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TOLERANCE AND ITS LIMITS

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Abstract

The decades around the turn of the 21st century have been marked by many interesting processes taking place in society, wherein some social phenomena are deliberately destroyed, and others carefully cultivated. Perhaps it does no good to deny everything that is being denied, or to foster all that seems new, modern, and right. History will put everything to its place. But there is one social phenomenon – an attitude of tolerance towards others – that seems to be at least a useful phenomenon. To respect others, to hold them as equals, not to preach at them and not to place them on a pedestal – this is essentially the basis of any social process. This article explores the concept of tolerance in terms of its practical application. The author analyzes the degree of tolerance in modern society, and delineates its limits. In modern society, it is often possible to observe the balance between what is understood to be for the good of the polity as a whole and the dignity of the individual human person; most often the scales tip towards the needs of the state. But it is incumbent upon the state to protect the rights and freedoms of every citizen, putting an end to any manifestation of intolerance or discrimination. The limits of tolerance, in turn, are to be determined by the goals and intentions of the parties in relation to each other and each of the parties separately. Although tolerance must be considered as a virtue which has its drawbacks.

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1. Introduction

For several years now, many public figures, politicians, and sociologists have held the opinion that in humankind there is an absence of relationships that are mutually respectful, benevolent, and understanding – in other words, they lack tolerance. This concept gained a great popularity, when it was mentioned in almost all discussions about the modern society and its problems, and even earned, as many really important phenomena did, a nominal value in the Russian with the distortion of the word. Disdainful attitude towards tolerance was the result of an intensified propaganda, often not supported by the theoretical basis and the clear interpretations of the phenomenon. The idea of tolerance is also propagated by some representatives of the Orthodox Church; abbot Veniamin (Novik) (2010) simply suggests that people live in a way that does not violate anyone else's interests: “It would seem so simple – live and let live, have your way of life, believe what you believe, express your point of view privately and publicly, recognize the rights of others to do the same, and everything will be fine. But somehow this does not work. Apparently, the problem of tolerance affects some deep level of the subconscious, and rarely does rational argument seem to work.” But if you turn to almost any religion (except perhaps Buddhism), you can see that non-believers are often either considered to be enemies, or so different that among the more fanatical adherents one can hear calls to root out heresy with sword and fire. Fortunately, of course, such calls rarely achieve mass appeal. But individual groups that live according to the rules of more radical currents of a particular religion can inflict serious and lasting damage in a state or a society where other religions are professed.

Moreover, the “golden rule” of morality, known since ancient times – “Do not do unto others what you would not have them do unto you,” – is also not always applicable. It works only if all members of the society have a similar mentality. For example, among tribes of cannibals, to eat one's enemy or close relative is considered to be an honor, recognizing the enemy as brave, or a relative as wise and beloved, and the act of eating their remains is done in the hopes of acquiring these qualities. Each member of such tribe hopes, sooner or later, to be eaten either by their enemies or by their family. From the point of view of a modern man, who regards himself as civilized, it would be impossible to see this as a sign of respect, for it is worse than killing a person. A more familiar example for our society is that polygamy, honored in Islam, is unacceptable for Christianity, and eating pork, in turn, is unacceptable for Muslims. Therefore, a Christian, from the bottom of his heart, offering a piece of pork to a Muslim, will insult him, although he does so in accordance with those rules of good relations that are correct for only one of the religions in question.

If one thinks carefully about the consequences of the practical implementation of this rule, one might notice that it is good when it does not concern a relationship between individuals, but at the level of the community – groups of people. It would be reasonable if this golden rule of morality was a largely obligatory basis for all modern legislation, but it is also important to understand what may be outside the norms of one's own culture, morality, and upbringing. Legislation is the result of relationships in a particular society – in every state there is a law that in some way coincides with the laws of other states, and in some ways contradicts them. Such society has a relatively stable contingent of members who have a similar mentality and profess one's religion, or treat it objectively, recognizing its historical and behavioral influences. Problems in social relationships often arise when new members of society appear

or are influenced from outside (Hunziker, 2014, p.128).

It would be reasonable if this golden rule of morality about the evaluation of non-accepting the facts “not do to others what you would not want them to do to you” would be largely an imperative basis for all modern legislation. But it is also important to understand what may be outside the norms of one's own culture, morality, and upbringing. Legislation is the result of relationships in a particular society - in every state, there is a law that in some way coincides with the laws of other states, in some way contradicting them. Such society has a relatively constant contingent of members who have a similar mentality, profess one religion, or treat it neutrally, recognizing its historical and behavioral influence (Forst, 2003, p.816). Problems of relationships often arise when new members of society appear or are influenced from outside.

The situation often changes dramatically when interpersonal relations are replaced by relations between public, political, and economic institution. When a single person confronts an institution, the institution most often wins. When striving for high ideals, it is easy to sacrifice an individual for the sake of achieving an important goal. Many human rights activists say that in today's society, there is a constant struggle between what appear to be pragmatic concerns and the dignity of the individual human being. On the one hand, the state by its nature always tends to manipulate society, the people. But on the other hand, it must maintain its integrity, which is achieved by uniting individuals into a single nation, which itself is achieved by exerting a certain influence on society. Human rights organizations, as a necessary element of the existence of civil society, oppose the tendency of the state to rise above its citizens, uphold the individual's right to not be merely one part of the whole, and defend human rights, compensating for manipulation by society.

2. Problem Statement

Relationships in the modern global community are based on an economy which full functioning is impossible in the total isolation of a single country; therefore, the most striking manifestations of tolerance can be seen at the inter-state level. The initiator of tolerant relations is, first of all, the state, in spite of the fact that the problem of tolerance first appeared at the religious level, and religious tolerance laid the foundation for all other freedoms that have been achieved in a free society. It is sometimes believed that nothing is more difficult than being tolerant of people who hold other religious beliefs. This idea is based on the assumption that religion is basically fanatical, and this is partly true in the sense that religion asks that the individual gives himself or herself to it over completely. Ideally, faith should engender charity, not fanaticism; although in reality, a religious person can easily fall into the temptation of erecting his or her thoughts and intentions in the absolute. Religious institutions are inherently designed to correct the activities and thoughts of adherents in accordance with their doctrines, but it is not always possible to convey to the heart and mind of the believer a true understanding of religious responsibilities towards others (Bienenstock, 2014, p.33). People inclined to fanaticism are able to interpret almost any argument in their own way, glorifying their deity with fire and a sword. Thus, religion can sometimes help to entrench and to intensify cultural, national or ethnic fanaticism.

3. Research Questions

One of the first religions to attempt a more tolerant attitude vis-a-vis other religions was Islam. But the goal of recognizing the right of other religions to exist was far from a merely theological consideration – for example, when the secret of gunpowder from China came to the Arab lands, this invention was not rejected as "an infidel creation", but thoroughly studied and improved upon. The scientific and cultural achievements of the Arabs in the 6th through the 9th centuries were great, and they quickly mastered the use of gunpowder. At that time, the religious establishment was inseparable from the state, but even then tolerance was a means of achieving primarily state goals. In our time, secular states have changed little in the principles behind their espousal of tolerance – it is still used to achieve mutually beneficial living conditions. But such situation is possible only on conditions of more or less equal partnership. No economically strong power is willing to be seen as weaker, so there is no tolerance at the level of "strong - weak" relations. Tolerant relations end whenever one of the parties pursues its own aggressive policy to the detriment of other states, when one side demands the other to accept its decisions that contradict that party's own legislation. For example, it is traced in the relations between the United States and Iran or Iraq when, in the opinion of the stronger power, misunderstandings can only be resolved by force

4. Purpose of the Study

In perfection for the complete observance of the principle of tolerant relationships within one society, there should be no division of this society within a single state according to a confessional or ethnic principle. In an ideally tolerant state, it is assumed that citizens first of all realize themselves as a nation, and only then as representatives of denominations or nationalities. To achieve a certain level of tolerance, figuratively speaking, a citizen must leave his or her family and nationality at home; and the believer must leave his or her religious identity (along with the prayer book) in the church or temple, each time he or she steps outside; it does not matter whether he or she is a representative of the majority religion and nationality or not. At the same time, the state requires strict observance of the principle of secularism and impartiality in relation to any religions and ethnic groups and communities operating on its territory. On the one hand, the state must protect the right of every citizen to self-identification with a particular ethnic group and one's right to freedom of religion, suppressing any manifestations of intolerance and discrimination, while avoiding favoritism in state policy towards individual nationalities or religions (Thierse, 2014). But, on the other hand, it is obliged to set standards, the observance of which ensures the integrity of the nation: due knowledge of the state language, the minimum educational level of citizens and the strict observance of the minimum moral standards underlying the society within that state, regardless of whether they are Legally approved or established historically.

5. Research Methods

At first, the idea of tolerance looks rather simple, but in reality it comes from rigid prerequisites and its implementation entails a number of consequences. It is associated with a number of fundamental philosophical questions relating to understanding the essence of man, his identity, the possibilities and

boundaries of knowledge and understanding. The urgency of discussions about tolerance is conditioned, firstly, by acute intolerance in interethnic relations, and by the intensification of the processes of globalization, by the desire to unify cultural diversity, to fit it to a certain standard; secondly, by the paradoxical definitions of tolerance associated with the socio-cultural identity of the researchers.

The slightly unclear situation in socio-political terms is due primarily to the fact that the main language of the UN is English, in which the word "sufferance ["*terpimost'*" in Russian]" is denoted as tolerance. The concept of "tolerance" has become widely used, first of all, in the spheres of medicine and ecology, it came to sociology later, in modern language the term "sufferance" is applied independently and is not a complete synonym for tolerance. Sufferance implies compulsory patience with respect to some phenomenon. In fact, it is the ability to suffer, to endure, to put up with something - consciously and resignedly transfer something. Sufferance does not require recognizing the behavior of others acceptable and means only that people suffer or put up with a person or with a social group, often as an inevitable evil. For from the very beginning, sufferance was understood as one of the possible relations to the other. Initially, it was mainly, if not exclusively, about religious tolerance, in the future the sphere of application of the concept of "tolerance" began to expand. Today, when discussing social relations or relationships between different cultures, it is already difficult to dispense with the notion of tolerance of others, where another person, another culture, another religion, etc. can act as "another" (Smirnov, 2004, p.205).

According to the Declaration of Principles of Tolerance signed by the UN member states in November 1995, the concept of tolerance has undergone a change in meaning with the notion of tolerance: "Tolerance is not concession, condescension or indulgence. Tolerance is, above all, an active attitude prompted by recognition of the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of others. In no circumstance can it be used to justify infringements of these fundamental values. Tolerance is to be exercised by individuals, groups and states."(Declaration of Principles of Tolerance).

6. Findings

Almost every scientist who reflects on tolerance seeks an answer to the question: to what extent is tolerance socially effective? In the value systems of European countries, tolerance, as a fundamental category, is a relative newcomer. In the religious sphere, it found expression in the principles of religious tolerance, religious freedom and freedom of conscience. The term "tolerance" was reduced to tolerance and was used to describe collective and individual behavior. It implies the non-persecution of those whose mindset or actions do not coincide with one's own and which cause one's disapproval. Of course, elements of tolerance can be found even among the ancient Greek sophists and Stoics, in the teachings of Aristotle, in the writings of medieval theologians Thomas Aquinas and Aurelius Augustine, in the treatises of the canonists of the Renaissance (F.de Vitoria and F. Suarez), in the works of the first essentially Protestant Lawyer and ancestor of modern international law Hugo Grotius. Grotius wrote, "The mother of natural law is the very nature of man, which would encourage him to strive for mutual communication, even if they did not need anything" (Grotius, 1994, p.48). Thus, the founder of international law saw in man's very nature a means to establish a tolerant world order, when political life obeys certain rules of responsibility for its actions towards the people.

As a certain quality of real interpersonal relations, tolerance is present, to some extent, in any viable, normally functioning society. "Such communities also named as "neighborhood community", "religious brotherhood" propagandize such moral values as mutual assistance, benevolence, support of the integrity of society" (Dementieva, 2004, p.149). An important role was played by historical experience, preserved in national traditions and customs, in various models of behavior at play in human relations at the present time. However, in a traditional society, integration within a group implies disintegration outwardly, where the hostile image of "another's" is used as a means of rallying "one's own". Such policy has even received a linguistic mapping - in Russian, for example, there is such expression as "to be friends against someone". The property of a person to support his or her "own" in the face of external danger is used by individual states and politicians, even when there is no danger as such. Often the image of the enemy that encroaches on the moral values and freedoms of a particular society is invented to distract attention from any internal problems. Thus, tolerant relations within society are normalized, society becomes a nation - a single whole organism.

Nevertheless, in psychological, sociological and philosophical definitions, tolerance is not defined as indifference. Tolerant attitude is in itself a recognition of the right to the existence of such relationship. Tolerance can be either an initial position, a "launching pad," or by itself valued, acceptable to participants and supported by the type of relationship (Lectorsky, 1997, p.48). In this case, tolerance is understood in the first version of V.Lectorsky's classification as the generally accepted indifference to the other, as the minimum condition for the realization of democracy, recognizing at the political and normative levels the diversity of interests of different countries, peoples and individuals. In this case, Dementieva (2005a, 2005b) believes that intolerance of "alien" cultures and political systems inherent in monocultures and undemocratic political systems in the transition to democracy and multiculturalism should be transformed not just into a tolerant attitude but also into an openness towards other countries, ethnoses, their cultures and peculiarities.

The author, on the contrary, believes that the tasks of any society are determined by its goals. Therefore, attempts to decide what someone should or should not do will lead either to complete disregard or forced decisions applied by those countries that for some reasons decided to take the responsibility to lead other states to democracy by any means. If intolerance towards other cultures, religions, nations, political systems is economically and socially beneficial for any society and does not affect other members of the world community, then it has the right to exist.

Discussion about the essence, formation and necessary measure of tolerance has continued into the present. V.I. Garadzha (2004) concludes that the problem of tolerance goes beyond the problem of "the formation of tolerant consciousness." He connects it with the process of forming a tolerant society that creates effective means of countering religious hostility, provides conditions for the harmonious coexistence of different cultures, religious traditions, political and ideological pluralism. V.A. Lectorsky (1997) in the article "On Tolerance, Pluralism and Criticism" consistently indicated the urgency of defining and filling the meaningful content of the concept of tolerance. He cited four understandings of tolerance:

- Tolerance as indifference (it has a liberal political basis, from the point of view of which the problems of the whole society are more important than the existence of disagreements

between people);

- Tolerance as an impossibility of mutual understanding (if one can not understand another culture or behavior, one should not be a priori hostile to it);
- Tolerance as a condescension to the weaknesses of others;
- Tolerance as an extension of one's own experience and critical dialogue (Lectorsky, 1997, p.53).

The hegumen Novik (2010), examining the question of tolerance, gives the following definition: tolerance is also love for the diversity of this world, manifested in cultures, religions, anthropological types. There is only one limitation: it is necessary that this diversity does not go beyond the generally recognized norm of humanism. And this suggests a certain consensus of mankind regarding this norm. Tolerance involves a compromise of cultures in conditions of multiculturalism, but not unprincipledness.

7. Conclusion

Multiculturalism in the opinion of many sociologists today does not imply the equality of cultures in the state. V. Tishkov believes that in the conditions of multiculturalism, some deviations from the cultural mainstream are permissible, but as to what extent, the state should always decide the rules of integration and certain prohibitions should be established, for example polygamy or ritual sacrifices in public places, etc. "Multicultural discourse is often designed to disguise discrimination and the exclusion of others. Having failed to ensure equality, states offered the right to be different in return, and it is these (cultural) differences that justify social inequality, preventing the formation of class consciousness and class solidarity. By denying minorities access to politics (and, in particular, citizenship), they are offered freedom of cultural expression in exchange, often condoning such norms and practices that are incompatible with the norms and practices of the majority and with democratic principles as such. Under the slogan of the right to a difference, culture erects tough boundaries within modern societies that have been deprived of the former class divisions. The presence of a foreign or regional accent, insufficiently literate speech, ignorance of cultural and behavioral codes of the majority, a different body language not only effectively label the stranger in public space, but also may become an obstacle to his social mobility and career growth." (Tishkov & Filippova, 2016, p.27)

Tolerance can be defined as non-interference in someone else's vital activity as long as it does not have a negative impact on the life of society as a whole. Negative influence happens when it is aimed at destroying the existing society, undermining its moral and cultural values, when it provokes phenomena that cause disruption in the functioning of the social and economic system of society. Sometimes, however, it is quite difficult to draw a clear line between the negative impact on society and the changes necessary for the further development of society. The reasons for this complexity are both the human emotional perception of some events, and the inability to predict the result of events in advance. A vivid example is the baptism of Rus, which was carried out forcibly, in which a large number of people were executed and killed. From the point of view of the way of planting a new religion, the influence on the established pagan society of Rus was negative, but the new religion brought with it, above all, economic ties with the more developed powers, which led to the progress of the development of the entire state.

In a sense, tolerance can be defined as that range of reciprocal concessions to which the partners

are going to achieve mutually beneficial conditions of existence, whether they are specific people or states. At the level of interpersonal relations, an example of this can be the usual courtesy in communicating with colleagues at work or in the family, when neither side mentions something that would be unpleasant to the other side. At the level of interstate, relations are mutually beneficial contracts and treaties, mutual facilitation of the passage of official instances, the opening of borders, the liquidation of the visa regime, etc.

The limits of tolerance are determined by the goals and intentions of the parties, both with respect to one another, and to either side individually. The basic factors of tolerant relations are the socio-cultural way of life of the established society and the vector of economic and legal evolution of this society. It should be noted that the socio-cultural mode is closely linked with economic development and this relationship operates in both directions, since they are integral categories of the development of society as a whole. The legal evolution vector is designed to regulate all interactions within the society and its actions outside in the context of the complication of the human material itself, which currently occurs, according to V. Tishkov, along four main lines. The first line is represented by internal mobility of the population, widespread urbanization and, as a result, the mixing and blurring of the boundaries of the once more defined areas of culturally distinctive communities. The second line is the radically changed cross-border migration activity of modern people. Labor temporary migration has acquired a global character and has captured virtually all regions of the world and countries: some as donors of migration, others as recipients. The third line is represented by the growth of particular (ethnic, regional) forms of self-consciousness (identities) among the aboriginal or old-timer population, which seemed integrated into the composition of nations, with the exception of radical elements professing extreme forms of collective self-determination. The fourth line is the formation of new cross-border, cosmopolitan forms of identity among people, especially those employed in international corporations and organizations or living and operating not only in one country (Tishkov, 2016, p.5-6).

Nevertheless, each community has the right to independently choose a tolerant or intolerant way of development. Its decisions can not be corrected by other actors until the activity of the given society does not have a negative impact on other participants in the interaction.

Although tolerance, as the ability to establish and maintain a community with other actors that are different in any respect, must be considered a virtue, it still has two drawbacks. One of them is a tendency to an indifferent attitude to values that fuel beliefs. Another disadvantage is the need to establish minimum moral standards, a serious violation of which is not allowed by the community; as well as the need to protect the community from absorption by others, and from manifestations of extremism, since at the head of many ethnic and religious communities there are fanatical and totalitarian political movements seeking to destroy dissenters. Therefore, the promotion of tolerant attitudes in society should occur not only within the dominant group in relation to the minority, but also vice versa.

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