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### **Abstract**

I defend cultural relativism against the following objections: (i) The analogy between motion and morality is flawed. (ii) Cultural relativism has higher potential to be harmful to our daily lives than is cultural absolutism. (iii) We made moral progress when we moved from slavery to equality. (iv) There are some moral principles that are accepted by all cultures around the world. (v) Moral argumentation is impossible within the framework of cultural relativism. (vi) We construct arguments for and against cultures.

### **Keywords**

Cultural Absolutism, Cultural Relativism, Morality, Motion, Ockham's Razor

### **1. Introduction**

Is morality relative to culture? Are there absolute moral standards? Is the analogy between motion and morality tenable? Which has higher potential to be harmful to our daily lives, cultural relativism or absolutism? Does the movement from slavery to equality undermine cultural relativism and support cultural absolutism? Can there be moral argumentation within the framework of cultural relativism? All cultures around the world make some unanimous moral judgments; does this fact undermine cultural relativism and support cultural absolutism? Can one culture be more correct than another? Cultural relativists and absolutists offer opposing answers to these questions. This paper criticizes cultural absolutism and defends cultural relativism.

This paper unpacks the debate between cultural relativists and absolutists as follows. In Section 2, I explicate cultural relativism and absolutism. In Section 3, I argue that the analogy between morality and motion can be used to explicate what cultural relativism claims. In Section 4, I argue that contrary to what cultural absolutists claim, it is not cultural relativism but rather cultural absolutism that has higher potential to be harmful to our daily lives. In Section 5, I argue that cultural relativism better explains the movement from slavery to equality than does cultural absolutism. In Section 6, I show that cultural relativism can accommodate the fact that all cultures around the world make some unanimous moral judgments. In Section 7, I establish that moral argumentation is possible within the framework of cultural relativism, contrary to what cultural absolutists maintain. In Section 8, I defend cultural relativism against the objection that we can construct arguments for and against cultures. In sum, cultural relativism is in better standing than moral philosophers tend to think.

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