

The spirit of Nature

Herbert Marcuse argues in his work *Repressive Tolerance* that since the Enlightenment when tolerance was a positive attitude expressed by individuals (intellectuals, citizens, etc.) it has become an imperative forced by the power and tolerance is only a tool which serves the total control of the society. In the following we would like to examine the process itself, understand what tolerance and toleration is, and find a way out from the power-controlled relations of individuals in today's society.

The three levels of Tolerance

We can identify three levels of tolerance by examining the phenomena closely.

- 1) Intercultural tolerance: this is the most abstract level. It means the acceptance of the validity of another culture, to see it as a legitimate system which has true statements about reality. For example: a European practises this kind of tolerance when he or she accepts Indian culture, the habits of Indian people, and does not question the metaphysical basis of it. It is important to note that in this case, there are not a lot of people in the society from that kind of culture, because Intercultural tolerance always tends toward a „far“ society.
- 2) Inner Cultural tolerance: this refers to the acceptance of an identity a belonging to a group. That group should be in the society, because in this case the individual knows well the meaning of belonging to that group (e.g.: homosexual identity).
- 3) Personal tolerance: somebody practise this when the he or she has to answer the question if he or she has to decide if somebody fit into his or her community. (e.g.: when a teacher holds a lecture he or she has to decide what to do with the deviant ones. Should he or she integrate them somehow, or just putting them out of the class.)

In the following I would like to examine these stages, but mainly the first one, because the concept of tolerance could be transformed from it in a way, that helps society to come out with situation which is described by Herbert Marcuse.

The dialectics of judgement

First, let's see the Intercultural tolerance. When we met the Face of an individual who came from another civilisation, we examine his personality first. Then, we identify his culture, and after that, we deduce back to his person. For example: „Muhamad is a great person, I love him. But he cannot drink at parties because of his faith. Oh how stupid thing! He believes in God! Oh, come on, there is not an old man in the sky. Poor Muhamad, he is so stupid!“

The second is Inner Cultural tolerance. This judgement comes from the group and then goes back to the individual. For example: „David is so nice, regarding the fact that he is a Jew.“ An alt-right man, who says this sentence could go further: if David is nice and he is a Jew at the same time, not every Jewish people are bad.“ But that is the question of logical abilities.

The third is Personal tolerance which is only about the individual. „Peter is deviant.“ There is no dialectical change in this sentence, this is why it is so stable. (e.g.: rumours could damage really hard on people).

Now, I would like to find the way, how to break out from these dialectical fence, examining the Intercultural tolerance.

The historical concept of the „faustian“ culture of Europe

In the end of the First World War (1914-1918) a historian and philosopher, Oswald Spengler had finished the creation of a system which is – according to himself – suitable for describing the developing of the different civilizations in the world. In his work, *The Decline of the West* he focuses on the Western civilization, the culture of political freedom, individualism, enterprises, capital, ruled by technology and the sense of superiority of the culture's elite (and also the society). He called this system *faustian*, because of the attitude of the protagonist of Goethe's Faust which is about a scientist who finds the meaning of his individual life, and the Life's itself in *useful* work.

But Spengler made a distinction between culture and civilization. While previous could be defined by discussion, pluralism and the forming of the values, the latter is a rigorous system which does not require individual interpretation, because it is not expandable. The individuals only have to fit into that system, but in the end civilization will collapse, because it loses his ability to serve as a possible world-describing system.

Following this train of thoughts we have to find where the European (or faustian) culture transformed to a strict system of values, and when it lost his flexibility.

To find the answer, we should examine one of the core events of this culture, the great French revolution, and its slogan: *liberty, equality, fraternity*. These three strong demands are the pillars of our modern democracy, but as we have thought before. If we examine these terms carefully, and their reference to the cultural history of Europe, we can notice that they are in a dialectical relation in the Hegelian sense. Liberty is a state when society becomes free from the previous civilizations (in this case philosophically it is the dogmatism of Christian Church, and politically it is absolutism) looking for new values. Its main characteristic is value-pluralism, and the foundations of the social-economic system called capitalism was grounded here. According to the history of law it was the time when the first generation of human rights was founded. These things show the demand of pluralism and how European culture brought tolerance: individuals accepted the validity of different cultures *and learned from them* (for example how Schopenhauer and Hegel examined eastern philosophies and found thoughts which they used for building their own philosophical system, or the Jesuits who may teach the ideas of eastern philosophies they met by conversion in Eastern-Asia in La Rochelle and in other schools) which needed a *positive attitude* from them, and the understanding and interpretation of other cultures. However, liberty does not mean that everybody can improve himself: richer people with bigger power rule the society and culture, and through the new form of monarchies (enlightened absolutism, like the system of Habsburg Joseph II or Hohenzollern Friedrich II) became clear. Examining the history of capitalism we can note that this time was the era of exploitation because without labour rights, capitalists could create the conditions of work, and they used this to reach the possible maximum profit. Without rules in the market, they had the power (for example: the because the lack of regulations in the lottery, Voltaire could made a lot of money with his mathematician friend). This period started in the Renaissance, and ended approximately in the end of the Enlightenment (or 1848).

Thus it had become really important to stand up against the economical and political elite who had control over society through market or government. This will resulted in the era of Equality when regulations were implemented to protect labours, (Marx showed up this time), and on the end of which the second generation of human laws were stated (in the XX. century). The state intervened in the relation of individuals and market, and in social issues: the second generation of human laws are

positive rights, as they require the positive attitude of the state in economical problems of the poor ones. As a social security network was being built, culture started to be a strict system. Enlightenment spread all over the world because its tolerant and pluralistic values, and this is why it had to become a value-monist civilization (in the Spenglerian sense). European culture saw its own productivity and effectiveness and that is why it transformed to an egoist *civilisation*. The process where we can see the most typical manifestation of the monist, civilization-like Europe is colonisation. Through colonialism the ancient opposition had come back: civilization versus barbarianism. As European powers and superpowers (the British Empire, the French Kingdom, or the Spanish Empire) colonized far lands, they saw themselves as the developed ones who bring culture to the uncivilised nations and tribes. The rhetoric of the tolerant West and intolerant East was still alive, although it had no legitimacy, but it was the only tool in the hand of the elite in the time of labour rights, and after so many successful revolution. As Herbert Marcuse states, power and control has become invisible, because during the „period of Equality“ it had to hide behind an attractive narrative which is the dogma of the supremacy of Western European values, capitalism, postmodern, and today’s relativistic culture. Thus the contemporary European paradigm requires a negative attitude from the citizen: tolerance means an acceptance of the opinion of power on tolerance, and the tolerant ones. Toleration in modern society shows up when the majority cannot control totally the minority, because this is the situation when a person is in front of the decision: he or she has to find his or her own relation to another civilisation/social group/person.

The synthesis of the system could be *Fraternity*. This is a state of acceptance, where every individuals understands the common good, and acts to reach that. But it is a bit different from the Kantian categorical imperative: fraternity means, that everybody sees the Other as a totality as Himself, and as a child resolve the Lord-and-Slave conflict of Man and Woman, Thesis and Antithesis by creating a family, a commonly accepted aim is necessary to create a community, where every members can have their own selves, called the Spirit at Hegel. Before we would go further, summarise our argumentation shortly in a table:

Liberty	Equality	Fraternity
European culture is forming	European culture becomes strict and rigorous	A new culture is forming
Capitalism is founded and is forming	Regulations are implemented, Institutions are formed	Individual is free from under the institution, the most important institution is the self-based community
Value-pluralism	Value-monism	Value-pluralism
From Renaissance to the Enlightenment	From the Enlightenment to Today	From today (if we understand the importance of it)
Positive attitude in Tolerance, ambition to understand the Other	Negative attitude in Tolerance, acceptance of European supremacy and globalism, serving culturally and politically to the elite	Every individual and culture should be defined by its relation to Nature, the Eternal Other, the „opposite of Culture“, tolerance of the Nature
Thesis	Antithesis	Synthesis
First Generations of Human Rights (negative rights)	Second generation of Human Rights (positive rights)	Third generation of (Human) rights and its extension not just to Humanity but to the Nature

The new concept of Intercultural tolerance

As I have stated above (in the table) the way out of today's colonialism (and self-colonialism) is the realization stated in the Bockenforde-paradox. As it states, the world „Justice” in Law and in our language does not refer to anything, because today's culture lacks the metaphysical system in which society (and individuals) can interpret it. Bockenforde sees the solution in Christianity (and some other intellects start recognising the importance of examining the Christian tradition, as Žižek does in his book: *The Fragile absolute or why is fighting for the Christian legacy worth it?*) The paradox mentioned above sheds light to the most important contemporary problem: relativism of the postmodern. We cannot be sure about hardly anything, and our societies are atomised (we can see a painful example to this in *Atomised*, a novel of Michelle Houellebecq, where he always contrasts the deontological aim-based ethics of Kant, and the egoist – we can be radical to say „power-mad – moral of Nietzsche which lacks systems, and – as Hegel thought about irony – abolishes itself). Therefore, we need a metaphysical system which refers to the problems and issues of the world around us (and not to the problems of the nineteenth century like today's politics with terms like „liberal”, „communist”, „conservative”, „socio-democrat”, etc.). Facing the fact that globalisation and the eternal greed for profit is slowly demolishing Nature and the Human in it, we should be aware of the importance of a system which refers to this problem. The 17th century philosopher, Baruch Spinoza had a metaphysical system, which is commonly seen as „pantheism”, and which has the background to imagine Nature, as a substance of which attributes are Us. We do not have to be so extreme, but the first thing we should know when we are talking about „Inner-culture tolerance” is to switch our attitude: there is no culture which is superior, but there is a system, called Nature, to which we are embodied, and what is the eternal „Other” of Culture. As a Hungarian poet, Attila Joseph wrote: „Nature, You, who lives with your eternal partner, with the Man-Society...”. This sentence shows the paternalistic views in societies of the modernism, but sheds light on the relation of Culture (on which society is based) and Nature.

Thus Intercultural tolerance should not mean the „acceptance of the validity of another culture, to see it as a legitimate system which has true statements about reality”, because civilizations and individuals are defined by they are all embedded in Nature, and the Intercultural tolerance is directed to Nature, seeing Nature as a system, and Humans equally worthy to Life.

The other stages of Tolerance

As I have mentioned above, the inner cultural tolerance is „the acceptance of an identity belonging to a group”. This stage of tolerance would be more egalitarian if we would have a metaphysical and moral system which other groups can interiorise. Building a culture with the Nature at the core, we could solve this problem, and the individual from another culture (e.g.: muslims) could help Europe by finding their concept of Nature in their Culture.

The Personal stage of Tolerance would not be less rich. A community which is looking for its relation to Nature can understand how important systems are, and could help deviant ones to find a position where their abilities needed.