

# Kant's Theology and Teleology

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Kant's philosophy<sup>1</sup> is particularly complex because he strives to present a systematic rational understanding of reality at the limit of human capacity for knowledge. Kant sought a systematic articulation of reality based on what is knowledge in the mode of Newtonian science, supplemented by a metaphysical speculation. These are two separated perspectives for him yet grounded in rationality. In that the former, Kant assumes a determination of cause and effect whereas, in the latter, he assumes freedom of a rational (and thus ethical) being, qualified in the case of man but unqualified for God.

Kant systematized complex levels of consciousness where different human capacities, especially aspects of a rational inclination, function in knowing and the reasonable to design a system. A difficulty for his readers is the temptation to view Kant only by his first Kritik, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, where a full systematic articulation is adumbrated, but not achieved. Here Kant is an epistemological psychologist with a negative result for philosophical content aside from the epistemological organization of mind; the task of philosophy is logical analysis of the structures of mind. Yet, just so, he moves to consider not descriptive judgment that does this task but reflective judgment that seeks a rational speculation for the meaning of the former: particularly, the human recognition of ethical universality and unconditionality. The inclusive anthropological psychology is presented in the orientation of the second part of the third Kritik: *the Critique of the Power of Judgement*.

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<sup>1</sup> For the historical background and further development of other themes in Kant, I cite my "Kant's Orientation," *Journal of the History of European Ideas*, 28 (2002) 263-80 and in the same journal, 30 (2004) 295-314 which I edited for the issue "Kant Anniversary 1804-2004" my "Kant's stand to Hobbes and Hume." Otherwise, I shall not bother with the well-known enormous Kant literature. However, of possible interest is my discussion of Kant and human rights in "Theoretical Instability and Practical Progress in Human Rights" *International Journal of Human Rights* VIII (2004).

In the third Kritik we have a theology. Its principle is a teleological understanding of nature as determined related to freedom of the ethical person, which had been discussed in the second Kritik. Though Kant is tangential to the mode of an ontologically content based metaphysics of classical philosophy, he too is provoked by a desire to articulate a rationally ordered, fundamental reality. So Kant uses the word ‘theology’ (or first philosophy) as Aristotle called the “Queen of the sciences,” (later called metaphysics by his editor, Andronikos of Rhodes.)

The fulcrum of theology is the principle of God’s teleology – (telein in Greek connotes perfectly complete) – in the organ of nature. Kant expresses this epistemic mode as *Zweckmaessig ohne Zweck* (purposive without purpose). The speculation depends on the assumptive triad of “freedom, God, and immortality,” particularly God and freedom. The reflective judgment constructs a non-natural, noumenal realm where ethical freedom is epistemologically independent of the determination of natural causal laws. The perspective of a nature and a noumenal realm (Reich) depends on Baumgarten’s distinction between *conceptibilis* and *comprehensibilis* organizes what that can offer knowledge, i.e., science, and what is a rational speculation. Science works concepts that may achieve clarity and distinctness within the classifications of nature, whereas theology cannot claim to provide knowledge because God is not knowable because he can not be understood through the intuitions of time and space schematizes with the categories of the understanding like cause, relation, etc. God does not have for the human mind qualities of clarity and distinctness. Thus, Kant calls his speculation “a rational faith”; which is motivated by an all too human hope, especially in the case of immortality. In the third Kritik’s speculation, God’s creating the world, under the assumption that God’s actions are ethical, allows Kant to propose a doctrine of rational progress, where the immaturity of humankind comes closer to a political form – Republicanism – that is concert as a representation of ethical rationality. The historical mode for Kant is in concert with the traditional story of Genesis (Breshith bara elohim.... [In the beginning God(s) created ...]).

One might compare it with the neo-Platonic framework that is a strong thrust in Western philosophical culture: viz. the treatment of nature not as a distinct product of God, but rather an emanation or attribute of God's existence, which ontologically objectifies nature as an accident of God as original substance. As an accident or determination not of God's substance rather than an attribute qua necessary of substance, – like in Spinoza, Kant's intellectual rival, – nature is denigrated. Indeed, in a sense, one can take it as an illusion like the Schopenhauer interpretation or one can ponder this closer to Leibniz, viz. that since God's actions are rationally and ethically perfect, per assumption, creatures – nature and all it contains; – are more intimate to God than a mere artistic creation. In any case, one finds strongest in Kant's theology, the echo of the Christian concept of Fallen Nature." Kant does take the conditional natural personality – in contrast with the unconditional noumenal essence or autonomous personhood – to be fragile.

From the noumenal perspective, human immortality implies an existence in a noumenal realm either from eternity as substantial or that God's creation of human beings as rational was a substantial creation of a creature. Again, Genesis speaks of humans created in the paradigm or image (*zal*) of God. Spinoza of course held that there can only be one substance by expressing existence; it is a logical extension of Descartes (or St. Anselm's) ontological argument. Kant denies the probity of the ontological argument. In that case, substance is quite mysteriously abstract. It is the ground of attributes but the only attribute essential to a person is the ethical law, which asserts the ontology of freedom. Freedom means the action that is in concert with an essentially rational identity. Yet, Kant's doctrine of punishment in an after-life and radical sin is a matter of immortal existence. Kant's argument is that sin results from acting against the ethical laws; however, this is not clear. Since Kant believes "the warped wood" that is a human being can perhaps never have a pure will necessary for a free action, not clouded by emotions, and, yet, as a matter of right (*Recht*) or moral (*Sittlich*) action, can act dutifully that in a representation of the unconditional moral law, which humans intuitively qua rationally perceive as a demand of their essential identity as persons. Consequently, sin can be both inherent as impure dimension of the dual

selfhood of a creature that is both personality and person and sin can be a direct act against the moral law, e.g. lying. Yet, among other important questions, it is most unclear how the natural, accidental personality can be dragged into the immortal noumenal realm?

Theological problems constantly arise for Kant by attempting to unify causality and freedom. The teleological principle when considered from the natural perspective of Newtonian laws has no room for essential freedom. In Hobbes materialism, we have the reasonable assertion of the physical qua Galilean, (for Kant it takes the name of Newton) orientation: here freedom is the lack of a restraint to achieve one's desire. If nature orients ethics in Hobbes or Spinoza, all actions are determined behaviours; for Hobbes' materialism of matter in motion, for Spinoza, a determination under the two attributes of God known to humans: extension and mind. The determinist position in both thinkers lessens the dignity of man for Kant. Kant's freedom provides the dignity of an autonomous rational being, whether that "person" is human, some other creature, or God: the difference among these is in capacity to act not in the obligation of one's identity as a person.

This pure rational comprehension necessitates a "disinterested" will to act, where ethical dignity trumps personal considerations, i.e., (the natural search for) happiness, which is apparently merely circumstantial: Kant like Socrates in Plato's *Philebus* finds the great perfection of rationality without emotion; the only one he allows is that of respect for the ethical law. (Hobbes assumes the range of human emotions, though only some are in concert with the laws or theorems of nature, like gratitude, charity and justice, whereas the elevating or freeing salubrious emotion for Spinoza, – perhaps like Plato and surely like Plotinus, – is contemplation of the highest reality by the mind's *scientia intuitiva*, the "intellectual love of God.")

The First *Kritik*'s stress is that both knowing and desiring is within nature, which is a realm of limitation. This is a construction of phenomena by mental machinery or a response to circumstances, including the motions of a human body that is dependently responsive to a mysterious and unknowable "thing-in-itself". In this *Kritik*, Kant considered the traditional metaphysical arguments to prove God's existence, finding their intellectual authority as naturalistic

arguments, to use Aquinas' phrase, to be "a nose of wax." The natural concepts of the argument projected in a metaphysical ontology are open to be bent to either side: they are amphibolous. There is no rational stability to create a full system on a rationalized ontology, like Descartes and the extended holistic attempt of Spinoza. The error is that existence cannot be conceptually schematized. Thomas Aquinas' argument from design likewise falters: the argument that depends on a world creating first cause, God's "pure act"; this uncaused cause necessarily has the characteristic of later natural causes as a determiner but not like them to be thought of as an infinite chain of effects. Indeed, the "pure will" of the ethical act is a supernatural, uncaused cause but, in the epistemological perspective of physics (physis is the Greek word for nature) is taken as an effect. Just so, we can see the intellectual difficulty of unifying the natural and supernatural perspective and Kant often refers to crucial intellectual moments of their relationship as mysterious, somehow finessed by God. His notion of reason consequently has moral ideology's strange concept of "pure will" as its factual springboard rather than a logical deduction. Just so Kant's ethical view is what he cannot be let go to be more in harmony with Enlightenment (Aufklärung) French models and instead takes a native pietistic turn toward Luther's conscience as "hidden inwardness" (verborgene Innerlichkeit).

Kant's speculation as srevetement of freedom as an ethical quality or accident must assume something like a first cause yet in a wider and different manner than the argument from natural design, e.g. in Aquinas or, after Newton, in Hutcheson, who did attract Kant. Kant accepts the foundational mystery of God's creative action. In the suggestion of Isaiah, "God formed the light and created the darkness," the substance of God, granted its obscurity, seems already to hold creatures in its timelessness action. God or Substance therefore creates creaturely imperfection as something in time. However, this tack seems to oppose the understanding of God as a perfect being because what need does a perfect God have for creatures? To avoid the difficult we seem to return to Spinoza; Kant does not solve this difficulty when he invokes mystery. The teleological principle, from the theological speculative perspective, assumes a free creation in some sort of strange

temporality that is as mysterious as the concept of immortality: outside of time and yet, for a very Christian aspect of Kant, a place where sin gets its come-uppance, despite a God who, one assumes, could rectify it less painfully after the confused game of natural life.

In a very late essay of 1786, “The Conjectural Beginnings of Human History,” Kant even challenges anyone to show a contradiction between his theological views and Genesis. Aside from all other themes, the theological perspective rests upon the teleological principle where God is presumed to have a Holy Will, with great capacity. One that acts immediately on its rational or ethical recognition, which is quite unlike a human pure will that, moreover, may not be ever actualized because it is hampered by natural desires: the Ariel-Caliban dualism of “heaven” so to speak recognized but trapped in earth’s gravity. Nevertheless, in terms of nothing humans themselves do, God’s will is necessarily represented – representation is close to analogy by signalling an ambiguous difference – by cultural and political progress in history.

As mentioned, the teleological goal of politics is a republican (formal) representation of man as a noumenon, i.e. the ethical or essential character of a rational being. Its dutiful or formal thrust is a matter of morality (*Sittlichkeit*) but not of an “internal” free action, of the ethical; it is caused in the historical realm by natural teleology. This teleological movement does not occur easily, but by historical strife or conflict (*Streit*). It completes its trajectory by the only ethical political representation: the republican form of government and an outward sense of human personhood: the cosmopolitan attitude that treats every person as end-in-himself.

Kant sense of historical progress is great; he even speculates that nature might change the egoism of human nature as part of an ultimate rational goal; however, like his wonderment if any human has ever acted solely from a pure will, he leaves the matter of a changed human nature undecided. This is a sort of redemption for fallen nature. Since Kant believes the noumenal ground of one’s humanity is not historical; yet, progress of humankind as a species is teleological. Here, another Christian theme is analogous: The paradigm is Christ always existing as the Divine Word whose salvation power is in the

historical progress to Jesus crucified. With that crucifixion, “crucial” history is ended by giving an essential freedom to humankind qua the Christian, despite the continuance of the confused strife of natural and political events. Yet, for that historical strife, the Christian dogma expects a further resolution, mostly a come-uppance for the unfaithful, when a post-Crucifixion Jesus qua Christ’s returns for rewards and punishments at the “end of days.”

In any case, each human being has an (intuitive) understanding of their self as a noumenon: a self-understanding of one’s freedom (as an ideal), though such awareness is vague and submerged by natural emotions, especially in relation to inadequate natural conditions for rational, absolute obligation. Notably, essential obligation to the ethical law is freedom for a rational being’s true (noumenal) identity. Obviously, the absoluteness of ethical law and the conditional natural context of human action make ethical action often a deterrent of happiness. Ethical dignity is unconditional whereas happiness is conditional; however, happiness is not opposed to dignity. Yet, in nature or the segment of nature that is human history, it may be contrary to it. In the orientation of theological speculation, Kant asserts it is reasonable to suppose moral or right acting or dutiful persons deserve happiness. Because in nature this may not happen, he “hopes” happiness can occur after bodily death.

Consider immortality from the viewpoint of its conceptual relation to the conditional and unconditional. Granted Kant’s doctrine that freedom is not determined, its causal efficacy is like a concept of a first cause, i.e. God’s putative creation of the world. It is unconditional. It occurs because of the actor’s autonomous essence. It is spontaneous, and here Kant follows Leibniz, who greatly influenced the philosophical generation before Kant in Germany. The essence of Leibniz’ monad, like Kant’s noumenal person, determines or defines the free act. The determination is equivalent to freedom by ontological unity. Thus, like in God’s creation there is a mystery between the divine Actor’s action of creating nature and any actor’s ethical action within nature. Of course, since Kant has suggested that perhaps no human person has acted with a pure will or purely ethical there is some fudging room. However, the problem expands. If one assumes man is actually capable of (pure) ethical

action, which is appropriate sense of disinterested obedience to rationality. Thus, the natural and the noumenal realms, the conditional and the unconditional intersect. Kant facing this possibility chose to keep them separate in terms of epistemic order, though the thrust in him toward a unified rational root for ontology makes epistemic dualism unstable.

Something of a system is formed by Kant's assuming the three rational conceptual or quasi-conceptual determiners of his theology: "freedom, God, and immortality." Immortality, compared to the other two, is a concept that Kant did not at first find essential, since ethics demands action for its own sake and not for a reward. Immortality has the extra conceptual difficulty of raising the problem of pre-existence; though, for Kant, the therapy of sin is post natural existence. He hesitated to include it; yet, he stresses it relates to the hope of man in a quasi-natural sense for justice, if not a very human version of God's compassion. Kant's orthodox inclination is in some tension with many important Enlightenment thinkers, certainly Voltaire and perhaps the sceptical but cautiously amiable Hume, who published his *Dialogues on Natural Religion*, posthumously. (Kant had Hamann translate this book for him and lectured on the theme from 1780-82, when Herder was his student.) Perhaps it is not unjust to say that Kant's God in relation to his ethical emphasis for religion – a historical religion is merely a mere sect or "cult" – is an abstract *tremendum*, part of the road to a *mundus saecularis*.

One has an "anthropologist's suspicion" about Kant's cultural influence for merging reason with Hume's "party of Humanity" and Christian pietism; albeit, when in his philosophical stance the rational is a non-cultural conceptual system. Kant certainly shows a rigid sort of Christian hesitance about whether any human act has ever been done purely, merely out of respect for the unconditional and absolute ethical law, a notion which itself is most unclear when Kant asserts such ethical obligations as "developing one's natural potential." Because for Kant the rational root is in the transcendental essence of one's humanity, an ethical act is considered purified from nature's emotional taint, which sounds like a categorical imperative acting in us and through us. Yet, this substitute of logic for the Pauline Christ has no power of salvation, unless one concedes that being in touch with one's essential being

as a person does not need a further panacea. In the essay of 1784, “Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Viewpoint,” Kant can even write, “Nothing straight can be constructed from the warped wood of which man is made.” Against the common experience of such a natural condition and, further, against a theology of logical abstractions, the criticism of both Kierkegaard and Hegel, in the measure of their different viewpoints, opposes Kant. For Kierkegaard there is a “knight of faith” and for Hegel (and Marx) a historical (and teleological) mind (Geist) that straightens the “warped wood” of human nature. Kierkegaard shows a Protestant Christian aspect in Kant that is emphasized to criticize his abstract rationality; Hegel shows the teleological historical aspect of Kant, but grounds it not in ethics – Kant’s republicanism as a representation of the noumenal – but, like Aristotle, (and not as historically specific to one cultural nation as in Herder), in a natural context for an organic development of the absolute (of this sort of thing) social and political form.

According to Kant, historical conditionality of contextual interest is bracketed by ethical action. Kant historical focus move him away from Hobbes, who has an epistemological essentialism based on the need of political construction to protect itself by artifice against an always to be encountered self-interest in humankind. Hobbes’s theory accepts interest as the basis of politics, and unlike Plato does not elevate the notion of interest into a noble ethics.

On the contrary, Kant characterizes ethics by disinterest. Here, he follows the moral sense philosophers with whom he was acquainted: particularly, Hutcheson. God’s Holy Will activates knowledge in an *actus puris*, whereas, as we have seen, under a dual personality/person existence Kant doubt’s that humans are capable this. Thus, for “moral” society or government becomes merely dutiful. The basis of the republican political order is an ethical duty. Duty is the concept of how the “ought” is undercut by self-interested “is” of natural inclinations. Duty is a response of a moral will hobbled by the practically – politically and socially – impossible rigor of the abstract ideal of an unconditional pure will.

The mere representation of the ethical by the natural, in politics and in moral intention, is the main thrust of Kant's historically progressive theology. From the natural perspective, the free act, unconditioned or spontaneous, cannot be understood; it is aside from science's conceptual possibilities and interests. From the speculative noumenal perspective, however, the free act, in principle, if or if not ever having occurred, intrudes into the natural causal chain of events. Thus, God's spontaneous or timeless creation of the world, as a dogmatic speculation to ground ethics, is not known; instead, as a doctrine of "rational faith," it counters the infinity of a natural rational position, as in Aristotle, that assumes the infinity of the world. In the moral order it counters Aristotle's teleological goal of happiness for individual and in the political order it undercuts Aristotle's naturalistic and biological understanding of the state and society being the context that forms and allows proper action for the individual: "The good man and the good citizen are not the same, except in the best state."

In contrast to naturalism, Kant's dutiful obedience to the ethical law is conditional response to the unnatural unconditional freedom of oneself as a rational person. Thus, the natural act depends on the rational aspect of oneself that is divine, but without actually achieving one's divine holiness as a person. Implicitly, this unbalanced human psychology is in need of God's so-called mercy, or shall we say justice. God is not dutiful, merely just – that is rational. God has no compassion; He is without passions by Kant's doctrine of rational actor, yet there is the continued mystery of why a just God created a creaturely condition that allows injustice or irrationality. Kant does not offer salvation by Christ, a mixture of the human and divine, ("a") God with a human face. Despite Kant's depending on many Biblical doctrines, his Enlightenment character and philosophical intention toward the rational avoids the man-God myth: a political absurdity for the anti-Jewish Romans and idolatrous scandal for the Jews. For Kant, such a "human-all-too-human" sentimental story is the projection of Christianity as a mere sect, for the purpose of bringing humans to a universal rational ethical awareness, the basis of a cosmopolitan attitude. Only ethical awareness as dutiful action is religion, i.e. within the limits of reason.

Yet, in Kant's 1793, *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, radical evil is assumed to justify punishment on rational grounds. This sort of rationality seems more primitive than Plato's therapeutic understanding of punishment in *Laws*; or, the "Myth of Er" in *Republic*, which suggests Karma in the soul's reincarnation to a human life. Obviously, one is "punished" by the limitations of soul condition or awareness but not externally, as an act of divine domination qua "justice," like in Dante's malicious Catholic Hell; emotional satisfaction by revenge seems as Nietzsche says, "Menschlich-alzu-Menschlich" (human-all-to-human.) A theology of revenge – disguised as rational justice – in Kant has a strong cultural root that is not rational or just. Harsh reactions to perceived harm or any opposition, however, is a trans-cultural human experience. For a rational God, not burdened by natural desires and passions, a better theology for Kant would be immediately to bring the sinner back to his own rational essence: the human share of the divine quality. Apparently, despite conceptual room, Kant's cultural sensibility opts for punishment rather than therapy. Perhaps, this relates to the strong sense of self-interest qua individuality in Western culture? In any case, Kant's stress on the autonomy of personhood sweeps the concept of freedom into that of individuality and the shift from an ideal awareness of human autonomy and the actuality of natural heteronomy again clashes and has much difficulty in not making an incoherence in such a doctrine as immortal punishment of sinners.

Kant's separation of nature and essence into two realms poses the following epistemological problem. If essence is in the noumenal realm and the natural realm is taken as an accident, that is, a quality that stands in some relation to the essence, then natural determination or the conditions that create personality stand in an "accidental" relation to essential freedom qua ethical law or personhood. Consequently, knowledge of the latter implies nothing about knowledge of the former. Every human being knows him or herself essentially, but perhaps not or only in a measure as a personality. Kant epistemic separation of the teleological perspectives of the individual trying to represent his essence by dutiful acts representing it in natural time is the nexus of a human personality in relation to God or one's own essential self that is

shared with God. In the natural telos, whether of the individual or historical progress to an ethical politics, representation implies a unitary concept. Kant must bridge purpose of time functioning teleology with the timeless weight of the noumenal Being.

This is an old philosophical problem expressed as the one-and the many, or Being and becoming. Therefore, provisionally Kant adopts the strategy of a practical disciple of Parmenides, the late Plato's Eleatic Stranger of the Sophist and Statesman, that is, a provisional double epistemology: here reason meets prudence, ethics meets dutiful action. However, because this does not provide more than a provisional approach to the unity of reason, Kant struggles for a schema that bridges the two perspectives, albeit with mystery as a stopgap for unsolved or unsolvable difficulties. Thus, unlike say in the discussions of the scholastics, the ambiguous linkage of the phrase "a rational faith."

Time and timelessness, unconditionality and conditionality, are a conceptual nightmare. One returns to Kant's critical suspicions of making a metaphysical system with such notions, pace his late life attempt. Spinoza's metaphysics is better if one can accept his totalizing ontological proof that ends with God becoming nature. Spinoza believes any human perspective other than the sage's intellectual harmony with Deus sive Natura is mere illusion: the perspective of man as "a kingdom within a kingdom." He avoids Kant's Platonic problem of reason of the two estranged conceptual perspectives, with seeming diverse ontological realms. Both use the word rational but Kant's limit on rationality allows for the classic theological move of scholastic thinking that faith informs reason. Kant often says his philosophy is against Spinoza's pantheism, which is the outcome of rationality as capable of understanding the divine fully as the world, under the two of the infinite attributes of God. Spinoza's argument, apt or not, refuses to give up a substantial rational understanding, modified by speculations motivated by "hope," whereas Kant's critical philosophy must treat rational speculation in an ambiguous manner of satisfying human hope in the noumenal order since the natural order has no conceptual room for them. Much of Kant's ontological speculation, despite his intent, is the work of the imagination,

what Spinoza called “mutilated reason.” Kant’s Biblical and Christian conceptions provide his system with special pleading.

Nevertheless, Kant as an Enlightenment thinker – using Hume’s phrase, “of the party of humanity” – opposes revealed religion’s dependence on miracles and, specifically, the transformation of the inner human by thaumaturgic grace. Indeed, he writes in *Religion within the Limits of Reason*, “There is only one true religion, but there can be faiths of many kinds.” Judaism, Christianity, Islam, with each of its internecine variants, is not religion, which, as we have seen, for Kant is the universal ethical insight of each person. In a way, this has a trace of the pagan understanding of the divine as symbolized by an aesthetic intuition, as Kant prepares the reader for his teleological theology in the first part of the *Third Kritik*. The mental characteristics of appreciating the beautiful are the same as those for the good, but with an illusion attached to the object prompting this mental structure. Disregarding the last qualification that makes Kant more Christian held in check by his Enlightenment characteristics than pagan; Heidegger, (much influenced by romantic idealism, especially the aesthetic idealism of Schelling and the cultural ontology of Hegel, not to mention Fichte’s nationalism) notes this tendency and believes it to be the crucial Kant but, in that, Heidegger disregards Kant’s rational commitment. For Kant, reason directs one to religion not dogmatically but as it orientates one to ethics.

Unlike Spinoza, whose Parmenidian perspective of the unity of substance qua Being, disavows Kant’s speculation; no doubt, for Spinoza, Kant is limited by cultural commitments that skew his understanding of rationality. The cultural element in Kant’s speculative theology can never be universalized to bring rational agreement and his cosmopolitan intentions because the origin of such speculation is built on idiosyncratic personal and cultural orientations.

In the social and political realm, exemplified by republicanism, the ethical ground presents the fundamental equality of men, departing from natural elitism: Aristotle’s “slave by nature.” Though in his republican vision, Kant only allows men of property and civil servants to participate in government, not women or servants. On the one hand, Kant’s cosmopolitan view has it

that each person is dignified and treated as an end-in-oneself. Here there is again a cultural diremption between ethics and a prudential order. Thus, an ethical community has rationality beyond its specific political institutions, even when the form of the political is the best one possible. The state for most modernist thinkers – Hobbes, Locke, and Hume – is a useful instrument whereas for Aristotle – and medievals, like Ibn Rochd, Moses ben Maimon, and Thomas of Aquino – it is a fundamental context for biological functioning. Kant sees the instrumental aspect of the state come to the fore in the historical period of natural strife; in addition, he sees divine teleology making republican fulfilment, fundamentally not an instrument but a moral ideal. Theologically, it is like all human are considered equally distant from God, whether in need or in capacity, yet some are saints – e.g. Paul’s Christ is “in one and acts through one” – and others are sinners: another sort of distance. This adds a religious quality to republicanism and explains the variously opposed measures of equality represented through unequal political participation. Perhaps Kant did not believe in his own cultural allowance for a republican inequality and the remark is a practical gesture to his audience. Only the republican form of government captures the fundamental equality of “men” as citizens and therefore as rational persons. It represents each man as an ethical noumenon – in principle equal to God as a person – by citizenship: thus, we have *liberté*, *égalité*, *fraternité*. In rather mimetic concert with these republican values, Kant gives three principles in the above mentioned Cosmopolitan Viewpoint essay: “(1) The freedom of every member of society as a human being; (2) The equality of each with all others as a subject; (3) The independence of each member of the commonwealth as a citizen.”

Man’s autonomy as a rational being extends beyond the state to a cosmopolitan fraternity. In the essay of 1795, “Toward Perpetual Peace,” his most important political writing, Kant writes, “The republican constitution is not only pure in its origin, since it springs from the pure concept of right, and it also offers a prospect of obtaining the desired result of perpetual peace.” Here the strife of nature is quieted and transformed; a pure concept of right loses its cultural hesitance asserted by prudence and fully represents the ethical or so it seems to me that Kant might hold this position.

In sum, Kant's thrust to system, which includes political progress, is initiated by the teleological principle God programmed into creation. The mysterious ontology of immortal reward qualifies the similar dual character of humans as creatures and persons. Humankind progresses, there is a childhood of humanity, but formally, each person as a noumenon shares an ethical awareness equality with God since both are essentially rational beings, though humans are hobbled by nature, both externally by circumstance and internally by desires and emotions. (This division of the human is similar to the Christian dogma's dual character of Jesus.) Every human essentially exists oxymoronically outside of time, (similar to the conditional Jesus who also is the unconditional Christ, the uncreated logos, yet, somehow is a son: a strong trace of the neo-Platonic influence on the Gospel of John and Council of Nicea.) The teleological enterprise reflects Kant's modernism in finding a place for science as a proper interpreter of nature and his traditionalism in denigrating nature in order to find a place not only for human hopes for justice and continuance, but for some of the traditional (pietistic) Christian structures of his culture.