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The Cosmopolitan Guest

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Abstract

Cosmopolitanism is widely understood as justified by or an expression of a particular normative moral or political theory, but this paper argues for a new conception of cosmopolitanism that sees it simply as a personal perspective or stance toward other cultures and people. Cosmopolitan guests are committed to ethical pluralism and so they deny that there is any single, universal conception of the good, but they are also motivated by the prospect of learning new, inspiring, and ultimately satisfying ideas about what it is to be a human being that they might adopt or perhaps come to advocate. In these respects, cosmopolitan guests are like people who dedicate themselves to developing the attitudes, skills, and tastes needed to become oenophiles, gourmands, or lovers or music or fine art. In such cases too, there is no grand, overarching normative moral or political theory justifying their pursuits; they are motivated and become committed to such a life by being inspired, uplifted, and satisfied by the lives such endeavors offer for consideration. Committed cosmopolitan guests advocate for the adoption of their chosen ideal in the institutions and societies in which they live but, given their commitment to ethical pluralism, they are not in favor of the state mandating any particular form or style of life.

Keywords: Cosmopolitanism, guest, ethical pluralism, multi-culturalism

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There are at least three basic types or approaches to cosmopolitanism found in the contemporary Western philosophical literature. The first takes cosmopolitanism to be a moral theory, the second understands cosmopolitanism as a view about oneself and one's perspective or stance toward other cultures and people, and the third sees cosmopolitanism as a political theory. Each of these three types can be and has been expressed in unique ways that represent distinct variations on the type. In the discussion that follows, I will offer examples of each and use these three types to present different conceptions of cosmopolitanism, including my own preferred conception, but these examples by no means exhaust the range of possible variants and that, arguably, is one of the most valuable lessons that was learned in the course of the meetings associated with the *U.S.-China Research Group on Cosmopolitanism*.[1]

Martha Nussbaum (1996) presents an example of the first type of cosmopolitanism in her early essay "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism." In this highly influential account, she offers a contemporary Western liberal cosmopolitan theory, crafted on Kantian principles, about the moral status and dignity of persons as rational moral agents. While her account offers a powerful statement of an important moral point of view, it also faces certain, by now, familiar challenges, especially as a prescription for how to understand and navigate our global, multicultural world. As a range of critics have pointed out,[2] human beings do not and cannot live in the thin air of an abstract conception of "the world" populated by "persons" shorn of every vestige of history and culture. Human beings do, they want to, and they have very good reasons to live in actual communities and inhabit ongoing traditions with particular features and unique histories; they work out the forms their lives might take within such thick and textured social contexts. Among the worrisome implications of Nussbaum's early view is that it

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[2] For this and other objections to Nussbaum's account, see the other contributions in Nussbaum (1996).

seems strongly inclined to encourage and perhaps even demand a high degree of homogeneity in the world's cultures—at least when it comes to their values and practices—which is unappealing for a variety of reasons.[3]

Nussbaum's essay represents an important analysis of cosmopolitanism conceived as a universal, normative moral theory aimed at ensuring that all people enjoy a particular conception of dignity defined largely in terms of first-generation rights. Such a view informs a number of important practical attempts at implementing cosmopolitanism in the world; for example, this is largely the view expressed in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948. Nevertheless, it has become increasingly clear that such an approach remains bound to a particular strain of Western moral theory that has proven to be controversial and appears to some as quite provincial. If this is what cosmopolitanism means, then from a practical point of view, it is something that much of the world does not accept—and that includes many informed and reflective people in Western liberal societies such as the United States. Advocating for such a form of cosmopolitanism can seem like and perhaps inevitably involves imposing one (sub)-culture's values on the world. For our purposes, the most important feature of Nussbaum's early account is that it understands cosmopolitanism primarily as a normative moral theory and that this is but one way to conceive of and employ the term.

Our second type of cosmopolitanism understands it to be an ideal view about oneself and one's perspective or stance toward other cultures and the people who live therein. This is the concept of cosmopolitanism that informs and inspires Kwame Anthony Appiah's (2006) book, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*, in which he seeks to describe how one can live as what he calls a "grounded cosmopolitanism": roughly, someone who embraces and remains committed to a home tradition or culture while working to understand

[3] For another work that engages Nussbaum's essay, discusses several of the objections raised to it in the volume cited above, extends their criticisms, and sketches some possible alternative conceptions of cosmopolitanism, see Ivanhoe (2014).

and appreciate a range of other cultures and traditions in the wider world. Such an understanding of cosmopolitanism, as a view of oneself and one's perspective or stance toward other cultures and people, offers a second important way to conceive of and deploy the term, and one that does not entail the imposition of one culture's values upon another (though it does express a particular view of how one views both self and world). This kind of view also animates Nussbaum's (1998) influential book *Cultivating Humanity*, which, while not explicitly presented as a form of cosmopolitanism, makes a persuasive case for the importance of a certain kind of critical, multicultural education in contributing to the production of worldly and humane people. Unlike her earlier essay, described above, this second approach is founded on the central importance of the concrete particular features of different cultures in their unique and irreducible plurality.

A third type of cosmopolitanism takes it as a normative political philosophy: a view about what nation states owe to one another.[4] This is the view that Nussbaum (2019) employs in her more recent book, *The Cosmopolitan Tradition: A Noble but Flawed Idea*. In this monograph, which marks a dramatic departure from her earlier work, she describes a Stoic tradition of philosophy inspired by the famous quote attributed to Diogenes of Sinope about being a citizen of the world but focuses on the bifurcation this tradition draws between a particular conception of justice—according to which people possess and are owed a fundamental and unalienable dignity that is impervious to a range of contingent aspects of life—and the physical material needs that in fact are necessary for human flourishing. The "flaw" that Nussbaum identifies is the clear bright line that the tradition has tended to draw between these two aspects of the human good. She argues, persuasively, that both define moral duties and that neither can coherently stand apart from the other—we have a moral duty to offer material aid to those in

[4] As noted below, efforts by organizations such as the United Nations have worked, with varying levels of success, to achieve such ends through, for example, developing a set of commonly agreed-upon (for the most part) fundamental human rights. Others have argued that a fairly strong consensus about viable forms of political organization has emerged as the result of a quasi-Hegelian process of political evolution. For example, see Fukuyama (1992).

need in order to ensure that justice can be realized, and we must offer this aid in ways consistent with their fundamental human dignity. A version of this general idea is found in John Rawls' conception of distributive justice, but Nussbaum presses the case further, presenting it in terms of her "capabilities approach," in which guaranteeing that people are supplied with a range of material needs enables them to employ their inherent, basic capabilities in order to develop more complex capabilities, which are needed to pursue and enjoy the full spectrum of human goods. For our purposes, the most important point is that cosmopolitanism is here conceived as a morally inflected political theory concerned with what nations owe to one another.

Each of the three types of cosmopolitanism described above contributes in significant ways to a more adequate and satisfying understanding of the global nature of the modern world and the multicultural dimensions of contemporary societies. Each can and some have been used as the basis for more critical-theory approaches to this general set of issues; for example, Chike Jeffers (2013) argues that Appiah's writings on cosmopolitanism, while revealing and powerful, fail to fully take into account the Eurocentric residues that inform parts of his analysis.[5] A more general way to critique and perhaps criticize these and other contemporary approaches to cosmopolitanism is to begin by highlighting that they all arise from the Western philosophical tradition and employ its characteristic assumptions and approaches. In itself, this is an observation, not a criticism, but in light of several of the criticisms raised above, it presents a *prima facie* case for concern and implies an imperative to explain and defend this exclusive and seemingly narrow and provincial starting point. Adding to such concerns is the fact that many other traditions of thought outside the West have produced alternative, powerful, and attractive ideas about the set of problems that define the kinds of views we call cosmopolitanism. For example, as highlighted by the work of the *U.S.-China Research Group on Cosmopolitanism*, there is a long and rich tradition in China centered upon ideas such as bringing "All Under Heaven" (*tianxia* 天下)

[5] One key feature of Jeffers' argument that supports the view I will later introduce and advocate is that "the historical integration of the world through European imperialism gives people of color added reason to uphold certain forms of group partiality."

into a harmonious union,[6] that "all within the four seas are brothers" (*sihai zhi nei jie xiongdi* 四海之內皆兄弟), that all human beings share the same basic nature (*benxing* 本性) and are "one body" (*yiti* 一體) with all people, creatures, and things, or that the goal of humanity is to realize the "Great Unity" (*datong* 大同), a notion that first appeared in the "Evolution of the Rites" (*Liyun* 禮運) chapter of the *Book of Rites*, but that has been revised and advocated as a utopian ideal throughout history and down to modern times.[7] Drawing upon some of these ideas and others we find in the Confucian tradition, one can and some have sketched alternative conceptions of cosmopolitanism.

In an earlier work, I offered one such possibility, built upon a passage and related ideas found in the *Analects* of Confucius (See Ivanhoe 2014). Very roughly, this involves seeing the cosmopolitan as *a special kind of guest*, one who is curious about and comfortable around the world. The idea of a cosmopolitan guest offers another example of the second type of cosmopolitanism described above, an ideal view about oneself and one's perspective or stance toward other cultures and people, and I shall return to and develop a revised version of this view more fully below as my preferred conception of cosmopolitanism.

In the same essay, I sketched a second possible Confucian form of cosmopolitanism: cosmopolitanism as *the attitude of seeing other people as part of one's family*, which is based on the characteristic Confucian conception of care as originating in but needing to be extended out from the family to all the world. As I noted, at first, the familial conception of cosmopolitanism appears to be much more demanding than the visitor or guest conception noted above. It seems to ask us to love even strangers as much as we love our own siblings. This, though, would be to take the analogy too literally. Confucians have always insisted that there is a lessening of emotional commitment and ethical responsibility as one moves out from the center of the family.[8] If we

[6] For a contemporary presentation of this idea, see Zhao (2021).

[7] For example, this was the motivating vision of Kang Youwei's 康有為 (1858–1927) *Book of Great Unity* (Datong shu 大同書). For a discussion of Kang and his thought, see Hsiao (1975).

[8] This feature of Confucian ethical thought, often described as "graded love," is explored in different ways in a number of other essays in the next issue of the *Journal of Confucian Philosophy and Culture*, and in particular in the contributions by Justin Tiwald and Li Chenyang.

work to think about and feel for other people on the analogy of how we feel about our own siblings, we are called on to have much greater sympathy for those we do not know. We are asked to take a more active interest in their welfare, to be more accommodating regarding their differences with us, and more forgiving of their faults. These features of the Confucian perspective actually are quite familiar to most people, for almost all of us regularly invoke Confucian-style arguments when we seek to persuade others to adopt our views about a range of ethical issues. For example, if someone physically harms, mocks, harshly criticizes, or shows inadequate understanding for or patience with another, we often ask them to imagine how they would feel if someone acted in the same way toward their brother or sister. If we think of other people as our brothers and sisters, we will tend not only *tolerate* difference but often will come to accept and even perhaps welcome and embrace much more of it. Like our first Confucian form, familial cosmopolitanism is an example of our second type.

A third possible expression of Confucian cosmopolitanism has been described by people such as Chai Shaojin (2011). This form of cosmopolitanism is based on the idea of "forming one body" with other people, creatures, and things, seen in many later Chinese thinkers but most often identified with the philosophy of Wang Yangming 王陽明 (1427–1529). The basic idea is that we are to see ourselves as in some deep sense as parts of or identical with all people, creatures, and things. Such metaphysical unity is thought to generate a greater sense of care for all things, the same kind of care one feels for oneself. A number of scholars, including me, have recently written about "oneness" as inspired by this and other East Asian sources (Ivanhoe 2017; Ivanhoe et. al 2018). I remain convinced that it is a powerful and potentially productive ideal but, in my view, traditional conceptions of oneness are difficult for modern, scientifically-minded people to accept; the underlying metaphysical vision that supports the moral stance toward self and world found in, for example, Buddhism or neo-Confucianism will strike many contemporary people as implausible. Nevertheless, there is nothing stopping us and much recommending us to adopt a view of ourselves as deeply and complexly related to other people, creatures, and things. Properly crafted, such a perspective is not only

not contrary to the best science of our day but often more consistent with it (consider someone who denies they are part of the earth's ecosystems). Such contemporary views about oneness offer a third, Confucian-inspired way to understand cosmopolitanism. And as is the case in the first two Confucian conceptions, this too is an example of our second type. Throughout the remaining sections of this essay, I present a revised and more complete account of the cosmopolitan guest conception of Confucian cosmopolitanism mentioned above.[9]

The first thing to note about this ideal is that a cosmopolitan guest is not a cultural tourist. A cosmopolitan guest is not just passing through or observing other people and cultures for personal pleasure or enjoyment; they are seeking to understand, appreciate, and learn from—not merely about—the people and places they visit. They seek to understand other ways of life because they believe that this is part of what it means to respect other people and cultures in a robust and practical sense[10] and that this will teach them important things about what it is to be and live life as a humane person. Such a guest is not the cultural equivalent of a speaker of Esperanto but rather works to become, to some degree, a multilingual traveler who knows and appreciates the special characteristics and tenor of different natural languages and cultures and how each offers distinctive insights into our common humanity.[11] As shall become clear, it is critical to understand

[9] While, as noted, inspired by parts of the *Analects*, the sketch I provide is not presented as an interpretation of a view found within this or any other early Confucian text. Nevertheless, it relies on ideas, such as the basic virtue ethical approach found in these texts, their belief in a shared human nature, and the importance of a broadly humanistic conception of the good life, that, for example, embraces aesthetic values as important for an ethically good life, which are found in and characteristic of this tradition. Its greatest difference from the traditional Confucian corpus is its explicit acceptance of irreducible ethical pluralism.

[10] The idea that such understanding and appreciation is part of a more robust conception of respect is also explored and defended by David B. Wong in his contribution to this special issue.

[11] This too is something I mentioned in my earlier essay. I will return to and elaborate upon the analogy with human languages below and there it will be clear that the ideal in play does not require complete fluency or command of all the world's languages or even more than one but is more a commitment to gain some degree of mastery of at least *one other* very different way of understanding, describing, and navigating through the world that is outside one's home tradition.

that it takes commitment and a good deal of work to attain this ideal—it calls upon us to make special effort—and this raises questions about how precisely one can pursue such an ideal, how demanding it is to live such a life, what might justify this view about oneself and one's moral stance toward other cultures and people, and what, if any, benefits it might offer to those who take it up and to those around them.

What practical steps can an individual, community, or society take to bring themselves closer to the other peoples and cultures of the world and developing and practicing a particular set of skills associated with understanding and appreciating them. The attitude consists of being open and inquisitive to alternative, new ways of living, what we might call different approaches to "doing" what it is to be human.[12] A cosmopolitan is dedicated to pursuing an ongoing quest to live well and to appreciate the fullest range of possibilities for how to organize their lives, communities, and societies. Regardless of how satisfied they may be with their home traditions, they believe that other people and cultures have alternative ideas and forms of life that are well worth exploring, not only because this reinforces their recognition that their own particular life and culture are but one variation on how to do being human, but also because such an orientation enables them to appreciate the value that others see in their home traditions and to join them and share in such appreciation. As noted earlier, making this effort and attaining such appreciation is part of what it means to respect another person and culture.[13] It also affords the cosmopolitan

[12] I adopt this distinctive expression from the work of Owen Flanagan (2021). Part of the aim of the expression is to emphasize the fact that while we share a basic palette or repertoire of emotions, capacities, and needs, how we respond to, develop, and deploy these in the course of a human life and how combinations and permutations of these evolve into distinctive cultures and norms is a complex, varied, open-ended, and ongoing process. So, roughly, for example, as Flanagan makes clear, while anger arguably is based on a core emotional module of some kind that is part of first nature, how we "do anger"—how we conceive of it, justify it, and deploy (or avoid) it in the course of our lives and in the routines of our society—is something that remains an open question and something amenable to reflection and change, both on the individual and societal level. The lives and societies that result from this process often generate equally attractive forms and styles of life. Such variations and their consequences are the primary focus of attention for a cosmopolitan guest.

[13] This effort does not in any way entail or imply abandoning an ability to assess and

the opportunity to learn from other people and cultures and discover new ideas, norms, and practices, which they or those they love might adopt and incorporate into their own lives, communities, and cultures to enhance and improve their lives. These are among the central justifications for and benefits that derive from taking up the life of a cosmopolitan guest. There is no grand normative moral theory justifying the adoption of the ideal of being a cosmopolitan guest; it is motivated by the recognition of ethical pluralism and the prospect of learning new, inspiring, and ultimately satisfying ideas about what it is to be a human being that one might adopt or perhaps come to advocate.

Cosmopolitan guests seek to develop and practice a particular set of skills; they work to cultivate the ability to understand and appreciate other people and cultures by developing greater powers of imagination, empathetic concern, and the arts of interpretation and will exercise these in a life of humanistic inquiry, study, and travel. In these respects, they are like people who dedicate themselves to developing the skills and tastes needed to become oenophiles, gourmands, or lovers or music or fine art. In such cases too, there is no grand, overarching moral theory justifying their pursuits; they are motivated and become committed by being inspired, uplifted, and satisfied by the lives such endeavors offer for consideration. People seeking to develop themselves in accord with this cosmopolitan ideal will seek out opportunities to travel to and live in the other cultures that most interest them not simply as tourists or visitors but as guests. Like good guests, they will look for and welcome appropriate opportunities to join in the lives of their hosts; for example, they would seek out and share in the work of their daily lives[14] and through such participation gain not only a greater sense of comradeship but also a deeper appreciation of

criticize other ideas and ways of life. I discuss this in detail in Ivanhoe (2009) and in particular how it is grounded in and guided by a view about human nature and its flourishing.

[14] The idea here is akin to what a good guest will do when they visit. If food if being prepared, tables set, or dishes are being done or boxes need to be moved, they offer to help and share the work. Thanks to Li Chenyang for suggesting this idea in comments on an earlier draft of this essay.

what it is to live as they do.[15] While physical travel may be beyond the means or prove otherwise impractical for many, given the technologies available today, virtual travel and live, person-to-person interaction with people from around the world and even collaborative work of various kinds is quite readily available and poses no great challenge to most who aspire to become cosmopolitan guests.[16] Moreover, a cosmopolitan guest will see the pursuit of a multi-cultural education in the humanities as an important personal goal,[17] because such a life is the only way to join with others in the quest to live well, as described above. This, of course, is how people and institutions used to justify the study of the humanities in general, as a path leading to a broader, richer, healthier, more humane form of life. Such a life is embraced as one of the best possible ways for one to live, but a core feature of such a life is that it must be pursued in the company of other people that one regards not simply as objects of study but as hosts, companions, and teachers; as noted earlier, it is based upon a more demanding and robust conception of what it means to respect other people and cultures. Such a multi-cultural education in the humanities will also be an important imperative for communities and societies dedicated to this cosmopolitan ideal. The lives, histories, art, literature, music, and general cultures of the world in all their complexity are bildungsroman for an explicitly cosmopolitan way of life.

How demanding is a life that incorporates the practical steps that an individual, community, and society can take to advance the ideal of

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15 Wang Yangming's teaching concerning the unity of knowing and acting (*zhi xing he yi* 知行合一) can help inspire and guide such participation as it maintains that practice often enhances and completes understanding and that those who are truly committed to an ideal will naturally seek to act accordingly.

16 Jamil Zaki (2019) has shown that virtual reality experiences can be used to produce elevated levels of empathy and this research can be applied to the experience of other cultures as well.

17 More Kantian forms of cosmopolitanism cannot offer any robust justification for such an imperative since they do not regard the particular, personal and cultural aspects of human life as morally valuable. I argue for this point in "Confucian Cosmopolitanism" (Ivanhoe 2014). The capabilities approach recently advocated by Martha Nussbaum also fails to provide any justification for a humanistic multi-cultural education, though this is what she advocates in *Cultivating Humanity*, because it simply adds an imperative for resource distribution to the basic Kantian model.

being a cosmopolitan guest described above? If such a life required one to aim at gaining a substantial understanding and appreciation of all the world's people and cultures, it would clearly be overly demanding and practically implausible. No one could meet such a standard; even those dedicated to the study of the humanities, such as college or university professors, rarely study more than one or at most a few other cultures in depth, and the majority of these scholars focus on at most one region of the world, for example, Europe, South America, or East Asia, and not the world as a whole. As a matter of fact, most humanities professors don't study people or cultures far removed from their own native cultures; if one compares the number of professors in North America or Europe studying North American or European literature or history to the number studying the literature or history of India, Korea, Africa, or Japan, it is clear that the humanities as a whole remains rather provincial and not robustly committed to the ideal of being a cosmopolitan guest advocated here.[18]

In any event, one need not commit oneself to becoming a scholar of other cultures to embrace the characteristic attitude or develop and practice the set of skills described above. One just needs to make a reasonable, ongoing effort to explore the lives of other people and cultures and attain a sympathetic understanding and appreciation of what makes them different and good. This must include study of the history, art, literature, music, and some of the languages of these people and places and, as suggested above, ideally would include traveling to these places, physically or virtually. It would also include seeking to meet and learn about and from these people and, whenever possible, welcoming opportunities to participate and share in their lives. This all could be achieved in a number of different ways on an individual basis, but institutions, communities, and societies can do a great deal more to make such endeavors part of the normal course of education, from primary school through post-secondary education and

[18] Given the nature of the *U.S.-China Research Group on Cosmopolitanism*, I focus primarily on the case of North America but the same argument can be made *ceteris paribus* for other cultures. Many world maps place the region in which the map is produced at the center of the "world" and this can be regarded as an illustration of the all-too-human tendency to see ourselves and our cultures as the center of everything.

facilitate individual, private efforts to pursue such study.

Many colleges and universities regard themselves as bastions of multicultural education, but for a variety of reasons this is mistaken, at least when multicultural education is understood in the way it is described in this essay. First, as noted above, the current curriculum of the humanities in North America and Europe is heavily weighted toward North American and European cultures. Second, at least in the United States, multiculturalism is largely understood as a commitment to expand course offerings on minority cultures and subcultures in the U.S. and not with challenging students to study, understand, and appreciate people and cultures from around the world and especially from places poorly understood by most U.S. citizens.[19] As a result, the justification for multicultural education, when it is articulated at all, tends to be based on morally charged though often quite vague[20] appeals to the "diversity," "underrepresentation," "recognition," and "inclusion" of minority cultures and subcultures and not on challenging all students to understand and appreciate forms of life and cultural traditions from other parts of the world.[21] Now addressing "diversity," "underrepresentation," "recognition," and "inclusion" can be laudable aims and can be presented in ways that to some extent cohere with the cosmopolitan ideal as described here. But especially as they are currently conceived and practiced, such efforts seek to address aims that are quite different from those of an education based on the ideal of a cosmopolitan guest. A multicultural education

[19] This tendency is illustrated in the case of Canada by Charles Taylor's *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, which focuses on the problem of French-Canadian culture within the larger, primarily Anglo culture of Canada. All of the contributions of the original edition of this volume were by white scholars who were studying the two largest, white, Christian subcultures of Canada. This issue was addressed, without comment, in the revised and expanded second edition (Taylor 1994).

[20] I say quite vague because it is not evident what precisely diversity or inclusion are or why they are morally warranted.

[21] It can be revealing to ask whether or not a particular course and the people and culture it represents rely upon a foreign language or English. If the culture relies on a foreign language, one might further ask if it is a language closely related to English or familiar to English-speakers. One way to know that one is in a vastly different, global culture, in the sense intended here, is to look around; if one doesn't see writing that employs the Western alphabet, one has arrived.

based on the latter ideal, unlike the former, is better thought of as a cosmopolitan education, one designed and aimed not simply to introduce other people and cultures from around the world but also to inculcate the attitudes and skill-set described earlier and challenge people's conception of themselves and the variety of alternative values, norms, and practices available in the world. As is true on the individual level, such an education does not require complete mastery of another tradition and should not seek to cover the earth, but it must aim at providing a substantial, reasonably "thick," and sympathetic introduction to at least one alternative way of life and make clear the underlying principles and goals of what it is to be a cosmopolitan guest.[22] In my view, the current educational curriculum in the United States, generally fails to meet this standard, and this is true for the vast majority of colleges and universities as well as primary and secondary schools.

I have described a distinctive and unique conception of cosmopolitanism that presents an ideal for people in the modern, developed world. This ideal, the cosmopolitan guest, describes someone who recognizes the fact of irreducible ethical pluralism and seeks to live a life in light of this truth about the other people and cultures of the world. A cosmopolitan guest engages in a lifelong quest to live well and to appreciate a range of possibilities for how to organize their lives, institutions, communities, and societies. Such people know that other people and cultures have alternative ideas and forms of life that are well worth exploring, not only because they realize that their particular life and culture are but one variation on how to "do" being human, but also, and importantly, because such a life enables them to appreciate the values that others see in their own lives and culture and to join with them by sharing such appreciation. Such culture- and tradition-specific values are not insignificant, "merely contingent" features of actual human lives; they, in fact, constitute the core of almost all

[22] Thus, the cosmopolitan guest ideal values depth over breadth; rather than skimming or sampling a broad range of other traditions, it promotes more in-depth, multi-course study of, for example, an African or Arabic culture—its history, religion, arts, and philosophy—or a similarly multi-dimensional study of some other culture. Thanks to Justin Tiwald for pointing out this implication of the cosmopolitan guest ideal.

people's sense of their own identity and many of their deepest and most salient values, and, in general, this is well-warranted, for such cultural creations are among humanity's most distinctive and valuable achievements. As argued above, attaining a sympathetic understanding and appreciation of these aspects of other lives and cultures is part of what it means to respect them. Such a life affords the additional good of providing the cosmopolitan a chance to learn from other people and cultures and discover new ideas, norms, and practices that they or those they love might adopt and incorporate into their own lives, communities, and cultures.

Those seeking to cultivate the ideal of being a cosmopolitan guest will work to develop and practice a distinctive attitude and set of skills; they will cultivate the ability to understand and appreciate other people and cultures by cultivating their powers of imagination, empathetic concern, and interpretation, and they will exercise these in a life of humanistic inquiry, study, travel, and participation—both real and virtual. A cosmopolitan guest will see the pursuit of a special type of multi-cultural education in the humanities—a distinctively cosmopolitan education—as an important life goal, because such a life is the only way to realize a rich and attractive type of live, one that calls on them to join with others in an ongoing quest to live well, as described above. Such a life will lead the cosmopolitan guest to become an advocate for the institutionalization of a cosmopolitan multi-cultural education within their communities, societies, and cultures. Unlike certain contemporary forms of multi-cultural education, which seek to address "diversity," "underrepresentation," "recognition," and "inclusion," the education sought and advocated by the cosmopolitan guest is motivated and justified by the explicitly cosmopolitan aim of understanding and appreciating alternative forms of life from around the world, especially those that differ in dramatic ways from the kinds of lives with which they and their fellow citizens are most familiar.

As noted at certain points in the discussion above, a number of connotations of the word "guest" and aspects of the guest relationship help us understand how one can attain the ideal that we have sought to describe. When one is a guest in another's home, one doesn't feel obligated to refrain from drawing one's own conclusions or making

one's own judgments about their customs or how they conduct their life. But the very fact that one is their guest and that they are kind hosts makes one reluctant to rush to judgment. One devotes more time and effort trying to get inside their hearts and minds and empathetically or sympathetically understanding the motivations they have for their particular practices and norms than one would if one were just reading about them, observing them from afar, or simply hearing about them. One seeks for and welcomes opportunities to join in the activities and work of one's host in an effort to strengthen both one's friendship with them and one's understanding and appreciation of their form of life. One does all these things partly out of a deep sense of one's shared humanity, partly out of a sense of gratitude for being invited as a guest, and partly as an expression of the aspirational ideal of cultivating a sense of oneness with one's host and all the world, all of which are important values within Confucian virtue ethics.[23] One does not pursue these ends out of a sense of moral obligation but in light of a view about what it is to be a good and humane person (and not an arrogant and provincial boor).

As noted earlier, this does not require one to study a wide range of alternative lives or cultures, much less every available candidate (though it does not discourage a wider sampling). The aim, rather, is to understand one or perhaps a few other ways of "doing" the human in a deep and sympathetic manner.[24] This is sufficient for bringing home the key points mentioned above. One's particular way of life is but one among many, and this fact can only be made sufficiently salient by entering into other forms through the exercise of empathy and imagination. This process is much like the experience one undergoes

[23] Thanks to Justin Tiwald for articulating many of the ideas expressed in this paragraph. For a contemporary argument for oneness as an aspirational ideal, inspired by the study of Confucian philosophy, see Ivanhoe (2017).

[24] There is an analogy between getting a sense of cosmopolitanism and getting a sense of what it is to do a proof in mathematics or pursue philosophy. If one genuinely grasps one proof or one philosophical system, one doesn't understand them all, but one understands something essential about them all and what it is to see and pursue these disciplines from a new, more realistic, and richer perspective. Moreover, one who experiences and comes to value a well-constructed proof or foreign ideas and values will tend to be motivated to explore these and other examples further.

when one learns enough of another language to start to see and engage the world through its categories, norms, and expectations, and this is one very important reason to include the study of foreign languages in the modern curriculum. Such study enables one to sympathetically understand an alternative form of life; it expands one's horizons and the range of what one appreciates and prepares one to be a welcome guest and good companion of fellow human beings around the world. This in no way implies that one will lack the ability to assess and at times criticize the behavior, practices, or beliefs of the people or cultures one comes to understand or that one will forsake one's home tradition and adopt the new way of life—though that of course is always possible. It will, though, enable one to understand and appreciate not only others but oneself more deeply and humanely and make it much more likely that we all can not only live more peacefully together upon this earth but will find and share more of the distinctive joys associated with being human.

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