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Hospitality and the ethics of religious diversity

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Abstract: As the discipline of philosophy of religion stretches to become a global, cross-cultural discipline, it takes on ethical questions about how one should treat those who participate in religious forms of life one does not share. This article offers a typology of possible ethical positions in a context of religious diversity and argues that the strongest position is one of conditional hospitality. That is, the moral ideal proposed here is one of welcome to the religious other that is conditional on an accurate moral judgement of their practices, beliefs, and institutions.

This article concerns a question that grows more urgent as globalization increases the contact between religious communities with their diverging views of the right way to live: how should one treat those who practise a religion that one does not share? This article's answer has three parts. In the first, I clarify the logic of three possible moral ideals: opposition, toleration, and hospitality. In the second, I argue that any ethical response to another's religion has to take into account the particularities of that religion and, for that reason, the moral ideal we want cannot be absolute but instead must be conditional. In the third, I argue that the moral ideal we want is conditional hospitality, and I explain why this position is superior both to the other two possible moral ideals and to unconditional hospitality.

Mapping the ethics of religious diversity

I understand a religion to be a set of practices.[1] One can consider a set of practices in the abstract, like a script, but religions *qua* practices are performed by people and, for this reason, even though not all religions include a marked boundary between insiders and outsiders nor a conscious choice to join, all concrete religions will be constituted by a group of practitioners. Furthermore,

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practices do not have sense apart from what the agent takes to be true, and so, even though not all religions include explicit doctrines or a statement of faith, all religions will include religious beliefs. And third, any practice that is more than ephemeral will be organized according to institutions that reproduce it over time and modify it when necessary, and so, even though not all religions include explicit rules or an official hierarchy, all religions will include institutions.[2] By 'a religion', then, I mean a set of practices, along with the attendant beliefs and institutions, performed by a group of people. One can use Wittgenstein's phase 'a form of life' to capture this structure. Paradigmatically, then, a religion of other people is a form of life composed of religious practices in which one does not participate, along with religious beliefs one does not hold and religious institutions whose authority one does not accept, concretized in a community of which one is not a member. So the question of this article is: how should one treat people who practise a religious form of life that one does not share?

Let me distinguish this question from two related ones. First, the ethical question here is not how one should treat the religious other simply *qua* human being. The question is not how one should treat religious others when they are hungry, orphaned, or displaced. That question can typically be answered without bringing the other person's religion into the moral equation. The question here, instead, concerns how one should treat the religious other *qua* religious person, which is to say, how one should treat the other as a member of a group that does religious practices, holds religious beliefs, and belongs to religious institutions that one does not share, as the practitioners of a form of life one does not practise. Second, my interest here is in the ethical question of how one should treat religious others rather than the empirical question of how religious people actually do treat others. If one asks the latter question, the answer is that the members of religious groups tend to be tolerant towards their religious kin and intolerant towards outsiders (Clarke et al. (2013)). But my interest here is normative and concerns the moral ideal one should seek. And this interest includes not only how religious people should treat those in other religions but how anyone should, and so the scope of the question here is broader.

Now, to the ethical question itself. It is wrong to think that history has been dominated by the persecution of those who practise other religions. Sometimes religious others have been persecuted – shunned or exiled or outlawed or killed because of their religion. But sometimes the practices, beliefs, experiences, and institutions of religious others are respected and admired. They sometimes appeal to those who are not members of the religion and they get consciously or unconsciously taken on. Throughout history, one sees a 'syncretistic churn' of constant religious adopting and adapting (Rose (2013), 81). This mix of both competition and struggle and emulation and borrowing between what we now call religions began even before the word 'religion' emerged (Casadio (2016)).

To sort the variety of positions one might take on the ethics of religious diversity, it can help to ask these two questions:

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1. Are there benefits one can obtain from another's religious form of life?
2. Are there good reasons for one to permit others to practise their religious form of life?

The question whether one might benefit from another's religious form of life raises the possibility that including another's religion within one's community may bring benefits even if one borrows nothing from it. Perhaps including some religious others makes one's community as a whole stronger, healthier, or richer in some way. And the first question also raises the possibility of the benefits of borrowing elements from the other. Perhaps the religious other teaches something that is true that one does not yet know. Perhaps taking on their practices would improve one's quality of life or incorporating their institutions would enable better ways of thinking about families, money, or wars. Perhaps those who participate in that way of life experience something that is real that non-participants have not yet seen.

The second question – whether there are good reasons to permit others to practise their form of life – raises the possibility of communities that are religiously plural. This plurality might be justified with a sceptical argument, like that found in Pierre Bayle, that there is no way to know for certain that other people's religions are false. It might be justified with an epistemic argument, like that found in John Locke, that given the inability of weapons to reach another person's conscience, trying to coerce them to believe what one wants them to believe will always fail. It might be justified with a liberal argument, like that found in John Stuart Mill, that unless the religious other is harming others, depriving them of their freedom to practise their religion is not as valuable as respecting their ability to choose their own lives.[3]

For simplicity's sake, let us consider just Yes and No answers to these two questions. When we do this, three distinct moral positions emerge.[4] In the first position are those who answer both questions regarding some particular religious form of life with a No. They hold a negative evaluation of the other religion, both for oneself and for the other person. In effect, they say: in my judgement, what this other religious community teaches is false and what they practise is harmful. It would be bad for us collectively to incorporate those who practise this way of life in our community and bad for me personally to adopt these false beliefs and harmful practices. In fact, it is also bad for others to hold these false beliefs and to engage in these harmful practices, and there are no good reasons why they should be permitted to practise it. This position may lead to one community shunning those who practise the other religion, or outlawing, exiling, or attacking them. Call this first position: *opposition*.

In the second position are those who answer the first question with a No but the second with a Yes. In effect, they say: from my perspective, what this other religious community teaches is false and what they practise is of no benefit, or may even be harmful. It would be at best useless for us collectively and for me

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personally to interact with or adopt these false beliefs and practices, and so there are no good reasons to borrow from them. It is also useless or even harmful for others to hold these false beliefs and to engage in those practices, but there are good reasons why they should be permitted to practise their religion. Therefore, even though I do not agree with this form of life, I will not oppose it but rather will permit those who practise it to do so. Call this second position: *toleration*.

In the third position are those who answer both questions with a Yes. In response to the first question, they say in effect: what this other religious community teaches may not be completely false and what they practise may not be completely harmful. If so, there may be good reasons why I should borrow elements of this form of life from this other religious community. There may be things that I could learn from them. It is not surprising that those who give an answer like this to the first question will answer the second question by saying that these religious others should be permitted to practise their religion. In the third position, neither answer is negative. Call this third position: *hospitality*.

A pure position of opposition, toleration, or hospitality is an ideal type, and those who have considered the ethics of religious diversity have almost always espoused some mixed position. Some thinkers have identified one of these three positions as the moral ideal but have applied it only to *some* religious forms of life but not others. John Locke, for instance, argued that toleration was the principle that could end the violence between warring Protestant churches but he did not extend the principle to Catholics or atheists. Some thinkers have identified one of these three positions as the moral ideal but then applied it only to some *parts* of a religious form of life but not others. The Supreme Court of the United States decided in the 1879 *Reynolds* case to tolerate the Mormon belief in polygamy but to outlaw its practice and, conversely, there are many who adopt the practices of yoga or meditation but only tolerate the beliefs in devotion or reincarnation that had traditionally justified those practices. These examples of tolerating or welcoming a religious other are only partial, but they are nevertheless genuine. By contrast, one also sees in history many who espouse one of these three positions as the moral ideal in their words but not in their actions. Thomas More, for instance, described toleration as the best state of a commonwealth in *Utopia* in 1516, but when the Reformation actually arrived in England ten years later, he argued that heretics should be executed, a position that perhaps he came to regret. There are many, in other words, who lobby for a moral ideal merely as an imaginative exercise, or who change their mind, or who are hypocrites, and do not endorse it in practice. When looking at actual cases, then, we have to keep in mind that a moral position does not exist above social disputes but emerges from within them, so that what any particular thinker intends will always be tied to her social and historical context.

Despite the messiness of the actual world, one can use the two questions behind this typology to identify the basic commitments that structure the

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range of possible positions. As one sees in the answer to the first question, it is part of the very definition of opposition that one judges the religious other negatively. For those who endorse this position, religious difference is a problem. And as one sees in the second question, those who endorse opposition as their moral ideal seek to solve this problem by eliminating religious difference or, in the most severe cases, by eliminating the religious other altogether. The social result sought is uniformity. It is also part of the very definition of toleration that one answers the first question by judging the religious other negatively. It is because toleration shares the negative evaluation of the religious other that tolerance is not the opposite of intolerance (Trigg (2013), 168). Despite this overlap, the alternative that toleration offers as a moral ideal was, historically speaking, revolutionary in Europe because it did not seek to solve the problem of the religious other by eliminating difference; it does not seek social uniformity. In fact, toleration does not seek to resolve but merely to contain and defuse religious disputes: 'the promise of toleration is that coexistence in disagreement is possible' (Forst (2013), 1). For this reason, even though both opposition and toleration judge the religious other negatively and both resist being influenced by the other, there is a substantive difference between them. Critics of toleration as a moral ideal should not treat it simply as another version of opposition.[5]

There are advocates of hospitality who treat their ethical position as a significant break from the other two – as 'a radical shift from an age of monologue to an age of dialogue' (Moyaert (2019), 3), 'the movement beyond the insularity of tolerance toward more open and cooperative interactions' (Conway (2009), 12) – and the two questions in my typology show that and how these claims are correct. Despite what advocates of hospitality sometimes claim, however, the significance of this position is not that it introduces a willingness to live with difference nor that it fosters a respect for other people's religious forms of life. One can find both of those features in toleration. The significance is that hospitality drops the negative evaluation of the other's religion. In the position of hospitality, unlike in either opposition or tolerance, one raises the possibility that one can benefit from the religion of the other. Because of its Yes answer to the second question above, hospitality includes the possibility of interreligious dialogue, mutual learning, and vulnerability to the other. Hospitality troubles the working assumption that one's way of life is not open to critique and opens the possibility that one should learn from the practices, beliefs, institutions, and experiences of the religious other. In terms of one's ethical formation or spiritual discipline, hospitality involves the cultivation of a virtue of openness to religious others that is not available in the positions of opposition and toleration. Insofar as one regards self-critique and openness to religious others as valuable, some form of hospitality is the superior moral ideal for responding to religious others, and the alternative that hospitality offers can be a second conceptual revolution in the ethics of religious diversity.

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The conditional logic of virtuous action

I want to argue for what one might call the conditional logic of virtuous action, including acts of hospitality. The key to this logic concerns how hospitality relates to the actions that characterize the other two moral ideals.

There are two basic ways of relating hospitality to opposition and toleration. The first is to see each as excluding the others: one either opposes *or* tolerates *or* welcomes the religious other. On this view, to endorse hospitality is to reject non-hospitable ways of treating religious others: those who endorse hospitality as their moral ideal 'leave behind' or 'move beyond' mere opposition and toleration. The second way of relating these actions sees them as options 'nested' within the superior moral ideal. On this nested view, those who endorse toleration as the ideal response to religious others will nevertheless, under some conditions, oppose them, and those who take hospitality as the moral ideal will nevertheless, under some conditions, oppose or merely tolerate them. For the rest of this article, I argue for this more complicated conditional view.

It is not unusual to hear these three kinds of action ranked so that opposing the religious other is morally backwards, tolerating them is morally better, but welcoming them with hospitality is the moral ideal. For some, to oppose other people simply because of their religion is not an ethical position but rather a refusal to treat them ethically. Endorsed by fundamentalists and religious extremists, opposition is said to be tribalistic or medieval, a closed-minded position that individuals and groups should move beyond. By contrast, toleration is a quintessentially modern position. Those who endorse this position take an accommodationist 'live and let live' stance. Though they may not care for the religions practised by others, they seek coexistence based on principled non-interference and they repudiate religious violence. From the perspective of many of those who endorse hospitality, toleration is a step in the right direction, but it is still too negative, still too limited in its appreciation of the other, still too closed-minded. As David Heyd (1996, 5) puts it, toleration was 'an interim value' in the period between an age of absolutism and an age of pluralism. Hospitality by contrast is a post-modern or post-colonialist position in that it welcomes and risks one's own transformation by the religious other. Since the typology of opposition/toleration/hospitality sorts the positions according to two negative answers, one negative answer, and zero negative answers, it may also seem to support this narrative of moral progress.

I think that this progressive view is flawed, however, both conceptually and historically. It is conceptually flawed in that what people refer to as 'religion' has not been stable. What Enlightenment philosophers argued one should tolerate was not the same thing that one had previously opposed but rather a privatized version of religion whose power to do violence was taken over by secular nation states (cf. Cavanaugh (2009)). The view is historically flawed in that opposition to the religious other is not a particularly pre-modern position. It is common in the

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contemporary world and continues to be championed as *realpolitik* and as the proper moral response to the clash of civilizations. Moreover, hospitality is not a particularly post-modern or post-colonial position, but rather an ethical response to religious others that one can find in numerous pre-modern traditions (cf. Kearney & Taylor (2011)).

By contrast, the 'nested' view sees opposition and toleration as options within the moral ideal of hospitality under certain conditions. Hospitality is superior to opposition and toleration as moral ideals, but this is not because the hospitable person transcends opposition and toleration, never tolerating or opposing a religious other. Instead, on this conditional view, hospitality includes all three kinds of action – welcoming, tolerating, and opposing – as the proper moral responses to religious others in different situations. In fact, I will argue that, logically speaking, any virtuous response *must* be conditional in this way.

Toleration is the moral ideal that has received the most philosophical attention, and one can consider the logic of toleration to see why any moral ideal has to be conditional.

Toleration is commonly defined in terms of two elements: (1) one disapproves of something and yet (2) in accord with some principle, one chooses not to interfere but rather to permit it. For instance, I do not like it that my friend smokes in my car, but for the sake of our relationship, I tolerate it. I wish that the kids were not making so much noise, but at least they get to have some fun, and so I tolerate it. If one does not disapprove of the thing in question (for example, if one is indifferent), then, strictly speaking, one is not tolerating it. Or if one would like to interfere but lacks the ability (for example, if one is simply dominated or if one has become resigned), then, again, strictly speaking, one is not tolerating. We might call a definition of toleration like this one 'generic' since it is neutral about the moral status of the thing that is being tolerated. A generic definition of toleration is fine when one seeks to describe all the different ways that people put up with things they do not care for, but I hold that it does not work as a definition of toleration *as a virtue*.

The shortcoming of a generic definition for our purposes is that it includes two kinds of toleration that, I argue, are not virtuous. That is, it includes those situations when someone tolerates *something to which, morally speaking, one should not object* and those situations when someone tolerates *something that, morally speaking, should not be tolerated*. Here is an example of each kind.[6] Consider the person – let us call her Marie – who disapproves when her friend falls in love with someone of the same sex, but out of Lockean recognition that one cannot coerce another's mind, she does not oppose it. Marie is tolerating something in the generic sense, but I would argue that her action is not virtuous. The action that Marie is tolerating should be permitted, and Marie does permit it, but if the action is one that does not merit disapproval, then her toleration is not praiseworthy. The problem in this case arises not in the second part of the generic definition but in the first. In short, then, to understand toleration as a

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possible moral ideal, we need to recognize a moral ceiling that the thing tolerated is below: for an act of toleration to count as a virtue, it must not be of an action that is morally unobjectionable.

The generic definition of toleration also includes those situations where someone tolerates something that should not be tolerated. Consider the person – let us call him Karl – who disapproves when his friend uses date-rape drugs, but out of Millian respect for his friend's right to make his own decisions, he does not oppose it. He does not oppose the action by objecting verbally, let alone by informing possible victims, calling the police, or physically interceding. Karl's action is an example of tolerating, but I would argue that his action is not virtuous. The action that Karl is tolerating deserves disapproval, and Karl does disapprove of it, but if the action should not be permitted, then his toleration is not praiseworthy. The problem in this case arises not in the first part of the generic definition but in the second. To understand toleration as a possible moral ideal, we need to recognize a moral threshold that the thing tolerated is above: for an act of toleration to count as a virtue, it must be of an action that is not morally intolerable.[7]

The conclusion of the argument to this point is that virtuous toleration is conditional: a tolerant person or action is only virtuous on the condition that it involves an accurate moral judgement about the thing being tolerated. Toleration as a virtue only obtains when one makes two successful evaluative judgements, first discriminating between what is not morally problematic and what is, and then, within the latter set, between what is and is not morally tolerable. Toleration is virtuous only when one sorts the social world in this way. If this argument is sound, then a person who espouses toleration as the moral ideal has to recognize – that is, she is required logically to recognize – that there are some things one should not tolerate, things that one should oppose. When a person who espouses toleration as her moral ideal opposes morally intolerable things, she does so as part of her larger commitment to toleration, and she does so virtuously.[8]

The need for critical judgement applies no less when one is considering the virtue of tolerating the religious other. The same threshold and ceiling exist. Someone who tolerates religious beliefs and practices that are morally impermissible is not being virtuous. As before, we can think of examples that illustrate the conditional character of tolerating religions. I would argue that someone who said that she did not agree with the murders and kidnappings of children by Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army, but that she tolerated them because they were based on sincerely held religious beliefs, would be tolerating in the generic sense but not in a virtuous way. Opposition in social-political cases like this could include both non-violent and violent resistance. Similarly, it is also not virtuous to tolerate religious beliefs and practices that are morally praiseworthy. I would argue that someone who said that he did not agree with the boycotts and marches for racial equality led by Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, but that he was willing to permit them

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without interference, would not be virtuous. The morally appropriate response when religious behaviour fails to rise above the moral threshold is active interference, and when religious behaviour rises above the moral ceiling, active support. In these two kinds of cases, refusing to interfere with the action is a form of toleration in the generic sense, but in neither case is it a *virtuous* form of toleration. This threshold/ceiling logic holds whether one judges religious practices and beliefs from a secular ethical or a religious ethical perspective (or even if, like Kierkegaard, one believes that some religious commitments suspend the ethical). That is, a member of Kony's army, a congregant in a white supremacist church, or Kierkegaard's Abraham would disagree with me about where the threshold and the ceiling should be placed, but their account of toleration would have the same structure.

It follows from this argument that, for those who take toleration as the moral ideal, their toleration cannot be absolute. Like virtuous toleration in general, virtuous religious toleration will depend upon cases and will require one to discriminate. One has to look into the details and make an evaluative judgement that sorts the religious phenomena in question. As a consequence, one's answer to the question of the ethics of religious diversity cannot be the unconditional answer that 'one should tolerate the religions of others', but rather must be the conditional answer that 'one should investigate the religions of others and sort those practices, beliefs, and institutions and tolerate those parts that merit toleration'. When a person who espouses religious toleration as her moral ideal opposes religious beliefs and practices that are morally intolerable, she does so virtuously.

The other two moral ideals being considered also operate like this. Opposition and hospitality also depend for their value on the agent responding accurately to the moral character of the thing they are dealing with. To answer our question, then, we have to make a distinction between inclusive, generic senses of opposition and hospitality on the one hand, and narrower, virtuous senses on the other. There is opposition in a generic sense whenever someone does not permit something but there is opposition as a virtue in the narrower sense when someone seeks to interfere with something that should not be permitted. Opposition to the religious other can be similarly virtuous when someone does not permit something religious that should not be permitted. I previously mentioned the ravages of the Lord's Resistance Army, and many would add further examples, such as George W. Bush's crusade into Iraq, Anders Breivik's Odinist killing spree, the Islamic State throwing gay men from rooftops, and Jim Jones's poisoned Kool-Aid. If these religious practices are immoral, then opposing them is virtuous. Analogously, we should distinguish between hospitality in a generic sense whenever someone welcomes something and hospitality in a virtuous sense only when someone welcomes something that should be welcomed. Hospitality to the religious other is similarly virtuous only when someone welcomes none of the religious practices, beliefs, and institutions that deserve opposition, but only those that should be welcomed. Just as toleration is virtuous on the

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condition that is based on an accurate moral judgement of its object, the same is true of opposition and hospitality.

Hospitality conditional and unconditional

I have argued that the virtue of an action is conditional upon the accuracy of the moral evaluation of that to which one is responding. Furthermore, a conditional hospitality is superior even to conditional versions of the other moral ideals and to the reputed alternative of unconditional hospitality. Here is why.

As argued above, the evaluative task that is taken on by those who espouse religious toleration as a moral ideal requires them to distinguish between the moral floor, the moral ceiling, and the space between them. In this way, virtuous toleration requires one to sort things into *three* categories: those which are morally intolerable and so must be opposed (like recruiting child soldiers), those which are morally praiseworthy and should not merely be tolerated (like protests at racism), and those which fall between this floor and this ceiling, the things one does not accept for oneself but can be tolerated. Given this sorting, opposition is not what the religiously tolerant person hopes for, but it is still a response that is part of the palette of toleration as a moral ideal. Religious toleration has opposition as a moral possibility nested within it, and necessarily so. The person who aspires to toleration will sometimes morally oppose. But the opposite is not true. The moral task that is taken on by those who espouse religious opposition as their moral ideal is to sort the practices, beliefs, and institutions of the religions one does not share into only *two* categories: those which deserve to be opposed and those which are not relevant. The latter is the category of the indifferent or permissible, what classical and medieval thinkers called *adiaphora*. For those who espouse opposition as their ethical ideal, there is no third category for things one disapproves of but which one does not oppose. So we can see that opposition only has two categories – should one oppose or should one be indifferent – whereas toleration asks whether one should oppose, be indifferent, or tolerate. In this way, toleration is a more complex moral position, one that is able to recognize and respond appropriately to a greater range of ways of life. For this reason, toleration is superior to opposition as a moral ideal.

Hospitality is even more complex. As with toleration and opposition, to practise religious hospitality as a virtue requires that one respond accurately to what the other person is doing. Since one is hospitable in a virtuous sense only when one welcomes what deserves to be welcomed, hospitality is, like the other two moral ideals, conditional. But hospitality as a moral ideal is the most complex of the three, because it includes a new option: the positive, open, welcoming response that was not recognized as a possibility by those who espouse either opposition or toleration. The moral task that is taken on by those who espouse hospitality as a moral ideal therefore is to sort religious practices, beliefs, and institutions into four categories: is the religious phenomenon in question something that

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deserves indifference, toleration, opposition, or welcome? As a moral ideal, then, religious hospitality is superior to toleration and opposition. The reason why it is superior is not that a policy of welcoming is kinder than moral ideals that are wholly or partly negative. Nor is it that the religions of other people simply deserve to be welcomed.[9] Those reasons are only available to those who treat their moral ideals as unconditional. Instead, hospitality is superior to toleration and opposition because as a moral ideal it is richer. Religious hospitality as a moral ideal does not, so to speak, leave opposition or toleration behind but instead refers to a complex task of sorting that includes opposing what should be opposed, tolerating what deserves to be tolerated, and for the first time, cultivating the attitudes of open-mindedness that let one learn from religions one does not share. To espouse hospitality as a moral ideal means that in some cases one will oppose or tolerate the religions of others, but it differs from the positions of opposition and tolerance because those who espouse hospitality as their ideal recognize a new possibility, namely, that of being changed in positive ways by the religious other.

The hospitality I am here recommending involves a willingness to welcome the religious other, but only under certain conditions. This understanding of hospitality permits one to countenance mere tolerance or even opposition to the religious other. Precisely for these reasons, some might think that there is a moral ideal that is superior, namely, unconditional hospitality. And, in fact, unconditional hospitality has its champions, most notably, Jacques Derrida (Derrida (2000); cf. Still (2010)). Derrida claims that hospitality offered only under some conditions is a failure to be ethical and that the only real hospitality is unconditional. Conditional hospitality, no matter how well-meaning, requires one to maintain a degree of power over those one welcomes, an implicit conceptual or physical violence, a latent hostility to the other. By contrast,

> absolute hospitality requires that I open up my home and that I give not only to the foreigner (provided with a family name, with the social status of being a foreigner, etc.), but to the absolute, unknown, anonymous other, and that I *give place* to them, that I let them come, that I let them arrive, and take place in the place I offer them, without asking of them either reciprocity (entering into a pact) or even their names. (Derrida (2000), 25)

True hospitality welcomes others 'without asking for their papers', which is to say, without passing judgement on their worthiness. The virtue of conditional hospitality that I have been recommending is always tied to a critical judgement on the part of the agent, and so it is not hospitality 'without papers'. On what grounds might one argue that conditional hospitality is superior to unconditional hospitality?

Some have suggested that unconditional hospitality is an inferior moral ideal because in practice it would not be ethical. If hospitality is unconditional, the argument goes, then it requires one to open one's home to those who would do one harm, and to those who would do harm to others for whom one is morally

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responsible. It is true that unconditional hospitality requires this. Unconditional hospitality eschews discrimination between those who are dangerous and those who are safe. But it does not follow that such welcoming without conditions is not ethical. The call for a hospitality that is absolute – just like the call for a love so boundless that it includes one's enemies, or the call for a justice so complete that oppression is overcome in all its forms – is certainly ethical. Absolute or unconditional obligations may not be prudent, but prudence is not a requirement of ethics.

The reason why unconditional hospitality is not a superior alternative to conditional hospitality is not that it is not ethical but rather that one cannot act on it. That is, unconditional hospitality is not really a moral ideal at all, and so it is not really an alternative to conditional hospitality. Unconditional hospitality as an ethic asks one to respond to others without making any judgements about them, without categorizing or naming the other in any way, even as 'other' or 'stranger'. It requires one to welcome the stranger without being conditioned by one's emotions or social location or history or intellectual traditions in any way. This request is impossible.[10] One *can* coherently practise a conditional hospitality in which one seeks to welcome everyone in need. One can even practise a conditional hospitality that is so radical that it includes, for instance, a willingness to feed all who are hungry, to provide a home to all who are homeless, and to destroy every border. But insofar as one's actions involve judgements about who is needy and strategies to help them, these radical goals would be conditional, not unconditional. Unlike unconditional hospitality, conditional hospitality is a coherent moral ideal.

Derrida's rhetoric may suggest that conditional hospitality and unconditional hospitality are competing alternatives when he says that only the latter is 'pure' or 'real' or 'true' hospitality, or when he says that the former 'would be the ruin of ethics' (Derrida (2001), 48).[11] The only workable account, however, treats unconditional hospitality not as a moral ideal that is superior to conditional hospitality but rather as a criterion of self-critique *within* a policy of conditional hospitality. In the end, I take this as Derrida's real view of the matter. As Derrida puts it, unconditional hospitality does not 'condemn' or 'oppose' an ethic of conditional hospitality but is rather 'indissociable' from it (Derrida (2000), 25–27). On this account, even though unconditional hospitality is not possible as a moral ideal, this utopian or messianic feature informs the practice of conditional hospitality. One cannot act according to the law of unconditional hospitality, but it can nevertheless operate as a never-reached *telos* and as a reminder that the status quo and the judgements that justify it are not simply imperfect, but also violent, unjust, and inhospitable. Those who live with conditional hospitality as their moral ideal therefore must practise a continuous self-critique and hold their concrete decisions open to an always more hospitable response. The ethic we want, then, pursues a single moral ideal, tensed within itself.

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Conditional hospitality is also psychologically superior. As several commentators have noticed, trying to take unconditional hospitality as one's moral ideal creates a feeling of infinite responsibility that can never be met (e.g. Taylor (2011), 14–17; Kakoliris (2015), 151–152), an ethics whose 'main motivation' (Derrida (2001), 48) is to generate a bad conscience over one's failure to be perfectly ethical. In contrast, a moral ideal of conditional hospitality (even though it includes unconditional hospitality as a feature) creates an ethic for fallible, limited human beings. A moral ideal of conditional hospitality includes self-critique since what one has accomplished so far can always be better, but this ideal also recognizes that an individual or a group is finite, with time and energy and material resources that are not unlimited. One need not be omnipotent or understand the other perfectly to do good. Unlike an ideal of unconditional hospitality, this moral ideal does not demand that one transcend one's conditions.

In the context of religious diversity, unconditional hospitality is again impossible, save as a feature of conditional hospitality. Recall that interreligious hospitality involves not only letting those who practise religions one does not share into one's country or one's home, that is, hospitality to them *qua* persons, but also offering hospitality to them *qua* practitioners of a form of life one does not share. Interreligious hospitality means being willing to be challenged by and perhaps to adopt the possibly-good practices and possibly-true doctrines of their religions. It involves what one might call both 'ritual hospitality', that is, participation in the other's religious practices, and 'doctrinal hospitality', a receptivity to the other's world-view and teachings (Cornille (2011)). Ritual and doctrinal hospitality is a coherent project when one sorts the religious beliefs and practices that one can and cannot take on as part of one's religious identity. Unconditional hospitality is not a coherent project, however, since one cannot coherently be unconditionally hospitable while taking on religious practices that are not hospitable, nor while taking on religious teachings from incompatible religions.

Philosophers and ethicists have rightly sought to critique a history of unjust opposition to religious others. But there is a danger that out of a desire to avoid those crimes, one is drawn to an unconditional hospitality that simply reverses them. That is, just as opposition to the religious other *eliminates* the other's religious difference, unconditional hospitality to the religious other *surrenders* one's own religious difference. In both cases, the result is social uniformity. Unless one practises a hospitality that is conditional, that is, welcoming the religious other as much as coherently possible while maintaining the valuable parts of one's own religious identity, one is simply converting to the other's religion. An ethic of interreligious hospitality may cultivate not merely an openness to but rather an expectation of change. Nevertheless, it requires one not unconditionally to surrender but rather conditionally to negotiate one's own religious identity in relation to the other.

In sum, then, the moral ideal I recommend for situations of religious diversity is a conditional hospitality, where this means that one makes judgements about the

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religious practices, beliefs, and institutions of religious others, distinguishing those from which one might learn from those one can tolerate and those one must oppose. One can be wrong about these judgements, of course, and so, despite the need and legitimacy of making those judgements, this moral ideal includes a perpetual self-critique as one seeks to treat religious others with a welcome that one never perfects.

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Notes

1. For an eloquent account of religion as a set of practices, see Smith (2017). I treat a set of practices as religious when they are predicated on superempirical realities in Schilbrack (2018).
2. For an argument that all religions include religious beliefs, see Schilbrack (2014), ch. 4; that they all include institutions, see Lincoln (2003), ch. 1.
3. For an excellent survey of these and other historical arguments for justifying toleration, see Mendus (1988).
4. There are actually four logically possible positions, including a 'Yes/No' position that says that the other person's religion might be good for me, but there is no reason to permit them to practise their own religion. One sees this position adopted unconsciously in cases of cultural appropriation or consciously in cases of supersessionism. In this article, I don't consider this a live option as a moral ideal, though I recognize that that conclusion merits a longer argument.
5. Recent defences of tolerance as the superior moral ideal include McKinnon (2006) and Forst in Forst & Brown (2014).
6. Note that my argument about the conditional character of virtues works if there are *any* actions to which one should not object or that should not be tolerated, and it does not depend on the particularities of the illustrative cases of same-sex marriage or date-rape drugs.
7. The last two paragraphs were inspired by Heyd (1996), esp. 10–11. It may seem that even if Karl's tolerant behaviour is not virtuous, Marie's is. I suspect that this appearance is caused by the fact that virtue leads to non-interference with same-sex love but not with date rape drugs. In other words, Marie's non-virtuous tolerant behaviour may appear virtuous because virtuous inaction is called for here and the consequences look alike. Forst (2017) points out that if one considers virtuous the person who does not act on their homophobic, sexist, or racist attitudes, then the person would be more virtuous the stronger those attitudes are. Cases like that of Marie do not belong among the virtuous kinds of toleration because the moral solution is not simply non-interference, but to oppose the person's incorrect negative attitudes. For this reason, the morally appropriate response to Marie is the opposition that this article argues is moral, and the same opposition would be warranted towards incorrect negative attitudes even if they are religious.
8. The claim that virtues presuppose proper moral judgements has classical roots. Aristotle said that the good person should not tolerate everything. According to Aristotle, it is not virtuous, but rather obsequious, for someone, out of a desire to avoid conflict, to develop a general habit of tolerating the offensive words and deeds of others and not opposing them. He considers it equally off the mark, 'churlish and contentious', for someone to develop a general habit of opposing what others do and say and not caring whether one causes them pain. The good person tolerates, but only sometimes. The virtuous position therefore is to sort what others do and to put up with the things that one should put up with and to resent the things that one should resent (Aristotle (1984), 1778; *NE* 4.6, 1126b12–19). The moral ideal I recommend is not Aristotle's, however, since he lacks the positive answers to my two questions, which is to say that he lacks an appreciation of forms of life other than his own. Conway has a nice discussion of the lack of toleration (let alone hospitality) towards other forms of life in classical and, later, in medieval thinkers:

   > Specific texts in Plato and Aristotle promote practices tied to tolerance and reveal curiosity about alien beliefs and practices, but there is no explicit affirming of the virtue itself. [Instead, e] mphasis is placed on the discerning of singular, objective truths and the ascent from the multiplicity of conjecture, opinion and belief to enduring knowledge of what is singularly true and good. In such accounts one tolerates diversity based on the recognition that persons and cultures stand at different stages of the ascent to such enlightenment. (Conway (2009), 2–3)

9. Some of those who endorse hospitality assume a religious pluralism according to which all (or, at least, multiple) religions are on a par with regard to truth. For an argument that interreligious hospitality should not assume this kind of religious pluralism, see Moyaert (2011). And one should note that a hospitality based on John Hick's pluralism would be conditional since he excluded religions that did not accept the Golden Rule (e.g. (Hick 1995), 78–79).

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10. I agree here with Martin Hägglund when he writes that:

> it is *not* the case that an ethics of unconditional hospitality is what we *ought* to strive for, while we regrettably have to make hospitality conditional. On the contrary, an ethics of unconditional hospitality is impossible for *essential* reasons, since it would require that I could not react in a negative or protective manner but automatically must welcome everything. An ethics of unconditional hospitality would short-circuit all forms of decisions and be the same as a complete indifference before what happens. (Hägglund (2008), 103)

11. Gerasimos Kakoliris argues persuasively that Derrida's sometimes hyperbolic rhetoric creates a binary that he should have deconstructed.

> Derrida should have concluded the impossibility of the existence of a 'pure' concept of hospitality: that the concept of hospitality, as with the concept of presence, is affected *straight away* by an essential disruption, impurity, corruption, contamination or prevention. In this sense, 'impurity,' in the form of conditions, is not a supplement which comes from outside to be added to an original, uncontaminated, pure hospitality. (Kakoliris (2015), 151)

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