Four centuries after the signing of the Peace of Westphalia, an inter-state system with national sovereignty as its fundamental principle, spread from Europe into the entire world. While the nation-state system has always been the core element in practice, reflections of cosmopolitanism which go beyond the nation-state have never disappeared in human thought, thoughts ranging from serious philosophical works to romantic poems.1 Since the discipline of international relations was established in the early 20th century, however, most IR theorists have centered on the concept and limit of “inter-national”. They regard the existence of nation-states as a prerequisite of their analysis, showing little interest in cosmopolitanism.2 At the same time, cosmopolitanism is still vivid in the disciplines of political science, sociology and philosophy. Ulrich Beck, Robert Fine, Martha Nussbaum and Thomas Pogge are only a few names among the modern cosmopolitanism scholars, who have influenced IR studies, especially on normative theories. Many of them, in their discussions on cosmopolitanism, trace the cosmopolitan tradition back to Stoicism and even Cynicism.3 The Stoic movement is indisputably the first among the “three major moments of cosmopolitan thought prior to the current re-engagement with its problematic and disposition” (Beardworth 2011, 17). Stoic cosmopolitanism provides the modern cosmopolitan researchers not only the notion of “cosmos in which human kind might live together in harmony”, but also, to some extent, the idea of “world citizenship” (Held 2005, 18; Couture and Nielsen 2005, 183).

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1 Chen Yudan is an Assistant Professor in the Department of International Politics at Fudan University.
2 It is interesting that in 18th and 19th centuries, when the institution of nation-states was fixed in Europe, great figures as Kant, Goethe and Schiller were keenly calling for an idea of “world citizenship”. (See for example, Francke 1927, 183-190)
3 There are, however, some exceptions (Brown 2000b, 7-26; Bartelson 2009; Beardsworth, 2011, etc.).
4 It is noteworthy that Martha Nussbaum herself is a well-known Classicist.
At the other side of the earth, China has witnessed the rise of its own cosmopolitanism under the name of “Tianxia Zhuyi” (The doctrine of Tianxia) since the mid-1990s. Some scholars have tended to employ this conception - which is generated from a Chinese classical tradition - to transcend the imported idea of the nation-state. Li Shenzhi, one of the most prominent Chinese IR scholars in the last century and the former president of the Chinese Academy of Social Science, declares in his article “Globalization and Chinese Culture” (1994), that “a vulgar nationalism, is totally against the trend and spirit of globalization as well as Chinese tradition...The traditional Chinese idea is ‘Tianxia Zhuyi’ and not ‘nationalism’” (Li 1994, 7-8). Another important article which raised enthusiastic discussion and even disputes on Chinese cosmopolitanism was by Sheng Hong, published in a leading Chinese social science journal under the title “From Nationalism to Tianxia Zhuyi” in 1996. The author argues that “since China is the only civilization in human history that once ended a warring states period (with the establishment of ‘Tianxia Zhuyi’ culture), its cultural tradition may become a spiritual resource for us to establish ‘Tianxia Zhuyi’ culture today” (Sheng 1996, 19). From then on, quite a few Chinese scholars have tried to view the world from a traditional Chinese cosmopolitan perspective. Like their Western counterparts, Chinese researchers often look back upon the Classical period, picking up phrases from Confucian classics dating from two thousand years ago, and which have been regarded as the main source of traditional cosmopolitanism. When China put forward the conception of “harmonious world” in 2005, some scholars tended to connect classical cosmopolitanism with the “harmonious world” idea, to prove that the latter is based on the uniqueness of Chinese culture and can benefit from its traditional cosmopolitanism. Since both modern Western and Chinese cosmopolitanisms appeal to some extent – to something beyond “nation-state,” it would be interesting and helpful to compare their respective ancestors, that is, Stoic cosmopolitanism and Confucian cosmopolitanism. Are they essentially different and incommensurable? Or do they share something common that

4 “Tianxia” is a concept widely used in ancient China which means “the Universe”, or “under the Heaven” literally. “Zhuyi” simply means “-ism”. I will retain “Tianxia Zhuyi” if it is in a citation, but use “cosmopolitanism” otherwise for the reason of easy-reading.

5 Li participated in China’s foreign affairs actively in 1950s with Premier Zhou Enlai and in the late 1970s, with Deng Xiaoping. He was also the founder of the Institute of American Studies in the Chinese Academy of Social Science (in 1980s).

6 The most influential figure is Zhao Tingyang, a professor in philosophy. He published the book The Tianxia System: A Philosophy for the World Institution in 2005, which has been widely spread among IR scholars in China.

7 There are numerous books, papers and articles on this topic, among which, I have to say, only a few are serious and profound academic works (See for example, Yang 2008).

8 While there existed diversity within both Stoicism and Confucianism, this article will consider them as unified theories, or it would be too much for the capacity of a single paper.
might benefit contemporary reflections in a changing world? The comparison between these two cosmopolitanisms in this article includes two aspects: the political space for people in the world to dwell in, and the way they live harmoniously in such a space. The article then turns to modern theories in the conclusion, with a brief discussion based on consideration of these two ancient philosophies.

I. Cosmos and Tianxia: The Space to Dwell in

During the Classical period (5th-4th century B.C.), both political thought and political practices in Greece reached their climax within the form of polis (city-state). Beyond the level of polis, there were senses of ethnos and even “Greek identity”, but the latter referred to common religion, culture and blood, not a political community. However, the 4th century B.C. witnessed the conquest of Greek poleis by Macedon, a peripheral kingdom, and it was Alexander the Great who led the Greeks to destroy the most typical barbarian figure in their minds: the Persian Empire. The city-state system then began to collapse in political practice. Meanwhile, ideas beyond city-state and even beyond the distinction between Greeks and barbarians appeared in political thought.

Diogenes, the renowned Cynic philosopher in the 4th century B.C., as “a homeless exile, to his country dead”, might be the earliest to put forward a cosmopolitan idea when he said, “I am a citizen of the world (cosmopolitēs)” (Diogenes Laertios 1972, VI. 38, 63). However, he has no works surviving today, and it is difficult to make clear the real meaning of his words. It might be “rather a rebellious reaction against every kind of coercion imposed by the community upon the individual” than a true “philosophic implication” of cosmopolitanism (Hadas 1943, 108).

The Stoic school created in late 4th century B.C. is always seen as the real origin of Western cosmopolitanism. The early development of the school was in the Hellenistic period, when

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9 Recent studies in Classical Greek inter-state relations are shared by classists and political scientists (cf., Arnpoulos 1999; Low 2007; Giovannini 2007).
10 We should keep in mind that the Macedonians were seen by the Greeks as semi-barbarians. Demosthenes in his famous Philippic III held Philip, the king of Macedon in strong contempt: “not only is he no Hellene, not only has he no kinship with Hellenes, but he is not even a barbarian from a country that one could acknowledge with credit;——he is a pestilent Macedonian, from whose country it used not to be possible to buy even a slave of any value”(Pickard 1912, 31).
11 See also VI.72 in the same work: “The only true commonwealth was, he said, that which is as wide as the universe.” Both the Greek and English texts I cite here are from R. D. Hicks’s text in Loeb Classical Library.
12 For a brief but detailed discussion on Diogenes’ cosmopolitanism and its relations with Stoic cosmopolitanism, see: Schofield 1991, 141-145.
Greek civilization spread into the non-Greek world. Zeno, the founder of Stoicism, was not an authentic Greek. The center of Stoicism in the middle phase began to transit outside the Greek world, resulting in the late Stoa finally having its headquarters at Rome. Therefore, Stoicism was born with the characteristics of universality and tolerance. We are not surprised to read from the works of late Stoics, some of whom were Roman politicians, an ethical tendency to evoke the world citizen.

Confucian cosmopolitanism, however, developed in a different background. It did not appear and develop following the change of the world. On the contrary, it pursued an old universal world order against the emerging new system of independent states.13 “Confucius”, as Cho-yun Hsu noticed, “defined the idea of Confucian political culture through re-interpreting the Western Zhou order” in the era of “the collapse of rules of propriety”, and modified the institution of Zhou “into the ideal political regime in Chinese culture” (Hsu 2010, 14).

At first glance, the Stoics look forward in their political contemplation, while the Confucians look backward. However, they in fact share the same idea in different ways; that is, the state system cannot comply with the development of the world, and there needs to be a superior political form to transcend the idea of independent states, whether the ideal pattern is new or old. Such a pattern is Cosmos for the Stoics and Tianxia for the Confucians. Two questions, then, will be explored as follows.

First, what are the respective characteristics of Cosmos and Tianxia, as both are expected to be the higher political space beyond single states?

It is easy to find that Cosmos and Tianxia share the same essence: a large space which includes all human beings. Zhao Tingyang, a leading Chinese philosopher who authored The Tianxia System: A Philosophy for the World Institution, defines Tianxia as “nothing outside” (无外). While recognizing this as a precise conclusion of Tianxia, I do not agree with his following statement that “China has a world view totally different with Western world...Only Chinese thought can reflect on harmony” (Zhao 2005, 14-15). At least, the Stoic Cosmos also has “nothing outside”. Moreover, we should not forget that the word “cosmos”

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13 The Western Zhou (1046-771 B.C.) was a united dynasty of feudality. The Eastern Zhou (771-256 B.C.) roughly covered two phases: the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 B.C.) and the Warring States Period (475-221 B.C.). There are still disputes regarding the problem as to what extent the inter-state system from 771 to 221 B.C. is parallel to the modern nation-state society. But the states during the period were essentially independent, despite the fact that there was still a nominal “common lord”. Confucius was living during the end of the Spring and Autumn Period, and his school was booming in the Warring States Period.
in the original Greek language means a harmonious system, (even though Chinese and Greeks might hold somewhat different perspectives on “harmony”).

Tianxia seems to exclude the concept of “outside” in a political sense. Examples can easily be found from Confucian classics, such as “Under the wide heaven, all is the King’s land. Within the sea-boundaries of the land, all are the King’s servants”; “[Y]ou obtained all within the four seas, and became sovereign of Tianxia” (Shijing-Xiaoya-Beishan; Shangshu-Dayumo).14

Nevertheless, one cannot simply conclude that there is no distinction between “the one” and “the other” from a Confucian perspective. One of the Confucian classics says that “the barbarous tribes disturb our great bright land” (Shangshu-Yaodian), which may remind us of the ancient Greeks’ view of barbarians. However, unlike the Greeks’ conception, the barbarians in the eyes of the Confucians are also covered by Tianxia. They are not, as Persians to Greeks, an absolute and external image of savages, but can be converted by and integrated into the central civilization through education. What is more, even Shun and King Wan, the two legendary ideal ancient rulers highly admired by the Confucians, were recognized as “Eastern barbarian” and “Western barbarian”: “Shun was born in Chû-fang, removed to Fû-hsiâ, and died in Ming-t’lao;—a man near the wild tribes on the east. King Wan was born in Châu by mount Ch’î, and died in Pî-ying;—a man near the wild tribes on the west. Those regions were distant from one another more than a thousand lî (ancient Chinese mile) But when they got their wish, and carried their principles into practice throughout the Middle Kingdom, it was like uniting the two halves of a seal. When we examine those sages, both the earlier and the later, their principles are found to be the same.” In other words, there is no definite distinction between barbarians and non-barbarians. What matters here is not the kinship, but the “principles” one carries out. Such a special way is considered by Liang Qichao, an early 20th century politician and scholar, as “a Chinese idea which was developed quite early, that the world (four seas) is a family and all men are equal” (Liang 2010, 51).

It was difficult for the Greeks in the Classical Period to imagine such a “nothing outside” world, since “the other” was essential for them to build the identity of “self” (Cf., Hall 1991; Harrison 2001; Cartledge 2002). But a new thought appeared from the very beginning of Stoicism. According to Plutarch, “the much-admired Republic of Zeno, the founder of the Stoic sect, may be summed up in this one main principle: that all the inhabitants of this world of ours should not live differentiated by their respective rules of justice into separate cities and communities, but that we should consider all men to be of one community and

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14 The Confucian classics cited in this article include: Shijing (Classic of Poetry), Shangshu (Classic of History), Liji (Classic of Rites), Chunqiu (Spring and Autumn [Annals]), Lunyu (Confucian Analects) and Mengzi (The Works of Mencius). The English text comes from the translation of James Legge, except for some slight changes when necessary (Legge 1885; Legge 1960).
one polity, and that we should have a common life and an order (cosmos) common to us all” (Plutarch 1936, 329A-B).

Zeno’s Republic is not surviving today. But we can again see Marcus Aurelius, a representative of late Stoics, repeating and developing the view on Cosmos as an encompassing political space: “for what other single polity can the whole race of mankind be said to be fellow-members of?” (Marcus Aurelius 1930, IV.4) Therefore, a Stoic, or a world citizen, will not see any man in the world as “the other” that is alien to “self”. As Martha Nussbaum concludes, according to Stoicism, “we should think of nobody as a stranger, outside our sphere of concern and obligation” (Nussbaum 1997, 9).

When we recognize the “nothing outside” characteristic of both Cosmos and Tianxia, one must question what is the relationship between Cosmos/Tianxia and individual states?

Cosmos and Tianxia, in their respective systems, obviously surpass the independent states. But it does not mean that the latter is simply removed from or replaced by the former. Neither Stoics nor Confucians exclude individual states, or other social or political organizations, from Cosmos/Tianxia. Hierocles, a Stoic whose life is little known now, provides a famous metaphor of concentric circles which “beginning with that representing our own body, then the circles representing our parents, siblings, spouse and children, and on to more remote relatives, and then to members of the same deme and tribe, to fellow citizens, to those who belong to the same people or ethnos, until we arrive at the widest circle, which is that of the entire human race” (Ramelli 2009, p.lvi). Confucians have a similar illustration of circles which expand from self (body), to family, to state, and finally to Tianxia (Liji-Daxue). Both Stoics and Confucians thus admit that one can own different identities, belonging to small units and to Cosmos/Tianxia at the same time.

Moreover, while international society is always regarded as opposing to domestic society in modern IR theories, neither Cosmos nor Tianxia represents a field with totally different principles as those within a state. Cosmos/Tianxia is a magnified state. Marcus Aurelius argues repeatedly that “the Universe (cosmos) is as it were a state (polis)” (See for example, Marcus Aurelius 1930, IV.3-4). And the term “cosmopolitēs” (world citizen) frequently used by Stoics is itself a combination of “cosmos” and “politēs” (citizen of city-state). Cosmos therefore is a larger and higher space for the accomplishment of city-state’s political ideas. Similarly, Confucians see Tianxia as rather an extension than an objection of state. A capable Emperor, according to the Confucians, “regulated and polished the people of his domain”,

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15 The English text is from Frank Cole Babbitt’s translation in Loeb Classical Library.
16 I use here the English translation of C.R. Haines in Loeb Classical Library.
17 Nussbaum also mentioned a similar illustration in Cicero’s De Officiis (Cf., Nussbaum 1997, 9).
and in the same way “united and harmonized the myriad States of the empire”, and what he brought about at last “was universal concord” (Shangshu-Yaodian).

However, a critical difference exists here between the Stoic and Confucian cosmopolitanisms. For the Stoics, Cosmos, although a magnified city-state, is superior and prior to state, and is the ultimate achievement embedded in all the lower political forms. Cosmos is “the highest state, of which all other states are but as households” (Marcus Aurelius 1930, III.11). Similarly, Epictetus says to his readers, “When one asks to which country do you belong, you should not say that you are an Athenian or a Corinthian, but that you are a citizen of the world”; since if one “has learned that the greatest, the supreme and most comprehensive community is that which is composed of men and God...why should not such a man call himself a citizen of the world” (Epictetus 1890, I.9.1-6). And the most renowned statement is from Seneca: “Let us embrace with our minds two commonwealths (res publicae): one great and truly common—in which gods and men are contained, in which we look not to this or that corner, but measure the bounds of our state (civitas) with the sun; the other the one to which the particular circumstances of birth have assigned us”. Briefly speaking, “the true city” for the Stoics “is the cosmic city” (Schofield 1991, 93).

Confucians, on the contrary, believe that the most private family ethics, which comprises the second smallest one in the concentric circles, is the fundamental political element. It is said in Liji, one of the Five Classics of Confucians, that “[t]he laying the foundation of (all) love in the love of parents teaches people concord...Therefore he who is perfectly filial approximates to be king, and he who is perfectly fraternal approximates to being presiding chieftain”, and this was the way the ancient kings “united and kept together the kingdom with its states and families” (Liji-Jiyi). A more popular version can be found from the doctrine of Mencius: “Treat with the reverence due to age the elders in your own family, so that the elders in the families of others shall be similarly treated; treat with the kindness due to youth the young in your own family, so that the young in the families of others shall be similarly treated;... do this, and the kingdom may be made to go round in your palm” (Mengzi-Lianghuiwang I). Tianxia is just a larger form of state, but not a superior being. Both Tianxia and state are natural extensions of the prime relationship: family.

We can conclude that Cosmos and Tianxia, as a political space in which people dwell, are similar. Both of the two concepts represent a space of “nothing outside”, which includes the entire human race, and eliminates the distinction between “self” and “the other”; and both of them covering as well as magnifying the form of state, instead of excluding the latter. The only difference is that Cosmos is ultimate and fundamental for Stoics, while for Confucians, family is the highest priority, and Tianxia is simply a copy or image of it.
II. Cosmos and Tianxia: The Way to Dwell in

Although both Stoics and Confucians advocate a “nothing outside” world community (Cosmos/Tianxia) which surpasses the individual state for people to dwell in, it does not mean that members of the community (man, state and other organizations) are in natural harmony——even a domestic society with a supreme authority is not bound to be harmonious. We thus need to continue to explore Stoic and Confucian cosmopolitanisms by questioning how Cosmos or Tianxia creates peace and harmony.

From the perspective of Stoics, a world community is not in a “state of nature” as introduced by modern political philosophers. In fact, the term “Cosmos” itself implies that such a community is of order and good. But why and how? There lies an explicit distinction between Stoics and most modern political scientists. Cosmos, as a political space, is not only political in essence. It is a synthesis of Nature (physis), logic (logos) and ethics, in which natural philosophy and political philosophy are not two separate fields. The general principle in Cosmos is logos, which has a rich meaning covering logic, speech, and, the most important, reason. Since Cosmos is governed by universal reason, it is evidently harmonious and ordered. As Epictetus maintains, God has appointed “that there should be summer and winter, plenty and dearth, virtue and vice, and all such contrarieties, for the harmony of the whole.” (Epictetus 1890, I.12.16) Obviously, such an idea of universal concord under logos contains an embryonic thought of “natural law,” and reminds us of Spinoza’s theory of harmony. 18

The point here, however, is not that people, as well as other beings in Cosmos, need to do nothing but enjoy the existing harmony. On the contrary, individuals should “accord with Nature”, since “Nature (God, pneuma, cause, logos or destiny) is a perfect being, and the value of anything else in the world depends upon its relationship to Nature” (Long 1986, 179). Here lies the essence of Stoic (cosmopolitan) ethics. A “world citizen”, as Epictetus argues, is one who is able “to understand the divine administration of the universe and to take into account what follows from it” (Stanton 1968, 184).

Therefore, the harmony within Cosmos as a political community, the tie among individuals, or the basis of world order, is the universal reason shared by everyone: “If the intellectual capacity is common to us all, common too is the reason...If so, we are fellow-members of an organized community. If so, the Universe is as it were a state” (Marcus Aurelius 1930, IV. 4). The common reason of human beings is granted by God: “from God have descended the seeds...to all beings...and particularly to rational beings——for these only are by their nature formed to have communion with God, being by means of reason conjoined with him—— why should not such a man call himself a citizen of the world, why not a son of God” 18

18 For more detailed discussions, see Long 1986, 147-209; Colish 1985, 31-36.
Since each man is a son of God, sharing common reason, human beings can and should cooperate with each other, in equality and friendship, because “all that is rational is akin”, and “it is in man’s nature to care for all men”; because “rational creatures have been made for one another”; and because “the Nature of the Universe has fashioned rational creatures for the sake of one another with a view to mutual benefit based upon worth, but by no means for harm” (Marcus Aurelius 1930, III.4, IV.3, IX.1). The good order of Stoic Cosmos is thus rooted in single individuals, in their ability, as well as their duty, to achieve a perfect personality by following the direction of reason, which is the common logos of both Nature and human beings.

God or Heaven, in Confucianism, does not naturally guarantee an established harmony in Tianxia. However, just as the Stoics, the Confucians maintain that the order of the human community is not separated from the Nature, that is to say, Heaven (Nature) stands as the fundamental ground and origin of human ethics in Tianxia (under the Heaven) which may ensure the harmony. One of the most remarkable Confucian classics tells us at the very beginning, “What Heaven has conferred is called The (human) Nature; an accordance with this nature is called The Path of duty... This Equilibrium (of personality) is the great root from which grow all the human actings in the world, and this Harmony is the universal path which they all should pursue” (Liji-Zhongyong).

While both the Stoics and the Confucians emphasize the connection between ethical persons and the Heaven or the Nature to create a harmonious political space, the core concept which the Confucians focus on is not the Stoic individual “Reason”, but “Ren” (roughly translated as benevolence or virtue), which is interpreted traditionally as “meeting of persons.” Similarly, “the notion of ‘human’ does not exist if each man is separated, which means that the so called ‘perfect personality’ would never be found if there were only one person alone in the world” (Liang 2010, 80).

As mentioned above, the Confucians cherish family ethics as the fundamental value, which represents the essence of “Ren”. Political principles in Tianxia are no more than a copy of relations between parents and children, as well as between siblings. The love and sympathy within family is the basis of social and political orders which is called “Li” (rules of propriety). Harmony in the world community, as well as in other organizations, is not only reconciliation or peace without justice. If one manifest harmony “without regulating it by the rules of propriety, this likewise is not to be done” (Confucius-Xueer).

Therefore, Confucian Cosmopolitanism means to expand the family love to the world community, from the elementary stage that “Every one loves (above all others) his own parents and cherishes (as) children (only) his own sons”, to the ultimate stage that “men did not love their parents only, nor treat as children only their own sons”, that “a public and
common spirit ruled all under the sky (Tianxia)” (Liji-Liyun). Even then, the Confucians reveal a “hierarchical” love for others as the basic characteristic of its cosmopolitanism, while the Stoics hold an “indiscriminative” love for all people in Cosmos since everyone is equally the son of God.

We may simply say that Stoic Cosmopolitanism focuses on individual person (or even self), while Confucian Cosmopolitanism on ethical relations between persons. At first glance, this is quite close to the conflict between liberalism and communitarianism in political philosophy, or between cosmopolitanism (in modern sense) and communitarianism in normative IR theories (Cf., Brown 1992, 12). Indeed, modern cosmopolitanism is always regarded as a successor of Stoicism and Kant, while Confucianism is sometimes criticized by liberalists as communitarianism (Cf., Lee 2005, 11-46). Nevertheless, with more detailed research, we will find that, unlike liberalism/cosmopolitanism vs. communitarianism in modern context, Stoic and Confucian Cosmopolitanisms are not in rivalry with each other. Although they begin from quite different starting points, the two ways have similar ends.

Stoic Cosmopolitanism does not seem to conform with Thomas Pogge’s widely-cited statement that individualism, universality and generality are the three elements “shared by all cosmopolitan positions” (Pogge 1992, 48-49. Pogge’s focus, I think, is universal individual rights. It is one of the main concerns of modern political philosophy, but not of classical Stoicism. The State, from the perspective of modern political thinkers, is chiefly an institution used to protect individual rights; while for the classical Greeks, the city-state is rather a space to perfect and display the virtue (aretē) of citizens through their participating in politics and taking responsibility for the community. When the Stoics said that the Cosmos was like a city-state, they were not like modern liberals or cosmopolitans, calling for universal and general rights.

Marcus Aurelius tells us, as well as himself, “he that prizes a soul which is rational, universal, and civic...keeps his own soul, in itself and in its activity, rational and social, and to this end works conjointly with all that is akin to him” (Marcus Aurelius 1930, VI.14). An “unencumbered self” is not found in Stoic Cosmopolitanism. “Self” can only be defined and perfected through the responsibility for the world community, which is also the way to realize one’s reason and establish a well-ordered soul (Shi and Zhang 2009, 336). Colish correctly points out that “[t]he idea that all men share in the common possession of reason also means, for the Stoics, that all men by nature have moral obligations to each other. All men form a natural moral community of rational beings” (Colish 1985, 38).

On the other hand, although Confucian Cosmopolitanism argues that the ethical relationship among people is the fundamental element, it does not, as some modern “collectivism” did,

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19 This is a term used by Michael Sandel to criticize liberalism (Sandel 1984, 85-87).
tend to dispel or oppress individuals. It is within communities, from the family, to the state, to the largest Tianxia, that individuals achieve self-fulfillment. That is why a noble man “cultivates himself so as to give rest to all the people”, and it is through personal cultivation that Tianxia “is thereby tranquillized” (Confucious-Xianwen; Mencius- Jinxin II). The ultimate stage that “a public and common spirit ruled all under the sky (Tianxia)” also means that a greater sense of “personhood” in the Universe is achieved (Liang 2010, 88).

Chang Hao, a renowned scholar in Chinese philosophy and history, argues that Confucianism is a kind of “personalism”, a third way beyond liberalism and communitarianism, which integrates collectivity and individuality (Cf., Lee 2005, 21). Therefore, we can say that Confucian Cosmopolitanism is not a version of communitarianism in normative IR theories, since what it pursues is harmony and mutual perfection between individuals and community in Tianxia. That is why Qian Mu, one of the most celebrated Chinese historians and Confucian scholars in the 20th century, concludes that the idea of “family” has not constrained the minds of Chinese. On the contrary, it is in the inherent transition from such an idea to the notion of humanity that the Chinese are able to surpass beyond the narrow scopes of nation and of state (Qian 1994, 52).

Starting from individual reason and personal relations respectively, Stoic and Confucian Cosmopolitanisms thus lead to the same final purpose: realizing the self through practices and duties in a world community.

Conclusion

Both Stoic cosmopolitanism and Confucian cosmopolitanism propose a “nothing outside” world community which establishes none as “the other” opposing “self.” We find their ideas of how people should dwell in the largest community are quiet similar. There are of course a few differences between the two cosmopolitanisms. But the two theories share some significant points and are not incommensurable. This historical comparison between two political thoughts originating more than two thousand years ago, may shed some light on current reflections in international affairs.

First, it implies the possibility to communicate Western tradition and Chinese tradition in considering the world. As mentioned above, with the rise of China, some Chinese scholars intend to prove that Chinese culture (mainly the doctrine of peace and harmony in Confucianism) is a substitute for Western political thought to shape a better world, since the latter focuses too much on individual national interests and struggles among nations. 20 It

20 Indeed, while the study on Western IR theories has already been an important subject in China, very few scholars are interested in cosmopolitanism.
seems more like a passion to prove China’s cultural superiority against the background of China’s rise, than a serious and profound academic consideration. This study on Stoic and Confucian cosmopolitanisms, however, does not support this view. I agree with Wang Dingding’s suggestion in his article “World Citizen and Tianxia Zhuyi” that Stoic Cosmopolitanism may act as a bridge for contemporary Chinese to understand our ancestors’ vision of Tianxia, which many of us have forgotten for too long a time (Wang 2008, 103). But even more important is to avoid establishing artificially a contrast between Chinese and Western traditions, which will only limit our minds in practice as well as in theory.

On the other hand, modern cosmopolitan political thought, which has always been rooted in the Western philosophical tradition, may also turn to Chinese tradition to draw some useful elements. A “fusion of horizons” (a term borrowed from Hans-Georg Gadamer) is necessary and helpful in constructing and promoting a genuinely international political thought.

Second, the ideas shared by the two cosmopolitanisms are actually what mainstream IR theories often ignore. Obviously, they provide another vision of the world, which may enlighten our thoughts to escape the “Westphalian Straitjacket”. Just as Jens Bartelson describes, many visions of world community “have traditionally attracted little or no interest from students of international political thought” (Bartelson 2009, ix). Furthermore, modern IR theories often focus on the themes of states, international organizations and transnational corporations, where “scientific” patterns exist, while living humans disappear. The two classical cosmopolitanisms, emphasizing individual duties, provide us a new perspective that includes everyone in the international arena.

We should not simply look forward to establishing a world “order” or “institution” with Stoic or Confucian characteristics. That might be the least we could benefit from them. Reversely, we may recall Colish and Long’s words on Stoic cosmopolitanism, which also fit Confucianism well, “In the ideal cosmopolis there are few institutions. They are not needed, for in this state men function in terms of their natural reason...The mutual natural obligations which constitute the ideal cosmopolis are also incumbent on the Stoic in this imperfect world... Stoic political theory is not a blue-print for reform but a paradigm of the world as it might be if men could be united not by artificial ties but by the recognition in each other of common values and common purposes.” (Colish 1985, 39; Long 1986, 205) For the Stoics, every man is capable of sharing reason; for the Confucians, “[a]ll men may be Yaos and Shuns (the ideal sage kings)...... The course of Yao and Shun was simply that of filial

21 For example, a Confucian Tianxia order would be very awkward in the modern world, since no one can answer such questions as to which person or state should be the “sage king”, what is the status of females, how to distribute justice among sovereign states, etc. Yao Dali, a Chinese professor of history, pointed out that “[a]s for the political framework and institutional arrangement of national governance, Confucianism is no more than a low grade ore” (Yao 2012).
piety and fraternal duty” (Mengzi-Gaozi II). By embedding international affairs into general personal ethics, the two cosmopolitanisms may help us to reflect on the tendency of “dehumanization” in IR studies, and remind us that world politics can not only be a realm with struggles for power and conflicts for interests among states and statesmen, but also one with the possibilities of perfecting personality and virtue through duties in every man’s minds and practices.

Last but not the least, the Stoic and Confucian cosmopolitanisms may also help us to find a way out of the dilemma between cosmopolitanism and communitarianism in modern international political theories. Chris Brown, in an article written in 2000 (based on Martha Nussbaum’s studies), offers “a sketch of one possible neo-Aristotelian resolution of the cosmopolitan-communitarian debate.” With a special emphasis on “virtue ethics”, Professor Brown has an acute observation that “[w]hile the virtues will be shaped by and can only be exercised in an actual community—thus endorsing the central communitarian intuition—they are in some sense universals, reflecting common human responses to common human experiences—and thus the central cosmopolitan intuition is also vindicated” (Brown 2000a, 76-99). Stoic and Confucian cosmopolitanisms, with their similar focuses on virtue ethics, could be another, if not better, source to work out a solution of the “cosmopolitan-communitarian debate”. As mentioned above, the two classical cosmopolitanisms reach the same end by different routes. Both of them intend to integrate individuality and collectivity in a universal “nothing outside” scope, through the practical virtues and duties of each person. There is still a long way to go before the classical theories can effectively inspire modern international political thought. But such an effort should not be in vain, as a Roman adage says, “Antiquitas est Nova”.

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