

Disputation CCIX

November 14, 2019

Dear Peucinians,

We are back at it again with another exciting disputation arranged for this week. What's on the menu, you ask? Well, in a sense, that is the question itself. You might opt for the local and authentic, but that can end up tedious and bland. You could pick an assortment of the best the world can offer, though this could look like the monstrous food catalogs over at the [Cheesecake Factory](#). I hope you will join us this Thursday as two of our elder Society members litigate our competing duties: to revere our own culture, as well as to explore those of others.

RESOLVED: SEEK TO TRAVEL

Affirmative: Iris Murdoch '21

Negative: Abigail Adams '21

Not only does travel teach us about other lives and locales, it teaches us about ourselves. It develops our understanding and compassion, which are goods in any community. Intercultural commerce promotes greater consideration and peace between groups of people. Furthermore, comparative perspectives help us to think critically about our relation to our homes and the rest of the world around us. There is no substitute for firsthand experience, which can shape our character and memory in distinctive and significant ways.

Yet, we might find this energy put to better use cultivating our home communities, which are built on mutual dependence and provide deeper relationships. We cannot maintain such places without holding an experience in common with others. And do we really travel with good intentions anyway? Travel can become a form of escapism, in which we disentangle ourselves from our genuine connections, and begin to romanticize the superficial. It is also worth considering whether travel constrains receiving cultures and can force them to caricature themselves.

What does it mean to set down roots? Can one really gain sophistication without travel? If you travel enough, is it possible to lose a sense of "home?" As a note: this is a disputation about our proper orientation to the communities around us. The opposing positions are not necessarily strict prohibitions on travel or stationary life.

Thursday, November 14th, 7:45 PM

Massachusetts Hall, Third Floor

Semi-Formal Attire

Sincerely yours,

Gilgamesh

Pinos Loquentes Semper Habemus