Cosmopolitanism and the deeply religious

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The authors provide a defence of cosmopolitanism from a liberal perspective, examining its moral underpinnings, including moral obligations predicated on a belief in common humanity and the fundamental dignity of human people, cultural capacities that include an embrace of pluralism and a fallibilist disposition, and pragmatist resolve in finding humanitarian solutions to real problems that people face. The authors also scrutinise the ideal of cosmopolitanism by considering the 'deeply religious' as the sort of people about whom it may be said that irreconcilable tensions exist between certain types of commitment and/or belonging and what the demands of cosmopolitanism involve.

Keywords: cosmopolitanism; moral obligations; pluralism; fallibilism; deeply religious

Introduction

Nowadays, cosmopolitanism receives a lot of attention. It is generally thought to describe admirable characteristics of people. Of course, there is no shortage of criticism as well. Critics purport that cosmopolitans unduly stress the universality of moral ideals to such an extent that real differences – not to mention historical grievances – are glossed over, which threatens to ignore or compromise the cultural and historical distinctiveness of specific groups and their way of life. One's cultural integrity, with its complex and unique historical, ethnic and religious particularity, is rendered insignificant or invisible by an offhand approach to difference for which cosmopolitans are allegedly renowned (see Breckenridge et al. 2002).

In this article we take issue with this depiction and accordingly develop a moral conception of cosmopolitanism. The dispositions we will describe approximate an 'ideal', but are not unattainable perfections. Indeed, many people embody cosmopolitan values, albeit imperfectly and inconsistently. The cosmopolitanism we defend, then, is a normative description of what a cosmopolitan person should be. Our aim is therefore to describe and defend the relevant moral qualities and not the institutional arrangements that may be implied by acting upon them. That people may fail to live up to the ideal does nothing to impugn its coherence or goodness as an ideal. In elucidating our ideal, we argue that cosmopolitans should possess, or acquire, relevant moral dispositions and cross-cultural capacities.

Next, we will examine people we call the deeply religious,[1] often thought to be emblematic of insular particularity. Our purpose is to discover whether or not the deeply religious are cosmopolitan in the manner that we defend. In order to see whether

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religious cosmopolitanism is oxymoronic or not, we must consider whether there is irreconcilable tension between certain types of faith commitment, including acting upon those commitments, and what the demands of cosmopolitanism involve. Next, we will raise some objections against our conception of cosmopolitanism and defend it. To conclude, we consider the implications of our arguments for the deeply religious.

A moral conception of cosmopolitanism

Cosmopolitanism can arise from a multitude of historical contexts, its articulations are varied and piecemeal, and it need not assume the guise of a universal, disembodied self that transcends historical and cultural narratives. Indeed, cosmopolitanism is most typically enacted from local contexts. Thus insofar as cosmopolitans in any cultural context ascribe universal import to their intercultural evaluations (for example, that forced child labour ought to be banned), they do so aware of their cultural embeddedness as well as their place in history.

   Yet as we proceed we shall underscore this point: cosmopolitanism places certain moral demands on people. To this end we will elucidate what this means in terms of one's obligations toward others, in particular by arguing that the basis for one's moral obligation is our common humanity. Cosmopolitans will also have cultural capacities with regard to others that are of a particular moral nature. We elucidate two central capacities, both of which we interpret in a moral way, i.e. a regard for pluralism and a fallibilist disposition. Thus cosmopolitanism, in the sense we are using it, has a decidedly liberal cast. A final characteristic of cosmopolitans that we succinctly describe is their pragmatist resolve.

Obligations to others

While there is little that is objectionable about participating in or learning more about how others live, cosmopolitans will be disposed to acknowledge that encounters with difference carry important ethical responsibilities. Indeed, an indispensable trait of cosmopolitanism is its insistence that we are morally obligated toward strangers, and not only those with whom we share associative relations, i.e. those close to us, i.e. family members, compatriots, co-religionists, etc. It is relatively easy to see how we might favour those with whom we share a common citizenship or cultural background, seeing as we will share similar attachments and act upon motivations deriving from those attachments. Shared bonds of kinship nourish communal concern and action centred on shared ideals and commitments in ways that attachments to vague ideals like 'world citizenship' cannot. Indeed, communitarians and nationalists argue that our moral obligations arise from loyalties and affections that are informed by specific communities with which we identify and to which we belong. Therefore, thepossibility of ethical obligation toward those with whom one is not in some sort of relationship seems weakened by the absence of bonds of kinship and affection. But it does not follow that one's obligations therefore focus exclusively on the specific community of which one is a part. Indeed, local attachments may supply us with the moral foundation on which to stand as we look outward from those communities.

   We would further argue that, excepting perhaps for sociopaths, people the world over possess a capacity for what Hume called 'sympathy'. That is, humans are hardwired with a capacity for recognising, and being troubled by, the suffering of others.

Again, it may be asked whether most people are naturally inclined to be sympathetic to others irrespective of whether or not they share a common bloodline, language, socio-cultural values, etc. As Thomas Nagel (2007, 119) observes, cosmopolitanism is therefore principally a conception of justice, because it derives 'from an equal concern or a duty of fairness that we owe in principle of all our fellow human beings, and the institutions to which standards of justice can be applied are instruments for the fulfilment of that duty'. Yet as we noted above, in no way do expressions of attachment or partiality prevent one from extending that concern beyond one's group (see Rosenblum 1998). Indeed, as we suggested, these bonds of affection may nurture as yet undeveloped moral obligations towards another about whom one previously believed she had none. As Lea Ypi (2008, 55) writes,

> One can share with cosmopolitanism the concern for universal obligations and still insist that we need particular communities to get a motivational grip on people by activating their shared understandings. Similarly, one can concede to particularists that many people are more easily motivated by feelings of love, sympathy or mutual trust than by respect for universal laws without also conceding that this is the only, or indeed the most appropriate, foundation of moral duties.

Additionally, certain moral standards apply – even if they are openly flouted – 'across' cultures; so, for example, torture, slavery, forced prostitution and child abuse are morally repugnant irrespective of whether a majority of persons presently acknowledge this. What makes these items morally repugnant is the fact that they violate the basic requirements of human decency, as we will show in the following section. The moral consensus which continues to evolve from cross-cultural dialog (e.g. over how, say, governments may co-operate in combating human trafficking) supplies a compelling ethical basis upon which demands may be made concerning how human beings are to be treated. This consensus is not static but represents a 'morally fixed point' from which ethical dialogue may occur (Tan 2004, 47). The dismissive claim that such a moral consensus is but a expedient political construct of powerful Western nations imposed on others is inattentive to the facts; it should surprise no one that those who suffer from oppression – or those who speak on their behalf – are most likely to invoke the language of human rights (Kymlicka 2007; Schouls 2003). Indeed, without this moral basis the dispossessed have little recourse to basic humanitarian protections.

Again, while it is possible to claim that some moral standards are widely acknowledged, it is certainly not the case that every culture or political entity, at all times, acknowledges these standards. Nevertheless, even though various cultures or nation states fail to live up to certain moral standards (including their own) such as unequal treatment of women, this does not mean that one should cease striving to attain these ideals. Indeed, the very nature of ideals compels a striving towards that which one has not yet attained and that one knows may never be attainable. Thus, moral obligations compel the attention of cosmopolitans, whether acting toward one's own cultural group members or toward outsiders. To appreciate what these obligations entail, we turn now to its moral underpinnings.

Human dignity and common humanity

Although cosmopolitans recognise that cultural memberships offer persons a sense of belonging and personal meaning as well as a rich context within which to exercise

choice, their ultimate concern will be with safeguarding individual well-being and dignity. But let us be clear: cosmopolitanism is not synonymous with mere individualism; cultural membership is an important human good (though some cultural memberships are patently harmful to some of their members). It is not the aim of cosmopolitanism to deny or downplay the importance of those memberships. Even so, the primary unit of moral concern is the individual, and not the groups or communities to which they belong. While this is clearly a liberal position, it is not only defended within liberalism. Its lexicography arises from different times and places and operates within different moral frameworks, although it is true that the dignity of human beings is conceptualised differently, for instance, by Hindus and humanists.

The point here is that for cosmopolitans one must possess (or acquire) moral dispositions that recognise the basic dignity of persons irrespective of whether there are shared cultural, religious, or political memberships. On this view, ethical consideration is owed to others on the basis of a shared humanity, and the choices people make must take into consideration the benefits or harms on others (while immensely complex, fair trade and environmental responsibility come to mind). One's proximity to another is not in itself a compelling reason to provide succour or aid, though it may be the best place to start (Dobson 2006; Nussbaum 1997; Scheffler 2001; Singer 1972).

A moral conception of cultural capacities

Cosmopolitans take a view of things informed by the experiences of others, looking as it were outside the boundaries of national or local community membership. Cosmopolitanism in this sense requires that one have cultural capacities that extend beyond what seems beneficial merely for one and those who share one's view of things; by widening one's moral perceptions and sensitivities cosmopolitans will seek to avoid the trappings of nationalism and ethnocentrism by looking past what is familiar or what seems 'natural' or certain. They will not merely be fascinated or enthralled by difference; they will seek, through strenuous effort, dialogue and a disposition of respect, to be transformed by it.

Pluralism

A relevant feature of one's cultural capacities is the value that cosmopolitans give to pluralism.[2] Indeed, whereas the temptation for some is to stamp out difference, or perhaps to ignore it, cosmopolitans have a penchant for embracing it. They value pluralism firstly because they recognise that people have diverse ways of living their lives and flourishing, and secondly, because environments in which multiple ideas, preferences and customs intersect provide opportunities for the exchange of ideas, the enlargement of one's understanding, and for coming to value what other people arguably take for granted.

Yet while cosmopolitans value pluralism, at least three things need to be noted about the cultural practices of others. First, while cosmopolitans do not dispute the importance of cultural membership for individuals, they do not see cultures as undifferentiated entities. No culture is a uniform entity impervious to change or outside influence. Cultures change because historical conditions change and because the individuals belonging to (perhaps several) cultures change within them. As Appiah has it: 'Cultural purity is an oxymoron' (2006, 113), which means that no culture is so isolated as to be absent of internal divisions or unaffected by outside influence. The

point is simply that cultural selves are as hybrid as the cultures in which their identities are rooted.

Second, no matter how important group identity may be, cosmopolitans do not hold that one's ends are determined by the culture of which one is a part. Accordingly, we do not agree with those, including some liberal theorists (e.g. Deveaux 2000; Moore 1993), who insist that one's individual choices and needs are irrevocably constituted – if not determined – by community membership. Individual interests may be framed by group interests, yet as Barbara Herman (2008, 330 n 14) astutely observes, this insight does not show that 'groups are ontologically or morally on a par with individuals'.

Cosmopolitans certainly recognise that cultures 'locate us according to particular contexts, they affect us deeply and irrevocably to the point of structuring and shaping our very personalities and [provide] the content of our identities' (Merry 2005, 495), but one's cultural self-understanding is continually subject to revision. Yet cosmopolitans do not accept that cultural particulars are absolute or that individual destinies are fixed by one's culturally constructed identity (also Merry and New 2008; Scheffler 2007).

Third, while cosmopolitans do not take a moral stance with regard to the genesis of one's cultural identity, i.e. whether one's cultural identity or membership is constructed by others or oneself, they do apply moral constraints to what some consider the 'good life'. Thus while cosmopolitans value pluralism, they do so in a qualified sense; that is, they will defend the right over the good. In other words, they will seek to uphold that which is just, even when this may conflict with what some consider a life worth living. This includes the good of group membership. So the fact that many women have their life options limited by patriarchy does not represent a morally justified cultural difference that cosmopolitans celebrate, even when accepted and internalised by millions of men and women. Cultural differences *per se* are not morally neutral when they trample the liberty and choice of individuals. Of course, freedom and choice will not be limitless, but a minimum threshold of autonomy must involve the possibility of choosing and acting without being coerced, including having the freedom to leave the community into which one has been raised.

Fallibilism

The moral dispositions of the cosmopolitan suggest that she will be motivated out of a respect for others, a sense of concern or care for their well-being, and an openness to learn. Yet cosmopolitans will also have, or seek to cultivate, a disposition to accept that one may be mistaken, or that one's viewpoint may be incomplete and hence in need of revision. In a word, cosmopolitans must be fallibilists. But fallibilism for a cosmopolitan goes further than epistemological fallibilism; it is a moral conception, too. On our argument, fallibilists will be sensitive to the need for multiple historical readings and perspectives; but more importantly a fallibilist will demonstrate empathy, amenableness to being wrong, and a willingness to forgive and be forgiven (Derrida 2002). Their fallibilism must entail a dispositional willingness to not only correct their views when shown to be mistaken, but also to validate painful memories, asking for pardoning from others if and when offence has wittingly or unwittingly been given. Further, by demonstrating opposition to exploitation, discrimination and oppression, fallibilism is closely linked to justice.

As fallibilists, cosmopolitans unite their cultural and historical contingency to a set of ethical obligations to others irrespective of whether they share the same point of view. So while fallibilism is not monist, it *is* a repudiation of moral relativism, the idea that different moral standards prevail in different times and locations and therefore one is never in a position to speak out against injustice or intervene when it is appropriate to do so. Indeed, moral relativism not only undermines fallibilism and thus the possibility of finding any behaviour either praiseworthy or condemnable, but it also risks trivialising the value of human persons.

Pragmatist resolve

When action is required, cosmopolitans are animated to act in concert with others to improve the human condition, which is to surmount the obstacles that impede improvements in one's quality of life. They will make common cause with those (e.g. Human Rights Watch, Oxfam, Amnesty International) whose work is to understand the problems that individuals or entire communities face, and then work together to find solutions that are suitable to everyone concerned. Yet, when addressing humanitarian crises, dialogic understanding and consensus must be sought out. Cosmopolitans also recognise the principle of subsidiarity, i.e. local responsibility and leadership is best, although they will acknowledge that hard cases may warrant imposing corrective action when abuses against human dignity are systemic and leaders are recalcitrant to dialogic appeals.

In order for the recognition of suffering to carry ethical import cosmopolitans must be moved to act, within their means, to alleviate suffering. For a few, this will mean direct intervention – say, working for Médicines san Frontières – but for others this may entail making donations to relief agencies, writing to members of Parliament or Congress, protesting in the streets against state inaction, or raising awareness in the press. Whatever the course of action taken, the principal motivation behind pragmatist resolve is to reduce suffering. This expresses the moral obligations whose basis is the common humanity that we share.[3]

Cosmopolitanism and the deeply religious

Thus far we have argued that cosmopolitans are persons who possess (or who strive to possess) a strong sense of moral obligations toward human beings around the world, and cross-cultural capacities that include moral dispositions towards cultural others. Now we will consider whether there are people about whom it may be said that cosmopolitanism is incompatible with their convictions and/or dispositions. Our case study will be those we will call the 'deeply religious' because they are viewed by many as paradigmatic examples of individuals to whom the characteristics of cosmopolitanism do not apply. In order to discover why this might be so and to elucidate further our conception of cosmopolitanism, we will examine the deeply religious in light of the cosmopolitan criteria we have outlined.

Of course, it is a difficult task to describe who the deeply religious are, because it is hardly possible to do justice to the enormous diversity of believers. General statements about them, even if one focuses on a particular type of believer, will generate the possibility of exceptions. However, although it is always possible to speak of exceptions, for the purposes of our argument we will construct specific types which characteristically describe the deeply religious. It is also important to stress that our

focus is on the deeply religious, not on religious people in general. 'Deeply religious' loosely describes a variegated group of believers, spread across a continuum. Thus, any conclusions we draw about the deeply religious apply only to this group and not to religious people generally.

We must also stress here that cosmopolitanism is not synonymous with secularism, nor is there any reason to presume that religious beliefs and cosmopolitanism are in conflict *per se*. Many people of religious conviction not only exemplify cosmopolitan traits, they are often motivated by religious convictions as they aspire to realise cosmopolitan ideals. Cosmopolitans do not operate within a cultural vacuum; they live in and act from particular cultural experiences and perspectives, which for some will include religion. Importantly, however, it is the manner in which individuals believe, including their psychological traits, that gives rise to tensions between cosmopolitanism and some forms of religious adherence.

Though doubtless a complex constellation of various types, we define deeply religious persons as individuals who are strongly committed to a belief in a transcendent being or Ultimate Reality and the central tenets of their faith. These are typically laid down in the sacred or authoritative texts and/or stories and are interpreted by those deemed to be authorities in their respective traditions. Additionally, many deeply religious people generally make a strict distinction between those on the inside and those on the outside; between those who are right and will therefore be 'saved' and those who are wrong and are therefore 'lost'.

The most recognisable paradigmatic example of the deeply religious is the 'fundamentalist'. Fundamentalists can be characterised as those believers who (1) are opposed to modernity,[4] various developments in science (e.g. embryonic stem cell research), growing individualism and the significance of autonomy, and permissive (im)morality; (2) have a heteronomous habit of mind; (3) have a strong commitment to 'absolute truth'; and, (4) make a strong distinction between themselves as true believers and other (un)believers, which can also manifest as passionate missionary zeal (de Ruyter 2001). These characteristics, which are found in the literature of fundamentalists themselves (Falwell 1981), clearly show that they are deeply religious (also see Marty and Appleby 1991).

'Orthodox believers' describes a second group of the deeply religious. They believe and live according to a strict interpretation of the teachings of their religion laid down in the sacred texts (and usually interpreted by a religious elite), and therefore also can be characterised as heteronomous believers who attribute absolute truth to their texts and doctrines. Further, like fundamentalists, orthodox believers make a strong distinction between insiders and outsiders. However, important differences exist between fundamentalists and orthodox believers; most orthodox tend to be less opposed to modernity (although the Old Order Amish may serve as an example of a group that is quite opposed to modernity as well as technological advances that interfere with community or spiritual life); most are unconcerned with other religious claims, and those who interact with religious others typically do so without ulterior motives. However, the differences between fundamentalists and the orthodox suggest a matter of nuance or degree more than a principled difference. Therefore, for the purposes of simplification and brevity, we will refer to these two groups together as 'literalists' or literalist believers.

A third group of deeply religious persons we will call the 'spiritual believers'. While their conception of Ultimate Reality may be based on the accepted teachings of their faith, they differ from the fundamentalists (though possibly less clearly from

the orthodox) in their conviction about the truth of the rules and regulations laid down by authorities concerning the history and interpretation of their religion, including the weight of authority given to the scriptures. Spiritual believers would include those who have left an indelible impression on their respective religious tradition, or, in the case of Francis of Assisi or Siddhartha Buddha, have even founded a religious tradition. Many spiritual believers have changed society owing to a deep sense of justice inherent in their faith, like Nichirin, Mohandas Ghandi, and Martin Luther King. With spiritual believers we may also think of the mystics, including Rumi, Theresa of Avila, Ramakrishna, Thomas Merton and Thich Nhat Hanh.

Having now described three types of deeply religious people, we ask, do any of these groups of deeply religious exhibit traits that exemplify cosmopolitanism? To see whether or not this is the case, we will discuss the cultural capacities and moral obligations for each of the two groups separately in order to fairly present the diversity of deeply religious people.

Are the deeply religious cosmopolitan?

Taking cultural capacities first, remember we have argued that our cosmopolitan conception has a distinct moral dimension. Cosmopolitans seek out encounters with cultural others; yet they also possess the morally qualified cultural capacities and moral disposition to see others as persons from whom they might learn. Indeed, as we have seen, they seek out encounters with difference for the purpose of enriching their own experience but also to better empathise with and understand others. Moreover, on the basis of their fallibilist position, cosmopolitans are willing to admit that they may be wrong about others or themselves.

Prima facie it is difficult to ascribe this extensive, moral conception of cultural capacities to the deeply religious but particularly to the literalists. Many literalists do exhibit hospitality to outsiders, yet some go so far as to withdraw from society, enclosing themselves as much as possible within their own communities (including, in many countries, schools, universities, sport clubs or other associations) aiming to avoid meaningful encounters with others. It is also true that many are open to dialogical encounters with others, but these frequently involve dogmatic pronouncements, precluding the possibility of learning from cultural others. Rather, 'learning' about others may simply involve ascertaining what their threat – for instance with respect to one's children – might consist of, or possibly how others may be converted to the 'true faith'. Secondly, while literalists appear to treat others with respect, it does not strike us as a sincere form of respect; for the simple reason that they do not perceive others as morally equal to them. Their disposition towards cultural others is therefore better described as polite toleration rather than respectful openness to learning from others, or to self-criticism. Thirdly, literalists are anything but fallibilist, given the unyielding manner in which they espouse their convictions.

Spiritual believers seem to be most able and willing to learn from cultural others, because they seem to be less strictly tied to dogma. Though not entirely convincing candidates for fallibilism, they do seem more open to reflecting on the possibility that they might be wrong. The best way to explain the difference between spiritual believers and the literalists is to phrase it in psychological terms: the spiritual believers are more open, because they more autonomously express their faith than the literalists. That is, they are not as heavily dependent on leaders or texts for their beliefs. Whether

or not individual spiritual believers consistently evince these qualities is an empirical matter, much as it is for cosmopolitans.

With regard to the first and third cosmopolitan characteristics, viz. moral obligations toward others and pragmatist resolve, it seems intuitively correct to say that the deeply religious exemplify these well. Deeply religious people are generally congenial to the idea that all people share a common humanity. To be sure, their reasons for holding this belief are different; for example, that people emanate from the universal divine spark, or that everyone is equal in the eyes of the Transcendent Being.

This qualitative difference in interpretation of the moral obligation one has towards others in the world also has an influence on the pragmatist resolve of the deeply religious. As we have said, it is typical for literalists to believe that only their (true) faith leads to salvation. Often this carries an injunction to save others too (although again there are also deeply religious who have no desire as such, because they are convinced that others are beyond redemption). Thus, their moral obligation is typically motivated by the 'intention' to convert others. We should note that this does not render all of their assistance morally worthless. However, it is certainly a different set of motives from that which impels the cosmopolitan and is therefore a different kind of moral obligation and pragmatist resolve. Thus, while literalists will doubtless feel a moral obligation, their pragmatist resolve is compromised by ulterior motives.

But what about the moral obligation and pragmatist resolve of spiritual believers? Their moral obligation appears to be based on their faith as well; as such, they are motivated by their beliefs. Consequently, theirs is not a view of what is right, but what is good. Although their view on the good may coincide with what is right – one need only think of Dorothy Day or Rosa Parks – the justification is qualitatively different from that of the cosmopolitan. Socially engaged spiritual believers clearly exhibit pragmatist resolve (although it might not always be pragmatic!) even though it too is qualitatively different from the cosmopolitan, because it follows from a different moral obligation.

Yet before we pass any verdict on religious cosmopolitanism, we first need to respond to one objection that the foregoing appraisal invites.

Objection

A powerful objection we anticipate is this: in defending our conception of cosmopolitanism we place it beyond reproach by implying that cosmopolitans already occupy the high moral ground. This appears to be evident in our exclusion of certain kinds of religious believers by which we show ourselves to be secular gatekeepers who will only permit those we deem 'liberal' enough to join the cosmopolitan ranks.

This is a serious charge, for it implies that cosmopolitanism is an elitist project. As suggested in our introduction, there are those who believe that cosmopolitanism assumes an imperial 'we' who determine not only what will be discussed and which action (if any) will be taken, but also who is invited to participate in the deliberations. The criticism here is that by erecting cosmopolitanism as a fallibilist ethical ideal, we employ a sleight of hand, feigning openness when in fact we occupy a position of moral rectitude, thus rendering our view immune from criticism and exposing a double standard with respect to fallibilism. Homi Bhabha expresses it this way:

> What is considerably more problematic than the inappropriate application of 'external' norms is the way in which the norms of Western liberalism become at once the measure and mentor of minority cultures – Western liberalism, warts and all, as a salvage operation, if not salvation itself. With a zealousness not unlike the colonial civilising mission, the 'liberal' agenda is articulated without a shadow of self-doubt, except perhaps an acknowledgement of its contingent failings in the practice of everyday life. (1999, 83)

Bhabha sees liberal cosmopolitanism as a kind of morally questionable international neo-liberal project, one that pushes for fewer trade barriers and tariffs, more global competition, greater liberalisation of local economies, greater export specialisation and elimination of domestic subsidies (see Tan 2004, 31–2). Yet, conflating the globalising actions of liberal nation states or its representatives with cosmopolitanism is an erroneous move; indeed, to do so is to demonstrate a serious misreading of cosmopolitanism.

First, cosmopolitans do not automatically presume to know what is good for others. At a minimum, their sensitivity to substantive value pluralism precludes this. Second, where errors in judgment are made – and cosmopolitans are as prone to error as anyone else – cosmopolitans will show themselves consistent with their ideals to the extent that they demonstrate humility, empathic listening and a willingness to learn from one's mistakes, and a disposition of contrition when offence has been given or harm has been done. That is, as fallibilists, cosmopolitans must show themselves willing to ask for forgiveness. Human error committed by those aiming to live up to worthy ideals cannot be compared – with any fairness – to some kind of colonialist collateral damage. It is important to remember, too, that we are elaborating an ideal moral conception of cosmopolitanism. We are obviously not, therefore, defending political aims or institutional practices which violate the very principles of that moral conception.

The fact that cosmopolitans value pluralism removes the temptation to impose culturally contingent 'solutions' onto cultural others; as it concerns pragmatist resolve, accepting fallibilism also means that cosmopolitans acknowledge that in fact they may be wrong about the solutions they aim to implement. Fallibilism is what gives the cosmopolitan scruples about hasty paternalistic interventions. Thus, cosmopolitans will be paternalistic with great caution, i.e. only if they have sufficient grounds for believing that the well-being of other persons will be improved and only if the other's preferences, in particular cases, are of lesser importance relative to their well-being. Further, as we have argued throughout this paper, the cosmopolitan must be motivated out of a respect for others, a sense of concern or care for their well-being, and an openness to learn. Any conclusions she reaches must arise from trans-cultural ethical norms about basic human dignity yielded through intercultural dialog and consensus. As such, those conclusions must remain open to revision.

Conclusions

In this article we have defended an (ideal) moral conception of cosmopolitanism, which describes persons with morally qualified cultural capacities and moral obligations towards cultural others with the necessary pragmatist resolve to act on those obligations. Further, we have shown that, owing to the moral requirements inherent to our conception of cosmopolitanism, the charge of moral elitism is groundless.

So where does that leave the deeply religious? We have shown, first, that the deeply religious who we described as literalists (both fundamentalist and orthodox) do

not typically evince an empathic openness to learn or a respectful regard for others; second, they do not exhibit a fallibilist disposition necessary to acknowledging possible error; finally, we have shown that literalist believers act upon a pragmatist resolve compromised by questionable motives. Therefore, we can only draw one conclusion, namely that in this respect literalist believers fall short of being cosmopolitans. While they can be good in many senses and while they may perceive themselves to be citizens of the world, they are not good cosmopolitans, at least when measured against the moral conception we have defended.

Yet it is admittedly difficult to come to an unequivocal conclusion concerning whether or not it is possible to be a deeply religious cosmopolitan given the manner in which certain commitments seem to work at cross purposes. While our critique has yielded an unfavourable verdict of literalist believers, the same does not seem to be true of many, and possibly most, spiritual believers. Importantly, however, the conclusion will hang on how strictly the criteria are applied, and how expansive a conception of moral obligation one is willing to permit. What we have done is defend an ideal. Yet with both cosmopolitans and the deeply religious, whether people exhibit the qualities we have described will ultimately be an empirical matter.

Notes

1. There are of course other foils to the cosmopolitan, viz., the nationalist, the anarchist, etc.
2. By pluralism we mean a set of conditions or an environment in which multiple value systems co-exist (and sometimes compete) with one another. These value systems need not rise to the level of dogma or creed; pluralism just as often describes different habits, tastes, customs, preferences and opinions sharing the same space.
3. We explore the implications for pragmatist resolve in a more rebust way elsewhere in a paper under review entitled, 'The moral demands of a cosmopolitan educator'.
4. Whether all fundamentalists are opposed or highly ambivalent is a relevant question considering that many fundamentalists in fact *embrace* certain aspects of modernity inasmuch as they deploy its technologies to disseminate their absolutist messages. So there is considerable tension (and contradiction) concerning the manner in which fundamentalists in fact oppose modernity.

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