

Christianity and the Cultivation of Global Citizens

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“But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”

—1 Timothy 5:8

When Barack Obama gave his speech “A World That Stands as One” in Berlin, the most receptive audience to his claim of being a “citizen of the world” who believed that “the burdens of global citizenship continue to bind us together” may have been the American academy, which has come to be dominated by cosmopolitan concerns. The college where I teach, Hope College, has as part of its mission statement that it will prepare students “for lives of leadership and service in a global society.” Nor is my college unique in this regard. Campus Compact, an organization dedicated to turning institutions of higher learning into citizenship prep schools, boasts over 1,100 member colleges and universities. The Association of American Colleges and Universities works with its 1,200 member schools to develop a “meaningful and relevant curriculum” whose “essential learning outcomes” will

prepare students for global citizenship. Indeed, perusing the mission or vision statements of the 200 colleges and universities listed at the top of the *U.S. News and World Report* rankings indicates that more schools understand themselves as cosmopolitan universities, not dedicated to serving their local communities or even the nation, but to serving the world; and they seek to educate students not by teaching them to think the unity of truth, but by “providing” them with “knowledge and skills” to be leaders in “a global society.”

With the advent of media coverage of large sectors of the globe over a twenty-four-hour news cycle, an increasingly interdependent global economy, and a renewed emphasis on multilateralism in the wake of the end of the Cold War, the social conditions became favorable to a renewal of cosmopolitanism. While Stoicism provides a model for these educational theories, these theories likewise require the reality of empire as the *sine qua non* for their project. Proponents advance

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formal education as a program of moral action and moral development, one that casts our moral possibilities as broadly as possible. St. Thomas's reflections on charity, however, provide a superior way of thinking about the nature of moral obligation and its relation to education, and they also show that the cosmopolitan vision is not exacting enough, for in attempting to love all, it actually loves less.

There is nothing novel about the idea that education cultivates citizens. Theorists from Plato to Montesquieu have argued that good citizens are made, not born, and that the making of good citizens involves the cultivation of virtue. Various social institutions other than schools have fulfilled this function throughout the history of the West. Education for citizenship could take place through moral example, or through the didactic value of the law, or in the household.

In America, however, colleges and universities increasingly served this function. While the nineteenth-century college dedicated itself to moral education, by the twentieth century such ideas seemed old-fashioned at best, anti-democratic at worst.¹ Indeed, the mottoes of many colleges and universities now seem like relics of a world that, as far as current faculty and staff are concerned, is well lost. Most private colleges in America were established as church-based schools, designed to serve the church and their local communities. As such, they were intentionally and intensely engaged in the project of moral formation, not in the sense that they presented students with moral dilemmas and let them choose their own responses, but in the sense that students were immersed in codes of conduct, in chapel programs, in traditions of inquiry, and in being mentored by faculty who were expected to be models of rectitude. This program was held together by the belief that there was truth, that it was

a unified and intelligible whole, and that its apprehension made a difference in the moral lives of individuals. The advent of moral and epistemological relativism thus had a corrosive effect on the very nature of American centers of higher learning.

Currently, many colleges have renewed an emphasis on citizenship. It is not surprising, in this context, that persons reflecting on the inattention to moral theory and its connection to citizenship would turn to the Stoics, who articulated most clearly the relationship of individual moral development to a cosmic ontology that bound everyone together in a universal community. An articulate contemporary example of this position is Martha Nussbaum's book *Cultivating Humanity*.² In it, Nussbaum attempts to synthesize the moral imperative of questioning custom and tradition, Stoic conceptions of humanity, and contemporary social science. Her project involves intensive case studies of fifteen different colleges and universities to see how well they were engaged in the project of "educating for world citizenship." A liberal education, she argues, is one that brings into question the bondage of custom and habit, overcomes the passivity of the mind engaged in its natural world, and moves students beyond themselves—beyond the hearth and hearth—to ever wider horizons.

There is merit to this aspect of Nussbaum's argument. Education, of course, involves intense questioning, a shifting of perspective, and an enlargement of our understanding. An educated mind refuses to accept something as "right" or as "the best" simply because that is all it has known. In making judgments concerning what is good or best, an educated person can do so by making comparisons. Educated individuals engage the world imaginatively. Learning a foreign language is a classic example of why we seek to be liber-

ally educated. Were we to simply stay in one place it would have no practical value, and the joy of learning a foreign language is diminished if the only reason we acquire it is so that we can use it in our careers. Reading something in a foreign language is indeed an expansion of our intellectual and imaginative horizons. A liberal education presents us a kind of “otherness” that becomes increasingly familiar, and always a little strange. It broadens our understanding of the world and satisfies our intellectual curiosities, even though curiosity is not necessarily a virtue. It can be an expression of the human desire to know and to know well, or it can be a form of sloth, the intellect’s dissipation in the novel and the trivial.³ A liberal education, improperly grounded and not in service of Divine Truth, encourages the wrong kind of intellectual development, for it detaches rather than attaches.

Nussbaum’s book reflects a social reality where widespread detachment has already occurred, and she argues it is more important than ever that students grapple with the changing requirements of citizenship. These requirements include an enlargement of the imagination and sympathies, greater compassion, and recognition of mutual vulnerability. Students develop the gift of “critical thinking,” which allows them to put aside particular engagements for the broader ones that alone can be the condition for mutual understanding and peace. Indeed, Nussbaum argues that such an education creates the necessary conditions for world peace, with the corollary that allowing local attachments to remain undermines that project. Becoming citizens of the world rightly exiles us from our own ways of life, which are particular and idiosyncratic, and contrary to the interests of a true community, which is universal and bound by common interests. Education in this context requires students to

love other cultures more than their own. While Nussbaum concedes that local attachments can’t completely be done away with and may even have some legitimacy, the bias of her book is clearly in favor of their negation. “Above all,” she writes, “education for world-citizenship requires transcending the inclination of both students and educators to define themselves primarily in terms of local group loyalties and identities.”⁴

Cosmopolitan education begins in infancy, takes seriously sex and race issues, and requires a faculty with the right sort of global consciousness. In this sense, Nussbaum weds Stoic theories to the political impulses of postmodernism.⁵ A global education is best promoted, Nussbaum believes, through the formation of a literary imagination. Reading the right kind of literature will cultivate in young people the ability to see the needs of others and to respond sympathetically to those needs; it will create a self-recognition of the moral attributes required to prevail in different circumstances; it creates compassion, which Nussbaum believes is the greatest of all moral sentiments; and, by increasing the student’s sense of contingency and vulnerability, it will lead to a recognition that we are bound to all other persons on the globe by our mutual vulnerabilities. “We do not fully respect the humanity of our fellow citizens—or cultivate our own—if we do not wish to learn about them, to understand their history, to appreciate the difference between their lives and ours.”⁶ To accomplish this, cosmopolitanism both justifies and is caused by the expansion of political authority.

There is much that is compelling about Nussbaum’s argument, particularly for those of us in the Christian tradition who are taught to see in all persons the image of God, and are taught by Christ that “even as you have done to the least of these, you

have done unto me.” Christianity itself is an enlarging of our sense of community, the belief that the church universal commands a greater allegiance from us than our local communities or our nations. Christ stated that allegiance to His Kingdom would supersede all other allegiances. The Christian command to love our neighbor has no obvious limits. So the idea of global citizenship apparently fits in well with the Christian message. Stretching the limits of our awareness more fully to appreciate how our actions affect others, or how different ways of living may improve our own lives as well as others, can hardly be thought of as bad things. There are at least seven reasons, however, to be skeptical of Nussbaum’s argument.

First, for all her talk of “cultivating humanity” and developing our moral sense, there is no discussion of what, concretely, these obligations entail. Indeed, the book seems to do little more than advance the belief that moral actions are simply expressions of moral sentiments. To be “moral,” then, is to be concerned about the right sorts of things, to feel compassion for those who are otherwise or unfortunately situated. Nussbaum spends a chapter on human sexuality, and another chapter on women’s rights, where moral action begins and ends in compassion, supported by doctrines of toleration and assertions concerning the universality of rights. But those doctrines and assertions are never rationally defended. Indeed, since her main argument in favor of Socratic education is that it gets us to question why we believe what we do, it is inconsistent for her never to question her commitments to conceptions of universal human rights, toleration, respect for sexual differences, and concern for racial equality. If in fact everyone in the world were so indoctrinated, it is possible the world would be a more peaceful place. Nonetheless, the fact remains that precisely those moral

claims are ones about which peoples and cultures engage in significant disagreement. Nussbaum asserts that global citizens ought to recognize the worth of every human life (after birth), but not everyone does, and that disagreement is the source of tremendous conflict. In her defense, she does not say we should not judge other cultures, at least not until after we have studied, understood, and respected that culture. She provides us no criteria for judging and respecting, however, and the result is that the engagement with other cultures really amounts to a kind of cultural imperialism.⁷

Second, this cultural imperialism tracks the political imperialism required to sustain her project. The reality of the Roman Empire as the instantiation of the cosmopolis held a central place in Stoic writings. Cicero defined a commonwealth as “not any group of men assembled in any way, but an assemblage of some size associated with one another through agreement on law and community of interest.”⁸ Now, there is no law where there is no coercive authority, and given the absence of effective coercive authority in any international organization, a global commonwealth can only be brought about through the actions of an imperial power. The interconnectedness of the globe does not just happen, but is a symbiotic activity of corporations, mass media, and government in its military capacity. The problem becomes especially pronounced when the *ecumene* is technologically bound together, but is not a community of shared interests or mores. In such situations, as Eric Voegelin has argued, the order of the *ecumene* can only be held together by the actions of an imperial military power, lest there be a complete power vacuum. Nussbaum, however, is completely silent about the *political* reality undergirding her moral theory.

Alasdair MacIntyre argues in *After Virtue* that every moral theory presupposes

a sociological reality. The only actually existing sociological reality presupposed by Nussbaum's moral theory is the organization of the contemporary university, which operates as only one institution within political society. Nussbaum is blind to the political requirements of global citizenship: a coercive unifying authority over a community of shared ideas and interests. Indeed, the sense of a dimension of universal humanity in Stoic thought only emerged because Rome had stretched her imperial power across the known world and was not due, as Nussbaum suggests, to developments in philosophy. The Stoic impulse was grounded in sustained rule by a powerful empire, which itself (according to Livy) emerged because different peoples were invited to the under-populated city of Rome with the concomitant insistence that civic ties were more important than familial ones. Indeed, it is in the interest of any empire to promote cosmopolitan values. Here also Nussbaum's Stoic impulse conflicts with a postmodern sensibility concerning the authenticity of self-generated moral ideas. While she allows citizens to choose their own conception of the good life, such choosing must be kept from devolving into anarchy. Nussbaum attempts to resolve the conflict between the particularity of individual conceptions of happiness with universal moral obligations by asserting, in Emersonian fashion, a metaphysical harmony grounded in the spontaneity of moral impulses—a speculative principle that undergirds all her claims.

Third, Nussbaum seriously underestimates the causes and nature of conflict. People can often engage in intense conflict over sharing the same aims (such as desiring the same piece of property), or because they have competing aims (women have or don't have rights). While she might concede the latter point, there is little

appreciation for the former one. It is not the case, historically, that regimes that share the same values are conflict-free or that they share all the same values. In a case of conflict between two communities (church and state, for example), both of which make serious claims on our allegiances, mutual recognition does nothing to resolve the need on occasion to make a choice between those communities. Further, she fails to provide any criterion by which such a choice can be made, other than to assert generally the primacy of the political.

Nussbaum conceives these allegiances in terms of a series of concentric circles, whereby the larger circle has a greater metaphysical reality and thus also a stronger claim on our allegiance.⁹ Our family may be the most immediate circle under this approach, but it cannot have the greatest, most substantive claim on our humanity and sense of moral obligation. Our moral energies must be directed toward the outer circles, making the cosmopolitan demand the greatest on our attentions. Anyone who believes that local, immediate obligations are more pressing is, according to Nussbaum, guilty of bad faith. This proposition is itself an instance of "bad faith," because it contradicts the central claim of cosmopolitan morality that all choices about the good life must be accorded equal respect and recognition. Hence the educational program requires a razing of a person's inherited moral sense in favor of a cosmopolitan one.

Fourth, citizenship is a type of belonging, and citizens have a say in how government works and hold government accountable. Global citizens, one would assume, are entitled to tell any government anywhere how to operate. Surely one of the functions of the concept of universal rights is that it provides global citizens legitimate authority to intervene in any situation on

the globe. The grandness of the ambition, however, can only be backed with the coercive authority of military power. Global citizens seem quite ambivalent on this score, especially in employing U.S. military power to enforce “human rights.” Such expansion of purpose is unlikely to solve many problems, and will likely lead to a depletion of a nation’s capacities.¹⁰

Fifth, Nussbaum’s theory is hemmed in by its concern with contingency; that is, the fact that we happen to be born in a particular place at a particular time means that we ought not to place undue moral weight on our particular situation. Indeed, particularity must be transcended. But it is not exactly clear why the particularity of anyone else’s situation ought to make a stronger claim on us than our own. Accidents of birth may be contingent, but they are not meaningless. The contingency of our existence entails our inclusion in structures and practices that give shape to human choices. Such structures and practices significantly mollify the contingency of our lives, and undermining those structures and practices can exact a high price in increased alienation and anomie. Contingency is not a problem for good education: it is simply the condition under which we engage in the quest for truth.

Sixth, the cosmopolitans may sound admirable in theory—broadly educated, large-hearted, sympathetic, and compassionate—but all too often they end up being less than admirable in the real world. Precisely because there are no obvious or immediate moral claims beyond an enlargement of sympathy, the actual claims of actual persons, especially if they are in the smaller concentric circles, lack the obligatory weight of the greater circles. Morality becomes sentimental rather than active, universal rather than particular, abstract rather than concrete. One may be tempted to become a public servant but a

private rogue. The gap in moral action is filled with the insistence that the cosmopolitan’s claims are universal and enlightened, while those who live in accordance with immediate demands are narrow-minded and parochial.

Such failure to meet the immediate demands of moral obligation is likely to be accompanied by some guilt. To compensate, the cosmopolitans are likely to feel compelled to assert the moral superiority of their expansive vision. They become educators to proselytize. Parents, Nussbaum insists, cannot be trusted to give their children the sorts of knowledge, imagination, and sympathies they will need to be peaceful citizens in the world-city. Indeed, parents have no intrinsic right to educate their own children. Rather, the imperatives of world-citizenship give educators not only the right, but also the ineluctable moral authority to reeducate the deluded masses and to take children into a new setting and turn them against their parents.¹¹ The cosmopolitans achieve the fullness of the moral life in enlightened, universalistic sentiments they impose on other people’s children.

Finally, a significant weakness to Nussbaum’s argument may be found in its minor premise: namely, in the belief that colleges and universities ought to reflect, adapt to, and provide for the world around them. Michael Oakshott argues, to the contrary, that the university ought simply to occupy its place and not to think about “contributing.” “Taken by itself,” he writes, “this ideal of a university which reflects fully and accurately a world as it has come to be is, of course, nothing better than an unconditional surrender to the absence of discrimination.”¹² While Nussbaum’s book is a significant attempt to rethink moral education in America, it is ultimately captive and subservient to both American empire and contestable ideas.

An alternative model that takes Nussbaum's call for moral education seriously, while avoiding the pitfalls, may be derived from Thomas Aquinas. Thomas wrote in something of a cosmopolitan age, with emergent universities, a resurgence of governments and the central authority of the Church, and in the wake of invasions and interactions with the East. Unlike many of our contemporaries who talk about respecting other cultures but have no actual acquaintance with them, Aquinas was thoroughly acquainted with the works of the Jewish philosopher Maimonides and many Islamic scholars as well. His writings show he read Muslim writers such as Avicenna, Averroes, and Algazel carefully. His *Summa Contra Gentiles* as well as the brief *De rationibus fidei contra Saracenos, Graecos, et Armenos ad Cantorem Antiochenum* are models of sympathetic engagement and thoughtful critique. Additionally, he did his academic work in various and generally cosmopolitan urban centers that facilitated the exchange of ideas. One might easily conclude that life at the University of Chicago is more cloistered than that of St. Thomas ever was.

Thomas's discussion of charity takes place in the context of reflections about the nature of friendship,¹³ harking back to Aristotle's discussion of the different types of friendship in Books 8 and 9 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Specifically, Thomas is interested in Aristotle's third type of friendship, namely that which is concerned for what is genuinely good for the other (as opposed to friendships of utility or pleasure). Such friendship requires proximity, mutual communication, equality, and reciprocity; it requires trust, and engagement in mutual projects. Indeed, one can have only a few real friends. Aquinas's connection of charity (love) to friendship is important because friendship is singular, discriminatory, infrequent, active, and

hierarchical. When we love a friend, we distinguish that person from all others and love him for his particular qualities. We love, more or less, with differing degrees of fervor.

Love involves the proper ordering of our passions and desires, first to God and then to our fellows. Indeed, without love of God, Thomas believes, love of our fellow man becomes impossible: "So, too, the charity by which we formally love our neighbor is a sharing in the divine charity" (2-2. 23. 2). All the other virtues we possess depend on our capacity to love, grounded in our relationship to God and vouchsafed by divine love. Because charity is directed at our ultimate end, it orders all other human action.

Thomas divides friendship into different species: God, first of all, then kinsmen, fellow citizens (either through natural or civic association), and our fellow human beings. For Thomas, this order reflects the proper ordering of love, and hence moral obligation which entails knowing what we owe others, and we owe most to those closest to us. So insistent is Thomas on the intimate nature of love that he argues that these differentiations and attachments will occur even in heaven. Charity necessarily involves "loving greater goods more and lesser goods less."¹⁴ In God alone we find perfect charity, a charity that loves all, and we are not required in the here and now to perform what belongs to charity's perfection (2-2. 25. 9). Indeed, the desire to perform perfectly, in addition to being susceptible to the sin of pride, draws us closer to the realm of hatred, for it increases frustration and anger in our actions.

One of the central mysteries of love involves understanding what moves one to love, and why one loves the things one does. Just as it is true that I might love a person that others might not love, so also is it possible for one person to love God and

another not. This apparent truism, however, is complicated in the Christian tradition by the belief that love takes on the qualities of its object—in this case God, who is love itself. Would not the love of God overwhelm? The movement of the soul in love toward God is a reciprocal movement to that of grace, which moves the soul to seek God seeking it. Now it seems some souls are more predisposed to respond affirmatively to the movement of grace, but even then, Thomas says, such predispositions may be a result of the actions of the Spirit. In short, the process by which friendship between God and man occurs is essentially mysterious (as are all friendships), involving in a dynamic interplay of approach and avoidance, of calling and pleading, of longing and fearing that our desires might be satisfied. Once established, however, the soul grows in love as it draws nearer to God. As we grow in charity, we grow in all the virtues, resembling more and more the perfection we can never attain, but for which we always strive. So drawn, our motives for acting are responses of humble gratitude, coupled with prudence, fortitude, justice, temperance, and the other virtues (2–2. 23. 7).

Charity, thus, is both the greatest of the theological virtues and the foundation for all other virtues. In order to understand charity properly, we need to connect it to the cardinal virtues and thus look at it (at least) four ways: with regard to its intent, with regard to its object, with regard to the act itself and the means chosen, and with regard to the effects produced by the acts on the object. Since charity cannot be genuine unless it is rooted in the love of God, an apparently obvious act of charity such as “clothing the naked” can be considered sinful if it is not born of the right intentions, for the right reasons, mindful of the range of effects, and aimed at what is ultimately good (2–2. 23. 8).

Once we have established that we are to love God above all, and are drawn by divine love to Itself, we are called to follow the second commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves, under the aspect of loving God (2–2. 25. 1). But who is my neighbor? And what does love of my neighbor actually entail? This question has long been a source of discussion in the Church, going back to the story of the Good Samaritan, told in response to that very question (Luke 10). Augustine in his work *On Christian Doctrine* noted that, while on the one hand we should look on every man as our neighbor (I.30), at the same time since “one cannot do good to all, we ought to consider those chiefly who by reason of place, time, or any other circumstance, by a kind of chance, are more closely united to us” (I.28). In other words, contingency is not a problem to be overcome—it is part of the human condition and ought to be embraced in recognition of our limitations and finitude. It gives shape to moral action. Thomas argues that, while we should wish good for all persons (the rule of benevolence), our favors must be dispensed preferentially and inequitably (the rule of beneficence) (2–2. 26. 6). Friendship wills the good for a particular person (*eunoia*), and those who are most closely united to us are those to whom we must wish the most good and express the most charity.

Thomas’s reflections here are remarkably detailed (see especially 2–2. 26). Ought we to love our parents more than our children? Ought we to love our mothers more than our fathers? Ought we to love our wives more than ourselves, or our bodies? Ought we to love our wives more than our parents? Should we love the neighbor more who is a better person, or the one who is in closer proximity to us? Should we love more the better person in lesser need, or the lesser person in greater

need (which presupposes the capacity to make such distinctions)? Ought we to love more those who are kind, or those to whom we are kind? The importance of Thomas's ruminations resides not so much in the answers he provides, but in the questions themselves, for they reveal that he sees the nature of charity to be discriminatory, preferential, concrete, unequal, and bound up in our particular circumstances. Indeed, circumstances will dictate almost everything in the determination of appropriate charitable acts, which means that charity requires prudence for its proper expression (2-2. 31. 1). For example, when Thomas says, "In a case of extreme necessity everything becomes common property," he is saying that desperately needy people are allowed to take what they need if no one will give it to them, and conversely people should always be engaged in the acts of giving if they are able to do so (2-2. 32. 8). He also assumes that the person "taking" can make a prudential case concerning both the nature of the need and the relation of the thing taken to that need. At the same time, as justice and temperance require, we must be careful never to give people more than they need, as it may lead to the development of vice on their part. We should never do for another what he ought to do himself. Thomas's claims depend on having intimate and immediate knowledge of the person to whom charity is being offered. There can be no obligation to act where there is no intimate knowledge. Indeed, such acting may actually be a vice, since its primary effect is to make the person offering the charity feel better and thus is a kind of self-love that is not sufficiently mindful of its effects.

Furthermore, our engagement in charity depends upon our resources. A man must first provide for his family and friends and then give alms out of his surplus. If we have an excess of time or means, it is

right to give them to those in need, but only after we have taken care of those closest to us. Just as in nature heat and energy are transmitted to organisms closest to the source, so also with charity. Now there are two kinds of charity in this regard, often grounded in sympathy, both of which are designed to alleviate deficits in the other person. Corporal alms involve feeding, clothing, housing, giving succor, visiting, and giving drink to those in physical need. Spiritual alms, which are primary, go to repairing the deficits of ignorance, despair, foolishness, anger, impatience, pride, and sloth. Only by first understanding a person's spiritual deficits can we begin to address his physical ones. All this inverts Nussbaum's theory of concentric circles, for Aquinas believes moral demands decrease the farther we get from the center.

What of Christ's command to love our enemies? Thomas breaks this question down to its constituent parts. Are we to love them as such, that is, *qua* enemies? Obviously not, Thomas believes, for they mean to do us harm. Are we to love them according to their nature? Yes, he argues, inasmuch as we extend a general indiscriminate love of well-wishing to all our fellow humans. We should wish for them that their souls become ennobled by divine grace. And while charity does not require a special movement of love to every person, the enemy included, as this would be impossible, it does require that we open our hearts and minds to the possibility of loving even those who mean us harm (2-2. 25. 8), should the circumstances permit. Furthermore, love requires that we use the coercive instruments of civil magistracy to protect our fellow citizens from the harm enemies might cause, for one aspect of love is its quality of preserving. In thus supporting the protective measures of civil authority we twice engage in acts of charity: once to our fellow citizens and

once to the enemy, since in vanquishing him we prevent him from doing more evil (2–2. 25. 6).

Thomas's view of charity is preferential, particular, discriminatory, and hierarchical. The better the person, the more worthy he is of our love. The more desperate the person, the more in need he is of our love. The closer the person, the more he may rightly demand our love. Love, then, rightly understood, both depends on and helps to form all ethical decision-making. This is not cheap love, and it is not a sentiment. It is a series of actions, grounded in love of God, directed discriminatingly toward those who have a rightful claim, mindful of the effects, and concerned about the means. It may not choose means that are easily pursued (such as writing a check). It requires sacrifice, pain, patience, magnanimity, fortitude, prudence, temperance. Without these virtues, civic friendship becomes impossible. Cultivating men and women with such attitudes and virtues is an educational project radically different from Nussbaum's, for it involves not only growing in love—and is in that sense more truly universal than Nussbaum's approach—but it also involves restraint. Education is the process of learning “in circumstances of direction and restraint.”¹⁵ The growth of the soul is not revealed in the number of persons it encompasses, but rather in the disciplined and prudential concern of mature persons operating in limited and limiting circumstances.¹⁶ The soul grows vertically, not horizontally; it is measured by its depth and not its breadth. Nussbaum's belief that cosmopolitanism will lead to peace is misdirected. It is the denial of passions and desires or the satisfaction of them in God, not the expansion of them to encompass all humanity, that leads to peace. The universality of love is not found in questionable theories of toleration and universal rights,

but in the concrete acts of genuine charity performed by individuals in their social settings.

For good reason Scripture tells us to love our neighbors and not mankind as ourselves. Chesterton remarks that while we make our friends and make our enemies, God makes our neighbors. “The duty towards humanity,” he wrote, “may often take the form of some personal choice which is personal or even pleasurable. That duty may be a hobby, it may even be a dissipation.” It can be an indulgence of our desires, especially our desire to avoid difficult tasks, but not our moral duty. We don't choose our moral projects, for in neighborly love the project is given to us. “We have to love our neighbor because he is *there*—a much more alarming reason for a much more serious operation.” This is a much more compelling notion of “negotiating differences” because we cannot do so on our terms, we cannot opt out, and the negotiation will have actual consequences for us. If a person seeking the moral life wants to interact with a person different than himself, “he had much better stop at home and discuss religion with the housemaid.”¹⁷ Indeed, it is in the immediacy of this kind of life that the full range of humanity is on display: the drunkenness of a father, the nastiness of a colleague, the lassitude of a sibling, the eccentricity of an uncle—these are humanity in our face. Our immersion in the humanity of the household and street and workplace alone exposes us to the fullness of human types and their demands.

Friendship as a civic bond has been replaced by notions of fraternity. When Aristotle made friendship the measure and the means of human excellence, he made a move away from fraternity. Aristotle saw that, contrary to popular locutions, a friend is really much closer to us than a brother is, for precisely in the reality of choosing

a particular person, and in the pursuit of appropriate ends, we have made a move beyond necessity and nature. Our brothers are givens; our friends are gifts. As such, there is a depth as well as a breadth to friendship that fraternity cannot match. Yet precisely because of its discriminatory and voluntarist nature, friendship becomes a tenuous base for political order. And even though Aristotle expanded individual friendship into an idea of “civic friendship,” it no longer remains clear in what sense it can be thought of as friendship at all, other than a vague wishing for general good without specifics. Emphasizing global citizenship attenuates engagement and commitment.

How strange would it seem if our colleges and universities, instead of trying to cultivate global citizens, tried to cultivate

good fathers and mothers, respectful children, good neighbors, and trustworthy friends? How much better off might our democracy then be if it were populated with such persons? Limited democracy is not a perfect solution to the problems of imperfect beings, but it is a modest attempt to make incremental progress in human affairs by leaving alone the realms of ethical action that belong to human beings in their families, their local communities, and maybe, perhaps above all, in their reciprocal friendships, which both demand and prepare the self to meet the demands of others. If our universities do nothing more than cultivate persons in this fashion—to give youth an interim where they escape the world’s problems and do not try to solve them—they will have done enough.

1 See Derek Bok, *Universities and the Future of America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990). For the idea that moral education is undemocratic, see Richard Rorty in Richard Rorty, Julie Reuben, and George Marsden, “The Moral Purposes of the University: An Exchange,” *The Hedgehog Review* 2 (2000) and Rorty, “The Priority of Democracy to Philosophy,” in *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth: Philosophical Papers, Vol. I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). **2** Martha Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997). **3** See Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, Q. 167. **4** Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity*, 67. **5** Likewise, Rob Gilbert argues that “citizenship education . . . would not be distracted by national symbols of flag or parliament, but would focus on concrete principles of rights and the practices of political action.” He argues that educating today’s youth ought not in any way undermine “the stimulations and pleasures of postmodern society;” “Citizenship, Education, and Postmodernity,” *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 13(1) (1992), 66. **6** Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity*, 295. **7** An incoherence that manifested itself in Obama’s Nobel

Prize address, where he argued America would respect the integrity of other countries and cultures, so long as they respected our conception of rights. **8** Cicero, *On the Commonwealth and On the Laws* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 18. **9** Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity*, 60. **10** See Claes Ryn, *America the Virtuous: The Crisis of Democracy and the Quest for Empire* (New York: Transaction Publishers, 2003). **11** See Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity*, Ch. 1, for her argument that education ought to be an act of parricide. **12** Michael Oakeshott, *The Voice of Liberal Learning* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 126–127. **13** St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae: Latin Text and English Translations*, ed. Dominicans of the English Province (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975). **14** Augustine, *Of True Religion* (Chicago: Regnery Publishers, 1991), 48. **15** Oakeshott, “The Study of ‘Politics’ in a University,” *Rationalism and Politics and Other Essays* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1991), 187. **16** See Irving Babbitt, *Literature and the American College* (Washington, DC: National Humanities Institute Press, 1986), 112. **17** G. K. Chesterton, *Collected Works, Volume I: Heretics* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 140.