International Baccalaureate

Extended essay cover

SAMPLE A

Diploma Programme subject in which this extended essay is registered: Philosophy

(For an extended essay in the area of languages, state the language and whether it is group 1 or group 2.)

Title of the extended essay: Responsibility of man in Human Conflict and War: Examination of Strict Determinism, Weak Determinism, and Free will

Candidate's declaration

If this declaration is not signed by the candidate the extended essay will not be assessed.

The extended essay I am submitting is my own work (apart from guidance allowed by the International Baccalaureate).

I have acknowledged each use of the words, graphics or ideas of another person, whether written, oral or visual.

I am aware that the word limit for all extended essays is 4000 words and that examiners are not required to read beyond this limit.

This is the final version of my extended essay.

Candidate's signature: _____ Date: 1/7/09

IB Cardiff use only: A: _____ B: _____

Supervisor's report

The supervisor must complete the report below and then give the final version of the extended essay, with this cover attached, to the Diploma Programme coordinator. The supervisor must sign this report; otherwise the extended essay will not be assessed and may be returned to the school.

Name of supervisor (CAPITAL letters) _____

Comments

Please comment, as appropriate, on the candidate's performance, the context in which the candidate undertook the research for the extended essay, any difficulties encountered and how these were overcome (see page 13 of the extended essay guide). The concluding interview (viva voce) may provide useful information. These comments can help the examiner award a level for criterion K (holistic judgment). Do not comment on any adverse personal circumstances that may have affected the candidate. If the amount of time spent with the candidate was zero, you must explain this, in particular how it was then possible to authenticate the essay as the candidate's own work. You may attach an additional sheet if there is insufficient space here.

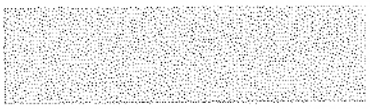
Christen struggled a great deal with focus on her topic. She was interested in human conflict: whether it was innate to humanity or was it a choice. If the latter, Then she wanted to research ways of resolving conflict using philosophy. We discussed her focus on several occasions, and I provided her with several sources. We consulted a great deal in both the research and writing process. I don't think she was completely happy with the focus in the end, but she did persevere throughout and worked very hard to work through the stumbling ~~bot~~-blocks.

I have read the final version of the extended essay that will be submitted to the examiner.

To the best of my knowledge, the extended essay is the authentic work of the candidate.

I spent ≈8 hours with the candidate discussing the progress of the extended essay.

Supervisor's signature: _____ _____ Date: 2/20/09



Responsibility of Man in Human Conflict and War: Examination of Strict Determinism, Weak Determinism, and Free Will

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Abstract

Warfare has persisted throughout history, creating great destruction and undesirable repercussions. In a world where many desire peace, it is perplexing that man has continuously turned to warfare as a solution to conflict. What is man's responsibility for eradicating the evils of war? Accountability is either large or minimal depending upon the degree of free will man has.

The investigation is separated into three views: free will, weak determinism, and strong determinism. Advocates of free will see man as the source of solution because man can inflict change towards a peaceful world. Jean-Paul Sartre exemplifies this idea of free will with his existentialism. His own book, Being and Nothingness, served as an excellent primary source. Jean-Jacques Rousseau's philosophy supports weak determinism; man has free will, but he is limited by his culture and society. This implies that man may or may not be the sole instigator of conflict. There can be patterns in cultural and societal interaction that affect man's choice. Man's responsibility to find peaceful solution may be out of his control. Thomas Hobbes' philosophy supports strict determinism. Man is subject to a greater force and acts as an insignificant piece to a much larger puzzle. Man has no control over conflict and has no responsibility to guide war in a positive direction. Bronowski's book, The Western Intellectual Tradition, aided insight to all the philosophers as a secondary source, but provided key statements by the philosophers in his book that enhanced this paper.

After reading the various philosophies, these three views seem valid and relevant, especially in a time when war and tension are present. However, weak determinism is most plausible because it accounts for variables, such as culture, that one individual cannot change in his or her lifetime. Therefore, man is responsible for making peace-sought change using free will. He cannot change the world he is born into, but can affect the outcome.

adequate detail

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THE TOC PROVIDES SOME SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Introduction

Warfare and conflict have endured the test of time and will presumably keep arising if it is a natural trend but potentially not if humans have the power to hamper its continuation. There are three main views on man's free will: those who believe human beings exhibit full free will, those who think that human nature is subject to deterministic forces in the universe, and those who stand on a middle ground between the two. As it relates to war and conflict, man can guide the path that warfare takes, either escalating or diminishing it, if free will exists. Those who believe in strong determinism believe that human beings have no accountability for or any control at all over the ravages of war. The philosopher Thomas Hobbes is an advocate who felt that humans are inherently evil and in order to maintain social harmony they must have a controlling government. Another form of determinism is that human nature is only partially influenced by determinism. This determinism is weak and states that the environment humans are born into, their social and cultural milieu, shapes who they become, but that humans have a say in what they do in response to their surroundings. Jean-Jacques Rousseau's concept of the general will reinforces this view of weak determinism. He acknowledges free will, but reveals that is not boundless. The final view of free will is that human beings have complete control and responsibility for war because they choose actions that lead to war and conflict. Sartre's existential viewpoint expands upon this idea in that humans constantly act and choose: existence precedes an essence that stems from freedom.

View One: Strong Determinism

Many people believe that war is a natural aspect of the universe over which man has no control whatsoever. Humans have no free will; we are destined to live according to a greater force that we have no power to change or comprehend, a greater force that

INTROD: SOME CONTEXT IS INITIATED.

has a guiding hand over all activities on earth including war. Man must accept this "fated fact of the universe" (Moseley 3). No society, culture, or individual on earth can minimize destruction or control outcomes. War is something established a priori, before existence. Because of this, no guilt can be claimed by humans. No side of any conflict is to blame for any actions taken against the other side, no matter how much ill will was wished or how many people lost their lives because of it. This is ironic because as human beings we often search for some form of control and almost always need to place blame upon somebody; someone must take responsibility. As is seen in Article 231 after World War II, blame was placed on Germany. This gave the Allied Powers' citizens a sense of security that wrongdoers were being punished. From the view of strong determinism the Nazi Germans were not to blame because they were just as guiltless as the Americans and British because the war was not related to human causes. Every facet of the war was part of some greater force that man had no hand in guiding.

One of the earliest philosophical proponents of strong determinism is Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes believed that the state of nature is actually a state of warfare and that "man was merely a body, or, better, a machine, in motion" (Bronowski 213). Man takes part in an ever-present, unending cycle cause and effect reactions. Man has no control over his actions for all machinery must be operated by some outside force. Warfare is something that is innate in the universe, specifically within humans. Because Hobbes believes that all humans are "poor, nasty, and brutish" (Bronowski 204), they need a strong leader and government that can attempt keeping peaceful stability. This conforms to the idea of strong determinism because war then is axiomatic to the human condition. It pre-exists and is bound to arise. All man can do is watch it run its course. Since the origin of war is in nature, is in humans, and is evident, the foundation – location and

active movement at an exact time – can be used in order to reveal what is to come. Furthermore, leaders can have a better understanding of what is to come and try to develop appropriate mechanisms of control. During Hobbes' life, much was still unknown about the universe, yet ideas such as the Newtonian world machine suggested that all things in the world were created by a supreme being and then left to work by natural law.

This coincides with Hobbes theories because of how structured he viewed the world. Religious sentiments were not focused on as much as rationalism and Hobbes reflects this rational and logical approach to the state of man. Hobbes viewed everything as orderly and rigid, including war existing as man's natural tendency to turn to when all else is stripped away. If humans are "poor, nasty, and brutish" (Bronowski 204) and selfish as Hobbes speculates, and if the world is governed by strict deterministic elements, then humans will inevitably be pushed into conflict.

The benefits of this view point being the origin of war are pretty self-evident. Warfare is; it exists within a greater scheme and shows itself through human interaction. It will always exist over time, although by applying Hobbes' idea of causation, the future of war has the potential of being pinpointed. If every minute aspect and detail of an instant in eternity can be assessed then the big picture can be interpreted.

As simple as this solution may seem, it is nearly impossible to account for every aspect because humans are only a tiny piece in the infinite mass of substance within the vast universe. There is only so much that human nature can comprehend, for although we may think we have covered everything, there is always more that is not even within the realm of our comprehension. Even when research or discoveries occur, often times other individuals come along later and build upon or refute the previous information.

View Two: Weak Determinism

Another view of determinism that must be addressed is weak determinism because it is not strictly a proponent of only determinism or just free will. In short, this philosophy says that humans are simply living with consequences in a world that is already determined. Responsibility and control over the origin of war are removed, but man still has the ability to affect the outcome. Man can choose to take the challenge and responsibility of hedging against the inclination of turning to conflict; he can ameliorate its effects, but will be in constant struggle because everyone has free will to do as they please within the parameters of the existing conditions.

brief description of the views related to war.

Jean Jacques Rousseau's ideas can be characterized and applied to weak determinism and war. Rousseau blames man and his society as the root of the world's problems, including the ravages of war. Rousseau opined that "Civilization and cultured society has produced the present evils of man" (Bronowski 284-285). The surroundings of man today, society specifically, have changed because man has made them change. Society is not something that changes over night, but over an extended period of time. Despite the fact that Rousseau thought "everything is evil in the hands of man" (285), he reasoned that man could be changed for the better if society was reformed. In order to be rid of warfare and come to more peaceful solutions between nations, changes must be made, although they may not yield immediate results.

The concept of peace being obtained by war is never gained as man has continuously turned to warfare. Peace seems to be ephemeral. From the time of hunters and gatherers to modern civilization, conflict has existed primarily over land ownership and resources. The need and desire to gain more of something has increasingly sparked more distrust as time has elapsed. Assuming the origin of war is found in society as

generalities

Rousseau says, then the panacea is to reform society. Rousseau's view of society is governed by the General Will, that is, a will by the entire people. All must conform; so while there is free will, it is a collective one that diminishes individual choice after a consensus has been reached by the entire body. This exhibits how Rousseau's views can be characterized as weak determinism. The individual has free will, but can only affect change with a majority agreement by others. Whatever society immersed in, man is raised following certain customs and ways of life. Unless he leaves to join a different society, he is determined to follow the current society's ways. He can try to affect change, but he will have to influence several people and slowly affect the views of the general will until change can be made. The role of society is greater than the individual's in continuing or creating trends that exist in the future.

To attain peace and stop a society or country from falling into the same habits that lead to war, an individual will have to be willing to have courage and understanding that results will not be immediate. War will continue to flow and ebb over time, but it can be diminished if individuals start to reform society and its values, traditions, relations with others, and any other evils that have been created.

View 3: Free Will

A greatly contrasting view with both determinisms is the view that human beings have complete control over their actions and events that take place in the world. This view is that man has complete free will to choose. Man determines his own future, his own goals, and even chooses for others because he lives in others' presence. It is in living with others and choosing to have conflicts with others, both individual struggles within a community and between countries, which causes wars. This means that all warfare is a conscious decision made by mankind. The future of man and even the entire

world is up to the human race and whether they choose to solve problems with warfare, so-called peaceful coercion, or living in true peace.

A significant contributor the philosophy of existentialism and free will is Jean-Paul Sartre. He views man as having complete and ultimate free will. This includes the idea that existence precedes essence. This means that "human freedom precedes essence in man and makes it possible; the essence of the human being is suspended in his freedom" (Adler 150). Only in embracing individual freedom can someone find meaning and essence in life. This life begins when one starts to exist and make decisions. In making choices, man defines himself; he is his choices because his choices are what he acts on. All the actions that one takes in life show who a person truly is. A boy may tell his mother that he will be a good son and return home promptly, but these words mean nothing unless he actually follows through on his promise. He will be seen as reliable and trustworthy only if his actions reflect that he is. Sartre sees the goal of man to work upon improving his own self (Sartre 620). Ultimately, man is all alone; alone with his own thoughts, emotions, actions, and interpretations. All individuals have the power to choose for themselves and at times have the power to choose for others. For example, those in positions of authority or seniority, such as parents, generals, and tsars, tend to have a final say in others' affairs. When these leaders or other individuals choose to act, only they can take responsibility for the decision they made. Even if a general in an army consults another general for advice, he chose the person he would go to for aid; hence, shifting the accountability of the plans made back to the first general.

Sartre firmly believed in human beings as being nothingness if they do not make choices (Sartre 616). Because humans are clearly living, they must be making choices, for in essence, choices are life. The human condition of having to participate in the world,

no matter what societal roles one fulfills, and eventually dying, is faced by all humans alike. No matter what, we are *something* by living this process, for we are choosing to.

Essentially, war is a part of this human condition. War did not exist before man did because essence does not come before existence. Since man must exist first in order to create war, man must take full responsibility for creating it and eventually either destroy it or continue its tradition. The origin of war lies not in society or nature, but in man's decision to employ it. "No factual state whatever it may be (the political and economic structure of society, the psychological "state," etc.) is capable by itself of motivating any act whatsoever" (Sartre 562). This applies to war because man is the creator of actions that occur. This is applicable for all parts or conflict, the initiation and building-up, the fighting, the resolution, and even the choices to not follow through on certain ideas. Even parties who do not get involved make a conscious thought-out decision to not act.

The solution to obliterating war and the great benefit of this view is that the solution is simply stated: for the ravages and destruction of war to cease, human beings must discontinue their choices to commence conflicts. Obviously, this is not so easy to do. While many individuals may desire for complete peace between all nations and groups, there will always be others who choose to fight and prefer risk all the losses for winning. There are even people who are lazy or scared who may inhibit the road to a greater peace. One individual has the power to choose for others, but this is nearly impossible to get an entire planet to agree on one thing such as war. People are alone in their decisions and can decide who to follow and what to believe. They do not have to help strive for a more morally-based world if they do not wish to.

Sartre emphasizes improving one's self through the idea of a self project (Sartre 620) because no individual can improve another person better than the person himself. Because man is alone he must make his own choices and as a result he defines himself through the actions he takes. No matter what he does, others will continue to choose, so while he can try to reason with others, the most reliable thing he can do is set an example of peace to impact others. By improving himself and not affecting others negatively, a ripple effect could hopefully and possibly ensue and over time, more harmony will exist.

The downside to this view is that the future is unpredictable. There is no way to know what others are going to choose, for every individual is alone with his choices. Every single person is condemned to be free; they have no choice but to make choices. These choices can be for keeping war or be ridding the world of it. Furthermore, the past can not explain why influential figures make the decisions they do. Nothing can tell us the complete answer for no other individual can penetrate into another's experience of an event, thoughts, reasons, or anything. All one can do is actively live and set a model for others to follow.

Personal View/Implications

By accepting the doctrine that "everything is constantly altering; no object retains all of its component parts from one moment to the next" (Cohen 1) as true and then applying this view to warfare a realization is made concerning causes of war and the role that human nature plays in its development. This view, known as the Flux Doctrine was formulated by Heraclitus. Whether believed in completely or moderately, "at every moment, every object is changing in some respect or other" (1); change occurring is undeniable. Of course, certain aspects or trends seem to exist over time such as epidemics that occur, migrations of birds, and even warfare between certain groups or

countries. What must be realized is that every moment there is a transformation occurring. No weather condition is the same as any one in the past. No one moment has all the exact same variables contributing to its definition as another moment in time.

This applies to warfare and conflicts between any group of people or even on an individual level. Consider a war in which two army generals meet each others' armies twice in two days. One may say that the second day is simply a continuation of the first time they met, that nothing has changed between the two armies. This cannot be entirely true, despite the animosity that may be felt between the two sides and the fact that one general has potentially won both days. The weather conditions were not identical because even the earth is changing as the humans and the nature of the battle are. The earth is that much closer to the sun as its gravitational force pulls it closer to burning up in many years to come. This change is so minimal that nobody fighting in the battle will ever notice it in their entire lifetime, but the change is present. The earth is turning as well. Individual soldiers are not the same person they were the first day on the second. Their amount of hunger is probably different, and the orders they followed were possibly different as the general probably had a different plan of attack or defense. The very emotions that everybody is feeling every second of every minute and so on and so forth is in constant change. Although one may be excited at one moment, he or she may not be at any given moment. So many an infinite number of other variables play into each battle that there is no possible way to list them all. Often times situations, people, and other facets of life seem to remain the same, but as time, whether a great deal or a small amount, elapses change undoubtedly occurs.

Just as every breath a person takes and as skin cells slowly fall off invisible to the human eye, the nature of warfare is in a constant state of change and alteration. Although

initial tribal warfare may have appeared very similar in nature to others at the time, it definitely changed over time. Whether believing that warfare is something human beings choose to act upon, whether it is a product of weak determinism, or even of strong determinism, in the end, there is no true way to classify all wars as ones that are caused by one method of reasoning. The best that can be done is to classify warfare into periods of time, since the past can be analyzed, but at the same time leaving a wide open door for the future. "Every age has its own peculiar forms of war, its own restrictive conditions, and its own prejudices. Each therefore, would also keep its own theory of war" (Clausewitz 582). Over time, the tools and weapons used in warfare have improved; they have become more effective, more threatening, and questioned more in the morality of using them. Not only has this aspect changed, but with every new battle, conflict, crusade, and struggle, generals and other leaders have more information from previous ones to grow and build upon. By examining the past, improvements can be made based on mistakes previously made and even to strategies that worked.

This constant changing of warfare over history implies that every struggle that is examined must be examined by itself. This does not mean that other previous struggles cannot be examined so as to expect possible re-occurring trends and tactics, but due to the different circumstances and factors – social, political, economic, religious, weather conditions and even the role of individuals involved – no war or struggle is exactly the same. Since evolution exists in warfare, even more possible options and factors that affect the nature and outcomes increase and change as well.

As a whole, wars can be classified to an extent into the three categories discussed, but they must not be limited to these possibilities. Some wars may be chosen completely by choice and some may develop due to some hidden part of man's nature or even the

society or culture that the participants are a part of. Warfare can be a combination; it has potential to stem from a variety of factors because of its constant change. Some cause that never existed before or exists now may develop in the future. Only time and degree of change will tell.

Conclusion

The three theories discussed are convincing, yet all have faults. This is due to constant change. Throughout the course of history, change has forever been occurring. There are varying underlying factors for every war thus resulting in no set formula to predict a war's outcome. Religious, economic, political, social, and so many other issues initiate wars as well as the drive of certain individuals to attain their goals. While trends can be identified and certain time periods classified, the future remains unknown. It appears to be that humans have limited free will. Society, culture, ethics, and history are just some features of life that prohibit one from doing exactly what they desire. Not every person can do as they please and because of individuals' constant need to satisfy and fulfill desires, conflict occurs on personal and national levels. If humans, and in turn the societies and countries they create and compose, become less demanding and more considerate a great deal can be accomplished. Only so much can be done by an individual, but change for peace must start somewhere. From this, the responsibility of man is great if he wants to protect future generations. There is no fault in attempting to keep war in check and even-keeled, to work within one's society to at least curb potential devastation. Even if man does not have free will and is merely a screw in a quasi-Newtonian machine, would it not be best to acknowledge war as it is and to believe in man's ability to alter warfare to maintain a peaceful coexistence?

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- generally clear + focused on the R.Q.
- mostly descriptive of the 3 views
- argument becomes basic in several sections
- analysis is required + further clarification of implications

Assessment form (for examiner use only)

Candidate session number	0	0	

		Achievement level		
		First examiner	maximum	Second examiner
Assessment criteria	**A** research question	1	2	1
	B introduction	1	2	1
	C investigation	3	4	3
	D knowledge and understanding	3	4	3
	E reasoned argument	3	4	3
	F analysis and evaluation	2	4	2
	G use of subject language	3	4	3
	H conclusion	1	2	2
	I formal presentation	3	4	3
	J abstract	2	2	2
	K holistic judgment	3	4	3
	Total out of 36	25		26 ✓

Name of first examiner: _____ Examiner number: _____
(CAPITAL letters)

Name of second examiner: _____ Examiner number: _____
(CAPITAL letters)