

Cosmopolitanism

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Abstract

This essay explicates and defends a version of moral cosmopolitanism. It builds on the work of Martha Nussbaum and Kwame Anthony Appiah, who in turn build on Cicero and Kant. It is an update in a contemporary idiom of a classical cosmopolitanism. In a time when Enlightenment ideas are widely discounted, it gives expression to an Enlightenment view arguing that there should be a fundamental allegiance to the ideal of a worldwide community of human beings where each human being, just because he/she is a human being, is equally a subject of concern and is taken to be of equal worth. Any patriotic concern for nation, or particularly groupings, should be subordinate to that ideal.

It defends such a conception against the charge of elitism, unrealistic utopianism, anthropological naiveté and irrelevance, and of the charge that it involves a failure to attend to the importance of particular attachments.

Section 1

In her two contributions to *For Love of Country*, her discussion of Kant and in her *Cultivating Humanity*, Martha Nussbaum develops a conception of cosmopolitanism, rooted very much in the Stoics – particularly the Roman Stoics – and in Kant (Nussbaum 1996a, 1996b, 1997a, 19997b). It is important, forcefully characterized, argued and defended. In a time when Enlightenment ideas are widely discounted, Nussbaum's is a voice of the Enlightenment articulating clearly and boldly Enlightenment views and resourcefully defending them.

I shall begin by setting out the core of her account and defense of cosmopolitanism. As against various particularisms – *some forms* of civic patriotism and nationalism – she defends what she calls – and correctly – ‘the very old ideal of the cosmopolitan,

the person whose allegiance is to the worldwide community of human beings' (Nussbaum, 1996a: 4). As over against neo-pragmatist contextualist defenses of particularity – she takes Richard Rorty as a paradigm case – Nussbaum thinks the goals of cosmopolitanism are expressive of an ideal that is 'more adequate to our situation in the contemporary world' (Nussbaum, 1996a: 4).

We need, in thinking morally and politically (including thinking about justice), to think carefully about what we – a worldwide 'we' – 'share as both rational and mutually dependent human beings' (Nussbaum, 1996a:5). We should not give our first allegiance to being an Italian, Canadian or Greek, or a Christian, socialist or Muslim. We should instead give our first allegiance to being a citizen of the world. She grants that we cannot and, even if we could, should not, set aside all or even most local allegiances. It is hardly possible just to be a human being without being a particular kind of human being socialized in a certain way. But our *first allegiance* should be 'to the worldwide community of human beings [and] to what is morally good ... and that which, being good, I can commend as such to all human beings' (Nussbaum, 1996a, 4-5). That, she has it, is a core ideal of the cosmopolitan outlook.

We should have a cosmopolitan education, and struggle to see that others should get such an education as well, where we learn not only to think and respond critically about ourselves as a particular people of a particular time and place but also to others, sometimes very different others, often very distant from ourselves, but also to people in our own midst (assuming we are not such people ourselves) who, as things stand now in our society, are subaltern to ourselves, e.g., in our traditional Western societies blacks, native peoples and the like. In short, our cosmopolitan education must be a multicultural education and this, of course, means it should not be limited to learning just about the West.

We should see ourselves as citizens of the world – a notion, absent a world-state or world-federation, that Nussbaum must take, and I think quite properly so, as metaphorical, or else she will fall prey to Michael Walzer's criticism – e.g., without a world-state, no one could be a citizen of the world (Walzer, 1996:125). In seeing ourselves, in a metaphorical sense, as citizens of the world, we are giving our first and highest allegiance to humanity, to the *community* of humankind.¹ The first principles of our practical thought must respect the equal worth of all members of that world community or, if 'world community' is hard to swallow, the complete population of *homo sapiens* on our planet. Commitments and attunements rooted in cultural membership, group affiliation or moral traditions, important as they are, must from a cosmopolitan point of view take second place. Our self-definition must not be so confined.

She follows the Stoics in arguing 'that each of us dwells, in effect, in two communities – the local community of our birth and the [worldwide] community of human argument and aspiration' – the community of humankind (Nussbaum, 1996a:7). It is *this community of humankind* that is, fundamentally, the source of our moral obligations with respect to the most basic moral values. 'We should regard all human beings as

1 It will be challenged that there is no such thing. We can intelligibly speak of some smaller groups as communities where they are linked together in a *gemeinschaftlich* way, e.g. the Hutterite community, the gay community, the Icelandic community in Winnipeg and the like, but there is nothing *gemeinschaftlich* about humanity taken as a whole that would give sense to speaking of it as a community. However, perhaps it could be taken as a metaphorical expression of an ideal.

our fellow citizens and neighbors' (Nussbaum, 1996a: 7 and quoting Plutarch *On the Fortunes of Alexander*).

Let me quote an extended passage where Nussbaum, with the help of the Stoics, expands her view. Nussbaum writes:

We should regard our deliberations as, first and foremost, deliberations about human problems of people in particular concrete situations, not problems growing out of a national identity that is altogether unlike that of others. Diogenes knew that the invitation to think as a world citizen was, in a sense, an invitation to be an exile from the comfort of patriotism and its easy sentiments, to see our own ways of life from the point of view of justice and the good. The accident of where one is born is just that, an accident; any human being might have been born in any nation. Recognizing this, his Stoic successors held, we should not allow differences of nationality or class or ethnic membership or even gender to erect barriers between us and our fellow human beings. We should recognize humanity wherever it occurs, and give its fundamental ingredients, reason and moral capacity, our first allegiance and respect (Nussbaum, 1996a:7).

There is an important way this view invites misunderstanding. Nussbaum guards against it in a passage that immediately follows the one above. She writes:

This clearly did not mean that the Stoics were proposing the abolition of local and national forms of political organization and the creation of a world state. *Their point was even more radical: that we should give our first allegiance to no mere form of government, no temporal power, but to the moral community made up by the humanity of all human beings.* The idea of the world citizen is in this way the ancestor and the source of Kant's idea of the 'kingdom of ends,' and has a similar function in inspiring and regulating moral and political conduct. One should always behave so as to treat with equal respect the dignity of reason and moral choice in every human being (Nussbaum, 1996:7-8; italics mine).

Stoics, and Nussbaum follows them here, argue that a good civic education is education for world citizenship. They recommend this attitude – this inculcation of cosmopolitanism – on three grounds:

1. 'The study of humanity as it is realized in the whole world is valuable for self-knowledge: we see ourselves more clearly when we see our ways in relation to those of other reasonable people' (Nussbaum, 1996a:8).²
2. Factionalism and shifting strategic allegiances do great harm to the political life of any group. Proper political deliberation is 'sabotaged again and again by partisan loyalties... Only by making our fundamental allegiance to the world community of justice and reason do we avoid these dangers' (Nussbaum, 1996a:8).
3. To adopt the viewpoint and cultivate the stance of world citizens is particularly valuable 'for it recognizes in people what is especially fundamental about them, most worthy of respect and acknowledgement: their aspirations to justice

2 Note qualifier 'reasonable'. Richard Rorty would have some critical things to say about that.

and goodness and their capacities for reasoning in this connection' (Nussbaum, 1996a:8).³

Local identifications can be – and I would add usually are – ‘a source of great richness in life’ (Nussbaum, 1996a:9). But they are, of course, as we have already seen Nussbaum noticing, *causally speaking* accidental. We could have been born anywhere and into any class or race. But it does not follow that these particular cultural belongings are superficial or (even if we could) to be set aside. Our very identity is partly constituted by them. And we should devote special attention to them in our education. However, Nussbaum adds and stresses, ‘we should also work to make all human beings part of our community of dialogue and concern, base our political deliberations on that interlocking commonality, and give the circle that defines our humanity special attention and respect’ (Nussbaum, 1996a:9).

It should also be a cosmopolitan aim – and this is something difficult to achieve – to learn to recognise humanity wherever it is encountered.⁴ Cosmopolitans should not be deterred by traits that are strange to them. We should instead be ‘eager to understand humanity in all its strange guises’ (Nussbaum, 1996a:9). However, she then goes on to make a universalist claim that many (particularly some anthropologists and cultural theorists) who enthusiastically endorse what she says about understanding others – about gaining cross cultural understanding and sympathies – would demur from. She tells us that cosmopolitans must make the universalist claim that it is necessary to learn enough about those very different from ourselves to ‘recognize common aims, aspirations, and values, and enough about these common ends to see how variously they are instantiated in the many cultures and their histories’ (Nussbaum, 1996a:9). Many cultural theorists and anthropologists believe that, a few banalities aside, we live in a world variously interpretable in particular settings, without sufficient commonalities to provide, across cultures, common aims or common ends. We have only enough overlap to be able to understand each other, but not enough to have a shared moral point of view. That *may* be so, but as Nussbaum sees it, there is enough plausibility in it to make such a humanist cosmopolitan stance a significant working ‘hypothesis’, not to be rejected out of hand.⁵ We should be cosmopolitans putting ‘right before country and universal reason before the symbols of national belonging’ (Nussbaum, 1996a:17).⁶

Cosmopolitanism, as Nussbaum sees it and characterises it, is not the detached basically aesthetic observation of an observer who understands all points of view, or at least many of them, and examines them with interest but without commitment. Instead *her* cosmopolitanism is the cosmopolitanism of a *committed participant observer* and not that of the unmoved observer who, with aesthetic distance and a purely aesthetic gaze comes to appreciate in a detached manner the kaleidoscope of a full range of the forms of life. Nussbaum remarks in her reply to her critics that her essay ‘in defense of cosmopolitanism argues, in essence, that we should follow’ those ‘righteous *goyim*’ who at great risk to themselves hid and protected Jews from the Fascists; and, she would, I trust, have added, those righteous Israelis who, against the political and social

3 On this see also John Rawls's *Political Liberalism*.

4 For, culturally speaking, to see how difficult this is, see Richard Rorty, 1998, 167-185.

5 This comes out clearly in her *Activating Humanity*.

6 What is ‘universal reason’? Do we have a bit of undefended Enlightenment rationalism here? See the exchange between Rorty and Habermas in Rorty (2000) and Jürgen Habermas (2000) (with response by Rorty).

thrust of their government, seek to protect Palestinians and see that they have fair treatment. Such people should be models for cosmopolitans. We should try

... as hard as we can to construct societies in which the norm will be realized in as many minds and hearts as possible and promoted by legal and institutional arrangements. Whatever else we are bound by and pursue, we should recognize at whatever personal and social cost, that each human being is human and counts as the moral equal of every other. To use the words of John Rawls, 'Each person possesses an inviolability founded on justice' (Nussbaum, 1996b:133).

She argues, along with Kwame Appiah, that 'the cosmopolitan ideal includes a positive delight in the diversity of human cultures, languages and forms of life' (Nussbaum, 1996b:137). But that notwithstanding, a cosmopolitan, Nussbaum has it, will push her cosmopolitanism in a Kantian – Rawlsian direction. Here they will, in seeking the best articulation of cosmopolitanism, give *priority of the right to the good*. This means in this context that cosmopolitans will give

... first priority to structures – prominently including structures of equal liberty – that will protect the ability of people to choose a form of life [not violating the rights of anyone else] in accordance with their own lights, whether cultural or religious or personal. The very principles of a world citizenship in this way value the diversity of persons; they value it so much that they make liberty of choice the benchmark of any just constitutional order, and refuse to compromise this principle in favour of any particular tradition or religion (Nussbaum, 1996b:137).

So, to sum up, cosmopolitanism, while not neglecting the near and the dear, enjoins us to be citizens of the world: that is, 'persons who can interact competently and respectfully with peoples and cultures around the globe' (Friedman, 2000:587). Marilyn Friedman, in discussing Nussbaum's views, makes the following useful remark.

Three capacities, in Nussbaum's view, are particularly important to a cultivated humanity. First, one should be able to reflect critically on oneself and one's traditions, accepting no belief or tradition until it has survived 'reason's demand for consistency and for justification' (p.9). Socratic, critically reflective education teaches students 'to think for themselves' (p. 16). Second, one should be able to see oneself not simply as a citizen of a particular locale or a member of a particular group, but also and 'above all' as a human being 'bound to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern' (p. 10). Third, one should possess narrative imagination; one should, that is, be able to understand the world 'from the point of view of the other' (p. 11). These are not the only three capacities that 'intelligent' citizenship requires, but they are the guiding aims of *world citizenship* (p.11) (Friedman, 2000:587).

Nussbaum's view, as by now should be obvious, is a *moral* cosmopolitanism – the full human community is the fundamental 'source of our moral and social obligations' (Nussbaum, 1997:52) – rather than a political or institutional cosmopolitanism, although Nussbaum, is very concerned with the political implications of her views.⁷ Friedman puts the matter well:

7 The distinction between moral cosmopolitanism and political and institutional cosmopolitanism is explained in Chapter Two.

Nussbaum's cosmopolitanism is not a form of political or legal cosmopolitanism. She does not call for world government. Indeed, in other writings, Nussbaum cautions that although the idea of working for 'genuine world government' seems 'deeply attractive,' there is reason, at present, to think that 'transnational bodies' would engage in worse policies than nation-states and would be less democratically accountable. Thus, another reason to give special attention to nation-states is that they are currently 'despite their faults ... the most manageable places within which to press for justice' (Friedman, 2000:588).

In Nussbaum's *Cultivating Humanity*, it becomes evident that her moral cosmopolitanism 'emphasizes not only rational principles and matters of rights and justice but also moral imagination and emotional attunement to others' (Friedman 2000:599). From her two papers in *Love of Country* and from her 'Kant and Cosmopolitanism', that would seem not to be so – there *reason* seems to have, rather exclusively the place of honor. But, as Friedman points out, Nussbaum's moral cosmopolitanism attends to the emotions. It is not a dry rationalism. It is not just a replay of the rationalist enlightenment. As we see in both her *Love's Knowledge* and *Poetic Justice*, she stresses, in a way that the tradition of moral philosophy has neglected, the role of emotional responsiveness in moral understanding and the capacity of literature to cultivate this crucial dimension of moral competence. We should both come to know the communal connections among human beings that ground our moral responses, but we should as well feel the connections by way of a compassion for the sufferings of others and a general love for them (Nussbaum, 1997b:85-90). Friedman remarks,

Nussbaum's moral community is held together by bonds of felt attachment and emotional responsiveness among persons at least as much as by recognition of, and respect for, their rational moral capacity. The idea of a love for all humanity is mentioned no less than fourteen times throughout *Cultivating Humanity* (Friedman 2000:589).

For Nussbaum, a cosmopolitan morality is robust. We have duties of non-maleficence, protection against injustice and duties of beneficence. We are, that is, morally obligated to promote the well-being of human beings generally in addition to obligations to refrain from harming them and protecting them against injustice. Unlike a minimal morality (libertarianism, for example), which only requires us to refrain from harming others, Nussbaum's cosmopolitanism is very demanding. This again sets her apart from Michael Waltzer's conception of a cosmopolitan morality.

Section 2

I want now to turn to Kwame Anthony Appiah's 'Cosmopolitan Patriots', which is in part a response to Nussbaum's 'Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism' (Appiah, 1996, Appiah, 1998).⁸ He develops, in a forceful way, two connected notions which he takes to set uneasily with Nussbaum's account. I speak of his arguments that an adequate cosmopolitanism must be a *rooted* cosmopolitanism and of what he takes to be the need for *cosmopolitan patriotism*. It seems to me that both of these notions are essential to moral cosmopolitanism. They are not much emphasised by Nussbaum but they should be. However, I think a careful reading of what she says on the matter will make it apparent that – emphasis aside – there is not much in the way of disagreement be-

8 I quote here from the 1996 version.

tween her and Appiah. Both have the notion that an adequate cosmopolitanism needs to be rooted and that patriotism and local attunements are important and that they need not, and will not, if they are reasonable, conflict with cosmopolitanism. I would add that this holds for liberal nationalism as well (Nielsen, 2000, Nielsen, 1998-9, and Couture and Nielsen 1996). But I leave that aside here. Appiah is insightful on these matters. Let us follow some of what he says.

In the face of the familiar charge – Appiah calls it a slander – that cosmopolitans are rootless,⁹ Appiah opposes a ‘rooted cosmopolitanism, or, if you like, a cosmopolitan patriotism’ to what is conventionally regarded as cosmopolitanism.¹⁰ Where, he asks, would we cosmopolitans get our roots from, our sense of identity with people, in a cosmopolitan world so conceived? And ‘where ... would all the diversity we cosmopolitans celebrate come from in a world where there were *only* such rootless cosmopolitans?’ – that is to say, where, to put it more accurately, there were such rootless cosmopolitans and nothing else (Appiah, 1996:22). Appiah remarks:

The answer is straightforward: The cosmopolitan patriot can entertain the possibility of a world in which everyone is a rooted cosmopolitan, attached to a home of his or her own, with its own cultural particularities, but taking pleasure from the presence of other, different places that are home to other, different, people. The cosmopolitan also imagines that in such a world not everyone will find it best to stay in their natal patria, so that the circulation of people between different localities will involve not only cultural tourism (which the cosmopolitan admits to enjoying) but migration, nomadism, diaspora. (In the past, these processes have usually been the result of forces we should deplore: the old migrants were often refugees, and the older diasporas often began in an involuntary exile. But what can be hateful if coerced can be celebrated when it flows from the free decisions of individuals or groups (Appiah, 1996:22).¹¹

People who emigrate from their country of origin will often be cosmopolitan patriots. They will willingly ‘accept the citizen’s responsibility to nurture the culture and politics of their [new] homes’ (Appiah, 1996:22). If they emigrate and come to settle in a new country, they will typically, if they are cosmopolitan patriots, become citizens of that country and willingly accept the responsibilities to nurture the culture, including the general political culture of their new country of allegiance. Here cosmopolitan patriots – and I believe Nussbaum’s cosmopolitans as well – are very distinct from a kind of detached elitist cosmopolitan who will, typically, moving from one country or another, feel that even non-chauvinist patriotism is vulgar and distasteful. To have, they believe, such an attachment to any place, or to have a commitment to some particular people, whom she regards as *her* people is, such *elitist* cosmopolitans believe, childishly parochial. Elitist cosmopolitans – think of the Bloomsbury group – will distance themselves from any such attachment, regarding it as an ethnocentric tribalism that a thoroughly emancipated person should be above. This is a very different form of cosmopolitanism from Nussbaum’s, Appiah’s and my own. But it is all the same a genuine form of cosmopolitanism. It is perhaps the form of cosmopolitanism that many people are thinking about when they think of the concept. One that I at least would set myself

9 But see Jeremy Waldron, ‘Minority Cultures and the Cosmopolitan Alternative’ in Will Kymlicka, ed., *The Rights of Minority Cultures*, 93-119.

10 See Nussbaum 1996a.

11 See, *pace* Appiah, Waldron 1995.

against without denying its attractions or failing to understand why a reflective person might feel this way given her awareness of how deeply people are usually ideologised and how pervasively and unreflectively – indeed blinkeredly – they are *parti-pris*. But, to repeat, that is not Appiah's or Nussbaum's cosmopolitanism and nor is it mine.

Such a cosmopolitan could not be a citizen of the world, because he could not be a citizen anywhere, except in a merely technical sense. He has a passport of convenience and he pays his taxes where he cannot adeptly and reasonably safely avoid doing so. He, as a rational person, would not welcome being embroiled in charges of tax evasion for the sake of a few extra bucks. But he has no sense of a commitment to a place, to a people to whom he is bound by particular ties of affection and loyalty. Where he is one of a people, he still does not regard them as a people to whom he is attached. He has no such sensibilities or commitments. He accepts no responsibilities of citizenship, takes no part, except to protect his interests and those of family and friends, in political and related activities in the place where he lives. If he has any commitments at all they will be to that small elite standing detachedly above the fray. By contrast, cosmopolitan patriots as well as Nussbaum's cosmopolitans – or for that matter Cicero's or Kant's cosmopolitans or mine – will, while being citizens of the world, (a) have commitments to a world and to a particular people who they regard as their people and (b) take pleasure in, learn from and seek to protect and sustain the deep cultural diversity of human beings. To put the basic point somewhat differently while having this commitment to cultivating humanity as something deeply engrained in their view of the world and in their sense of being the kind of persons they are, they will still have as well local attachments, which are genuine and powerful, and they will accept, and not just as a burden, 'the citizen's responsibility to nurture the culture and politics of their homes' (Appiah 1996:22).

Appiah makes another point which matches well with what cultural theorists say about *actually existing cosmopolitanism*. Many cosmopolitan patriots – rooted cosmopolitan patriots – will, as did Kant, 'spend their lives in the places that shaped them; and that is one of the reasons local practices [will] be sustained and transmitted' (Appiah, 1996:22). But he adds,

many [will] move, and that [will] mean that cultural practices ... travel also (as they have always traveled). The result [will] be a world in which each local form of human life [is] the result of long term and persistent processes of *cultural* hybridization: a world, in that respect, much like the world we live in now (Appiah, 1996:22-23).¹²

Here we come to actually existing cosmopolitanisms. But to stay on the normative road we have been taking, we can still say, in the light of Appiah's above remarks, and not unreasonably, as an anthropology teacher of mine used to say, that *cultural hybridization yields hybrid vigor*.

There is also the claim that with modernism, and even more so with the globalization growing from it, that we are getting a cultural homogenization throughout the world and that this is an unfortunate effect of cosmopolitanism. Appiah claims that this familiar claim is false. He remarks:

In the global system of cultural exchanges, some forms of human life are disappearing, and the processes of homogenization are somewhat asymmetrical. Nei-

¹² Note again Waldron, 1995.

ther of these phenomena are particularly new, but their range and speed probably are. Nevertheless, as forms of culture disappear, new forms are created, and they are created locally, which means they have exactly the regional inflections that cosmopolitans celebrate. The disappearance of old cultural forms is, in short, consistent with a rich variety of forms of human life, just because new cultural forms that differ from each other are also being created all the time (Appiah, 1996:23).¹³

Appiah next turns to the relation of liberalism to cosmopolitan patriotism and most particularly to the patriotism side of it. Remember, it is commonly claimed that cosmopolitanism just goes with liberalism. Yet both cosmopolitanism and patriotism, as sentiments, ‘can seem to be hard to accommodate to liberal principles’ (Appiah, 1996:23). But, that notwithstanding, Appiah is a liberal and a cosmopolitan patriot. He attempts to show how the two stances can coherently go together. Liberals who, like Rawls, ‘propose a state that does not take sides in the debates among citizen’s various conceptions of the good are said by some communitarians and Aristotelians, for example, to be unable to value and sustain any kind of patriotism including cosmopolitan patriotism’ (Appiah, 1996:23-24). Appiah argues that this belief is also false (Appiah, 1996: 23-26).

Of course, if patriotism entails accepting the duty to accept what one’s country does, ‘right or wrong’, no liberal can accept that ‘because liberalism invokes a set of political principles that a state can fail to realize; and the liberal will have no special loyalty to an illiberal state, because liberals value people over collectivities’ (Appiah, 1996: 24).

Collectivities or peoples are only valuable, Appiah claims, when, as often they do, these collectivities enrich the lives of people – individuals.

Still, you can be a patriot and a liberal too. Someone ‘who loves principle can also love country, family, friends ...’ (Appiah, 1996:29). But it is also true that a true patriot will hold the state and the community within which she lives to certain standards, will have moral aspirations for it, and these aspirations may be liberal (Appiah, 1996:24). J. S. Mill, T. H. Green, L. T. Hobhouse, John Dewey, Bertrand Russell, and Noam Chomsky are all liberals and yet particularly Russell and Chomsky are severe critics of the states of which they remain [remained] members. Russell, for example, was imprisoned for opposing the First World War, and in some circles Chomsky is treated as an irresponsible pariah. Yet Chomsky has a firm sense of being an American and has a firm loyalty and concern for the people of the United States – a people of which he is a member – though as an anarchist socialist he can hardly have loyalty to the state and particularly that state. The others, although they were socialists, were also firm liberals and cosmopolitans. They however also retained the kind of patriotism of which Appiah speaks. They stood against their state and society when they believed they were in violation of liberal principles, but they remained loyal citizens, with a firm sense of being American or British as the case may be.

As Appiah points out, ‘at the heart of the liberal picture of humanity is the idea of the equal dignity of all persons’ (Appiah, 1996:25). It is the distinctive modernist belief, however overridden in practice, ‘that every one of us begins life with an equal entitlement to respect: an entitlement that we may, perhaps, lose through misbehavior, but which otherwise remains with us all our lives’ (Appiah, 1996:25). The idea, ex-

13 And again note Waldron, 1995 and Salmon Rushdie, 1991.

pressed powerfully by John Rawls and Ronald Dworkin, that each person is entitled to equal respect, is a central, if not *the* central element of liberalism.

We should also not confuse cosmopolitanism and humanism. A humanist can be, and often is, a cosmopolitan, but he need not be. Cosmopolitanism is not *just* the feeling that everybody matters and matters equally. It is not *just* a belief in moral and social equality.

The cosmopolitan also celebrates the fact that there are different desirable local human ways of being, while humanism is consistent with the desire for global homogeneity. Humanism can be made compatible with cosmopolitan sentiments, but it can also live with a deadening urge to uniformity (Appiah, 1996:25).

I am inclined to think that a humanist who is also an egalitarian and committed to the idea of the equal dignity of all persons and to the idea that the life of everyone matters and matters equally, will, if she also thinks carefully, informedly and imaginatively about these egalitarian beliefs, end up also being a cosmopolitan. But it is not obvious that that is so. And indeed it may be false.

A cosmopolitan patriot will welcome human differences, including deep human differences, deep differences of ways of life, not only in his own society but worldwide. However, there is a deontic justice-based constraint on this. A liberal cosmopolitan will welcome these differences as long as these differences – these different ways of life – meet certain general moral constraints – so long as, in particular, the different ways of life respect basic human rights. When this is obtained, they are not only happy, but compelled ‘to let these different ways of doing and being be’ (Appiah, 1996:25-26). Put slightly differently, a cosmopolitan liberal will tolerate a panoply of different conceptions of the good, and a consistent cosmopolitan liberal cannot insist on the hegemony of, or even in any way the privileging of one conception of the good over another.¹⁴ Liberals will accept such differences and, if they are cosmopolitans, welcome and take joy in such differences as long as they are all compatible with a cluster of similar liberal conceptions of justice and, taken in broad terms, a single cluster of fundamental principles of social justice for the design of the basic structure of our societies. This is what Rawls means by the priority of the right over the good. There must, for a society to hold together, be a broad agreement on the fundamental principles of the right, while there can be wide disagreement about what constitutes a good life. This yields diversity and a respect for diversity in life plans and about what a good life consists of, while providing, through its conception of justice, practices of justice, structures of law that are in accord with them and a general constitutional order that goes with these principles of justice. These things, together with loyalties and solidarities, provide the *social cement* to bind a society together. The hope of the liberal cosmopolitan is that, in time, this can come to be a worldwide phenomenon: that our solidarities and loyalties can be greatly enlarged.¹⁵

Is this at all a realistic hope, something that could be part of a *realistic utopia*? Note the claim of the anthropologist Anthony Smith ‘that a mass-based global loyalty is anthropologically impossible.’

timeless global culture answers to no living needs and conjures no memories. If

14 Remember here the old saw that a liberal is someone who cannot stand up for himself.

15 See Richard Rorty, ‘Justice as a Wider Loyalty’ in P. Cheah and B. Robbins, eds., *Cosmopolitanism* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 90-115.

memory is central to identity, we can discern no global identity-in-the-making, nor aspirations for one, nor any collective amnesia to replace existing 'deep' cultures with a cosmopolitan 'flat' culture. The latter remain a dream confined to some intellectuals. It strikes no chord among the vast masses of peoples divided into their habitual communities of class, gender, region, religion and culture. Images, identities, cultures, all express the plurality and particularism of histories and their remoteness from ... any vision of a cosmopolitan global order' (Cheah, 1998:26. Quoted from Anthony D. Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*. Cambridge: Polity, 1995:24).

It is difficult even for an old cosmopolitan like myself not to sympathise with Smith's claim. I have just come, as I write this, from reading in my newspaper that in central Kalamantan in Borneo tens of thousands of refugees have fled from gangs armed with spears and machetes. They are Dayaks looking for Madurese. Some four hundred people have been massacred. In some instances they were stripped naked, their hands tied together and beheaded. Some of their hearts were cut out. Later the Dayaks marched through their villages with the heads of those murdered on poles for display. Turning to another and quite different gem, I read, revealing that the West is in on this too, that 42 pharmaceutical companies have launched a lawsuit against the South African government for importing cheap copies of AIDS medicines where many South Africans, plagued by AIDS, are too poor to be able to pay for the much more expensive drugs made by the drug companies.¹⁶ And fresh from re-reading Richard Rorty's 'Human Rights, Rationality, and Sentimentality,' I have vividly in mind his sickening examples of how various featherless bipeds have treated other featherless bipeds without any sense that they were violating human rights or doing anything wrong (Rorty, 1998:169-185). This is not an atypical day's reading. Our world is awash with such horrors. Does this make cosmopolitanism a cruel joke?

Most human beings, it is tempting to say, have no regard for humanity at large (the whole of humanity). They do not identify with anything nearly so grand as humanity, but have narrower identifications limited pretty much to their nation, their race, their religion, their ethnic group, their class, their section of the country, to people in a similar profession and the like. And they, as well, are typically and sometimes cruelly ethnocentric. They take it that the group they identify with has a grip on 'the truth'. They have, in contrast with The Others, the only right way of doing things, the correct view of things. Others who disagree with them are just in error and often, so they believe, dangerously so. Global loyalty, it is sad to say, is only for a few cosmopolitan intellectuals. There is indeed, we are tempted to believe, 'no global identity-in-the-making' nor any widespread cosmopolitan aspirations or sentiments. Appiah, Nielsen and Nussbaum are spitting into the wind.

Perhaps. But particularly after some clarifications are made concerning Smith's remarks, it is not so terribly clear that widespread global loyalty is anthropologically impossible. First, the kind of cosmopolitanism defended above does not claim that there is a timeless global culture such that there could be no significant change in pan-cultural beliefs and attunements over time. And, as Appiah and Nielsen make particularly clear, the cosmopolitan with her global loyalties will have various particular loyalties as well, which also form her identity and which are often precious to her (Nielsen

16 There has been – although hardly a satisfactory one – some shift, under embarrassing pressure, of the big drug companies since I first wrote this.

2000). The cosmopolitan will prize difference and cultural variability. They will be set, as Appiah, Nielsen and Nussbaum are, against *a flat homogenizing global culture*. That is just what a cosmopolitan does not want. Here Isaiah Berlin – a paradigm cosmopolitan if there ever was one – is an instructive example.¹⁷ Moreover, the particular loyalties and the global loyalties often at least need not conflict. One can, as a rooted cosmopolitan, be a good Dane *and* a loyal European as one can be a good Icelander *and* a loyal citizen of the world.

However, we are only clearing the decks here, for what I have just said, important as it is to get clear about, is not sufficient to refute the claim that mass-based global loyalty is anthropologically impossible. Memory is a crucial element in identity. But if we look at the populations of the various cultures of the world we can, as Smith puts it, ‘discern no global identity-in-the-making nor aspirations for one.’ The belief in such an identity is not rooted in anthropological investigation – or in the anthropological facts – but it is a dream of some intellectuals about how we *should* be. And no doubt there are *some* intellectuals, *as well as others*, who have become citizens of the world in the way Nussbaum, following the Stoics, articulates. And it is not unreasonable to believe that that is obtained and that that is a good thing. But, Smith's claim is that it has not sunk into *any* culture, let alone all cultures such that masses of people will have such commitments and attunements. Moreover, he claims, there is no good reason to think that they ever will. Cosmopolitanism, to repeat, is principally a dream of some intellectuals and not something that could back up, through mass acceptance, cosmopolitan democracy or make cosmopolitics plausible. Is not Smith being realistically tough-minded when he remarks that cosmopolitanism ‘strikes no chord among the vast masses of peoples divided into their habitual communities of class, gender, region, religion and culture? Images, identities, cultures, all express the plurality and particularism of histories and their remoteness from ... any vision of a cosmopolitan global order’ (Smith, 1995:24; quoted by Cheah, 1998:26).

Surely, if we are the least bit realistic, we will feel, hard as it is for us, the bite of that. Our planet is *not* made up of peoples with a generalised love of humanity or anything like a commitment to the welfare let alone the love of humanity. Yet that is not the whole of the story. It is also the case that in the richer, securer parts of the world, with many of its citizens highly educated – think, for example, of Sweden – and a not inconsiderable number of them, typically well-traveled people, are increasingly cosmopolitan. People living in societies with long secure democratic traditions have in not inconsiderable numbers such cosmopolitan loyalties. This is particularly so when they have grown up in countries that are also social democratic in orientation. Where this occurs, where people have been so socialised, they tend to have something bearing some family resemblance to such cosmopolitan sentiments and beliefs. I am thinking of societies such as the Netherlands or the Nordic countries.¹⁸ They, of course, have, like other societies, their racists, bigots, sexists and fanatics, but they are fewer than in less fortunately situated parts of the world and they are pariahs, not heroes, in their own societies. The elites of those societies, intellectual, political and broadly cultural, unlike Bush, Haider and their associates, articulate such cosmopolitan ideas and ideals; and these ideas are firmly in the school system and in the media of such societies. Over time, this has had its effect. Such ideas and ideals are not just the property of a

17 See, for example, his *The Crooked Timber of Humanity*, 1991.

18 We must not neglect the very recent reversal of fascist and quasi-fascist movements in these countries but we should also keep in mind how marginal they are and how pervasively they are criticized.

few intellectuals. Yet we must be careful here, lest we become too Whiggish. There is, faced now with mass immigration, a backlash against 'The Other'. Still we should also keep firmly in mind that it is being firmly opposed in these societies. We having nothing like Bush running wild.

Of course, to remind us of an old Marxist truth, it is easier to be concerned with humanity when you are well-fed, well-housed, well-clothed, well-educated, and secure, although *some* who are none of these things are so committed. But it is fair (although perhaps false) to say that without these material conditions these ideas and ideals would not be widely diffused. Still, they are at best *necessary* conditions – *not sufficient* conditions – for such a wide diffusion. The United States is one of the wealthiest countries in the world, but New York City and Chicago (to say nothing of Buffalo and Cleveland) are not Stockholm or Copenhagen. There are in New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago and Washington, as well as (in varying degrees) in other large cities, vast slums that are principally the place of residence of African Americans and Chicanos. Nothing like this exists in Amsterdam, Copenhagen and Stockholm. And not unsurprisingly – with such class and racial differentiation – cosmopolitan ideas in the American cities are in short supply. Yet even there some not inconsiderable numbers come to have something, although typically on the conservative side, like cosmopolitan ideas. I am thinking of typical readers of *The Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker* or *The Washington Post*, to say nothing of *The New York Review of Books*, *The Boston Review* or the *Village Voice*. They are, for the most part, the reasonably well-educated, reasonably well-off sector of society, but there is a large underclass that has no effective opportunity to be *socialised* into something like cosmopolitanism. Their education is rotten through no fault of their own and the media they have regular access to is not, to understate it, a source of enlightenment. But even here there has been *some* movement. The mass media is not as blatantly racist and sexist as they were in 'the good old days'; the days of my youth where people without embarrassment were called Pollacks, Hunkies, Waps, Krauts, Squareheads, Kikes, Niggars, Chinks, and the like.

Still, we must not make too much of the U.S. exceptionalism. Montreal and Toronto, Sydney and Melbourne, Auckland and Wellington are also not Stockholm or Copenhagen, but they are not New York and Chicago either. There is poverty in these cities and some people in them fare far worse than others, but there are not the vast slums we find in the United States. The same is true in varying degrees for Continental Europe and Japan.¹⁹ Of course not all, to put it mildly, residents of Montreal, Tokyo, Paris or Sydney are aspiring cosmopolitans or live in great or even in reasonable comfort. Yet among the better educated liberal and cosmopolitan ideas are widespread, and that hopefully carries with it the nascence of cosmopolitanism.

But I sound very much like I am saying we will be saved by the bourgeoisie, that they will push things sufficiently so that we will have a cosmopolitan world that will also be egalitarian. There is good reason to be sceptical about that. Moreover, I have neglected the South. Durban, Pretoria, Mexico City, Lima, Sao Paulo, Johannesburg, Calcutta, and Bombay are awash with slums; the class structure there is very sharp and for the underclass education is minimal. Indeed even Shanghai is by no means heaven. I did not claim that the nascence of cosmopolitanism is widespread or the promise of a rose garden, but only that cosmopolitanism has a toehold in some of the luckier parts of the world and that in some of the urban centers of the world – Bombay for example

¹⁹ Think here of Paris and Naples.

– such ideas and sentiments are pervasive, although often largely limited to a certain stratum of the urban population. With the continued development of the productive forces it is not unreasonable to hope that conditions will spread which will make such sentiments widespread and such a realistic utopia possible. It is much easier, to repeat, to be decent if you are secure, well-fed and have a reasonable education.

Someone, to turn to what I hinted at above, not unreasonably, could charge me with elitism in the way I have just argued. Elitism is, of course, an occupational hazard – some might say a disease – for an intellectual. I talk above like I expect social change – and in this instance cosmopolitanism and the social practices that go with it – to come from *above* from an enlightened educated elite. I do think that such elites have a causal impute, but I do not think that major social change ever occurs from the top but occurs only when there is mass resistance from below to the old order. Sweden's social democracy came into power by militant union action. In the thirties after their conservative government sent troops to break up a peaceful though militant strike and this resulted in a considerable number of unarmed workers being killed – murdered is more accurate – the unions in response called a general strike. With the support of a population shocked by the troops' violence the government fell, elections were called and social democracy came into being. Its social democratic government has governed for 70 of the last 80 years. When the conservatives get in (always short-lived) it is always on the promise to do more efficiently and with less cost what the social democrats are doing. The aim was not to roll back social democracy. Cosmopolitan intellectuals could have talked and written all they wanted and nothing would have happened if it had not been for those determined militant unions.

The writers in the anthology *Cosmopolitics*, writing about the role of *some* actually existing cosmopolitanisms, see something of that (Cheah and Robbins 1998). Social movements in the North and social movements, militant unions, and sometimes church groups in the South are the principal agents of social change and resistance to capitalist globalisation and imperialism. Without them we eggheads would be ineffectual. This is something that we should never forget. Richard Rorty remarks that we would like social change – deep social change – to come from *below* and *perhaps* sometimes for the Nietzschean reasons of resentment he alludes to. But what we intellectuals want or do not want is not what counts. What is important is the claim, true or false, of putative social fact that really fundamental change only comes from below. I think this is a fact and that history confirms it. But this needs discussion, argument and empirical corroboration.

However, I also think that it is not *simply* a matter of action from below, because (a) for the action to have a chance of succeeding certain material conditions must be obtained and (b) change does not *simply* come from below. Such change is effected, guided and sometimes first articulated by intellectuals and typically by a certain type of militant cosmopolitan intellectual, where 'cosmopolitan intellectual' is construed broadly enough to centrally include Antonio Gramsci's 'organic intellectuals'. Moreover, with this in mind, we should not for a minute assume that cosmopolitanism is the exclusive property of intellectuals, to say nothing of 'our corporate leaders'. Or that with them capitalist globalisation will yield emancipation or even a decent life for masses of people. That is an ideological illusion.

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