

# **The Bahá'í Approach to Cosmopolitan Ideas in International Relations**

## **Introduction: The Development of International Relations theory**

International Relations (IR) has been deemed to be in state of 'disarray' and 'complexity'.<sup>1</sup> As a theoretical framework that embeds more tangible social relations, its state of perplexity and diversity can perhaps be explained by the confusion which depicts international affairs. Indeed, what is IR theory? International Relations theory challenges rigid divisions between disciplines, but also poses important questions within its own disciplinary remit, which in its latter phase concerns the possibilities of the transformation of world order and the inclusion of new theoretical forms. For a long time, IR was described as the field that studied the relations between states, hence 'inter-national' relations. In the last three decades, it has broadened its spectrum, and become more than the traditional study of relations between states for such relations are too restrictive in the context of an increasingly global, hybrid, and constantly adaptive age – with many sub- and trans-national processes. However, IR does remain an 'invisible discipline': IR borrows, but it is seldom borrowed from.<sup>2</sup> Currently, various theories are advancing claims - or non-claims - about nation-states, human rights, state-sovereignty, the overused and underspecified term of 'globalisation', social movements, global ethics, gender, migration, and/or difference and identity.<sup>3</sup>

Current normative ‘trends’ have encouraged the inclusion of a plethora of viewpoints such as women’s perspectives dubbed ‘feminist’, and also permit the incorporation of what is considered to be traditionally within the remit of more ‘religious’ perspectives, such as Bahá’í views on International Relations, and more specifically on cosmopolitan IR. Cosmopolitanism’s main precept seeks to propound the idea of a community of mankind standing below, above, and ‘around’ the nation-state. Cosmopolitanism offers an interesting platform for theorising the ‘international’ and developing the idea of a common humane habitat, and in this regard, the Bahá’í model can make interesting inroads. The Bahá’í model is cosmopolitan insofar as its core values revolve around the principle of the ‘oneness of humankind’ and its ‘corollary of diversity’, which in the words of ‘Abdu’l’Bahá,<sup>4</sup> represent the ‘cornerstone of all the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh’ and in those of Shoghi Effendi<sup>5</sup> ‘the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh revolve’.<sup>6</sup> Binding Bahá’í cosmopolitan views with a constantly growing Western secular cosmopolitan field may, as a case in point, offer a way of reinforcing cosmopolitan IR. The Bahá’í Faith, the youngest world religion, stems from Eastern origins, namely nineteenth century Persia, and can be depicted by its diverse world-wide community. The present article looks at how the secular and Western field of cosmopolitan IR can be rounded out by the Bahá’í approach. In this article, it is shown that the secular and sacred models in cosmopolitan IR are not necessarily opposed, and that the Bahá’í approach can assist cosmopolitan IR by adding new elements whilst reinforcing its normative intents. This article firstly broadly presents the field of IR theory; secondly, it scrutinises cosmopolitanism and its main propositions, and finally it examines the Bahá’í approach to cosmopolitan IR.

It is suggested that the Bahá'í model offers a spiritual and more 'sacred' avenue to IR, whilst standing close to its concerns, and complementing and expanding its remit.

Three main debates stand at the centre of IR theory from the time of its first inception as a discipline in 1919. The first debate concerns the two founding 'theories' of the discipline – liberal internationalism and thereafter realism (realists wrongly dubbed liberal internationalists 'idealists', as realists thought that they drew hasty utopian conclusions about the nature of world order and politics); the second debate, the 'behavioural revolution', pervaded the social sciences in the 1960s; and since the 1990s the third debate lies between positivist (that is scientific accounts of world politics) and non-positivist approaches, that is, the view that social sciences cannot be approached in the same way as physical sciences and that we cannot test 'one theory' or set of facts to explain 'social order' and 'human beings'. IR feminists<sup>7</sup> describe this as 'embedded knowledge', or, a knowledge which cannot be completely value-neutral, because the observer is co-related to her or his research by specific conditions and influences such as culture, language, religion, class, gender and other factors.<sup>8</sup> In this regard, knowledge becomes entangled with, and informed by, our sensitivities and particularities, and may be shaped by the experiences of those normally excluded from 'conventional' knowledge, thereby inviting novel, or more accurately marginalised, voices. Knowledge, in critical IR, is not neutral: rather, it is ethically charged as it seeks to de-legitimise usual ways of looking at the world by challenging its main features.

Realism has long been the ‘main theory’ in IR and remains with its counterpart neo-realism classical theories, but they have since then been dethroned. Realism is essentially a pessimistic and non-progressivist world-view<sup>9</sup> that places states and sovereignty at the centre-stage of IR, and undermines the possibility of valuable change in world politics. Its main proposition lies in the suggestion that world politics is divided along domestic and international spheres, which cannot be reconciled due to the, allegedly, condemned nature of the ‘international’. ‘Power’, ‘recurrence’, ‘fixity’, and ‘anarchy’ are usually utilised to describe the wider international non-state domain. Kenneth Waltz, the father of neo-realism, portrayed three images as an impediment to the transformation of world order: 1) a fallen human nature (in classical realism) 2) the constitution of states 3) the nature of the international order as anarchic and functioning according to a self-help system.<sup>10</sup> Other propositions also function on a quasi- realist basis: this is the case of Samuel Huntington’s infamous thesis *The Clash of Civilizations* in which there is fated antagonism between diverse ‘civilisations’; according to critics, this vision ignores the differences *within* civilisations, and the historical relationships that have taken place *between* them.<sup>11</sup> Nation–states, here, are substituted for belligerent civilisations.

Realism – which is actually not to be confounded with being realistic and associated with names such as E.H. Carr and Hans Morgenthau – came as a response to liberal internationalism, the first paradigm in IR co-related with leaders such as Woodrow Wilson and the creation of the League of Nations. Liberal internationalism posits that a peaceful society is possible if it abides by certain principles of international law and

morality that sustain a collective security – an image praised by the Bahá'í model insofar as it seeks to create co-operation based on institutions of global governance. Realism and liberal internationalism, as the two conventional IR ‘theories’, have been thereafter complemented by many others, such as neo-realism, the English School (inspired by the idea of an international society of states and containing a ‘mediating’ ground between realist and liberal international elements), and a number of critical theories, including feminist theory, critical international theory, post-structuralism and post-modernism. The third debate – the current stage at which IR finds itself – is situated between positivist and non-positivist theories such as critical theories, which as it was mentioned, seek to include perspectives that are not only positivist, but also moral. Fred Halliday writes:

... [N]o human agent ... whether academic or not, can rest content with facts alone: all social activity involves moral questions, of right and wrong, and these can, by definition, not be decided by facts. In the international domain such ethical issues are pervasive: the question of legitimacy and loyalty – should one obey the nation, a broader community (even the world, the cosmopolis), or some smaller sub-national group, the issues of intervention – whether sovereignty is a supreme value or whether states or agents can intervene in the internal affairs of states; the question of human rights and their definition and universality.<sup>12</sup>

Critical IR contends that the more knowledge privileges certain viewpoints, the more it occludes diverse perspectives, such as those of women, children, and minorities. Gender, for example, is a way of interrogating conventional knowledge. Feminist theorists' main assumption is that IR has traditionally favoured gendered perspectives that generate an imbalanced and 'taken-for-granted' masculine reality. Consequently, the inclusion of diverse perspectives and life experiences are vital to the transformation of world order as this process uncovers untraditional viewpoints and ideas which may shape theories, and thus, realities. 'It broadens the base', according to a critical scholar, 'from which we derive knowledge, but also because the perspectives of ... marginalized people may reveal aspects of reality obscured by more orthodox approaches of knowledge-building'.<sup>13</sup> Entertaining the possibility of transformation has been named 'normative', that is, the possibility of transforming world order in ways that are unthinkable to present 'realities'. Karin Fierke, for instance, speaks of denaturalising the present and to 'look again, in a fresh way, at that which we assume about the world because it has become overly familiar.'<sup>14</sup>

The importance of including a more sensitive, broad, and inclusive approach in International Relations has a specific aim: that of challenging classical assumptions about the nature and directions of world order. For example, in realism, if knowledge is informed by the inevitability of war and violence in the international domain and the impossibility of enduring peace, it is likely that practices would adhere to such a way of thinking. This is the 'dogmatism of knowledge' as Seyla Benhabib put it.<sup>15</sup> The Universal House of Justice, the international governing body of the Bahá'í Faith,

whilst referring to the stubborn belief in the inherent pugnacity of human nature which creates lasting antagonism, has called this phenomenon a ‘paralysis of will’. The paralysis of will, the Universal House of Justice writes ‘... has led to the reluctance to entertain the possibility of subordinating national self-interest to the requirements of world order’.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, there is a very thin line between both theory and practice in IR. Theories can influence international order, or often come as a response to specific crises in the contemporary world,<sup>17</sup> and as these crises change, new theoretical perspectives emerge, not only to explain them, but to act as a prescription. The end of the Cold War, as a case in point, has opened many doors for theorising IR and transforming the supposed ‘realities’ of world order. Cosmopolitan political theory, or cosmopolitanism, represents one of them.

### **Cosmopolitan Ideas in IR**

Cosmopolitanism is an approach or a tradition. It resides within, and is carried by, several approaches in IR theory; it has survived the great debates; and, suggests an interesting alternative to the myopic lenses of realism and neo-realism. It has regained a new vitality in the post-Cold War era, and has been worked and reworked: cosmopolitanism is, therefore, constantly reconceptualised whilst its main intentions are safeguarded: the transformation of world order; the realisation that strangeness and foreignness do not have to guide our moral and political communities; the salience of every human being – regardless of the many characteristics that may describe her. Here, it is not despite these categories – race, gender, religion etc... – that we envision

the humanity of beings, but thanks to these categories. Indeed, it has sometimes been deemed that creating a universal humanity *despite* these categories tends to merge universality towards a centre which is defined along hierarchical and homogeneous lines.<sup>18</sup> This had led to a debate between universality and difference and envisaging both as part of a layered cosmopolitanism: one in which unity is not opposed, but created by, diversity.<sup>19</sup> Cosmopolitanism, at this present stage, views differences, not as being locked and fixed within defined parameters, but rather as an open and fluctuating current.

Cosmopolitanism contends that human beings belong to the universal community of mankind, which should be nurtured. Various strands of cosmopolitanism revolve around this principal idea, and react against favouring the national state over the natural community of mankind, or preferring ‘fellow citizens’ to ‘fellow human beings’. Cosmopolitanism, thus, highlights the limitedness of political communities (the *polis* – city-state – was also criticised by ancient Stoicism), which now correlates to the inadequacy of ‘reasons of state’ or ‘reasons of political communities’, when their fates are entwined.<sup>20</sup> Trans-parochial responsibilities for others and for diversity represent pivotal cosmopolitan beliefs. Princeton Philosopher Anthony Kwame Appiah underscores that two strands are entangled within cosmopolitanism:

[O]ne is the idea that we have obligations towards others, obligations that stretch beyond those to whom we are related by the ties of kith and kind, or even the more formal ties of citizenship. The other is that we take



seriously the value not just of human life but of particular human lives, which means taking an interest in the beliefs and practices that lend them significance.<sup>21</sup>

Cosmopolitanism was, it is said, born into the Cynic and Stoic world where *cosmopolis* was firstly conceived as the whole universe in which all living beings were citizens – not of course, in the literal meaning of the word, but more as an expression of emotion. The word ‘cosmopolitan’ is derived from the Greek *Kosmopolites*, which translates into ‘world citizen’. Diogenes, a Cynic, allegedly first coined the word ‘cosmopolitan’ in the 4th century BC. For him, cosmopolitanism was not, as it is now conceived, a way of finding ways to live peacefully on the globe, but more so a way of rebelling against conformism – actually the Greek word for Cynic derives from the word ‘Dog’.<sup>22</sup> It was also, in the Cynic ideal, a wholesome rejection of the *Polis* or city-state: the individual was free roaming and had neither ‘local’ attachments, nor particularities. Nonetheless, cosmopolitanism is not concerned with replacing, but supplementing more fixed identities. Indeed, as opposed to this Cynic version, the Stoics did not wish to replace particular identities with a universal one, but rather construct a cosmopolitanism which develops from the grassroots level.

Cosmopolitanism aims to complement and build on multiple identities, rather than destroy human diversity and enriching particularities that it holds to be vital to sustain a global community. Edmund Burke, for example, stated, ‘to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle (the germ as it were) of public affections. It is

the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country and to mankind'.<sup>23</sup> Cicero, a Stoic, also contradicts the idea expressed by Rousseau that to be cosmopolitan is to assert love of mankind as an excuse to really love no-one.<sup>24</sup> 'Society and human fellowship', Cicero delineated, 'will be best served if we confer the most kindness on those with whom we are most closely associated'.<sup>25</sup> In other words, it is facile to proclaim love of mankind, states the dubious, but treat the closest people to us with disdain. This paradox resolves itself. Indeed, cosmopolitanism starts at home.<sup>26</sup> It seems to us that wider human loyalties best serve local interests.<sup>27</sup>

Furthermore, some of us can now choose the little platoons we wish to live in, and consequently multiply our identities and experiences. Hence, in addition to pyramidal forms that stretch from the local to the global vertically, there is also the possibility that loyalties intersect at various levels horizontally: the very idea of humanity does not preclude association with multiple communities and more locally situated identities.<sup>28</sup> The significance of the 'local level' is more recently expressed by David Held, who introduced the pioneering paradigm of 'cosmopolitan democracy' for global governance: 'It is important to clarify that cosmopolitanism is not at loggerheads with all aspects of state tradition; nor does it deny cultural difference or the enduring significance of national culture. It is not against cultural diversity. Few, if any, contemporary cosmopolitans hold such view'.<sup>29</sup> This has also crucial institutional implications: just as identities are seen as multiple and overlapping in the vision of world citizenship, so institutions of global governance and socio-economic import must abide by grassroots principles that posit a layered vision of decision-making and

participation. The useful question to pose here is why is cosmopolitanism needed? It is, indeed, a model to be experimented upon, as political life has demonstrated that exclusivist parochial and nationalistic models have so far failed to provide a basis upon which human suffering may decrease.

Many other strands and ideas are expressed within cosmopolitanism. For reasons of space, it is not possible to delve into them in further detail. It can be said, however, that Western cosmopolitanism started in the Cynic and Stoic worlds, was carried in the Enlightenment by authors such as Immanuel Kant and Montesquieu, and other *philosophes*.<sup>30</sup> It has developed and is being used in late modernity, whether to be criticised or promoted. It is possible to identify three main strands within cosmopolitanism: an ethical cosmopolitanism in the style of the Stoics (in which the oneness of humankind underpins the unity of the universe); a political cosmopolitanism (in the Enlightenment, this was envisaged as ‘perpetual peace projects’ now viewed as theoretical precursors to international organisations like the League of Nations, the United Nations, or the International Court of Justice); and a more legal cosmopolitanism, in the form of the new International Criminal Court based on the Nuremberg legacy, and on a human, as opposed to state, unit).

### **The Bahá’í Model**

The Bahá’í Faith provides the means by which IR can add an element which was long overlooked in world politics: the role of religion for the pacification of international

relations. This joins the revolutionary methodological approach that underpins subjectivity. Without including other voices which have been overlooked, how can world order be possibly improved? This is the contention of IR feminists, who advance that the voices of women have been silenced thereby rendering IR biased and incomplete. The same applies to religion. How can IR be complete if it ignores religion? In this regard, religion carries with it moral and ethical values that are important for the reconfiguration of world politics. The secular world calls these values 'ethical', the sacred 'spiritual'. They are, nonetheless, converging. One of these spiritual bases, as it was noted, lies in the concept of the oneness of humanity, as found in the Bahá'í Writings. Roman Stoics such as Marcus Aurelius – perhaps better known for his portrayal as Emperor in the Hollywood movie 'Gladiator' – pronounced the bio-ethical principle of the oneness of humanity. It was, nevertheless, an emotional outburst for ethical speculations. Shoghi Effendi renders this concept more transformative and salient in its impacts. The oneness of mankind 'concerns itself', Shoghi Effendi states, '... primarily with the nature of *those essential relationships* that must bind all the states and nations as members of one human family'.<sup>31</sup> This principle, therefore, implicates devising global institutions for the protection of *all* members of humanity. Indeed, for 'Abdu'l'Bahá, the denial of the concept of the oneness of mankind represents the destroyer of the body politic.<sup>32</sup> This invokes that a spiritual principle is linked to, and consonant with, the design and shape of world order. The Bahá'í model centralises ethical principles whilst being pragmatic. It contends that in the transition from a system based on national sovereignty to a more cosmopolitan formulation of world politics and world order, global values need to

added, nurtured, and fostered. It also envisions the strengthening of international organisations,<sup>33</sup> which will gradually become global in order to respond to the all-encompassing *needs* of all the peoples of the world.

The Bahá'í approach is not based upon a rigid formula of International Relations; it would perhaps be more appropriate to state that it contains a model that is based on spiritual values and the consensus of the main stakeholders – ‘Abdu’l’Bahá notes that any system of governance must have at its basis ‘the sanction of the human race’.<sup>34</sup> The Bahá'í model on governance also contains defined characteristics that may channel and bring about the enduring transformation of world order.<sup>35</sup> These features are based upon values of justice and the ethics of oneness. In this regard, the Universal House of Justice states that, ‘...the primary challenge in dealing with issues of peace is to raise the context to the *level of principle*, as distinct from pure pragmatism’.<sup>36</sup> Here we may make the links between IR theories that seek to inform changes, and the significance of the ‘level of principle’ as expressed in the Bahá'í model by the Universal House of Justice. The universal governing body of the Bahá'í Faith goes on to outline, ‘[F]or, in essence, peace stems from an inner state supported by *a spiritual or moral attitude*, and it is chiefly in evoking this attitude that the possibility of enduring solutions can be found’.<sup>37</sup> In the Bahá'í model, spiritual aspects, which post-positivist IR depicts as ‘ethical’ or ‘moral’, are central to world order – or rather world (dis)order. The Bahá'í model also posits that guidelines on ‘how to live with each other’ have to do with providing the discipline with more inclusive ethical theories. Indeed, IR theories, especially in its critical turn, seek to transform political order, and

in this sense, has a practical purpose. The ‘level of principle’ as well as ‘theories’ are of value to the Bahá’í model inasmuch as they can impact on the realities that we build for ourselves and for the world. Shoghi Effendi underlined, ‘... if certain social assumptions ... have ceased to promote the welfare of the generality of mankind, if they no longer minister to the *needs* of a continually evolving humanity, let them be swept away and relegated to the limbo of obsolescent and forgotten doctrines.’ Shoghi Effendi goes on to state that legal standards, economic and political theories are meant to safeguard *all* of humanity, proposing thereby a motional and inclusive viewpoint.<sup>38</sup>

### **Universality of the Cosmopolitan Tradition**

From a Bahá’í perspective, how can we explain the similarities, but also the differences between the cosmopolitan tradition and the cosmopolitan ethos of the Bahá’í Faith? For Bahá’ís, as Bahá’u’lláh has infused the world with renewed spiritual values, and as He has come in the context of a global age, this implicates that regardless of our denominations and view points, the character of the ‘signs of the times’ – in the precise phraseology of Kant the ‘historical signs’<sup>39</sup> – lies in the urge, despite many obstacles and vivid conflicts that thwart the world, to cooperate and unify. In this context, the similarities that could be made between present IR thinking and its theories on ethical values and global co-operative strategies are not necessarily at odds with the global and caring spirit which depicts the Bahá’í Faith.

The fact that the Bahá'í Faith has Eastern roots is a remarkable aspect for the cosmopolitan tradition. One of the current criticisms that is being voiced against the cosmopolitan tradition and its ideas lay in its exclusive Western lineage. This firstly ignores the links between civilisations,<sup>40</sup> and can act as an impediment to realising the universality of this tradition. The unity of humankind is neither an exclusive Western concept, nor necessarily a secular one. It has, in the real sense of the word, a universal lineage which belongs to all humankind. The Bahá'í faith, by centralising this concept in its world-view, provides the possibility of the re-appropriation of unity in a diverse world as a truly global heritage, and not only as a particular one. Furthermore, 'unity' does not have to be conceived as a mechanical idea, where by the application of certain rules and laws, world order is improved; it also partakes in a more ethical and spiritual basis. In this sense, the 'rational' element that has served to depict cosmopolitanism through the Enlightenment and Modernity in the Western tradition has been complemented by more 'divine' components. 'Divine' does not imply the imposition of world order that descends upon us miraculously, but rather invokes the association with spiritual values and the vital role of human agency that permeate global solidarity.

In addition to being rational beings, and subjective beings, we are also spiritual beings. Rational power is substituted for, or rather complemented by, spiritual empowerment. Reason serves to allow the human mind to make decisions by which it can reinvent the world. The Bahá'í model provides ethical and spiritual elements to our beings that humble raw rationality, and questions the atomistic view of human beings as clearly

independent, autonomous, and severed from each other (cosmopolitans identify this feature of ‘atomisation’ as ‘egalitarian individualism’). This is not necessarily contradictory to the post-positivist phase in IR which has criticised the view that utilitarian reason can solve all problems on its own. The Bahá’í model calls for a wider conception of human beings, who are related to each other, concerned about others, and not solely with their own selves. As Bahá’u’lláh, the Prophet-Founder of the Bahá’í Faith, has written, ‘Let your vision be world-embracing, rather than confined to your own self’.<sup>41</sup> The Bahá’í model challenges androcentric and utilitarian bases of knowledge. It also undermines the current conception that the role of religion relies on romantic and foggy conceptions of reality, and is irrelevant to the more social, public, and global concerns of mankind.

### **World Citizenship and Loyalty**

Debating identities can lead us to develop the notion of ‘world citizenship’. In Bahá’u’lláh’s words, ‘[T]he earth is but one country and mankind its citizens’, constitutes a cosmopolitan theme that has clear legal, political, social and spiritual implications. We are all ‘world citizens’ on planet earth, and also share a common spiritual home. If mankind constitutes the citizenship of the earth, then we are all world citizens, we are *kosmopolites*, we have identities that transcend parochialisms and insularities. Some may say, ‘well, nobody has asked me whether I would like to be citizen of such an imaginary realm, it does not exist. I do not have a world citizenship identity card. There is no world state I can be a citizen of’. Yet, this



conception of world citizenship has a long historical lineage and also has, as cosmopolitans such as Derek Heater argues, always refused to fade. Insofar as it seeks to uproot extreme nationalisms, the alternative of world citizenship is at work.

The times in which we live permit us to differentiate between a 'McDonald' identity, and a genuine world citizenship, especially because the contests against standardisation can underlie identity fundamentalism and romanticism. World citizenship reveres diversity, and does not call for a standardisation of forms. In the words of Shoghi Effendi, the world-wide Law of Bahá'u'lláh seeks 'to broaden the basis' of institutions and loyalties, not to eradicate them. Shoghi Effendi pronounces that the Bahá'í vision of world citizenship 'can conflict with no legitimate allegiances, nor can it undermine essential loyalties.'<sup>42</sup> We have affiliations and loyalties which build upon each other, and all of these make us human. These affiliations can be constantly redefined and put to the test on many corners, especially in an age of globalisation where our most basic assumptions can be directly challenged by others. 'Broadening the basis' of our political institutions and loyalties, as articulated by Shoghi Effendi in the first half of the twentieth century, has of late been voiced in IR as a 'thin', 'sensitive', or 'rooted cosmopolitanism'.<sup>43</sup>

This, furthermore, acts as a means to checking a domineering and homogenising universalism.<sup>44</sup> Richard Devetak explains, 'in recognising the diversity of social bonds and moral ties, a thin cosmopolitanism ethos seeks to multiply the types and levels of political community; recognise the community of humanity at the same time as it

recognises regional, national and sub-national associations'.<sup>45</sup> This layered form of world citizenship is not a threat to enriching human diversity. On the contrary, it may offer a way of enjoying local affiliations. The attribute of world citizenship may also assist in *sharing identities and loyalties*, thereby partaking in a discovery that eschews particularism whilst surpassing it. The Bahá'í view stands against parochialism insofar as it produces virulent nationalisms; it however values the locality that produces a 'sane patriotism'.<sup>46</sup> Shoghi Effendi writes, '[T]he call of Bahá'u'lláh is primarily directed against all forms of provincialism, all insularities and prejudices'.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, by relying on a singular identity on which we may thrive, find strength and pride, we can also learn to hate as exemplified by the horrors which occurred in Rwanda and in the former Yugoslavia. By focusing on exclusionary 'we-ness' and exclusive communities, it is likely that the 'adversity of exclusion can be made to go hand in hand with the gifts of inclusion'.<sup>48</sup> Our local identities will be maximised if they stretch, and constantly challenge themselves.

World citizenship has also generated models of dialogue among communities, which have been termed 'discourse ethics', 'democratic iterations' or a 'dialogic cosmopolitanism',<sup>49</sup> a form of moral conversation in which *all* are invited.<sup>50</sup> Even though these forms recognise that it might not always be possible to reach agreement, dialogue does not have to result in consensus, but should reflect diversity, and heterogeneity of thought. In short, discourse ethics can be linked to world citizenship and is not based on the fatalistic view that differences impede meaningful discourse. This can be associated with democratic processes within international organisations,

underlining thereby that people should participate in the global processes and discussion which affect them in their daily lives. Here, Bahá'í communities can make a *real* contribution to these forms of dialogue and build upon the possibilities inherent in language. Bahá'í examples also lead to the realisation that these forms of communication are not utopian, and have real outcomes insofar as they provide an inclusive and practical framework that lead to action. Bahá'í communities have developed, through what is termed 'consultation', a mode of discourse that embodies diversity whilst forsaking antagonistic and powerful communicative forms that ignore multiplicity, exchange, and diverse opinions. This form of dialogue, here, can significantly impact on cosmopolitan IR.

Discussion also importantly engages the question of world citizenship education in order to recognise our shared membership of humankind and multiple identities. Furthermore, by adopting a preventive approach that revolves around the education of children, the Universal House of Justice writes, '[I]n keeping with the requirements of the times, consideration should also be given to teaching the concept of world citizenship...'<sup>51</sup> The Bahá'í model preferably seeks to solve possible problems before they may occur: it offers a preventive, spiritual, basis that engages unity.<sup>52</sup> Professor Patrick Thornberry, member of Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) at the United Nations, argues in this context that world citizenship education, which he terms 'pro-tolerance education', is one of the crucial safeguards, but neglected means, for tackling racism and ethnic conflicts.<sup>53</sup>

The great challenge that we face, indeed, is the realisation that through our differences, there is a *common responsibility* for the human fate, as advanced by cosmopolitan scholars. In Bahá'ú'lláh's words, 'the earth is but one country and mankind its citizens', as the words 'citizens' and therefore 'citizenship' imply, evoke responsibilities as well as human rights on the global plane.<sup>54</sup> This is a revolutionary idea especially when life chances and opportunities depend so much on contingent places of birth.<sup>55</sup> Currently, many critical scholars link the concept of world citizenship to shouldering responsibility for the global commons, the environment, the eradication of poverty, and the fate of 'strangers' outside as well as within nations.

Indeed, favouring 'co-citizens' has given way to caring for the fate of 'co-humans' – and it is interesting indeed that the phrase the '*earth* is but one country' can also invoke a sense of ecological responsibility. The Bahá'í International Community<sup>56</sup> (BIC) stipulates that world citizenship has both a practical and transformative function, '[W]orld citizenship encompasses the principles of social and economic justice, both within and between nations; non-adversarial decision making at all levels of society; equality of the sexes; racial, ethnic, national and religious harmony; and the willingness to sacrifice for the common good'.<sup>57</sup> World citizenship implies, in short, responsibilities for others. The Bahá'í notion of world citizenship is, in this regard, linked to dissipating the dichotomies between citizen and stranger that have fed modern notions of identity in IR: its assertion of world citizenship is a rejection of erecting barriers between peoples of the earth, the 'inhabitants of one city' – as

expressed by Bahá'u'lláh –<sup>58</sup> in order to eliminate divisive discriminations, illusionary prejudices, and irreconcilable ‘otherness’.<sup>59</sup>

### **A Balanced Politics of Care and Reciprocity**

The private sphere, traditionally associated with women, can offer the means by which cosmopolitanism may be ameliorated. Benhabib and Cornell have argued that the public sphere has been constructed in a way that devalues the moral skills developed in the lives of women, in turn the disregard for these values contribute to placing women within the private sphere. Responsiveness, nurturance, attentiveness, care and dependence have traditionally been linked to women, and these, in turn, have been considered inferior moral standards. ‘Abdul’l’Bahá has talked of ‘moral courage’ as a strong feminine attribute<sup>60</sup> and the Universal House of Justice mentions that women’s participation creates a ‘*moral and psychological climate* in which international peace can emerge.’<sup>61</sup> The BIC has underlined the value of women’s participation: ‘[O]nly as the contributions of women are *valued* will they be sought out and woven into the fabric of society. The result will be a more peaceful, balanced, just and prosperous civilization.’<sup>62</sup> This calls for readjusting the moral standards which have been belittled, and which are traditionally associated with the female gender. Undervalued norms in IR can render the international sphere more co-operative, that is, more responsive, nurturing, attentive, and caring for the fate of *all* its constituents. World order values, which greatly affect the shape and contours of global realities, *do not have* to be antagonistic and competitive: ‘power over others’ can be redefined as ‘service to

others' and 'service to humankind'. New values can lead to the redefinition of 'power' and 'rationality'. The 'public/international' traditionally defined in bellicose terms can be reconceptualised. The Bahá'í model, by including, valuing, and emphasising feminine values,<sup>63</sup> challenges aggressiveness as a condemned IR framework.

### **Globalisation and the Need for Global Cooperation**

The cosmopolis is not only an ideal. It represents, from the Bahá'í viewpoint, an embryonic form which is struggling to appear.<sup>64</sup> Indeed, we live in an age of paradox. Many issues have become transnational while identities and systems of organisations are still entrenched in nationalistic parameters; we have great developments in technology and communications, but only a small portion of humanity can benefit from its breakthroughs; thanks to material advances the earth has shrunk in many ways, nevertheless, people feel increasingly lonely and conflicts multiply and intensify. Physical and material distance may have shrunk, but global social distance has actually widened characterised by sharp asymmetries between wealth and poverty. David Held contends that even if cosmopolitan advocacy could seem like defying gravity and walking on water,<sup>65</sup> there are many cosmopolitan anchors to the world: non-governmental organisations (NGOs), global social movements, the creation of regional systems of governance, women and youth movements, the development of international law, the cooperative search for solutions relating to specific issues such as children's rights, women's rights, labour rights, and the environment. Needless to say that the tendency towards unity is met by opposing tendencies which are contained

in many new forms of antagonisms.<sup>66</sup> According to Bahá'í views, these opposing tendencies are part of a dual process, a process of integration and disintegration,<sup>67</sup> in which setbacks and conflicts will have to give way to gradual global arrangements.

The Bahá'í approach is correlated to the view that a global peace is an ethical and spiritual goal that demands appropriate institutions for its maintenance, but is detached from the cosmopolitan turn around the eighteenth century<sup>68</sup> that sustained that progress and the advantages of peace should be conceived exclusively in material terms. The Bahá'í ethos upholds that technological and material advances provide the possibility of engendering a more ethical and fulfilling peace. Material interdependence does not equate to an ethical community of mankind, but can lead to its realisation and fulfilment. Shoghi Effendi and 'Abdu'l-Bahá observed that the twentieth century offered the material conditions that allowed peace to become a concrete possibility due to global financial and technological interdependence.<sup>69</sup> In this regard, the globalisation of the economy, e.g. a material cosmopolitanism, neither equates to the collapse of exclusions and divisions nor to the expansion of values and identities, in the sense of being responsive to the intrinsic social rights of others, that is an ethical cosmopolitanism. The Bahá'í model offers a way of reconciling both forms. It denotes that the challenge lies not in forsaking technological and material benefits, but rather in infusing renewed values of justice and unity into an uneven process. The balance between matter, on the one hand, and ethics, on the other hand, would ensure that the benefits of globalisation are shared more fairly.

Whilst the economy has gone transnational, our political structures, embedded in Westphalian, statist and national forms of governance, struggle. Questions regarding the environment, HIV/AIDS, the trafficking in women and children, the universal rights of minorities, mass terrorism, genocide, civil society breakdown, global poverty crack through the walls of the state and/or have repercussions beyond the state. How, may we wonder, can global values remedy all this? Here, it is crucial to mention that global values can *induce* practical changes in world order, and engage the ethos of institutions. In this regard, Joseph Stiglitz argues that changes in global governance involve a change in mind-sets.<sup>70</sup> Global values are not necessarily grand schemes for speculation, but also crucial instruments of ‘moral motivation’, an expression that has of late been expressed by critical IR.<sup>71</sup> Through the stretching of identities, they can infuse a global perspective to problems that are no longer exclusively nationally framed, and that transcend Westphalia.

Neo-liberal underpinnings, whose antecedents can be found in utilitarianism, bear upon the ethos of the global economy and its matching organisations.<sup>72</sup> The pursuit of profits and commercial interests is mostly undertaken at the expense of the environment, labour and health standards, human rights, and can wreck the social fabric of many societies whilst serving the interests of the few. In addition, democratic input does not inform unfair trade rules, and barriers to trade result in more poverty for which international aid cannot compensate.<sup>73</sup> (In relation to the latter, Shoghi Effendi remarked the need for all economic barriers to vanish if a community imbued with world citizenship was to be realised).<sup>74</sup> The neo-liberal formula which guides



development policies in a number of countries does not acknowledge that development requires a transformation of society.<sup>75</sup> The formula has wrongly conflated global economic growth with human welfare.<sup>76</sup> Global economic institutions lack transparency, are unequally represented (voting rights discriminate against economically disadvantaged countries whilst policies mostly affect them, a voting representation/model deplored by Shoghi Effendi),<sup>77</sup> and incite counter-reactions in both ‘North and South’ – divided as can be witnessed in this terminology along the lines of ‘rich and poor’ or ‘haves and have not’. The end-results for people subjected to top-down policies are powerlessness, voicelessness, despair, and may materialise in violence. The Universal House of Justice writes:

All too many of these ideologies, alas, instead of embracing the concept of the oneness of mankind, and promoting the increase of concord among different peoples, have tended to *deify the state*, to subordinate the rest of mankind to one nation, race or class, to attempt to suppress all discussion and interchange of ideas, or to callously abandon starving millions to the operations of a market system that all too clearly is aggravating the plight of the majority of mankind, while enabling small sections to live in a condition of affluence scarcely dreamed of by our forebears.<sup>78</sup>

Indeed, material market forces cannot, on their own, solve human rights issues, social inequality, social empowerment, unemployment, pollution.<sup>79</sup> They cannot redistribute resources, heal the sick, and educate children. They need to be embedded in ethical

and social values. According to Devetak and Higgott, globalisation has eroded the social bond, as the political normative order which usually provides security and protection on the national level, has not matched the global economic order.<sup>80</sup> On this view, governmental intervention to promote standards of health, sound environmental policies, and safe labour practices can mitigate the destabilising effects of the global economy. Yet, there is no government at the global level to do this.<sup>81</sup>

In the absence of strong political institutions to deal with these gaps in governance, there is a need for transparent multi-layered multilateralism, democratic input in governance, and grassroots empowerment. In other words, an ethical cosmopolitanism, in the form of democratic citizenry input, values of transparency to govern international organisations, values of participation and consent, and wider human social values need to be fostered in order to offset dividing tendencies between the haves and the haves not. This demands rethinking *issues of justice*, without which real unity cannot be, and also the emergence of novel and improved forms of global governance. If political arrangements do not catch up with economic globalisation, global unity will be delayed.<sup>82</sup> The BIC writes:

The challenge goes beyond ensuring an equitable distribution of opportunity, important as that is. It calls for a fundamental rethinking of economic issues in a manner that will invite the full participation of a range of *human experience* and insight hitherto largely *excluded* from the discourse. The classical economic models of impersonal markets in which

human beings act as *autonomous makers of self-regarding choices* will not serve the needs of a world motivated by ideals of unity and justice.<sup>83</sup>

In this passage, one can notice the salience of the conceptualisation of human beings. For example, the way we view human beings and their potential can have lasting effects on policies that affect them. The concepts of the oneness of humankind and justice can reshape the view of human beings, not as ‘autonomous makers’, but as ‘empowered beings’ who are connected with one another through relationships and the recognition of inherent dignity. This point might sometimes be undermined in current debates about the North and South. As long as social, political, and economic institutions will not view human beings as equal in inherent dignity, and as part of a network of social relationships, as concrete beings with concrete lives and experiences, the distance between global institutions and peoples will not be bridged.<sup>84</sup>

Here, the Bahá’í model can challenge the view of human beings as ‘autonomous rational beings’ as expressed in the liberal cosmopolitan tradition; the Bahá’í model instead views human beings as moral agents who are not severed from each other, but connected through valued *relationships*. Shoghi Effendi, for example, places the principle of the oneness of humankind around the idea of relationships that bind diverse elements together, rendering it interactive and interconnected.<sup>85</sup> J. Ann Tickner suggests an alternative to the view that human beings are autonomous makers of profit maximisation. She proposes an ethic that redefines rationality as personal, rather than abstract, whereby human beings are also attached to the fate of others.<sup>86</sup> This model of

interaction and moral empowerment for world order has been proposed as a humane alternative, and can assist in underlining the social ills that are cancerous namely *because* they disempower. Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen importantly depicts poverty as the deprivation of capabilities.<sup>87</sup> Indeed, finding durable solutions to global poverty does not only concern food and death, but also personal transformation in dignified lives.<sup>88</sup> It also concerns institutional cosmopolitanism. David Held argues that:

[T]he creation of new global governance structures with responsibility for addressing poverty, welfare and related issues is vital to offset the power and influence of market-oriented agencies such as the WTO and IMF. It will be important to reconcile, in this debate, civil and political rights and issues of geopolitical and global security with socio-economic rights and issues of social justice. One cannot accept the burden of putting accountability and justice right in one realm of life – physical security and political cooperation among defence establishments – without at the same time seeking to put it right elsewhere.<sup>89</sup>

Held goes on to suggest, ‘if the political and the security, the social and the economic dimensions of accountability and justice are separated in the long term – as is the tendency in the global order today – the prospects of a peaceful and civil society will be bleak indeed’.<sup>90</sup> More importantly, this underwrites that issues of security, such as terrorism, cannot be decoupled from social deprivations, such as global poverty, and poverty from ecological matters, such as environmental depletion.<sup>91</sup> In this way,

propositions have been advanced for reforming our international institutions, based on sovereign states and self-interest, to a more global system of governance based on subsidiarity and decentralisation, safeguarding thereby that decisions occur at the most appropriate level. A world parliament, dealing with global transnational issues of a political and social import, has been proposed as a possible and fair alternative:

The focus of a global assembly<sup>92</sup> would be the examination of those pressing problems which are at the heart of the possibility of the implementation of cosmopolitan principles – for instance health and disease, food supply and distribution, the debt burden of the developing world, the instability of the hundreds of billions of dollars that circulate the globe daily, global warming and the reduction of the risks of nuclear, chemical and biological warfare.<sup>93</sup>

Shoghi Effendi referring to a world parliament noted that it should, ‘enact such laws as shall be required to regulate the life, satisfy the *needs*, and *adjust all the relationships* of all races and peoples’.<sup>94</sup> It is interesting to note that the second and third generation of human rights – socio-economic rights – define these rights as encompassing needs.<sup>95</sup> Other dimensions of life such as those mentioned by David Held such as the questions of the environment, the instability of the global economy, issues of health and disease, and food supply could also be envisaged within such a crucial remit.

## **Conclusion**

What has been advanced is that the Bahá'í model differs from the cosmopolitan tradition on the grounds that it contains a sacred dimension, and stems from Eastern origins. This has important ramifications for the ideas of cosmopolitanism at large. It can be said that the cosmopolitan ideas are universal, and not solely Western. This is very strong point for cosmopolitanism, albeit one which is quite salient for the Western tradition as a whole. The main criticisms that can be charged against cosmopolitan ideas in current IR scholarship are that they may mask a desire for a global hegemony based on European values, what is termed 'euro-centric'. In this regard, the Bahá'í model destabilises the idea of the universal as being exclusively 'Western' and 'secular'. It also destabilises ideas that the 'rational' mind is a sufficient tool for shaping world order. The Bahá'í model reconciles secular and sacred trends in cosmopolitan IR, by redefining the very idea of the rational and complementing it with feminine elements which have been occluded, and also more 'mystical' elements.

World order does not solely depend on male (not man, but male) rational minds, but also on divine elements which value and engage human agency. Indeed, material cosmopolitanism, which takes the form of a globalisation that has been mismanaged, has to be complemented with more ethical aspects, such as the input of social values, an ethics of solidarity through the participation of global civil society; the accountability of global institutions; the involvement of the grassroots level. This brings several reconciliations in the field: the marriage between the sacred and the

secular, the reconciliation of ‘reason’ with ‘emotion’ and ‘spirit’, and the reunion between matter and ethics, in other words, between material innovations and spirituality. The Bahá’í model also provides ‘a level of principle’ upon which IR theories may thrive, and be reinforced *via* normative and spiritual/ethical components.

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<sup>1</sup> See James N. Rosenau, *The Study of Global Interdependence: Essays on Transnationalisation of World Affairs*, (London: Frances Pinter Publishers, 1980) and Kal J. Holsti, *The Dividing Discipline*, (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1987).

<sup>2</sup> Barry Buzan and Richard Little, “Why International Relations has Failed as an Intellectual Project and What to do about it,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 30:1 (2001): 19. See also Fred Halliday “The Future of International Relations: Fears and Hopes,” in *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, ed. Steve Smith, Ken Booth, and Marysia Zalewski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 319.

<sup>3</sup> Critical international theory, for example, focuses on the boundedness of political communities which gives rise to the concepts of ‘inclusion’ and ‘exclusion’, whilst postmodernism may tackle issues of difference and identity and the dismantling of the notion of sovereignty.

<sup>4</sup> ‘Abdu’l’Bahá, meaning ‘Servant of Bahá’, is the title of ‘Abbas Effendi (1844- 1921). ‘Abdu’l’Bahá is the appointed successor of Bahá’u’lláh (1817-92), Founder of the Bahá’í Faith. Bahá’u’lláh, meaning ‘the Glory of God’, is the title of Mírzá Husayn-‘Alí.

<sup>5</sup> Shoghi Effendi (1897-57), title of Shoghi Rabbání, is the great-grandson of Bahá’u’lláh, Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith appointed by ‘Abdu’l’Bahá. ‘Abdu’l’Bahá and Shoghi Effendi are Bahá’u’lláh’s interpreters and have written extensively on a wide range of subjects, including cosmopolitanism.

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<sup>6</sup> Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh: Selected Letters*, (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1991), 40.

<sup>7</sup> The word 'feminist' here broadly implies the inclusion of women in IR debates, and more specifically aims at achieving gender justice in social relations.

<sup>8</sup> IR feminists 'tend to believe that emotion and intellect are mutually constitutive and sustaining rather than oppositional forces in the construction of knowledge'. (J. Ann Tickner, "What is Your Research Program? Some Feminist Answers to International Relations Methodological Questions," *International Studies Quarterly* 49 (2005): 9-10).

<sup>9</sup> Wight, from the English school, contended in a very realist fashion, that the international sphere is 'incompatible with progressivist theory'. Martin Wight quoted in Linklater, 'The English School', *Theories of International Relations*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., ed. Scott Burchill and Andrew Linklater, (Basingtoke: Palgrave, 2005), 85.

<sup>10</sup> See Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).

<sup>11</sup> For an interesting critic of the civilisational thesis, see Michael J. Shapiro, "The Events of Discourse and the Ethics of Global Hospitality," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 27(3) (1998): 695-713. See also Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*, (London: Allen Lane, 2006).

<sup>12</sup> Fred Halliday quoted in *Theories of International Relations*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 16.



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<sup>13</sup> Tickner, "What is Your Research Program?," 8.

<sup>14</sup> Karin Fierke, *Changing Games, Changing Strategies: Critical Investigations in Security*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 13.

<sup>15</sup> Seyla Benhabib, *Critique, Norm, and Utopia: A Study of the Foundations of Critical Theory*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 30. See also Andrew Linklater, "The Achievements of Critical Theory," in *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, 282.

<sup>16</sup> The Universal House of Justice, "The Promise of World Peace: To the Peoples of the World," in *Peace: More Than An End To War: Selections From The Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb, 'Adbu'l'Bahá, Shoghi Effendi, and the Universal House of Justice*, compiled by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1986), 5.

<sup>17</sup> Halliday, "The Future of International Relations," 318.

<sup>18</sup> Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 11. According to a hierarchical universalism, all those who do not conform to the set definitions of the 'universal' have to be either assimilated, or repressed.

<sup>19</sup> See Richard Devetak, "The Project of Modernity and International Relations Theory," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 24:1 (1999): 40 and R.B.J Walker's concept of 'easy universalism' (*Ibid.*). The marriage between universality and difference can be located within the idea of the universal rights of minorities, e.g. universality at the service of specificity.

<sup>20</sup> David Held, "From Executive to Cosmopolitan Multilateralism," in *Taming Globalization: Frontiers of Governance*, ed. David Held and Mathias Koenig-Archibugi, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), 168.

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<sup>21</sup> Kwame Anthony Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*, (London: Allen Lane, 2006), xv.

<sup>22</sup> Diogenes lived ‘in a capacious jar in the market place... and behaving, it was said, like a dog’. (Derek Heater, *World Citizenship: Cosmopolitan Thinking and its Opponents*, (London: Continuum, 2002), 27.

<sup>23</sup> Edmund Burke quoted in Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism*, 152.

<sup>24</sup> Rousseau spoke of ‘...those supposed cosmopolites who, justifying their love of fatherland by their love of mankind, boast of loving everyone so that they might have the right to love no one’. (Jean Jacques Rousseau, “Geneva Manuscript,” in *The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings*, ed. Victor Gourevitch, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 158.

<sup>25</sup> Cicero quoted in Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism*, xviii.

<sup>26</sup> See also Shapiro, “The Events of Discourse,” 713.

<sup>27</sup> In the words of Marcus Aurelius, ‘...For what is advantageous to the whole can in no wise be injurious to the part’. (Marcus Aurelius quoted in Derek Heater, *World Citizenship and Government, Cosmopolitan Ideas in the History of Western Political Thought*, (New York: St Martin's Press: 1996), 20.) In an age of interdependence, Shoghi Effendi underlined the importance of a world-perspective to tackle local issues, ‘in a world of interdependent peoples and nations the advantage of the part is best to be reached by the advantage of the whole...’ (Shoghi Effendi, *The Promised Day is Come*, (Wilmette: Bahá’í Publishing Trust, 1996), vi.

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<sup>28</sup> Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence*, xii-xiii.

<sup>29</sup> Held, "From Executive to Cosmopolitan Multilateralism," 168.

<sup>30</sup> Thomas Schlereth, *The Cosmopolitan Ideal in Enlightenment Thought*, (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977) and Derek Heater, *World Citizenship and Government: Cosmopolitan Ideas in the History of Western Political Thought*, (New York: St Martin's Press: 1996).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* Emphasis added.

<sup>32</sup> 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1982), 124.

<sup>33</sup> The Bahá'í model, for instance, contends the International Court of Justice should be made more cosmopolitan. The Bahá'í International Community calls for the extension of the Court's jurisdiction and suggests that other organs of the United Nations, not only member states, be given the right to bring cases before the Court. (BIC, "Turning Point for all Nations: A Statement of the Bahá'í International Community on the Occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the United Nations," (New York: Bahá'í International Community, 13).

<sup>34</sup> Bahá'u'lláh, in the Súriy-I-Mulúk (Tablets to the Kings) specifies important governance concepts. The Universal House of Justice says of the Súriy-I-Mulúk:

It introduces some of the great themes that were to figure prominently in the writings of Bahá'u'lláh over the next two and a half decades: the obligation of ...civil authority to institute the reign of justice, the necessity for the reduction of armaments and the

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resolution of conflicts among nations, and an end to the excessive expenditures that were impoverishing these rulers' subjects.

The Universal House of Justice, *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts: Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 2002), iv. See also 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1990), 64.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> The Universal House of Justice, "The Promise of World Peace," 14-15. Emphasis added.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* Emphasis added.

<sup>38</sup> Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, 42. Emphasis added.

<sup>39</sup> Immanuel Kant, "The Contest of Faculties," in *Kant's Political Writings*, ed. Hans Reiss, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 181.

<sup>40</sup> This, for example, ignores the colossal contribution of Islamic heritage to the West: the gift of the transmission of classical, and in particular, Aristotelian, knowledge in the thirteenth century. 'Civilisations' were not separate wholes in which ideas did not circulate.

<sup>41</sup> Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, trans. Shoghi Effendi, (Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1983), 94.

<sup>42</sup> Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, 41.

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<sup>43</sup> Andrew Linklater, *The Transformation of Political Community: Ethical Foundations of the Post-Westphalian Era*, (Cambridge: Polity, 1998), 48-9; Richard Shapcott, *Justice, Community, and Dialogue in International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); for a 'rooted cosmopolitanism' see Anthony Appiah, "Cosmopolitan Patriots," in *For Love of One Country: Debating The Limits of Patriotism*, ed. Martha Nussbaum and Joshua Cohen, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 22; for a 'differentiated universalism' see Patrick Thornberry, "Confronting Racial Discrimination: A CERD Perspective," *Human Rights Law Review*, 5:2 (2005): 266.

<sup>44</sup> Richard Devetak, "Critical Theory," in *Theories of International Relations*, 2nd ed., ed. Scott Burchill and Andrew Linklater, (Basingtoke: Palgrave, 2001), 172.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> The Universal House of Justice, "The Promise of World Peace," 13.

<sup>47</sup> Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, 42.

<sup>48</sup> Sen, *Identity and Violence*, 3.

<sup>49</sup> See Jürgen Habermas, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995); Linklater, *The Transformation*, 88; Seyla Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture: Equality and Diversity in the Global Era*, (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), 37 and 145.

<sup>50</sup> Benhabib underlines the 'right to equal participation between conversation partners whom she defines as 'all whose interests are actually or potentially affected by the courses of action and decisions which may ensue from such conversations'. (*Ibid.*, 37) In relation to discourse ethics Linklater writes, 'true dialogue requires that agents are prepared to question their own truth claims, respect the claims of

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others and anticipate that all points of departure will be modified in the course of dialogue. (Linklater, *The Transformation*, 92).

<sup>51</sup> The Universal House of Justice, “The Promise of World Peace,” 14.

<sup>52</sup> Peter Khan, “Significance of the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh,” (Unpublished Talk), Sydney, Australia, 2003.

<sup>53</sup> Patrick Thornberry, “Confronting Racial Discrimination,” 252.

<sup>54</sup> In this regard, the Bahá’í International Community has developed the principle of ‘collective trusteeship’. (Bahá’í International Community (BIC), *The Prosperity of Humankind*, (London: Bahá’í Publishing Trust, 1995). The BIC writes, ‘... since the body of humankind is one and indivisible, each member of the human race is born into the world as a trust of the whole’. (BIC, “Turning Point for all Nations,” 4).

<sup>55</sup> In IR, this aspect has been deemed the main ‘ethical’ problem of our times. (Mathias Koenig Archibugi, “The Challenge to Governance,” in *Taming Globalization*, 5).

<sup>56</sup> The Bahá’í International Community represents the world-wide Bahá’í community and has consultative status with various United Nations agencies.

<sup>57</sup> BIC, “World Citizenship: A Global Ethic for Sustainable Development,” Based on a Concept Paper shared at the 1st Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, New York, 14- 25<sup>th</sup> June 1993, <<http://www.bic-un.bahai.org/93-0614.htm>>

<sup>58</sup> Bahá’u’lláh, *Gleanings*, 217.

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<sup>59</sup> ‘Abdu’l’Bahá stated, ‘See ye no strangers...for love and unity come hard when ye fix your gaze on otherness’. (‘Abdu’l’Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l’Bahá*, (Southampton: Camelot Press Ltd., 1982), 24.

<sup>60</sup> ‘Abdu’l’Bahá, *‘Abdu’l’Bahá in London: Addresses and Notes of Conversation*, (London: Bahá’í Publishing Trust, 1982), 103.

<sup>61</sup> The Universal House of Justice, “The Promise of World Peace,” 14. Emphasis added.

<sup>62</sup> BIC, “Turning Point for all Nations,” 18. Emphasis added.

<sup>63</sup> ‘Abdu’l’Bahá has written, ‘... the balance is already shifting; force is losing its dominance, and mental alertness, intuition, and the spiritual qualities of love and service, in which woman is strong, are gaining ascendancy. Hence the new age will be an age less masculine and more permeated with the feminine ideals... an age in which the masculine and feminine elements of civilization will be more evenly balanced.’ (‘Abdu’l’Bahá quoted in Janet and Peter Khan, *Advancement of Women: A Bahá’í Perspective*, (Wilmette Illinois: Bahá’í Publishing, 2003), 303-4.

<sup>64</sup> “The whole earth,” Bahá’u’lláh asserts, “is now in a state of pregnancy”. (Bahá’u’lláh quoted in Effendi, *The Promised Day*, 5).

<sup>65</sup> David Held, “Cosmopolitanism: Globalisation Tamed,” *Review of International Studies* 29 (2003): 478-9.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

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<sup>67</sup> Shoghi Effendi referred to ‘simultaneous processes of rise and fall, of integration and disintegration, of order and chaos, with their continuous and reciprocal reactions on each other’. (Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, (Wilmette: Bahá’í Publishing Trust, 1990), 72).

<sup>68</sup> British utilitarianism inspired by Bentham, regarded progress as essentially material, and asserted that through the sum of individual self-interest, the (material) happiness of the greatest number would be achieved. This view is also found in the liberal internationalism of the nineteenth century. Adam Smith thought that through free trade, an invisible hand would co-ordinate economic activity and benefit all. (See Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, (London: J.M. Dent, 1910)).

<sup>69</sup> ‘Abdu’l’Bahá quoted in Bahá’í World Centre (Commissioned by the Universal House of Justice), *Century of Light*, (New Delhi: Bahá’í Publishing Trust, 2001), 7.

<sup>70</sup> ‘The greatest challenge is not just in the institutions themselves, but in mind-sets: Caring about the environment, making sure the poor have a say in decisions that affect them, promoting democracy and fair trade are necessary if the potential benefits of globalization are to be achieved’. (Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, (London: Allen Lane, 2002), 216).

<sup>71</sup> Fiona Robinson, *Globalizing Care: Feminist Theory, Ethics and International Relations*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press), 1999, 131.

<sup>72</sup> Global economic institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organisation, and also the World Bank.

<sup>73</sup> Stiglitz notes that the losses stemming from unfair trade rules are not compensated by international aid, and often worsen the gap between ‘rich and poor’. (Joseph Stiglitz, “Globalization and Development”, in *Taming Globalization*, 56).



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<sup>74</sup> Effendi, *The World Order of Baha'u'llah*, 40.

<sup>75</sup> Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, (London: Allen Lane, 2002), 242 and 252.

<sup>76</sup> James Brassett and Richard Higgott, "Building the Normative Dimension(s) of a Global Polity," in *Review of International Studies* 29 (2003): 30.

<sup>77</sup> Shoghi Effendi has written in this regard, "Though it is premature to try and endeavour to foresee on what basis various nations would be represented on any international council, or in any international form of government, it is clear that from the Bahá'í standpoint it could only be carried out on a basis of true justice; and justice does not imply one race having a preponderating vote over some other race's representatives, and thus being in a position to dominate them". (Shoghi Effendi quoted in Foad Katirai, *Global Governance and the Lesser Peace*, (Oxford: George Ronald, 1981), 97.

<sup>78</sup> The Universal House of Justice, "The Promise of World Peace," 8-9.

<sup>79</sup> 'Mere globalization of market relations can, on its own, be a deeply inadequate approach to world prosperity'. (Sen, *Identity and Violence*, 138).

<sup>80</sup> Richard Higgott and Richard Devetak, "Justice Unbound? Globalization, States and the Transformation of the Social Bond," *International Affairs* 75:3 (1999): 483- 498.

<sup>81</sup> See J.G. Ruggie, "Taking Embedded Liberalism Global," Joseph Stiglitz, "Globalization and Development," Robert O. Keohane, "Global Governance and Democratic Accountability," in *Taming Globalization*, 95, 54, and 132.

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<sup>82</sup> Instead of ‘thwarted’, the term ‘delayed’ was favoured, as the Bahá’í perspective upholds the eventual pacification of IR. The manner in which it will be realised, and its timing, depends on human agency.

<sup>83</sup> BIC, *The Prosperity of Humankind*. Emphasis Added.

<sup>84</sup> The BIC notes that the distance between people and international institutions are part of the problem of global governance. (BIC, “Turning Point for All Nations,” 14).

<sup>85</sup> Effendi, *The World Order of Baha'u'llah*, 42.

<sup>86</sup> Tickner quoted in Robinson, *Globalizing Care*, 131.

<sup>87</sup> Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlements and Deprivation*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982).

<sup>88</sup> ‘Death isn’t the only thing that matters. What matters is decent lives’. (Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism*, 167).

<sup>89</sup> Held, “Cosmopolitanism: Globalisation Tamed?,” 479.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> See also Stiglitz, *Globalization*, 224.

<sup>92</sup> That is a reformed General Assembly at the United Nations.

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<sup>93</sup> Held, “Cosmopolitanism: Globalisation Tamed,” 477.

<sup>94</sup> Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, 203.

<sup>95</sup> John Burton observed that human needs are comprised of security, identity, learning, recognition, valued relationships, bonding, and control over their own environments. (John W. Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention*, (New York: St Martin's Press, 1990), 23 and 47).

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