

Peace Building in International Relations

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This paper sits across two academic disciplines, that of international sociology and international relations. It aims to explore themes in relation to peace building in international relations looking particularly at the dynamic between secularity, religion and spirituality, in the context of the United Nations peace building projects and initiatives. Spirituality is introduced as a third dynamic seen as being in an ideal position to synthesize and integrate the religious and secular fields of human endeavor.

This paper discusses how, in the present context of international relations, a major key to peace building is to overcome the dynamic of separation of key actors in international relations. In the UN there is the separation of the government organizations and the non-government organizations. In academia there is the separation of the religious from the secular. In politics there is the separation of the religious from the secular. These splits are seen as resulting in a weakening of the power of the majority and allow small fundamentalist organizations to have much more influence than is warranted by their size and approach.

In the discussion on the theory of international relations I discuss the role of the modern in creating and post modern in bridging the chasm that presently exists between the religious and the secular institutions. The modernity that emerged in the 16th Century has a very negative perception of religion. Modern thought assumes that religion will continue to die out or be relegated to the private sphere. That is the modern narrative that the majority of the Western and westernized parts of the world still live at present.

The post modern however itself recognizes the modern narrative as a hegemonic discourse, a grand narrative. According to post modernism we are to no longer have the religious narratives but we are to no longer have the modernist narrative either. The post modern is about competing narratives, which is why it is about having a

UN Dialogue of Civilizations. Dialogue in this case is seen as a means to uncover the commonalities of ethical and universalist aims amongst states, global institutions and movements. Such a dialogue is also the means of emerging a new narrative that can take us beyond the modern narrative. According to John Millbank we can't disprove this present dominant modern narrative, but what we can do is out-narrate it.

The contradictory and dangerous outcome of the modern narrative on an international level, as outlined in this paper, is the present security threat to the continuance of human existence. Terrorism has become a major issue both in developing and developed countries. Lack of co-operation of secular and religious is seen as creating the problem and the dynamic of fundamentalism. The answer, as expressed through the UN project Dialogue among civilizations, is one of cultural governance, it is the practical expression of the principle of unity in diversity. This is the core principle of the counter narrative that needs to be taken up by governments and organizations trying to move away from the modernity driven fundamentalist dynamic that leads to terrorism.

The three main international relations theories relevant to peace building

To frame the theme of this paper, international peace building, I will discuss the three well known international relations theories most immediately relevant to present peace building activities. These are the realist, cosmopolitan and inter-civilization theories. To understand present international peace building approaches, it is important to keep in mind the underlying assumptions of these three theories. This paper outlines some of the ways that the limitations within these assumptions form a part of the present obstacles to international peace building.

The Hobbesian realist tradition is based on the assumption that international relations is in an ongoing state of war against all (Bull 1977). The goal is to have a limit to violence. Having the goal to have limits to violence means states are to follow certain rules. Rules such as not to kill the messenger; war is only for a 'just' cause and

can only be fought within certain limits. Such goals of limits to violence illustrate that the vision for peace is secondary to the maintenance of stability within the system. The aim is the maintenance of the state system above all other priorities, since the state is assumed to be the foundation of order and security. Realists have adopted the old European concept of 'just war', applied it to world wars of the 20th century, and now the Bush administration has used the term 'just war' to refer to the global war on terror. (Walzer 1992)

Bull points out peace is 'not a goal which the society of states can be said to have pursued in any serious way. Rather what is meant is the maintenance of peace in the sense of the absence of war among member states of international society as the normal condition of their relationship, to be breached only in special circumstances and according to principles that are generally accepted.' (p18 Bull 1977)

Neo-realist international relations theory is a change to a Grotian, institutionally based view (Buzan 1983) that includes change factors such as economics and social relations but still it assumes that war like relations between states are the norm. (Falk 1995) It also acknowledges that relations that exist presently between states need to and actually already do include ethics and morality allowing for co-existence and co-operation. Again looking at the realist approach to international ethics and the creation of institutions to implement those ethics we find realism struggling and failing to create a clear foundation for a secular ethical approach, nuclear ethics (Nye) are a clear example of this (Hoffman 1981). This failure of realist ethics contrasts with the success of the ethic of non-violence practiced by Gandhi and other religio-political leaders.

The neo-realist approach to international relations is however slightly different from realists such as Morgenthau (1955). Power is economically based; it comes from military resources and your logistical capacity to use these resources to manipulate other states. This power determines your position on the international hierarchy. This neo-realist definition of power is what has determined the selection of members

for the Security Council at the United Nations. Along with the role of all nation states to maintain a balance of power through negotiation there is also a need for the UN Security Council to use military might to police those decisions. Realists however totally reject the role of the UN, seeing the central mechanism for maintaining peace or 'order' is balance of power among states without the need for any international institutions.

Neo-realists are relatively pessimistic about finding areas of commonality such as values or interests between states so that there could be a basis for co-operation and institution building. Conflict is viewed as unavoidable in certain situations due to the existence of 'rogue' states and the expansionary aims of states in different areas of activity. The last interesting aspect of realism and to some extent neo-realism is that it totally ignores cultural and historical differences of nations and civilizations. Waltz's (1992) structural realism inspiring neo-realism also minimizes the importance of national culture or religion or geography as a determinant of foreign policy decisions made by the states and maximizes the motivations of power.

The cosmopolitan approach makes redundant the neo-realist and realist viewpoint of immutability

Neo-realists are concerned about structure in addition to motivation. From a cosmopolitan perspective, this then allows the critical social theorist like Linklater (1998), also concerned about structure; to point out that structure can be changed both within and between states. Motivations are the outcomes of structures of knowledge and can also be changed. In this way the cosmopolitan approach makes redundant the neo-realist and realist viewpoint of immutability.

If we look at the increasingly cosmopolitan institutions of the European Community and their present approaches to peace building such as conflict resolution, multilateralism and the use of dialogue we see how this contrasts and contradicts the

present neo-conservative realist approach of the USA, UK and Australia. (Muravchik 2002)

Cosmopolitans view global peace as a viable future option and peace building as an important activity that can bring about changes of structural relations between nations. The structures of knowledge, such as moral principles, can be changed and these changes will in turn bring about changes in institutional structures linking nations. So the cosmopolitan question deliberately counters the pessimism of realism, they ask how to create a global future that can be founded on a global society:

“determined by freely chosen moral principles...rather than by considerations of national power or by a concern for maintaining order and stability between the most powerful or potentially disruptive sovereign states.” (p22 Linklater 1998)

An example of the implementation of a cosmopolitan approach to peace building was the foundation of the UN and the League of Nations.

We find that the realists at the time of UN establishment were highly critical of the underlying UN cosmopolitan principles of idealism and normative thinking.

(Roberts 1993) (Carr 1940)

Carr's criticism was based on the realist assumption that dominant powers think that only their cultural view is correct and justify actions that appear to other cultures as unjustified. So a United Nations is an unrealistic enterprise and will never work.

“Theories of international morality are the product of dominant nations or groups of nations.” (p101-2, Carr 1939)

This criticism, however, from the point of view of this paper returns us again to the reality of cultural and religious differences between nations. A cosmopolitan interpretation of Carr's statement is that it is not so much the existence of different nations that causes conflict, but the 'nature' of their differences that is important. Change is possible however, by looking at the 'nature' of those differences, a way through difference can be found and new knowledge structure can be created.

An important recent development in cosmopolitan international relations is feminist international relations and its development of the global ethic of care. (Tickner 1997) (Rearden 1993). Feminists feel that decisions being made in international relations are made from a male perspective. They would like to increase opportunities for women to have a collective say and influence in this field.

“The prevailing perspectives within international politics, on the other hand, are predominantly Western and masculinist in their view of human nature. In Women and the Evolution of World Politics, Francis Fukuyama defines international politics through the behavior of male chimpanzees. Here, Fukuyama warns that a more peaceful feminist leadership could actually be harmful to the international order because it is men’s nature (i.e., Saddam Hussein) to aggress.” (Coates)

Radical feminism takes a cosmopolitan view of how change can take place. They focus on bringing change in knowledge structures. That is change in thoughts, values, and relationships. This belief makes radical feminists naturally optimistic about peace building since they believe that peace can also come about through similar methods of change. They also reject the realist analysis of immutability.

Dialogue as a way of expanding the boundaries of political community in order to overcome exclusion

The third approach to cosmopolitan peace building is the critical theory (Linklater 1998) use of dialogue as a way of expanding the boundaries of political community in order to overcome exclusion. Habermas is a key instigator of cosmopolitan dialogue, his aim being to reach a sense of the moral within the individual using rational reasoning. (Habermas 1989).

Developing this direction of critical theory further and taking a post modern approach to dialogue it is possible to acknowledge the existence of competing styles of dialogue and include rather than exclude the other styles. We can then include feminist approaches to use of dialogue as reflections of caring, (Tickner) and a

spiritual approach of basing dialogue on a sense of commonality based on a transcendent view of self, used often in multi-faith dialogue. (Cahill 2002). We can also include communitarian norms of dialogue and its different outcomes and its reliance on group identity (Lyotard 1984). By having dialogues that include all styles of dialogue and change we allow for a truly cosmopolitan dialogue to take place.

Liberal cosmopolitanism limited within the framework of modernity

When we look at present cosmopolitan models for peace building we need to acknowledge the history of the development of cosmopolitanism through Kant (1970), Marx and liberal cosmopolitanism through Linklater (1998). As pointed out, in its present form liberal cosmopolitanism has been instrumental in providing a viable alternative to the realist and neo-realistic schools of thought. However this paper proposes that liberal cosmopolitanism is limited by its continuing allegiance to modernity. There are deep historical reasons for this that we cannot explore within this paper but it is the outcome that is of present concern. This relationship of modernity to liberal cosmopolitanism (Giddens 1990) has resulted in the creation of a Western dominated approach to liberal cosmopolitanism (Fukuyama 1992) (Tyrie 2003). We propose that a western dominated approach in this age of globalization is not sufficiently unlimited and thus cannot create a firm foundation for peace building.

If we turn to a post modern critique of modernity as yet another grand narrative we can see that this leads to the recognition that there are many narratives, and that also there is the possibility of creating counter-narratives to modernity (Walker 1988). If cosmopolitanism took up a post-modern approach to international relations it can include all elements of international society, as a chamois of competing narratives. Dialogue amongst these competing narratives can be done more easily through the recognition of spirituality as a point of commonality between the secular and religious narratives of international society (White 1991) (Millbank 1962). For the sake of this paper we will call this particular post modern cosmopolitan approach to

peace building, spiritual cosmopolitanism. Let us explore these possibilities more fully.

Moving from the modern to the post-modern – the metaprocess of peace building for the 21st century

In the area of inter-civilization peace building the liberal realist view of the clash of civilizations (Huntington 1996) contrasts with the inter-cultural cosmopolitan approach taken by UN and Unesco (Taylor 1992). Predominantly, present inter-civilization politics are viewed through the realist lens of fundamentalist driven inter-civilization clashes (Huntington 1996) based on Fukuyama's theory of end of history (Fukuyama 1992). The cosmopolitan counter project UN Dialogue among Civilizations, tries to engage religious as well political institutions to counter the fundamentalist agenda. (Shea 1996) (Euben 2002).

Huntington's view of the world's clash of civilizations, that has been the focus of much debate about whether the war on terrorism is a clash of civilizations, is not a post-modern analysis, nor is it cosmopolitan in outlook. It centers on a modern neo-realist perspective of international relations with balance of power as the central institution. However his analysis does open up the possibility of developing an inter-civilization view of international relations that breaks out of the bounds of his theory.

In the 1990's the assumption that there had been a common uptake of the path to modernity (i.e. globalization) by all nations had tended to dominate the analysis of civilization differences. Eisenstadt in particular perceived each civilization as being on the path towards modernity, whatever their origins and whatever their present state. As far as he was concerned, the multiplicity and diversity that leads to tension and clashes is all a part of the process along this path to modernity. History is still at work as a transformational and learning process as history continues with the 'modernizing project'. So Eisenstadt (1991), although he acknowledges civilization

diversity still sees modernization as a common future evolutionary outcome for all civilizations.

The other more recent and more controversial figure in this area, already mentioned, is Samuel Huntington (1996). Huntington, although he acknowledges the existence of civilizations and their divides, seems to assume that Western civilization is the only civilization on the path to actualizing modernity. He also sees the West as being prevented from reaching their goal unless they consciously keep a superior position in relation to other civilizations. The higher ethical position of the West is justified by the modern project values that they are promoting and realizing. Huntington's proposed scenario shows each civilization moving in its own direction with clashes on the way being inevitable. Huntington does not accept that a collective evolution of civilizations is taking place together with the West. Western civilization alone is evolving and so is in a superior moral position in relation to other civilizations.

Huntington does however for the purpose of this paper make interesting points as to the role of religion within civilization blocks or regions. He shows clearly that religion is a major force in holding together these various countries to act as regions rather than nation states. Why religion has such a power to glue such huge and diverse groups of people together over such long periods of time he doesn't discuss, but he does point out clearly that religion is the glue through political change, through ideological change, through racial conflict religion continues to hold a region together. It is the largest identity that people culturally choose to take onboard.

This theory of international relations of Huntington is as with most international relationship theories a self fulfilling prophecy depending on who takes it up and operates off it. If government departments of foreign affairs take it up as a map rather than a theory then it becomes a guiding force for decisions. As a guiding force it will actually increase the multi-polar nature of relationships between civilizations.

There always have been elements of this theory operating in international relations but in today's climate, since the end of the Cold War, there has been a lack of a sense of direction in conflicts and interactions. Gradually again the borders are being set up as countries determine where their best interests lie. These new borders appear to some extent to be being drawn along civilization lines.

As an alternative to Huntington's approach the post modern analysis of civilization clashes and historical narratives leads to the view that the dynamic of 21st century conflict is driven by and centers around a conflict of narratives or civilizations. These differences and diversity cannot be resolved through the present governing inter-state mechanisms. These mechanisms quite often define themselves against such types of resolution due to their allegiance to or against a governmental role for religion, or allegiance to institutions of democracy or allegiance to a modern Western civilization worldview or a traditional civilization worldview. It is only agencies like the United Nations that can take this broader inter-civilizational approach.

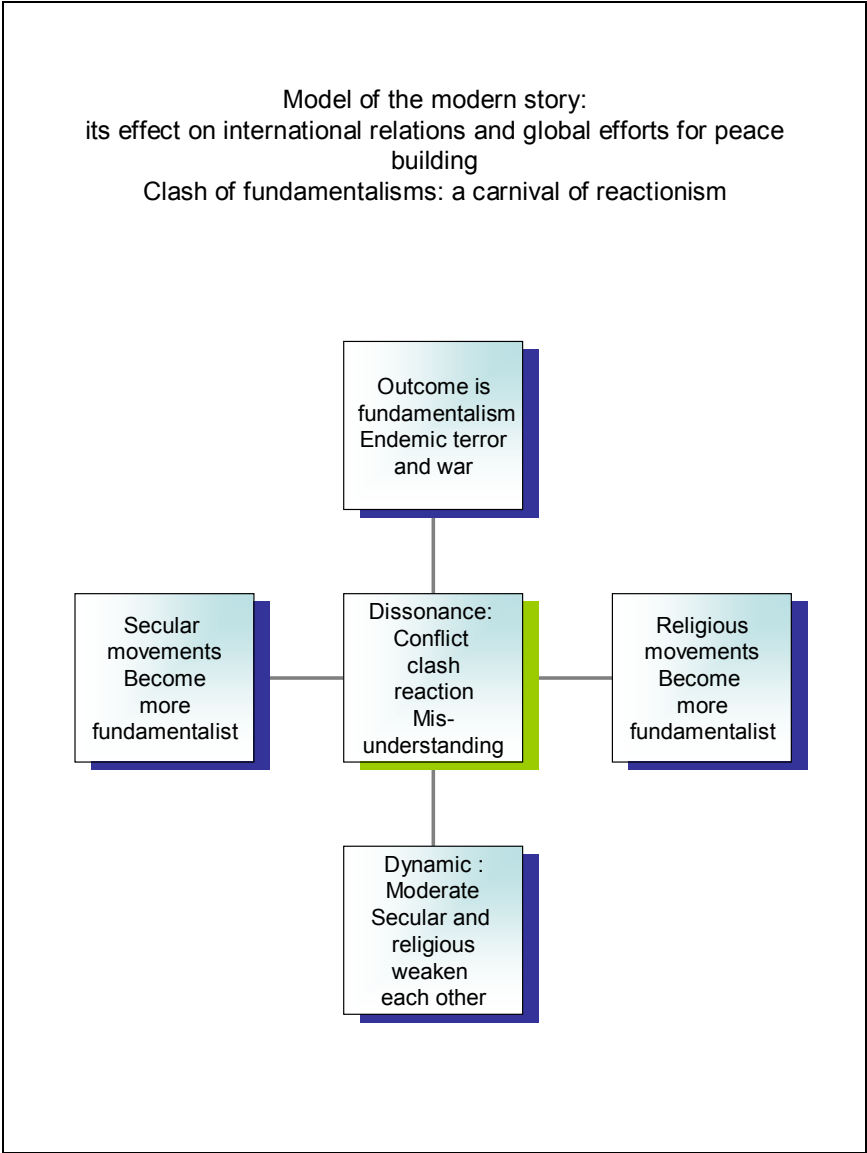
What is a true dialogue of civilizations? Kofi Annan concluded that the real essence of a dialogue is between those who perceive diversity as a threat and those who don't (fundamentalists versus the enlightened practitioner or believer). This is a strong thread throughout the UN; it is germane to the philosophy of the UN. But the real thing really is that diversity, as it was spoken about in the UN, was not to be feared. Diversity is part of the whole system as universality is part and parcel of the whole institution. The UN Dialogue among Civilizations aims to strengthen those who believe that unity in diversity is possible thus reducing the power of fundamentalism.

Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the UN, stated that alongside an infinite diversity of cultures now evolves a new global civilization. Its fundamental principles are the celebration of cultural diversity, tolerance of dissent, and universal human rights. The cultural diversity – in his opinion – is not only the basis for the dialogue among

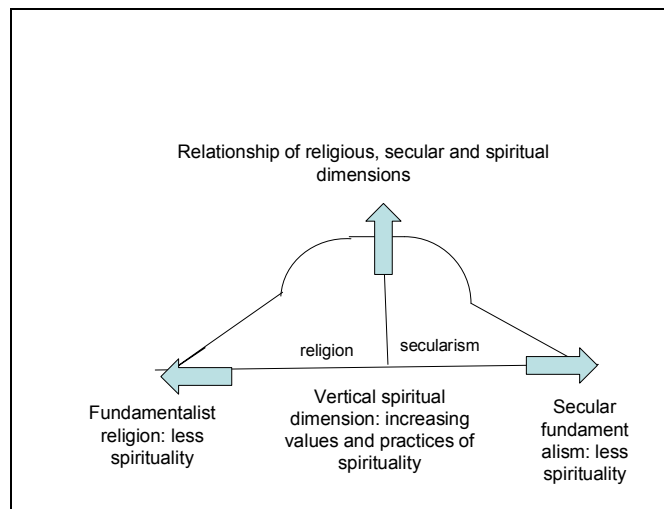
civilizations, but also the reality that makes dialogue necessary, since the perception of diversity as a threat is the very seed of war.

Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, added that active and mutually enriching exchange between cultures is essential to furthering peace between nations. Knowledge of the cultures of others and listening to what they have to say – dispels hatred, ignorance and mistrust, and helps to build peace. Thus cultural dialogue leads to long-term understanding, and helps to sow the seeds of peace.

Globalization could bring great benefits to many nations, but it could also result in increasing sufferings, hatred and conflicts. It requires not only economic and political co-operation, but also a new “architecture of dialogue” among nations and civilizations. There are in the West politicians and intellectuals who expect that the entire world will eventually be Westernized and will adopt the Western values, institutions, social and political norms, etc. Others, together with their numerous colleagues from non-Western countries, realize that such expectations are unrealistic, or even harmful, at least for foreseeable future. There will exist numerous civilizations which should enrich one another and perhaps could even share some essential common values. People grown up in them should increase their mutual understanding, and this requires a new “education for dialogue” instead of the old education in the national spirit. Closer international co-operation requires new information network promoting cultural dialogue, mutual respect and understanding.



The Curve of Commonality



Finding a point of commonality between narratives and civilizations with a religious or secular bias.

A post-modern spiritual approach to the development of understanding between civilizations can develop principles and values that have points in common in both the secular and the religious narratives. The modern 20th Century view is that these two types of narrative are oppositional and cannot co-exist.

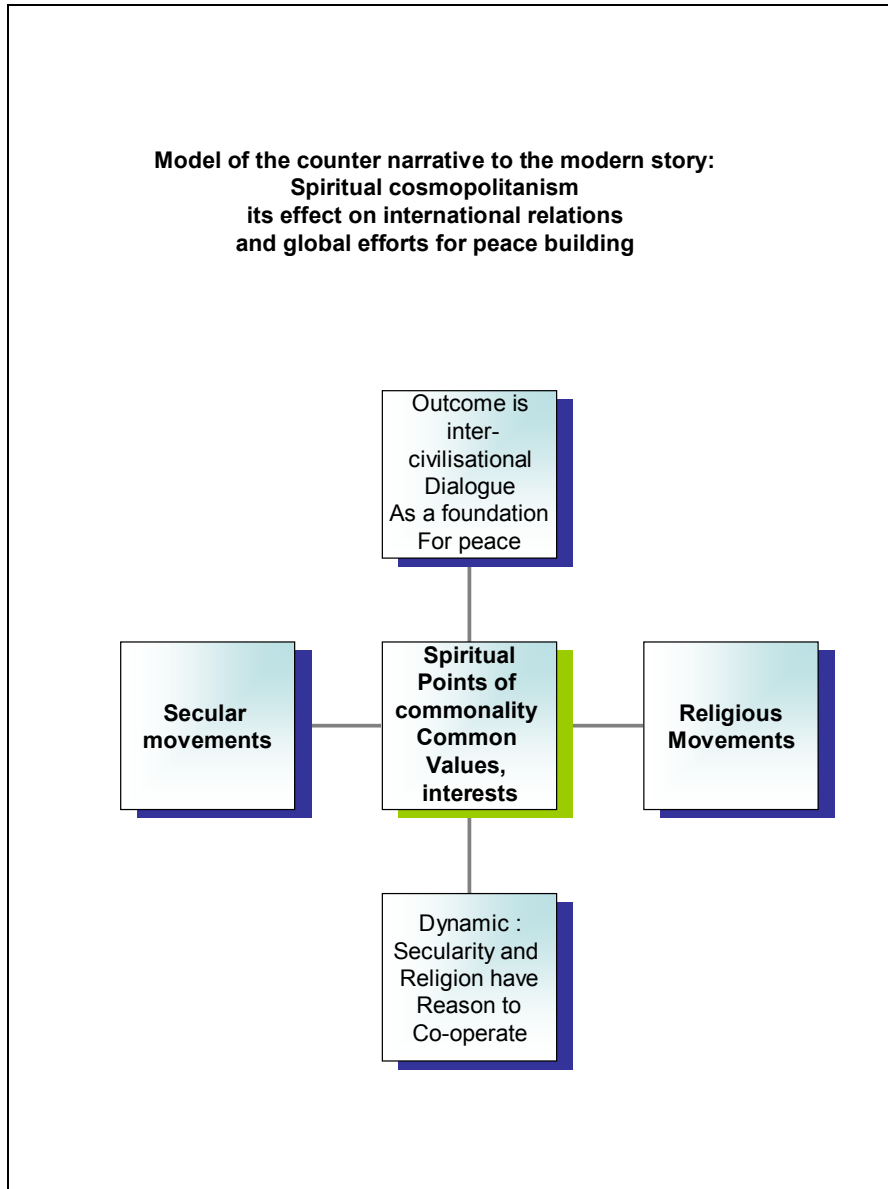
There are a variety of new ethical dimensions that emerge in the values, visions and purposes of post-modern philosophies. The ongoing search for truth, the deconstruction of the old in the search for the new, continues to also uncover new powers of transformation that can be added to the cosmopolitan spiritual dimension of transformation that is happening in the world.

Spirituality accepts the belief in the transcendent essence of the self as being spirit or an eternal being different from the body. But at the same time it also sees the self as expressing itself through its values, practices and actions that is its knowledge structures. With this in mind although a person may lack a belief in their

transcendent essence they can still have values and actions with a high degree of selflessness and care for others. Secular people can also choose to have a transcendent belief without having a religious belief. They also may have good reasons for preferring a secular view finding it difficult to accept religious traditions, prejudices or ideas as is discussed later in relation to women.

There is no rejection in spirituality of religion either. Religion is seen potentially as a deep source of values, understanding of the transcendent and having also great possibilities for leading people towards a more spiritual development of themselves. Religion however can also get in the way of this development by blocking a persons spiritual path through the imposition of unnecessary traditions, rules by force and fear. Religious people, like any others are not always selfless but can also use institutions for their own selfish purposes rather than spiritual purposes and entrap people in religion for purposes of power rather than for transcendent purposes. Fundamentalist religion is an example of this.

During the UN Dialogue among Civilizations Forums held in Australia 2001-3, (see UNDAC Forums) there was the development of a cosmopolitan spiritual counter-narrative. This counter narrative through dialogue synergizes the local forces of difference, and similarly as it is being done internationally potentially synergize the forces of world diversity. It acknowledges the importance of modernity but also the importance of religion based traditional civilizations and recognizes the struggle that traditional religions are involved in fighting the fundamentalist elements within. It appreciates greatness of spirit in both the secular and the traditional religious societies but asks both to transform and to recognize their relative existence to the others. Such recognition can enable common interests, common humane concerns and values to form the basis of co-operation and working together for a better future (Neilsen, 1986).



Present day example of the functioning of the model of the modern narrative versus its counter narrative

What is happening at the moment in Iraq has been variously termed a clash of fundamentalisms or as James Connelly once put it a carnival of reaction. James Connelly wanted a secular socialist Ireland (James Connelly: The partition of Ireland), instead they made a partition that divided Ireland along interest lines and gave all the power to the fundamentalists on both sides of the border. This paper

explores that idea that what happened in Ireland is just a small scale example of what has happened globally due to a partition of major interest groups along civilization borders.

Globally due to the modern approach to politics and society there has developed a division of interests between the secular and the religious institutions, nation-states and civilizations. The outcome of this division has been the rise of fundamentalist representatives of those interests due to dissatisfaction with the status quo. The Bush regime in this case represents fundamentalist modernity and Osama Bin Laden represents Islamic fundamentalism. Both are idealists, but fundamentalist idealists which by the by means there is no room for negotiation, they must either win or lose.

Both Bush and Bin Laden believe, unlike the realists, that the world can change, and that it is the whole world that needs to change not just one or two nation states. They don't believe that it is good enough to create peace through a balance of power but aim rather for a peace that requires a change of world view. These are the two world views one based on the modern narrative, the other based on the Islamic religious narrative, and they are placed through a fundamentalist agenda in direct opposition to each other.

The more moderate cosmopolitan and neorealist parties such as the Europeans, the Russians, the Asians, the Africans, much of the Arab world and the United Nations are pushed to the side lines by this fight. The lines of war are drawn up by the most fundamentalist parties representing the two sides. The realist institution of balance of power to maintain peace can no longer work under such circumstances since the driving forces driving both parties are no longer those of power, not even economic drivers but the ideals of different world views.

Although a true dialogue of civilizations could prevent the development of such confrontations, presently the dialogue of civilizations are more often than not framed

within modernity. The potential to extend the UN project of dialogue among civilizations using a post modern approach to dialogue and civilizations has not yet been properly explored.

We see global acculturation being resisted in the form of Western cultural values (Tibi 1992). Peace building efforts in this case are the creation of inter-civilization common ground and an acknowledgement of differences of values (Said, 1993) (Osama bin Laden, 1996).

Looking for examples of cultural governance

According to our discussion so far cultural and religious conflict are amongst the greatest problems being identified at the beginning of the 21st century. Developing countries have issues with cultural globalization and Westernization and this has become a source of conflict within their own societies as some members encourage Westernization and others resist the incursions of the West and hold on determinedly to their own traditions. These defensive reactive responses are to the spread of cultural values emanating from the West.

Both the secular and religious traditions of the West and other civilizations culturally have room for reform but at the moment because of the hegemonic position of the United States and the superior economic position of the Western countries in general there is a feel of threat both culturally and economically and militarily from the West and less interest in internal reform. This again is due to the present political climate. Actually developing countries are greatly in need of cultural reform as problems of corruption and distortions of the value systems of their cultures and traditions are underlying many of the problems they face in today's world. However for the politician and the power broker it is often easier to blame the outsider than to take up genuine local reform.

Mahatma Gandhi was an interesting figure in relation to this issue. India was facing the problem of colonization and imposition from the outside. Gandhi saw the path to liberation as involving a valuing of India's strengths. Valuing the village system and its self sustainability rather than chasing after the industrial model of its colonial masters. But Gandhi also admitted that the strength of values to do that had to be developed within India. He would often say when civil wars broke out between the Hindus and the Muslims, that India was not yet ready for independence. He knew they could become ready and that they were worthy of independence, but they needed to learn more about themselves and have greater strength of character to be able to treat people of other religions as their brothers. So Gandhi, although he demanded freedom for India from Britain also knew that reform was required by both parties, the British and the Indians and he was the first to be ready to admit that.

This is another aspect of cultural governance, the ability for all parties to admit the need for change. It is always hard to do that when one party is dominating the proceedings and implicitly colonizing both economically and culturally. But, as in the case of India, part of the key to internal stability of a country was its value of its own self. Looking for reasons why people in developing countries turn towards the West it has been found that they feel that their own cultural systems are corrupt and even dangerous to their own well being. Of course the temptation of economic benefit and material values is there but the downside of their own culture also plays a part in their decision.

For Gandhi, this was one of the hardest parts of the role he had to play as, in a sense, the Father of India. To let the Indian people know that their enemy was not just the unfair rule of their outside masters, the British, but also the enemy was their unbridled anger towards their fellow citizens and the lack of discipline and fairness within Indian society. India had terrorist groups that were holding up the British and ambushing them and assassinating them. But Gandhi never sided with such groups

declaring them to be as bad as or even worse than the British. Gandhi was not just concerned with immediate freedom from British rule but he was concerned with the long term future of India and what would happen to India after the British left. The terrorist methodology gave little support to notions of long term governance or sustainable society, but rather presented an image of anything goes in terms of behavior, the cause justifies the method. Such as rule is anathema to the development of a peaceful and stable society.

The education of people within developing countries is of major concern to many of the UN and Unesco programs. The participative method of reform is being used increasingly in developing countries. Also use of peace making and peace keeping methods involving reconciliation and mediation allows both colonizers and colonized parties to work through the issues and come to new understandings rather than just set up new borders to keep the unreconciled parties separated. What happens with the anger and resentment and trauma after colonialism, war or terrorism is an important part of rebuilding a peaceful society. These are all forms of cultural governance. These are the methods of building a Culture of Peace as framed in the UN Decade for a Culture of Peace. (see chapter four on UN and Building a Culture of Peace).

Lastly is the inter-civilization peace building approach that brings us to the issue of cultural global governance (Commission on Global Governance 1995) as a way of moving beyond the modern rationalism and working with cultural valorizing and hybridity. (Hall S, 1996) (Hall and Gieben 1992). Here the use of the core principle of unity in diversity in relation to the division between the secular and religious, acting as an inter-civilization bridge becomes a foundation for cultural governance. (UN and Unesco projects related to the theme unity in diversity: web research). The role of NGO's is crucial in relation to this approach (Boli and Thomas 1999).

The difficulty here is the gap between the grassroots healing activities of

participative governance and sustainable living projects of the UN and reconciliation and mediation of the peace making and peace keeping UN initiatives and the actual hard headed reality of international politics. The overall ideology that is driving the global system at present destroys the outcomes of these grass roots efforts.

However ideological reform and understanding on an international level as well as reform of methods and directions of cultural governance is required. This is where the UN Dialogue among Civilizations can play a role. Gandhi also understood this principle of inter-civilization communication. He deliberately targeted the British Empire. He targeted British media in order to let the British public know that their rule in India was unethical and not necessary, the Indian people were capable and willing to govern themselves. He needed to target the ideology underlying the British colonial drive, the belief that colonial countries were somehow culturally inferior and incapable of governing themselves. Somewhat similar to the present Western ideology that the Western liberal democratic values are superior to those of the pre-modern civilizations that still found themselves on outmoded religious traditions.

Religion and women as part of the problem for inter-civilization dialogue

One of the main objections amongst secular women to religion is the religious attitude towards women. This prejudiced attitude of religion has encouraged women to increasingly turn to spirituality and secularism. They feel that religion is ignoring the demand from women to let go of out of date institutions that lack a good foundation in the real teachings of religion.

Without the spiritual dimension to bridge the gap between secularity and religion, women committed to modernity in particular would increasingly be turning against religion. With the spiritual as a bridge women are still able to appreciate the values and common interests and concerns within religion without having to sacrifice their

own sense of self-respect by taking on a tradition which places them as being lower beings than men.

When I met a women's group ANRWA, involved with refugee work we discussed the role of religion in the work with refugee women. The main view is that religion is one of the main problems for refugees. ANRWA is totally against religion because of the way it puts women down.

The issue identified by ANWRA is there and should not be ignored but an approach of anger, criticism and rejection of religion will not solve the issue. However, modernity's contribution to a better future is its ability to question traditions so that any elements of corruption can be worked through and the future becomes a better future for all. To bring change dialogue is required between the parties concerned so that a better understanding can be reached of the issues.

Religion is completely founded on beliefs that are a part of a complex world view with many thousands of years of tradition and development of those beliefs. This makes change a complex matter. In addition change means questioning a belief system that is attractive because of its claim to be the truth. Change could also lead to doubt in the believers. Heads of religions are usually only willing to bring change incrementally so that it doesn't undermine the faith of the believers and the stability of their religious identity. Changes may well be needed but the voice demanding change must be both truthful to their reasons for change and be persistent in their call for change.

Secular thinkers have reason to be wary of religion and also reason to be impatient but they don't have reason to be dismissive because a reasonable approach cannot afford to dismiss the world views of billions of people that are religious. Modern people need to work with and help in the transformation of religion. They can't afford to hope it will go away. If they work against it they will just confirm and

strengthen the worst characteristics of religion, its blind and extreme reaction to outside threat as exemplified by Bin Laden.

On the other side, religion cannot afford to dismiss modernity. Modernity is the main narrative of the end of the second millennium and is firmly in power in the beginning of the third. The Western societies run by secular democracies with the religion relegated to the private sphere are the dominant economic and political powers.

The other issue is the distrust of religion of secular institutions. Secular institutions are regarded as being a source of unethical behavior, materialistic attitudes and false ideologies that lead people to think they can do without transcendence (religious faith and practices). They are also seen as a source of war and conflict.

When we look at history we find that the 18th to 20th centuries have been dominated by secular ideologically inspired wars and conflicts between states. The secular ideologies that have been a source of conflict, communism versus capitalism the driver of the cold war, fascism versus liberalism the driver of world war two, Napoleonic wars for equality, liberty against the monarchical governments of Europe – the driver is liberalism against autocratic governments.

These modern philosophies did not work for peace. The realist view is that war is an endemic aspect of nation state to state relationships. That conflict is inevitable but different mechanisms can be used to avoid it if possible. The communist view is that revolution and war are a part of the process of change and is also inevitable. The fascist view is that war is a way of spreading the ideology.

Religion as part of the solution of inter-civilization dialogue

The proposal of this paper is to bring the forces of religion into the international arena and engage them with the process of peace building. Religions are powerful

institutions that have the resources and the powerful values base to resist the temptations of power and corruption and anger that plague attempts to move in the direction of peace. Religion is what gave Gandhi the power to do what he did, he resisted the temptations of power declaring the humility and remembrance of God were the basis of ruler-ship, he openly defamed all forms of corruption with the example of simplicity and total renunciation and branded anger as being unworthy of a religious people whether Muslim or Hindu or Christian since they were all brothers and had a duty to uplift and help each other.

The difficulty with involving religion in this manner is the long tradition coming from Western history of the secularization of politics, which has not only engendered a cynical and negative attitude towards religion amongst many in power, but also an inability to perceive the importance of the role of religion in the traditions of other civilizations. Religion is often labeled as the problem that other civilizations have to get rid of, rather than as part of the solution. This is not helped by the terrorist's use of religion as a banner, openly brandishing the promise of heaven eternal in exchange for turning oneself into a living bomb.

"(Bagarah; 2:154). His messenger (Allah's Blessings and Salutations may be on him) said: "for those who strive in His cause Allah prepared hundred degrees (levels) in paradise; in-between two degrees as the in-between heaven and earth". Saheeh Al-Jame' As-Sagheer. He (Allah's Blessings and Salutations may be on him) also said: "the best of the martyrs are those who do NOT turn their faces away from the battle till they are killed. They are in the high level of Jannah (paradise). Their Lord laughs to them (in pleasure) and when your Lord laughs to a slave of His, He will not hold him to an account"." (Bin Laden O, Our youths believe in paradise after death Statement by Bin Laden in 1996)

However if we look at the history of colonialism and politics we find that traditionally terrorism has used methods such as this, and it has often only been when a strong religious leader counters this narrative with an equally religious but peace oriented narrative that people are able to turn away from violence and conflict and turn their attention towards building institutions based on their own cultural traditions for bringing peace and stability and prosperity in their nation. We find that

figures such as Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, and Mahatma Gandhi all spoke in this way about the cultures and their religions. They drew people away from the temptation of using violence and channeled their energies towards peace building and cultural governance and they did this with a deep religious message and open religious faith.

The message that comes from these great leaders is similar to this one, coming from a Canadian mosque in protest of the September 11th terrorist attacks:

“The Qur’an speaks about the basic dignity of all human beings. The Prophet -peace be upon him- spoke about the equality of all human beings, regardless of their race, color language or ethnic background. The Shri’ah recognizes the rights of all people to life, property, family, honor and conscience.

Islam emphasizes the establishment of equality and justice, both of these values cannot be established without some degree of tolerance. Islam recognized from the very beginning the principle of freedom of belief or freedom of religion. It said very clearly that it is not allowed to have any coercion in the matters of faith and belief. In Surah al-Shura Allah says to the Prophet -peace be upon him, “If then they turn away, We have not sent you as a guard over them. Your duty is but to convey (the Message)... (al-Shura 42:48)”

By stepping back from the immediate struggle implied by the war on terror and looking at the cultural criticism of both sides of each other, we see a struggle shackled by cultural prejudice on both sides. Both sides can also find a lot to criticize and also a lot to be angry about in the behavior and actions of the other. So the question is does the modernity of the Western world win or does the traditional religion based world win. The answer of course is that neither will win if just force is used. War has a high cost to both sides because it is a lose lose scenario.

So war is not the solution but rather the longer that violence and war is used the more problems it creates as both sides dig in an increase in their degree of resentment and anger of the other. The war on terror is not obviously a war of the innocent being attacked by a power hungry aggressor. It is an ideological war. So the only way to stop ideological warfare is with ideological peace building as

exemplified by the great leaders of colonized countries such as Gandhi, Mandela and King. But here the stakes and the war is global not restricted to national borders or national solutions.

Conclusion:

International leaders have virtually been forced, by the dynamic of fundamentalist confrontation, between USA and strategic terrorists, to take on the confrontational model of change rather than looking to transform the foundation of the relationships between the parties. The confrontational model to some extent suits the modern narrative, it allows for the deliberate promotion of liberal democratic values in areas of the world that are seen to be held back from joining the modern world by their old fashioned values and traditions. It allows liberal governments to promote their narrative, and make themselves the heroes of the story.

The narrative has a line, and that line is easy to push through the media as it is presently structured. The story is that peace will come as the world becomes more liberal and more democratic and as religion is increasingly relegated to the private sphere. Such religious fundamentalist regimes cannot be trusted with WMD and cannot be trusted to fight against terrorists.

The inter-civilization approach to international relations being developed by the UN Dialogue among Civilizations is an attempt to out-narrate this story, to undermine its assumptions about endemic violence being the fault of religions having political power, or the lack of democratic values, or that dictatorial rule is the natural outcome of under developed societies and that they can only be liberated if they take on board liberal democratic values and way of life.

The narrative that Dialogue among Civilizations is promoting is quite different. It is a narrative of the richness and diversity of human tradition and religious beliefs and it is that very diversity and culture that is the pool of wisdom and greatness that can

carry humankind into the third millennium. Religions are not so much a threat as a much under utilized resource for development and peace.

In this context we can see the role played up till now by the realist, cosmopolitan and inter-civilization international relations theory. This paper has attempted to illustrate the way international relations and peace building has been and continues to be influenced by the underlying assumptions of these theories. We have also attempted to outline ways of going beyond these limitations or extending the theories so that they can encompass new possibilities for peace building extended to us in the opening of the 21st Century.

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Publications

She has published her presentation papers for previous forums on the internet as part of the UN Dialogue Network.

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