

Republican hegemony as perpetual peace? Sieyès's theory of international politics and the intellectual origins of Kant's "federation of peoples"

Angus Harwood Brown 

Department of History, University of Chicago, Chicago, USA

ABSTRACT

Although Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès remains amongst the most studied thinkers of the French Revolution, his views on international politics remain largely unexplored, despite his significant role in shaping the foreign policy of the French republic after 1794. This article provides a new account of Sieyès as an international political thinker and actor, drawing on published and archival materials to reconstruct Sieyès' diplomatic programme and its intellectual roots. In so doing, it challenges both the notion that Sieyès was a committed practitioner of an unideological realpolitik and the common assertion that Sieyès was a follower of Immanuel Kant's famous project for perpetual peace. Instead, this article shows that Sieyès charted a distinct course, based on a plan for the 'republicanisation' of Europe and its reorganisation into a league of militarily and economically linked states under French hegemony, oriented towards the preservation of republicanism in a hostile world. On this basis it re-evaluates the relationship between Sieyès' and Kant's conceptions of a confederation of republican states, presenting a new account of Kant's Perpetual Peace as a curtailment of his earlier cosmopolitan and pacifist idealism in response to the international situation of the 1790s and the foreign policy pursued by Sieyès and his allies.


KEYWORDS

French Revolution; Sieyès; perpetual peace

Bit by bit we are seeing the emergence in Germany of writings perfectly well suited to our interests ... Kant has just published a work on universal peace in which he puts it in principle that only Republics could establish it.¹

Karl Friedrich Reinhard, Letter to Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès, 17 November 1795

When Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès arrived in Berlin in 1798 as the French Republic's minister to Friedrich Wilhelm III, his self-presentation alone sufficed to unsettle the staid world of Prussian court politics. "Simple in his manners, but dignified in his relations", the famed author of *What is the Third Estate?* eschewed the dignities usually bestowed upon ambassadors and foreign ministers, and instead "adopted for his costume no

CONTACT Angus Harwood Brown  ahb43@cam.ac.uk

© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

more than a blue coat, with a collar embroidered with green silk olive branches”.² Asked to explain his unusual attire and his rejection of the courtesies of European diplomacy, which “attracted no small part of the public attention”, Sieyès declared that he was not a national representative at all, but a “Minister of Peace”.³ Eccentric as Sieyès’s conduct may have been, this idiosyncratic episode in the already norm-defying history of revolutionary diplomacy is emblematic of the wider ambiguity of his approach to international politics. In fact, whilst Sieyès served as a leading French diplomat in 1795–1799, none of his published writings contain a detailed theoretical account of international relations. Such was Sieyès’s absence from debates on the matter early in the Revolution that his ally the Comte de Mirabeau lamented that he was “a man, whose silence and inaction [on foreign affairs] I regard as a public calamity”.⁴

Indeed, although Sieyès’s thought has received considerable scholarly attention, his views on international politics remain largely unknown and have rarely been treated with commensurate seriousness. In his path-breaking intellectual biography of Sieyès, for example, Murray Forsyth argued that “[Sieyès’s] ideas of foreign policy [are] because of [their] very nature ... more susceptible to narrative treatment than to [a] more analytical approach”, and cast doubt on the idea that Sieyès had ever forwarded a theoretical account of international politics.⁵ Other scholars have concurred, suggesting that Sieyès’s approach to international politics was that of a practical politician who followed the traditional French policy of national aggrandisement and the extension of France to her “natural frontiers” on the Rhine.⁶ For his own part, Sieyès claimed on at least one occasion that his thinking on foreign politics was best summed up by the nakedly realist epigram “Principles are for school, interests are for the state”.⁷ Yet a different of school thought holds that Sieyès’s vision of world politics was not guided by realpolitik at all, but was instead aligned with – and perhaps influenced by – the most famous text in the pantheon of “Liberal Idealist” international relations theory, Kant’s *Perpetual Peace*.⁸ On this telling, Sieyès was the leading practitioner on the European stage of the vision of international politics enumerated in the writings of Immanuel Kant, whose diplomatic activities were oriented towards the establishment of a federation of republics and, with it, world peace. That a serious – if ultimately futile – attempt to arrange for Sieyès and Kant to correspond with one another was made by their respective followers only serves to bolster this narrative.

Both accounts misunderstand the nature of Sieyès’s thinking on international politics and the role of Kant’s *Perpetual Peace* in French political debates in the 1790s. Drawing upon evidence from amongst Sieyès’s papers, this essay shows that Sieyès possessed a holistic theory of interstate relations, which saw the promotion of republicanism as a necessary means to secure peace in Europe and safeguard the achievements of the revolution. In order to ensure the safety of the republics of Europe in a hostile world, moreover, Sieyès argued for the creation of a federation of republican states led by France, which would both guarantee the security of its members and harmonise conflicts between them. Only the creation of such a federation, he concluded, could safeguard the achievements of the Revolution against a world full of enemies. Strikingly, despite the similarities between this conception of international politics and Kant’s famous 1795 blueprint for *Perpetual Peace*, the archival record demonstrates that Sieyès had conceived of its major contours long before he had ever encountered Kant’s pamphlet. On the contrary, as the final section of this paper argues, it is quite possible that it was Sieyès’s vision for

the reorganisation of Europe into a French-led republican confederation which shaped Kant's vision of perpetual peace after 1795 and not the other way around. Kant's aspiration to a "league of peoples" led by a "powerful and enlightened nation" was, in other words, a philosophical eulogy to Sieyès's aspiration to restructure the European state system and not a utopian plea for a more peaceful world to come.

Securing republicanism in a world of perils

Although Sieyès would never publish an extended treatise on international relations, the germ of his later approach to diplomacy can already be found in his most famous pamphlet, *What is the Third Estate?*, written in 1789. There he had laid out an analysis of the threat posed to all states by the uncertainty of a conflict-prone and unregulated international system, writing that "A nation never leaves the state of nature, and, amidst so many perils, it can never have too many possible ways of expressing its will".⁹ As Istvan Hont has noted, this isolated remark had far-reaching implications for Sieyès's understanding of international politics, stressing the fundamental insecurity of interstate relations in the "perilous" conditions of what is now usually called "international anarchy".¹⁰ In the mid-1790s, however, Sieyès would devise a more detailed account of the international situation in Europe, particularly in two memoranda submitted to the Executive Directory of the French Republic, which combine elements of both practical diplomatic advice and political theorising. These two works, entitled "*L'Europe sous le rapport de la Paix*" (written at some point in 1794) and "*Aperçu des rapports de la République française avec les Puissances de l'Europe*" (written in August 1795), have largely been ignored by scholars.¹¹ But, together, they represent an extended analysis of the conditions of Europe in 1794–1795 and a blueprint for how to bring peace to the continent.

The origins and authorship of the second of these two documents, hereafter "the *Aperçu*", requires a brief discussion. Although usually attributed to Sieyès, its origins have been debated by historians and some, like Raymond Kubben, have suggested that it was written by someone else and annotated by Sieyès, on the basis of extensive commentary written in its margins.¹² This seems unconvincing, however, since other manuscripts which we know were solely authored by Sieyès contain similarly extensive marginalia; as in these works, the comments are written in the same hand as the main text. Whilst it is hard to be certain, this handwriting is also similar to that in Sieyès's other manuscripts. As the document discusses France's then-secret negotiations with Prussia, we know it was probably written by a senior official, and the only significant alternative attribution is to Cambacérès.¹³ But this attribution is questionable, since Cambacérès was typically regarded as a leading supporter of the kind of "peace on very moderate conditions"¹⁴ which the document rejects. For these reasons, it appears very likely that the document was, indeed, Sieyès's work.

This is important, because it was in the *Aperçu* in particular that Sieyès provided a thoroughgoing and "scientific" account of the nature of international relations. As he explained, international politics was governed by both "practical" concerns relating to everyday diplomacy and "theoretical concerns"; principles which governed "the constant relations which exist between states", regardless of the contingencies of day-to-day interaction. These were fundamental interstate relations "derive[d] from [states'] geographical

position, production, population and extent, constitution, and finally their natural interests”,¹⁵ which determined whether states were predisposed to alliance or enmity. Though these natural lines of conflict affected all states, they had particularly grave implications for the French Republic because, as Sieyès acknowledged, she not only had “natural enemies” determined by economic and geostrategic antagonisms, but also natural *ideological* enemies, with whom conflict was inevitable as a result of constitutional difference, placing her in a particularly acute position of danger.¹⁶ Indeed, Sieyès had already suggested as such in 1794, in *L’Europe sous le rapport de la Paix*, in which he observed that “the heterogeneity of their principles of government” represented the main stumbling block in France’s attempts to find European allies.¹⁷ Consequently, if the anarchic nature of international politics placed all states in conditions of danger and uncertainty, as he had argued in 1789, France’s position as a republic surrounded by monarchies was nonetheless uniquely perilous.

It followed from this observation that, since the revolution, the European state system had become unbalanced, as ideological enmity had locked France and her monarchical neighbours into an irresolvable conflict. As a consequence, as Sieyès would later write to Talleyrand, the achievements of the revolution could be secured only if France was able to arrest the structural threat to republicanism posed by the conflictual nature of the international order. Only then, Sieyès wrote:

[will] you have peace ... true peace, solid and permanent, for you and for all of Western Europe. Your agents abroad will then be able to show themselves to be Republicans, without fear of being frustrated, and ... the Republic will be recognized politically, morally, and civilly.¹⁸

What would it take to achieve this end? On the one hand, Sieyès argued, it was quite clear that France would have to pursue an active policy of “republicanisation” in Europe. As he explained in the *Aperçu*, since “[t]he motive ... which is common to [our enemies] and which allies them, is the destruction of our freedom, the affirmation of their despotism”,¹⁹ the French republic’s sole war aim would have to be “the destruction of despotism in Europe”.²⁰ Necessity might demand temporarily peaceful relations with non-republics, and should guide France’s short-term alliances, but this could only ever be a “partial peace” – an intermediate alliance of convenience on the road to the “general peace” – which would “consolidate our happiness and our glory, [by] the gradual destruction of tyranny in Europe”.²¹ This sentiment was delivered even more forcefully in Sieyès’s later letters to Talleyrand from Berlin. In one such letter, Sieyès lamented that, when faced with the spectre of a thriving republic, “[t]he most violent aristocratic passions seized Kings as their natural instruments ... [sending] Cobenzl [a leading Austrian diplomat] to court Europe and promote the line of the hereditary interest”.²² In the face of the conspiracy of the thrones of Europe against France, he argued that, “[i]f the war recommences, you will only end it to see it recommence again, and so on, unless you adopt ... a plan of republicanisation”.²³ That Sieyès was amongst the most forceful advocates of a policy of republicanisation was certainly recognised by contemporaries, who saw him as the architect of French efforts to establish new republics in Germany, as the Prussian diplomat Gervinus recorded in both his correspondence with Karl August von Hardenburg and his personal journal.²⁴

Notably, however, if Sieyès’s view was more radical than that of other members of the Directorial elite, particularly Cambacérès but perhaps also his friends Talleyrand and

Pierre-Louis Roederer and his sometime-ally Germaine de Staël, his republicanising tendencies were more limited than those held by the pre-Thermidorian war hawks around Brissot. That Sieyès was willing to accept not only temporary periods of peace between republican and non-republican states, but even alliances of expediency marked him out from those in the Girondin party who had believed that “The moment [had] arrived for [a] crusade ... for universal liberty”, as Brissot put it in 1792.²⁵ In fact, in this earlier period, Sieyès appears to have held a relatively moderate position, and he was not amongst those who clamoured for war in 1792. In a private note of that year, Sieyès had argued that, whilst the French republic might aspire to “unification” with Francophone regions like the Savoy, she ought never to pursue *conquests* of foreign territory: “France”, he wrote, “no longer seeks aggrandisement ... but offers alliance and fraternity to all the peoples of the earth”.²⁶ In 1792, this put Sieyès closer to war sceptics like Robespierre and Condorcet, who rejected the Brissotin march to war. What had changed in the intervening period was that France was already at war when Sieyès began to pursue a diplomatic career after the Terror, but he seems to have retained his scepticism about the dreams of a crusading republic entertained by some of his contemporaries.

It is certainly clear that Sieyès never shared the aspirations to creating a world state or a “Universal Republic of Mankind” voiced by the Prussian revolutionary Anacharsis Cloots, but nor did he hold the more common and more restrained view that war would vanish altogether in a world where every state was a republic.²⁷ One reason for this was that Sieyès was not convinced either of the inherent pacifism of republics or of the inevitable unity of purpose of republican states. His shifting attitude towards the United States is an illustrative case. In 1790, he had expressed his hopes that “the happy resemblance between France and the United States cements the fraternal alliance which will always unite [them]”,²⁸ but by 1794 he had come to believe that constitutional similarity would no longer suffice to maintain their alliance. Despite their earlier fraternity, Sieyès now argued that the United States represented an obstacle to France’s foreign policy, oscillating between “apathetic neutrality” and alignment with Great Britain after signing the Jay Treaty that year.²⁹ Indeed, Sieyès’s sensitivity to the United States’ growing hostility to revolutionary France under President John Adams suggests, rather intriguingly, that he was sceptical of the idea that republics would naturally ally with one another. Notably, Sieyès only ever suggested that constitutional similarity removed ideological difference as a vector for conflict, never discounting that conflict might arise for other reasons between constitutionally similar states. Republicanisation, therefore, would remove only one obstacle to peace in Europe: it would take a far more thoroughgoing reorganisation of the international states system to secure lasting peace on the continent.

A new order of things in Europe

Doing so, Sieyès suggested, required “the establishment of a new order of things in Europe which will be guaranteed ... through a federative system in which the number of our friends is equal or superior to that of our enemies”,³⁰ a goal reiterated in a manifesto probably written by Sieyès and Talleyrand on the former’s appointment as minister to Berlin.³¹ Sieyès was never explicit about how this “federative

system” was to be organised and his frequent usage of both “*federation*” and “*confederation*” (a word which meant both a confederation or an alliance in eighteenth-century French) to describe the system which he envisaged leave his ideas ambiguous. Nonetheless, the Franco–Batavian relationship established in the 1795 Treaty of The Hague, which Sieyès negotiated, offers a suggestion of how the new European order may have looked. That treaty established the Batavian republic as a “free and independent power, for whom [France] will guarantee liberty, and independence”, allied to France in perpetuity, and committed to a defensive and offensive alliance, guaranteeing mutual collective security.³² A similar structure is suggested in Sieyès’s letter to Talleyrand of 26 July 1799, wherein he proposed a “league or confederation” of states sharing a common military policy, shielded from British commerce and constitutionally guaranteed by France in order to ensure “solid and permanent” peace.³³

In order to bring about this “league or confederation”, Sieyès concerned himself primarily with the reorganisation of the Holy Roman Empire, seeking either to implement “a new federal system in Germany”,³⁴ or, as he later suggested, to create “an intermediary state between the Rhine and Prussia” in the north, and another in the south which would “separate us from Austria, and be our guarantee against her”.³⁵ This reorganisation would strengthen the small German states, pacifying the Empire by balancing against Austro-Prussian predation, whilst ensuring that France bordered sympathetic states, minimising the external pressure on the republic. Following Albert Sorel, historians like J.H. Clapham and Glyndon van Deusen have characterised this plan as an echo, whether conscious or not, of the policy pursued by Richelieu, Mazarin, and Louis XIV in the previous century, concerned primarily with weakening Austria.³⁶ But Sieyès himself rejected such a policy, and chafed against the Directory’s orders to pursue an alliance with Prussia to this end, making clear that he believed France had to go beyond simply balancing Germany in her favour, and “create ... a league or confederation based as far as possible on representation”.³⁷

The economic component of this new federation was particularly important, especially in regard to Franco-German relations, and Sieyès argued that “I do not believe continental peace is possible, if I do not see ... an insurmountable barrier interposed between England and the states of Germany”³⁸ in order to “defend [them] against English commerce”.³⁹ The reorganisation of northern Europe entailed by Sieyès’s plans for Germany and the Netherlands were substantially influenced by this concern. By securing France’s access to their ports, these alliances would enable her to overcome British naval supremacy, ensuring that “the French Republic which, by the simple force of its position, must play ... a great role in the Mediterranean, [and] the Oceans to the West, ... will acquire in the North the only thing it lacks, [ensuring] a great and superb naval and commercial existence.”⁴⁰ France would thus “acquire by commerce the superiority which [its] armies had won from [her] enemies”,⁴¹ wresting mastery of the seas from them. Until this had been achieved, military victory on the continent would remain insufficient.

This aspect of Sieyès’s thought has already been partly identified by Isaac Nakhimovsky, but by also taking into account Sieyès’s observations on commerce in “*L’Europe sous le rapport de la paix*”, its critical place in his plan for a republican federation becomes clear.⁴² In that work, Sieyès wrote that:

Maritime neutrality must be armed ... Its objective would be to prescribe to our enemies a precise code for the freedom of navigation, and it would therefore be necessary, before bringing its participants into the war, to calculate the extent to which we could guarantee the arrival of essential supplies, or do without.⁴³

Neutral, free, commerce was only possible if the parties to it enforced strict rules of trade on non-neutral nations, but, where this had been ensured by the Russian-led “League of Armed Neutrality” during the American War of Independence, no such league appeared likely to emerge in France’s war with the Coalition (though one did, unsuccessfully, in 1800–1801).⁴⁴ It thus fell to France to ensure that free commerce prevailed, acting as a “general maritime police”⁴⁵ and the arbiter of trade within a federation of the continental powers, until she could finally “announce to the world that British tyranny [had given] way to the freedom of the seas which [we] have conquered”.⁴⁶ Although less developed than his plan for the commercial and political reorganisation of Germany, Sieyès also appears to have believed that Spain should be absorbed into France’s orbit via a similar system of commercial relations.⁴⁷

This perspective on international commerce was also voiced by Sieyès’s follower Charles Thémin in a pamphlet of 1794, which argued that “Great Britain is by its nature hostile to all the continental powers”, which ought to align themselves with France, rather than England, in order to “balance England’s political and commercial influence, and one day deliver Europe from the subjection in which she holds it”.⁴⁸ England was a nation “whose commerce is founded on war [and] nourished by blood”, with whom peace was “nothing more than preparation for another war” in her pursuit of universal empire.⁴⁹ And this concern continued to influence French policy under the Consulate and, in a memorandum commissioned by Napoleon, the Count d’Hauterive, a protégée of Talleyrand, argued that “the external policy of England ... [is] to unceasingly extend her ascendancy over and domination of the politics of all states ... [and] open privileged avenues for her commerce in every part of the world”.⁵⁰ On this view, England’s perpetual interest was to pursue “Universal Empire” through economic domination, acting, as Sieyès wrote, “against all the laws of nations and the freedom of the seas”.⁵¹ Only French hegemony could ensure *truly free* European trade against this commercial imperialism.⁵² As the historian J.H. Clapham suggests, this was the theoretical foundation of Napoleon’s Continental System.⁵³

This did not mean that Sieyès embraced Fichte’s radical proposition that “[t]he state must close itself off entirely to all foreign trade, forming ... an isolated commercial body, just as it had already previously formed an isolated juridical and political body”⁵⁴ and, as Sonenscher and Nakhimovsky demonstrate, there is no evidence he even knew of it.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, as the nineteenth-century historian William M. Sloane recognised, and Nakhimovsky has artfully demonstrated, the same impulse to guard the republic’s independence against the influence of international commerce guided both Fichte and the architects of the Continental System.⁵⁶ Sieyès, as was so often the case, was ahead of the game. Indeed, he had actually already addressed these issues in a pre-revolutionary manuscript on the *Wealth of Nations*, entitled the “Cahier Smith”, which simultaneously extolled the benefits of free trade against protectionism and warned of the dangers of dependency on foreign commerce.⁵⁷ Modern states’ economic policies had to be understood in terms of “national production”,⁵⁸ and states themselves as “vast ateliers” focused on meeting national needs, as he argued in 1790.⁵⁹ Participating in international

commerce could serve that end, but only if it did not threaten national independence. The system Sieyès championed from 1794 onwards – which we might call a “closed commercial federation” – can be seen as a resolution to this contradiction: an economic order in which commerce held together a league of free states, but only because they were protected from economic dependence on a foreign power by France.

Taken in its totality, Sieyès’s system thus demanded the reorganisation of Europe into a closely linked federation or alliance of republics under the military, political, and commercial hegemony of France, with their dependence upon her guaranteeing peace in Europe. This would include a system of economic arbitration within a discrete trading area, designed both to prevent commercial disputes or conflict over resources from provoking war and to limit the influence of Great Britain.⁶⁰ It would also, presumably, eventually have had to involve a more substantial form of interstate political coordination than a series of bilateral treaties with France like that uniting the French and Batavian Republics, although Sieyès did not expand upon this. That it was nonetheless the case is, at the very least, strongly supported by Sieyès’s aspirations to a common military policy between the associated states. Only such a “federative system” could finally eliminate the structural causes of French national insecurity and bring peace to a Europe of free states. In this, Sieyès differed from both the aspirations of the Girondin Brissot and the Montagnard Cloots towards the militaristic establishment of a universal republic *and* the scepticism of Thermidorian moderates like Roederer and Staël towards military conquest as a means of establishing peace in Europe. Indeed, Staël might have had Sieyès in mind when she authored a plea for peace directed to “the moderate party in France”, in which she maintained that “[t]he continuation of the war serves the plans of the anarchists.”⁶¹

The closest argument to Sieyès’s was, in fact, that forwarded by Edmund Burke in his *Letters on a Regicide Peace* (1796), which held that, facing an unyielding ideological foe, the British could not “reconcile ourselves to the irreconcilable enemy of all thrones”.⁶² Britain’s limited and free monarchy was, on Burke’s account, compelled to reorganise the entire state system and enter into any alliance in order to arrest the permanent threat posed by a state whose constitutive principles necessitated enmity. Sieyès felt the same: the difference between the two men was only that one was French and the other British. As was his wont, Sieyès had adopted a position somewhere between the two extremes: rejecting both the utopian dream of uniting mankind under the *tricolore* and what he took to be the naïve view that a permanent peace could be established between states whose ideological foundations were irreconcilably opposed.

Reading *Perpetual Peace* in revolutionary France

Such a view of the path to European peace was, however, undoubtedly, quite similar to that advanced by Immanuel Kant in his famous essay on *Perpetual Peace*. Partly on this basis, scholars have long identified an intellectual affinity between Sieyès and Kant. J.H. Clapham and Michael Sonenscher have even argued that Sieyès’s diplomacy in 1795–1799 marked an attempt to realise in practice what Kant had portrayed in theory.⁶³ Yet, as we have seen, Sieyès’s plan for a republican peace in Europe predated the publication of Kant’s *Perpetual Peace* and was devised almost two years before Sieyès could have read it. We know that Sieyès, who could not read German,⁶⁴ read *Perpetual*

Peace no earlier than 10 January 1796, when he was sent a French translation produced by a German admirer, Karl Friedrich Reinhard, by which time he had already formulated the plan to reorganise Europe into a confederation of republics, outlined above.⁶⁵ This is corroborated by a letter from Sieyès's friend Charles Théremin to his brother, Anton-Ludwig, at the beginning of their unsuccessful attempt to foster a philosophical and political dialogue between Sieyès and Kant. As Théremin explained to his brother, Sieyès's first engagement with Kant's work had been inspired by his meeting with a group of German Kantians in Paris in December 1795.⁶⁶ That month, Reinhard had also written to Sieyès that "we are seeing the emergence in Germany of writings perfectly well suited to our interests ... Kant has just published a work on universal peace in which he puts it in principle that only Republics could establish it".⁶⁷ Rather than having enthusiastically adopted Kant's project for perpetual peace, it appears that Sieyès and his allies instead strategically promoted Kant's doctrine to advance their own geopolitical aims and utilised Kant's theory as a justification for Sieyès's existing ambitions.

Quite to the contrary, it is possible that it was the achievements of the diplomatic policy spearheaded by Sieyès and his allies after 1794 which offered the blueprint for the system of perpetual peace which Kant set out in 1795. In *Perpetual Peace*, Kant famously argued that the achievement of peace in Europe would be best secured through the creation of a "federation of peoples" or a "*pacific federation*", organised as a free association of equal partners between republican states.⁶⁸ What is less well-known, however, is that Kant followed this by suggesting that:

[I]f by good fortune one powerful and enlightened nation can form a republic (which is by its nature inclined to seek perpetual peace), this will provide a focal point for federal association among other states. These will join up with the first one, thus securing the freedom of each state in accordance with the idea of international right, and the whole will gradually spread further and further by a series of alliances of this kind.⁶⁹

As Murray Forsyth, Richard Tuck, and Isaac Nakhimovsky have argued, no one in 1795 would have doubted that the "powerful and enlightened nation" in question was the French Republic.⁷⁰ This aspect of Kant's vision of perpetual peace in 1795 marked a significant shift from his earlier writing on the matter, a shift which appears to have represented an accommodation to French policy. In his 1784 essay on an *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose*, for example, Kant wrote quite positively about the need to establish a "*perfect civil union of mankind*", which might usher in a regime founded upon universal justice and not the partial justice afforded by mankind's division into competing states.⁷¹ In fact, in this earlier essay, Kant explicitly framed this vision of a unified human society *in contrast* to the ideas of the Abbé Saint Pierre and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, both of whom had expressed scepticism about the prospect for a world government in favour of a more pessimistic vision of world peace guaranteed by a league of independent states.⁷² Even in his 1793 essay, "*On the Common Saying: 'This May be True in Theory, but it does not Apply in Practice'*", Kant still held out hope that "the distress produced by the constant wars in which the states try to subjugate or engulf each other must finally led them, even against their will, to enter into a *cosmopolitan constitution*".⁷³ Even if such a "cosmopolitan commonwealth under a single ruler" would

prove too onerous, he nonetheless argued that man's destiny lay in submitting to a federation of states which would impose laws upon them.⁷⁴

By contrast, it is quite clear that the Kant of *Perpetual Peace* had abandoned the dream of a world state. Now, instead of portraying world government and an international federation as two versions of the same ideal, he explicitly ruled out a system in which states would "submit to public laws and a coercive power which enforces them".⁷⁵ The difference between a single world state and a league of freely associated nations was now posed as a quite stark decision between despotism and liberty. As Kant wrote of his proposal for a league of republican states, "unlike that universal despotism which saps all man's energies and ends in the graveyard of freedom, this peace is created and guaranteed by an equilibrium of forces and a most vigorous rivalry".⁷⁶ That the Kant of *Perpetual Peace* was opposed to world government was recognised both by contemporaries and by the first few generations of his admirers. The young Friedrich Schlegel, for example, castigated Kant precisely for his failure to recognise that "Universal perfect republicanism and eternal peace are inseparable" and could be achieved only by "a universal international state" in his "*Versuch über den Begriff des Republikanismus*" in 1796.⁷⁷ Likewise, the nineteenth-century historian Konrad Dietrich maintained in his 1878 book, *Rousseau und Kant*, that Kant did not provide a blueprint for pacifist cosmopolitanism at all, but instead appeared to acknowledge that conflict and antagonism between states – if not war itself – were necessary for human flourishing.⁷⁸ Abolishing this conflict through the creation of a state capable of realising transnational justice was now rejected in favour of the "negative" task of establishing a stable political order based in the hegemony of a powerful republican state.⁷⁹

That this was the goal of *Perpetual Peace* was also recognised by one of Sieyès's associates, Adrien Lezay-Marnésia, in a review published in October 1796, in which he contended that "Kant founds his project of perpetual peace not upon philanthropic considerations, but on rigorous legal principles [*principes de droit rigoureux*]"⁸⁰ If only France could enjoy enlightenment equal to her power, he quipped, she would be the perfect candidate for the large and enlightened nation necessary to effect Kant's system.⁸¹ What made Kant's "League of Peoples" interesting to the French in the mid-1790s was, therefore, precisely that he espoused a doctrine of republican realism in accordance with their own principles, as Reinhard had already recognised in November 1795. In fact, it is notable that the shift in Kant's thought coincided with France's success in the War of the First Coalition following Prussia's decision to reach a separate peace in April 1795, including the cessation of the left bank of the Rhine to the French republic. Following this victory, as Richard Tuck notes, hope that France might spread her revolution into Germany and establish a new order in Europe began to revive amongst both French and German republicans.⁸² What Tuck misses, but Sieyès's Prussian opponents at the time did not, was that the foremost advocate of this policy after the Terror was Sieyès himself, whose vision of a republican federation encompassing western Europe and Germany formed the model for French policy in this period.⁸³ If it was the seeming realisation of this goal in April 1795 which inspired Kant's new vision of perpetual peace as the hegemony of a large and enlightened republic, it was, therefore, he who floated in Sieyès's wake, and not the other way around. Indeed, although Kant outwardly eschewed the more militaristic elements of Sieyès's plan, rejecting forcible republicanisation as a foolhardy endeavour, his oblique remarks about the rights of states to intervene

to restore peace to other states gripped by civil conflict nonetheless left open a form of revolutionary evangelism which required only a relatively easily manufactured *casus belli*.⁸⁴

Contrary to his modern reputation as the father of an idealistic vision of international politics, from 1795 onwards Kant thus appeared committed to a “realist” policy of securing peace through the application of military force.⁸⁵ In doing so, he turned away from the cosmopolitanism of his earlier writings in which he, like his countryman Anacharsis Cloots, appeared to take seriously the possibility of establishing a single republic of mankind, which would abolish war and establish the reign of universal justice.⁸⁶ In its place, he now came to accept a far more limited and pessimistic view of the potential for peace on Earth, limited to a hierarchically organised state system in which peace was enforced not by cosmopolitan right but at the end of French bayonets. In other words, it was not Sieyès and his friends who became enchanted by Kant’s dream of perpetual peace, but Kant who came to reconcile himself to Sieyès’s plan for a “solid” and “permanent” peace established on the uneasy terrain of international anarchy by the skill of French arms. If Sieyès was a “Minister of Peace”, as he claimed in 1798, it was not a peace between equals which he preached, but the peace of empire – an empire which German republicans like Kant were quite willing to embrace.

Conclusion

Certainly, Sieyès and Kant did not share an identical approach to international politics. Where Kant’s programme for perpetual peace was clearly sincere in its orientation towards establishing a lasting and universal peace, Sieyès’s primary concern appears to have been to make a world safe for revolutionary French republicanism. The construction of a republican federation in Europe was simply the means to this end and did not spell the inauguration of a new era of peace and justice in international affairs. Nor did the two agree entirely on how to achieve the republicanisation of Europe, although, as we have seen, Kant’s interdiction against forcible republicanisation is not as iron-clad as is sometimes supposed. These differences aside, however, Kant’s vision of a republican federation in 1795 was clearly much closer to the Sieyèsian policy for European reorganisation than it was to Kant’s own earlier cosmopolitan theory of world peace. What has been argued here is that, in their basic orientation, concerns, and prescriptions, Kant’s famous project for perpetual peace and Sieyès’s long-submerged vision of international politics were, more or less, in accord. What is more, contrary to a long-running historiographical contention, far more evidence points to Sieyès’s plans – and their practical effects – having shaped Kant’s views than to the inverse relationship. It was the military success of the French republic which convinced Kant that only a powerful free state could establish a united and pacified Europe on confederal lines, a pattern established for France by Sieyès and his colleagues in the wake of both the Reign of Terror and the failure of the Brissotin crusade for liberty.

Both Kant and Sieyès were participants in a broader shift away from the utopian vision of a cosmopolitan, pacific, and tolerant world order brought about through moderation at home, restraint abroad, and free commerce, which had seemed close at hand to many philosophers in the middle of the eighteenth century, as Richard Whatmore has shown.⁸⁷

Thinkers ranging from Hume, Gibbon, and Burke to Paine, Condorcet, and Brissot, so optimistic about the prospect for “perpetual peace” through cosmopolitan ties earlier in the eighteenth century had come, by its end, to believe that the rise of revolutionary war, commercial imperialism, and mercantilism had doomed this prospect.⁸⁸ On the other hand, Sieyès, and perhaps also Kant, went further in abandoning the idea of a cosmopolitan peace altogether, in favour of a vision of peace based on the assertion of coercive power by a military hegemon; an international pseudo-Leviathan which alone could pacify the interstate state of nature. Although it shared its name, this was quite different to the vision of “perpetual peace” secured through the creation of a league or federation of free states by mutual consent proposed by Saint-Pierre or Rousseau’s admiring adaptation thereof.⁸⁹ And this pared down vision of world peace would persist into the nineteenth century, such that even otherwise committed utopians like Henri de Saint-Simon and Moses Hess could only imagine peace as a product of the might of great states like France, Britain, and a unified Germany.⁹⁰ Unearthing this broader intellectual context helps, in part, to restore the diversity of eighteenth-century debates about international politics, to which Kant’s famous project for perpetual peace was only one contribution amongst many.⁹¹ In doing so we can, partly, clarify what was and was not revolutionary or novel about Kant’s work, whilst resituating its “utopian” reputation in context of the far *more* utopian conversation to which it was at once a contribution, a reaction, and a challenge.

If this rejection of an earlier cosmopolitan account of perpetual peace was, indeed, the origin of Kant’s famous project for perpetual peace in 1795, then we must acknowledge that much contemporary thinking about international politics derived from it rests on shaky conceptual grounds. The “Democratic Peace Theory” made famous by Dean Babst, Michael W. Doyle, and Bruce Russett, and which strongly influenced the post-Cold War foreign policy of the United States, for example, takes Kant’s text to be a blueprint for a spontaneously emerging pacific and cosmopolitan order between democratic states.⁹² Yet, a close study of Kant’s shifting perspective on international politics, and of the potential intellectual and political influence of Sieyès, suggests that Kant, in fact, came to believe that world peace could be established only on the basis of hegemonic coercion. Kant’s model was thus closer to another American vision of world politics: Woodrow Wilson’s original idea for a League of Nations in which peace would be enforced by the active participation of major powers, led by the United States, an idea revived in the explicitly hegemonic and Great Power-led United Nations Security Council.⁹³ Wilson, himself a Germanophile and serious scholar of the history of political thought, and whose vision of world peace rested explicitly on hegemonic military power, was, therefore, a much better Kantian than those who have since adopted his name to describe an ideology supportive of world government through mutual consent.

Viewed this way, “Kantianism” in international relations would have rather less to do with the idealistic establishment of a free international community of equals than with the creation of an armed league or military hegemony as the necessary coordinator of a peaceful international order. The vision of perpetual peace which Kant had outlined in 1795, whilst so influential today, thus represented in his own time a capitulation to a marked pessimism about the possibility of sustained peace facilitated through careful diplomacy abroad and political reform at home. And though Kant outwardly rejected the militaristic republicanism of Sieyès and his colleagues, he provided a sound rational

for its perpetuation whilst repudiating the possibility of international cooperation without compulsion. His project also marked a remarkable repudiation of the tradition of Enlightenment and republican pacificism best summed up, a generation later, by Sieyès's colleague in Berlin, John Quincy Adams, when he said of the United States that "she goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy".⁹⁴ From the vantage point of the twenty-first century, it hardly seems clear that this crusading mentality does the causes of democracy or world peace many favours. We can only hope, in other words, that we can (re)imagine more pacific forms of international politics than Kant's, lest the Dutch innkeeper with whose sign Kant's essay begins is to be proven right in their jest that perpetual peace is found only in the grave.

Notes

1. Karl Friedrich Reinhard, Letter to Sieyès, 17 November 1795, Archives Nationales (hereafter AN), 284AP/17, Dossier 7. This letter can be found in *De Königsberg à Paris*, 79. "Peu à peu, on voit éclore en Allemagne des écrits parfaitement bien faits dans nos intérêts. On y traite de la question de la limite du Rhin, de la sécularisation des États ecclésiastiques avec une énergie à laquelle a manqué malheureusement l'appui de nos canons. Kant vient de publier un ouvrage sur la paix universelle où il met en principe qu'il n'y a que des Républiques qui puissent l'établir. Si mes occupations me le permettent je vous en enverrai l'extrait dans ma première lettre". All translations are the author's, unless otherwise stated.
2. Oelsner, *Des Opinions Politiques*, 265. "Simple dans ses manières, quoique digne dans ses relations, il n'adopte pour costume, pendant tout la durée de sa mission, qu'un habit bleu, collet brodé en soie vert, où étaient représentées des branches d'olivier. Il disait à ce sujet qu'il voulait être un *ministère de paix*". This anecdote is widely referenced in diplomatic memoirs of the period.
3. Adams, *Writings*, ii, 367.
4. *Gazette Nationale, ou Le Moniteur Universel*, (no.41), Friday 21 May 1790, 572. "[U]n homme, dont je regarde le silence & l'inaction comme une calamité publique".
5. Forsyth, *Reason and Revolution*, 215.
6. Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, 8 vols., iv, 297–298, Bastid, *Sieyès*, 158, Deussen, *Sieyès*, 125–126, and more recently Forsyth, 'The Old European States-System', pp. 527–529 and Hayworth, *Revolutionary France's War of Conquest in the Rhineland*, 158.
7. Cited in Bastid, *Sieyès*, 158. 'Les principes sont pour l'Ecole, l'intérêt et pour l'État.'
8. For Sieyès' relationship to Kant, see among others, Clapham, *The Abbé Sieyès*, 178–179, Avouzi and Bourel (eds.), *De Königsberg à Paris*, 7–17, Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, 222–224 and Nahkimovsky, *The Closed Commercial State*, 23–25.
9. Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès, "What is the Third Estate", 138. He likewise wrote that "Every nation on earth has to be taken as if it is like an isolated individual ... in a state of nature", 137.
10. Istvan Hont, "The Permanent Crisis of a Divided Mankind", 206.
11. They are, however, discussed briefly in Jainchill, *Reimagining Politics After the Terror*, 188–9, and Kubben, *Regeneration and Hegemony*, 254. For the two documents, see, respectively, Sieyès, "Aperçu des rapports de la République française avec les Puissances de l'Europe", and Sieyès, "L'Europe sous le rapport de la Paix".
12. Kubben, *Regeneration and Hegemony*, 254.
13. This interpretation can be found in both Andrew Jainchill, *Reimagining Politics After the Terror*, 88–189, and in Hippolyte Fortoul's annotation on the document itself.
14. Excerpt from the Journal of Gervinus, 21 July 1795, in Bailieu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, 407. "Les uns sont les modérés par excellence, la plupart partisans de la Prusse et de la paix à des conditions très modérées dont les chefs sont Boissy d'Anglas et Cambacérès".

15. Sieyès, “Aperçu des rapports de la République française”. “[S]ur les rapports constant qui existent entre les différents états, déduits de leur position géographique, de leurs productions, de leur population et étendue, de leur constitution, enfin de leur intérêts naturels”.
16. Ibid.
17. Sieyès, “L’Europe sous le rapport de la Paix”. “Enfin des considérations de plus d’un genre peuvent nous empêcher nous mènes de désirer des alliés, soit à cause de leurs faiblesses, soit à cause de l’hétérogénéité des principaux de leurs gouvernements”.
18. Sieyès, Letter to Talleyrand, 8 January 1799, in *Preussen und Frankreich*, 497. “[V]ous aurez la paix ... , la véritable paix, solide et permanente, pour vous et pour toute l’Europe occidentale. Vos agents dans l’étranger pourront alors se montrer républicains, sans crainte de nuire aux affaires, et pour dire la vérité, la République sera reconnue politiquement, moralement et civilement”.
19. Sieyès, “Aperçu des rapports de la République française avec les Puissances de l’Europe”.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
22. Sieyès, Letter to Talleyrand, 29 August 1798, in *Preussen und Frankreich*, 486–7. “Les passions aristocratiques les plus violentes se sont emparées des rois comme de leurs instruments naturels. ... On dirait que Cobenzl court l’Europe pour donner le mot d’ordre des héréditaires”.
23. Ibid., “Si la guerre recommence, vous ne la finirez que pour la voir recommencer encore, ainsi de suite, à moins d’adopter et d’amalgamer avec les opérations militaires un plan de républicanisation différente celui qu’on a suivi”.
24. Gervinus, Letter to Hardenberg, 15 June 1795, and Excerpt from the Journal of Gervinus, 15 June 1795, in *Preussen und Frankreich*, 398 and 407.
25. Brissot, *Second Discours sur la nécessité de faire la guerre aux Princes allemands*, 27. See also Israel, *Revolutionary Ideas*, 635–9, 659.
26. Sieyès, “Fragments Politiques”, in *Des Manuscrits de Sieyès*, i, 456. “La France ne veut plus s’agrandir ... mais elle offre alliance et fraternité à tous les peuples de la terre”.
27. For Cloots’s proposal, see Cloots, *La République universelle*. See also Bevilacqua, “Conceiving the Republic of Mankind”, 562–3, and Poulsen, *The Political Thought of Anacharsis Cloots*. Amongst many others who argued for the inherently pacific character of republics, see the arguments to this effect made by Sieyès’s sometime-rival Thomas Paine and his friend Charles Theremin. See Paine, “Common Sense”, 26, and Thérein, *Discours sur la question*, 3–9.
28. Sieyès, “Lettre de M. Washington, Président des États-Unis”, in *Œuvres de Sieyès*, ii, 6. “[C]ette heureusement ressemblance entre la France et les Etats-Unis, cimenter pour toujours la fraternelle alliance qui unit les deux Empires”.
29. Sieyès, “L’Europe sous le rapport de la Paix”.
30. Sieyès, “Aperçu des rapports de la République française avec les Puissances de l’Europe”. “[L]’établissement d’un nouvel ordre de choses en Europe quel garantie doit par la destruction du principal motif de la guerre, du despotisme, fais par l’abaissement de nos ennemis naturels, doit par un système fédératif tel que le nombre de nos amies est égal ou supérieur à celui de nos ennemis”.
31. “Mémoire pour servir d’instruction au Citoyen Sieyès”, in *Preussen und Frankreich*, 473, 479.
32. Sieyès, “Rapport fait au nom du Comité de Salut Public sur le traité de paix et d’alliance entre la République française et la République des Provinces Unies”, in *Œuvres de Sieyès*, iii, 2. “[C]omme puissance libre et indépendante, lui garantit sa liberté [et] son indépendances”.
33. Sieyès, Letter to Talleyrand, 26 July 1799, in *Preussen und Frankreich*, 497.
34. Sieyès, “L’Europe sous le rapport de la Paix”.
35. Sieyès, Letter to Talleyrand, 24 July 1798 and Letter to Talleyrand, 25 August 1798, in *Preussen und Frankreich*, 482 and 485–6. “[L]a nécessité d’établir un État intermédiaire entre le Rhin et la Prusse” and “Celle du sud nous séparée de l’Autriche sera garantie contre elle”.

36. Clapham, *The Abbé Sieyès*, 180–1. On Richelieu and Mazarin’s contribution to the theory of French foreign policy, see, particularly, Weber, “Une bonne paix”, 45–70.
37. Letter to Talleyrand, 26 January 1799, in *Preussen und Frankreich*, 497. “[F]ond ... une ligue ou confédération la plus représentative possible”.
38. Sieyès, Letter to Talleyrand, 24 July 1798, in *Preussen und Frankreich*, 482. “Je ne crois pas à la paix continentale, si je ne vois pas entre l’Angleterre et des grands États d’Allemagne une masse interposée comme une barrière insurmontable”.
39. Sieyès, Letter to Talleyrand, 25 August 1798, in *Preussen und Frankreich*, 486. “[D]éfendra l’Allemagne contre le commerce Anglais”.
40. Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès, “Rapport fait au nom du Comité de Salut Public sur le traité de paix et d’alliance entre la République française et la République des Provinces Unies”, in *Cœuvres de Sieyès*, iii, 2. “Ainsi la République française qui, par la seule force de sa position doit jouer au Sud un grand rôle dans la Méditerranée, qui peut à l’ouest, dans l’Océan, opposer de grandes forces à la tyrannie anglaise, acquiert encore au nord la seule chose qui lui manquait, une grande et superbe existence navale et commerciale”.
41. *ibid.* “[A]cqérir sur son commerce la supériorité que nos armes ont remportée sur nos ennemis”.
42. Nakhimovsky, *The Closed Commercial State*, 89–90.
43. Sieyès, “L’Europe sous le rapport de la paix”. “La neutralité maritime ne peut-être qu’armée, et il faudrait que toutes les puissances maritimes neutres y puissent parti. Elle aurait pour objet de prescrire à nos ennemis un code précis de liberté de la navigation, et il faudrait donc avant de conger à amener les membres à prendre parti à la guerre, un calculer jusqu’à quel point nous pourraient dans cette hypothèse, garantir l’arrivage des denrées de première nécessité ou nous enpasser [sic]”.
44. *Ibid.*
45. Sieyès, Letter to Talleyrand, 29 August 1798, in *Preussen und Frankreich*, 486.
46. Sieyès, “Rapport fait au nom du Comité de Salut Public sur le traité de paix et d’alliance”, 2. “La réunion des deux républiques française et batave annonce déjà du monde que la tyrannie britannique va bientôt faire place à la liberté des mers que vous avez conquise, et que, grands et magnanimes dans vos prospérités, vous offrirez aussitôt la reconnaissance de tous les peuples de la terre”.
47. See Clapham, *The Abbé Sieyès*, 189–90.
48. Thérémin, *Des Intérêts des puissances continentales*, 1–2. “Grande-Bretagne est par sa nature hostile envers toutes les puissances du continent”, and “balancer l’influence politique et commerciale de l’Angleterre, et délivrer un jour l’Europe de la sujétion où elle la tient”.
49. *Ibid.*, 85 and 43. “[S]on commerce fondé sur des guerres est nourri de sang”, and “[C]ette paix ne serait jamais qu’une préparation à une nouvelle guerre”.
50. d’Hauterive, *De l’état de la France à la fin de l’an VIII*, 138. “[L]a politique extérieure du gouvernement Angleterre ... [est] d’étendre sans cesse son ascendant dominateur sur la politique de tous les États, ses alliances ont toujours eu pour motif principal l’ambition d’ouvrir dans toutes les parties du Monde, des routes privilégiées à son commerce”.
51. “L’Europe sous le rapport de la paix”. “[E]n vis tous le droit des gens et la liberté des mers”.
52. Whatmore, “Liberty, war and empire”, 218–22.
53. Clapham, *The Abbé Sieyès*, 183–4.
54. Fichte, *The Closed Commercial State*, 163.
55. Sonenscher, *Before the Deluge*, 70–71 and Nakhimovsky, *The Closed Commercial State*, 38–39.
56. Sloane, ‘The Continental System of Napoleon’, 216–218, and Nakhimovsky, *The Closed Commercial State*, 97–100.
57. Sieyès, ‘Cahier Smith’, in *Des Manuscrits de Sieyès*, ii, 305–361, 345–348. See also, Christine Fauré, ‘Sieyès, lecteur problématique des Lumières’, *Dix-Huitième Siècle*, 35, (2005), 225–241.
58. Sieyès, ‘Cahier Smith’, 348.

59. Sieyès, 'Dire sur la question du veto royal' in *Écrits Politiques*, 229–244, 236. 'Le désir de richesses semble ne faire de tous les Etats de l'Europe que de vastes ateliers'
60. Sieyès, "L'Europe sous le rapport de la paix".
61. Staël, *Réflexions sur la paix*, 48. "La continuation de la guerre sert les projets des anarchistes".
62. Burke, "Letters on a Regicidal Peace", in *Selected Works* iii, 39–220, 133.
63. Clapham, *The Abbé Sieyès*, 179–80, and Sonenscher, "The Nation's Debt and the Birth of the Modern Republic", 320–1.
64. Bredin, *Sieyès*, 407. For this reason, it is also unlikely that Sieyès was familiar with any of the earlier works in which Kant discussed the prerequisites for perpetual peace. On these, see Stedman Jones, "Kant, the French Revolution and the definition of the republic", 154–72.
65. Karl Friedrich Reinhard, Letter to Sieyès, 10 January 1796, AN, 284AP/17, Dossier 7. This letter can be found in *De Königsberg à Paris*, 80–1.
66. Charles Théremin, Letter to Anton-Ludwig Théremin, 1 January 1796, in *De Königsberg à Paris*, 80.
67. Karl Friedrich Reinhard, Letter to Sieyès, 17 November 1795, in *De Königsberg à Paris*, 79. "Peu à peu, on voit éclore en Allemagne des écrits parfaitement bien faits dans nos intérêts. On y traite de la question de la limite du Rhin, de la sécularisation des Etats ecclésiastiques avec une énergie à laquelle a manqué malheureusement l'appui de nos canons. Kant vient de publier un ouvrage sur la paix universelle où il met en principe qu'il n'y a que des Républiques qui puissent l'établir. Si mes occupations me le permettent je vous en enverrai l'extrait dans ma première lettre".
68. Kant, "Zum ewigen Frieden: Ein philosophischer Entwurf", in *Sämtliche Werke*, vi, 229–92, 247–52. Where quoting from the text, I have elected to use H.B. Nisbet's excellent translations throughout, see Kant, "Perpetual Peace: a Philosophical Sketch", in *Political Writings*, 93–130, 102–4.
69. Kant, "Zum ewigen Frieden", 250, and Kant, "Perpetual Peace", 104.
70. Forsyth, *Unions of States*, 99–100, Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, 224, and Nakhi-movsky, *The Closed Commercial State*, 97–100.
71. Kant, "Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht", in *Populäre Schriften*, 203–24, 218–21. For the quote, see "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmo-politan Purpose", in *Political Writings*, 41–53, 51.
72. Kant, "Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht", 215–16.
73. Immanuel Kant, "Über den Gemeinspruch: Das mag in der Theorie richtig sein, taugt aber nicht für die Praxis", in *Sämtliche Werke*, vi, 175–228, 225, and Kant, "On the Common Saying: 'This May be True in Theory, but it does not Apply in Practice'", in *Political Writings*, 61–92, 90.
74. Kant, "Über den Gemeinspruch", 225–7, and Kant, "On the Common Saying", 90–2.
75. Kant, "Zum ewigen Frieden", 250, and Kant, "Perpetual Peace", 104.
76. Kant, "Zum ewigen Frieden", 265–6, and Kant, "Perpetual Peace", 114.
77. Schlegel, "Essay on the Concept of Republicanism occasioned by the Kantian Tract 'Perpetual Peace'", in *The Early Political Writings of the German Romantics*, 93–112, 108–9.
78. Konrad Dietrich, *Rousseau und Kant*, 44–9.
79. This argument follows that made by Murray Forsyth closely. See Forsyth, *Unions of States*, 96–104.
80. Lezay-Marnésia, "Observations ... sur le projet de Paix Perpétuelle, d'Emmanuel Kant".
81. *Ibid.*, 241.
82. Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, 221–2.
83. "Instruction for the Prussian Ambassador in Paris, Sandoz-Rollin", in *Preussen und Frankreich*, 29. "Un parti, à la tête duquel se trouve l'abbé Sieyès, voudrait l'extension des limites de la France jusqu'au Rhin". See, for more detailed summaries, Sorel, "Le Comité de Salut Public", 275–8, and Neton, *Sieyès*, 326–8.
84. Kant, "Zum ewigen Frieden", 251.

85. For the classic statement of Kantian “internationalism” as a counterpoint to Hobbesian realism, see Bull, *The anarchical society*, 24–7. For a more general debate on Kant’s role in modern international relations theory, see Brown, Lynn-Jones, and Miller, *Debating the democratic peace*.
86. For Cloots’s vision, see Cloots, *La République universelle*, 8.
87. Whatmore, *The End of Enlightenment*, 133–43, 155–60, 247–51, 289–303.
88. *Ibid.*
89. See, for both plans, Rousseau, “Judgement of the Plan for Perpetual Peace”.
90. See, respectively, Saint-Simon and Thiéry, *De la réorganisation de la société Européenne*, and Hess, *Der europäische Triarchie*.
91. An excellent recent example of this rediscovery can be found in Stafford, “The alternative to perpetual peace”, 65–6.
92. On the Democratic Peace Theory, see, particularly, Babst, “A Force for Peace”, Brown, Lynn-Jones, and Miller, *Debating the democratic peace*, and Russett, *Grasping the democratic peace*.
93. At the time of its birth, Wilson’s dream of a League of Nations or “league for peace” was widely understood as an attempt to fulfil Kant’s dream. See, for example, Bralisford, “The United States and the League of Peace”.
94. Adams, *An Address Celebrating the Anniversary of Independence*, 32. As James Monroe’s Secretary of State and progenitor of the “Monroe Doctrine”, Adams would later pioneer a policy of continental republican hegemony somewhat redolent of Sieyès’s, albeit without the confederal element.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Notes on contributor

Angus Harwood Brown is a Harper-Schmidt Fellow and Collegiate Assistant Professor at the University of Chicago. His research focuses on ideas about constitutionalism and constitutional guardianship in the eighteenth century as well as debates about war, peace, and the possibility of a world state since the French Revolution.

ORCID

Angus Brown  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9786-8663>

Bibliography

- Adams, John Quincy. *An Address Celebrating the Anniversary of Independence*. Hilliard: Cambridge, 1821.
- Adams, John Quincy. *Writings of John Quincy Adams*, edited by Worthington Chauncey Ford, 7 vols. New York: Macmillan, 1913–1917.
- Avouzi, François, and Dominique Bourel, eds. *De Königsberg à Paris: la réception de Kant en France (1788-1804)*. Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1991.
- Babst, Dean. “A Force For Peace.” *Industrial Research* 14 (1972): 55–58.
- Bailleu, Paul. *Preussen und Frankreich von 1795 bis 1807: Diplomatische Correspondenzen*. Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1880.
- Bastid, Paul. *Sieyès et sa pensée*. Paris: Hachette, 1939.
- Bevilacqua, Alexander. “Conceiving the Republic of Mankind: The Political Thought of Anacharsis Cloots.” *History of European Ideas* 38, no. 4 (2012): 550–569.

- Bralisford, H. N. 'The United States and the League of Peace', *The Atlantic Monthly*, April 1917 [accessed online at <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1917/04/the-united-states-and-the-league-of-peace/564827/>, 20th November 2023].
- Bredin, Denis. *Sieyès: La clé de la Révolution Française*. Paris: Éditions de Fallois, 1988.
- Brissot, Jacques-Pierre. *Second Discours sur la nécessité de faire la guerre aux Princes allemands*. Paris: Imprimerie du Patriote François, 1792.
- Brown, Michael E., Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven E. Miller, eds. *Debating the democratic peace*. London: MIT Press, 1996.
- Bull, Hedley. *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1977.
- Burke, Edmund. *Selected Works of Edmund Burke*, 4 vols. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1999.
- Clapham, J. H. *The Abbé Sieyès: An Essay in the Politics of the French Revolution*. London: P.S. King and Son, 1912.
- Cloots, Anacharsis. *La République universelle, ou Adresse aux tyrannicides*. Paris: Chez les marchands de nouveautés, 1792.
- Deusen, Glyndon van. *Sieyès: His Life and His Nationalism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1932.
- d'Hauterive, Alexander-Maurice Blanc de La Nautte, Count. *De l'état de la France à la fin de l'an VIII*. Paris: Henrici, 1800.
- Dietrich, Konrad. *Rousseau und Kant*. Tübingen: Laupp'schen Buchhandlung, 1878.
- Fauré, Christine. "Sieyès, lecteur problématique des Lumières." *Dix-Huitième Siècle* 35 (2005): 225–241.
- Fichte, J. G. *The Closed Commercial State*, Translated by Anthony Curtis Adler. New York: SUNY Press, 2012.
- Forsyth, Murray. "The Old European States-System: Gentz versus Hauterive." *The Historical Journal* 23 (1981): 521–538.
- Forsyth, Murray. *Unions of States: The Theory and Practice of Confederation*. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1981.
- Forsyth, Murray. *Reason and Revolution: the political thought of the Abbé Sieyès*. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1987.
- Gazette Nationale, ou Le Moniteur Universel*, (no.41), Friday 21st May 1790.
- Hayworth, Jordan R. *Revolutionary France's War of Conquest in the Rhineland: Conquering the Natural Frontier, 1792–1797*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.
- Hess, Moses. *Der europäische Triarchie*. Leipzig: Otto Wigand, 1841.
- Hont, Istvan. "The Permanent Crisis of a Divided Mankind." In *Contemporary Crises of the Nation State?*, edited by John Dunn, 166–231. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995.
- Israel, Jonathan. *Revolutionary Ideas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Jainchill, Andrew. *Reimagining Politics After the Terror*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Sämtliche Werke*, edited by Karl Rosenkranz und Friedrich Wilhelm Schubert. Leipzig: L. Voss, 1838–1840.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Kants Populäre Schriften*, edited by Paul Menzer. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1911.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Political Writings*, edited by H.S. Reiss, Translated by H.B. Nisbet. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Kubben, Raymond. *Regeneration and Hegemony: Franco-Batavian Relations in the Revolutionary Era, 1795–1803*. Leiden: Brill, 2011.
- Lezay-Marnésia, Adrien. "'Observations [...] sur le projet de Paix Perpétuelle, d'Emmanuel Kant.'" *Journal d'économie publique, de morale et de politique* 5, 20 Vendémiaire, An V: 232–244.
- Nahkimovsky, Isaac. *The Closed Commercial State: Perpetual Peace and Commercial Society from Rousseau to Fichte*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011.
- Neton, Albéric. *Sieyès (1748–1836): d'Après des documents inédits*. Paris: Perrin et Cie, 1901.
- Oelsner, K. E. *Des Opinions Politiques du Citoyen Sieyès et de sa vie comme homme public*. Paris: Chez Goujon fils, 1799.
- Paine, Thomas. "Common Sense." In *Political Writings*, edited by Bruce Kuklick, 1–46. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

- Poulsen, Frank Ejby. *The Political Thought of Anacharsis Cloots: A Proponent of Cosmopolitan Republicanism in the French Revolution*. Leuven: De Gruyter, 2023.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. "Judgement of the Plan for Perpetual Peace." In *The Plan for Perpetual Peace, On the Government of Poland, and Other Writings on History and Politics*, edited by Christopher Kelly, Translated by Christopher Kelly and Judith Bush, 53–60. Dartmouth: Dartmouth College Press, 2011.
- Russett, Bruce. *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Saint-Simon, Henri de, and Augustin Thierry. *De la réorganisation de la société Européenne*. Paris: Adrien Égron, 1814.
- Schlegel, Friedrich. "Essay on the Concept of Republicanism Occasioned by the Kantian Tract 'Perpetual Peace'." In *The Early Political Writings of the German Romantics*, Translated and edited by Frederick C. Beiser, 93–112. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Sieyès, Emmanuel-Joseph. *Œuvres de Sieyès*, edited by Marcel Dorigny 3 vols. Paris: EDHIS, 1989.
- Sieyès, Emmanuel-Joseph. *Écrits Politiques*, edited by Roberto Zapperi, 229–244. Paris: Archives contemporaines, 1994.
- Sieyès, Emmanuel-Joseph. *Des Manuscrits de Sieyès*, edited by Christine Fauré, Jacques Guilhaumou, and Jacques Vallier, 2 vols. Paris: Honoré Champion, 1999.
- Sieyès, Emmanuel-Joseph. "What is the Third Estate." In *Political Writings*, Translated and edited by Michael Sonenscher, 92–162. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2003.
- Sieyès, Emmanuel-Joseph. 'Aperçu des rapports de la République française avec les Puissances de l'Europe', AN, 284AP/10, Dossier 1.
- Sieyès, Emmanuel-Joseph. 'L'Europe sous le rapport de la Paix', AN, 284AP/10, Dossier 1.
- Sloane, William M. "The Continental System of Napoleon." *Political Science Quarterly* 13, no. 2 (1898): 213–231.
- Sonenscher, Michael. "The Nation's Debt and the Birth of the Modern Republic: The French Fiscal Deficit and the Politics of the Revolution of 1789: Part II." *History of Political Thought* 18, no. 2 (1997): 267–325.
- Sonenscher, Michael. *Before the Deluge: Public Debt, Inequality, and the Intellectual Origins of the French Revolution*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.
- Sorel, Albert. "Le Comité de Salut Public et la question de la rive gauche du Rhin en 1795." *Revue Historique* 18, no. 2 (1882): 273–322.
- Sorel, Albert. *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, 8 vols. Paris: E. Plon Nourrit, et Cie, 1885–1904.
- Staël, Germaine de. *Réflexions sur la paix adressées à M. Pitt et aux Français*. Paris: n.p, 1795.
- Stafford, James. "The Alternative to Perpetual Peace: Britain, Ireland and the Case for Union in Friedrich Gentz's *Historisches Journal*, 1799–1800." *Modern Intellectual History* 13, no. 1 (2016): 63–91.
- Stedman Jones, Gareth. "Kant, the French Revolution and the Definition of the Republic." In *The Invention of the Modern Republic*, edited by Biancamaria Fontana, 154–172. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Théremin, Charles. *Des Intérêts des puissances continentales relativement à l'Angleterre*. Paris: Louvet, 1794.
- Théremin, Charles. *Discours sur la question: Est-il de l'intérêt de la République Française de reculer ses limites jusqu'aux bords du Rhin?* Paris: n.p, 1795.
- Tuck, Richard. *The Rights of War and Peace: Political Thought and the International Order from Grotius to Kant*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Weber, H. "'Une bonne paix': Richelieu's Foreign Policy and the Peace of Christendom." In *Richelieu and his Age*, edited by J. Bergin, and L. Brockliss, 45–70. Oxford, 1992.
- Whatmore, Richard. "Liberty, War and Empire: Overcoming the Rich State-Poor State Problem, 1789–1815." In *Commerce and Peace in the Enlightenment*, edited by Béla Kapossy, Isaac Nakhimovsky, and Richard Whatmore, 216–243. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- Whatmore, Richard. *The End of Enlightenment: Empire, Commerce, Crisis*. London: Allen Lane, 2023.