On the Conceptual Insufficiency of Toleration and the Quest

for a Superseding Concept

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Abstract: The concept of toleration occupies an important position in contemporary societal debates. I will analyse the concept by considering the apparent inconsistency between what I regard as the genuine meaning of the concept of toleration and the prevalent common perception of toleration. One essential factor in the concept of toleration is the negative evaluation of the subject matter. However, this decisive feature appears to have become obsolete in the prevalent common perception of toleration. I will examine the normative implications of the imprecise usage of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ caused by the vague perception of the concept. Furthermore, I argue there to be a significant, yet underemphasised linguistic power inherent to ´toleration´/´tolerance´, which is influential in how it perpetuates negative attitudes towards various minorities and maintains thereby unjust societal relations. Since ´toleration´/´tolerance´ appears insufficient to address the changed social reality in which attitudes towards minorities have remarkably progressed, I will adopt the approach of conceptual engineering to outline a concept capable of replacing ´toleration´/´tolerance´. I suggest that a new concept to supersede toleration should carry the ethos of respect, yet have the conceptual scope and precision of tolerance/toleration, to be intuitively appealing to replace it. I propose to replace ´toleration´ with ´respectation´ and ´tolerance´ with ´respectance´.

Key words: toleration, tolerance, respect, linguistic power, conceptual engineering, political philosophy of language.

SECTION 1 – ON THE SOCIETAL STANDING OF THE CONCEPT OF TOLERATION

On a general note, different conceptions of words and concepts are pivotal in the way they have normative implications on our thinking. In the sphere of charged concepts in morally and politically relevant discourses, I consider the concept of toleration as particularly significant, since different conceptions of toleration are consequential in societal terms.

Issues around toleration are substantive in the 21ˢᵗ century. Due, for instance, to growth in immigration numbers, many contemporary Western societies HAVE diversified significantly in recent decades. Moreover, the gained acceptance of various minority groups seems to motivate the usage of the concept of toleration all the more, since there appear to be good grounds to argue that these societies have become more tolerant.[1]

Nevertheless, the reputation of toleration/tolerance as a contemporary common virtue that is celebrated among liberals is inconsistent with the original meaning of the word which is rooted in a negative evaluation of the subject matter.[2] Despite this obvious

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1] Although the expression "more tolerant" seems perfectly plausible in common language, I find it ultimately unclear.

2] I want to emphasise that since ´toleration´ is the established notion to be utilised in liberal discourses regarding minorities, it appears understandable that ´toleration´ or ´tolerance´, is the term still

discrepancy, ´toleration´/´tolerance´ has become a code word that sets the paradigm for political discourse particularly in contemporary liberal debates on minority issues.[3] One notable outcome from the benevolently used, yet imprecisely perceived concept of toleration, is that ´toleration´/´tolerance´ has become overused. Moreover, it appears to be the only recognised, if not the best conceivable concept to indicate an affirmative attitude or acceptance of minorities.

When elaborating on *tolerance* and the societal standing of the concept, the topic of *intolerance* looms unavoidably as a concern to be acknowledged. Therefore, it appears understandable that toleration/tolerance is considered a safeguard to protect from intolerance. I argue, nevertheless, that in many Western societies the current social reality has developed remarkably further so that the general attitude towards many minorities has evolved beyond mere tolerance. I find the following sentence, foregrounded on the website of the US-based educational project *Teaching Tolerance*, revealing. "Tolerance is surely an imperfect term, yet the English language offers no single word that embraces the broad range of skills we need to live together peacefully." (Teaching Tolerance, 2019)

The circumstance that the English language is lacking a word for such essential competences in the 21st century, calls for an engagement in conceptual engineering to search for a suitable word.[4] Towards the end of this paper, I will outline a concept which is also not perfect, but could perhaps more adequately fulfil the conceptual task of ´toleration´/´tolerance´.

SECTION 2 – ON THE SHIFTED PERCEPTION OF THE CONCEPT OF TOLERATION

I will begin my exploration of the shifted perception of toleration with a definition of the concept. A concise formal definition of the concept goes as follows:

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resorted to in references to various minority groups.

3] I consider a possibly perceived difference between *toleration* and *tolerance*, as merely technical without any conceptual difference between the two terms. The similarity of *toleration* and *tolerance* becomes manifest also by the circumstance that they are being used interchangeably. In this paper, I will mainly utilise the compound form: ´toleration´/´tolerance´, to cover the whole range of the concept with both TERMS.

Nevertheless, there are some authors, who conceptually differentiate between *toleration* and *tolerance*. Notable examples are Balint (2017, 26), who argues that while in specific acts of *tolerance* an objection is required, in the general practice of *toleration* it is not; and Zucca (2012, 5), who in contrast considers *toleration* to be a moralising attitude, whereas he regards *tolerance* as a natural disposition to cope with diversity. However, I consider such a differentiation between *toleration* and *tolerance* arbitrary, since both *toleration* and *tolerance* share the word stem *toler-* (from the Latin verb *tolerō* – to bear, endure, tolerate – see also n. 7 below).

4] *Conceptual engineering* or *conceptual ethics* is an emerging field in recent contemporary philosophy. It is a practice of assessing the scope of concepts, analysing if a certain concept is adequate to indicate a particular meaning, and whether this concept can be extended and improved. A good introductory account on conceptual engineering is given by: Cappelen 2018. *Fixing Language – An Essay on Conceptual Engineering,* and Burgess, Cappelen & Plunkett, (forthcoming).

(Condition 1): X has a negative evaluation of Y

(Condition 2): X has the potential to interfere with Y

(Condition 3): X refrains from interfering with Y

This definition constitutes, what is being called the ´standard notion´ of toleration.[5] The dynamics of the three conditions involved in the standard notion, interplay in such a way that the acceptance component, which is the result of Condition 3 does not cancel out, but overrides the objection component, which is the result of Condition 1. This constellation leads to toleration of the subject matter in question. (Forst 2013, 20)

Even if the function of ´toleration´ as a socio-political linguistic operator to indicate a certain disposition, has remained the same in common discourses, the common perception of toleration appears to have somewhat shifted. Concerning the hypothesised shift in the common perception, the crucial point is that the first condition: X has a negative evaluation of Y, is not considered as being essential to the concept of toleration anymore.

I hypothesise that, in liberal discourses, two overlapping and mutually reinforcing tendencies in the usage of the term ´toleration´/´tolerance´ have occurred, which cause the gradual change in the common perception of toleration. First, when ´toleration´/´tolerance´ is utilised in common usage, i), the negative evaluation of the subject matter has often gradually weakened or may have even disappeared. Moreover, there seems to be ii) a decreased awareness about the negative evaluation of the subject matter being present in the concept.

I hypothesise that the development in which many minorities have become accepted and gained recognition in Western societies in recent decades, has facilitated the described shift in the perception of the concept. As a result, the prevalent common perception of toleration seems to have departed from the original conception of the concept to such an extent that now it does not necessarily involve a negative evaluation of the subject matter, for instance, a particular minority.

In a certain sense, the general attitude customarily referred to with ´toleration´/´tolerance´ seems to have evolved beyond the linguistic term that ought to describe that attitude. However, if one still acknowledges the standard notion of toleration which is bound to a negative evaluation of the subject matter, then there seems to emerge an inconsistency between the evolved i) general disposition or common public attitude, in which the negative evaluation of the subject matter may, or may not have become omitted, and the ii) label: ´toleration´/´tolerance´ given for that disposition.

Since the concept of toleration is so consequential and important in contemporary societal discourses, it becomes crucial whether the concept in its various instantiations is perceived to involve a negative evaluation of its respective

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5] For instance, Galeotti (2015, 94) refers to the 'standard notion'.

subject matter. Therefore, I argue it to be critical that the evaluation of the subject matter (negative or non-negative) can be construed correctly according to the intention of who is utilising ´toleration´/´tolerance´. In the next section, I will elaborate on what I consider the genuine meaning of the concept of toleration.

SECTION 3 – ON THE GENUINE MEANING OF THE CONCEPT OF TOLERATION

In this section, I will apply the approach of conceptual engineering to examine the conceptual scope of toleration, and the reasonable extension thereof. I will analyse the concept by seeking to dismantle it into its i) semantic content and ii) form, to explore the malleability and the plausible conceptual limits of toleration.[6] I aim to examine, if the first condition of the standard notion of toleration: a negative evaluation of the subject matter, is ultimately essential to the concept itself.

Let´s assume that when referring to a certain minority group, or a specific feature attributed to that group, that the agent using ´toleration´/´tolerance´ would hold a neutral or positive evaluation about the minority group or the attributed feature in question. If one construes the concept of toleration to be profoundly indeterminate and unbound to a particular evaluation, then it seems hypothetically plausible that the evaluation of the subject matter (in this example case, neutral or positive) would be considered as predicating the semantic content of toleration.

I argue, nonetheless, that in the particular case of ´toleration´, the concept cannot exhaustively be disentangled into its semantic content and form, since the i) linguistic form of the concept shaped by the word stem toler*, is fundamentally constitutive also for the ii) semantic content of the concept. I consider the stem *toler** in the word ´toleration´/´tolerance´ as decisive since it predicates the meaning of the concept in that it signifies enduring, forbearing and sustaining hardship.[7]

Therefore, despite the apparent shift in the prevalent common perception of toleration, I defend the position that the concept of toleration has a certain definite meaning that is constituted primarily by the form of the word, prefixed with *toler**. Thus, it becomes intuitively evident in a linguistic sense that the concept of toleration is intrinsically marked by a negative evaluation of the subject matter, which is implicitly present in the concept and should not be overlooked. I argue that the meaning of the concept of toleration is bound to the roots of the expression that are given by its Latin origins, from which also the English word ´toleration´/´tolerance´ is derived.

As the prefix *toler-* postulates the meaning of the concept of toleration, the differing evaluations (negative, neutral, or positive) of the subject matter that may

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6] By i) semantic content of the concept, I refer to the meaning the concept indicates. By ii) form of the concept, I refer to the shape of the concept, as it appears as a particular word.

7] The word stem *toler-* is derived from the Latin verb tolerō: Oxford Latin Dictionary, 2012.

lay behind the application of the term ´toleration´/´tolerance´, become eventually subjugated to what I consider as a primordially essential part of the concept of toleration, namely the negative evaluation of the subject matter.

As a conclusion of this section, I argue that the traditional conception or standard notion of toleration reflects the genuine meaning of the concept of toleration, whereas the prevalent common conception does not. Particularly since issues in which the concept of toleration is frequently utilised are often pivotal in societal discourses in contemporary Western societies, it makes the concept influential in the moral and political realm. Therefore, the utilisation of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ should be strictly reserved for instances in which there is a negative evaluation of the subject matter. Otherwise, there is the risk that the concept of toleration becomes perceived as vague and unclear.

SECTION 4 – ON THE IMPLICATION OF THE OBJECTION COMPONENT IN ´TOLERATION´/´TOLERANCE´

In this section, I will inspect the significance of the objection component which results from the negative evaluation of the subject matter, for expressions containing ´toleration´/´tolerance´. I will analyse two different interpretations of how the meaning of the concept of toleration can be construed, by means of an example sentence. The first interpretation is based on the i) prevalent common perception of toleration in which the objection component is omitted. The second interpretation is based on the ii) traditional conception in which the objection component is assumed to hold. Thus, the decisive factor between the two interpretations regards whether or not the objection component is assumed.

Think of the following plausible sentence: "Same-sex marriage laws in Western countries are legal manifestations of societal tolerance". Let´s assume for the sake of a thought experiment that the agent utilising "tolerance" in the sentence, does not hold a negative but a neutral or positive evaluation of two persons of the same sex getting married.[8]

I hypothesise that two different basic interpretations, according to differing conceptions of the concept of toleration, may emerge about the sentence. According to i) the prevalent common perception of toleration which has omitted the objection component in the concept of toleration, the ´tolerance´ in the sentence is presumably construed as indicating a neutral or positive evaluation of same-sex marriage laws. According to ii) the traditional conception, on the other hand, the meaning of ´tolerance´ in the sentence is construed as indicating a negative evaluation of same-sex marriage laws.

8] Thus, my example sentence is a more concrete explication of the constellation outlined in a more abstract form in section 3.

Thus, a presumable interpretation of the sentence, along the lines of the traditional conception of toleration could be as follows: "Same-sex marriage laws in Western countries, are a legal manifestation of the acceptance of same-sex couples getting married, even if the possibility of same-sex couples getting married is generally unwanted in the society".[9] Although this interpretation of the sentence may appear overly literal, it is perfectly in line with the traditional conception of toleration. Since according to the traditional conception, the term ´toleration´/´tolerance as a conceptual tool is inclining the recipients of a sentence in which ´toleration´/´tolerance´ appears, to form a negative evaluation of the subject matter in question.

I argue that the crucial condition about the two different interpretations of the sentence is that there is no decisive internal factor in the sentence which would incline towards one of the interpretations. All that matters, seems to be whether one holds the i) prevalent positively laden conception of toleration which has omitted the negative evaluation of the subject matter, or the ii) traditional conception of toleration. I find, however, that the concept of toleration is societally too significant, to be exposed to arbitrary variables, such as educational background or political views that lead to holding one of the two conceptions of toleration.

One can probably comprehend that the circumstance regarding two different conceptions of "societal tolerance" in the example sentence, is unbearable particularly for the ones exposed to it, namely same-sex couples who want to get married. This calls to settle the incompatibility between the two conceptions of toleration. I argue that the traditional conception is ultimately more convincing since it is faithful to what the concept of toleration was originally used for, namely to indicate acceptance of a particular subject matter, despite a negative evaluation of it. Moreover, the traditional conception of toleration functions conceptually in simpler terms than the prevalent ambiguous conception, in that it does not involve any omitting of the basic premises of the concept.

In this section, I have shown through an analysis of the example sentence that the mere appearance of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ in an expression, has the potential to restore the value evaluation of the subject matter in question as negative. There is always the possibility to construe a negative evaluation about the particular subject matter, referred to with ´toleration´/´tolerance´, irrespectively of the intentions of the agent utilising ´toleration´/´tolerance´ and regardless of whether the agent themselves may hold a neutral or positive evaluation of the subject matter. Thus, I argue that the concept of toleration as a linguistic tool is essentially independent from how the concept is used and perceived.

9] I consider the mentioned interpretation ("Same-sex marriage laws in Western countries are a legal manifestation of the acceptance of same-sex couples getting married, even if the possibility of same-sex couples getting married is generally unwanted in the society") should not be ruled out, if only to retain the liberty to express one´s hesitation about same-sex couples' getting married.

SECTION 5 – ON THE USAGE OF ´TOLERATION´/´TOLERANCE´ IN THE PREVALENT COMMON CONCEPTION

Although I take a quite literal view about the meaning of the concept of toleration, I acknowledge that in the contemporary social reality, the common perception of ´toleration/tolerance´ is on the contrary rather indeterminate, as I showed in Section 2. Therefore, I consider it worthwhile to examine further the shifted prevalent conception of toleration and the implications of the usage of a shifted version of ´toleration/tolerance´. In the prevalent conception the features which I hypothesise to contribute to the popularity of the usage of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ are particularly noteworthy, and therefore I will focus on them.

The trait in the prevalent conception of toleration which emphasises the acceptance, and downplays the objection component, seems to facilitate the usage of ´toleration/tolerance´. Thereby, the elevated reputation of the concept of toleration enables to draw the attention to one´s acceptance of e.g. a certain minority group while disguising, and yet maintaining one´s negative evaluation of that minority group. This feature in the usage of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ is an element which obviously charges the concept of toleration with significant power.[10]

I find Foucault´s well-known observation that the success of power is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms, highlights an important aspect in the common usage of ´toleration/tolerance´. (1980, 86) Regarding the feature of hiding the mechanism of power in the prevalent usage of ´toleration/tolerance´, there seems then to occur a disguising operation which functions; by i) bracketing the negative evaluation in the concept, or rendering it as merely implicit, and by ii) highlighting the acceptance of the subject matter in question: for instance, a certain minority.

Considering the power component in the common usage of ´toleration/tolerance´ seen from a Foucauldian perspective, I hypothesise the power component to function the better the objection of the subject matter is disguised. I hypothesise, furthermore, that the present distorted perception of toleration is not just an arbitrary collateral consequence of the imprecise usage of the concept but a significant, yet underemphasised reason behind the popularity of the usage of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ in liberal discourses. Perhaps the most significant feature in the prevalent conception of toleration is the ambivalence regarding the negative evaluation of the subject matter, since eventually the acceptance component overrides any possible objection component.

Another important characteristic with the prevalent common conception of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ is the tendency to utilise ´toleration´/´tolerance´ in a general manner without any reference to a particular subject matter e.g. a certain

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10] I will further explore the aspect of power in the concept of toleration, in Section 6.

minority group. I find the following definition given by the UNESCO about the "Meaning of tolerance", a prime example of this "Tolerance is respect, acceptance, and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human". (UNESCO, 1995)

The concept of tolerance is used here as a reification of universal goodwill towards diversity *per se*. The sentence is, moreover, an example of the shifted common perception of toleration, in which the objection component has completely disappeared since there is no negative evaluation about any subject matter to be found in the sentence. One could possibly argue that UNESCO's definition of tolerance is a counterexample of a real transformation of the concept, examined in Section 2. In the claimed transformation, ´tolerance´ need not involve a negative evaluation anymore, if only it is reframed in context with concepts which are not based on a negative evaluation. However, I consider already the beginning of the sentence "Tolerance is respect…" contradictory, since ´tolerance´ is genuinely based on a negative, yet ´respect´ is genuinely based on a neutral or positive evaluation of the subject matter. Moreover, if the asserted "respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity […] of being human", would be sincere, there would be no need to describe this attitude as ´tolerance´.

SECTION 6 – ON THE ELEMENT OF POWER IN THE CONCEPT OF TOLERATION

In the philosophical literature on toleration, the prevalent usage of the concept is taken as a given mode of discourse in societal debates, and the insufficiencies related to the concept have not been properly addressed. Particularly the element of linguistic power inherent to the concept has been underemphasised. By linguistic power in the concept of toleration, I refer particularly to the i) negative evaluation of the respective subject matter which, I argue, is always latently present in the concept and cannot be neglected, and the ii) normative implications that derive from its usage.[11] Given that the standard notion of toleration is assumed to hold, these implications involve the reinforcement and perpetuation of negative evaluations of, for instance, various minorities by referring to these minorities with ´toleration´/´tolerance´ in common public debates. Accordingly, I argue that adherence to ´toleration´/´tolerance´ risks the possibility of maintaining pernicious societal power relations.

Nevertheless, a few authors, notably Emanuela Ceva and Wendy Brown, have indeed addressed the power dimension in the concept of toleration. I will elaborate on their respective accounts in the following. The ´standard notion´ of toleration acknowledges the power component in terms of Condition 2 (X has the potential

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11] With being latently present, I refer to the condition that the negative evaluation of the sub-ject matter is in some instances assumed, whereas in others it is omitted.

to interfere with Y). Ceva adds as a complementary note a further condition to it, which stipulates that the relation between the tolerating agent and the tolerated subject(s) is unequal. (2011, 6-7) She recognises the linguistic aspect of power in that the framing of, e.g. minority issues in terms of toleration, "legitimises" the idea that the issue at stake, is an object of a negative evaluation. (2011, 15)

Brown, for her part, emphasises the strong rhetorical aspect of toleration in specific historical and cultural power discourses. (2006, 9) She argues, in a discernibly Foucauldian fashion, that attention should be paid to how the usage of toleration constitutes social, political, religious and cultural norms, and how it structures practices of permission and regulation. (2006, 13) Brown asserts that discourses of toleration and the usage of the concept of tolerance not only alleviate, for instance, racism, homophobia, and ethnic prejudices, but also maintain these attitudes. (2006, 10) Here, I consider the alleviating element as an improvement in contrast to discourses of intolerance. However, the usage of ´tolerance´ also maintains these negative attitudes, since it reinforces the unequal relation between the tolerating and tolerated subjects.

I follow Brown´s argument that sentences of historical and cultural power discourses, in which the concept of tolerance appears, represent discourses of power. However, in contrast to Brown´s somewhat imprecise reference to "discourses of tolerance", which renew and reinforce societal power relations, I would argue that the power component in ´toleration´/´tolerance´ originates primarily from the concept itself. The rationale to locate the crux of the power component in the word ´toleration´/´tolerance´, is that the negative evaluation about the respective subject matter is eventually postulated by the word stem *toler** in the concept of toleration.

Ceva brings up the pernicious implication of utilising ´toleration´/´tolerance´ by remarking that the concept of toleration presupposes a negative attitude that people in the social reality otherwise may, or may not have. (2011, 16) Thus, applying the concept of toleration may arguably restore and perpetuate negative attitudes, which would otherwise be already overcome. Brown notes regarding the structuring feature of utilising ´toleration´/´tolerance´ that discourses of toleration sustain an arrangement into subjects of tolerance who are inferior, deviant or marginal to those practising tolerance. (2006, 13) The people of the tolerated minority group receive by the expression of ´tolerance´ a negative evaluation which has detrimental impacts, particularly if members of the minority internalise the negative evaluation of themselves.[12]

The disguising of the negative evaluation of the subject matter, addressed in Section 5, comes close to Brown´s assertion that discourses related to tolerance have a strong tendency of depoliticisation. This depoliticisation functions by

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12] On internalised racism, internalised oppression, and internalised dominance, see DiAngelo: *What Does It Mean to Be White? Developing White Racial Literacy.*

construing inequality, subordination, marginalisation, and social conflict, as personal or individual, or as natural, religious or cultural. Brown argues further that in discourses around tolerance, group conflicts are cast in religious, ethnic, or cultural differences. (2006, 15) For Brown *difference* as such becomes the subject of tolerance, as she argues that: "[a]n object of tolerance [...] is identified as naturally and essentially different from the tolerating subject; in this difference, it appears as a natural provocation to that which tolerates it". (2006, 15)

Developing Brown´s thoughts further, I argue that the mere expression of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ triggers a dynamics of an uneven power relation. Consider a general statement such as: "We should foster tolerance in education". I argue that it creates an attitude of reservation towards anything different in the context of education. In turn, when ´tolerance´ is utilised with a particular subject in mind, it triggers a power relation between the agent who employs ´tolerance´ and the designated subjects referred to with the term. Hereby, the agent utilising ´tolerance´, i) posits themselves above the subject(s) of toleration, ii) assumes the right to make a negative evaluation about the subject(s), and, furthermore, ii) posits the subject(s) as exposed to being tolerated.

SECTION 7 – ON THE INSUFFICIENCY OF THE CONCEPT OF TOLERATION

In this section, I will elaborate further on what I consider being significant weaknesses of the concept of toleration. These deficiencies motivate to reconsider the utilisation of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ in many instances. In addition to the intrinsic power component in the concept which posits the subjects of toleration as inferior and perpetuates unjust societal relations, there are further aspects related to the common prevalent usage of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ that makes the concept insufficient for contemporary demands. Regarding, for instance, the assumed progressiveness of the concept of ´toleration´/´tolerance´, Ceva´s remark is revealing that in appeals for toleration, it is far from clear and uncontroversial what such appeals actually mean and require. (2011, 1)

I will explore the asserted inadequacies of the concept of toleration by continuing to examine some examples concerning the utilisation of ´toleration´/´tolerance´. I will begin with the example sentence invoked in Section 4: "Same-sex marriage laws in Western countries are manifestations of societal tolerance". Let´s assume according to my example sentence that someone who does not have a negative but a neutral or positive evaluation of two persons of the same sex getting married, nonetheless utilises ´toleration´/´tolerance´ to express their evaluation about two persons of the same sex getting married.[13] If we assume further the traditional conception of toleration (in

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13] I want to emphasise, however, that the adherence to the usage of ´toleration/tolerance´ is rather to be conceived as a lack of deliberate choice, since no alternative concept is yet

which the negative evaluation of the subject matter is a basic premise) to hold, this will then lead to a misrepresentation about the evaluation of the subject matter.

The misrepresentation emerges, in that the evaluation of the subject matter (in this case about the possibility of two persons of the same sex getting married) is positive but the traditional conception of toleration presents the evaluation as negative.[14] However, more significant than the misrepresentation in the descriptive sense *per se* is how it affects the normative level by restoring the negative evaluation of a particular subject matter.

I argue that along the lines of the traditional conception of toleration, the restoration of the negative evaluation occurs by resorting to ´toleration´/´tolerance´ when referring to a particular subject in common language usage. Thereby, the negative evaluation of the subject matter, e.g. a certain minority group, becomes perpetuated which has pernicious implications on how the particular minority group is regarded in the common public.

My second example sentence comes from the following newspaper headline: "Why Ireland leads in tolerance towards immigrants". (McWilliams, 2018) The relevant essence of the headline is its latter part: "tolerance towards immigrants". This formulation is invoked frequently, since immigrants are typically considered as being a plausible subject matter of tolerance. One can plausibly conceive that the way the sentence is interpreted depends on whether in this case the notion of tolerance is, or is not considered entailing a negative evaluation of immigrants. Thus, the crucial factor regards the conception of tolerance and whether it is considered to involve the first condition of the standard notion of toleration: X has a negative evaluation of Y.

I argue, that the sentence illustrates the intrinsic power of the concept of toleration, as it may, or may not indicate a negative evaluation of immigrants, according to whether one´s conception of the concept of toleration includes a negative evaluation of the subject matter. I argue that the subjects of tolerance, in this case, immigrants, have a legitimate interest in knowing whether the ´tolerance´ they are subjected to is, or is not grounded on a negative evaluation.

The third example I will cite, regards the standing of ´toleration´ as the apparently most positive conceivable concept to indicate a common societal disposition which signifies acceptance of minorities. Think about the popular, yet vague expression: "tolerant society". The content of the phrase is condensed and functions on implicit assumptions concerning primarily: the content of the ´tolerance´ at stake, what a tolerant society is, and what the subjects of tolerance in such a society are. I assume it is

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acknowledged, let alone established.

14] Thus, someone who holds the traditional conception of toleration, construes ´societal tolerance´ in the sentence: "Same-sex marriage laws in Western countries are manifestations of societal tolerance", to indicate a negative evaluation of the possibility of same-sex couples getting married, even if the one referring to ´societal tolerance´ in the sentence would aim to indicate a neutral or positive evaluation of that possibility.

safe to suggest that the various minorities living in a tolerant society, are regarded here as subjects of toleration. Moreover, I suppose that one important tacit assumption is that a "tolerant society" is regarded here as the preferable alternative to an "intolerant society". I argue that the benevolent sounding expression "tolerant society" enjoys such a good reputation, since a society that is tolerant, is in the prevalent political imagination apparently the morally and politically highest stage OF a society THAT people can conceive of.

I argue that the evaluation behind the common disposition towards minorities which so far has been called ´toleration´/´tolerance´, has evolved remarkably further without this progression having led to an appropriate new concept to express this disposition, which is based on a neutral or positive evaluation, instead of a negative one. The concept of toleration is, nonetheless, understandably still deployed in common discourses, since there is no acknowledged concept available yet, to replace ´toleration´/´tolerance´ in these instances which are i) based on a neutral or positive evaluation of the subject matter, and in which ii) the agent has had to resort to ´toleration´/´tolerance´ finds the concept not adequate, since it misrepresents the evaluation they want to indicate about the subject matter.

Ceva proposes to make the move from ´toleration´ to ´respect´ by suggesting that, minority issues should generally be framed rather in terms of ´respect´ than ´toleration´. (2011, 14) Considering the apparent development of the common societal attitude towards various minorities which may have been grounded mainly on a negative evaluation, but which has changed and has become gradually more based on a neutral or positive evaluation; it appears that utilising the concept of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ in describing this societal attitude has become outdated and maintaining its usage seems misplaced. Brown, in contrast, explicitly discourages replacing ´tolerance´ with some other term or practice. She suggests rather a positive political strategy of counter-discourses, alternative political speech and, practices. (2006, 205)

In contrast to Brown, I argue that it is crucial to jettison ´toleration´/´tolerance´ where the evaluation of the subject matter is not negative. Since the societal discourses in which ´toleration/tolerance´ is utilised are significant in the ethical and political dimension, there is an urgency to consider a concept capable of replacing ´toleration´. In the next section, I will examine the conditions of such a replacement.

SECTION 8 – AN OUTLINE FOR A NEW CONCEPT TO SUPERSEDE ´TOLERATION´/´TOLERANCE´

In this section, I will apply the approach of conceptual engineering to outline a concept which is suitable to supersede ´toleration´/´tolerance´ in the relevant contexts. As I noted in section 7, the improved attitudes towards minorities have not yet been explicated consequently on a conceptual level. Thus, there is a need

to articulate this progression with a concept which distinctly indicates a neutral or positive evaluation of minorities.

I find the concept of ´respect´ promising as a possible replacement of ´tolerance´. Ceva notes that respect-based relations are characteristically equal relations between the respecter and the one who is respected. She summarises that in a democracy, the commitment to respect translates into the imperative of treating all citizens as equals. (2011, 7) In addition to being based on equality, respecting tacitly includes the idea of being likewise respected. Thus, the notion of respect is essentially carried by reciprocity. In contrast, the concept of ´toleration´ is intrinsically characterised by an unequal and non-reciprocal relation between the tolerating agent(s) and tolerated subject(s), since the very utilisation of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ triggers an unequal power relation. I conclude that a concept based on the idea of respect is therefore more appropriate and morally justified to be used to refer to minorities.

Thus, I am sympathetic of Ceva´s suggestion that a concept with the ethos of ´respect´ should replace ´toleration´ as its´ neutral or positive counterpart. Nevertheless, despite their similarity I argue that ´toleration´ and ´respect´ also differ in their scope as concepts decisively, thus averting a straightforward replacement, in which ´respect´ could directly take the place of ´toleration´/´tolerance´.[15] I suggest as a possible solution, to outline a concept which is a more fine-grained and linguistically flexible variation of ´respect´. However, I will begin with giving a rationale as to why I consider the concept of ´respect´ incapable of directly occupying the conceptual space of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ and assume the position and role ´toleration´/´tolerance´ has taken in societal discourses.

First, the concepts of ´toleration´ and ´respect´ are dissimilar in their range of expression. ´Toleration´ is far more pointed than ´respect´, and its domain of application is narrower. The narrower domain of ´toleration´, is grounded on its conceptually predetermined purpose to indicate accepting, despite a negative evaluation of the subject matter. This makes ´toleration´ as a conceptual tool more specific than ´respect´ and limits the conceptual scope of ´toleration´.[16] In contrast, the concept of respect is more general and broad. This circumstance becomes illustrated, by that you can meaningfully speak about respect, for instance, towards i) nature, ii) elderly people, and iii) religions. The *respect* disposition involved is very different in all three cases. In contrast, I argue that the *tolerance* disposition, however, is always more of the same type, even if its subjects are different.

15] ´Toleration´ and ´respect´ are similar in their content as concepts, as they both indicate acceptance. Nevertheless, they also have a categorical difference, in that ´toleration´ is, and ´respect´ is not based on a negative evaluation of the respective subject matter.

16] Therefore, ´respect´ cannot directly replace ´tolerance´ in the cited definition of tolerance of UNESCO, since it would then be phrased: "Respect is acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity [...]" I argue that ´respect´ is conceived in too broad terms to express the intention here.

Another challenge for the replacement of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ with ´respect´ is that the concept of toleration has received the status of a reification of an abstract idea of goodwill. This has facilitated the possibility of utilising ´toleration´/´tolerance´ autonomously without a reference to any particular subject matter. As noted in Section 1, ´toleration´/´tolerance´ has made its way into educational programmes. In these programmes, ´toleration´/´tolerance´ is being used in a reified form in which ´toleration´/´tolerance´ assumes the role of a concept, which has wondrous pacifying qualities applicable in all kind of conflicts.[17] I doubt that ´respect´ could be conceived in a similar manner as a replacement of ´toleration´/´tolerance´.

Although, I have argued above that a direct replacement of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ by ´respect´ is conceptually not plausible, I do think that a linguistic variation of ´respect´ which has been modified through conceptual engineering, could be suitable to supersede ´toleration´ and ´tolerance´. I outline that the linguistic variation should have the i) content and ethos of respect, yet as the word a similar ii) form and shape than ´toleration´ and ´tolerance´ to be conceived as a potential replacement of them.[18]

Another central criterion for a concept suitable to supersede ´toleration´/´tolerance´ is that it should be characterised by the conceptual scope and precision of ´toleration´/´tolerance´. Furthermore, it should have the conceptual expressiveness of toleration/tolerance, to be apt to perform similar conceptual tasks than ´toleration´/´tolerance´. By conceptual expressiveness, I mean the capability to indicate distinct evaluations of different subject matters e.g. different minority groups.

Given these criteria, I propose as a replacement of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ a conceptually engineered amalgam of toleration/tolerance and respect. My suggestion is *respection* instead of *toleration*, and *respectance* instead of *tolerance*. I find the coinage: ´respection´/´respectance´ is in conceptual terms capable of superseding ´toleration´/´tolerance´, since it i) resembles the latter word pair in its form and shape, so that ´respection´/´respectance´ can be conceived as replacing ´toleration´/´tolerance´ when it appears in discourses. I hypothesise, moreover, that ii) ´respection´/´respectance´ fits into the conceptual space in which ´toleration´/´tolerance´ operates and is therefore suitable to assume iii) the conceptual expressiveness of ´toleration´/´tolerance´.

Obviously, my coinage needs to stand critical testing. First, ´respection´/´respectance´ should be able to maintain the whole range of applicability that ´toleration´/´tolerance´ has. In the following, I will apply

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17] I refer here to such projects as the one mentioned in section 1: *Teaching Tolerance* by the Southern Poverty Law Center, and *Strategy: Diversity and Tolerance Education in Schools* by the National Crime Prevention Council. Both projects are based in the US.

18] By having the content and ethos of respect, I mean that the replacing concept is grounded on a neutral or positive evaluation.

´respectation´/´respectance´ to sentences cited in this paper. It should, for instance, be sufficiently versatile to be utilised independently and in reified forms without a reference to any particular subject matter. Thus, the expression: "tolerant society" should be able to be rephrased into "respectant society", and the latter expression should, furthermore, be conceived as replacing the former.

Another examples of rephrasing would be: ´Same-sex marriage laws in Western countries are legal manifestations of societal respectance´, ´Respectance towards immigrants´, and the cited UNESCO definition would be reformulated: ´Respectance is acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world›s cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human´.

However, a change from ´toleration´/´tolerance´ to ´respectation´/´respectance´ implies certainly more than just a shift of vocabulary. In section 6, I posed the hypothesis that since the component of linguistic power is intrinsic to the concept of toleration, and the mere expression of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ in discourses thereby triggers an unequal power relation, a replacement of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ by a respect-based term would involve a deliberate relinquishment of power by the ones who thus far have been utilising the concept of toleration. I hypothesise, moreover, that my proposed substitution would discharge the power relation upheld by resorting to ´toleration´/´tolerance´, since the concept of respect and its linguistic variation respectation is, unlike the concept of toleration, based on an equal relation. Moreover, ´respectation´/´respectance would release the tense reservation maintained by ´toleration´/´tolerance´ in societal discourses.

Nevertheless, the most momentous implications of a possible replacement in the usage of *toleration* with *respectation* and tolerance with *respectance*, are in the moral and political dimension. I hypothesise that ´respectation´/´respectance´ would in a conceptually similar way than toleration´/´tolerance reinforce common attitudes towards minorities. Only that these attitudes would be neutral or positive, according to the neutral or positive evaluation on which ´respectation´/´respectance´ is grounded. Therefore, I consider that the possible substitution of ´toleration´/´tolerance´ with ´respectation´/´respectance´ has significant emancipatory potential.

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