

**The international research workshop *Kant's Project of Perpetual Peace in the Context of Modern Politics*  
(Kaliningrad, April 20 – 22, 2012)\***

On April 20 – 22, 2012, international research workshop *Kant's Project of Perpetual Peace In the context of Modern Politics* was held at the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University. It was organised by the Kant Institute with the financial support of IKBFU and the Russian Office of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation. The workshop brought together both eminent and young Kant scholars, political philosophers, and political scientists from Germany, Poland, Belarus, France, Italy, and Luxembourg; alongside IKBFU scholars, Russia was represented by researchers from Moscow and Saint Petersburg. 15 presentations were made over the three days. The working languages of the workshop were Russian, English, and German.

The innovative nature of many ideas put forward in Kant's treatise *Towards Perpetual Peace* and their unique for the time systemic interconnection are widely recognised in the scientific community. Moreover, the philosopher's ideas had direct or indirect influence on the development of the international security system in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, numerous questions relating to the significance and relevance of Kant's peace treatise and its impact on modern politics, world and national law, and state-building remain unanswered. Since, after the cold war, the world is still being faced with new global and local crises, not only philosophers but also politicians revisit Kant's treatise. However, philosophy of international relations is a very young branch, its "independent history" goes back only three decades, over which, nevertheless, several competing schools of thought have developed; they differ in their interpretation of Kant's ideas and the perspective on their implementation. There are on-going disputes about their prospects; alternative projects have been proposed. The workshop organisers also tried to make their contribution to solving the problem. The workshop participants both expressed original opinions and advocated the mentioned schools of thought and analysed them.

The first workshop dedicated to the peace project and organised by the Baltic Federal University was held in the town of Svetlogorsk (Kaliningrad region) in 2007 under the title *Kant's Project of Perpetual Peace and the Modern World. The Role of International Organisations, Legal Rules, and Nation States in Establishing Peace*. The subject and objectives of the second workshop had a greater scope and moved from analysing the practical application of law to the fields of basic political science and political philosophy, whereas the research methods took on an interdisciplinary character. Thus, initially, the following topics were planned to be considered at the workshop:

1. The historical and cultural context of the treatise *Towards Perpetual Peace*.
2. A comparative analysis of Kant's perpetual peace project and the major philosophical concepts of world politics of the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

3. The role, responsibility, and competences of international organisations, regional unions, communities, and institutions in establishing peace.

4. The meaning of Kant's perpetual peace concept for modern philosophical and political discussions.

The initially formulated objectives transformed into the topics of three round tables that were held during the three days:

1. The relevance of philosophical foundations of the peace treatise.
2. The legal forms of peace establishment.
3. The peace project and political interests.

The first day of the workshop was dedicated solely to the first topic. The IKBFU's vice rector for research, G.M. Fedorov, and the head of the Russian branch of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Sascha Tamm, gave a welcome address. Mr Tamm emphasised the undoubted relevance of the principles presented in Kant's peace treatise to the problem of modern international politics in general and the principles of the Naumann Foundation in particular.

The workshop opened with two presentations on the historical and historical-philosophical prerequisites for the peace project. Prof J. Krause of the University of Kiel made a presentation entitled "*The treatise on perpetual peace against the background of the Great French Revolution and ensuing wars*". At first, he reminded the audience that, despite the general belief, the 18<sup>th</sup> century gave birth to a wide range of works on peace problems, whose arguments were also used by Kant; however, the novelty of his treatise lays in the way he systematised them (in particular, he connected the requirements of democracy and international law, which are often unduly separated these days). Kant's major objective was to protect the peace ideas of the Enlightenment from criticism stemming from the failures and problems of the French Revolution and adjust them to the changed political conditions, which manifested in his critique of certain aspects of French politics — such perspective is absent in most interpretations. Prof Krause believes that Kant would be satisfied with the current state of affairs, which corroborates his ideas; however, his project had a rather indirect effect on the current order, whereas the crucial theoretical foundation for democratic peaceableness (the one that politicians find convincing) developed on the basis of the ideas of the 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century philosophers — from G.W.F. Hegel to W.H. Beveridge. The statement that "World War I was a *democratic war*, which reduced the theses of Kant and other philosophers about republican peace to absurd" required further explanations and provoked a discussion. The topic of historical prerequisites was proposed by a young Kant scholar from IKBFU, Alexei Trotsak. He characterised the treatise as a vivid example of Kant's method (the theological method and that of structuring a philosophical work) and offered a detailed comparison of factors contributing to and inhibiting "moral" politics, thus detailing the answer to the "perpetual" question as to what stands in its way.

Prof Monique Castillo of Paris 12 Val de Marne University made a plenary presentation entitled "*Kant's cosmopolitanism in the modern culture of identity*". She emphasised that the "culture of identity" was replacing the "culture of autonomy" in the current conditions of debilitated influence of the state and the strengthening of civil society, when various minorities increase their influence and improve their position in this new culture practicing, as Kant called it, "political moralism". Prof Castillo finds the outlines of a rather admissible anthropological foundation in Kantian philosophy so that, even against the background of such trends, not only cosmopolitanism, but also "cosmoculturalism" would pre-

vail and the universality of principles and versatility of ethnic groups and subculture stay harmonised. One can only hope that the publication of the presentation will stimulate the development of this method of interpreting Kant's works, which is new for Russia but has been developing in the West in the framework of the dispute between liberals and communitarians.

The rest of the first day of the workshop was dedicated to discussions between the optimistic audience and the sceptical speakers. The director of the Luxembourg Institute for European and International Studies, *Armand Clesse*, presented his ideas about the problems of studying and developing the peaceful potential of the human nature. A professor of Belarusian State University, *Tatyana Rumyantseva*, summarised the philosophical foundations of the rejection of Kant's peace ideal by J.G. Fichte and later philosophers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century focusing especially on the case of G.W.F. Hegel. Moreover, she stressed that Kant's ideas are not applicable to the assessment of modern local conflicts as an "objectification of the forms of law and freedom", which is still carried out by military means.

In the conclusion of the first day, Dr Jakub Szczepański of the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, when analysing the ironic elements in the rhetoric of the treatise, formulated the following question: "Is it possible that the author made fun of the reader?" However, the author himself gives a rather unambiguous answer to the question, and the speaker refrained from following the old tradition that interpreted the whole treatise as something hardly more serious than a joke. This question gives rise to another one concerning the target audience of the treatise, especially the role of "onlookers" in establishing peace and, in particular, the very possibility of establishing peace. The speaker answered the latter question in a spirit of agnosticism (we can neither establish perpetual peace nor prove its unattainability), at the same time he called the idea of peace an assumption, which we should strive to make true, although it is not morally binding.

The search for legal forms of peaceful co-existence was opened on the second day with the presentation by Prof *Peter Schulze* of Göttingen University who presented his assessment of the structural elements of modern European peace order identifying Russia and NATO as its major gravitation poles and sources of dynamics. *Vyacheslav Dashichev*, Chief Research Fellow of the Institute for International Economic and Political Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, emphasised the relevance of the peace treatise in the light of general tendencies of modern international relations and, particularly, in the light of his own peace-making activities as the 1987–1989 chair of the Scientific Consulting Council of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR.

IKBFU's *Vadim Chaly* and *Alexander Kuteinikov* of Saint Petersburg State University reviewed and assessed the concepts of modern theory of international organisation based on Kant's ideas. These are liberalism, federalism, institutionalism, functionalism, the concept of international regimes, and the Marxist theory. As to the issue of the form and role (both the present and future ones) of international organisations in establishing peace, the speakers considered the "cosmopolitan" trend in Kant's philosophy as the predominant and statism as the subordinate one.

Prof *Leonard Kalinnikov* of IKBFU gave an overview of a wide range of philosophical foundations of the peace project and stressed that the federalist prescription in anthropology is deeply rooted in Kant's practical philosophy in general. Prof *Helmut Wagner* (Berlin) continued the topic trying to persuade the audience that the division of the state monopoly according to the principle of "mu-

tual assistance”, which can be and is being implemented in the European Union, makes the “republic of peace” possible despite the convictions of Kant, who could not foresee the establishment of the EU. Kant’s scepticism was based on that he did not see a possibility of overpowering or dividing the state’s monopoly on power, however, the principle of “mutual assistance”, H. Wagner believes, is a real alternative to the federalism principle.

The concluding round table of the second day of the workshop aimed to identify the correlation between the peace project and the trends in modern *realpolitik*. Prof Luigi Caranti of the University of Catania (Italy) focused his presentation entitled “The *Perpetual Peace* and the ‘liberal world’...” on three problematical issues in interpreting Kant (one per each of the Definitive Articles, which can puzzle the reader, since the author himself did not wholly explain the correlation between the notions. As to the first article, L. Caranti criticised the identification of the republic with liberal democracy. In his opinion, the republic should be understood as the ideal of liberal democracy or even the ultimate stage of the development of the rule-of-law state and civil society. It is a promising conclusion, which can further the understanding of wars between democratic state and wars in the name of democracy. The question directed at the second of the Definitive Articles is as follows: Is it reasonable to introduce limitations to accepting states as members of a federative peaceful union and what should these limitations be? The speaker presented his proofs of that Kant could not consider a federative union as open only to republics, otherwise this article would lose its original meaning: the transition towards a peaceful federation and republicanism should be parallel. The question to the third article is whether the right to “world citizenship” is applicable to only those who cross borders on business. The speaker answered this question negatively: it is rather a right to get to know each other, establish contacts with foreigners in order to eliminate mutual distrust, and form a foundation for wider-than-national communities. As to economy, L. Caranti believes that, if trade is based on rules, which – and here another problem emerges – acknowledge a dreadful dictator as the legal owner of the country’s resources, it is not difficult to understand that such interdependencies can lead to conflicts rather than peace. The interconnection and interdependency should be of legal and cultural nature. All these conclusions question the mainstream of the “theory of democratic peace”, which has a significant effect on modern politics. Prof Caranti believes that the attempts made by the adherents of this theory to rely on Kant’s peace project are illegitimate as a result of the inconsistency of several of its major points.

The criticism of the theory of democratic peace was continued by Prof. *Lothar Brok* (J.W. Goethe University in Frankfurt). He stressed that, under the influence of political reality, it had divided into two schools, one of which maintains that democracies are peaceful only towards each other rather than other regimes. There are still the following problems: How should one interpret that, when it comes to the questions of war and peace, even against the background of division of powers, executive power still dominates? Is liberalism a project of Western hegemony and, if it is, does it undermine Kant’s statement about the necessity of the republican system? Finally, the speaker formulated the problem of discrepancy between the standards and objectives of the UN and its procedural rules and practices resulting in that the UN member states vindicate the values they cannot protect. As to the solution to the problem, the author supports the recommendations given by J. Habermas to extend the authority of the UN and regional organisations in combination with the constitutionalisation of international law.

The topic of “humanitarian intervention” was continued in the presentation by IKBFU researchers *Vyacheslav Dykhanov* and *Andrei Zilber*. It is widely known that Kant did not condone the interference of states in each other’s internal affairs, including the participation of neighbours in civil wars, since he believed that internal problems of other states should be seen merely as warnings. Kant also prohibited revolutions due to their inevitable illegitimacy. But how can one assess the humanitarian catastrophes that took place in “third world” countries in the 20<sup>th</sup> century from this perspective? The international community still regrets the non-interference or late interference in some of those events. At the same time, it condemns the idea of “export of revolution”, which often disguises the intent to export authority and influence and is manifested, for example, in the recent “velvet revolutions”. Kant, who lived in the age of thriving colonialism and first successes in the colonies’ fight for freedom, did take this fact into account. Having reminded the audience of this complex aggregate of circumstances, the authors came to a conclusion that there is a need for balanced solutions through addressing, as well as the previous speaker, the subsidiary model of the world community proposed by Jürgen Habermas.

On the third day of the workshop, Prof *Alexei Kruglov* (Russian State University for the Humanities) made a presentation “*The problem of peace in the dialogue between three tsars: I. Kant, Nikolai II, and L. Tolstoy*”. He emphasised the similarity between the statements found in Kant’s treatise and the provisions of the Russian memorandum of 1898 on the need to convene a peace preservation conference. As a rule, a later and more remarkable event is considered the first political response (or its close equivalent) to Kant’s ideas – the establishment of the League of Nations at the initiative of Woodrow Wilson in 1920. Of special interest was that the speaker addressed the history of not only Russian politics, but also Russian philosophy. The central topic of the presentation was the comparison of Kant’s ideas with those of Leo Tolstoy as concerns the theoretical and ethical foundations of the peace project. The latter believed that the major instrument in establishing peace is not the law proper, but the moral law as formulated by Kant. This issue is rather relevant in view of the desacralisation of the sources of law and today’s rejection of the concept of “natural law”. It is still a contentious issue whether it was succeeded by “human rights” and whether there is a clear concept of human rights (the first prototypes thereof were presented in the declaration of the French revolutionaries, i.e. during Kant’s lifetime). The speaker also tried to justify the statement that Kant almost “deifies” law. In his opinion, the philosopher himself – as the appendices to the peace treatise show – was seriously concerned about the peace-making role of morals, the problem of its correlation with politics and commodity and currency circulation.

The workshop was concluded with a discussion of the content and forms of a possible international project of cooperation between the workshop participants and other researchers aimed to adapt and apply Kant’s peace project, preserving the enduring significance of its basic principles and supplementing them with the ideas of modern philosophers in order to formulate practical recommendations on peace-making and human rights protection. All workshop participants emphasised the practical value, theoretical significance, and heuristic potential of the event and expressed their readiness to continue cooperation.