'Our normal attitude to foreigners is a complete negation of that absence of discrimination on irrelevant grounds which we have recognized as the principle of equality'.

Political philosophers have traditionally assumed that ideals of distributive justice should operate, if they operate at all, within countries. On this view, principles of distributive justice should be adopted at the state-level or nation-level and may require the redistribution of wealth from the wealthy within the state or nation to the less advantaged members of that society. The standard assumption, thus, has been that what has been called the 'scope of justice' -- the account specifying from whom and to whom goods should be distributed -- should include other members of one's state or one's nation. It should not, however, include everyone. Recently, however, this assumption has been vigorously challenged and a number of political philosophers have argued that there are global principles of justice. Principles of distributive justice, that is, should have a global scope.

This Review Article examines recent work on international distributive justice. Within the literature on global justice, one can distinguish between a number of competing approaches. In this Article, I shall focus on four commonly expressed approaches. In particular I shall examine the cosmopolitan contention that distributive principles should operate globally (sec I) before then examining three responses to this position, namely the nationalist emphasis on special duties to fellow-nationals (sec II), the society-of-states claim that principles of global distributive justice violate the independence of states (sec III) and realist claims that global justice is utopian and that states should advance the national interest (sec IV).
Prior to analysing these different traditions, three preliminary points should be made. First, it is worth noting that the characterisations of the four perspectives I have given above are approximate and require further qualification. Moreover, the philosophical perspectives adopted are not intended to be seen as rigidly defined mutually exclusive doctrines: rather they refer to philosophical perspectives which may overlap and whose borders are not precisely demarcated. Indeed, what I hope to show is that the approaches outlined above have more in common than is often recognised.

Secondly, it is worth distinguishing between strong and weak versions of the claim that there are international principles of distributive justice. On the weak claim, individuals have obligations of distributive justice to some but not all those who live outside their state or nation. On this account, obligations of distributive justice may operate beyond the nation or state -- and are, in this sense, international -- but may not incorporate everyone: the scope of justice is not simply domestic but is not global either. Thus, the British might have obligations of distributive justice to other members of the European Union, say, but not to Malaysians. On the strong version of the claim, by contrast, individuals have obligations of distributive justice to everyone: the scope of justice is global. This Review focuses on the stronger claim but it is also worth noting that even if we reject this we are not committed to the traditional view that ideals of distributive justice specify the distribution of resources within states.

A third and final point should be made, namely that the aim of this Review is to discuss recent discussions of international distributive justice. That is, it analyses the obligations issued by a theory of distributive justice, and it is important to distinguish between these obligations and other types of moral obligation. There are, for example, arguments for a global redistribution of wealth which appeal not to justice but to charity. This paper will not examine such claims.

I: Cosmopolitanism

Having made these preliminary points, let us begin with contemporary defences of a global principles of distributive justice. Recently a number of political philosophers -- including Brian Barry, Charles Beitz, Thomas Pogge, among others -- have advocated what has come to be known as a cosmopolitan position, arguing that principles of distributive justice should be applied to the world as a whole. Duties of distributive
justice thus apply to all human beings. To get a full picture of the cosmopolitan perspective and the various forms it takes, it is important to bear four further points in mind.

First, it is important to distinguish between what might be termed 'radical' and 'mild' cosmopolitanism.\(^8\) Radical cosmopolitanism, as I define it, makes the two following claims: first, there are global principles of distributive justice (the positive claim), and, second there are no state-wide or nation-wide principles of distributive justice (the negative claim). Mild cosmopolitanism, by contrast, simply affirms the positive claim. As such it can accept the claim, denied by radical cosmopolitanism, that citizens and/or co-nationals owe special obligations of distributive justice to fellow nationals and fellow-citizens respectively. Now cosmopolitans differ in their position here. Whereas some, like Charles Beitz, do affirm the radical view that 'state boundaries can have derivative, but they cannot have fundamental, moral importance'\(^9\), others, like Brian Barry, Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen do not.\(^{10}\)

Secondly, it is worth noting Thomas Pogge's distinction between 'institutional' and 'interactive' forms of cosmopolitanism. The former maintains that principles of justice concern the distribution of resources within institutions and the focus of attention is on the fairness of the institution(s). The latter, on the other hand, maintains that principles of justice concern the behaviour of individuals and one has obligations to other humans independently of whether they are members of the same institutions or not.\(^{11}\) Pogge, himself, defends the institutional approach and argues that given the degree of international economic interdependence, there is a global basic structure and hence that there are global principles of distributive justice.\(^{12}\) Other cosmopolitans, however, most notably consequentialists like Peter Singer, would claim that persons can have obligations to help others even if those others do not belong to the same institutions.\(^{13}\)

A third feature of contemporary cosmopolitan accounts of distributive justice concerns who is entitled to the goods transferred. Here it is clear that most contemporary cosmopolitans affirm that duties are owed to individuals (and not states). This, for example is made clear by Charles Beitz and Thomas Pogge.\(^{14}\) An alternative view has been taken by Brian Barry who once argued that states were entitled to receive resources.\(^{15}\) In recent publications, however, he rejects this position. And indeed, given cosmopolitanism's individualist assumptions, his later position is most in keeping with cosmopolitan tenets.\(^{16}\)
Finally, it is worth drawing attention to the practical measures affirmed by contemporary cosmopolitans. These vary considerably. Some like Charles Beitz and David Richards have endorsed a global difference principle, arguing that resources should be distributed to maximise the condition of the least well-off humans. Others like Hillel Steiner have argued that everyone is entitled to an equal proportion of the Earth's resources. Brian Barry has defended four principles of global justice. These require in turn, that we affirm (i) an overriddable commitment to equality, (ii) a principle compensating people for involuntary disadvantages, (iii) a commitment to protecting people's basic needs, and (iv) the claim that where these three principles are already met, we may prefer that arrangement which is most mutually advantageous. Finally Thomas Pogge has defended what he terms the global resources dividend - a scheme under which persons pay a dividend when they use the Earth's natural resources. Space precludes a full examination of the respective merits and demerits of the various schemes proposed. What is more important is that they all have in common the conclusion that the current system is extremely unjust and that a redistribution of wealth from the affluent to the impoverished is required.

Now that we have an approximate understanding of the claims advanced by contemporary cosmopolitans, we need to examine the reasoning underlying their position. Here it is instructive to consider what leading cosmopolitans -- like Barry, Beitz and Pogge -- claim are the central tenets of cosmopolitanism. They all argue that cosmopolitanism contains (and derives its plausibility from) the following intuitively appealing claims: (a) individuals have moral worth, (b) they have this equally, and (c) people's equal moral worth generates moral reasons that are binding on everyone. Now, as they then point out, if we accept these (very plausible) ethical claims it would be mysterious to claim that the duties imposed by a theory of justice should include only fellow citizens or fellow-nationals. These universalist considerations imply that the scope of distributive justice should be universal.

Cosmopolitans develop this point further by analysing the moral relevance of cultural identities. As Pogge, among others, points out, on all accounts of justice no reference is made to someone's ethnic identity or their status or their sex. These are all deemed to be irrelevant. But then given this, it is puzzling why these are morally irrelevant but someone's membership of a nation or state is relevant. Furthermore, as Samuel Black, Charles Jones and Robert Goodin all point out, the considerations standardly adduced to defend redistribution refer to characteristics (like the capacity for autonomy) that are possessed by humans throughout the world. Thus, if we invoke
such considerations to defend redistribution they justify it to all who possess these properties whether they are fellow nationals or not. In short the fundamental thesis advanced by contemporary cosmopolitans states that:

the principal cosmopolitan claim: given the reasons we give to defend the distribution of resources and given our convictions about the irrelevance of people’s cultural identity to their entitlements, it follows that the scope of distributive justice should be global.

To employ a Rawlsian term, the principal cosmopolitan claim makes a claim about peoples’ ‘moral personality’. In stating that all persons (whatever their creed, culture, ethnicity or nation) should be included within the scope of justice, it affirms a universalist moral personality according to which none of these factors is ethically relevant.

This cosmopolitan claim can be found throughout recent cosmopolitan literature generally and in all of the many different arguments given in defence of the redistribution of wealth throughout the world. To see this, we need to consider some of the different cosmopolitan theories advanced, focusing on (a) contractarian, (b) rights-based, and (c) goal-based brands of cosmopolitan justice.

A. Let us begin with the contractarian brand. Charles Beitz is famous for employing Rawls's contractarian device -- the original position -- and arguing that instead of asking what people in individual societies would agree to one should hold a global original position. Although he once argued in Political Theory and International Relations that everyone should be included in a global original position on the grounds (i) that principles of justice should dictate the distribution of goods generated by a system of co-operation and (ii) that there now existed a global system of economic co-operation, he has long since rejected this argument. In its place, Beitz argues that everyone should be included in a global hypothetical contract because the morally relevant features of humans are universal properties like their capacity for forming and revising their conception of the good and that their nationality is not morally significant. The principal cosmopolitan claim is also affirmed by David Richards who writes that one should adopt a global original position because ‘one's membership in one nation as opposed to another and the natural inequality among nations may be as morally fortuitous as any other natural fact’. The same point is sustained if we consider the brand of contractarian cosmopolitanism defended by Brian Barry. Drawing on Thomas Scanlon's model of contractualism, Barry argues that just principles are principles which no person in a global hypothetical contract could reasonably reject. Now, as Barry would happily agree, this device -- a
A hypothetical contract which includes everyone -- is legitimate only if we assume that everyone (independently of ethnicity and nationality) should be consulted. As Barry explicitly points out, he views his brand of contractarianism as 'the best way of giving content to the idea of impartial treatment that underlies moral cosmopolitanism'. Barry's contractarian argument, thus, like the other contractarian arguments for global principles of distributive justice, articulates and embodies the principal cosmopolitan thesis defended above.

B. The same point can be made about other brands of cosmopolitanism. We can see this if we examine the rights-based cosmopolitan theories of justice defended by Thomas Pogge, Henry Shue, Hillel Steiner and most recently Charles Jones. Although their work differs in a number of respects, what they have in common is the belief that all humans have rights, and among these rights are rights to economic resources. Thus in his important and influential Basic Rights, Shue argues that if we accept civil and political rights we should also accept subsistence rights as well since the latter are essential for the former. In his Global Justice, Charles Jones also defends subsistence rights, arguing that they protect important human interests. A rather different rights-based position is defended by Hillel Steiner who argues that everyone has a right to equal freedom and accordingly each is entitled to an equal amount of the Earth's resources. Finally, Thomas Pogge has written a number of important papers which defend global economic rights. In particular he is keen to provide a defence of Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that 'Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care'. Now my aim here is not evaluate these individual theories. It is to record that in each we find the principal cosmopolitan claim outlined above - namely the claim that a person's nationality or citizenship should not determine their entitlements. Both Pogge and Steiner, for instance, make explicit their commitment to the latter in their writings on distributive justice.

C. The same point can be seen in goal-based theories of justice. Of course, the most familiar such theory is utilitarianism and so it is worth pointing out that from a utilitarian perspective, justice demands that the welfare of all human beings should be taken into account and then maximised. According to such a theory what matters is people's welfare and no reference is made to people's citizenship or nationality except insofar as these affect people's level of utility. This is clear in the work of utilitarians like Peter Singer. Underlying his utilitarianism is a principle of moral equality and this requires that principles of justice take everyone's utility into account.
Accordingly he criticises the idea that people should allocate aid to those who are of the same race on the grounds that race is irrelevant, adding that '[t]he same point applies to citizenship or nationhood ... [I]t would be arbitrary to decide that only those fortunate enough to be citizens of our own community will share in our surplus.'

It is also worth recording here that non-utilitarian consequentialist cosmopolitan theories of distributive justice are also animated by the same principles. Richard Falk, for example, presents such a theory in his recent work *On Humane Governance* in which he argues that people's basic needs and fundamental interests should be met. On his account of justice, the current global system is deeply unfair for two reasons: *first*, it permits poverty, infant mortality, oppression and militarization (what Falk terms 'avoidable harm'), and, *second*, it permits environmental degradation (what he terms 'eco-imperialism'). Central again to this cosmopolitan theory, therefore, is the claim that persons have needs and their citizenship or nationality is not pertinent to whether these needs should be met.

From this brief survey of contemporary brands of cosmopolitanism we can see then both, (1) that there is a great variety of different cosmopolitan theories of distributive justice but also (2) also that they are united in their commitment to an account of 'moral personality' according to which people’s entitlements are independent of their culture, race, and nationality. The same point would, I believe, be sustained if we analysed other recent defences of cosmopolitanism - like Onora O'Neill’s distinguished *Towards Justice and Virtue*. Many, however, have expressed misgivings about the cosmopolitan ideal and in the remaining sections of this Review I shall examine some of these misgivings.

II: Nationalism

Let us start with those who emphasize the moral relevance of membership in a nation. Recent years have seen a number of important defences of a nationalist perspective, including David Miller’s *On Nationality* and Yael Tamir’s *Liberal Nationalism*. In this section I shall examine the nationalist perspective on international distributive justice. Before we do so, however, we must address the question of how to define a nation since the cogency of the nationalist position depends on having a clear understanding of the entity in question. Miller and Tamir make it clear that nations are, for them, distinct from both (a) states and (b) ethnic groups. What then is a nation? Miller provides the fullest characterisation, defining a nation as a community (1) constituted by shared belief and mutual commitment, (2) extended in history, (3)
active in character, (4) connected to a particular territory, and (5) marked off from other communities by its distinct public culture.'

No reference is therefore made to either a common membership of a state or a common ethnic identity.

Having analysed the concept of a nation, we may evaluate the claims advanced by nationalists. Within recent nationalist writings, one can find three claims: what might be termed the 'national duties' thesis, the 'viability' thesis and the 'allocation of duty' thesis. Let us examine each of these in turn.

A. Many contemporary nationalists argue that cosmopolitanism is flawed because it fails to recognise the ethical ties generated by membership of a nation. More precisely, they argue, that cosmopolitans overlook the following claim:

the national duties thesis: individuals owe special obligations of distributive justice to fellow-nationals.

This claim is strongly affirmed by both Miller and Tamir, who are keen to emphasize the local obligations one has to fellow nationals. Why, however, should we accept this argument? Sometimes nationalists are content simply to argue that we should accept this claim on the grounds that it is intuitively plausible - an argument that has met with much criticism.

Some, however, have proffered other considerations in support of their claim that individuals owe special obligations of distributive justice to fellow-nationals. In his contribution to an edited volume on The Morality of Nationalism, Jeff McMahan, for example, has argued that individuals owe special obligations to other nationals on the grounds: first, that individuals have special duties to others if they engage in a joint co-operative system and second that a nation is such a system. It is also interesting to note that Miller appeals on several occasions to the concept of 'reciprocity' in his defence of special obligations.

Some, like Brian Barry, have criticised this argument, claiming that it actually supports obligations to fellow-citizens rather than fellow-nationals. This also receives some support from Richard Dagger, who in Civic Virtues, invokes what he terms the ‘argument from reciprocity’ to defend special duties to fellow citizens. More radically, the central problem with this argument, however, is that it is implausible to think of nations as systems of reciprocity. Members of nations do not participate in any common enterprise. Many, for example, live overseas; others do not engage in any co-operation since they are handicapped; others live in multi-national states and engage in co-operation with people from different nations.
It is also worth recording here that even if the 'national duties' thesis is vindicated, this would not contradict the cosmopolitan position. It simply challenges the negative claim affirmed by some cosmopolitans but does not challenge the positive cosmopolitan thesis that there are global principles of justice. This last point is important because it shows that the common perception of nationalism and cosmopolitanism as being straightforwardly incompatible is simplistic. Of course, even if the national duties thesis and the cosmopolitan claim that there are global principles of distributive justice are compatible, nationalists and cosmopolitans can disagree in several ways. First, they might disagree on the content of the cosmopolitan claim. Nationalists might tend to defend more minimal cosmopolitan principles. Second, they might disagree on the ranking of national duties in relation to cosmopolitan duties. The point remains, however, that cosmopolitan claims that individuals have duties to everyone are consistent with nationalist claims that they are under special duties to others of their nation.

B. Having discussed the 'national duties' thesis, let us consider a second claim advanced by nationalists, namely what I have termed the 'viability' thesis. Some nationalists have expressed misgivings about the viability of global systems of distributive justice. David Miller, for example, has argued that distributive principles, to be workable, must enjoy the support of the people included within this scheme. People must be willing to comply with a system of justice if it is to be successfully implemented. He then argues that people will adhere to such systems when that involves redistributing to fellow-nationals but they are not willing to see their money go to foreigners. Given this, cosmopolitan accounts of distributive justice should be rejected. We should therefore accept the following:

the viability thesis: this states that systems of distributive justice to be feasible must map onto national communities and hence that global systems of distributive justice are unworkable

Cosmopolitans can and do, however, make two replies to this argument. First, as Beitz and Pogge argue, what cosmopolitans are committed to are certain moral criteria and not any specific political policies or institutional structures. Thus even if nationalists are right to argue that global institutional schemes for redistribution are simply not viable this does not undermine the moral claims affirmed by cosmopolitans. Cosmopolitans can simply reply that we should adopt whichever feasible system closest approximates their standards. Secondly, it is worth questioning the model of human motivation this argument employs. The viability
argument presupposes an ahistorical and unchanging account of human nature, assuming that we are necessarily only willing to make sacrifices for fellow-nationals. As Robert Goodin and others have pointed out, however, such an account is too static and neglects the fact that people’s willingness to adhere to principles depends considerably on institutional structures, the behaviour of others and prevalent social norms. After all, in earlier periods in history the idea that people would identify with and be willing to make sacrifices for a group of 50 million would have seemed quite fantastic. It would therefore be erroneous simply to make the *a priori* assumption that the motivations people currently have are invariant.

C. Having examined two nationalist theses about international distributive justice, let us now consider a third. This third thesis does not deny the cosmopolitan contention that people have entitlements as specified by a global theory of justice. But it does take exception to the claim that everyone has the same duties to ensure that people receive their just entitlements. It makes the following claim:

the *allocation of duty* thesis: nations have special duties to ensure that their members receive their just entitlements as defined by a cosmopolitan theory of distributive justice

David Miller, for example, defends this claim in *On Nationality*. He agrees with Henry Shue's (cosmopolitan) claim that individuals have a human right to liberty, security and subsistence but he maintains that the duty to ensure that people receive their entitlements belongs mainly to fellow-nationals. Again this illustrates the point that the contrast between cosmopolitanism is more complex than is normally imagined since Miller's claim does not challenge the cosmopolitan affirmation of rights. Furthermore, the claim that not everyone has a duty to ensure that other people receive their cosmopolitan entitlements is also made by cosmopolitans like Henry Shue - although he would not claim that nations have special duties to protect their own member's rights.

Now Miller's claim that the duties to ensure that people receive their just entitlements should not be borne equally by everyone is plausible. His argument for the 'allocation of duty' thesis is, however, unpersuasive. He defends his claim that individuals should promote the basic rights of their fellow-nationals on the following grounds: (P1) Human beings have certain basic rights. (P2) Individuals are under special obligations to their fellow-nationals. *Therefore*, (C) Individuals are under a special obligation to ensure that their fellow-nationals' basic rights are observed. Thus he writes: *Who has the obligation to protect these basic rights? Given what has been said so far about the role of shared identities in generating obligations, we must suppose that it falls in the*
first place on the national and smaller local communities to which the rights-bearer belongs. 58

This argument, however, fails for two reasons. First, (P1) and (P2) do not imply (C). One can, for example, accept both premises and deny (C). Just because X has a right to alpha and I have a duty to X, does not show that I have a duty to provide X with alpha. Suppose, for example, that a married man, A, has a right to a job. Now, A's spouse, we believe, has special duties to A. These two claims do not, however, imply that the central responsibility for ensuring that A's right is observed should be borne by his wife. A second problem with this argument is that it succeeds only if we also accept the 'national duty' thesis's claim that individuals owe special obligations of distributive justice to co-nationals and, as I have argued above, this thesis is implausible.

III: Society of States

Having examined cosmopolitan and nationalist perspectives on global justice, it is worth discussing a third approach to global justice that has been affirmed in recent writings - what I have termed the 'society of states' approach. According to the latter, international justice requires that sovereign independent states respect other state's independence and equal status. Accordingly they should not seek to implement cosmopolitan ideals of distributive justice which some states would reject. A distinguished version of this position is defended by Terry Nardin in his Law, Morality, and the Relations of States. 59 More recently similar claims have also been made by John Rawls in his Amnesty lecture on 'The Law of Peoples' and I shall focus on his presentation of this approach. 60 In 'The Law of Peoples' Rawls distinguishes between three types of state: 'liberal' states, 'hierarchical' states and 'outlaw' states. Liberal states, as Rawls defines them, affirm (i) the core freedoms and rights, (ii) they deem them to be of great value, and (iii) they distribute economic resources to their needy citizens. 61 Hierarchical states, in Rawls's terms, are states that are not liberal but satisfy certain essential moral criteria. In particular they are (i) peaceful, (ii) seek to promote the common good of their people and (iii) affirm certain essential human rights. 62 Outlaw states, by contrast, do not meet these conditions.

Now using this framework, Rawls, argues that liberal and hierarchical societies both accept the following seven principles of international justice: the freedom and equality of states (1 & 2), self-defence (3), non-intervention (4), keeping treaties (5), principles of just warfare (6) and human rights (7). 63 Now whilst the emphasis is very much on
acknowledging the sovereignty of liberal and hierarchical societies it is worth recording the cosmopolitan component to his theory - namely the seventh principle, affirming human rights. These human rights, according to Rawls, include 'certain minimum rights to means of subsistence and security (the right to life), to liberty (freedom from slavery, serfdom, and forced occupations) and (personal) property, as well as to formal equality as expressed by the rules of natural justice (for example, that similar cases be treated similarly). Nonetheless the economic content of these rights -- preventing people from dying from starvation -- is pretty minimal and Rawls explicitly rejects more expansive cosmopolitan principles of international distributive justice like a global difference principle).

Now many criticisms have been made of Rawls’s treatise on international justice. One major problem concerns Rawls’s justification for eschewing 'liberal' ideals of distributive justice, namely his desire to avoid foisting liberal values on other cultures who do not affirm these values. This commitment is what animates his theory of international justice and he explicitly rejects global norms that rely on the principal cosmopolitan claim analysed in section I. This argument is, however, vulnerable in two ways: first, it is incomplete. Liberal and hierarchical societies can accept Rawls’s 7 principles because he defines both types of society in such a way that they will affirm them. In other words, the argument is made prior to the contract. Given this, before we accept the moral legitimacy of what liberal and hierarchical peoples consent to we need to be given a reason why they both represent morally acceptable forms of society. Rawls, however, does not provide any such argument and without this we do not have any reason to accept his conclusions. Secondly, and relatedly, Rawls’s contract is ad hoc. Both liberal and hierarchical societies are defined as being committed to some rights. But Rawls gives us no reason for his inclusion of some rights or his exclusion of others. As Thomas McCarthy has pointed out, he is sometimes willing to be ethnocentric (e.g. his endorsement of sexual equality) and other times he is not. Without giving a reason for his commitment to some (like freedom of conscience) but not to others (like equality of opportunity) his account is criterionless and arbitrary. And his rejection of more substantive liberal cosmopolitan proposals is undermined.

IV: Realism

Having analysed three strands prevalent in the contemporary literature on international distributive justice, I now want, in this penultimate section to analyse the ethical claims advanced by a fourth approach, namely realist perspectives. As with all the
other perspectives, the term ‘realism’ is imprecise and its use contested. For the purposes of this Review, I shall, however, assume that realists make the ethical claim that the state should advance its national interest and should not seek to further the standard of living of those living abroad. Defined as such, of course, it contrasts starkly with the claim that we have duties to distribute resources to the impoverished abroad. I think it is fair to say that whilst there has been a great deal of descriptive and explanatory work by realists recently there has not been as much explicitly directed towards ethical issues. There is no recent sustained defense of a realist ethical perspective in the same way that there have been sustained defences of nationalist or cosmopolitan positions. This is not to say, however, that realist value-judgements are widely rejected or dismissed. On the contrary, many are sympathetic to realist misgivings about the wisdom of seeking to further cosmopolitan principles of justice and, one can discern three distinct realist challenges to global justice within the contemporary literature

(a) human nature Some have misgivings about cosmopolitan ideals because they hold a pessimistic account of human nature. In a recent discussion of the rights of free movement, David Hendrickson, for example, grounds his realism on ‘certain psychological facts ... of human nature’. Similarly, in his work *Cosmopolis* Danilo Zolo argues against cosmopolitanism on the grounds that humans are naturally inclined to aggression and uncooperative behaviour. They adopt, in other words, what Kenneth Waltz has termed a first-image explanation, explaining the character of international politics by reference to the nature of human beings.

This kind of argument, however, fails to get to the core tenets underlying cosmopolitanism. Even if we accept their account of human nature it does not impugn the claims cosmopolitans advance about how we should behave and what criteria should be employed to judge how people behave. Their factual claims about what people *do* are quite compatible with the moral claims affirmed by cosmopolitans about what people *should* do. This is not to say that claims about human nature are irrelevant. They should be taken into account when proposing specific policies and measures. It is just that to claim that someone will not do something does not show that they have no obligation to do so.

(b) the international system Other realist challenges to cosmopolitanism take a different tack and adopt what Waltz has called a third image perspective. That is, they explain world politics in terms of the character of the international system, arguing that the system is such that states have no choice but to fend for themselves
and can not seek to improve the quality of life of those outside their borders. In an article co-authored with Robert Art, Waltz has defended the state's pursuit of the national interest on these grounds and a similar case has also been given by Zolo.77

This argument, however, entails its conclusion only if we assume that all the actions of states are determined by the international system and they have no capability for choice at all. Only then can we say that states have no choice but to advance the national interest. But, as Andrew Linklater points out, it is implausible to claim that states are unable to pursue policies other than those which advance their own ends.78 States can - that is, are able to - devote part of their GNP to overseas aid and can admit the impoverished who wish to immigrate to their country and can co-operate with other states in international relief operations. It is therefore not plausible to reject cosmopolitanism on the grounds that the international system compels states simply to further their national interest. Within the parameters set by the international system, states do have leeway and thus are able to further cosmopolitan ideals.

(c) consequentialist considerations Finally, it is worth recording the consequentialist considerations often adduced by realists in criticism of cosmopolitan programmes. The latter, it is often argued, are inefficient, motivated by the wrong considerations, based on poor information and are badly executed.79 These points, however, do not give us any reason to reject cosmopolitan criteria. What they do show is the inappropriateness of certain policies but they do not show that the criteria underlying them are incorrect. In fact what they show is that if we are committed to these cosmopolitan criteria we should adopt other more effective policies. Cosmopolitanism therefore remains in tact.80

Clearly, much more could be said on each of these points.81 My aim, here, however, has been simply to draw attention to the various types of realist criticism currently levelled against cosmopolitanism and to indicate ways in which the latter reply.

V: Conclusion

This brings us to the end of the Review of contemporary discussions of international distributive justice. I would like to conclude by emphasizing two central points and then drawing attention to future avenues for research.

(1) first, we have seen that underlying all the very different cosmopolitan theories there is a common claim that does all the work, namely the claim that the
scope of distributive justice should not be determined by factors such as people’s nationality or citizenship.

(2) secondly, an analysis of the literature suggests that the extent to which cosmopolitanism conflicts with the other perspectives should not be exaggerated. Nationalists, for example, make claims -- like the 'national duties' thesis and the 'allocation of duty' thesis -- that are quite consistent with cosmopolitanism. In addition, acceptance of nationalist concerns about viability does not undermine cosmopolitanism. The same points can be made about the relationship between cosmopolitanism and realism. Indeed, as we have just seen, those realist critiques of humanitarian and 'idealistic' foreign policy which take a consequentialist form do not dispute the cosmopolitans' fundamental moral tenets. Furthermore, realist claims about human nature do not challenge cosmopolitan moral standards: there is no deep disagreement on moral ideals between the two.

Where does this leave future research? Several options are worth pursuing. First, current discussions about international distributive justice are very abstract and there is room for more analysis of which specific practical measures should be adopted. What, for example, are the implications of principles of international justice for cancelling debt or regulating the environment or immigration policy or humanitarian intervention? This in turn, points to a need for philosophical analyses of international distributive justice to be integrated with empirical and theoretical explanations of the nature of global politics. Some scholars do do this already (distinguished examples including Charles Beitz, Brian Barry and Chris Brown), but, in general, this is an area which could and should be developed further.

A second important area for research concerns the institutional implications of ideals of international distributive justice. Recently there have been important examinations (notably by David Held and Richard Linklater) of the question of whether states should be supplemented with, or replaced by, transnational political institutions. This work, however, has tended to focus on the (legitimate) question of whether a commitment to democracy requires cosmopolitan democratic structures, rather than on the question ‘if one accepts principles of international distributive justice what political institutions should one accept?’ Some like Thomas Pogge and Charles Beitz have addressed these questions but quite what the appropriate answers are still remains very unclear.

Third, as was remarked at the beginning of this Review, much of the debate concerning international distributive justice focuses very much on the question of
whether there are global principles of distributive justice or on whether distributive justice should be implemented at the state-level. It is, however, worth exploring the applicability of principles of distributive justice to bodies such as the European Union, which fall between states and nations, on the one hand, and, the whole world, on the other. Some redistribution already takes place (via the cohesion fund) and it is appropriate to ask whether such intermediate forms of co-operation can be the subject of principles of justice.  

A final area worth exploring concerns non-western ethical traditions. The approaches discussed in this Review all draw almost exclusively on ‘western’ thinkers, whether they are Hobbes, Thucydides, Herder, Kant or Rawls. If, however, we wish to analyse global norms and principles of distributive justice then it is of vital importance to explore traditions of thought other than those prevalent in the west.


3 There are many other classifications of normative perspectives on global politics, Chris Brown and Janna Thompson, for example, divide theories of international morality into cosmopolitan and communitarian perspectives. See C. Brown International Relations Theory: New Normative Approaches (Hemel Hempstead, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992) and J. Thompson Justice and World Order: A Philosophical Inquiry (London, Routledge, 1992). Others, like Charles Beitz and Martin Wight, adopt tripartite divisions. Wight distinguishes between Machiavellians, Kantians and Grotians; and Beitz makes a similar but, I think, clearer distinction between cosmopolitans, realists and those who affirm 'the morality of states'. See C. Beitz Political Theory and International Relations (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979); Martin Wight International Theory: The Three Traditions (London, Leicester University Press, 1991) edited by G. Wight and B. Porter with an introductory essay by Hedley Bull. The four-fold schema I have adopted endorses the three different traditions Beitz identifies (the only difference being that I employ the term 'society of states' to the 'morality of states'): where it differs is, simply, that it also wishes to include a fourth perspective, i.e. the nationalist perspective. For other classifications, see M. Doyle Ways of War and Peace: Realism, Liberalism, and Socialism (New York, Norton, 1997); T. Nardin and D. Mapel (eds) Traditions of International Ethics (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992); T. Nardin and D. Mapel (eds) International Society: Diverse Ethical Perspectives (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1998) edited by D. Mapel and T. Nardin.

4 Such a claim is defended, for example, by Andreas Follesdal in 'Global Justice as Impartiality: Whither Claims to Equal Shares?' in International Justice (Aldershot: Ashgate, forthcoming 1999) edited by Tony Coates, section 6.


6 We should also note in this context, that some ethical perspectives are wary of abstract global ideals of justice. David Campbell and Michael Shapiro, for example, affirm the importance of an ethical outlook on global issues but have misgivings about global ideals of justice. See their 'Introduction: From Ethical Theory to the Ethical Relation' in Moral Spaces: Rethinking Ethics and World Politics (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

7 Each of these has written a great deal on cosmopolitan ideals of distributive justice. See, among other works, B. Barry 'Humanity and Justice in Global Perspective' and 'Justice as Reciprocity' in Liberty and Justice; B. Barry 'International Society from a Cosmopolitan Perspective', International Society; C. Beitz Political Theory and International Relations; and T. Pogge Realizing Rawls (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1989), part III. The discussion of cosmopolitanism below will also incorporate many of their other writings on global justice.

8 This distinction is also made by David Miller, who prefers the terms 'strong' and 'weak' cosmopolitanism in 'The Limits of Cosmopolitan Justice', in International
Society', pp.166-167. The two distinctions differ only in that mine distinguishes between two types of cosmopolitan account of justice whereas Miller's is a distinction between two types of cosmopolitan accounts of morality in general.


12 'Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty', pp.91-97.

13 See, for example, 'Famine, Affluence, and Morality'.


15 See 'Justice as Reciprocity', pp.239-240 and 'Humanity and Justice in Global Perspective', pp.203-208.

16 See B. Barry 'International Society from a Cosmopolitan Perspective', pp.159-160; and Barry 'Statism and Nationalism: A Cosmopolitan Critique', pp.31-36 and especially pp.34-36.


19 See *International Society from a Cosmopolitan Perspective*, pp.147-149.


A Theory of Justice, pp.12, 19, 505-510.


For (i) see Beitz Political Theory and International Relations, p.131; for (ii) see Political Theory and International Relations, pp.144-152 & 154. For criticism of this argument see B. Barry 'Humanity and Justice in Global Perspective', p.194 and D. Richards International Distributive Justice', pp.277-278, 288-290 & 292. Beitz has been persuaded by Richards' criticism: see 'Cosmopolitan Ideals and National Sentiment', p.595 (footnote 8). Pogge, however, affirms the claims Beitz has now rejected: 'Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty', pp.91-97. Beitz, we should also record, gave another argument for global redistribution in Political Theory and International Relations which did not rely on the claim that there was global economic cooperation: see Political Theory and International Relations, pp.137-143.

'Cosmopolitan Ideals and National Sentiment', pp.595-596.


'International Society from a Cosmopolitan Perspective', p.146.

For Shue's defence of the right to security and subsistence see Basic Rights: Subsistence, Affluence, and U.S. Foreign Policy (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1980), pp.13-34. For a discussion of the duties generated by these rights and a rebuttal of those who distinguish between positive and negative rights see Basic Rights, pp.35-64.

See Jones Global Justice, chapter 2.


37 Some, like Brian Barry, employ Singer's reasoning to reach a claim about our non-justice-related obligations: see Barry 'Humanity and Justice in Global Perspective', pp.183-187. Singer, himself, is keen to defend a utilitarian account of justice and rights, according to which, as a matter of justice, aid should be distributed to alleviate the needs of the impoverished overseas. See Practical Ethics, pp.166, 173-174. Another utilitarian, Robert Goodin, thinks that there is a case for redistribution on grounds of justice (Protecting the Vulnerable, pp.159-161) but thinks the stronger case is on humanitarian grounds (Protecting the Vulnerable, pp.161-169 especially pp.161-164). For his affirmation of the central cosmopolitan claim see, in particular, Protecting the Vulnerable, p.154. See also Goodin 'What is so Special about our Fellow Countrymen?' Ethics 98 (1988).
38 Practical Ethics, pp.14-23 (especially p.23).
40 For Falk's discussion of 'avoidable harm', see Falk On Humane Governance: Toward a New Global Politics (Cambridge, Polity, 1995), pp.55-74. For his discussion of 'eco-imperialism', see On Humane Governance, pp.74-78.

Beitz 'Cosmopolitan Liberalism and the States System' in Political Restructuring in Europe and Pogge 'Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty'.


On Nationality, p.75.

Nardin Law, Morality, and the Relations of States (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1983). See also Mervyn Frost's rich and stimulating Ethics in International Relations: A Constitutive Theory (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996). Frost does not address the question of global justice and so will not be discussed further.


The Law of Peoples', pp.60-64.


The Law of Peoples', p.75.


This is a familiar point about contractarian arguments: see for example Peter Jones Rights (London: Macmillan, 1994), pp.105-106.

As Peter Jones argues, Rawls sometimes simply defines a well-ordered society in terms of a commitment to human rights, in which case the appeal to what (liberal or hierarchical) well-ordered societies both accept has moral significance only if we accept the moral values built into the concept of a well-ordered society. See his 'International Human Rights', pp.193-195. Jones also notes an alternative way of interpreting the relationship between a well-ordered society and human rights but finds it unpersuasive: see 'International Human Rights', pp.191-195.

Liberal societies obviously do. For Rawls's statement that hierarchical societies also affirm some rights see 'The Law of Peoples', pp.62-63, 67-71 & 76-78.


This point is made clearly by Robert Goodin: see his 'Commentary: The Political Realism of Free Movement' in Free Movement, pp.248-249 & 252-254. See, more generally, his instructive discussion, 'Commentary', pp.248-264.

Waltz Man, the State and War.


There have been a number of excellent critical assessments of realist normative claims. For further discussion see B. Barry 'Can States be Moral? International Morality and the Compliance Problem' in Liberty and Justice, 159-181; L. Brilmayer American Hegemony: Political Morality in a One-Superpower World (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1994); J. Donnelly 'Twentieth-Century Realism', in Traditions of International Ethics, 85-111; S. Forde 'Classical Realism' in Traditions of International Ethics, 62-84; Goodin 'Commentary', 248-264; A. Linklater The Transformation of Political Community, ch1 & pp.215-216; Thompson Justice and World Order, pp.27-43.


Beitz 'Cosmopolitan Liberalism and the States System’ in Political Restructuring in Europe and Pogge ‘Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty’. This point, and the one made in the preceding paragraph, are both points also stressed by Chris Brown in ‘Justice and International Order’, a paper presented to the conference on ‘International Justice’ organised by the UK Association for Legal and Social Philosophy: 25th Annual Conference (Reading, April 2-4, 1998),
For discussion of this issue see Follesdal 'Global Justice as Impartiality: Whither Claims to Equal Shares?' section 6.

This article was completed during my tenure of a Leverhulme Research Fellowship. I am grateful to the Leverhulme Trust for this support.