military buildups in a similar way. He was highly critical of Pitt's large buildup of British forces during the 1787 crisis with the Dutch. By pursuing such a large and rapid buildup, Paine [1787a:66] contended, "the sparks of ill will are afresh kindled up between nations, the fair prospects of lasting peace are vanished." Since standing armies could be used to attack as well as to defend, one likely but unintentional consequence was a heightened sense of insecurity in neighboring states. Rather than arousing the suspicions and insecurities of neighboring states—*by insulting them with their fleets and armies*—Paine thought it wiser and more economical to have a small but potent defensive force. The unintended consequences of seeking offensive military advantage is a danger that cosmopolitans have long warned against.

Paine had also been critical of large navies for their expense and their threatening nature. "The idea of having navies for the protection of commerce is delusive. It is putting the means of destruction for the means of protection" [1791–92:238]. For Paine, the distinction between offense and defense (i.e., destruction versus protection) was recurrent throughout his writings. Large blue-water navies were definitely offensive in character and therefore threatening to neighboring states. There was no need for a large navy that could extend around the globe unless a nation was bent on "foreign dominion." Paine argued that America could defend itself against the Royal Navy with an extremely small fleet. He estimated that a naval force one-twentieth the size of England's would suffice

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<sup>8</sup> Kates (1989:585) argued that Paine underwent a transformation from a liberal to a violent radical during his time in France. Paine's subsequent work—Kates relied only on the second part of *Rights of Man*—would not support such a claim.

since “our whole force would be employed on our coast” [1776:106]. Again, the advantages—both strategic and fiscal—rested in defense.

Yet naval defense presented problems that could not be easily addressed with a militia-type system. The crew of an eighteenth-century warship demanded much more training and expertise than a minuteman who is knowledgeable about local terrain and experienced with a musket. Also, a fleet demanded a great deal more capital for construction and upkeep than did the militia. Paine’s solution called for the creation of a democratic, inexpensive, and highly effective navy that would use small gunboats. Compared to conventional ships of the line, these boats were simple and light. Powered by fifty oars and flat-bottomed, they resembled more a large canoe than a warship. Pointing from the bows of these sixty-foot craft would be one large, twenty-four or thirty-six pound cannon. Paine argued that such cannon would be far more accurate and effective than those shot from the heights of a ship of the line. The design of the boat allowed for rapid deployment and mobility in all conditions. “It will be found,” Paine contended, “that half a dozen gun-boats carrying twenty-four pounders, will do it more effectually than can be done by any other method” [1807a:1072].

Paine also celebrated the fact that the gunboat could not be deployed abroad. Returning to his distinction between defense and offense, Paine [1807b:1075] noted how “ships and gun-boats are for different services. Ships are for distant expeditions; gun-boats for home defense.” Gunboats would not be crewed by full-time marines, but by a civilian coast guard. These coast guards would work much like the citizen militia and be called up in the event of an invasion, or for occasional training. Another positive feature of gunboats is found in their relatively small price tag. These craft could be built at a fraction of the cost incurred by traditional coastal fortification and fully commissioned ships. And when not in use, gunboats could be “sheltered and preserved from the weather” [1807b:1075]. This would both extend the life of these boats and save in upkeep and repairs.

In addition to his advocacy for inexpensive gunboats, Paine called for naval arms control agreements. In *Rights of Man* Paine recommended a fifty percent mutual decrease in the naval force. In his history of militarism, Vagts (1959:398) referred to Paine’s proposal as “plausibly argued” and “eminently fair.” It was also viewed by military organizations, according to Vagts, as a “most dangerous proposal.”

When considering the likelihood of implementing naval arms reductions or the actual construction of gunboats, Paine was not so idealistic. Paine [1807b:1073] reckoned that his idea might not be implemented because of the narrowly vested interests of Philadelphia shipbuilders: “men are led away by the *greatness* of an idea and not by the *justness* of it. This is always the case with those who are advocates for navies and large ships.” He feared that the special interests would likely carry the day, much to the detriment of the treasury and the public interest.

To limit the influence of these special interests in matters of weapon procurement, Paine advocated open diplomacy and free discussion on all foreign policy matters, especially defense. Defense issues are no different than any other policy issue; the people must decide them publicly and openly. Paine [1791–92:206] noted that “nations can have no secrets; and the secrets of courts, like those of individuals, are always their defects. In a representative system, the reason for everything must publicly appear.” By ensuring that citizens were clearly informed about foreign policy, Paine was certain that just policies would come naturally. Gone would be the intrigues of court, with their secret treaties and unjustified arms buildups.

Nowhere was Paine’s commitment to open diplomacy more apparent than in the Silas Deane affair. When serving as American Secretary for the Committee

on Foreign Affairs, Paine discovered that war materials being shipped secretly from France in the early years of the revolution had earned some of its handlers excessive profits. Unable to resolve it privately, Paine divulged what was apparently a case of war profiteering by Silas Deane and others. Paine's revelations embarrassed French officials, who had wanted to keep any assistance hidden to avoid provoking England. Perhaps more costly was the fact that it jeopardized continued French aid. This forced Paine's resignation and ensured that he would never again play a major role in the government.<sup>9</sup> Although Paine paid a high personal price for this principle, he never turned away from his support of open diplomacy.

Paine thought that open diplomacy would remove two of the more menacing features of the international system: clandestine arms buildups and secret military alliances. Paine's militia and gunboat defense worked in similar ways. Without these costly and threatening arms buildups, Paine [1787a:66] saw little chance of sparking "ill will between nations." Since Paine's defensive forces would be incapable of projecting power much beyond national boundaries, their contributions to any military alliance would be severely limited. A democratic state with a defensively aligned military force would not be sought after as an alliance partner. The fact that democracies would not enter into military alliances suited Paine well. He was critical of England's "speculative alliances that served rather to draw her into a continental war . . . than extricate her from a war" [1787a:27]. As with all cosmopolitans, Paine [1791-92:239] viewed military alliances and arms buildups as costly, agitating, and destabilizing.<sup>10</sup>

### **Intervention and Stewardship: To Bring *Felicity* and Peace**

Like those of many cosmopolitans whose world fails to match their utopian vision, Paine's frustrations sometimes gave way to paternalistic and condescending attitudes. These were directed mainly toward tyranny—both its perpetrators and those whom it oppressed. Not only did monarchy lead to costly war and other misguided allocations of society's resources, its subjects were an inferior lot compared to citizens of a democracy. "It will be noticed," Paine [1792:286] contended, "that the inhabitants of a monarchical country are often intellectually degenerate and are distinguished for their servile disposition." Political edification of these "intellectual degenerates" would require not only careful nurturing, but also some firm direction. In a letter to the inhabitants of Louisiana, Paine [1804:101] castigated them for their views on government and slavery: "you do not understand the principles and interest of a republic. . . . We have had experience, and you have not." Paine believed it was the responsibility of those with "experience" to lead those who have yet to enjoy benefits of democracy and enlightenment.

Perhaps as a result of seeing the revolution go awry in France, Paine grew to be cautious in how to make the residents of Louisiana good republicans. In a letter to Jefferson in 1803 he advised that since the inhabitants "know little or nothing of election and representation," there should be a sort of stewardship over the territory for up to seven years. "In the meantime they may be initiated into the practice by electing their municipal government, and after some experience they will be in train to elect their state government" (quoted in Fruchtman, 1994:406). For Paine, if given proper guidance and the chance to reason

<sup>9</sup> See Fruchtman (1994:110-20) for a good account of the role Paine played in the affair.

<sup>10</sup> Paine [1791-92:256, 289] also used the concept of alliances to mean disarmament agreements which could be negotiated between democratic states.

through completely, everyone will become a good citizen of a vibrant, free-trading, and peaceful republic.

The task for Paine, then, was to teach the less fortunate the virtues of reason and enlighten them as to their best interests. Once this was done, democratic government would soon follow. But to lead and to teach effectively might require intervention into the domestic affairs of corrupt monarchies. "If universal peace, civilization, and commerce are ever to be the happy lot of man, it cannot be accomplished but by a revolution in the system of governments" [1791–92:183]. Paine grew to be a zealous supporter of interventions to bring about democratic revolution.

Paine's favorite target to incite revolution was his native England. In 1798, while still an active member of the French Assembly, he offered 500 livres as a "small patriotic donation" to help finance a French-led "descent" on England. There could be no lasting peace for France—nor for the world, Paine reasoned—until England became "a sister republic" [1804:249]. While this gift was surely an acknowledgment of his appreciation for the assistance that the French rendered to the American revolutionary cause, it also signaled Paine's commitment to interventionism.

In keeping with his creed of open diplomacy, Paine published specifics of his plans for the cross-channel invasion. It would entail 1,000 of his gunboats, which could pass north of the shores of Kent. Each would have 100 men on board and they could avoid direct naval confrontation by traveling on a calm day when the British ships of the line would be left dead in deep water. According to Paine's account, Bonaparte was to command the descent. "By agreement between him and me," Paine wrote, "I was to accompany him . . . to give the people of England an opportunity of forming a government for themselves, and thereby bring about peace" [1804:259].

It is important to note that in Paine's mind this descent was certainly not an effort to conquer England. As noted above, he was convinced that any conquest was doomed to fail; so Paine thought of this as a "descent" on England. The term provides the fitting image of coming down from above to assist the "duped and degenerate" Englishmen in the establishment of a more enlightened form of government. Rather naively, Paine believed that once a beachhead was gained, he could sit down at a sort of town meeting and convince the people of the superiority of democratic rule. Given the limited worth of military force, only a small landing force would be needed for such an enterprise.

Paine's descent upon England never took place. Yet many interventions to secure or impose democratic governance, however, did follow. Most of these interventions were tinged with a similar messianism—as well as unjustified optimism—that Paine demonstrated two centuries ago. And none succeeded as easily as Paine would have had it. Along with the transforming power of democratic rule, another enduring feature of cosmopolitan thought is an unqualified faith in a smooth and inevitable transition to democracy, imposed from without.

### **Paine's Cosmopolitanism and Kant's Liberalism: A Brief Comparison**

A detailed analysis of Kant's liberalism is beyond the scope of this essay, but given the previously noted confusion regarding Kant's obscured meanings and the widespread tendency to equate Paine with Kant, a concise comparison of the two is in order. Once Paine is distinguished from Kant, his contribution to international relations thought is better understood, as are the differences between cosmopolitans and liberals.

At first glance Kant's liberalism and Paine's cosmopolitanism appear markedly similar, and are often mistakenly lumped together within the study of inter-



national relations. Zacher and Mathew (1996:113) failed to see any meaningful differences between Paine and Kant: "Another late-eighteenth-century writer whose views are very close to those of Kant is the American Thomas Paine." This is conceivable since there are some important points of agreement between the two. Both, for instance, saw democracy as a positive force for peace; both viewed large standing armies and military alliances as threats to peace; and both agreed that conquest and war would rarely achieve the desired outcome. In spite of these agreements, important differences create a distinction that must be recognized.

Yet Paine's cosmopolitanism is distinct from Kant's liberalism on several fronts. While both shared a faith in principles of the Enlightenment, Kant placed less optimism in mankind's ability to unveil the divine scheme of things. In fact, Kant's view of human nature was far more pessimistic. While Paine [1791-92:230] boldly pronounced that there "is a morning of reason rising upon man on the subject of government, that has not appeared before," Kant [1784a:46] often doubted what could be "constructed from such a warped wood as that which man is made of." For Paine, enlightenment and reason would rise as naturally and as dramatically as the sun. Kant was not so optimistic, and tended to be more skeptical about inevitable progress. Kant [1784b:55] viewed enlightenment as a slow but gradual process and one prone to backsliding. Kant [1784a:42] argued that progress through "reason does not itself work instinctively, for it requires trial, practice and instruction . . . one stage to the next."

Whereas Paine saw human nature as cast from a divine mold, Kant frequently demonstrated a dark view of humanity. In one passage Kant [1795:111] blamed war on human nature: "War itself, however, does not require any particular kind of motivation, for it seems to be ingrained in human nature." In another, Kant [1784a:46] claimed that man, because of his moral weakness, "requires a master to break his self-will." Only then can individuals be free. Kant [1795:126] acknowledged "that evil aspect of human nature which makes coercion necessary"; Paine saw flaws in the individual as a result of unjust government.

Kant's rather cautious view of the goodness of human nature led him away from popular sovereignty. Compared to Paine, Kant wanted to limit the right to vote to relatively few. To vote, according to Kant [1797:139-40], one must be an "active citizen" and "must possess civil independence." By "active citizen" Kant simply meant that one "must by his own free will actively participate in a community of other people." His ideas on what constituted "civil independence," however, would drastically curtail political participation. Kant wanted to deny the vote to anyone who has to "receive orders or protection from other individuals, so that they do not possess civil independence." This would mean denying the vote to woodcutters and blacksmiths who seek employment from other individuals, domestic tutors, apprentices, women, and "all those who are obliged to depend for their living . . . on the offices of others." These restrictions fit nicely with Kant's assertion that some individuals, motivated by short-sighted self-interests, might be swayed from a reasoned and just decision. On the other hand, Paine believed that individuals are essentially good and unselfish; he therefore wanted to enfranchise all individuals within a society. Kant's limitations on democratic governance reflect his caution concerning the innate goodness of all men, and also testify to his wariness concerning the virtues of democratic rule. These points are often missed in contemporary discussions of Kant and international relations.

Another distinction to be made between Paine's cosmopolitan democracy and Kant's liberal democracy has to do with the role of the state. Brown (1992:41), for instance, argued that "Kant's notion of republicanism is far closer to a Hayekian view of liberalism," where the state plays no part in social welfare or economic

matters. Paine, on the other hand, envisioned a very active role for the state in the redistribution of wealth within a society. For example, Paine [1791–92] reasoned that if the state levied progressive taxes, education could be universal, and the elderly and disabled could receive adequate care. Kant, on the other hand, took very little notice of the state's role other than in providing for the defense of the republic.

Kant and Paine also maintained opposite views on intervention. For Kant, just political institutions could only develop slowly and indigenously. Harmony did not emerge naturally and institutions could not be imposed from outside the polity. This led Kant to warn against intervention into the affairs of other states. While Paine emphasized the importance of intervening to help establish democracy, one of Kant's [1795:96] preliminary articles of *Perpetual Peace* stated "No state shall forcibly interfere in the constitution and government of another state." It was Paine [1791–92:173–74] who was poised to assist Lafayette in a military campaign that would end with "the extinction of German despotism, and in establishing the freedom of all of Germany"—Kant's Königsberg included.

Another important difference between the international thought of Kant and Paine rests in their view of political community: Paine was clearly a cosmopolitan and Kant a nationalist. One of the best known features of Kant's [1795:104] internationalism is membership within a union of peaceful democracies: "For if by good fortune one powerful and enlightened nation can form a republic (which is by its nature inclined to seek perpetual peace), this will provide a focal point for federal association among other states." This democratic union would resemble a federation in which states maintained their sovereign right to rule domestically without any adherence to the universal rights of man. This federation, Kant continued, "does not aim to acquire any power like that of a state, but merely to preserve and secure the *freedom* of each state in itself, along with that of the other confederated states, although this does not mean that they need to submit to public laws and to a coercive power."

Rather than stressing the importance of a cosmopolitan scheme based on the rights of man, Kant viewed the state as the most important entity in international politics. He saw each state as a unique entity that could not be merged or absorbed by another. According to Kant [1795:94], "a state, unlike the ground on which it is based, is not a possession (patrimonium). It is a society of men, which no-one other than itself can command or dispose of. Like a tree, it has its own roots." For Kant, each grouping of people was so completely unique in law and custom that it rendered cosmopolitan understandings extremely unlikely. This division of the world into nation-states, he reasoned, has been decreed by nature. In Kant's view, there could be no such thing as a "citizen of the world." Kant [1795:113] argued that "nature uses two means to separate the nations and prevent them from intermingling—linguistic and religious differences." Kant's world was cast in terms of rigidly divided nation-states, not an international family united by a common core of universal rights. For Kant, such a scheme was impractical because "laws progressively lose their impact as the government increases its range, and a soulless despotism . . . will finally lapse into anarchy." This loss-of-strength gradient in rights, laws, and governance ensured that states will remain the key actors in the international system. Any sort of cosmopolitan union as envisioned by Paine remained a distant—if not impossible—vision to Kant.

Kant's lukewarm attitude toward any universal rights of man is clear in the limitations he placed on his "cosmopolitan right." In the subtitle to his "Third Definitive Article of a Perpetual Peace," Kant [1795:105] stated that "Cosmopolitan Right shall be limited to Conditions of Universal Hospitality." By hospitality, Kant meant the "right of a stranger not to be treated with hostility when he

arrives on someone else's territory." Kant's cosmopolitan right was minimalist at best and certainly did not extend beyond the norms of even the most rudimentary international society.

Because of these differences, Kant's liberalism should be cast separately from the cosmopolitan tradition of Tom Paine.<sup>11</sup> It is a mistake, then, to carelessly blend Paine's ideas with those of Immanuel Kant. This succinct comparison should make clear the unique contribution that Paine has made toward international relations theory, as well as highlight some of the differences between cosmopolitan and liberal thought.

### Conclusion

Paine's works leave us with all the features of cosmopolitan thinking in international relations: faith in reason and progress, the evils of authoritarian regimes, the democratic peace, the irenic impact of international commerce, nonprovocative defense policies, open diplomacy, the obsolescence of conquest, the universal respect for human rights, and the occasional need for democracies to pursue policies of messianic interventionism. While Paine remains an obscure figure in international relations, some of his cosmopolitan concerns have cropped up intermittently in international relations research. The idea that some wars might be waged not in the national interest, but rather to benefit the ruling elite, has been addressed in Levy's (1989) discussion of diversionary war. U.S. naval historians often make references to Paine's thinking on maritime defense. Paine's advocacy for small, shallow-drafted boats that could only be used for coastal defense helped inform U.S. naval policy debates up until the Naval Appropriation Act of 1889 (see Buhl, 1978). Discussions of democratic, nonprovocative defense received a brief hearing in the mid-1980s, but without reference to Paine (see, for instance, Galtung, 1984; Sharp, 1984; Tatchell, 1985). Offensive and defensive military postures have also been explored (Levy, 1984), but most of these studies are concerned with identifying a clear advantage for the defense or offense in different historical periods, rather than determining whether a defensive posture is viable. Research on how military alliances and arms races may "*spark ill will between nations*" has been comprehensively reviewed by Vasquez (1993). The question of whether international trade will actually "extirpate the system of war" has received some recent attention (Barbieri, 1996; Oneal et al., 1996). The latest study by Oneal and Russett (1997) supports Paine's assertion that high levels of trade will indeed lower the likelihood of militarized interstate disputes between important trading partners.

Most prominent of all Paine's assertions is that of the democratic peace. Paine recognized that democracies standing near monarchies and autocracies might not be peaceful. Tyrants would always pose threats to the peaceful repose of democracies, but in regard to one another, democracies would be at peace. The accuracy of Paine's claim regarding the democratic peace remains intact. Why peace has been the rule among democratic states has become one of the most popular and most contentious questions in contemporary international relations research. So it would appear that Paine's legacy, although unacknowledged, is faring quite well.

Paine was not a utopian dreamer. He realized that many of his proposals—like those of gunboats and naval arms reductions—might not be implemented given the vested interests of some sectors of society. Paine was, however, a believer in progress; as a believer in progress he held forth certain goals and ideals that are

<sup>11</sup> Many Kantians might welcome this differentiation. Indeed, it could be argued that Paine—with easy assumptions about harmony and goodness—is a more fitting target for Carr's (1964) seminal critique than is Kant.

worthy of our attention and pursuits. To do otherwise would be to resign ourselves to the same darkness and violence characteristic of times past.

But there is more to this story than to acknowledge the contributions of a pioneering theorist in international relations. In the new millennium, it is becoming more and more obvious that political realism provides us with a very incomplete picture of how the world works. Students of international relations would be wise to explore other theoretical frameworks. Paine's cosmopolitanism provides a rich store of insight and propositions that have yet to be tested. As the world inches slowly toward Paine's 200-year-old vision, we might do well to address his cosmopolitan ideas in a more conscious, systematic, and cumulative manner. And if these cosmopolitan ideas enhance our understanding, we might elevate the status of Paine's legacy in international relations beyond its current uncertain plateau.

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