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THE PLURAL STATES OF RECOGNITION

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FAIRNESS, CLASS AND BELONGING IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLAND

Tolerance, Intolerance and Respect

Hard to Accept?

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The Logics of Toleration: Outline for a Comparative Approach to the Study of Tolerance

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The concept of tolerance has been discussed intensively by philosophers and political theorists. Their discussion has centred on the concept itself and on the political consequences to be drawn from it. The key question is how a meaningful concept of tolerance can be developed and applied to (good) political practice. While drawing on these discussions, I try to follow a different path in this chapter and to apply a more empirically-grounded approach. I am less interested in normative questions but rather in the social practice of toleration. What do actors do when they are or claim to be tolerant? How is the concept of tolerance used and in what situations? How is this use of tolerance embedded in social relations and especially in power structures?

I want to focus in particular on the acts of boundary drawing that take place whenever tolerance is an issue. Boundaries are essential for tolerance. Let me illustrate this in relation to the minimalist concept of tolerance as it has been defined by Preston King (1976) and in the introduction to this volume. According to King, tolerance is self-restraint that requires the tolerating person to voluntarily endure an object that is objected (disliked, disapproved, etc.) under the condition that one has the power not to tolerate. This definition implies several boundaries: the first is the boundary between the accepted and the objected. In the former, tolerance is a non-issue. Differences do exist but they do not play a role and are considered to be normal. In fact, it is not difference *per se* which is at stake. The boundary between the accepted and the objected should be understood as the boundary between a realm where difference makes a difference and a realm where difference makes no difference. The second boundary implied in this definition is one

which separates the tolerable (which is voluntarily endured) and the intolerable. Forst (2003: 32) argues that this boundary is essential for us to speak of tolerance rather than indifference. In fact this boundary entails a set of further distinctions as we will show later: it makes a difference whether something objected *must* be, *should* be or *can* be tolerated, or not. A further set of distinctions refer to the 'modalities' of boundary drawing. Some behaviour can be tolerated in private but not in public; some behaviour can be tolerated when it is non-ostensive but not when it is ostensive; some behaviour can be tolerated in some places at some times, but not in others. So the concrete working of tolerance corresponds to the complex structuring of public life. These modalities evidently have to do, as I suggest below, with the desire to control (a problematic) difference. The third boundary implied in King's definition is the one between the dominant, who is at least in relative control of a situation and therefore has the power not to tolerate, and the dominated, who does not have this power. All these boundaries are continuously negotiated and contested, and like all boundaries they require work to be upheld and stabilized. This focus on boundary drawing allows us to develop a grammar of tolerance, which in a second step can be the basis for a meaningful comparative analysis of different regimes of toleration.

Acts of boundary drawing interest us in this volume with regard to the construction of the ethnic or religious other. I will argue that acts of toleration and 'othering' are intertwined in a complex way. On the one hand, toleration implies otherness, and constructing the other raises the question of tolerance. The domain of sameness is the domain of 'the known' and 'the own': differences do exist but they are considered to be normal. They make no difference. It is the behaviour of those who are perceived to be the sexual, religious or ethnic 'others' which creates irritation and therefore poses the problem of tolerance. On the other hand, otherness is naturalized through the concept of toleration. As Wendy Brown argues:

> When, for example, middle and high schoolers are urged to tolerate one another's race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or sexual orientation, there is no suggestion that the differences at issue, or the identities through which these differences are negotiated, have been socially and historically constituted and are themselves the effect of power and hegemonic norms, or even of certain discourses about race, ethnicity, sexuality, and culture.
>
> (Brown, 2006: 16)

The interdependence of tolerance and otherness is particularly apparent when we consider what we might call the 'standpoint epistemology' of tolerance. In the framework of normative political theory it may be meaningful to distinguish, as Veit Bader does in this volume, between tolerance (which refers to beliefs and practices) and respect (which refers to persons and groups).[1] In reality this distinction is almost impossible to uphold. One reason for such difficulties is that with regard to tolerance it makes a difference who does what. The very same act or statement may be considered as completely acceptable when coming from a member of a 'we-group' but might raise the question of acceptability coming from the outside. The term 'nigger' can be used among African-Americans without causing offence but is completely unacceptable when used outside of a specific context. The very same statements with regard to the politics of Israel, considered to be absolutely normal when proposed from Jewish journalists, can be considered to be anti-Semitic (and therefore unacceptable) if proposed by a Muslim. There is, of course, behaviour which cannot be accepted by anybody (because it does demonstrable harm); but there exists a wide domain where boundaries are drawn very differently with regard to insiders and outsiders. As I will show in this chapter, this difference is related to social fears and anxieties.

In a first step I will formulate some hypotheses about specificities of tolerance discourse in post-war Europe. Secondly, I will develop the idea of 'boundary drawing' and 'boundary shifting' with regard to tolerance. A third section will be devoted to the question of social fears and anxieties. A fourth section will discuss the connection between national identity and tolerance. The fifth will point to recent attempts to delineate a European identity and its implications for the boundaries of toleration.

Tolerance and the tamed nation-state

Following Homi Bhabha, Benedict Anderson and others, Anna Triandafyllidou argues that otherness is built into the very idea of national identity: it requires an 'out-group against which the unity and homogeneity of the in-group is tested' (Triandafyllidou, Chapter 6). Given internal divisions and the historic-accidental nature of the emergence of any existing nation (including the ones whose borders are not contested), the idea of a shared national identity is problematic. It is almost impossible to formulate a consensus about what a nation stands for, where its proper boundaries are and who it includes or excludes.

Schoolbooks attempt to define some general ideas about shared national history and derive lessons to be taught on this basis (Schiffauer et al., 2004). There might be a vague consensus about what constitutes the core of a nation. A closer look, however, reveals that there is strife whenever these general principles are spelled out and when consequences are drawn. In these moments it becomes clear that the ideas relating to the nation are 'empty signifiers', which can be filled in very different ways by different fractions in society. If one of the societal fractions attempts to impose its particular interpretation of a national identity on others, it is usually met with resistance. The classical way to conceal this emptiness of national identity is to define it negatively, that is by setting it apart from what it is not. This can be understood as a process of double negation (Hoffmann, 1997): in a first step, significant others are stereotypically constructed as the very negation of the vague principles that the nation is seen to embody. In a second step, the claim is that the nation is the exact opposite of this negative image of itself. This double negation conveys the impression that there is substance to these vague ideas, that is that they actually stand for something and not for ideas that can be filled quite deliberately. The existence of the significant other allows endowing the idea of a national community with an emotional grounding. The other stands for that which is disliked, detested, abhorred or hated – and by opposition allows 'the own' to be felt as something familiar and for it to become an object of identification or even love. This must not be as unequivocal as it might sound, and ambivalences might be the rule rather than the exception. In many cases, as Slavoj Žižek (1992) has pointed out, there is considerable empirical evidence to support the notion that what is rejected is also an object of repressed desire, which does not detract from but adds to the perceived danger of the other. The other is threatening because it is also tempting.

The significant others to the nation are particularly problematic when they are not only present as neighbouring nations but also constitute significant minorities within a country. In these cases, the threat from the outside is doubled by a threat from the inside. These inside groups interest us in particular in the context of toleration.

The conscious turn towards a politics of toleration is a post-war phenomenon. The inter-war period, by contrast, can be described as a period of intolerance. This was the time when most European countries underwent a process of national consolidation through conservative revolutions. In this period Europe was dominated by authoritarian or fascist regimes – a few exceptions in Northern Europe granted. In this time, the process of double negation described above turned most ugly: otherness was radicalized; significant others were turned into arch enemies (*Erbfeinde*) whose otherness was conceived as a potential threat to the being of the nation. The classical formulation stems from Carl Schmitt:

> The political enemy must not be morally evil; he must not be aesthetically ugly; he must not be an economic competitor (it may even be advisable to do business with him). He is simply the other, the stranger and for defining his existence it suffices to say that he is in a very deep meaning existentially different and alien, so that in extreme cases conflicts are possible with him which can neither be normatively regulated, nor settled by the verdict of an impartial and uninvolved third.... Extreme case of conflict can only be decided by the participants among themselves; each has to decide whether the otherness of the stranger in the case of conflict at hand means a negation of the own kind of existence and therefore has to be warded off or fought against in order to maintain the own characteristic way of being (*die eigene seinsmäßige Art von Leben*).
>
> (Schmitt, 1979[1932]: 27)

It was according to Schmitt the quintessential task of the nation-state to define its enemies. This passage in *The Concept of the Political* could be considered as a manifesto of intolerance. It is not the definition of an enemy *per se*, which makes this position intolerant, but the refusal of any rational deliberation when the other is considered to be the negation of the self which, in turn, implies the ultimate recourse to violence in order to defend one's own 'way of being'. Schmitt does not mention who he had in mind – it could either be France, which up to 1945 had been perceived as the quintessential other to Germany (Elias, 1969) or the Jews. While Schmitt can be quite justifiably criticized for having legitimated, particularly in this text, the atrocities of the National Socialist regime, it must be remembered that his way of thinking was far more widespread.[2] In inter-war Europe, there was hardly a nation in which national minorities were not considered to be a problem. This resulted in well-known catastrophes of intolerance, culminating in the Holocaust.

The post-war period is characterized by the taming of nationalisms. Communism notwithstanding, nation-states remained the key political actors but there was a shared commitment in both Eastern and Western Europe not to repeat the mistakes of the past. The challenge was to

develop benevolent nationalisms, which would allow the formation of inclusive solidarities and provide a normative basis of society. While this still required the construction of significant others, there was a shared commitment to moderation. It was in this period that tolerance was rediscovered as the guiding principle in relation to national minorities, particularly in the liberal democracies of Western Europe (in Eastern Europe the principal way of dealing with ethnic minorities was thorough 'folklorization' within the communist framework).[3] After 1989, the EU made sure that an idea of liberal tolerance was extended to the new member states. It is with good reason that the EU conceives of it as one of its greatest achievements that (with the exception of Yugoslavia, which remains a warning example) it managed to prevent outbursts of violence against minorities during the transformation process. It is primarily in the post-war era that the concept of toleration (and the politics of tolerance) towards ethnic minorities became central.

For the sake of conceptual clarity, it might be helpful to point out shifts that the concept of tolerance underwent in this historical overview. As it was used during the Enlightenment, the concept of tolerance was based on respect for the other. Its point of departure was the recognition of the fallibility of man. There is always the possibility that the other might be right. Because it is human to err, it is wise to be tolerant. Even if on first sight the other's ideas or beliefs seem abstruse or bizarre (and therefore should be rejected), a closer reading might show that there is something to be learnt from them. Intolerance and fanaticism are destructive because they destroy human potential. In section II of his *Dictionnaire philosophique*, Voltaire thus defines tolerance as the 'consequence of humanity' (Voltaire, 1924[1764]). He adds that 'we are all formed of frailty and error; let us pardon reciprocally each other's folly – that is the first law of nature'. And, continuing in section III: 'discord is the great ill of mankind; and tolerance is the only remedy for it' (Voltaire, 1924[1764]). The classical case of intolerance for Voltaire, resonating even today, was committed against Socrates, who was made to drink hemlock and died for his opinions. Prohibited from teaching, Socrates incurred hatred for his questioning of religious tradition. The injustice of his death came to have a powerful influence on minds throughout the centuries, prompting Voltaire to ultimately raise the fundamental question: 'But of all the superstitions, that of hating our neighbours on account of his opinion, is surely the most dangerous!' (Voltaire, 1764: 229).[4] The foundation for tolerance according to this understanding was drawn from the idea of harm (McClure, 1990: 381).

When this understanding of tolerance was taken up in the post-war situation, it was significantly modified. The abstract 'philosopher-other' that Enlightenment conceptions of tolerance addressed has been replaced by concrete 'ethnic-others' within the nation-state. Tolerance has become an essential requirement of decent politics, and it has taken the character of a social contract with minorities. They were given a secure status within the nation-state (which was much compared to the inter-war period). This change of reference changed everything. Boundary transgression, which was conceived to be enriching when practised by the 'philosopher other', came to be considered a danger when it was carried out by the 'ethnic other'. Tolerance turned into 'gritted-teeth tolerance': one tolerated minorities but one did not respect them necessarily. Why should one respect groups that are seen as the very negation of oneself? What, after all, could be learnt from them? Today the concept of tolerance is commonly defined as the realm of differences that are not approved, but should not be prevented, mainly for reasons that are constitutive of the political culture of benevolent nationalism (such as freedom of opinion or freedom of religion). The modification of the concept becomes apparent when one considers the issue of respect. The idea of respect, which was associated with the Enlightenment concept of tolerance, was increasingly seen to be opposed to the principle of tolerance. Respect was associated with unconditional acceptance or even with the appreciation of difference in the public sphere and tolerance was increasingly seen as a variant of disrespect.

In the context of post-war Europe, the idea that 'the intolerant' should not be tolerated gained particular prominence. This idea was formulated by Karl Popper (1971) in his *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. The rationale of this position is that the 'toleration of intolerance' would lead to the self-sacrifice of tolerance, as in fact was seen to have happened during National Socialism. The compelling logic of this argument, however, means that it has become a type of master narrative to legitimize or rationalize intolerance. If, for a variety of reasons, such as anxieties or moral embarrassment, one's intention is to curtail the rights of others, one is well advised to portray the other as intolerant as this provides one of the most plausible justifications for intolerance. It is even possible to go a step further and claim that the other, although he may appear to be tolerant for the moment, might become intolerant as soon as he has the opportunity and so should be prevented as long as there is still time. A case in point are 'zero tolerance' policies that aren't practised because the other is intolerant; rather, the other is pictured as intolerant because there is a desire to practise 'zero tolerance'.[5]

From the 1970s to the 1990s, the idea of multicultural societies attempted to reintroduce the Enlightenment idea that difference represents opportunities and thus sought to replace 'mere toleration' with a more positive concept. Today, this seems like an interlude and the pendulum swings in a different direction. The limits of toleration are re-emphasized and narrowed. Currently, there are strong voices that characterize multiculturalism as indifferent, irresponsible and laisser-faire politics. Multiculturalism is said to have turned a blind eye to the oppression (particularly) of women within ethnic communities and to have neglected state responsibility in failing to provide for equal educational opportunities. Multicultural laisser-faire is alleged to have favoured the development of 'parallel societies' and to have provided the basis for the radicalization of immigrant groups. With apparent consequences for the boundaries of toleration, a re-emphasis on values is demanded.

The boundaries of tolerance

Taking the significance of boundaries as a point of departure, one can enquire more closely into the work of boundary construction. In fact, upon closer examination a grammar of boundary construction emerges. There is first the realm in which toleration is not an issue. This must not necessarily be based on the embracement of difference; it suffices if it is the realm of differences that are considered to be normal. This realm is partly the outcome of earlier struggles about boundary shifting. A behaviour that was discussed within the framework of toleration (like kissing in public, nudity in certain spaces, or cohabitation of unmarried couples) has been normalized in many European countries. The result of this normalization is that difference does not make a difference any more. If fact, it is often no longer noticed and becomes more or less invisible.

There are spheres where this struggle about a movement from the realm of 'the tolerated' into the realm of 'the normal' is still ongoing. This fight is about what *should* be tolerated and is usually waged in the name of liberal values and practices in society. As Mouritsen and Olsen show in this volume, there are good chances for boundaries to be shifted when claims for more tolerance can be related to autonomy, self-realization and reflexivity. It is remarkable that demands for the toleration of religious rights, such as wearing the headscarf, are rarely put forward in the name of religious truths and much more frequently with reference to these individual rights. The struggle focuses on boundary

shifting in public opinion and hegemonic discourse. The boundary is shifted successfully when the process of legitimization is reversed (i.e. when a particular practice does not even need to be justified but when questioning this practice carries the burden of proof and requires legitimization). Ostensive homosexual behaviour is a case in point: anyone who would invoke *toleration* in relation to homosexual behaviour, for example, in Germany today would by this very act be identified as illiberal.

A second sphere is defined by practices that (definitely) *must* be tolerated. The necessity of acceptance is related to standards which mean something to us, and freedom of religion is a case in point. Although sometimes severe criticism might be directed at concrete religious practices and groups, which are considered to be problematic (e.g. Jehovah's Witnesses, scientology, conservative Islam), the principle itself may not be questioned. As opposed to the first sphere, however, the idea of boundary shifting towards increased tolerance is met with scepticism. In most European societies, the majority would consider an increased presence of religion in the public sphere to be problematic.

From this, again, the realm of what *can* be tolerated is set apart. This is usually a value statement: it is better to tolerate a certain type of behaviour than not to tolerate it, although both toleration and non-toleration would be feasible and compatible with value commitments. In this domain, discourses of deliberation are characteristic. Is it better to tolerate or not to tolerate (e.g. the headscarf in public spaces, drinking in public)? The argument in favour of toleration usually suggests that intolerance would lead to resilience and withdrawal; the counter-argument suggests that acceptance in public would set negative precedents and shift boundaries in an undesired direction.

The next realm is the zone of what *could* (still) be tolerated, even if it is quite unacceptable to the tolerator. These are usually issues that are heavily contested in public and that often are emotionally charged. There may be strong calls by parts of the public for government to set an end to a certain practices because they are seen to be potentially harmful. The arguments focus on the questions of whether harm can be proven and, more importantly, whether an interdiction can be legally justified and constitutionally upheld, or whether the hands of the tolerator are tied by law. Such cases usually lead to some discussions about whether legal principles should be changed.

Corresponding to these boundaries on the side of toleration, there are boundaries on the side of non-toleration. The realm of what *should not* be tolerated, what *cannot* be tolerated and what *must not* (under no

Table 4.1 The boundaries of tolerance

	Realm of what...	Character of debate and typical arguments
Domain of acceptance	is normal must be tolerated can be tolerated	No debate Religious freedom Public debates setting pro against contra
Liminal domain	has to be tolerated but is clearly undesirable is not but should be tolerated	Strong reservations by the majority of tolerators Strong voices claiming the desirability of change
Domain of non-acceptance	should not (no longer) be tolerated cannot be tolerated must not be tolerated	Moral objections; 'things have gone too far' Appeals to danger Because it infringes upon the rights of others

circumstances) be tolerated mark out realms for dealing with 'intolerable' ideas, values or practices. They reflect political sensitivities that have to be of particular interest (Table 4.1).

Here, we have what we might call the 'spectrum of toleration'. We have the sphere of 'the normal', which includes 'the accepted' and the realm of what must be tolerated (which is usual, consensual). On the other side of the spectrum is the domain of non-acceptance, which is also characterized by different levels of repression. In the middle you find the 'red line', which marks the limits of tolerance. This liminal domain is best understood as a grey area or border zone, which is characterized by increasing uneasiness on the side of the tolerator, on one end, and by increasing problems of legitimizing non-acceptance, on the other.

In the liminal domain, complex modalities of boundary drawings are the rule. They are crucial for the fine-tuning of boundary management and relate to the fact that some behaviour is (more or less) acceptable in some places and situations, but not in others. A first key distinction for such modalities of boundary drawing is the one between private and public. Some behaviour can be tolerated in private but not in public, and the public sphere can be subdivided into areas where certain behaviour can be tolerated and those where it is not permissible. The headscarf is tolerated in public spaces (such as parks) and offices in France, but not in schools, whereas the burqa is permitted in neither. Another dimension is the difference between ostensive and non-ostensive behaviour. In France non-ostensive religious symbols are accepted in schools whereas ostensive symbols are forbidden.[6] Again, the boundary between the ostensive and the non-ostensive is anything but clear. Class also plays an important role in boundary drawing. The 'quod licet iovi non licet bovi' principle is widely applied, and sometimes also works the other way around. Acts that are permissible for lower classes might not be for those in power. This is not only true for individual class positions but also for the national class position in the world system. Whereas the withdrawal into ethnic groups is severely criticized regarding immigrants from the Islamic World, it is no problem when it is practised by Japanese businessmen.

The liminal domain also demarcates areas of heated discussion. Generally, the issue of tolerance arises in the media when the boundaries between what can be, or still has to be, and what is not, but should be, tolerated are questioned. This can be done in two ways. On the one hand, there are groups and practices that have so far been tolerated but which at some point are considered to be problematic – as was the case, for example, in Germany when the institution of Islamic summer schools was questioned with regard to the children's right to integration by an initiative of the *Land* Hesse in 2004 (Bundesrat, 2004). On the other hand, practices that have not been tolerated so far may compete for toleration – as was the case with the Turkish headscarf movement. Usually, precedents are used as arguments and past struggles for tolerance are drawn on to demonstrate that current fears are not justified.

The crucial importance of boundary drawing immediately refers to what philosophers named the 'paradox of tolerance'. On the one hand, the argument is that there have to be boundaries as tolerance would otherwise be identical with indifference. On the other hand, each boundary is contingent and reflects particular values. It can always be questioned by whom and in what name boundaries are drawn – the argument being that the drawing of any particular boundary is an act of intolerance. This can be illustrated by the debate about the construction of minarets, which we will return to below: there are fractions in society which see the building of minarets as perfectly normal (and even desirable because they add to the diversity of our cities); there is a second fraction, which suggests that minarets must be tolerated because of the commitment to freedom of religion; a third fraction feels that the building of minarets can be tolerated because forbidding it would create even greater problems than allowing it (e.g. with regard to Muslim mobilization); a fourth group argues that minarets could still be tolerated if they are built in

industrial zones, but not in inner city areas, and only if they are not too high; a fifth group puts forward the argument that building minarets should not be tolerated because they signify the 'Islamization' of public space; and a final group argues that minarets must definitely be forbidden because Islam as such is an aggressive religion it has to be kept out of Europe altogether. It is evident that these different positions are related to different political and ethical convictions.

Considering the process of boundary drawing allows a shifting of the argument about the paradox of tolerance. The suggestion that tolerance is basically impossible would be in contradiction to the experience that there is indeed explicit intolerance, such as the one we described for the inter-war period and a type of concealed intolerance (i.e. intolerance in the name of protecting tolerance). Rather than posing the question in a binary fashion – asking whether there is or isn't tolerance – the concern with boundary drawing processes allows distinguishing between variants and degrees of tolerance (without having to claim that absolute tolerance is ever possible). Rather than asking for a normative solution to the problem of tolerance, a social science approach would take its departure in the analysis of the power relations that underlie the boundary drawing process. It would analyse the political field in which the limits of tolerance and the arguments that are employed in this process are debated. It sees the limits of tolerance as set by specific societies and as the (always reversible) result of struggles.

Public fears and significant others: the practice of boundary drawing

The driving force behind boundary drawing seems to be less the presence of 'difference' as such and more the anxieties, fears and concerns relating to difference. This distinction is crucial because it draws attention to the problem of the 'other'. As we have shown so far, tolerance implies 'othering' and otherness requires tolerance. This problem is radicalized when it refers to the significant other of a given collectivity. The significant other is the one whose orientations, values and practices are by definition conceived as the opposite to one's own orientations, values and practices, as the one who is (sometimes) admired, but more often rejected. Through his mere presence, the significant other challenges the established truths and strong convictions of the collectivity. As long as he remains outside, this is a minor problem, but when he forms part of the collectivity, the problem of toleration arises. The 'stranger', as Zygmunt Bauman (1991) has brilliantly shown, is simultaneously inside and outside the nation-state and as such is the quintessential object of tolerance. The anxieties, fears or concerns relating to him motivate and necessitate boundary drawing.

German political culture is a good case to think with. Today, the place of the significant other is held by Islam, which is a comparatively new phenomenon. The position had been occupied by Communism during the cold war and by Eastern European immigrants during the 1990s. Islam has become the significant other during the 2000s for four main reasons. First, there has been a growing concern about immigration after Germany finally started to realize during the 1990s that it had become a 'country of immigration' (*Einwanderungsland*). There has been a growing consensus that the nation has to come to terms with new minorities, and with cultural difference more generally, as it became clear that migrants would remain for good. In a condensed way, Islam brought to the fore the concerns, fears and anxieties that were created by this new challenge. As a religion, Islam has a set of doctrines and symbols that make 'difference' particularly tangible and distinct from mere cultural difference. Second, there is a long-standing tradition of Orientalist othering in which Islam has been depicted as the significant other to occidental Europe.[7] Third, there are collective memories of wars: the Crusades, Muslim conquests, and colonial and postcolonial wars. The relation to the Muslim other seems to have been characterized more by violent encounters than by peaceful interaction. A hostile relationship implies the suspicion that the aim of the other side is to take power and to dominate. Fourth, the attacks on September 11 seemed to prove that Islam is not just an objectified and inimical but also a dangerous other. It has the power to attack and to do harm.

Against this background, a heated debate has begun to take place concerning the concrete boundaries between what must, what should, what can or what cannot be tolerated regarding the presence of Islam in European societies. One can discern four major positions, which again relate to anxieties, fears and concerns about this significant other.

i. A first position articulates rather general anxieties about an alleged Muslim invasion. The 'master in your own house' trope is central and plays on the fear of being dominated by immigrants. This would result in the destruction of German or European culture. Proponents of these anxieties point to demographic developments and to how in some areas migrants already form the majority of the population. There, it is said, 'you do no longer feel as if you are

in Germany'. The boundaries that are drawn concern in many cases the public visibility of symbolic phenomena. In particular, the building of public mosques and the construction of minarets are seen as problematic. While backyard and storefront mosques still have to be tolerated, minarets, grand mosques and calls to prayer in public cannot or must (definitely) not be tolerated because they imply the Islamization of public space. To allow these activities would mean to succumb to an aggressive religion, which ideally should be kept out of Europe altogether. Arguments that Islam must be tolerated for reasons of religious freedom are countered with the argument that Islam is not a religion but a political ideology.

ii. A second position relates to fears about 'social cohesion'. Admitting too much cultural difference would threaten the cohesion of society. According to this position, solidarity requires a common basis of shared norms, beliefs and values. If there is 'too much difference', there will be no chance of finding a consensus. Conflicts cannot be settled because one cannot agree on causes and remedies, and society will disintegrate. Proponents of such views argue that all claims for a right to difference, such as regarding the headscarf, should not be tolerated because they would eventually lead to the formation of counter- or parallel societies. As opposed to the first position, the second camp is not necessarily against public mosques. There are strong arguments that they would serve the integration of Muslims. Rather, its proponents are concerned with backyard mosques and their pedagogical endeavours. Quran courses and summer courses by conservative Muslim communities are met with suspicion and cannot be tolerated.

iii. A third position relates to concerns, fears or anxieties regarding 'regression'. The 'regression trope' raises concerns about falling short of historical achievements in the fight against patriarchy, homophobia, anti-Semitism, animal welfare or censorship. Whereas the 'master in your own house' or the 'social cohesion' tropes are prominent among the political right, this latter position is prominent among liberals and leftists. A 'no tolerance' policy is demanded towards all positions or statements that (actually or seemingly) point in this direction. Statements by Muslims are screened for anti-Semitic, homophobic or anti-feminist content. On the other hand, there are strong debates in this camp with regard to the headscarf. Whereas conservative feminists see in the headscarf a weapon for female submission that cannot be tolerated, post-colonial feminists tend to see in the headscarf a sign of rebellion.

iv. The fourth position is concerned with 'social responsibility'. Again, it is held mostly by leftists and to some extent appears very 'social democratic'. The social responsibility trope draws on fears of inequality that are seen to result from strong identity claims. Cultural separation might severely infringe upon educational opportunities of children who are 'trapped' in their culture and deprived of contacts with majority society. An expression of this fear is the formulation of 'a right to integration' policy, for example, by the National Youth Office of the German *Land* Rheinland-Pfalz. According to this position, separate activities, such as Muslim summer camps or Quran courses, should no longer be tolerated because they diminish the opportunities of second generation Muslims.

Beyond these four positions, there are others that value the presence of Islam for how it adds to diversity; but these are clearly only held by a minority.

There are two conclusions that we can draw here: depending on political positions, the 'otherness' of the significant other creates very different concerns, fears and anxieties, which then have an impact on the boundaries that separate what can be tolerated and what cannot. The boundaries derived from each frame can overlap but they can also diverge. A society is thus not simply more or less tolerant but constitutes a field (in Bourdieu's sense) within which the politics of toleration is debated and negotiated. This also implies that statements about limits of tolerance are very often used to position a speaker within a discursive field. Someone who regards minarets as unacceptable will very likely run the risk of being accused of intolerance. It also seems that there is not simply more or less tolerance. The question of mosques is a case in point: whereas, for the first camp, the building of minarets is intolerable, backyard mosques can be tolerated. For others, backyard mosques are a problem (because they lack transparency). Although they may have to be tolerated, it is representative mosques that must be tolerated and are even desirable.

Again, very different positions might come to the same conclusions regarding the location of boundaries. The position that Islamic summer camps should not be tolerated, for example, can be justified by drawing on the 'social cohesion' argument as well as with 'social responsibility' arguments.

All of these tropes are proposed with different degrees of intensity as they may be grounded on (rationally based) concerns, (realistic) fears or (unrealistic) anxieties. Anxiety-driven arguments tend towards

a 'zero tolerance' approach in relation to certain practices. They usually embrace a slippery slope argument: if you show lenience regarding one practice, you encourage further demands. You give one finger and they will take the whole hand. Conversely, it is suggested that in order to contain unwanted practices it is wise to be strict regarding the drawing of boundaries. Different from anxieties, fears can be discussed for whether they are justified or not. In the case of fears, 'no tolerance' policies are often rejected in favour of more differentiated policies that take different modalities into account. The French acceptance of non-ostensive religious symbols is a case in point. Concern-driven policies are open to rational deliberation: arguments against or in favour of boundaries are exchanged.

The concerns, fears and anxieties created by the presence of significant others explain the 'standpoint epistemology' of tolerance concepts. It makes a difference whether a house of worship is built by an established religious community, which is known and trusted, or by a newcomer or – worse even – by the significant other whose presence seems to question a consensus and challenges our vested opinions about the world.

Interesting is the case of Aygül Özkan, the first Muslim minister in the *Land* of Lower Saxony.[8] In an interview, she argued against all religious symbols in schools and mentioned the headscarf and the crucifix in classrooms. Although the statement was in line with the verdicts of the constitutional court, it was severely criticized because of its 'intolerance'. It was very clear that Özkan's Muslim background considerably changed the perception of the statement. The discussion dealt with her objection to the crucifix and ignored her statements on headscarves. It very clearly focused and highlighted fears about the appointment of a Muslim minister.

Standpoint epistemology also explains responses to the wearing of headscarves. While the headscarf is unproblematic for nuns teaching in the Catholic schools of some German *Länder*, in the case of Muslim teachers it cannot be tolerated. While there certainly are practices that cannot be accepted by anyone, there is a whole range of practices that are only problematic when they are committed by certain others. It can be said that the boundaries of tolerance with regard to practices, ideas and attitudes are considerably narrower in the case of significant others than in the case of those who belong to majority society.

In the standpoint epistemology of tolerance, scenarios play a crucial role. The core of each position is a scenario about what would happen if boundaries fail to be drawn: society will be colonized, will fall apart,

will regress or will become more unjust. Empirical cases illustrate that it is often not current or demonstrable harm that defines the limits of tolerance but that it is increasingly potential and future harm. Such scenarios often take the form of 'slippery slope' arguments, drawing on the notion that one has to 'beware of the beginnings'. Any demonstrable harm today might be negligible but this might change in future. A case presented by Nina Mühe (2011) is helpful: when a young Muslim demanded a prayer room in a Berlin school, it was the fact that it was a Muslim (and not a Buddhist or Jew) that caused an uproar. It was seen as a first step towards a Muslim 'takeover' of the school, which would become intolerant to non-believers or secular Muslims. Scenarios of this kind easily lead to increasingly narrow boundaries of toleration and to 'zero tolerance' politics eventually.

The four positions sketched out above are characteristic for German public discourse and public culture more generally. With regard to other European countries, my assumption is that (1) a similar plurality can be found in any country, (2) that while all positions might be found everywhere their relative strength is different and (3) that there do exist some positions that are unique to some countries. This is because such positions are embedded in wider national narratives and corresponding anxieties and fears.

National narratives

The different positions that are held within a society vis-à-vis the significant other are embedded in national discourses and guided by historical memory. Different national key narratives can be distinguished from each other. The 'historical failure' narrative, the 'unity of the nation' narrative, 'the positive achievement' and the 'national independence' narrative define specific ways of boundary drawing.

Germany stands in particular for the *historical failure narrative*. In fact, there are two historical narratives that are referred to and from which general guidelines regarding tolerance are derived. The first narrative takes as its point of departure the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) and its conclusion in the peace treaty of Münster and Osnabrück. The war is depicted as the epitome for how religious intolerance leads to violence and for the necessity of interreligious tolerance. The guarantor of religious peace is the secular state, which is to stand above the religious communities. The state sets limits to religious practices and defines what is to be tolerated and what not. The lesson to be drawn from the historical narrative is: never again should there be tolerance for

religious extremism and that in particular a strong state will guarantee that religions remain tolerant and peaceful.

The second narrative concerns the Weimar Republic and National Socialism. The narrative about the Weimar Republic posits that it was too tolerant towards its (intolerant) enemies. It set no limits to the participation of undemocratic groups whose declared aim was to abolish democracy. The result was that the political centre was crushed between Communism and National Socialism. The consequence was the barbarity of the Nazis, which, of course, constitutes a second paradigm of intolerance. The political identity of the Federal Republic can be condensed into two sentences: *Never again Auschwitz* and *Never again shall Germany start a war*. With regard to tolerance, two consequences were drawn. First, the Federal Republic portrayed itself as a guarantor of tolerance. In fact, intolerance and fascism were almost equated. To call somebody 'intolerant' is not far from calling someone Nazi. Inversely, a neo-Nazi is almost by definition intolerant. The second consequence is that 'enemies of democracy' are never again to be tolerated (as they are seen to exploit the protection of tolerance to work towards its final abolition). It is against this background that limitations of tolerance are particularly emphasized in German public discourse.

There has been an interesting discursive shift in the early 2000s that in particular reflects the working of this nationally specific grammar of tolerance. During the 1980s and 1990s, Muslims were primarily seen as victims of intolerant neo-Nazism. There was a strong outcry particularly by the Jewish Community whenever an attack on Muslims or Islamic institutions occurred. These incidents were interpreted as a sign that the danger of Nazism was still present. During the 2000s, however, the Muslim community was increasingly viewed not as victim but as aggressor. Islam was increasingly associated with intolerant neo-Nazism. The term 'Islamo-Fascism' made the connection to National Socialism explicit. The fact that the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem had tried to build an alliance with Nazi Germany during the war was interpreted as proof of an intrinsic anti-Semitism in Islam. This was important as a previous narrative had been that Islam historically compared more than favourably to Christianity with regard to tolerance. Muslim anti-Semitism became a topic that was widely and intensively discussed. This is highly relevant as any association with National Socialism is particularly emotionally charged.

South-East Europe (including Turkey) provides examples for the 'national unity' narrative. With regard to the Turkish Republic, the key narrative relates to the war of independence. After World War I, the imperial powers invaded Anatolia in order to divide it. It was the liberation army under Mustafa Kemal that saved Turkey from the fate of being cut up into pieces. The idea of national unity and the suspicion that outside forces were conspiring to split up Turkey in order to dominate it politically (just as they did Yugoslavia) is decisive for the limits of tolerance towards ethnic minorities. Any attempt that could be interpreted as divisive (such as some minimal support for the Kurdish language) has historically been met with a 'zero tolerance' response, which only recently was replaced by a slow and careful attempt to open boundaries. For very understandable reasons, the danger of irredentism also haunts other countries in South-East Europe. When the Turkish minority in Greece began to mobilize around claims for a common Turkish identity in the 1990s, fears were raised that this mobilization would develop into a national claim aiming at reopening the question of state borders between Greece and Turkey and allowing for interferences in internal affairs.

The *'positive achievement'* narrative is found in very different versions in France and Great Britain. In France, it is the achievement of *laïcité* that defines very broadly the limits of tolerance. In French historical narratives, the state is the key agent of emancipation from primordial bonds. There should be no intermediary collective between the state and the individual as this would infringe on the individual's right to *égalité*. A very low level of tolerance toward all types of communitarian politics results from this narrative. Great Britain, again, prides itself on being a country that guarantees individual freedom through rights to privacy and non-interference. This resulted in accusations of being too tolerant towards intolerant and extremist developments in 'Londonistan'. While British politics is certainly more tolerant than others, clear boundaries were drawn, for example, when during the Rushdie affair the principle of free opinion seemed to be threatened. In Britain, the burning of Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* was clearly considered to be a major infringement of principles of reciprocal tolerance.

The *'national independence'* narrative is particularly apparent in Poland, which has a history of being divided and dominated by foreign powers. It is here that the prescriptive tolerance that is promoted by the EU (e.g. with regard to homosexuality) is met with some reservations at least by some political actors who consider this to be a new type of hegemony. To a lesser degree the 'national independence' narrative is

present in all Eastern European countries that have experienced Soviet domination.

Of course, there can be combinations of these different types of national discourse. In Germany, for example, the 'historical achievement' discourse is found next to the 'historical failure' narrative: The Federal Republic prides itself in having (more or less successfully) overcome anti-Semitism and applies a 'no tolerance' policy to movements that would threaten this achievement. Again, the 'historical failure' with regard to the Holocaust has been successfully generalized throughout Europe. France and Great Britain, for example, take a certain pride in having defeated National Socialism, which includes a debate over tacit complicity (by not bombing Auschwitz, for example) or collaboration with Nazi occupation and denunciation.

Pan-European developments

Since 2000, there is an increasing tendency all over Europe to portray Islam as the significant other and correspondingly to define the relation to Islam as the key issue with regard to tolerance. This development seems to be related to increasing difficulties in defining a European identity, such as to find an answer to questions such as who is part of Europe and why? Where are the borders of Europe? What does Europe stand for? Are there European values?

These questions only began to be asked during the 2000s, and up to 1989 European identity was not widely seen to constitute a problem. The answer was clear: Europe was Western Europe; the borders were drawn by the Iron Curtain. Eastern Europe (considered as only somewhat European) began with the GDR, Poland and Czechoslovakia, whereas the Balkan was everything beyond the Slovenian border. The 1990s saw a consolidation of Western Europe through the enlargement of the EU and the accession of the former GDR, Sweden and Finland. It was only in the 2000s that European identity began to be conceived of as a problem. The basic reason was the enlargement from 15 to 25 member states in 2004 and again to 27 in 2007. Within three years the EU had almost doubled in size. This tremendous enlargement was paralleled by a severe crisis. In 2003, negotiations about the EU constitution failed; in 2005 two founding members of the EU, namely France and the Netherlands, rejected the constitution; during the Iraq war the Bush administration managed to divide Europe on the lines of Old Europe vs New Europe (plus Great Britain); the impact of the Euro crisis yet remains to be seen.

These crises revealed uncertainty about what Europe stands for. The question of European values was put on the agenda. There was a widespread feeling that we would have to create a European *demos* should the EU realize itself. It was against this background that the attacks of September 11, the murder of Theo van Gogh in 2004, or the Madrid and London bombings gained their specific meaning. From the beginning, these events were interpreted less as acts of terrorist individuals but as a declaration of war against 'our' civilization and democracy.

This allowed for the process of double negation, as described above, across Europe. Islam has become the significant other to Europe and it has increasingly been stereotyped as all that which Europe is presumed not to be: authoritarian, homophobic, anti-Enlightenment, pre-modern, anti-Semitic and so on (first negation). In a second negation, Europe was defined as non-Islamic: democratic, tolerant, enlightened, modern. This operation allowed setting aside reflections on the meaning of signifiers, such as Enlightenment or modernity, which would only reveal the lack of consensus on these issues. It allows drawing on such issues as empty signifiers or as a 'form'. It allows constructing an 'us' which is set against a 'them'. It implies the drawing of boundaries and in particular the exclusion of Muslim labour migrants and, on the terrain of foreign policy with regard to Turkey, the refusal to initiate membership negotiations. It allows for the construction of solidarities in opposition to Islam as the significant other but it prevents integration and leads to further conflicts.

This double negation means that there is a tendency to avoid critical reflection. Let me point out the intricacies: if we consider the Enlightenment objective, we might think with Kant about the process of liberating oneself from self-inflicted dependency (*Unmündigkeit*). But we should also look at the dark side of the Enlightenment. After having lived through the experience of National Socialism, Adorno and Horkheimer pointed to the very ambivalence of the Enlightenment process of empowerment. According to these authors, the idea of full control over the world and over the self (*Welt- und Selbstbeherrschung*) led to industrialization and mechanization and were finally the reason for industrialized mass murder committed in the Third Reich. We might also think about the fact that Enlightenment and progress were the banners that legitimized colonialism. That does not necessarily imply a rejection of the idea of Enlightenment altogether or its uselessness – but it throws a shadow of doubt on all endeavours that cherish Enlightenment values unequivocally. To see Enlightenment in a reflexive way means taking its two faces into account. This does not allow for the

reference to the Enlightenment as a weapon of exclusion or in support of the superiority of one's own culture as has been expressed by Silvio Berlusconi among others:

> We must be aware of the superiority of our civilization, a system that has guaranteed the well-being, respect for human rights and – in contrast with Islamic countries – respect for religious and political rights, a system that has as its values understandings of diversity and tolerance.
>
> (Cited in BBC, 2001)

It was in this vein that multicultural politics were declared to have failed all across Europe: they were said to have been too tolerant, too laisser faire and too little insistent on European (or national) traditions. This has resulted in a renewed and, on this occasion, pan-European movement of redrawing the limits of tolerance.

Conclusion: outline of a comparative approach to the study of tolerance

The intention of this article was to inquire into logics of toleration. Starting with the observation that tolerance is related to boundary drawing, I suggest that an empirical approach to tolerance can take its point of departure in the analysis of limits of tolerance. A closer look reveals that the limits of tolerance imply boundaries of secondary order, which distinguish the realm of the normal from the realm of what must be, can be, or should be tolerated, as well as from the realm of what should not, cannot and must not be tolerated. There is no unanimity in any given society about these boundaries. Rather, there are discursive fields in which different positions relate to specific concerns, fears and anxieties and fight with each other in the determination of what should be accepted and what not. The respective strength of these positions is related to national narratives, which define specific sensitivities with regard to the 'other'. National narratives, however, are increasingly influenced by the emergence of pan-European discourses of otherness. A comparative approach would thus pay attention to four levels: considering boundary drawing processes; building a typology of societal positions vis-à-vis toleration; relating the characteristics of the discursive field to national narratives; and finally exploring the modifications of national discourses in relation to ongoing constructions of a European identity.

Notes

1. Within this framework Bader offers a legitimate and meaningful attempt to be precise about terminology and not to call everything tolerance. It is also the attempt to defend the classical idea of 'gritted-teeth tolerance' as a civilizational achievement which is part and parcel of any decent polity. The fear is that a criticism of tolerance in the name of respect (and the claim to replace tolerance by respect) would undermine the concept.
2. See, for example, Frantz Fanon's legitimization of violence against the colonial oppressor.
3. The difference between tolerance in Western liberal democracies and the Communist countries can be defined as 'tolerance by permission' as distinguished from 'tolerance by respect'. Whereas 'tolerance by permission' allows for a certain space for otherness within the framework of an order that cannot be challenged (Forst, 2003: 42ff. who mentions the edict of Nantes or the Ottoman millet system but not the communist order), 'tolerance by respect' is based 'on equal membership in a political community based on the rule of law' (Forst, 2003: 45). The latter implies that persons and groups holding tolerated opinions can participate in and influence the public debate.
4. See also Forst (2003: 352–475).
5. In an extreme way this was done by Hindu nationalists who were legitimizing the pogroms of Gujarat as necessary to defend an overly tolerant Hindu culture against an intolerant Muslim culture.
6. There is, of course, extensive literature on this issue. See among others Collet (2004).
7. There are striking shifts among such images. Throughout the 19th century, Harem fantasies portrayed the very opposite of a highly disciplined Victorian sexual culture. During the 20th century, especially after the sexual revolution, Muslim cultures became suddenly associated with repressive sexual culture.
8. I owe the information about this case to Nina Mühe (2011).

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5
Liberalism and the Diminishing Space of Tolerance

Per Mouritsen and Tore Vincents Olsen

Over the last decades, European societies have been confronted with forms of diversity that have challenged the national self-understandings of countries accustomed to presenting their public cultures as liberal and *tolerant*. If liberalism involves an idea of individual freedom to pursue different conceptions of the good life, and of the state as primarily an instrument to protect this freedom and the cultural and associational pluralism of civil society it involves (Rawls, 1993) – indeed even seeing such diversity as beneficial (Rosenblum, 1994) – it may be argued that these societies are less liberal than they perceive themselves to be. Yet the new *intolerance* – particularly when manifested in official policy and public discourse – is often presented in ostensibly liberal vocabulary. The religious or ethno-religious practices, identities and values at stake, primarily Muslim, are seen to be taken more seriously and literally; to structure the lives, choices, and relations of individuals (particularly within the family and between the sexes) more tightly; to jeopardize the secular neutrality of public institutions and political life (protected by the very distinction between private and public constitutive of liberalism); and indeed, at times, to threaten the very fabric of liberal societies in ways that render intolerance an increasingly favoured strategy of liberal self-defence. As such, it is presented as a liberal concern with individual autonomy, equality and reasonableness.

The concept of tolerance presupposes at least three spaces of valuation, which may also be talked of as modes of accepting or not accepting. One space is made up of the groups, the virtues and practices, and the values and principles that we either endorse, promote, are indifferent towards, or, crucially for the following argument, at least realize we have no valid reason to censure or even feel uncomfortable about (in case we do, or used to do). It is the space of what we *positively accept*.[1]