

3- 'Because a (narrower or wiser) universal community widely prevails among the Earth's people, a transgression of rights in *one* place in the world is felt *everywhere*.' –Emmanuel Kant

Emmanuel Kant promoted moral progress in his works. In fact, he wrote during the Enlightenment Movement and he wanted the society to become better. In fact, through the 'universal community', Kant surely means mankind. The word 'community' refers to a gathering of people but it is not the same as a society. In fact, a community is a smaller gathering, people are more close to each other and they usually gather by respecting some rules. The author is also using two opposite adjectives, 'narrower' and 'wiser' because we can see the human society like a community more and more close as we get to know the others every single day. On the other hand, we can see it like a growing community with still new people who integrate it. Then, this community 'prevails' on the Earth's people, this leads to say that this is the community we belong to first. It means we feel more than French, American or Nigerian, we feel human.

Kant, here, is dealing with the relationships between the people in the world who now form a community. He thinks they are close enough to feel compassion for the others and to feel concerned for them. He expresses the hypothesis of universal rights which can be acknowledged by everybody. That even may be the link between people. However, how can people feel concerned by a transgression of rights which takes place far from where they live? Does a universal human feeling exist?

To answer, we will firstly see that it is hard to imagine a universal community as people are completely different according to where they live. However, there are some topics like the transgression of rights which lead to a universal concern. Finally, we will expose how the current expansion of media turns mankind to a universal community.

To begin with, imagining mankind like a real community sounds a little bit utopist. So we can confront Kant's quotation to Montaigne's thought about relativity of culture. In fact, each country has its own culture which is very often really different from the other's one. We don't have the same policies, the same institutions and that is why the Constitution changes between the countries. It is complex to admit that the relationship between the people in the world is based on the rights because everybody does not have the same. Each culture has its own origins and we cannot judge it. Thus, how can we agree about fair and unfair decisions if we do not share the same idea of what is fair or not? Each culture has its arguments to defend a judicial decision for example.

Next, it's hard for the other countries to judge it because they do not know all the circumstances. They can feel moved but the distance eases the reaction. The transgression of rights

happened and certainly had terrible consequences but sometimes it does not touch people directly and they cannot understand the whole issue.

As a result if the universal community cannot be based on juridical and conventional elements, what is leading people in the world to feel concerned for the others even if they are far away?

However, there are, in History, special events which aroused a universal concern. We can think of the Jewish genocide during World War II. When the world became aware of the huge atrocity that the Nazis committed on the Jewish community, it spread a wave of emotion and indignation. Everybody agreed about considering those acts to be a crime against humanity. It shows that a universal feeling can be shared in the world, especially, as Kant said, when there is 'a transgression of rights' which often implicates suffering or death of people. Even if they were Europeans, Asians, Americans, everybody got indignant in front of these atrocities. This indignation led to the creation of the state of Israel in 1947 by the United Nations, a kind of apology from the international community to the Jewish community.

It may prove that a universal feeling exists and it would gather everybody in front of a terrible event. It makes us support the other human beings and feel moved when we see them suffer. This feeling passes the borders and we forget about our nationalism to take part of the international community, the human community. The human interest became more important than our country's one. How can someone be called human if he does not feel indignation or sadness and all these normal feelings that are necessary to feel in order to change things?

In Kant's purpose of moral progress, the rights are very important; they are the basis of a moral society. If they are not respected even in one tiny place in the world, it will be a step backwards for the whole mankind. This is the advantage of the 'universal community' because if there is a transgression anywhere, everybody will feel it, maybe also suffer the consequences. Then, people are not going to make the same mistakes and it will lead to an improvement of the whole community.

Still, the quotation reports that when a 'transgression of rights' is made anywhere in the world, the whole community feels it. As a result we can wonder why it took so much time before someone acted to stop the Nazis' policy in Europe. This part of the quotation remains vague. What means does the 'universal community' have to know that a transgression has been committed? Is this innate? In fact, Kant wrote this quotation at a time when the international media were not as developed as it is nowadays.

This leads us to adapt his quotation for our contemporary world with all the technological and communication improvement it involves. In the 1960's, the United States was fighting against communism in Vietnam. It was a horrible war in which atrocities were committed as the US army

used Napalm bombs on the Vietnam population. During those years, there was a technological development which enabled the journalists to share their photographs and videos with the entire world. Thanks to the media, American and European societies discovered the conditions of the war in Vietnam. It spread a wave of contestation in the United States because people disagreed with their country's policy. Maybe there were an economic or political interest for the US government in fighting in Vietnam but people defended human rights. The media play a very important role in gathering the community around a cause. Indeed, the Vietnam War also raised contestations in France even if the country was not really involved. Many activists who demonstrated in the May 1968 movement denounced the US army's acts and asked for the respect of human rights.

Besides, the twentieth century came with the improvement of the Internet. We can firstly think that as social media are booming, the universal community is narrower and closer than it has never been. We are in the communication era so we can almost know what is happening in the whole world at the moment. Information spread nearly instantaneously so when a terrible thing happens in the world we rapidly know it. Maybe it is in this kind of situation that Kant's quotation finds its better meaning even though it is not his epoch. In fact, we can take the example of several photographs which show the living conditions in Syria, which are sometimes inhuman, through their work. The majority of the human rights are transgressed in this war and the international community feels concerned by this issue thanks to the power of media and especially social media which enable people to be aware of what is happening far from them. Indeed, many people are not able to locate Damas in a map because of the geographical distance. Still they feel compassion for the people who live in horrible conditions over there. Social media and especially photographs play a huge part in making people feel they take part of the universal community. For example, Facebook or Instagram are a sort of representation of our world but in a virtual way. Thanks to it we feel close to a person who is at the other end of the world.

As a conclusion, mankind keeps expanding: there are more and more people on Earth. Still, we form a close community by sharing universal feelings. Kant used the example of the transgression of rights which gathers people because they react to their fellowmen's condition. Thus, we may confirm his hypothesis of a universal human feeling which concerns each one of us, no matter our origins. The human being can overcome the obstacle of the distance thanks to the recent expansion of media which enable him to feel concerned for causes far away from us.