

**Introduction to Western Political Thought**  
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**Lecture No. 22**

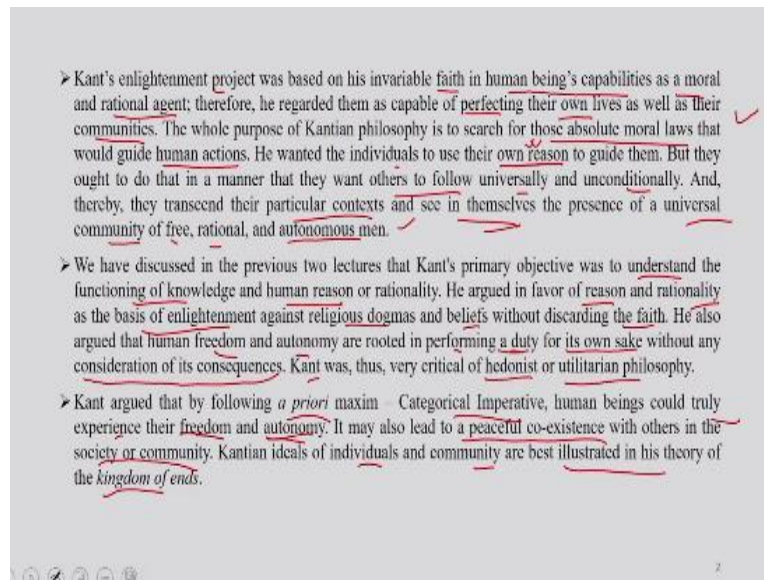
**Kant – III: Kingdom of Ends & Critical Assessment of His Thought**

Hello and welcome everyone. This is the third and concluding lecture on Kant. Today, we are going to discuss his views on ‘kingdom of ends’ and his republican thoughts and views on cosmopolitanism, and how to attain what he called the perpetual peace among the community of the nation. Within the nation-state by following republican ideals or democratic values one can attain peace. But how one can extend it to the international level. That we will discuss in the first part of our lecture, today.

And in the second part, we will discuss how Kantian philosophy shaped metaphysical thinking and about ‘German Idealism’. What are the legitimate criticisms against Kantian political philosophy? We have done two lectures on Kant, where we have discussed his views on enlightenment and how he connected morality based on what he called the ‘categorical imperative’ by differentiating it with the ‘hypothetical imperative’. And then, how he combined that notion of morality as the basis of duty or obligation which human beings must perform. By performing that duty and obligation human beings could realize their freedom and attain his and her autonomy.

So, thereby in Kant, you have a complex or delicate combination of freedom with morality and autonomy. That we have already discussed. Let us start with today’s lecture.

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As we have discussed before in Kant, we had a quintessential, enlightenment thinker who wanted to bring about progress, development, peace, morality, and enlightenment based on reason, and yet at the same time, he was someone who understood the limits of reason. There are domains of life which we cannot know that is the world of 'noumenon'. What we know is the world of the phenomenon through our sense perception and using our reason and rational faculty, develop our knowledge or understanding based on those sensations and perception where there is a world which we do not know, we cannot know about it.

So, there is a kind of paradox here. The reason is the basis of all forms of knowledge. It can lead to enlightenment. But also, there are certain limits to reason. Then how to combine reason with morality or a sense of absolute duty and obligation towards the self and others. These are some of the things which we have discussed. In Kant, you have a kind of enlightenment project that was based on his invariable faith in human being's capability as a moral and rational agent. Therefore, he regarded them as capable of perfecting their own lives as well as their community.

Kant believed in human beings' capacity to reason and through the use of reason on public matters as free and autonomous citizens, they could not only perfect their own life. But also, they could bring about enlightenment for their community and thereby progress, development, peace, and prosperity. The whole purpose of Kantian philosophy was to search for those absolute moral laws that would guide human action and what was the framework of

such moral laws was his a priori maxim that he called the 'categorical imperative' which we have discussed in the second lecture on Kant.

He wanted individuals to use their reason to guide them. But they ought to do that in a manner that they wanted others to follow universally and unconditionally. There was a kind of categorical framework. It was a kind of transcendental ethics where human beings in his or her particular setup should act on those moral laws which they want others to follow universally and unconditionally in the same context. So, they transcend their particular context and see in themselves the presence of a universal community of free rational and autonomous men.

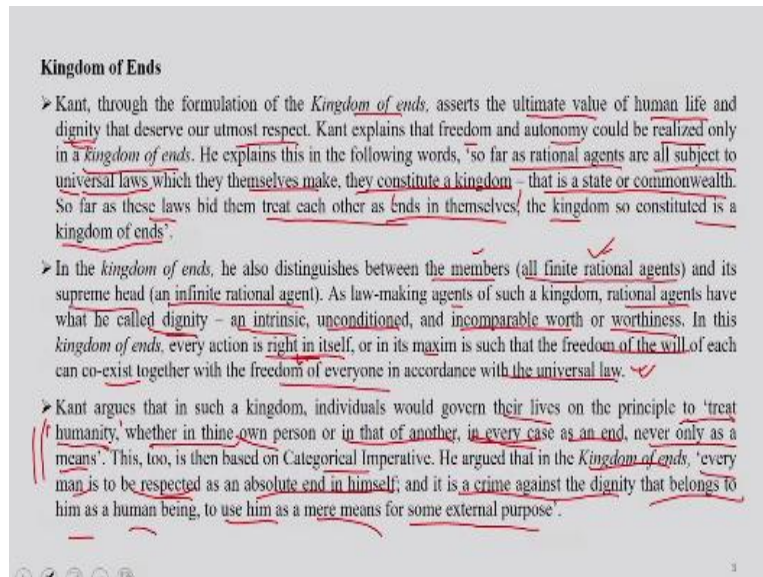
And that free, rational, or autonomous men together constituted what he called the 'kingdom of ends' which we will discuss further. We have discussed in the previous two lectures that Kant's primary objective was to understand the functioning of knowledge and human reason, how it functions, what are the limits to human reason, and human knowledge, and the three major critics that he wrote the critic of pure reason, practical reason, and judgment. It was to analyze the realm of human understanding or human knowledge. The way it functions and its limits to knowledge and human reason.

He argued in favor of reason and rationality as the basis of enlightenment. Therefore, he was very critical of religious dogmas and beliefs. However, in Kant, as we have discussed there was no rejection of faith. He gave reason or faith a more rational foundation rather than blind faith or blind worshiping of religious dogmas and beliefs as mentioned in the scriptures or by the priest. He also argued that human freedom and autonomy were rooted in performing a duty for its own sake without any consideration of the consequences of that duty.

Thus, human beings as moral rational agents would decide for themselves what action they should do, their obligation towards self and others in the community, and they decide that based on what he called the 'categorical imperative'. Once it is decided they will perform that duty for its own sake. That is a kind of beauty in itself and it does not require any further justification like in utilitarian philosophy or hedonist philosophy. Kant was thus very critical of hedonist philosophy or utilitarian philosophy which talks about the consequences of one's action or consequences of the policy. Thus, the justification or assessment of a policy is based on the idea of how it benefits the other.

Maximum good of the maximum number. So, those kinds of ideas were something Kant had rejected. He was very critical of that. Kant argued that by following a priori maxim that is 'categorical imperative', human beings could truly experience their freedom and autonomy. The realization of freedom and autonomy is like Rousseau in performing one action that human beings themselves legislate. It may lead to a peaceful co-existence with others and society or community, and Kantian ideals of individuals and community are best illustrated in this theory of 'kingdom of ends'.

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**Kingdom of Ends**

- Kant, through the formulation of the *Kingdom of ends*, asserts the ultimate value of human life and dignity that deserve our utmost respect. Kant explains that freedom and autonomy could be realized only in a *Kingdom of ends*. He explains this in the following words, 'so far as rational agents are all subject to universal laws which they themselves make, they constitute a kingdom – that is a state or commonwealth. So far as these laws bid them treat each other as ends in themselves, the kingdom so constituted is a kingdom of ends'.
- In the *kingdom of ends*, he also distinguishes between the members (all finite rational agents) and its supreme head (an infinite rational agent). As law-making agents of such a kingdom, rational agents have what he called dignity – an intrinsic, unconditioned, and incomparable worth or worthiness. In this *kingdom of ends*, every action is right in itself, or in its maxim is such that the freedom of the will of each can co-exist together with the freedom of everyone in accordance with the universal law.
- Kant argues that in such a kingdom, individuals would govern their lives on the principle to 'treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of another, in every case as an end, never only as a means'. This, too, is then based on Categorical Imperative. He argued that in the *Kingdom of ends*, 'every man is to be respected as an absolute end in himself'; and it is a crime against the dignity that belongs to him as a human being, to use him as a mere means for some external purpose'.

Now, we move on to this idea of the 'kingdom of ends'. Kant through the formulation of the 'kingdom of ends' assessed the ultimate value of human life and dignity that deserve our utmost respect. So, Kant was a kind of individualist thinker in the sense that for him, the ultimate value in life is that of human life and his dignity. It demands a kind of utmost respect from others in society or by the community as a whole. There should not be interference or kind of instrumental use of human life and his or her dignity.

The 'kingdom of ends' that Kant asserted was the ultimate value of human life and dignity which must be respected by others in the community. And Kant explained that freedom and autonomy could be realized only in the 'kingdom of ends' and he explained this in the following words. So far as rational agents are all subjects to the universal law that is based on the categorical imperative and this universal law then is something that they legislate. So, are all subject to universal laws which they make. They constitute a kingdom that is a state of the commonwealth, so far as these laws bind them treat each other as ends in themselves.

The kingdom so constituted is the 'kingdom of ends'. That is the basis of the formation of what he calls 'kingdom of ends', thereby he meant that human being as rational and moral agents would govern their life on universal law. This universal law is something that is not given to them by society or by any other kind of authority. They legislate through using their reason by following a priori maxim what he called the 'categorical imperative'.

And then when you have a community of such man as a moral rational agent, governing themselves by the universal law, you form a commonwealth or a community where everyone will treat everyone else as an end in themselves and not as a means for something else. That community would be the 'kingdom of ends', where dignity and human life would have utmost respect and regards, and so each will respect everyone else. Thereby, the dignity and the human life of each would be respected and acknowledged by everyone else. Therefore, human beings would be truly free and autonomous in such a 'kingdom of ends'.

So, in the 'kingdom of ends', he also distinguished between the members and these members are all finite rational agents. There was a kind of finite need for human rationality and human being as a rational agent. There were domains which they did not know. So, he made this distinction between the members in the 'kingdom of ends' as the finite rational agent. It was a supreme head and this supreme head was an infinite rational agent. Thus, as a law-making agent of such a kingdom, the rational agents would what he called dignity. This dignity was something intrinsic, unconditional, and incomparable worth or worthiness in the individual.

This is something which gives meaning to our life and human being as a social being or who prefers to live in the society in association with others constantly seek that others respect, their dignity when it is not recognized or it is used by others as an instrument for something else. That human being feels hurt, cheated, betrayed, and that leads to conflict, enviousness, and even violence. Thus, the 'kingdom of ends' would be a community, where everyone would respect everyone else's dignity and thereby, treating others as an end in themselves and not as a means for certain ends.

In this 'kingdom of ends', every action was right in itself and governed by the universal law. So, everybody would perform their duty and obligation to self and others for its own sake regardless of the consequences. In this 'kingdom of ends', every action is right in itself or its maxim is such that the freedom of the will of each can coexist together with the freedom of everyone following the universal law. So, there would not be any conflict of freedom and

autonomy of one person versus the freedom and autonomy of another person. Thus, everyone could live a free and autonomous life without coming into conflict with a similar life of others.

That is a kind of mutual understanding or respect of freedom and autonomy of each by acknowledging and respecting the dignity of another person as an end in themselves and not as a means. Kant argued that in such a kingdom, individuals would govern their lives on the principle to treat humanity whether in thine own person or in that of another in every case as an end never only as means. That is how human beings would behave in the 'kingdom of ends' where they would treat humanity and this humanity applies to themselves as well.

So, humanity in their person or another person. Every interaction with others in the society would be governed by this law that is similar to a kind of 'categorical imperative'. One needs to treat others as an end in themselves and not merely as a means. And this is not something which one use once and do not use on other occasions. It must be internally and externally consistent. That means in all cases and circumstances, one must treat others as an end in themselves. This applies to all kinds of relationships whether friendship, family relationships, and community ties.

When you see, observe, or experience people, treating other people as a means for them to achieve certain other ends then that person treated in such a manner feels cheated. They feel their dignity is heard and that leads to the problem and conflict. That also leads to enviousness in the society and to avoid that human being as a moral and rational agent, Kant argued, treat every other human being as an end in themselves, thereby, recognizing their dignity. They together can live a life of peaceful co-existence where the autonomy and freedom of everyone would be respected.

So, these two are based on the 'categorical imperative'. He argued that in the 'kingdom of ends', every man is to be respected as an absolute end in himself. The existence of man does not require any further justification. The humanity in any person whether the self or others should be treated as an absolute end in themselves. Not for any other further ends and it is a crime against the dignity that belongs to him as a human being, to use him as mere means for some external purpose. So, in the 'kingdom of ends', a man must not treat other men as means for certain other ends. But end in themselves that would constitute what I call a community of 'kingdom of ends' where the individual is a rational and moral agent.

Although it is a kind of ideal image of such a community, the human in actual practical life does not govern themselves according to this principle. Nonetheless, it remains ideal and only possible where a human being can realize his true and real sense of freedom and autonomy.

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➤ Kant understood how difficult it was for human beings to live such principles of morality. However, according to him, that is the only way we can create an ideal community of moral and rational agents where 'each would seek happiness in others and perfection in self'. To create such a community, Kant wanted the individual to believe and act according to moral laws as if they are already part of such a community. It is only in this community that human beings can attain the highest stage of perfection. In this kingdom, Kant gives priority to a moral sense of duty towards self and others over the theoretical knowledge or logic. He also wants the individual to lead a life as if it was a kind of prelude to something larger, immortal life, or even God.

**Views on Republicanism and Cosmopolitanism**

➤ Kant was a republican and a great admirer of the French revolution. He saw it as divine commandment and wanted every state or monarchies in Europe to be based on republican principles and constitutions. He was against all forms of class hierarchies and hereditary privileges. In his essay, *The Natural Principle of the Political Order Considered in Connection with the Idea of a Universal Cosmopolitan History*, published in 1784, Kant argues about the need for struggle as indispensable for progress and a form of world government based on republican values.

➤ However, as a Republican, he did not reduce the individuality, like Rousseau, at the altar of community or socialization. All progress and developments happen because of individuality, enviousness, and desire for power or possessions. It led them to exert their faculties in a particular way. According to Kant, complete socialization of men would lead to stagnation where human beings could lead a perfect, simple, and harmonious life, but without any new developments, progress, or innovations.

Kant understood how difficult it was for human beings to live such principles of morality that tells you to treat everyone as an end in themselves. However, according to Kant, that was the only way we could create an ideal community of moral and rational agents, where each would seek happiness in others and perfection in himself. This is also a kind of paradox and counter-intuitive thinking. In the 'kingdom of ends', Kant argued that human beings would not create happiness. They would be guided by their duty and a sense of obligation to self and others, and in performing that duty they make themselves worthy of happiness rather than craving for it.

In their interaction with others, they would try to seek happiness or bring happiness to others' lives and in doing so, they would perfect themselves. And thereby, when all the members in the community follow the same rule that they would be perfect in their duties and obligations. They would be in themselves and seek happiness in others. The society would be a society of free and autonomous individuals in the true sense of the term. A human being could realize the fullest potentiality which nature had endowed on them with. That is the use of reason, rationality to lead a life that would be peaceful, harmonious, and dignified life.

So, to create such a community, Kant wanted the individual to believe and act according to moral laws. As if they were already a part of such a community, it is not that Kant did not

realize the practical life and imperfectability of practical life. That means human beings do not necessarily guide their action, according to the rational principle or moral laws. And yet Kant believed that one must have the absolute moral laws of perfect moral laws in the imperfect society to bring about an ideal community. Thereby, bringing peace, progress, prosperity in the society or the enlightened age.

In Kant, you have a contemplative or ethical understanding, where he wanted the human subject as a moral agent to think of themselves as part of that community of 'kingdom of ends'. So, it was not real, not given, yet when the individual began to think of themselves as the member of that community of 'kingdom of ends' and thereby perfecting their sense of duty and obligation. Gradually, there would be the creation of such a community. There is the realization of an imperfect world. But to make the life perfect, ideal, and better than the (22:22) life or sub-human life of existence.

You have to have a life governed by certain moral laws and on the majority, and most of the people will govern their life, according to the same laws. Then you have a society that would be more peaceful and prosperous that would recognize the dignity of each and thereby the co-existence or peaceful harmonious co-existence of everyone. Thus, it is only in this community that human beings could attain the highest stage of perfection.

So, remember, for Rousseau, human beings were free and inherently moral. But it was the corrupting influence of society that make them act in a certain manner. And how to avoid the corrupting influence of society or socialization had one of the chief concerns for Rousseau. Similarly, in Kant, you have a kind of idea that life was imperfect. Most of the people lived a life of immaturity condition. That means, they do not use their reason.

And yet how one can bring about enlightenment and do that one should have to have moral laws. It is only in the 'kingdom of ends', the highest stage of human perfection is possible where everyone would govern themselves by the same universal laws that they want everyone else to follow unconditionally. Thereby, recognizing what is the worthy thing in the human being that is dignity.

The highest stage of perfection is possible in such a community and in this kingdom, Kant gave priority to a moral sense of duty towards self and others over theoretical knowledge or logic. So, every human being as I have discussed, his views on morality, freedom, and



autonomy that the rules of morality apply to a human being. Because human beings have in need of a sense of justness or what is unjust.

They may not accept it may be for their personal or selfish interest. They tend to ignore it. Nonetheless, they have an intuitive understanding of what is just? what is unjust? and what is desirable? what is undesirable? They may ignore or sideline it. Nonetheless, they cannot remove it from their imagination, consciousness, and their inner-self and that is the basic premise of Kantian thinking, where he sees that human beings are governed by moral laws.

And this moral sense of duty and obligation should come before their theoretical knowledge or understanding. He wanted the individual to lead a life as if it was a kind of prelude to something larger, immortal life or even God. That is the kind of realm of metaphysics where Kant considered this practical, empirical life of the individual as something a prelude to the larger life. That is the life of immortality and even God. So, he provided some kind of rational basis to religion and religious thinking or faith, not rejecting the use of faith or moral concern or life beyond. That is to say, in his thinking that led to some kind of mysticism or mysteriousness in Kantian thinking.

Now, we move on to the Kantian views on republicanism and cosmopolitanism. Kant was a republican and a great admirer of the French revolution. He saw it as a kind of divine commandment and wanted every state or monarchies in Europe to be based on the republican principles and constitution. It was where people should themselves decide how their community should be governed and how major decisions should be taken. He was against, therefore, all kinds of class hierarchies and hereditary privilege that he considered as the result of some unjust world in the past. Thus, everyone must be treated equally and with dignity.

The reason for each treatment or demand for such treatment is that human beings are rational or a moral agent that has nothing to do with his class, position, or any other forms of hierarchy. They must be treated equally. That is the very basis of republican ideas during the French revolution. In his essay, 'The Natural Principles of Political Order', considered in connection with the idea of 'Universal Cosmopolitan History' was published in 1784. Kant argued about the need for a struggle as indispensable for progress and a form of world government based on republican values.

However, this struggle must be carried out within the limits of laws or the limits of the constitution. So, Kant as a republican did not reduce individuality as Rousseau did at the altar of community. If you remember, Rousseau's idea of 'general will' that human beings must submit to the 'general will'. And there is no kind of difference between the individual and the 'general will'. These are kinds of the organic connection between the individual and the 'general will' of the community.

In contrast, Kant did not reduce the individual to the community and complete socialization. He argued that all progress and development happened because of individuality, enviousness, and desire for power, and possession. These are something that leads to the advancement in science and technology, industry, and overall prosperity. This desire for power or possession led them to exert their faculties in a particular way and according to Kant, the complete socialization of man would lead to a stagnation, where human beings could lead a perfect, simple, and harmonious life. But without any new development progress and innovation. Thus, even as a republican thinker, he did not completely reduce the individuality to the process of socialization or the life of a community.

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- According to Kant, the struggle was the basis of all progress and development, but it must be regulated by certain rules, laws, and customs. It also leads to the origin and development of civil society and eventually states. And all the capacities of man that nature has endowed him with could be fully developed in a state which is governed by a political constitution that is internally and externally perfect.
- He further argues that 'the civil constitution of every state shall be republican, and war shall not be declared except by a plebiscite of all the citizens'. He also argued that the laws that govern a state should also govern the international order if peace and harmony are to be maintained. He further developed this idea in his conception of perpetual peace.

#### Perpetual peace

- In 1795, Kant wrote an essay – *Eternal Peace*. The title may appear contradictory to many as there is a constant cycle of peace and war. And peace rarely remains everlasting. Particularly, during Kant's time, nation-states were constantly at war with each other, and violence was a regular part of life. Kant tries to establish a perpetual peace among the states at the international level. Kant wanted the nation first to minimize and gradually entirely abolish their standing armies. He argued that 'standing armies excite states to outlive one another in the number of their armed men, which has no limit'. And rulers rarely have resources for public education and other welfare measures as all the resources of the state are mobilized and kept for the next war. Thus, he was against all forms of violence or wars. He sees it as a violation of individual dignity.

According to Kant, as we have said that the struggle was a part of all progress and development throughout human history. But such a struggle must be regulated by certain laws, rules, and customs. It leads to the origin and development of the civil society and eventually, the states and all the capacities of man that nature has endowed him with could be wholly developed in a state governed by the political constitution that is internally and

externally perfect. Thus, the idea is that the laws and government must be based on the consent of the people.

It has to be internally and externally consistent. That means, the decisions that are taken should be by the constitution and the constitution is something that reflects the will of the people as a whole. Note a few people or a particular section in the society such as monarchies and elite. But as a people, as a whole in their collective sense reflect their will in the constitution and the government must operate in that constitution and that constitution needs to be internally and externally perfect. He further argues that the civil constitution of every state shall be republican which should be the guiding force or a kind of limit to the access of the government and its power.

He argued that the civil constitution of every state shall be republican and war shall not be declared except by a plebiscite of all citizens and during Kant's times, there was a kind of competitive struggle for power, for the acquisition of new territories or new colonies among the European states. That leads to a kind of militarization, where natural resources were mostly spent on the preparation of war. And many welfare programs such as education, health, and others were ignored. Thus, the whole functionaries of a state were in preparation for war, in the competitive struggle for new territories, power, and authority among the other states.

In contrast to that kind of thinking, Kant argued that how to create a society where internally a state would be republication. But also, in their external relation, they can have a peaceful co-existence with other states. Now, one of the major reasons for such conflicts, such threat to peace was constant war. Kant argued that the war was declared by those who had the least to suffer as a consequence of it. So, it is the people, the majority of the population who suffered as the consequence of war through their lives or resources or property. But that has no participation, while a state or its King or a ruler decide the war.

And most of the time, they declare war on the flimsy ground. So, whether to declare war and peace which should be a preferable option or decided by the whole community as such. He wanted and this is the reflection of his faith in the republican values and democratic culture. When it comes to the declaration of war, it should be only declared, when there is a plebiscite by all citizens. So, it cannot be taken by the few people who enjoy the luxury of their life and

declare war and people suffer. Thus, those who suffer the consequences of war must participate in the decision about war.

He also argued that the laws that govern a state internally to manage or organize political life among its members should be the guiding principle for the international order. He argued that the laws governed a state that should also govern the international order if peace and harmony are to be maintained. He further developed this idea in his conception of perpetual peace and to which now we turn. In 1795, Kant wrote an essay called the 'Eternal Peace'. This may appear contradictory to many scholars. The title of the essay appeared contradictory as there was a constant cycle of peace and war in human existence.

So, there was nothing like perpetual peace or eternal peace, there was the cycle of a period of peace followed by war and again by peace and followed by war. The human existence or the history of human existence is replete with this cyclical nature of peace and war, and then arguing for something like the eternal peace or perpetual peace or something like kind of history or counter-intuitive in its possessions. But Kant argued that how a state within its territory and at the international level might attain the peace that would be everlasting or permanent by following certain principles or moral assumptions. That is guided by the 'categorical imperative' where the particular is not in isolation from the universal.

Therefore, the transcendental ethics in Kant if applying to individuals and the state and international order would create a society and a condition of perpetual peace, and eternal peace. So, if you look at their title, it may appear contradictory and peace rarely remains everlasting. There is a kind of constant threat to peace and the whole order of the state. Its machinery is to maintain the peace and yet war is inevitable. Particularly, during Kant's time, nation-states were constantly at war with each other and violence was a regular part of life.

Kant tried to establish a perpetual peace among the states at the international level and he wanted the nation first to minimize and gradually, abolish the standing armies. The very legitimacy and the strength of a nation-state lie in the fact of its standing armies. To achieve peace, first, Kant argued that the government should function under a civil and republican constitution, where the war was declared only through a plebiscite. Thus, it is the people who decide whether they should go for peace or war.

The next thing that he argued was all the states if they wanted perpetual peace and eternal peace, first, minimize their standing armies and eventually, abolish them. He argued that the

standing armies of the state excited state to outrival one another in the number of their ornaments which had no limit. This kind of competitive rivalry among the nation-states to have more and more standing army was a limitless competition. There was no end to that and yet a state constantly tried to outrival each other in terms of the standing army. That is the (38:50) perpetual peace that Kant was arguing. So, he wanted that all the states should first minimize and eventually, abolish their standing armies.

If they want to have perpetual peace among themselves within their territory and also among the other nation-states at the international level. Kant argued that rulers rarely had resources for public education and other welfare measures as all resources of the state were mobilized and kept for the preparation of the next war. Thus, he was against all forms of violence and war. He saw it as a violation of individual dignity and peace. Kant was equally critical of the expansionist regime of the European states.

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➤ He was equally critical of European states and their expansions in America, Africa, and Asia. The horrors they committed, the resources they extracted, and the way they reduced the aboriginals in these land to nothing, all at the same time when they fight for piety and republican values at home, resulted in, according to Kant, competitive militarism and an ever-present threat to peace among the nation-states in Europe.

➤ Kant thus hoped that the republican constitution and an international order based on republican and democratic values free from slavery or bondage or exploitations would create a condition of perpetual peace among the nation-states at the international level. He argued in favor of a universal government in the form of 'world republic', 'league', or 'federation of nations' that would transcend the boundaries of the nation-states.

**Critical Assessment of Kant's Thought**

➤ Kant's greatest contribution to philosophy is his *Critiques*, i.e., an analysis of the functioning and the limits of knowledge and human reason. He argued about the role of sensation that leads to perception, which ultimately enables the individuals to develop a definite understanding or ideas about the world or circumstances external to them. Such knowledge is not given, but attainable. Human beings may lose it too due to insanity, or when they lack the courage to use their own reason or are dependent on others for guidance.

So, the European states expanded their territory and power beyond their territory in Asia, Africa, America, or Latin America. Kant was equally critical of the European states and their expansions in America, Africa, and Asia, and the horrors they committed, the resources they extracted from these colonies. And the way, they reduced their aboriginals in these lands to nothing all. At the same time, when they fight for piety and republican values at home resulted in, according to Kant's competitive militarism and ever-present threat to peace among the nation-states in Europe.

He was a critique of the colonial expansion and competitive rivalry among the European nation-states to outperform other states within Europe in conquering new territories. And the kind of horror, they committed there and reduce their aboriginals of those lands to nothing. The territories in Asia, Africa, and America were considered by the European states as open for grabs. They could come and establish their rule, then extract resources, do all kinds of horrors, all at the same time when they were fighting in their states for greater freedom, rights of the citizen or pieties, and the republican values.

And this seems to Kant internally contradictory in the functioning of the European states that lead to the competitive struggle among themselves for more and more military might or standing armies and a kind of competitive rivalry among other states for the conquest of new territories. That leads to a kind of threat to the possible peace or perpetual peace that he is shaking to establish even at the international level. Kant, however, hoped like he was arguing about enlightenment that even in the immaturity conditions of the majority of the population yet courageous individual as a moral or rational agent that would gradually take the society forward towards the enlightenment age.

Similarly, among the nation-states, he hoped that the states with the republican constitution and democratic values would create some kind of order at the international level which would create the condition for perpetual or eternal peace. Kant hoped that the republican constitution and international order to be based on republican and democratic values. This must be free from slavery, bondage, or exploitation of any kind. So, once you have states with the republican constitution with values like democratic and republican values that is participation by the people in decision-making or managing the affairs of state.

When you have those states at the international level and there is freedom from all kinds of slavery, bondage, and exploitation, then it would create a condition of perpetual peace among the nation-states at the international level. Kant was in that sense the first cosmopolitan thinker in modern times who argued about a universal government in the form of a world republic, league, or federation of a nation that would transcend the boundaries of the nation-states. That is part of the Kantian transcendental ethics, where individuals transcend their particular and consider themselves as part of the universal.

Similarly, the state should operate on those laws and values which would create the conditions of perpetual or eternal peace at the international level. That is all on Kantian views

of perpetual peace, republicanism, and cosmopolitanism. Now, we look at the critical assessment of Kantian philosophy or Kantian thought. Let us begin by understanding Kant's contribution to the history of western philosophy and his greatest contribution remains the three critics that he wrote. That is an analysis of functioning and limits of knowledge and human reason.

Kant was first to engage thoroughly with the idea of how humans develop understanding or knowledge by the use of reason and how it functions in practical life. And what are the limits of knowledge and human reason? What are the realms? What are the areas which cannot be reached by human reason and human knowledge? And in that context, what should be the basis of human actions or human behavior? So, Kant's greatest contributions remained his critics that is an analysis of functioning and limits of knowledge and human reason.

He argued about the role of sensation that he derived from the empiricist. So, the way we developed knowledge is through our senses. But sense alone is not and cannot be the basis of our knowledge. So, the sensation is the way, we understand or experience the external world. But that is not the sufficient ground of knowledge. He argued that the role of sensation is there in knowledge which leads to perception. First, you have the kind of sensation about the external world based on that you develop certain perception which ultimately enables you to develop a definite understanding or ideas about the world or circumstances external to you based on your reason and rationality.

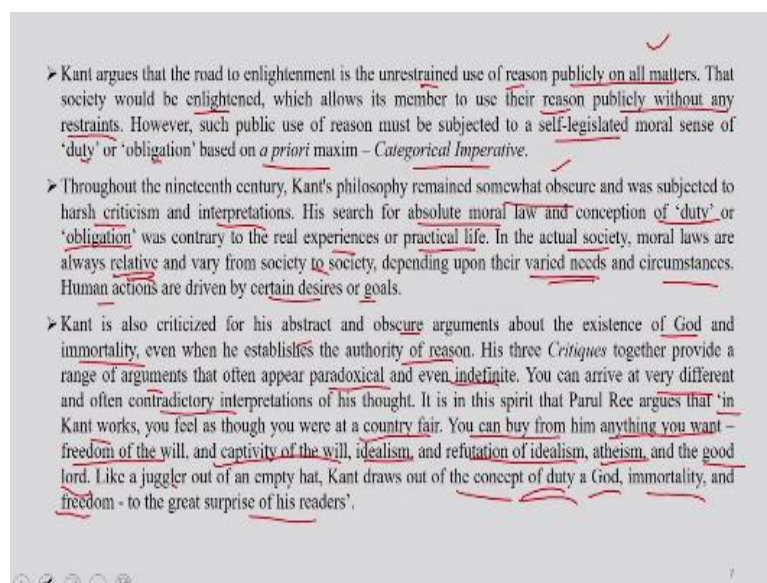
So, one cannot just experience the world and develop knowledge automatically out of sensation. One should use reason to develop experiences of the world through sensory organs to have some kind of perception or definite understanding about something. That requires the use of reason and rationality. Thus, without reason and rationality, one cannot organize one's experience or sensation of the external world. It requires some organized way of developing or looking at the world, and developing one's knowledge or understanding of the world.

Kant, thereby, combines in a sense of the empiricist and the rationalist. This knowledge for Kant was not given. All human beings having the sensation and experience are not equally capable of developing the correct knowledge or true knowledge of the world. It requires constant or meticulous or rigorous practice by using human reason and rationality. In that sense, the knowledge is attainable and one can cultivate it. But human beings can also lose such capacity due to insanity or when they lack the courage to use their reason. That means,

they live or prefer to live in the immaturity condition and when they are dependent on others for guidance.

So, in such circumstances, it is impossible for a human being to develop their knowledge of the world. In other words, for Kant, knowledge is something that requires the organization of one's experience or sensation of the external world. Sensation helps one to understand the world. But in itself, it is not sufficient. It requires a rigorous organization or meticulous organization by reason or rationality or human faculty of reason.

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Kant argued that the road to enlightenment was the unrestrained use of reason publically in all matters and that society would be enlightened which allow its members to use their reason publically without any restraints. So, the road to enlightenment for Kant is the unrestrained use of reason. However, such public use of reason, he also argued must be subjected to a self-legislated moral sense of duty and obligation based on a priori maxim which he called the 'categorical imperative'.

Now, throughout the nineteenth century, Kant's philosophy remained somewhat obscure and was subjected to harsh criticism and interpretation, precisely, because of its complex and almost mysterious ways of explaining and engaging with the thoughts and ideas it contains. He searched for absolute moral law and conception of duty or obligation for its own sake. It was contrary to the real experience or practical life. So, human beings do not do duty just for the sake of it. They have certain objective and goals in the mind and then they perform the duty to achieve those things.



The Kantian ethics of transcendental ethics is very contrary to the human experience or the way humans organize their life or govern their actions or behavior, according to certain moral perceptions. It differs from society depending upon their circumstances or their codes of behavior depending upon their location and the survival needs. In actual society, moral laws are always relative and not absolute as Kant argued. It varies from society to society, depending upon their varied needs and circumstances. Human actions are driven by certain desires and goals, and not necessarily by duty or obligation for the sake of it.

It may be Kant's personal experience in life. As we have discussed in the first lecture, it was a kind of series of verb raising, preparing notes, giving a lecture, having dinner, and going for walk. He followed it meticulously. There is a kind of piety, there is a kind of devotion to one's duty. But that is not something that we experience in all the people and all the time. Human actions are driven by certain goals and objectives which Kant argued as the 'hypothetical imperative' that may not lead to perpetual peace.

Whereas, the 'categorical imperative' or a definite absolute sense of moral duty and obligation would lead to perpetual peace where an individual would perform active duty or obligation for the sake of it without any disregard to its consequences. Kant is also criticized for his abstract and obscure argument about the existence of God and immortality even when he established the authority of reason. Kant's justification for the absolute moral law was based on certain mysterious ideas or his distinction of 'noumenon' or phenomena, where there are the realms in life. Also, where human reason cannot explain certain things such as immortality or whether God exists or not yet he wanted human beings to have faith.

So, he provided a kind of rational basis to faith by critiquing the religious dogmas, blind faiths, and worshipping. And yet the explanation that he provided was not exactly rational. He wanted individuals to believe in something if that lead them to perform their duties and obligations to self and others in society. That is a kind of mysticism and Kant did not fit with his rational argument. His three critics together provided a range of arguments that often appear paradoxical and even indefinite to many.

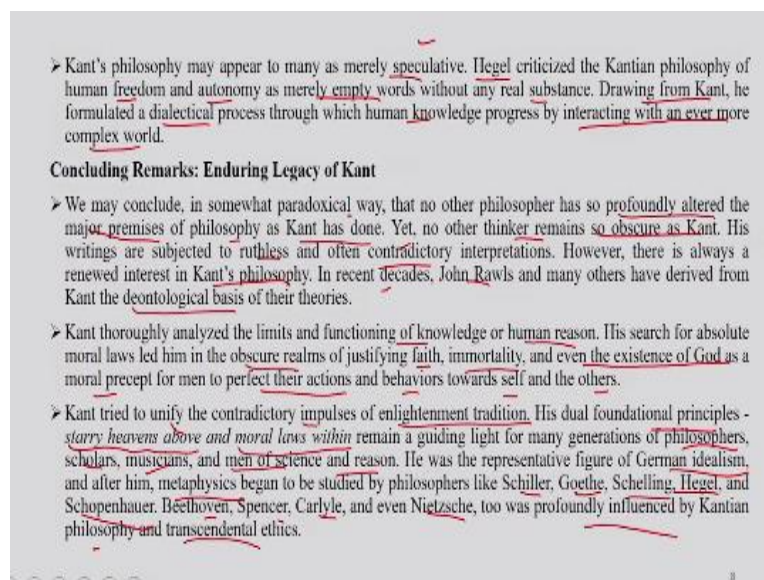
If one cares to read these three critiques, you may come across a range of ideas which is not necessarily consistent with the first, second, and third critique that he wrote. One can arrive at very different and often contradictory interpretations of his thought. It is in this spirit that

Paul Rees argued, in Kant's works, one can feel as though one is at a country fair. You can buy him anything you want.

So, freedom of the will is to be free. One first starts thinking that he or she is free without any external constant and limits. In Kant, one has that freedom of the will that is the first step towards enlightenment or use of reason for one's guidance or legislating own moral laws and codes of behavior. In Kant, one has the freedom of the will. But also, one has the captivity of the will. This will must be subject to a priori maxim which he called the 'categorical imperative'.

One also has idealism in Kant. But one has the reputation of idealism. One has atheism and also the good lord. So, like a juggler out of an empty hat, Kant draws out of the concept of duty a God, immortality, and freedom to the great surprise of his readers. Kant's complex terrain of thoughts and writings, one has a range of things depending upon how to interpret it.

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➤ Kant's philosophy may appear to many as merely speculative. Hegel criticized the Kantian philosophy of human freedom and autonomy as merely empty words without any real substance. Drawing from Kant, he formulated a dialectical process through which human knowledge progress by interacting with an ever more complex world.

**Concluding Remarks: Enduring Legacy of Kant**

➤ We may conclude, in somewhat paradoxical way, that no other philosopher has so profoundly altered the major premises of philosophy as Kant has done. Yet, no other thinker remains so obscure as Kant. His writings are subjected to ruthless and often contradictory interpretations. However, there is always a renewed interest in Kant's philosophy. In recent decades, John Rawls and many others have derived from Kant the deontological basis of their theories.

➤ Kant thoroughly analyzed the limits and functioning of knowledge or human reason. His search for absolute moral laws led him in the obscure realms of justifying faith, immortality, and even the existence of God as a moral precept for men to perfect their actions and behaviors towards self and the others.

➤ Kant tried to unify the contradictory impulses of enlightenment tradition. His dual foundational principles - *starry heavens above and moral laws within* remain a guiding light for many generations of philosophers, scholars, musicians, and men of science and reason. He was the representative figure of German idealism, and after him, metaphysics began to be studied by philosophers like Schiller, Goethe, Schelling, Hegel, and Schopenhauer. Beethoven, Spencer, Carlyle, and even Nietzsche, too was profoundly influenced by Kantian philosophy and transcendental ethics.

Kant's philosophy might appear to many as merely speculative or contemplative and particularly, Hegel criticized the Kantian philosophy of human freedom and autonomy as merely empty words. It emphasized the thinking about being free and autonomous, not really in the actual substantial sense. Thus, whether one lives in the perfect or imperfect world that supports freedom or not is inconsequential, and immaterial for Kant. What is required is that one must think of oneself as free and must think of oneself as part of the universal community.

For Hegel and many other scholars, such kind of freedom or autonomy was hollow merely words divided of any substance, and drawing from Kant, Hegel formulated a dialectal process through which human knowledge progresses by interacting with an ever-complex world. And about the dialectics, we will discuss when we will start our lecture on Hegel. But much of his philosophy was inspired by Kantian thoughts and writing.

Now, we conclude our lecture on Kant by understanding his enduring legacy and Kant as we have discussed that in the history of western philosophy after Plato and Aristotle, he altered the major premises of reason, knowledge, and understanding in the totality of philosophy. So, we may conclude in a somewhat paradoxical way that no other philosopher had so profoundly altered the major premises of philosophy as Kant did. Yet no other thinker remained so obscure as Kant.

So, still many people do not read Kant's word. It is through the secondary writings on Kant that one develops an understanding of Kant's writing and his contribution to philosophy. His original writing remained somewhat impenetrable and inaccessible. His writings are subjected to ruthless and often contradictory interpretations. However, there is always renewed interest in Kant's philosophy. In the recent decade, John Rawls and others have derived from Kant the deontological basis of their theories. Yet many scholars argued about the teleological imagination and arguments in Kant.

One has a range of or variety of interpretations of Kant's work and his philosophical position. Kant, thoroughly, however, analyzed the limits in the functioning of knowledge or human reason. That is perhaps, his greatest contribution. The reason is necessary. But it cannot lead one to all kinds of knowledge. One must have faith or subject oneself to something if it helps to perform one's moral duty and moral obligations to the self and others. Such as God and immortality or one's life after death or human life as part of the larger life.

So, he searched for absolute moral laws that led him to the obscured realms of justified faith, immortality, or even the existence of God as a moral precept for man to perfect their actions and behavior towards self and others. Kant as we have discussed in the first lecture tried to unite or unify the contradictory impulses of enlightenment tradition and his dual foundational principle that starry heavens above and moral laws within remains a guiding light for many generations or philosophers, scholars, musicians, and man of science and reason.

There is something transcendental about which we cannot know and human reasons fail to explain it fully. We rely on certain faith that cannot be explained rationally and yet human beliefs in the existence of such things. So, there are starry heavens above. But moral laws within, so the codes of behavior that should guide one's action must be self-legislative. Human beings by nature have the innate capacity to decide for themselves that is good or bad, or what is just or unjust? what is desirable and undesirable?

And it is by using the reason to perfect themselves according to those moral laws that human beings can achieve the highest perfection. It is possible through living in the society which he calls 'kingdom of ends' by treating others as an end in themselves and not merely as the means. This idea of starry heavens above and moral laws within remains the guiding light for many generations of philosophers, scholars, musicians, and men of science and reason.

He was the representative figure of 'German Idealism' and after him, metaphysics began to be studied by philosophers like Schiller, Goethe, Schelling, Hegel, and Schopenhauer. Beethoven the famous musician, Spencer Carlyle, and even Nietzsche were profoundly influenced by Kantian philosophy and transcendental ethics. Kant in that sense has an enduring legacy and yet remained somewhat an obscure thinker in the sense of his writings. That is all on Kant for the topics that we have covered.

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Today, you can refer to some of the texts like Gary Browning's, *A History of Modern Political Thought*. You should also read, Will Durant's, *The History of Philosophy*, Paul Guyer's, *The Cambridge Companion to Kant and Modern Philosophy*, Otfried Hoffe's, *Immanuel Kant*, and one should certainly read this particular text of Kant, *Ground Work of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Then you can also refer to Hans Reiss, *Kant's Political Writing*, and Roger Scruton's, *Kant A Very Short Introduction*.

So, these are some of the texts, you should refer to understand more about Kant's contribution to western philosophy and his views on enlightenment, morality, freedom, autonomy and 'kingdom of ends' and perpetual peace, cosmopolitanism, and republicanism that we have covered in the three lectures on Kant. Do share your comments and feedback. We will be happy to respond. Thanks for listening. Thank you all.