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The Concept of International Peace in Cicero's and Kant's Thought: Comparing Ancient and Modern Views

Abstract. The idea of peace has always been at the core of the debate concerning the development of international relations. By comparing Cicero's and Kant's thought, this article seeks to find a theoretical junction between ancient and modern views. Despite belonging to different eras, Cicero and Kant reach similar conclusions. Thanks to their high level of criticism towards the political dynamics of their time, these two authors anchor harmony to the domestic consolidation of Republican culture. However, it must be said that their arguments arise from different starting points. According to Cicero, history had made Rome responsible for the maintenance of inter-community balance. Therefore, his idea of *pax* was grounded on the solidity and superiority of Rome's Republican institutions and virtues. On the contrary, Kant wishes for the independence of States. In his view, only a shared acceptance of the Republican form of government can bring to the peaceful cooperation of nations. In both Cicero's and Kant's standpoints, the absence of conflict is the outcome of the consolidation of the Republic. This is because Republican systems cannot be based on individualistic logics, but on social principles oriented to the achievement of the common good.

Il concetto di pace è sempre stato al centro del dibattito inerente ai meccanismi di sviluppo delle relazioni internazionali. Attraverso l'analisi comparata del pensiero ciceroniano e kantiano, il presente articolo si pone lo scopo di trovare un punto di raccordo teoretico tra visioni antiche e moderne sull'argomento. Seppure appartenenti a due ere estremamente distanti tra loro, Cicerone e Kant giungono a conclusioni pressoché simili in punto di principio. Grazie alla loro capacità critica nei riguardi della realtà politica caratterizzante i rispettivi tempi, entrambi gli autori ancorano il raggiungimento dell'armonia tra i popoli al consolidamento della cultura repubblicana. Tuttavia, mentre Cicerone teorizza una *pax* garantita dalla solidità delle istituzioni di Roma in quanto nazione superiore ed eletta dalla storia a responsabile degli equilibri tra le genti, Kant auspica l'indipendenza degli Stati, nonché la capacità di cooperare tra loro grazie ad un collettivo accoglimento della forma di governo repubblicana. Sia per Cicerone che per Kant, l'assenza di conflittualità internazionale sarà dunque il risultato di una stabilizzazione del sistema politico domestico in chiave repubblicana. Ciò avverrà perché la Repubblica, in quanto forma di governo ideale, rifiuta ideologicamente l'accoglimento di logiche personalistiche, basandosi invece su principi sociali orientati al raggiungimento del bene comune.

1. *Methodological and Historical Premise*

Broadly speaking, conflict can be considered as an ubiquitous factor underpinning the dynamics of human coexistence.¹ An unavoidable state of hostility characterised history

¹ A significant example of this idea can be found already in Latin literature. For instance, in verse 495 of his *Asinaria*, Plautus points out that 'when a man does not know his fellows, he acts like a wolf towards them, rather than a man' (*Lupus est homo homini, non homo, quom qualis sit non novit*). This belief kept being developed over time by authors such as Erasmus of Rotterdam, Francisco de Vitoria, Francis Bacon, and culminated in Thomas Hobbes' theory of innate hostility expressed in the *Leviathan*, as well

over the centuries. For this reason, ancient and modern thought tried to find ideological solutions aiming at leading people and nations towards stable forms of socio-political harmony. Peace is perceived as a condition which guarantees cohesion. This condition is ontologically opposed to belligerency. This collective balance requires the solidity of domestic systems, which interact each other within the inter-community necessary coexistence underpinning international relations.² On the basis of this premise, this article will try to underline proximity between ancient and modern views of peace. Through the analysis of Cicero's *De Officiis* and Kant's *Zum ewigen Frieden: Ein philosophischer Entwurf (Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Proposal)*,³ it will be argued that both authors grounded their idea of peace on the primary importance of domestic system. Cicero and Kant theorise a framework which needs to be based on morality, as well as on a universal system of shared values. As it will be explicated, the need to compare Cicero and Kant arises from the similar structure of their line of reasoning. This comparison springs from several theoretical aspects underpinning their concept of peace: their will to supply philosophical direction to put an end to political conflict; the interpenetration between reason and social harmony; the necessary link existing between inter-community cohesion and specific political structures reflecting the idea of *humanitas*. A lasting form of peace can be pursued only by politically stable States which comply with the norms at the core of mankind. The philosophical understanding of peace evolved over time as an appendix of war. Characters such as Augustine of Hippo, Thomas of Aquino, Erasmus of Rotterdam, Pierino Belli, Alberico Gentili, the Scholars of Salamanca, as well as several natural law theorists of the 16th Century AD, had interpreted peace as the end of hostility. They indirectly recognised the importance of justice to preserve this period of quiescence between hegemonic power and subjugated populations. This balance required the compliance with the principles of man's dignity. In this regard, Cicero's and Kant's moral spheres lead up to legal and political discourse. Driven by an attempt of guidance, these two thinkers emphasise the innate inclinations of man's actions. The relationship between human choice and nature serves as a search engine to find the leitmotiv of events. Hence, in time of social identity crisis, Cicero and Kant interpret their respective historical backdrops for the sake of suggesting ways to improve humanity. Before delving into the

as in the pessimism of Arthur Schopenhauer. This article will not delve into the debate revolving around the natural state of hostility or harmony at the basis of human relationships. For a quick but thorough analysis of this conceptual evolution, see TRICAUD 1969: 61-70. On the intrinsic belligerence or friendship underpinning the culture of the ancient world, see MOMMSEN 1864: 322-30; PHILLIPSON 1911: 214-17; TÄUBLER 1913: 339-44; VON WILAMOWITZ 1926: 3-10; BRASSLOFF 1928: 22-36; HEUB 1933: 4-18; DE MARTINO 1958: 14-20; BOLCHAZY 1977: 21-54; 1978: 45-64.

² MORGENTHAU 1948: 3-21; QUADRI 1948:1-37; SINAGRA – BARGIACCHI 2009: 5-43. For an opposite view, cf. BORK 1990: 122-24; BOLTON 2000: 2-15.

³ Every further mention to Kant's work will be made by employing the abbreviate form *Perpetual Peace*. In order to refer to single passages and pages of this essay, I used the English edition translated and commented by O'BRIEN – BUCKLAND.

examination of peace, it is worth providing a brief overview of the historical context at the roots of these two writings.⁴

Written in 44 BC, the *De Officiis* is a philosophical treatise in which Cicero discusses the duties that the members of the State should observe. By supplying a multilayered analysis of several aspects of human behaviour,⁵ he pursues a dual objective. On one hand, he tried to find new directions to connect Rome's future to her glorious past. On the other hand, Cicero provided a realistic view of the precepts to observe to conduct a virtuous life within the sphere of human relationships. He was experiencing the final decline of the Republic. This period of social and political crush, together with the selfishness of his peers, had weakened the model function that Rome's old generation had to provide in favour of the new one. Therefore, Cicero employed his literary contribution to rekindle this trans-generational transmission of culture. This delicate task is conducted through the examination of behaviour patterns which led men to morally right choices. In this regard, Picone has underlined that, during this period, Cicero embraced the theme of remembrance fully. His literary activity mainly focused on bequeathing Republican heritage before its total destruction due to the effects of Caesar's rise.⁶ In addition, as pinpointed by Marchese, in the *De Officiis* Cicero felt the urgency to fight an ethical-cultural battle. This challenge centred upon reawakening the importance of the *mores* in the mind of the Romans.⁷ The political order of the State had been destabilised by Caesar's death. Furthermore, the following ascent of Marcus Antonius had wiped out any chance of restoration of Republican customs and values.⁸ Rome had definitely become a quarry at the mercy of the selfishness and tyrannical objectives of her men of power. Thus, although the *De Officiis* was addressed to Cicero's son Marcus Tullius,⁹ it aimed at providing guidance to further generations of Roman statesmen.¹⁰ Given his political experience and strong philosophical

⁴ For reasons of constraint, this article can focus neither on the historical context of the late Republic, nor on that of Europe in the last years of the 17th Century AD. My intention is simply that of providing a short summary of the events at the base of Cicero's and Kant's theoretical framework.

⁵ At the beginning of this century, NUSSBAUM (2001: 38-52) maintained that the *De Officiis* mirrors the distinction between *officia iustitiae* (duties of justice) and *officia auxilii* (material duties of aid). While justice implies universality, the second category, aid, is characterised by proportionality and consequent limitations. While complying with duties of justice means respecting the nature of mankind, duties of aid help neighbours. Cf. MARCHESE 2019: 52-53.

⁶ PICONE 2012: x-xi.

⁷ MARCHESE 2019: 53-54.

⁸ MARCHESE 2016: 51-53; 2019: 54-55.

⁹ Cic. *Att.* 15.13a.2. On the transmission of experience from father to son in ancient Rome and in Cicero's life, see TESTARD 1962: 198-213; LEMOINE 1991: 337-66.

¹⁰ GABBA (1979: 119-20) has argued that, in the *De Officiis*, Cicero aimed at connecting educational and political objectives. He dovetailed his will to guide his son with the need to describe a precise ideal of State during that period of crisis. See also PICONE 2012: xiv-xv. According to BUTLER (2002: 83-85), one of the first goals of Cicero was the acquisition of a glorious and immortal recognition for his merits towards the Republic.

background,¹¹ Cicero decided to undertake this cultural crusade in the name of his values and trust in Rome's Republican institutions.

A similar intent of guidance can be found in Kant as well.¹² Written in 1795 AD, *Perpetual Peace* can be categorised as a theoretical project composed by articles: they aspire to provide directions to avoid future conflicts between nations for the sake of realising durable peace.¹³ Inspired by the ideals of the French and American Revolutions, as well as by the content of the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*, the German philosopher reflects on the dynamics ensuring the stability of the State. In Kant's view, domestic harmony was an essential factor to produce constructive effects on the entire international community. *Perpetual Peace* was outlined after the Peace of Basil, by means of which France and Prussia had stopped the War of the First Coalition (1792-1797 AD). This treaty laid the foundations for a truce, rather than a lasting peace. The two nations were grounded on different political structures.¹⁴ On one hand, France was no longer a monarchy. It was experiencing the period of the Thermidorian Reaction, which was characterised by the return to liberal models. On the other hand, Prussia was governed by King Frederick William II, who fostered his royalist policy. Given the precariousness of this break, Kant tried to employ his thought to indicate the directions to turn an apparently unstable truce into a permanent peace.¹⁵ As argued by Tomba, Kant did not intend to prescribe the juridical bedrocks for a new world order. On the contrary, his purpose was philosophical and showed directions to build and consolidate forms of Republican policies shared by nations on both domestic and international levels.¹⁶ According to Mom, Kant's peace proposal hovers between political and philosophical aspects.¹⁷ Kant's categorical imperative is intercalated into his sense of realism, which becomes the path to indicate how to apply moral principles to political actions.¹⁸ His project for a perpetual peace aims at triggering a cultural evolution which transmigrates from domestic institutions to the complex of all the States.

¹¹ RAWSON 1975: 18-19.

¹² FLIKSCHUH (2000: 118-20) argues that Kant should not be read only from the standpoint of political recommendation. A correct analysis of *Perpetual Peace* requires deep attention to his philosophical outlook. For an opposite view, cf. MOM 2001: 53-63.

¹³ See BOURKE 1942: 324-33; SCHWARZ 1962: 71-80.

¹⁴ GALLIE 1978: 8-9.

¹⁵ GALLIE 1978: 9-10.

¹⁶ TOMBA 2006: 24-25.

¹⁷ MOM 2001: 63-64.

¹⁸ In this respect, VIEIRA (2016: 407-25) has argued that Kant's cosmopolitanism can be considered as the political supplement to the categorical imperative concerning all rational beings. Cf. FRÖHLICH 2006: 69-102.

2. Politics and Morality: An Essential Compromise

Muñoz has argued that Cicero employed the concept of *pax* in order to question the mechanisms of the late-Republican system, as well as to condemn the maximisation of Rome's imperialistic expansion.¹⁹ However, while in Italy peace was seen as a value, in Roman provinces it was a way to guarantee the exploitation of human and territorial resources to the mere benefit of the Romans.²⁰ Cicero filters the idea of peace through the stability of the State. By arguing that real glory comes from taking care of the Republic, Cicero exhorts Roman statesmen to reject war as a means for personal power and pure subjugation. The prioritisation of domestic policy is seen as a way to bring war back to its essential role of *extrema ratio*. In this light, war is an instrument to harmonise foreign areas under the protection of Rome.²¹ Peace is therefore interpreted as the supreme object of belligerence. The justice of Roman warfare could not imply any personal use of war itself. On the contrary, in Cicero's final analysis, war was functional to peace. Differently, Kant puts himself in a contrast with the argumentative starting point of past theorists. As correctly highlighted by Fabbrini, the reasoning of thinkers such as Cicero, Alberico Gentili, Francisco de Vitoria and Hugo Grotius rotates around the concept of *bellum iustum*. On the contrary, Kant was the first one who analysed belligerence from an opposite perspective, namely that of peace.²² His intention was that of demonstrating the feasibility of cosmopolitanism, which turns war into a useless entity.²³

Cicero and Kant anchor their argument on a fundamental premise, namely the necessary interpenetration between ethical and political spheres. In their views, morality and politics need to find the way to avoid contrasting each other. Cicero suggests a realistic approach. The *De Officiis* was extremely influenced by the thought of Panaetius of Rhodes, expressed in his *Περὶ τοῦ καθήκοντος*.²⁴ This influence did not involve only

¹⁹ MUÑOZ 1996: 213-27.

²⁰ Cf. CORNWELL 2018b: 31-32.

²¹ About the tight correlation between war and peace in Roman culture and system, see NJAMMASCH 1989: 863-67; WOOLF 1993 171-94; HARDWICK 2000: 335-68.

²² FABBRINI 2017: 203.

²³ See NUSSBAUM 1997: 25-58; POJMAN 2005: 62-71; ANDERSON-GOLD 2015: 205-21.

²⁴ Cic. *Att.* 16.11.4; *Off.* 3.2.7. See ILTING 1977: 149-67; LÉVY 1989: 11-16; FRÖHLICH 2006: 46-68. In the analysis of FINGER (1942: 1-20), Book One of the *De Officiis* unveils that Cicero did not follow only Panaetius, but also Antiochus. A similar interpretation has been provided by GRILLI (1975: 73-80). A different view is given by DES PLACES (1956: 83-93), who has pointed out that, although Panaetius was quoted in numerous passages of the *De Officiis*, Cicero's thesis mostly reproduced the Platonic model. Similarly, BÜCHNER (1967: 85-86) has argued that the development of the *De Officiis* was substantially independent from Panaetius' influence. According to ERREN (1987: 181-94) and DYCK (1996: 503-504), Cicero reviewed and corrected Panaetius' argument. Lastly, VIMERCATI (2002: 19-20) has pointed out that the theoretical pillars of the *De Officiis* correspond to those of the *Περὶ τοῦ καθήκοντος*. Nevertheless, Cicero surely added new and original ideas.

ethics, but also the social expression of individual morality, namely politics.²⁵ The concept of ethics and virtue elaborated by the Greek philosopher was less rigid than that of traditional Stoicism.²⁶ According to Panaetius, instincts needed to be guided by reason, rather than being totally suppressed. As a consequence, virtues such as justice, fortitude, wisdom and temperance were the development of human instinct. Magnanimity shone in Rome's ability to dominate her neighbours because it arose from the natural instinct of excelling. By employing Panaetius' link between *καθήκον* (*officium*) and *κατόρθωμα* (*recta ratio*), Cicero emphasises the pre-eminence of actions over mere theoretical reflections.²⁷ In the third book of the *De Officiis*, Cicero seems to clarify that men must refuse benefits when they bring about shame or dishonour.²⁸ In his view, the achievement of usefulness is not unnatural, but only secondary. For this reason, no connection between utility and dishonour can be justified. Morality enlightens human discernment and helps men to understand when the benefit is not real, but only apparent:

*Tanta vis est honesti, ut speciem utilitatis obscuret.*²⁹

The strength of morality is so high that it is able to darken the appearance of utility.

Cicero's argument continues with a necessary comparison between his idea of *utilitas* and that of Panaetius.³⁰ Cicero explains that, according to the Greek philosopher, moral consistency and usefulness corresponded, rather than being opposed. Nothing can be useful, if it is not morally coherent as well. In this light, dividing usefulness and ethics implied the ruin of human life.³¹ Furthermore, Cicero clarifies Panaetius' intentions below this idea. Panaetius did not aim at suggesting to put usefulness before morality. He emphasised the need of prudent evaluation of both aspects when practical decisions

²⁵ GABBA 1979: 117-41; REESOR 1951: 25-33; SINCLAIR 1951: 275-78; LONG 1995: 213-40; VIMERCATI 2002: 45-46.

²⁶ LONG (2007: 241-261) has highlighted the high influence that Stoicism produced on modern political thought. From a Stoic standpoint, the common good can be realised thanks to the guidance of virtue, shared human values and rationality, rather than materialism. Although the world is characterised also by factors and situations which are out of our control, we must do our utmost to respect the norms of mutual advantage and harmonious coexistence.

²⁷ GRIMAL 1989: 2-9.

²⁸ Cic. *Off.* 3.8.35.

²⁹ Cic. *Off.* 3.9.47.

³⁰ In this regard, GAUDAMET (1951: 465-72) has argued that the concept of *publica utilitas* was introduced in Rome by Panaetius or Carneades. However, Cicero rarely mentions this idea. Rather, he talks about *utilitas communis*, which went beyond the boundaries of domestic community. Cf. HOWALD – FUHRER 2000: 81-87. According to DYCK (1996: 23-24) the relationship between *utilitas* and *honestum* was neglected by Panaetius. Therefore, Cicero's reasoning was substantially original.

³¹ Most likely, Cicero refers to Panaetius' criticism towards Scepticism and, in particular, to Carneades' school of thought. Cf. ALESSE 1994: 242-44.

were needed.³² Hence, *honestum* and *utilitas* found their own connection in both Cicero's and Panaetius' pragmatism. Nonetheless, as argued by Vimercati, the juxtaposition between ethical justice and usefulness does not mean that the two concepts were identical in terms of morality. The *honestum* is the main light of human actions because it is morally higher than *utilitas*. Only by following their *honestum*, men can achieve real usefulness.³³ However, Cicero does not reject the compromise between morality and utilitarianism fully:

*Maneat ergo, quod turpe sit, id numquam esse utile, ne tum quidem, cum id, quod utile esse putes, adispicare; hoc enim ipsum, utile putare quod turpe sit, calamitosum est. Sed incidunt, ut supra dixi, saepe causa, cum repugnare utilitatis honestati videatur, ut animadvertendum sit, repugnetne plane an posit cum honestate coniungi.*³⁴

Again, what is ignoble is therefore never useful. Not even when we think about obtaining what is useful for us. Every time we think that a dishonourable action can be useful, this is damaging per se. However, as I said before, it happens that sometimes utility and morality seem to be at odds. In this case, we have to verify whether this is an unsolvable conflict or we can find a contact point between our utility and honesty.

The middle ground between morality and utilitarianism can be established ethically and without damaging consequences if it is proved that the conflict cannot be solved by following honesty fully. Cicero's idealism is Middle-Stoic and, as such, it is not rigid and absolute. On the contrary, his high morality is moderated by his realism. Furthermore, Cicero was not only a philosopher, but also a lawyer and a statesman who tried find the right crossing point between ethical research and realpolitik. Firstly, he lays the general rule of the incompatibility between dishonour and usefulness. Secondly he points out that utility and morality are not fully idiosyncratic. Both brotherhood and the search for benefits are intrinsic components of human nature. Therefore, the compromise between utility and honesty is necessary in a pragmatic world.

As already mentioned a few lines above, a similar attempt to find a compromise between morality and politics can be found in Kant as well.³⁵ Shell has argued that Kant tried to embody the moral politician. By following this purpose, the theory expressed in *Perpetual Peace* is the outcome of the combination between the power of the sovereign

³² See Cic. *Off.* 3.7.34.

³³ VIMERCATI 2004: 180-81.

³⁴ Cic. *Off.* 3.12.49-50.

³⁵ APEL 1997: 79-112.

and the wisdom of the philosopher.³⁶ In the appendix of *Perpetual Peace*, Kant highlights the implications coming from the necessary interaction between these two spheres of human relationship. He points out that, while political reasoning teaches to be ‘as wise as snakes’, ethics suggests to be ‘as pure as doves’. If these two aspects cannot be dovetailed, morality and politics are in conflict. But if this conceptual combination is possible, there is no real battle between ethical and political action.³⁷ In order to emphasise the reflection that morality can produce on politics, Kant employs a logical-rational correlation. He underlines that these two fields are not idiosyncratic *per se*. Their interaction can be either possible or not, depending on human will. Hence, this bond is verified in the practice of decision-making, and arises from the concrete behaviour of statesmen. Exactly like Cicero, Kant does not deny that ethics and utilitarianism can be at odds. However, this contrast is not ontological, but can be generated by human intention. Connecting morality to politics is a duty of man, who should act by following his conscience, rather than his selfish instinct. As a conglomeration of people, the State is able to behave as an honest person in the context of foreign relations. In this regard, Holland has argued that Kant consistently blends two apparently contradictory aspects of the State as an international actor and, at the same time, a complex of people. Eternal peace is the outcome of the union of several pieces of a puzzle composed by each State, which can pursue global harmony as a specific objective.³⁸ This is possible because of a specific reason: international relations are nothing else than the translation, at a global level, of the same dynamics underpinning interpersonal relationships. It is undeniable that the coexistence of States is marked by strong logics of benefit. However, this does not mean non-existence of values and moral norms at the base of foreign affairs. Kant believes in the indispensable osmosis between ethics and politics, which has to orient the decisions and attitude of statesmen.³⁹ Nevertheless, analogously to Cicero, Kant does not polarise the idea of morality. He distinguishes the moral politician from the moralistic one. The first category of men is able to intertwine ethics with experience. This leads to wise choices, as well as to the progressive achievement of the common good. On the contrary, moralists pontificate and hinder every improvement due to their unrealistic views.⁴⁰

3. Ideological Differences

It must be said that Cicero’s and Kant’s ideas of peace diverge on a crucial point. While Cicero theorises harmony under the aegis of Rome’s hegemony, Kant considers the

³⁶ SHELL 1996: 153-71.

³⁷ KANT 1795: 43-44.

³⁸ HOLLAND 2017: 599-620.

³⁹ FABBRINI 2017: 204-205.

⁴⁰ KANT 1795: 45-46.

independence of nations as an essential factor to reach a perpetual form of peace. Already in the third book of his *De Republica*, Cicero had delved into the complex theme of *iustitia*. Here, Lucius Furius Philus and Gaius Laelius discuss the role of justice in both domestic system and relations between nations.⁴¹ Justice is portrayed as the highest political virtue and bedrock of any good government.⁴² Power must be based on the primacy of law, equity and social harmony. In this framework, Cicero argues that people will always prefer to form an unjust empire instead of being under a just form of subjugation (*nulla est tam stulta civitas, quae non iniuste imperare malit quam servire iuste*).⁴³ Consequently, when hegemonic power is employed from the perspective of justice, the servile condition of subjugated communities is made in their own interests. In order to defend her neighbours and allies, Rome had conquered the entire world (*Noster autem populus sociis defendendis terrarum iam omnium potitus est*).⁴⁴ According to Cicero, Roman imperialism was just because of its civilising influence on peoples who were not able to have self-government.⁴⁵ Nature had deemed Rome as the best nation (*An non cernimus optimo cuique dominatum ab ipsa natura cum summa utilitate infirmorum datum?*).⁴⁶ This idea is substantially revamped in *Off.* 2.8.26-29. By highlighting the degeneration of his society, Cicero provides a clear picture of the logics underpinning Rome's dominion over her neighbours. He points out that, in the past, Roman power was based on diplomacy, clemency and concession, rather than on subjugation and abuse. The Senate was seen as a bastion of virtue, in which allies placed their trust (*regum, populorum, nationum portus erat et refugium senatus*). The Romans were guided by equity in their defence of their friends and provincial territories (*si provincias, si socios aequitate et fide defendissent*). Thus, Rome's supremacy embodied the *patrocinium orbis terrae*, namely patronage of the entire world.⁴⁷

Kant's line of reasoning arises from a diametrically opposed belief. In his view, peace is not the outcome of the universal control of any hegemonic power. Rather, peace is the result of the interaction amongst independent Republics characterised by a common legal and juridical culture. In this regard, the distance between Cicero and Kant appears particularly evident in the three cunning principles, enunciated in the last part of *Perpetual Peace*. In Kant's view, these principles hinder the achievement of a real form of peace. The first one is *fac et excusa*, namely the chance to benefit from favourable situations to usurp. The second one is *si fecisti, nega*: this means denying to be

⁴¹ Cic. *Rep.* 3.8.12-13; 9.14-16; 11. 18-19; 15.24; 22.33; 27.39.

⁴² See also Cic. *Rep.* 2.44.70.

⁴³ Cic. *Rep.* 3.18.1.

⁴⁴ Cic. *Rep.* 3.23.35.

⁴⁵ In *Rep.* 1.44.68 Cicero points out that uncontrolled freedom gives birth to tyranny, which is the most unjust and tough servitude. See BÉRANGER 1935: 85-94; BÜCHNER 1962: 343-71.

⁴⁶ Cic. *Rep.* 3.25.37.

⁴⁷ Cic. *Off.* 2.8.27.

responsible for the wrongs committed at the expenses of subjugated populations. In this case, politicians are used to justifying hostility by means of defensive reasons (conquering in order to avoid being conquered). The last one is *divide et impera*, which brings a ruling nation to put itself as the protector and guarantor of universal stability.⁴⁸ In the second preliminary article of *Perpetual Peace*, Kant underlines that no sovereign State, either small or big, can be acquired by another State through inheritance, trade or gift.⁴⁹ Moreover, the fifth preliminary article states that no nation can wade into the constitution or affairs of another.⁵⁰ Lucht has argued that Kant projects an idea of everlasting peace which requires improvements of both legal and moral levels. Harmony can be reached only after the rejection of selfishness, as well as by embracing real cosmopolitan attitudes. Hence, Lucht points out, this cultural reform enables peoples to feel part of a shared system, as well as to stand against any form of tyranny and authoritarian regimes aiming at manipulating the rule of law of nations.⁵¹ As distinct from Cicero, Kant highlights the importance of a global sphere made by sovereign States. He takes position against the concept of supremacy itself. The evolution of his century had demonstrated the triumph of ideas such as freedom, democracy and independence, as well as the progressive decline of the logics of personal power and dominion. As a result, Kant wished for the harmonious interaction of peoples in the name of the bedrocks of human nature, which are politically enshrined in the concept of Republic.

This ideological distance reflects the different dynamics underpinning ancient and modern worlds. Cicero and Kant were, after all, children of their respective times. They were messengers of two opposed ways to interpret peace and harmony within the coexistence of nations. According to Gruen, peace in the Republican period was simply a rest from belligerence.⁵² Cornwell has underlined the multilayered nature of the concept of *pax*. Rome guaranteed peace to foreign nations on the basis of the typical contractual relationship existing between winner and loser. Hence, peace reflected the dynamics of power in the Mediterranean areas.⁵³ While Gruen's view is based on the undeniable state of belligerence underpinning the Republic, Cornwell discusses peace as a functional instrument for Rome's dominion. Both standpoints are grounded on a common fact, namely the increasing race for international power characterising Rome's evolution during the whole Republican period. This trait is identifiable also in Cicero's analysis of his era. Conversely, Kant lived in a period in which the idea of peace is no

⁴⁸ KANT 1795: 47-48.

⁴⁹ KANT 1795: 20.

⁵⁰ KANT 1795: 22.

⁵¹ LUCHT 2009: 303-24.

⁵² GRUEN 1985: 51-52.

⁵³ CORNWELL 2018a: 17-21.

longer anchored to that of power, but to the values of man.⁵⁴ As marked by Fabbrini, although the absolute monarchies had reached their peak during the 18th Century AD, they had been questioned by Enlightenment. This entailed the epochal decay of the role of kings, as well as the following rise of human-centric political views based on reason.⁵⁵

4. *The Core of Peace*

In order to be real and stable, peace must be the purpose of the statesman. As a consequence, political actions do not have to be oriented towards mere subjugation. On the contrary, the State has to take care of the wellbeing of the neighbours, rather than being driven by egoistic impulses. Despite giving a ruling role to Rome, Cicero highlights the importance of a real peaceful will in Book One of the *De Officiis*:

*Mea quidem sententia paci, quae nihil habitura sit insidiarum, semper est consulendum. In quo si mihi esset optemperatum, si non optimam, at aliquam rem publicam, quae nunc nulla est, haberemus. Et cum iis, quos vi deviceris, consulendum est, tum ii, qui armis positis ad imperatorum fidem confugient, quamvis murum aries percusserit, recipiendi. In quo tantopere apud nostros iustitia culta est, ut ii, qui civitates aut nationes devictas bello in fidem recepissent, earum patroni essent more maiorum.*⁵⁶

In my opinion, we should always opt for peace, which is never harbinger of tricks. If they had followed my advice, we would still have a State. Certainly not the perfect one, but at least we would have some semblance of that State which we have lost. It is necessary to take care of whom we have conquered by means of our arms. Even though our battering ram has torn down their walls, we should treat them in the same way we treat those who surrendered and begged for the mercy of our generals. In this direction, justice has been observed by our compatriots thoroughly. Those who guaranteed protection to people and nations subjugated in war became the patrons of those nations according to the customs of our forefathers.

Német has summarised the development of Cicero's idea of peace in three phases. Firstly, during the year of his consulate, Cicero believed in the peace-keeping role of the Romans towards their provincial territories. Secondly, during the conflict between Pompey and Caesar, Cicero seemed to prefer the idea of unfair peace, rather than a

⁵⁴ See GALLIE 1978: 12-14.

⁵⁵ FABBRINI 2017: 206.

⁵⁶ Cic. *Off.* 1.11.35.

justified war. Lastly, he considered the peace imposed after Caesar's dictatorship as a servile condition which had to be fought to death.⁵⁷ This passage of the *De Officiis* reveals a sort of development in Cicero's concept of peace compared to what he had stated years before, especially on the occasion of the *Pro lege Manilia* and *De provinciis consularibus*. While in the *De Officiis* he affirms that, in case of potential conflict, peace should be the first choice of every Roman leader, in the *Pro lege Manilia* and *De provinciis consularibus* war was necessary and no peaceful option was suggested.⁵⁸ Moreover, by supporting Pompey's and Caesar's extension of power, Cicero underlined how past generals and politicians never took a resolute actions to solve conflicts in Pontus and Gaul.⁵⁹ This contradiction opens the gates to further considerations. First of all, at the time of the two orations, Cicero was trying to gain Pompey's and Caesar's favour. Personal interest undeniably influenced the content of these speeches because Cicero aimed to strengthen his political career. On the contrary, the *De Officiis* is characterised by a sort of definitive detachment from Rome's political life. He progressively understood that late-Republican policy was oriented towards the achievement of personal power. The respect for ideals and traditions which had made Rome great was more and more marginal. So, during the last years of his life, Cicero shaped his role of advisor for future generations. As correctly underlined by Cornwell, Cicero fostered different ideals at different moments according to the priorities of the single political situation.⁶⁰ While the argument of the *Pro lege Manilia* and *De provinciis consularibus* was that of an active statesman, the line of reasoning of the *De Officiis* belonged to the philosopher the most. Nonetheless, there is no real contradiction in Cicero's view. He argued in favour of peace from two different perspectives.⁶¹ He never denied that war was an instrument of foreign relations. In this passage of the *De Officiis*, Cicero highlights that war is the *extrema ratio* and leaders should always opt for peace when it is possible. And indeed, in the pro-Pompey and pro-Caesar orations, war is described as the only chance left to solve conflicts undermining Rome's stability for a long period. Therefore, Pompey's and Caesar's supreme power was just because it was the instrument to restore harmony and, lastly, to achieve peace. In addition, Cicero points out that the ancient attitude to peace was lost in the late Republic. The glory of the State had been replaced by the rapacious attitude of politicians and warlords. His argument mirrors the standpoint of the defender of the Roman tradition of peace. As

⁵⁷ NÉMET 1969: 77-81. Similarly, LANA (1967: 9-13) has underlined the existence of a tripartite concept of *pax* in Ciceronian thought. In this view, Cicero had three ways to understand peace: the peace of the wise man, the peace of the citizen and that of the soldier. See also DUMÉZIL 1966: 237-38; NARDUCCI 1991: 165-190.

⁵⁸ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 2.4-6; 3.7-8; 4.9-11; 5.11-12; 10.27; *Prov. cons.* 8.19-20; 12.29-31.

⁵⁹ Cic. *Leg. Man.* 9.20-26; *Prov. cons.* 13.32-33; 14.34-35.

⁶⁰ CORNWELL 2017: 22-23.

⁶¹ A different interpretation has been provided by LORETO (2001: 24-25), who has argued that there was no link between Cicero's idea of war and peace. They were diametrically opposed concepts.

highlighted by Manthey, the Republican ideal of *pax* implied that the *aeternitas* of the Empire had to be guaranteed by Rome's virtuous statesmen.⁶²

In the first preliminary article of *Perpetual Peace*, Kant states that, in order to be real, peace must be truly wanted. He explains this concept by saying that a treaty between two nations cannot contain any reservation about the chance to wage future wars.⁶³ The purpose of this article is that of avoiding agreements which give the chance to derogate to peace due to old claims.⁶⁴ Peace must be absolute. This means that each negotiator have to create linear conditions to stop the conflict once and forever, without giving space to potential causes of war. Here, the relevance of a real intention of peace underpinning the action of the State is clear. The German philosopher seems to know that the absence of precise clauses can be employed to open the gates to new hostility. He tries therefore to go to the root of the problem by cutting out any chance of specious interpretation. The conditions for a durable peace must be fully wanted, definite and, as a result, non-interpretable. This provision needs a fundamental prerequisite which places Kant near Cicero. Politics must relinquish any warlike attitude and, consequently, commit to peace. Furthermore, the essential relevance of a genuine will for peace is marked by Kant in the sixth preliminary article. Here, he points out that no nation, when at war, should use specious methods or cunning stratagems. This would destroy any trust in a future peace.⁶⁵ The pursue of perpetual peace implies the rejection of the resort to deceits. They push people towards a vicious circle and destroy trust. Kant does not deny that belligerence is an ubiquitous element characterising the relations between nations. Nonetheless, war is seen as functional to peace. Still in the sixth preliminary article, Kant argues that war is just the sad and necessary remedy belonging to the natural state of men, who try to impose their rights by means of violence.⁶⁶ Thus, peace is an instrument that needs to be specifically built and wisely preserved in order to avoid falling back into the intrinsic hostility at the base of mankind.

5. Peace and War: The Importance of the Republic

In *Off.* 1.22.74-23.81, Cicero provides a long discussion about war and the ideal of peace. He points out that, 'since many people believes that war is more important than peace, it is worth scaling down this conviction' (*Sed cum plerique arbitrentur res*

⁶² MANTHEY 1952: 45-57.

⁶³ KANT 1795: 19-20.

⁶⁴ FABBRINI 2017: 206-207.

⁶⁵ KANT 1795: 22-23.

⁶⁶ KANT 1795: 23.

bellicas maiores esse quam urbanas, minuenda est haec opinio).⁶⁷ He underlines that, during his time, warlike culture took over the traditional mentality of the Romans. War became more and more important and well-considered as the Republic evolved.⁶⁸ While ancient traditions were based on principles such as harmony and inclusion towards subjugated populations, the growing attitude of the Republican leading class was that of maximising the benefit coming from war and foreign relations. War turned into a way to strengthen personal power and to ensure the loyalty of the army by means of new territorial control and future richness. Cicero points out that many magnanimous and talented men employed war to broaden their glory. The more capable in the battlefield they were, the more they desired war.⁶⁹ Characters such as Pompey and Caesar can be identified within this wide category. Given their unquestionable military ability, they made a speculative use of war to gain growing personal power. However, Cicero specifies that the first concern of statesmen should be the stability of the domestic system. The glory arising from a good administration of the State is more durable than that coming from conquest. In addition, foreign affairs followed the guideline of foreign policy.⁷⁰ Cicero clarifies this idea by making reference to Athens and Sparta, as well as to their famous statesmen. According to Cicero, Themistocles and his victory at Salamis (480 BC) were more renowned than Solon and his introduction of Aeropagus in Athens' system. Nevertheless, this did not mean that Solon's reform was less prestigious than Themistocles' military triumph. While Themistocles' success produced only one specific benefit, Solon's policy created the conditions for a lasting advantage. Furthermore, Cicero argues, while the victory of Salamis did not help the Aeropagus, this victory was possible because the Aeropagus had approved military intervention.⁷¹ Similarly, people connected Sparta's power to characters such as Pausanias and Lysander. However, the glory of those generals was not comparable to the greatness coming from the laws of Lycurgus.⁷² Cicero refers to the reform of Greek statesman in order to highlight that real glory does not come from war, but from a virtuous administration of the State. The fame arising from war is high but ends in itself. On the contrary, good domestic policy brings more benefit for the homeland and, therefore, more glory for politicians. Cicero corroborates this belief by comparing Roman characters as well. He points out that, during his youth, he did not consider Marcus Aemilius Scavrus as less eminent than Caius Marius. Analogously, during his political career, Quintus Lutatius Catulus looked inferior compared to Pompey. Hence, Cicero says, if domestic policy is not prudent, the arms have little importance out of the

⁶⁷ Cic. *Off.* 1.22.74.

⁶⁸ PARCHAMI 2009: 19-20.

⁶⁹ Cic. *Off.* 1.22.74.

⁷⁰ Cic. *Off.* 1.22.74.

⁷¹ Cic. *Off.* 1.22.75.

⁷² Cic. *Off.* 1.22.76.

boundaries of the State.⁷³ According to Smith, Cicero was 'the Republic's last true friend.' His words and actions arose from his genuine concerns about the safeguard of the Republic.⁷⁴ Likewise, Winsor Leach has affirmed that the Republic was the real love of Cicero, who deeply desired to perfect the Republican order. However, this was not possible due to failure of the Republican ideals.⁷⁵ As highlighted by Lana, Cicero demonstrated superior sensitivity towards the problems of his time. He also refused to surrender when faced with the threats which, at the end of his life, surrounded him.⁷⁶

Similarly to Hobbes, Kant believed that the *naturalis status* of mankind is that of hostility. The state of belligerence is innate in the interactions of nations, which are inclined to solve their issue through war. For this reason, peace must be not only wanted, but also instituted.⁷⁷ In Kant's view, peace is therefore an artificial outcome of social will. Men decide to forgo their hostile instinct in order to lay the foundation of harmony. According to Kant, this can be done only by means of the only governmental form includes the respect and primacy of human values, namely the Republic. The importance of stable Republics at the base of the inter-community coexistence is underlined in the first definitive article of *Perpetual Peace*. Kant emphasises the relevance of a constitution springing from the principles of freedom and common good. The only government including these values is precisely identified in the Republican one.⁷⁸ Williams has argued that Kant's thought provides a clear example of constructive processes and mutual recognition of international identities. The identification of shared views and values brings States to acknowledge their equal roles in the growth of foreign relations.⁷⁹ Oneal and Russett have pointed out that Kant's theory reflects an extreme idealistic approach to international relations, which is contrary to any form of realism.⁸⁰ An opposite interpretation has been provided by Harste, who has underlined the mistake in considering Kant as a mere idealist moraliser of world politics. By distinguishing false realism (which describes military power as unitary) from true realism (which recognises the complexity of military power), Harste emphasises how *Perpetual Peace* is the result of a historical analysis concerning the evolution of society and warfare. Therefore, Kant's theory embodies high realism.⁸¹ It is worth clarifying that Kant did not intend to make a parallelism between Republic and democracy: these two elements are not automatically fused each other. Kant's idea of Republic is rather the opposite of despotism and tyranny, which are considered the engine of war. This makes Kant

⁷³ Cic. *Off.* 1.22.76.

⁷⁴ SMITH 1966: 257-58.

⁷⁵ WINSOR LEACH 1993: 19-20.

⁷⁶ LANA 2003: 17-18.

⁷⁷ KANT 1795: 24-25.

⁷⁸ KANT 1795: 25-26.

⁷⁹ WILLIAMS 2001: 525-33.

⁸⁰ ONEAL – RUSSETT 2003: 13-14.

⁸¹ HARSTE 2009: 53-84.

conceptually close to Cicero. Both authors identify in the Republic a sort of guarantee of social balance. Personal regimes are sources of conflict because they foster thirst for individual power and glory.

In the second definitive article, Kant affirms that international law must rest on a Federation of free States,⁸² the sole institution which can ensure peace.⁸³ In this regard, Dodson has argued in favour of the incompatibility between this concept and that of social contract, which rather requires the making of a universal civil society.⁸⁴ In a similar way to Dodson, Huggler has pointed out that Kant's essay contains an evident rejection of the idea of world government. The reason can be found in his will to outline a realistic path to perpetual peace.⁸⁵ Conversely, Kleingeld believes that Kant wished for the establishment of a non-coercive Federation of States where the political autonomy of nations is guaranteed.⁸⁶ Kant compares nations to human beings.⁸⁷ He makes reference to the difference between Europeans and American natives. While the first ones had been able to adhere to a reasonable form of freedom limited by law, the second ones laid claim to an unrestrained freedom that brought them to enmity and self-destruction due to the leadership of despots.⁸⁸ In this light, although Cicero and Kant are ideologically distant, the analysis of their argument shows conceptual proximity. Both authors theorise the importance of a stabilising and harmonising entity aiming at maintaining peace amongst nations. According to Cicero, it is represented by Rome's power and superiority. Kant identifies this entity in a confederation of States characterised by the collective reception of the Republic.⁸⁹ However, Cicero and Kant recognise the relevance of a governmental form having the common good at the core of its *raison d'être*. Peace is generated by the understanding of being part of necessary coexistence, as well as of a shared system of values concerning the respect for the rights and needs of the neighbour.

Prestipino has argued that the concept of *pax* in Roman culture was universal. War was a way to defend collective peace. This view was typically Stoic and concerned the idea of universal homeland.⁹⁰ Cicero encourages the future generations of Roman leaders to feed their political passion and to focus on the care of the State, instead of on military glory. His experience made him more and more aware of the supremacy of warlike

⁸² KANT 1795: 29.

⁸³ See CARSON 1988: 173-214.

⁸⁴ DODSON 1993: 1-9.

⁸⁵ HUGGLER 2010: 129-40.

⁸⁶ KLEINGELD 2004: 304-25.

⁸⁷ Cf. VECA 2006: 233-34.

⁸⁸ KANT 1795: 30-31.

⁸⁹ Cf. LUTZ-BACHMANN 1997: 59-78.

⁹⁰ PRESTIPINO 1983: 4-17.

culture over Roman traditions of peace. Cicero underlines that, in order to end any conflict, a diplomatic and friendly solution is more beneficial than the courage that comes from the battlefield. Nonetheless, this does not mean to run away from the idea of war, but to prioritise the public good.⁹¹ Therefore, war should be undertaken in such a way as to clarify that it aims at securing peace:⁹²

*Bellum autem ita suscipiatur, ut nihil aliud nisi pax quaesita videatur.*⁹³

Hence, the reasons of waging war should make it clear that there is no other object but peace.

Evidently, Cicero's purpose is not that of rejecting the idea of war *a priori*. His political experience had taught him that war was unavoidable and, most of the time, it was the only way to solve a conflict between two nations.⁹⁴ As correctly pointed out by Gittings, peace did not mean absence of war. Rather, peace is a dynamic concept which evolves according to its social and cultural environment.⁹⁵ However, according to the content of the previous passages, Cicero seems to suggest that the reason of war should be the achievement of peace. War should reflect the good of Rome and the pacifying role that her hegemony had held in the past. Roman reputation needed to be polished from the stains of a specious use of war. Thus, the leading class had the duty to undertake war for the sake of peace. Once more, Cicero recommends that war cannot be an instrument for personal power, but something beneficial to the State. By rejecting the recourse to belligerence that characterised the late Republic, he encourages the future leading class to become statesmen, rather than warlords. Gaining military glory is seen as a natural consequence of victory and heroism, not a primary target. He supports this belief by arguing that the firm spirit is not affected by adversity or intimate impulse. On the contrary, the rules of reason drive the decisions of strong men. Thoughtlessly fighting against the enemy is an act of ferocity which belongs to beasts. Nevertheless, Cicero underlines, fighting is necessary sometimes. In this case, dying is better than ending in slavery and shame.⁹⁶ Here Cicero highlights the Stoic concept of living and deciding under the guidance of justice, which imposes to analyse the flow of the events by employing rationality. The human mistake is generated when the *λόγος* (rationality) wrongly pictures something as good. Wrong opinions arise from misjudgement and give birth to passion. From a philosophical standpoint, the culture of the late-Republican class was influenced by the misinterpretation of the role of war. This created the passion

⁹¹ Cic. *Off.* 1.23.80.

⁹² CASAVOLA 1991: 153-54.

⁹³ Cic. *Off.* 1.23.80.

⁹⁴ See BOTERMANN 2002: 279-96.

⁹⁵ GITTINGS 2012: 2-3.

⁹⁶ Cic. *Off.* 1.23.80-81.

of desire for glory and power. Thus, Cicero tries to persuade his audience that war did not have to be sought out for the sake of satisfying such an egoistic desire. The right use of reason shows war for what it is, namely violence. Similarly, the employment of reason drives the virtuous man to prefer to die rather than ending in a shameful condition.

As already mentioned, also Kant demonstrates to be aware of the ineluctability of war.⁹⁷ Nonetheless, he underlines that, by showing the path to walk down, nature supplies the instruments to accomplish a stable and durable form of peace.⁹⁸ By unveiling the directions to peace, as well as the ways to reach it, nature makes use of human sensibility in order to be the guarantor of harmony.⁹⁹ This is possible thanks to three provident arrangements of nature. Firstly, she has provided for men all the habitable regions of the Earth. Secondly, she has dispersed men around the world with the purpose of populating it. Lastly, she has forced peoples to establish mutual relations through war.¹⁰⁰ In Kant's view, war had a legalising effect on the inter-community coexistence. Due to their hostility, men were compelled to shape their mutual relationships. As correctly underlined by Fabbrini, Kant shows deep awareness of the role played by man in the world. Mankind is not analysed through a theoretical separation between juridical and human evolution. On the contrary, these two spheres are tightly interconnected. As a consequence, Fabbrini points out, war is interpreted by Kant as a natural instrument of men, as well as a necessary step towards the perpetual peace of nations. Peace is achievable because human history created the final conditions to conquer it.¹⁰¹

6. Conclusions

In closing, although Cicero and Kant anchor their argument on diametrically opposed ideologies, they reach similar conclusions in principle. According to Cicero, Roman dominion is the way to guarantee the stability of nations. Kant theorises a form of cosmopolitanism made by independent States. However, both authors recognise the needful importance of a Republican form of government at the base of the main actor of foreign relations, namely the State. Hence, the concept of peace expressed by Cicero and Kant finds its own development within the sphere of the juridical and political culture of man. Since it is the government of everyone and for the good of everyone, the

⁹⁷ See OREND 2004: 161-77.

⁹⁸ KANT 1795: 36.

⁹⁹ Here, Kant's idea of nature is symmetrical to that of providence. According to FABBRINI (2017: 215-16) the concept of nature employed by Kant in this last part of his essay is equivalent to that of "destiny".

¹⁰⁰ KANT 1795: 36-37.

¹⁰¹ FABBRINI 2017: 216-17. Cf. BERNSTEIN 2013: 237-60.

Republic is also the expression of human values and justice. Thanks to the interpenetration between morality and wisdom, Republican traditions are opposed to the individualism characterising personal regimes. In this regard, Cicero's and Kant's reasoning shows great topicality within the contemporary debate. A durable and stable absence of conflict is possible only if States, which are the fundamental components of international coexistence, are able to embrace a collective culture. This culture should orient the political action of each State, which must be based on the respect for human values and rights. This process dovetails with the acceptance of the principles underpinning the Republic, namely the only form of government that can subsume the qualities of mankind. Once morality and politics are integrated and incorporated in the social fabric of the State, the culture of the common good will be radiated within the international sphere. These conditions will produce harmony and collaboration, essential factors for perpetual peace.

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