

Cosmopolitan Virtue, Globalization and Patriotism

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Introduction: Global Citizenship

ALTHOUGH THE concept of citizenship has in recent decades been a useful way of framing progressive debates about the erosion of welfare and mounting criticisms of neo-liberal theories of social identity as merely market activity, theories of citizenship have been singularly unimpressive as perspectives on the possibility of a global polity. Attempts to develop theories of global citizenship look equally unpromising. And yet there is a need for some understanding of how identities, membership and loyalties can develop and function in a global context. In the early modern period, religion and nationalism provided the dominant modes of individual and collective identity. Both religious and nationalist modes of self reference are products of a common process of modernization, of which globalization can be regarded as the contemporary dominant phase. Just as nationalism can assume either liberal or reactionary forms (Kohn, 1944), so religion can either develop a cosmopolitan or a fundamentalist orientation. However, from the end of the 19th century, with increasing secularization, national citizenship became increasingly the predominant juridical form of civil society as the conduit of national membership and individual identity. In Europe and North America, national citizenship emerged as a secular form of solidarity that either competed or combined with the national church to provide a potent channel of nationalist fervour. In England, this period witnessed the rise of a evangelical 'muscular Christianity' that was tied to the public schools and the ancient universities, and that developed the Christian mission as a form of cultural imperialism. In the United States, citizenship was primarily an institution of 'national manhood' (Nelson, 1998) in which entitlements to citizenship benefits were

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based on work and warfare. As a form of patriarchal relationship with the state, citizenship became an exclusionary principle of identity and membership.

In recent political theory, there has been a growing interest in global governance and global citizenship as alternatives to national or religious forms of membership. While socialist internationalism once appeared as the only viable alternative to fascism and national socialism, the failures of communism as a global political movement have left a political vacuum for alternatives to territorial politics and consciousness. For some authors, human rights appear to be a promising ingredient for the concoction of a post-national and postcolonial glue. Human rights discourse has emerged as a major example of globalization and, despite its strong western vestiges, it holds out the promise of a global language that is capable of commanding loyalties in a post-national political environment. The idea of humanity and human rights as an ethical and communal outcome of the globalization process was probably first identified as a sociological issue by Roland Robertson in the intellectual context of theoretical engagements with civilizational theory in the 1980s (Robertson and Chirico, 1985). While human rights institutions are clearly examples of legal and cultural globalization, there are definite problems with the argument that human rights could function as a global 'religion' to replace either nationalism or religion. However, the most promising human rights theories have been minimalist, secular and pragmatic, being reluctant to make extravagant claims about universalism (Ignatieff, 2001).

There are three arguments against human rights discourse as a global medium for framing post-national identities. The first is that they are irredeemably associated with western values, and in particular with liberal individualism. There is much discontent among Asian governments with the substantive contents of human rights legislation, and even more anxiety about its application and enforcement. While there have been attempts to replace or to supplement the allegedly western tradition of rights with Asian traditions, such as Buddhism and Confucianism, these efforts are not entirely satisfactory. Not all forms of western rights theory are individualistic, and not every instance of 'Asian thought' is communal. In short, the sharp separation of values between East and West, from a historical perspective, is bogus. It is possible to defend the view that human rights theory is not inherently flawed by its western origins, and various forms of reformed Buddhism do appear to be compatible with existing human rights legal theory (De Bary, 1998; Bauer and Bell, 1999). The second criticism of the human rights tradition is that they are not 'justiciable' or enforceable (see Woodiwiss, in this issue). While political rights such as habeas corpus or the right to free elections appear to be enforceable, it is not clear that the bulk of human rights, especially those that have a significant cultural component, could be enforced. The real problem here is that it is typically states that enforce rights and there is no global government that has the authority or powers to enforce rights. Whereas national governments are typically

democratically elected, many international bodies are not, and hence the legitimacy of enforcement is open to question. Finally, a right typically implies an obligation, and, while there has been a deluge of legislation on rights, there is at present very little discussion of the obligations that might correspond to such rights. The primary purpose of this article is to promote a discussion of human obligations in order to elaborate and consolidate the idea of human rights. I shall call human rights obligations ‘cosmopolitan virtue’.

Politics and Virtue Ethics

While ‘virtue’ became unfashionable in contemporary political science, a number of social theorists such as Alasdair MacIntyre (1984) and Martha Nussbaum (1986) have attempted to retrieve this tradition to provide an ethical critique of political institutions. In order to sustain the idea of cosmopolitan virtue in relation to an extension of the province of the citizenship, it is necessary briefly to rehearse the ideological and social origins of citizenship as a theory of membership.

There are three versions of citizenship. There is a political theory of citizenship that, from its origins in 17th-century political struggles in England, was embraced in the 18th century by the American war of independence. This liberal theory is minimalist. It says that the role of the state is to protect the freedom of its citizens and that it can best achieve this aim by removing the obstacles to free exchange between individuals in the marketplace. This theory celebrates the sovereignty of the individual (Abercrombie et al., 1986). The role of the state is utilitarian, namely to maximize the happiness of the majority, but this ‘happiness’ is most effectively and efficiently measured by their individual wealth. Because, for utilitarian writers like Jeremy Bentham and James Mill, pushpin is as good as poetry (that is, they are equal because they both produce happiness), it is not sensible for states to take much interest in morality and culture. With the dominance of neo-liberalism in state policy since the 1970s, the liberal view of citizenship has been triumphant.

Second, there is a theory of social citizenship. In the British welfare theory of citizenship, the state has a role to play in moderating the negative impact of the capitalist market by providing a safety net to protect workers against unemployment and sickness, and to support them in retirement. This argument was the characteristic view of British welfare citizenship as outlined by T.H. Marshall (1950) and Richard Titmuss (1958). Social citizenship is not overtly a normative theory of membership, and in the reformist tradition it merely describes certain social adjustments to capitalism and class inequality.

Finally, there is a tradition that had diverse origins in classical Greek political theory, in Rousseau’s educational theory, and in the cultural legacy of the German *Bildungsroman*. This tradition says that the education of the citizen in the virtues is essential if that individual is to achieve personal autonomy, and if society is to remain free of corruption. While neo-liberals

have argued that the citizen needs training in order to secure a job in the labour market, virtue ethics argues that a person requires education in order to become an individual. While the Marshallian tradition did not adopt a strong theory of culture and character, the notion of virtue requires a thick rather than thin view of the citizen of a national community, namely of the citizen as a complex, educated and vibrant member of a society. There is, therefore, an important connection between virtuous citizens and effective and living institutions; this connection is through the dual operation of virtue and obligation. An autonomous citizen will want to be an active and involved participant in a community. The *Bildungs* tradition had a clear understanding of the relationship between virtuous citizens, educational institutions and civil society, and was critical of utilitarianism as a doctrine that was corrosive of public institutions.

There is plenty of evidence that the liberal and social frameworks of citizenship are in crisis. Liberal capitalist societies have created a set of conditions that has produced an erosion of citizenship (Turner, 2001a). Participation in the market is obviously important and the idea of the worker-citizen has been a foundational aspect of modern society. However, there are clearly problems with this foundation, especially where there is profound casualization of labour, under-employment, early retirement and flexible hours of work. As Richard Sennett (1998) has argued, the modern market creates casualized employment that leads to a corrosion of character. There has also been a widespread devaluation of education and the university system by neo-liberal governments that have reduced funding and attempted to destroy the autonomy of universities in providing an education that is not merely training for a job. The marginalization of the worker and the degradation of education have resulted in an erosion of citizenship that we can see manifested in low participation rates in elections, distrust of politicians, lack of social capital investment in society, the decline of the public sphere and the decline of the universities.

While national forms of citizenship appear to be in crisis, there is considerable interest in the possibility of global citizenship. The notion that there could be a 'citizen of the world' has long been part of the utopian imaginary of the Western tradition. It was implicit in Augustine's idea of the City of God, within which the legacy of Roman global society would be perfected. It was part of Kant's vision of a 'perpetual peace' in 1796 (Lutz-Bachmann and Bohman, 1997; Kant, 1983) in which the Enlightenment dream of a world free from irrational prejudice could be realized. It was part of Goethe's cosmopolitan idea of world society that would transcend the narrow limitations of emerging German militarism. Despite his criticisms of bourgeois citizenship, it was part of Karl Marx's dream of socialism in the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848 (Marx and Engels, 1973/1848) to create an international society in which workers would combine to overcome capitalism to transformation of human nature, and to establish a world community. In recent years, this dream has re-emerged in the idea that globalization will demand or make possible world governance within which cosmopolitan democracy can flourish.

The revival of cosmopolitan idealism is in fact closely connected with the classical idea of virtue. There is a republican tradition that had its origins in the Stoic tradition of Rome that promoted the idea of cosmopolitan virtue. This tradition, in the modern period, attempted to distinguish between love of country (patriotism) and respect for the state (nationalism). We have lost this tradition, failing typically to recognize any distinction between patriotic and nationalist commitments. Writers like Giuseppe Mazzini wanted to argue that love of one's own country was perfectly compatible with commitment to a commonwealth that embraced a love of humanity. Indeed, an education in the love of *patria* moved inevitably towards a commitment to the *respublica*. This language of virtue and the commonwealth has been lost to us in a world that has become dominated by calculating rationalism and the neo-liberal faith that our private vices (greed) are public virtues (wealth).

The idea of global citizenship is probably too abstract and vague to carry conviction and commitment. The nation state is often too distant to provide a channel for strong emotions and serious involvement by comparison with the effect of local and regional identities. It would therefore be difficult to grasp how individuals might feel some passionate loyalties to a global government or indeed to any global institutions. What rituals and collective rites might be associated with such an artificial political entity?

It is for this reason that it is useful to differentiate between nationalism and patriotism. Maurizio Viroli, in *For Love of Country* (1995), writes that commitments and identities require a common culture, a landscape and shared rituals to be effective and enduring. The weakness of socialist internationalism was that it had difficulty creating a sense of solidarity without place. The geography of emotions therefore appears to be important in creating civic loyalties and commitments. Political attachments need memories and collective memories need a location where these common rituals can be enacted. A placeless cosmopolitanism would also be vacuous and ultimately lifeless. A love of one's country as a love for the republic does not, in Viroli's argument, rule out respect for other cultures and places. On the contrary, love of country is merely a preparation for such respect. John Milton, that ardent patriot of English liberties, regarded travel abroad as a duty in order to appreciate better the culture of his neighbours. In a similar fashion, the growth of German romantic nationalism did not rule out the connection between patriotism and cosmopolitanism. August Schlegel in his *Vorlesungen über schöne Literatur und Kunst* of 1803–4 sought to promote 'European patriotism' with cosmopolitanism, which he saw as a modern version of the Holy Roman Empire. Without such a geographical sense of place, republicanism would commit the same mistake as 19th-century socialist internationalism. It would be devoid of emotional specificity. This issue has been recognized by Habermas (1990) in his criticisms of both national citizenship and socialism, and he has advocated a patriotism of the Constitution (*Verfassungspatriotismus*) in which it is possible to

combine universal principles of democracy and personal liberties in the constitution of a single society.

These arguments demonstrate the limitations of the language of national citizenship as a framework for global politics. Thus, the language of *patria* and *pietas* need not be archaic. Indeed it makes sense that, if we are to have global rights and global citizenship, we need to evolve a language of obligation and virtue. What commitments might a global citizen have? We suggest that one answer would be respect for other cultures and that this commitment to protect the cultural diversity of the global commonwealth would constitute a cosmopolitan virtue. We detect elements of this development in the theory of cosmopolitan democracy.

Nationalism and Citizenship

Nation-state citizenship and nationalist ideology have been, in the modern world, powerful agencies for creating individual identities. Modern notions of social rights have defined citizenship as primarily a political and juridical category relating to liberal individualism. This juridical identity of citizens has evolved according to the larger political context, because citizenship has necessarily been constructed within a definite political community, namely the nation-state. Of course, citizenship was originally a product of Renaissance humanism, in which the ascending order of the state and the horizontal ordering of citizenship contrasted with the descending theme of the Church and its hierarchical order of institutionalized grace (Ullmann, 1977). This tradition of citizenship became linked to the norms of civility, civilization and civil society. The rise of nation-state citizenship somewhat replaced the tradition of humanism and urban cosmopolitanism with a national ethic that was increasingly exclusionary. Now the problem for the development of contemporary forms of citizenship is two-fold: global society is not (as yet) a definite or specific political community to which cosmopolitanism could be attached, and the continuity of robust forms of nationalistic citizenship necessarily constrains the possibilities of global governance.

In the traditional terminology of sociology, citizenship-building was also, and necessarily, nation-building. The creation of the institutions of citizenship in legal, political and social terms was also the construction of a national framework of membership within the administrative structures of the state – an historical process that dominated domestic politics in Europe and North America through much of the late 18th and 19th centuries. The production of an institutional framework of national citizenship created new national identities and replaced regional and sub-national cultures. Citizenship identities during the rise of the European cities had been local and urban, but with the rise of nationalism they became increasingly connected with strong nationalistic cultures that required greater domestic coherence. Nationalism embraced negative images of outsiders, and, as a result, modern politics became a politics of friend or foe, along the lines suggested in political theology by Carl Schmitt (1976). National

identities and social citizenship thrived in a period of international conflict and competition.

Historical and Sociological Roots of Cosmopolitanism

Contemporary debates about globalization are characteristically ahistorical. There is little awareness of or appreciation for early modern accounts of globalization and culture. More specifically, theories of modernization and globalization have remained blind to previous debates about cosmopolitanism, tolerance and the problem of difference in relation to cultural otherness. The moral difficulty of cultural relativism was the central issue of the historical writing of Herodotus, and exercised the Greek imagination in its confrontation with the outside world. The problem of strangers lay at the roots of Greek political thought about the preservation of the *polis*. However, the specifically modern problem of relativism and otherness can be located in the philosophical inquiries of Michel Montaigne (1533–92). In attempting to develop a concept of cosmopolitan virtue, I shall draw heavily on the sceptical humanism of Montaigne, who deployed irony to question the values of war-like France.

From the devastation of the French religious wars, Montaigne wanted to achieve an ethical reform of the French nobility whose warlike character prohibited the development of political compromise and compassion. In the *Essais* (Tilley and Boase, 1948), Montaigne, who in this respect could be seen an early theorist of civilization in the mode of Norbert Elias (1978), argued that the violent ethic of noble life had resulted in the destruction of French society. His question was simply: what is appropriate behaviour for a noble class if we are ever to restore peace and civilization? Through a close examination of revenge and clemency, Montaigne presents an argument which gives priority to '*humanité*' as the basis for mercy and sympathy. Only the cultivation of humanity can contain the propensity towards a cycle of vengeance and resentment (Quint, 1998). Montaigne was shocked by the cruelty and violence of his own times. Men had become like beasts of the field; they delighted in the torture of others. How could this behaviour be regarded as truly noble? Hunting as the principal pastime of the nobility prepared them for a warrior calling in which they were trained to inflict terrible violence on human beings. He complained about parents who encouraged aggressive behaviour in their children. What he called the seeds of cruelty and tyranny were to be found in a child who is amused by hurting a dog or cat, or in a young nobleman who unjustly strikes a peasant or lackey who cannot defend themselves. Montaigne saw a parallel between refractory French noblemen, intransigent religious zealots, Roman gladiators and Brazilian cannibals. In many respects they all exhibit the virtues of Roman Stoicism which, Montaigne argued, had profoundly negative consequences. The unyielding and rigid behaviour of the Stoic warrior ruled out compromise and social cooperation. Montaigne's values embraced the softer (feminine) values of mercy, compassion and tenderness.

Montaigne's interest in the Brazilian cannibals was a literary device

for analysing the violence of his own society (O'Neill, 1982). His ironic version of Orientalism was employed as a literary technique to study his own society. This attitude was in fact an important part of the humanistic goal of understanding one's own society through the study of other societies. Montaigne's notion of virtuous behaviour – yielding, flexible, forgiving, clement, in favour of talking it through rather than fighting it out, adopting feminine virtues rather than Stoic masculinity – could make men behave more humanely towards each other, perhaps lead his fellow country men out of their civil war and restore conditions of justice.

There is a useful theoretical connection between Montaigne and Elias. The civilizing process involves a pacification of warriors that Elias traced from the foundation of feudalism through the creation of a court society to the world of the bourgeois gentleman. We can interpret cosmopolitan virtue as a further evolution of the process of civilization in which cosmopolitan virtue embraces pacific values and further precludes violence as a worthy model of action. Care for others and protection of their rights that lie at the heart of human rights legislation are a civilizing transformation of international relations.

In ancient civilizations, trade centres were often protected by religion and custom as places where strangers could meet for exchange without danger or harassment. The flow of trade across the ancient Middle East required trading depots where traders could meet without the dangers of tribal and ethnic conflict. Hospitality towards strangers evolved out of these norms of protected trade. In early Islam for example, Medina and Mecca had always been traditional places for trade where foreigners could assemble without fear of tribal or religious violence (Watt, 1953, 1956). They were sites of enforced hospitality and cosmopolitanism.

With the growth of early capitalism in Europe, there were similar developments where the need to exchange had the unanticipated consequence of promoting cosmopolitanism. In Amsterdam in the Golden Age, Calvinist leaders of the reformed church sought desperately to exclude or control the growing cultural and religious diversity of the public arena, but the urban culture of the United Provinces was deeply fragmented by a kaleidoscope of religious opinion and theological debate from Quakers, Remonstrants, Counter-Remonstrants, Arminians, Mennonites and millenarians. In addition, after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, Jewish traders began to settle in Amsterdam via Portugal and France. Many Jews who had converted to Catholicism to escape persecution returned to orthodox practice in the more secure environment of northern Europe. While the Calvinist authorities attempted to restrict the entry of Jews into mainstream society, they often came to prominence through their commercial success in long-distance trade. Attempts to secure religious uniformity were constantly undermined by the economic needs of a trading society, where liberal and secular views flourished alongside religious fragmentation. The quest for religious orthodoxy was further corroded by the fact that the Dutch authorities could not find enough Calvinist recruits to run their overseas

operations. The problems of the New Netherlands forced the Calvinist elite to employ people of divergent religious backgrounds (Boxer, 1965; Smith, 1973).

Trade tended to impose tolerance, which had the unwanted and unanticipated consequence of promoting cosmopolitanism. We should not exaggerate the extent of such tolerance. Civic calm was periodically fractured, for example, by a number of messianic movements in 1656 and 1666, including the European-wide Jewish messianism associated with Sabbatai Zevi. Throughout the 17th century, there were various attempts to purge the northern cities of Jews, heretics and heretical sects. Despite these attempts, the Netherlands was regarded as the home of liberal tolerance. In a famous poem on the ‘Character of Holland’, Andrew Marvell observed:

Hence Amsterdam, Turk, Christian, Pagan, Jew,
 Staple of sects and mint of schisms grew:
 That bank of conscience, where not one so strange
 Opinion but finds credit and exchange. (Marvell, 1681)

Market exchange required the background assumptions that every individual was the autonomous origin of their own beliefs and actions. These abstract elements of the structure of rationalism – individualism, tolerance, universality, contract and equality – were identified by Lucien Goldmann (1973) as products of bourgeois capitalism that came to maturity with the Enlightenment.

This cultural diversity that was described by Marvell provided the background to Baruch Spinoza’s democratic and republican theory of urban space. Spinoza’s rationalism desacralized and naturalized religion whereby the personal God of Judeo-Christianity became Nature. Spinoza (1632–77) challenged the basic authority of Jewish orthodoxy by claiming that Moses was not the sole author of the Torah. He treated the sacred texts as historical documents that were fallible and open to diverse interpretation, and distinguished between the ceremonial and moral functions of religious rituals. Spinoza’s radical argument for tolerance found support among Protestant radicals such as the Quakers, who had questioned the authority of the Bible by raising issues about the historical nature of sacred scriptures. For Spinoza, there was little to choose between Islam and Roman Catholicism. Because the role of religion was to mystify the masses in the interests of a dominant elite, the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* clearly set out the necessary connections between the ‘internal’ rights to freedom of belief for an individual and the external requirements of a democratic state. Spinoza’s rationalist critique of religion thus paved the way for an open and tolerant society, of which Amsterdam as the spearhead of free trade was the principal example (Nadler, 1999: 147). In the *Tractatus*, Spinoza commented on the civil liberties and tolerance that were possible in Amsterdam. He observed that, when commercial exchanges were undertaken, the trader’s:

religion or sect does not matter, for it has no influence on the decision of law-suits; and no sect whatsoever is so detested that its members (provided that they harm no one, give everyman his own, and live decent lives) are refused the protection of the civil authorities. (Wernham, 1958: 241)

Civil liberties in a tolerant society were not damaging to the sovereignty of a democratic state and, in these circumstances, ‘outsiders’ were not a threat to the state.

Let us now consider a contemporary example, namely the debate around the universality of human rights. Cosmopolitanism has been closely associated with the human rights revolution, but this cosmopolitanism has often been dismissed because it is allegedly western, elitist and interventionist. The cosmopolitan thrust of human rights legislation, it is argued, will bring about the standardization of other cultures. Everything is acceptable, provided it falls within the basic assumptions of western modernity. In his recent study of *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry*, Michael Ignatieff (2001) attempts to get round this problem by recommending human rights as a minimalist defence of rights that promotes human agency and dignity. His thesis is overtly liberal, in the tradition of Berlin’s negative freedoms, but he argues that, in practice, there is widespread support for a minimalist version of human rights, that fundamentalism is not the only view of Islam and that relativism is not defensible as a moral position. Ignatieff’s argument is that:

[I]t should be possible to maintain regimes of human rights protection in a wide variety of civilisations, culture and religions each of which happens to disagree with others as to what a good human life should be. (Ignatieff, 2001: 56)

His minimalist theory to achieve this possibility has the following features. Democratically elected foreign powers should not be the target of international intervention if and only if they abide by human rights convention. However, intervention should be a last resort, and only undertaken when human rights abuse is systematic, constitutes a threat to international peace and military intervention has a real chance of stopping abuses. East Timor illustrates the dangers of intervention without regard for internal security. Generally speaking, states that offer ‘their citizens security without democracy are preferable to no government at all’ (Ignatieff, 2001: 36). The human rights revolution, as an aspect of the globalization of juridical relations, does not spell the end of state sovereignty; on the contrary, the efficacy of human rights, in most cases, will require state support. Ignatieff is very critical of cultural relativism as an argument against human rights universalism, and complains that the West has conceded too much to arguments about local custom (such as female circumcision). The mistake has been to regard fundamentalism as the only voice of Islam and to have ignored the diversity of internal voices of opposition in Islamic societies. While ‘people from

different cultures may continue to disagree about what is good . . . [they] nevertheless agree about what is insufferably, unarguably wrong' (Ignatieff, 2001: 56). There is in my view an even stronger argument about the community of suffering and vulnerability that lies behind the notion that there is a consensus about the insufferably wrong. In his *Reflections on the Causes of Human Misery* (1970), Barrington Moore argued that, while some weak version of cultural relativism was inevitable for social science, there is strong human consensus against tolerance of suffering. While there is a diversity of happiness, there is a unity of human misery. Thus 'a general opposition to human suffering constitutes a standpoint that both transcends and unites different cultures and historical epochs' (Moore, 1970: 11). If human rights exist to protect us from suffering, why not argue that there are universal human obligations to oppose misery, to respect the cultures of other peoples and to oppose governments that fail to protect human rights? Respect for other cultures and revulsion against oppression emerged in the modern period in reaction to religious wars and civil wars, and were enhanced by the growth of liberalism as an unanticipated consequence of global trade. Contemporary cosmopolitanism can be regarded as a response to ethnic cleansing and racial violence in a context of a global economy that produces, through a global labour market, the unintended consequence of hybridity.

Irony and Cosmopolitanism

In a number of recent essays, I have attempted to outline the contents of cosmopolitan virtue in terms of irony. The ability to respect others requires a certain distance from one's own culture (Turner, 2000a, 2000b, 2001b), namely an ironic distance. While that formulation of the problem is valid, there is an important addition to that perspective. Irony may only be possible once one already has an emotional commitment to a place. Patriotism, in this sense, may be not only compatible with irony, but its precondition. Irony may not be comfortable with hot nationalistic commitments, but patriotic love of country is compatible with both the capacity for ironic distance and regard for others. Perhaps irony without patriotism may be too cool and thin to provide for identification and involvement with place and with politics.

This notion of ironic cosmopolitanism is intended to steer a course between two contrasted positions in the work of Maurizio Viroli (1995) and Martha Nussbaum (Cohen, 1996) on *For Love of Country*. Against patriotism, Nussbaum has rejected the distinction between patriotism and nationalism, and condemns those on the Left who have argued that nationalism can be combined with universalism. She asserts, in the interests of 'international quality of life issues' (such as hunger, poverty and ecological crises), that we must commit ourselves to a higher level of values (Nussbaum, 2000). Her plea for cosmopolitanism is to establish 'a more international basis for political emotions and concern' (Cohen, 1996: 4). We must undertake a dramatic shift in allegiance from national citizens to

'citizens of the world' and establish an educational strategy to promote understanding other cultures and acceptance of a moral obligation to 'the rest of the world' (1996: 389). We can take Nussbaum's argument to be directly opposed to the arguments of Richard Rorty who has celebrated value diversity (Rorty, 1998a), and who in *Achieving Our Country* (1998b) has also criticized the 'cultural left' for its lack of patriotism.

Nussbaum's argument is problematic partly because the creation of 'citizens of the world' would require a global government to enforce the rights and obligations of citizens. While I can in principle vote in a democratic government as a citizen of a state, I cannot currently enjoy many or any rights as a 'global citizen'. Here is one reason why the language of human rights and citizenship do not easily combine. Nussbaum's sharp contrast between patriotism and cosmopolitanism is too severe; it depends what we mean by patriotism. The danger with global cosmopolitanism is that it is too abstract and flat to carry conviction, whereas patriotism has the advantage of a living culture. But two aspects of her argument are very relevant to my account of cosmopolitan virtue. First, it appears to be self evident that American patriotism, especially after 11 September, is not a promising basis for understanding other cultures, even less respecting them. Indeed 'American foreign policy, particularly with regard to foreign aid, ecology, and international trade, does near to nothing to address the moral scandals of our times' (Bader, 1999). Second, most accounts of cultural relativism would imply that the contemporary cultural world is made up of a collection of tribes that have almost nothing in common. We need arguments that flesh out the commonalities of the human, especially social, experience. I use 'flesh out' deliberately. We can make the cosmopolitan argument more convincing through the argument that the vulnerability of the human body provides the starting point for an account of human commonality as the basis for a cosmopolitan ethic.

One response to the growth of globalization and cultural hybridity was to embrace the so-called politics of identity in order to develop an ethical view (respect for difference) that is relevant to multiculturalism. Acceptance of cultural differences in multiculturalism, however, does not provide an effective basis for common purpose or communal integrity. The problem of cultural fragmentation and loss of solidarity has, in recent years, resulted in a volume of critical responses that attempt to create some revised grounds for universalism. Critics of the politics of difference include Todd Gitlin (1995) who has accused left-wing politics of betraying the positive values of the Enlightenment. A politics of identity ends up as just another particularism, and leaves modern society exposed to 'culture wars'. A similar view has been developed by David Hollinger, who examines the need for a post-ethnic moral viewpoint for cosmopolitan America (1995). Perhaps the most elegant exposition of cosmopolitanism has come from Martha Nussbaum (1986), who attempts to develop a universalism that depends on a critical reading of Kant, but also argues there is a need to recognize the new issues raised by multiculturalism. Nussbaum clearly has a preference

for universality, but she recognizes the need to study other cultures with tolerance and care. A ‘cosmopolitan’ is a ‘citizen of the world’ (*kosmou polites*) and this type of membership raises an old problem: can a cosmopolitan be a patriot? In modern terms, it raises the issue of whether citizenship can be de-territorialized. There is here an important relationship between the desire for adventure and nostalgia for a homeland – a tension that was expressed in the *Odyssey*. Sceptics of cosmopolitanism argue that a genuine democracy cannot be without territory, because love of country is a necessary prerequisite for pride in the democratic community. One learns political virtues within a definite spatial context, because respect for democracy cannot be easily divorced from commitment to a place (Deneen, 2000). There is a parallel here between adherence to the faith of our forefathers and a global ecumenical regard for other religions: can a committed believer have an ecumenical love of world religions? Can cosmopolitanism survive without otherness? In short, the problem of religious studies in a global society is the problem of borders.

Cosmopolitanism does not mean that one does not have a country or a homeland, but one has to have a certain reflexive distance from that homeland. Cosmopolitan virtue requires Socratic irony, by which one can achieve some distance from the polity. The principal component of cosmopolitan virtue is irony, because the understanding of other cultures is assisted by an intellectual distance from one’s own national or local culture. If Nussbaum’s plea for global civic education can work, then understanding other cultures presupposes that we could treat our own culture disinterestedly as an object of inquiry. As such, cosmopolitan virtue also requires self-reflexivity with respect to both our own cultural context and other cultural values. Such an orientation of irony and reflexivity produces a humanistic scepticism towards the grand narratives of modern ideologies. As a result, cosmopolitan irony would share much in common with the pragmatism of Dewey and Rorty in that tolerance of others must start from a position of some uncertainty as to the ultimate authority of one’s own culture (Rorty, 1982). Cosmopolitanism assumes that there is doubt about the validity of any ‘final vocabulary’, but cosmopolitan doubt about cultural authority is not equivalent to cultural relativism, especially what I have termed complacent relativism. Because cosmopolitanism engenders ironic self-reflection, it does not need a strong or hot version of otherness, because its own identity is not profoundly shaped in conflict with others.

Scepticism and distance from one’s own tradition are the basis of an obligation of care and stewardship for other cultures. If cosmopolitans are urbanites, they have a special responsibility towards aboriginal cultures arising from an awareness of their precarious condition and hence acceptance of cultural hybridization. This description of cosmopolitan virtue as a set of obligations flows from a recognition of the vulnerability of persons and the precariousness of institutions with the globalization of culture (Turner and Rojek, 2001). It is intended to take a stand against relativism and awaken a recognition of the similarities between the prospects for and

problems of cosmopolitan understanding and an ecumenical commitment to dialogue with other cultures, especially religious cultures.

The argument, however, is not that contemporary cosmopolitanism is simply a return to classical cosmopolitanism or religious universalism. Cosmopolitan irony is generally incompatible with nostalgia, because it recognizes that our modern dilemmas cannot be solved simply by a naive return to origins. The cosmopolitanism of the Stoics (Hill, 2000) attempted to come to terms with the cultural diversity of classical times, but contemporary cosmopolitanism is specifically a product of globalization and modernity. Classical cosmopolitanism was an inevitable product of Roman imperialism, but contemporary globalization cannot be easily or effectively dominated or orchestrated by a single political power. While American culture, especially popular and commercial culture, provides much of the content of contemporary globalization, it is also the case that cultural exchange has promoted the prominence of Japanese civilization globally. Similar arguments could be made for Chinese cuisine, alternative medicine and commerce (Ong, 1999). This view of global cultural exchange thus leads to a more complex and rewarding interpretation of the traditional understanding of Orientalism. Modern cosmopolitanism is a consequence of specific social changes that are associated with globalization. These changes include: the partial erosion of national sovereignty and the growth of dual and multiple citizenship; the growth of global markets, especially a global labour market and an expansion of migrant labour seeking forms of quasi-citizenship; the growth of multiculturalism and cultural hybridity as an aspect of mainstream contemporary political life; and the globalization of the politics of migrant communities, giving rise to diasporic cultures. These global political communities require ironic membership if the modern world is to escape from the vicious cycle of ethnic conflict and retribution. Modern political communities need to be thin and contemporary identities have to be cool (Turner, 2000a).

In a period of globalization, traditional systems of inclusion and exclusion have to face the challenge of hybridization, diversity and heterogeneity. As a result, in a system of global cultures, cosmopolitan citizenship will be characterized by cool loyalties and thin patterns of solidarity (Walzer, 1983; White, 1991). Indeed the characteristic mode or orientation of the cosmopolitan citizen would in fact be one of Socratic or ironic involvement in politics through a critical dialogue. Given the complexity and the hybridization of modern society, there is no convenient place for real or hot emotions. Intercultural sensitivities and the need to interact constantly with strangers promote irony as the most prized norm of social interaction. Irony is sensitive to the simulation which is necessary for interaction in multicultural societies. In such a world, ironic distance is functionally compatible with globalized hybridity, because we have all become urban strangers. Urbane ironists, in Rorty's terms, always hold their final views about the social world in doubt, because they are always subject to revision and reformulation. Their picture of social relations is necessarily provisional or

temporary and they are sceptical about 'grand narratives', because their own 'final vocabulary' is always open to further criticism, inspection and correction. Their ironic views of the world are always contingent and 'for the time being'. If the cosmopolitan mentality is cool, the social relationships of the ironist will of necessity be thin; indeed, email friendships and electronic networks will constitute the new patterns of companionship in a post-modern globe. Ironists are often homeless people who are in some sense dislodged from their traditional worlds and find themselves in new situations where old answers no longer work. Cosmopolitan virtue may well turn out to be the ethic of exile (Turner, 2000c). While nationalism does not easily cohabit in the world of cosmopolitan diversity, patriotic cosmopolitanism is not a contradiction in terms, because the republican tradition regards patriotism as a training ground for cosmopolitanism. Ironists are inclined towards reflexivity, because they intuitively get the point of hermeneutics. In this anthropologically reflexive context, the world is a site of contested loyalties and interpretations (Rorty, 1989).

By describing the intellectual as ironic, it may be taken to mean that the intellectual is indifferent to ethical issues. Cosmopolitan virtue does not simply mean moral indifference or vague liberal universalism. The image of the modern intellectual as the revolutionary hero, who is passionately committed to social and political causes, may not be relevant to a fragmented and diverse global culture. Intellectual concern for other cultures might draw upon a different set of metaphors, either relating to the hermeneutic understanding of illness or to the psychoanalytic relationship, in which the neutral analyst has to listen carefully to what the other is saying. Moral responses to pain may not require passion but care as a controlled emotional engagement. One could imagine that cosmopolitan virtue would involve a careful engagement with cultural issues such as the protection of so-called primitive cultures and aboriginal communities which are clearly threatened by the globalization of tourism, and responsibility for advocacy in a world of collapsing environments and endangered languages. The cosmopolitan intellectual does not argue that fundamentalism is, in some simple sense, wrong or dangerous. The cosmopolite joins, rather, with local voices to probe and if necessary to problematize debate.

Cosmopolitan virtue may be regarded as a weak alternative to a strong theory of cultural relativism. A more important auxiliary argument concerns human frailty and vulnerability. The underlying moral component of this argument is that human frailty provides a foundation for recognizing a common human bond, typically described as 'the human condition'. Human beings are embodied, and therefore they are frail and vulnerable. In order to respond to that frailty, human beings create institutions to protect them against risk, but these very institutions are also sociologically precarious. Human beings need both social and ontological security, and therefore they need a 'sacred canopy' (Berger, 1967), but this sacred canopy can only have force if it is based on an existing foundation of social reciprocity. The dangers of the modern world are that globalization increases our

vulnerability (through damage to the natural environment), makes our institutions even more precarious (through an erosion of their sovereignty in the face of global exchanges) and reduces the interconnectedness of social life (by the erosion of the social capital invested in everyday life). Precisely because body, society and culture are threatened by global risks, we need methods of rebuilding community, solidarity and inter-communal understanding. The concepts of vulnerability and cosmopolitanism are a modest proposal towards such a project. It is intended to be an alternative to the bleak and tragic view of Weber's analysis of the differentiation of the life-spheres and at the same time a statement about how religious studies could function in a global era.

Cosmopolitan virtue is not designed to make us feel psychologically comfortable with cultural difference and diversity. Cosmopolitanism has a relationship to the traditional themes of homelessness in the theology of the Abrahamic faiths. Adam and Eve were driven from their Garden as a consequence of their transgression, and forced to sweat and labour in an alien place. It was also central to Jewish themes of exile and exclusion, and is generally shared by the world religions as an image of the vulnerability of human beings. If the body has been a metaphor of the human home, then homelessness expresses the fundamental spiritual alienation of human beings. The adventures of Odysseus provide an equally potent image of the tensions between the security of a dwelling place and the moral challenge of the journey. Odysseus's confrontation with diversity and his voyage home have been taken as a collective metaphor of human alienation.

Conclusion: Against Relativism

Cosmopolitan virtue is a defensible moral position in a globally fragmented culture, and complacent relativism is not the only possible outcome of the recognition of global diversity. In addition, a focus on human vulnerability provides a moral baseline for standards of conduct and intellectual inquiry that can, as it were, make relativism relative. Cosmopolitanism can both express a set of virtues (care for other cultures, ironic distance from one's own traditions, concern for the integrity of cultures in a hybrid world, openness to cross-cultural criticism and so forth), and embrace a love of country as a republican commonwealth that ought to be shared by all. If there is now widespread acceptance of the relevance of human rights legislation, then in principle perhaps we can accept a set of obligations that logically underpin those rights. The notion of 'cosmopolitan virtue' is a general description of such cultural and moral obligations.

This account of cosmopolitan virtue could be easily criticized as hopelessly naïve and, even as a normative position, could be challenged for being completely out of touch with contemporary social and political realities. Cosmopolitans are criticized as rootless sceptics who are not committed to place and local culture (Barber, 1985; Mansfield, 1994). In *Achieving Our Country*, Rorty (1998b) condemns the liberal complacency of the super-rich cosmopolitans who have turned their backs on the democratic American

traditions of Dewey and Whitman. Cosmopolitanism could also be held to be elitist in the sense that the elite, in the comfort of their Beverly Hills mansions, can afford to be generous to other cultures at a safe distance, whereas the slum dwellers of Bradford and Glasgow cannot. It is because these criticisms have considerable force that I have selected Montaigne as, so to speak, the fountain of contemporary cosmopolitanism. It was precisely in the horror of civil war and religious violence that Montaigne called upon his fellow countrymen to exercise restraint and to adopt a set of 'feminine' virtues lest they destroy themselves in a sea of blood. His disquisition on virtue and his reflections on cannibalism must also have appeared naïve and elitist. My proposal for cosmopolitan virtue is addressed to precisely those powers responsible for genocide in Chechnya, Bosnia, Kosovo and Rwanda, and equally for global warming, the global narcotics industry and the global sales of small arms. These virtues are elitist in the sense that they are initially addressed to those in power to exercise a set of obligations. Finally, there is a sociological argument behind this normative account of virtues. It is the sociological hope that, as the global elites become more culturally diverse and flexible, they will have to embrace global diversity more seriously and with greater determination. In this sense, they may become, in Aihwa Ong's terms, 'flexible citizens' (Ong, 1999), because cosmopolitanism is part of the cultural logic of transnationality.

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