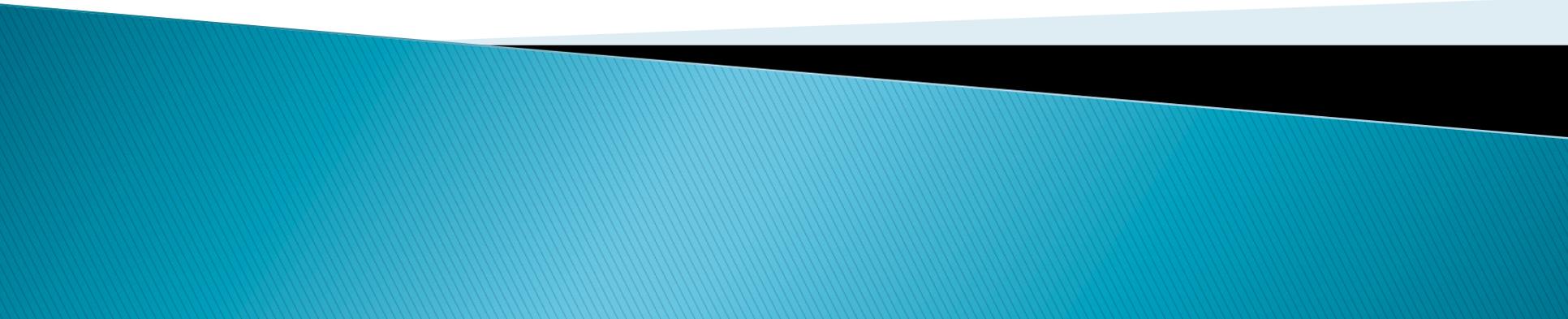
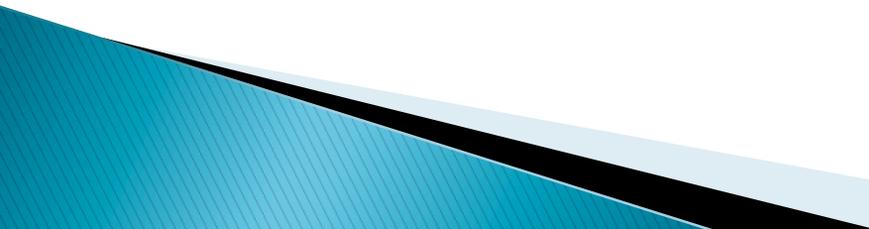


Political obligations in the world society:

From Kant to Kommunikation



Political obligation: definitions

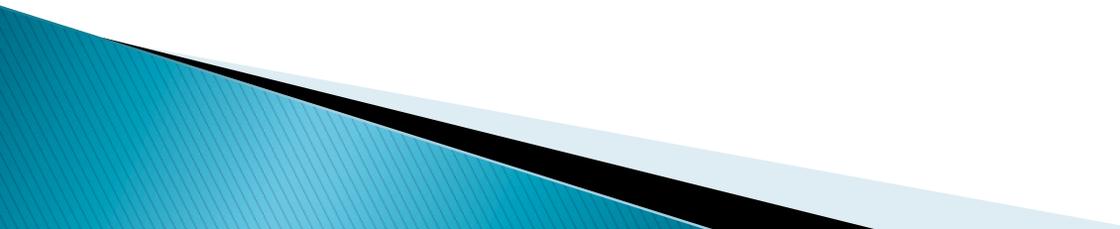
- ▶ *Narrow* – defeasible duty to obey the law (or comply with political authority, e.g. the state)
 - Denial = ‘philosophical’ anarchism
 - Affirmation (grounds, theories): fairness, justice, gratitude, consent, identity/membership, etc
 - ▶ *Wider* – what one ought to do as a citizen of a polity
 - ▶ *Widest* – what one ought politically to do
- 

Normative foundations: Kant

- ▶ Foundation: duty of respect/right of freedom
 - ▶ Argument: Rights cannot be respected (justice cannot be done) until *all* disputes about them are subject to compulsory adjudication and enforcement by credibly impartial institutions (at *all* levels of political organization).
- 

Three duties of right

1. Be a rightful person (*honeste vive*). Juridical honor (*honestas iuridica*, *rechtliche Ehrbarkeit*) consists in asserting one's worth as a human being in relation to others, a duty expressed by the saying, "Do not make yourself a mere means for others but be at the same time an end for them." This duty is an obligation from the right of humanity in our own person (*Lex iusti*).
2. Do not wrong anyone (*neminem laede*), even if, to avoid doing so, you should have to stop associating with others and shun all society (*Lex iuridica*). If you cannot help associating with others ...
3. Enter a society in which what belongs to each can be secured to him against everyone else (*suum cuique tribue*) (*Lex iustitiae*) (*Doctrine of Right*, 6:236–7, trans. altered)

- ▶ ‘Cosmopolitan’ implication: rightfulness of state territorial claims only ‘provisional’ until *all* related disputes subject to compulsory adjudication.
 - Ex. U.S.–Mexico War of 1846.]
- 



Political foundationalism

- ▶ Political justification must rest on something that is ‘external’ or ‘prior’ or more ‘fundamental’ or ‘basic’ than the political (and perhaps even the social).
 - e.g., ‘moral’ duties/principles, or ‘individual’ (self-)interest/utility.

The anarchism/skepticism parallel

- ▶ Philosophical anarchism, re: modern (CD) states:
 - “The mere fact that an action is legally required or that a stable government holds power within a reasonably just state is insufficient to establish a **moral** presumption in favor of legal compliance.” (A.J. Simmons)
- ▶ Philosophical skepticism, re: modern science:
 - The mere fact that a belief is scientifically endorsed or that a recognized group of researchers investigates such matters within a reasonably epistemically favorable institution is insufficient to establish an epistemic presumption in favor of doxastic deference.

Non-foundationalist alternative

- ▶ Political practices, like scientific ones, are rational (if at all), not because they have a foundation but because they are self-correcting enterprises which can put *any* claim in jeopardy, though not *all* at once.
 - i.e., institutionalize *both* challenge, critique and contestation (variation) and authority/defaults (selection, retention)
 - (Cf. Wilfred Sellars, “Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind”, §38)

Normative evolutions: Habermas

- ▶ Social evolution = learning process
- ▶ Material/instrumental & normative dimensions
- ▶ Normative dimension
 - Driven by expansion of open, public communication and argument in social process, including
 - Range of topics
 - Number and type/category of persons included
 - Number of ways (forums, media, institutional roles) in which they are included
 - Directional bias via structural features of speech
 - Reversibility of speech roles: 'I'/'me', 'you', 'he/she/it'
 - Internal connection of meaning and justification

Young's social connection model

- ▶ Responsibility, not liability
 - Parameters (reflect structural position of agent)
 - Power/influence, privilege, interest, collective ability
- ▶ Types of connection
 - Causal
 - Historical–genealogical (semantic, conceptual)
 - Social–political (institutions, laws, rules)
- ▶ Example: global apparel industry



March 25, 1911

145 dead

Mostly immigrant girls







Rana Plaza, Dhaka, Bangladesh. April 24, 2013. 1132 dead.











- ▶ ‘Garment industry wields power in Bangladesh’, NYT, 7.24.13

From the article:

“In the honking, congested heart of this overcrowded capital, one glass office tower stands uniquely alone, surrounded by water, accessible by a small bridge. It is a symbol of the power of Bangladesh’s garment industry, the headquarters of the country’s most powerful association of factory owners. It is also illegal. So said the Bangladesh High Court, concluding that the land had been illegally obtained, the building had been erected without proper approvals and the location threatened a network of lakes that form the natural drainage system of the capital. The High Court called the building “a scam of abysmal proportions” and ordered it demolished within 90 days. That was two years ago. The building still stands.”

- ▶ [“Benetton Admits it 'Occasionally' Made Clothing at Bangladesh Factory “, *International Business Times*, 05/01/2013](#)



World society 1

- ▶ Usual ‘society’ concept *too* political
 - ‘society’ has tended to mean ‘nation–state society’
 - ‘methodological nationalism’ (Ulrich Beck)
- ▶ Fits statist bias of political obligation theory too well
- ▶ Partly explains Kant’s hesitations:
 - Voluntary confederation of states or federal world republic? Which ‘society’ is sufficient for our duty?
 - (Note: my own position contentious re: Kant interpretation.)

World society 2: models of global order

- ▶ International system of states– IR realism
 - No societal aspect at world level – ‘anarchy’
 - Rational action = instrumental
- ▶ International society of states– English School
 - Thin societal aspect – international values/norms
 - Rational action = instrumental & normative (thin)
- ▶ World society – Habermas/Luhmann
 - Communication/meaning fundamental concept of social theory
 - World level now *only* non–arbitrary point of application of unqualified society concept
 - Every communicative event now reachable from every other
 - Cf. Kant: ‘violation of rights in *one* place on the earth felt *everywhere*’