

INTRODUCTION: PLURALISTIC AND MULTICULTURAL REEXAMINATIONS OF TOLERANCE/TOLERATION

John Zijiang Ding*

Tolerance, inter-cultural dialogue and respect for diversity are more essential than ever in a world where people are becoming more and more closely interconnected.

--Kofi Annan, Former Secretary-General of the United Nation

This special issue of *JET* will discuss “Pluralism, Multiculturalism, and Tolerance/Toleration.” The highest social idea is “universal love,” however the bottom line of a realistic society is “tolerance/toleration.” “Tolerance/toleration” can be defined as a sense of openness to difference and diversity, namely, a just, inclusive, pluralistic, and objective attitude of mind or way of thinking toward different genders, races, religions, and nationalities as well as different values, rights, interests, spiritualities, and socio-political ideas. But *what* are the more detailed distinctions between tolerance and toleration? V. Bader answers: “Tolerance/toleration, first, can refer to (a) an articulated normative principle; (b) an individual attitude, disposition or a personal virtue; and (c) to collective practices and institutional regimes. When I mean an articulated normative principle, I call it *tolerance*; when I refer to attitudes, virtues, practices and institutional regimes I use the term *toleration*.” (Bader 2011, 18)

The concept of tolerance has become an important issue in ethical and political philosophy such as Karl Popper, John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas, and many other important thinkers. So far, we may find a growing number of books and articles approaching the issues of tolerance from various angles as well as in many different nations. R. Forst classifies “toleration” into the four types: the permission conception, the coexistence conception, the respect conception, and the esteem conception. (Forst 2012) All of the four types of conceptions must be involved in inclusivism, pluralism and multiculturalism. Cultural pluralism is the view that all genders, races, nations, religions, and any socio-political units are all equally worthy. All of them should have a legitimate status of a unique and independent cultural heritage. Multiculturalism “is a body of thought in political philosophy about the proper way to respond to cultural and religious diversity. Mere toleration of group differences is said to fall short of treating members of minority groups as equal citizens; recognition and positive accommodation of group differences are required through ‘group-differentiated rights,’”¹ Tolerance is said to be indispensable for any decent society. It has been recognized today as “crucial characteristic in pluralist, multicultural communities which are seeking to be free of oppression, violence and discrimination.” (Bergen 2012,

*Dr. JOHN ZIJIANG DING, Professor, Department of Philosophy, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. Email: zding@csupomona.edu.

¹“Multiculturalism,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

112) Studies of tolerance are finally related to cultural pluralism and multiculturalism, and constantly face certain new issues and various challenges.

I

Interestingly enough, the scholars have faced the paradox of tolerance. “The tolerance paradox arises from a problem that a tolerant person might be antagonistic toward *intolerance*, hence intolerant of it. The tolerant individual would then be by definition intolerant of intolerance.”² K. Popper points out:

Less well known is the *paradox of tolerance*: Unlimited tolerance must lead to the disappearance of tolerance. If we extend unlimited tolerance even to those who are intolerant, if we are not prepared to defend a tolerant society against the onslaught of the intolerant, then the tolerant will be destroyed, and tolerance with them.—In this formulation, I do not imply, for instance, that we should always suppress the utterance of intolerant philosophies; as long as we can counter them by rational argument and keep them in check by public opinion, suppression would certainly be most unwise....We should therefore claim, in the name of tolerance, the right not to tolerate the intolerant. We should claim that any movement preaching intolerance places itself outside the law. And we should consider incitement to intolerance and persecution as criminal, in the same way as we should consider incitement to murder, or to kidnapping, or to the revival of the slave trade, as criminal. (Popper 1945, I. p. 360)

In J. Rawls’ regards, a just society must tolerate the intolerant, “While an intolerant sect does not itself have title to complain of intolerance, its freedom should be restricted only when the tolerant sincerely and with reason believe that their own security and that of the institutions of liberty are in danger.”(Rawls 1971, 220) J. Habermas proposes a deliberative account of tolerance where the norms of tolerance—including the threshold of tolerance and the norms regulating the relationship between the tolerating and the tolerated parties—are the outcomes of deliberations among the citizens affected by the norms. “He thinks that in this way, the threshold of tolerance can be rationalized and the relationship between tolerating and tolerated will rest on the symmetrical relations of public deliberations.” (Thomassen 2006, 439) M. Walzer continued to ask “Should we tolerate the intolerant?” (Walzer 1997, 80-81) Later, the relation between homophily and intolerance is manifested “when a tolerant person is faced with the dilemma of choosing between establishing a positive relationship with a tolerant individual of a dissimilar group, or establishing a positive relationship with an intolerant group member.”³ F. Aguiar and A. Parravano attempted to solve this problem again. They tried to model a community of individuals whose relationships are governed by the rules of so-called *Heider Balance Theory*, but modified to address the impact of tolerating intolerant individuals. For them, to consider tolerance toward a different group, the elements are assigned one of the two flags, *A* or *B*, and

²See “Paradox of tolerance”, *Wikipedia*.

³*Ibid*.

the elements of each group can be tolerant or intolerant. Two additional parameters, p and q , respectively, characterize the propensity of elements to cooperate and the propensity of tolerants to reject intolerant attitudes. Both scholars found that 1) parameter q does not affect the degree of conflict at the micro level, but has an important influence on the degree of conflict in the whole system; 2) segregation into two cliques occurs whenever there exists intolerants in both groups; 3) when intolerants are present in only one of the groups, segregation can be avoided for appropriate combinations of parameters p and q that depend on the fraction of intolerants and the size of the groups; 4) as the size of the system increases, two balanced solutions dominate: segregation into two cliques or the isolation of intolerants; and 5) endemic partially balanced configurations are observed in large systems. (Aguilar and Parravano 2013)

In 2014, W. Brown and R. Forst have made a debate on “the power of tolerance”. Both scholars invoke the ideal of tolerance in response to conflict. They want to answer those questions: “What does it mean to answer conflict with a call for tolerance?”, “Is tolerance a way of resolving conflicts or a means of sustaining them?”, “Does it transform conflicts into productive tensions, or does it perpetuate underlying power relations?”, and “To what extent does tolerance hide its involvement with power and act as a form of depoliticization?”. They debate the uses and misuses of tolerance, an exchange that highlights the fundamental differences in their critical practice despite a number of political similarities. The two authors address the normative premises, limits, and political implications of various conceptions of tolerance. Brown offers a genealogical critique of contemporary discourses on tolerance in Western liberal societies, focusing on their inherent ties to colonialism and imperialism, and Forst reconstructs an intellectual history of tolerance that attempts to redeem its political virtue in democratic societies. They work from different perspectives and traditions, yet they each remain wary of the subjection and abnegation embodied in toleration discourses, among other issues. The result is a dialogue rich in critical and conceptual reflections on power, justice, discourse, rationality, and identity. As Brown says: “...we’re much closer together as students of tolerance than either of us are to, for example, analytical philosophers who tend to treat tolerance purely conceptual, boosters of tolerance who simply cheer it as a benign individual virtue or a benign politics in multi-religious, multicultural or conflict-driven society. This much we share. There are many ways, though, as I said, that we not only operating in different analytical registers about tolerance, but often, I think, are not even referring to the same phenomenon in our critical engagement with tolerance.” (Brown and Forst 2014, 14)

II

A popular situation is the practice of intolerance in the name of tolerance works. In today’s world, a kind of “selective tolerance” has been “selected” by many governments, authorities, and political powers. “Selective tolerance” means that a tolerance is developed or applied only to one gender, group, race, religion, nationality, and so on, but not another. Selective tolerance is not real tolerance at all.

Generally, tolerance is a positive force in the history of human development. Morally speaking, tolerance has been considered a virtue, and should be applied universally, not selectively. Tolerance denotes forbearance of different behaviors, practices and activities, but of different opinions, beliefs and standpoints that are disagreed with. B. Stetson and J. G. Conti discuss “tolerance” through Pluralism, Diversity and the Culture Wars. They note that the pursuit of truth and the pursuit of tolerance are often taken to be mutually exclusive, and it ends with truth having to give way to tolerance; and argue that true tolerance requires the pursuit of truth. For them, Christian conviction about religious truth provides the only secure basis for a tolerant society which promotes truth seeking. The two scholars criticize “selective tolerance”, as they say: “when considering the perverse misapprehension of tolerance that has settled over contemporary American culture, we must first note that it is not a stand-alone phenomenon but rather a component of the large drift of our society into selective secular relativism.” (Stetson and Conti 2005, 113) So-called selective tolerance is to use tolerance by “double standard”. For instance, “A proposed *Framework National Statute for the Promotion of Tolerance* was presented to members of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee (LIBE) on the 17th of September. It called for direct surveillance of supposedly intolerant behavior of individual citizens and groups by Governmental bodies. Put forward by an NGO, the ideas contained in the policy proposal would not only create double standards on the issue of tolerance but would severely limit freedom of speech and expression. It is part of a broader trend of such ideas becoming official EU policy.” (Climent 2013)

Slavoj Žižek asks: “Why are so many problems today perceived as problems of intolerance, not as problems of inequality, exploitation, injustice? Why is the proposed remedy tolerance, not emancipation, political struggle, even armed struggle?” For him, the immediate answer is “the liberal multiculturalist’s basic ideological operation: the culturalization of politics. Political differences, differences conditioned by political inequality, economic exploitation, and so on, are naturalized and neutralized into cultural differences, different ways of life, which are something given, something that cannot be overcome, but must be merely tolerated.” (Žižek 2008, 660) J. Noll, E. Poppe and M. Verkuyten attempt to explain political tolerance for Muslims from an intergroup perspective. According to them explanatory mechanisms were derived from integrated threat theory, social identity theory, and the contact and multiculturalism hypotheses. Their results, based on survey data among Dutch youth and by using structural equation modeling, revealed that endorsement of multiculturalism and perceived symbolic and safety threat were the main determinants of political tolerance. They argue that perceived safety threat was not associated with tolerance judgments among the unprejudiced participants. (Noll 2010, 46-56) F. Furedi claims that we live in an era that appears more open-minded, nonjudgemental and tolerant than in any time in human history. He reveals: “the idea of tolerance has been subject to significant conceptual confusions. Tolerance is often represented as a form of nonjudgemental acceptance of other people’s beliefs; yet, to tolerate a disagreeable opinion requires a priori act of judgment. In a world where acceptance of difference is represented as mandatory, the classical idea of tolerance has become problematic.” (Furedi 2011, 1) For him, the very term intolerant invokes moral

condemnation, and today's world is constantly reminded to understand the importance of respecting different cultures and diversities. Furedi argues that despite the democratization of public life and the expansion of freedom, society is dominated by a culture that not only tolerates but often encourages intolerance. In his regards, often the intolerance is directed at people who refuse to accept the conventional wisdom and who are stigmatized as "deniers". He emphasizes that frequently intolerance comes into its own in clashes over cultural values and lifestyles.

M. Hadler thinks that societal variation in xenophobia, homophobia, and other prejudices is frequently explained by the economic background and political history of different countries. His research expands these explanations by considering the influence of world societal factors on individual attitudes. For him, the empirical analysis is based on survey data collected within the World Value Survey and European Values Study framework between 1989 and 2010; data are combined to a three-wave cross-sectional design including about 130,000 respondents from 32 countries. Hadler shows that xenophobia and homophobia are influenced by the national political history, societal affluence, and the presence of international organizations. Accordingly, global forces are of particular importance for homophobia. (Hadler 2012, 211-237) L. Tønder offers a thought-provoking theory on what tolerance means in pluralistic societies. According to him, "Long at the heart of democratic politics, questions about tolerance have resurfaced with great intensity in the past fifteen years because changes provoked by globalization and new information technologies have heighten our attention to differences within all significant domains of human experience." (Tønder 2013, 1) He shows the limitations of the way democratic theory currently understands tolerance: either as a form of restraint or as benevolence, but always divorced from what it is that the tolerant person really senses. According to him, what is missing from current theories of tolerance is the idea of pain, or the lived experience of what it means to become tolerant. Introducing what he calls a "sensorial orientation to politics" and a "theory of active tolerance," he argues that the act of becoming tolerant (and the reasoning it entails) depends on sensing the world in an expansive manner attentive to the new and unforeseen. Tønder queries the great philosophers such as Spinoza, Locke, Kant, Nietzsche, Mill, Merleau-Ponty, and Marcuse. He also draws upon a wide range of examples, including the 2005 controversy over the Danish cartoons of Muhammad, Sacher-Masoch's *Venus in Furs*, Dave Chappelle's comedy, and methods of torture used in the war on terror. Tønder's examination can be considered as a thoughtful discussion of the meaning of tolerance both theoretically and philosophically.

In 2014, in his article "Confucianism and Toleration," R. C. Neville advocates:

...toleration in Confucianism becomes an historical question. Some cultures named Confucian have been very tolerant of other religious philosophies, of diverse ethnic groups, of differing social practices concerning food, sexuality, and lifestyle issues, and other so-called Confucian cultures have been intolerant in regards such as

these.⁴ Some Confucian cultures have been tolerant of many variations within what counts as the Confucian culture, others have been more monolithic. ...The study of the history of toleration among the many branches of Confucian culture in this sense can be highly instructive, just as the history of toleration among Christian, Buddhist, or Jewish cultures is important to understand. (Neville 2014, 25)

According to Neville, there have been two common ways to focus the problems of toleration in the twenty-first century: the first is to see them as issues of ingroups relative to outgroups. Relative to the boundaries of groups, the issues of toleration are double-barreled. Some have to do with the toleration of the outgroups, of their traits, of their members, or their competitive existence. Others have to do with toleration of deviations within the ingroup. The second is through narratives. Most narratives are stories of conflict, of overcoming obstacles (usually other people), of warfare, feuding, displacement, religious opposition, apostasy, betrayal, competition, domination and submission. In light of these narratives, people make judgments about what should and should not be tolerated. Many people try to make sense of their lives by reducing them to narratives. However, “Central to any Confucian approach to issues of tolerance is respect for individuals. The main Confucian word for this respect is humaneness, *ren*. Very much of the whole Confucian cosmology is packed into this complex notion, of which only a few strands can be extracted here.” (*Ibid.*, 33) He stresses: “concerns for toleration cannot escape the issues of ethical judgment. Here the Confucian perspective focuses on the metaphysics of Principle, *li*.” (*Ibid.*, 35) Continuously, he points out some Confucian Morals of Toleration: 1) bigotry in all forms should be rejected; 2) all judgments that something or someone ought not be tolerated are context dependent; 3) there should be no fixed rules for what should be tolerated and what not, because what promotes or inhibits relevant flourishing is so context dependent and the context is constantly changing; 4) sage judgment is neither following rules nor acting out of pre-determined cultivated inclinations; 5) we should never allow a complex social ritual, structuring important relations between classes of people determine by itself what should be tolerated and what not; 6) the more variety in a coherent harmony, the better. In his end of discussion, Neville concludes: “Confucianism for a pluralistic, meritocratic, highly mobile, urban culture such as obtains in Boston as well as much of the rest of the world cannot advocate the same social policies it would for a relatively homogeneous agrarian culture. This is a time for vigorous creativity in inventing rituals for making the components of a pluralistic world cohere and flourish.” (*Ibid.*, 38) Neville has examined the issue of tolerance in his other research writings. Neville stresses: The issue of political tolerance in North Atlantic nations has until recently been associated with diverse tribal, ethnic, cultural, or religious groups under the protections of a nation-state. Distinctions between tribal, ethnic, cultural, and religious groups are notoriously difficult to define. “Tolerance is

⁴For a reflection on Confucian themes filtered through a focus on political contexts of tolerance, see Neville’s “Culture, Religion, Nation-States, and Reason in the Politics of Tolerance,” in Gerson Moreno-Riano, editor, *Tolerance in the Twenty-First Century: Prospects and Challenges* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), pp. 67-80.

an issue because, however defined, these groups make political demands on the nation-state...Whereas some obvious religious competitions within a body politic are directly concerned with the clash of religions and denominations in theologically significant matters, the broader clash of religious interests to which notions of political tolerance are relevant include tribal, ethnic, and cultural differences that have been given a religious edge.” (Neville 2008, 67)

III

“Forgiveness” is an important concept in Kwong-loi Shun’s studies of comparative philosophy. He considers a certain view on forgiveness found in recent Anglo-American philosophical discussions, and argues that though the kind of responses akin to resentment may be common human responses, the ultimate way to address them is not by changing our perspective on the offender in a way that leads to forgiveness, “...while the Confucians do talk about responses akin to resentment as common human responses, they do not discuss forgiveness as a way to address such responses.” (Shun 2012, 33) In this *JET* special issue, Shun continues to explore a certain way of understanding resentment and forgiveness found in contemporary philosophical discussions. For him, it understands resentment in terms of the notion of self-respect, and forgiveness in terms of the forswearing of resentment. He shows that, while there are concepts akin to those of resentment and anger in early China, there is no concept close to that of forgiveness. Accordingly, forgiveness is not idealized in Confucian thought, and an examination of why this is so helps highlight a certain ethical outlook distinctive of the Confucian tradition. Shun’s examination has the following six tasks: the first is to explore why, while there are concepts akin to resentment and anger in China and while the Confucians do recognize the phenomenon of resentment, the concept of forgiveness is not developed nor idealized in Confucian thought. The second is to discuss terms in early China that are akin to the notions of resentment and anger. The third is to show that there are no terms akin to the notion of forgiveness after discussing a number of possibilities; and the notion of forgiveness is not developed in Confucian thought because the Confucians reject two assumptions that underlie the contemporary view. The fourth and the fifth is to consider these two assumptions and to discuss the alternative views of the Confucians. The last is to conclude with a brief discussion of the fundamental difference between the Confucian outlook and the contemporary view. Shun claims:

...we have shown that the Confucians do not idealize resentment as a response to wrongful injury to oneself, where resentment is understood as a reaction to challenges to one’s self-respect posed by the wrongful injury. The reason is that the Confucians believe that one’s self-respect is not a matter of how one is viewed by others, but a matter of one’s own ethical qualities...Their presence shows a deficiency in ourselves, and to address such reactions, the primary focus of our efforts should be to correct this deficiency in ourselves rather than to change the way we view the offender. Addressing this deficiency will result in our viewing the offender differently, but efforts devoted to the former are not efforts at forgiveness as they are not directly focused on altering the way we view the offender. Thus, just

as the Confucians do not idealize resentment as a response to wrongful injury, they also do not idealize forgiveness as a way to address such responses. (Shun, 33)

In 2013, Sune Lægaard thinks that toleration and respect are types of relations between different agents. The standard analyses of toleration and respect are attitudinal; toleration and respect require subjects to have appropriate types of attitudes towards the objects of toleration or respect. He investigates whether states can sensibly be described as tolerant or respectful in ways theoretically relevantly similar to the standard analyses. Accordingly, this is a descriptive question about the applicability of concepts rather than a normative question about whether, when and why states should be tolerant or respectful. The problem of institutional application is that institutions in general and the state in particular arguably cannot have attitudes of the required kind. This problem is distinct from, and broader than, well-known problems about whether political toleration is normatively legitimate. To make sense of political toleration or respect, Lægaard proposes that the analysis of institutional toleration and respect should not be solely agent-centered (as in attitudinal analyses) or patient-centered (as in explanations of the good of toleration or respect in terms of the effects of being tolerated or respected). The analysis should also include features about the relation itself. For him, we can describe institutions as tolerant or respectful in a sense relevantly similar to the standard analyses if we focus on the public features of the relation between institutions and citizens or groups, without ascribing attitudes in the problematic sense.⁵ He stresses: “In debates about multiculturalism, it is widely claimed that ‘tolerantism is not enough’ and that we need to go ‘beyond toleration’ to some form of politics of recognition in order to satisfactorily address contemporary forms of cultural diversity...” (Lægaard 2013b, 52)

In this issue, Lægaard also reveals the standard understanding of multiculturalism is that multiculturalism which is concerned with cultural diversity, to which it responds politically by granting group-differentiated rights that go beyond standard liberal rights. He argues this understanding of multiculturalism is inadequate and fails to capture many of the controversies discussed under the heading of multiculturalism in Europe. An alternative understanding of Euro-multiculturalism is offered. Euro-multiculturalism is concerned with immigrant religious minorities and consists in reinterpretations of standard liberal rights and principles to accommodate these groups. He uses the concept of toleration as a prism to view Euro-multiculturalism as a distinct approach to diversity. Two objections to the proposed understanding of Euro-multiculturalism are discussed, namely that it conflates culture and religion, and that it collapses into a standard liberal theory of religious pluralism.

Multiculturalism is about diversity and is highly politicised in the sense that the diversity in question generates much controversy and opposition. This combination makes salient the other concept in the title of the paper, namely *toleration*. There

⁵See Lægaard, S.. 2013. “Attitudinal Analyses of Toleration and Respect and the Problem of Institutional Applicability,” *European Journal of Philosophy*, 16 APR 2013.

are many discussions of toleration and multiculturalism at the general conceptual level, where it is often argued that multiculturalism as a response to diversity is necessarily something else and more than “mere” toleration, since toleration is premised on a negative attitude to and only permits the presence of difference, whereas multiculturalism welcomes, recognises and accommodates diversity....I will rather lay out my idea of Euro-multiculturalism and rely on my characterisation of it to make evident that multiculturalism in this sense can involve issues of toleration. Furthermore I will use the concept of toleration as a prism through which to view understandings of multiculturalism. The idea is that the concept of toleration picks out a number of important aspects of how one can relate to diversity and provides a framework for distinguishing between different attitudes to diversity. Viewing Euro-multiculturalism through the prism of toleration therefore provides a way of identifying and explicating the peculiar ways in which Euro-multiculturalism is a different way of relating to diversity. (Lægaard, 38)

Lægaard declares his idea of Euro-multiculturalism first of all changes the premises for the assessment of whether there indeed is a retreat from multiculturalism in Europe. Secondly, it challenges the assumption that multiculturalism and civic integrationism are somehow at odds with each other, and the introduction of the latter necessarily involves a move away from the former. And thirdly, it presents multiculturalism and civic integrationism as potentially based on the same normative foundation, namely liberal ideals.

Xunwu Chen has been interested in “social tolerance” for years. In his book *Justice, Humanity, and Social Toleration* (2008), he claims that practically, normative justice imposes a set of duties or obligations on all members of humankind and provides an ethical ground for the mental attitude of tolerance and the behavioral form of toleration. This in turn, gives rise to the state of human affairs in which people remain harmonious while maintaining disagreements and stay unified while preserving diversity. In 2012, Chen continued to explore the concept of the “religious other,” indicating the metaphysical, cognitive, ethical, and political challenges which the religious other presents. In doing so, he draws a distinction between religious other which is a legitimate object of religious toleration and religious other that is not a proper object of religious toleration. He rejects the concept that religious laws such as Sharia family laws could be, and should be, the legal other of municipal laws of a modern democratic state. He defends the Habermas-Forst dissolving of the paradox of tolerance that there can be no tolerance without intolerance but does not entertain a concept of limitless, indiscriminate religious toleration. In his view:

The existence of religious other and diversity is a distinctive color of modern time. Religious toleration implies bearing with religious other in terms of its otherness, especially its cognitive otherness. That being said, true and enduring religious toleration is not unconstrained. The Forst -paradox of tolerance, “it is wrong to reject the wrong,” should dissolve in the understanding that from the point of view of practical and ethical fairness and prudence, better to tolerate the other which one considers to be wrong in given contexts and with qualifications. The paradox that there can be no tolerance without intolerance should dissolve in an understanding that in terms of practical and ethical prudence, there should be just and prudent

toleration without unjust or imprudent intolerance and endurable toleration is always reflective, discreet, and as merited, and has its proper limit and category of objects. Religious toleration, thou burden! (Chen 2012, 81)

In this issue, Chen examines social toleration as an obligation, value, and virtue. His research first explores four popular conceptions of toleration and three courses of conceptual difficulty of toleration. He then explores the justification of toleration as an obligation, a value and a virtue. Finally, he explores social-cultural toleration as a norm of global justice. According to Chen:

...since the United Nations published *Declaration of Principles of Tolerance*, social toleration has become the distinctive political approach to the profound reality of diversity of our time. It has become a wisdom of our time. Social toleration is a family of practice that differs from social indifference, social indulgence, and various forms of social acceptance. It is an alternative to rejection, though its objects are what one morally disapproves and objects. The doctrine of toleration singles out a family of beliefs, practices and people which one includes but does not accept and of which one constrains one's demand of rejection, repression, oppression, and marginalization, but also refuses indulgence. (Chen, 53)

Chen believes that in Chinese philosophy there is a rich conceptual diversity for the idea of toleration. The Chinese counterparts for the English word "toleration" include (but are not limited to) as follows: "include the variant and incompatible (兼容 *jian rong*)," "broadness (宽 *kuan*)," "broadly include (宽容 *kuan rong*)," "extensively include (包容 *bao rong*)," "accommodate (容纳 *rong na*)," "bear with; putting up with (容忍 *rong ren*)," and so on. All of these concepts are centered on the idea of "taking into; accommodate (容 *rong*)." Chen argues that the difficulty of conceptualizing social toleration comes from a variety of fronts: the first is in the absence of archetype cases of toleration; (2) the second is in no small measure to the relation between social toleration and the concept of rights; and (3) the third is in the uncertain relation between toleration and the public good. In his opinion, the concept of social toleration has at least the three merits: (1) it is applicable to most cases of social toleration; (2) it properly defines social toleration as a family of social practice bordering social rejection on the one end and social acceptance on the other end, as delineating both social indifference and social indulgence; (3) it can account for the tolerator's rights, the tolerated's rights, and public good; it can account for the permission conception, the co-existence conception, the respect conception, and the esteem conception but does not suffer fatal flaw of any of the four conceptions. Chen considers social toleration as a norm of justice, geared to redeem the validity claims of basic human rights, dependent upon the rule of law and the rule of reason, and goes hand in hand with democracy.

From the above mentioned, we may find that the studies of tolerance/toleration constantly face certain new issues and various challenges. Z. Saeidzadeh asks "Tolerance is often defined as the ability to accept the values and beliefs of others that poses dilemma, but how is it possible to ask people to accept all other peoples' values

and practices when they might believe that some of those ideas and behavior are wrong?" She addresses: "Tolerance is a controversial topic by way of being debated throughout the history as corruptive and constructive at the same time." (Saeidzadeh 2013) Only pluralism or multiculturalism itself is not an absolute guarantee of tolerance/toleration. Any true tolerance/toleration between different cultures is only based on "highly mutual and all-inclusive understanding", and finally on "universal love". In some cases, pluralism is not necessary to reach tolerance. Generally, tolerance/toleration is based on diversity and disagreement. However tolerance/toleration does not denote that we must believe, follow, support or agree with some values, faiths, standpoints or systems from other cultural traditions. Actually, it means that we should respect and consider any varieties of disagreements inclusively and forgivingly. There are many debates on the relationships between pluralism, multiculturalism and tolerance. As D. Keyes says: "'pluralism', 'relativism' and 'tolerance' are the source of spectacular confusion today-the confusion extending from personal faith and witness to good citizenship to public policy."⁶ His article claims that the case against the tolerance argument for religious pluralism is overwhelming; "religious pluralism is self-contradictory, and the tolerance argument for it is, by its own standard, intolerant."⁷ One important study proposes an equal relationship between the tolerator and the tolerated. J. Sacks says that multiculturalism was intended to create a more tolerant society, one in which everyone, regardless of color, creed or culture, feels acknowledged and accepted. He also stresses that multiculturalism's message is "there is no need to integrate" and distinguishes between tolerance and multiculturalism - using the Netherlands as an example of a tolerant, rather than multicultural, society. Furthermore, he claims the current meaning of multiculturalism is part of the wider European phenomenon of moral relativism. He talks of multiculturalism as dissolving national identity, shared values and collective identity which "makes it impossible for groups to integrate because there is nothing to integrate into".⁸ Surely, there will be more unsolved issues of tolerance/toleration waiting for us to examine and seriously consider.

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⁶See D. Keyes. "Pluralism, Relativism and Tolerance," *The Third Way*, (L'Abri Papers #DK-1) http://www.labri.org/england/resources/05052008/DK01_Pluralism_Relat_3EF200.pdf

⁷ See "Religious Pluralism and Tolerance," <http://www.existence-of-god.com/pluralism-tolerance.html>.

⁸See BBC commentator, "Multiculturalism: What does it mean?" *BBC News Magazine*, 7 February 2011. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-12381027>

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