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PLURALISM IS NOT ENOUGH FOR TOLERANCE. PHILOSOPHICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON PLURALISM AND TOLERANCE

TOLERANCE IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

People of earlier generations were aware that different peoples have different cultures, traditions, and religions. Already the ancient philosopher Xenophon remarked ironically that the Ethiopians claimed that their gods were blunt-nosed and black, while for the Thracians, they were blue-eyed and red-haired. However, direct contact between different peoples was mostly sporadic, of short duration, or usually reserved for very small segments of society, such as leading figures or merchants, which is why issues of cultural, moral, and religious pluralism mostly received rather little attention.

This situation did not change significantly in Europe in the Middle Age. There was a binding canon of philosophical and theological literature, summarized, for example, in the commentary on sentences by Petrus Lombardus, and each generation of students of theology and philosophy had to study and interpret this canon anew. Medieval thinkers, of course, were not unaware that, on the one hand, the interpretation of this canon entailed different approaches and corresponding controversies, and that, on the other hand, there were also powerful traditions outside this canon, such as the Islamic or Jewish philosophy and theology, or even, in attempts, a secular Aristotelianism. Apparently, however, medieval thinkers were united by the conviction that these divergences were essentially due to the hermeneutic-epistemic limits

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of the human intellect. Thus, Nicholas Wolterstorff characterizes the situation as follows:

> Of course, it was recognized that there were heresies, errors, and disputed questions…. Nonetheless, the conviction remained that if one assigned the proper priorities among the texts (with the Bible being preeminent), selected the right senses, used the appropriate strategies of interpretation, and made the right distinctions, a richly articulated body of truth would come to light. St. Paul and Virgil, Aristotle and Augustine, would all be seen to fit together. (1996, 2)

This situation changed in the early modern period, as the Reformation and the onset of the early Enlightenment caused the common religious-intellectual cosmos increasingly to crumble. Bloody religious wars in England and France as well as the Thirty Years' War left behind a politically and religiously fragmented Europe, in which the idea of a unified world-view as the basis of a common understanding of reality no longer proved credible. For this reason, it is not surprising that the search for new foundations of understanding independent of religious, political or ethnic affiliation began, with the idea of religious tolerance gaining increasing importance. John Locke's thoughts on tolerance are characteristic of this process.[1]

Briefly summarized, the focus is on two ideas: First, he argues for the thesis that the persecution of dissenters is irrational, since true religious faith cannot be coerced by force but must be sincerely embraced. Second, he points out that the persecutors themselves may be wrong and therefore the exercise of coercion in matters of religious, ethical or political beliefs is highly problematic and unjustified in a world of morally and epistemically fallible subjects. As a consequence, tolerance, appears to be the justified default position regarding these beliefs.

This idea of tolerance comes to the fore even more sharply in a globalized world. For until the middle of the 20th century, most people continued to live in largely homogeneous social, cultural and religious contexts. Only new means of communication and mass migration fundamentally changed this situation. Whereas several decades ago a journey from continent to continent usually took weeks or even months, today one of the longest direct flights from New York to Singapore takes just 18.5 hours; thanks to the internet, we can make direct contact with each other over thousands of kilometers and

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[1] See, for instance, John Locke's *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689), as well as his replications of critics in *From A Second Letter Concerning Toleration* (1690) and *A Third letter for toleration*, to the author of the *Third Letter Concerning Toleration* (1692).

call up news from all over the world on our smartphones each moment. Globalization means that people from different parts of the world with different cultural, political and religious beliefs find themselves interacting directly with each other on a daily basis. The exchange of different beliefs about and interpretations of reality no longer affects a small elite but a significant part of society. This situation poses a challenge, as we are constantly confronted with alternatives to our own beliefs, which others consider to be just as self-evident, natural and reasonable as we do with regard to our beliefs.

This raises for us not only the question of how tolerant we should be in dealing with other beliefs but it brings to the fore the further question of the extent to which we should regard our own beliefs as rationally justified. Indeed, if we assume that other people have good reasons for their alternative beliefs, this seems to undermine the justification of our own beliefs. A multiplicity of apparently well-justified beliefs in tension with or even contradicting each other suggests that there is little likelihood that our own beliefs are correct while those of our epistemic peers are false.

An intuitive conclusion in the light of this situation is the view that the fundament of sincere tolerance lies in the uncertainty regarding the rational justification of one's own beliefs. In other words, uncertainty about whether one's own beliefs are true clears the way for tolerance, since the willingness to defend these beliefs tooth and nail decreases. A pluralism of different beliefs, as it is increasingly becoming the norm in a globalized world, so the idea goes, should consequently reduce the degree of confidence in the truth of one's own beliefs and correspondingly raise the degree of tolerant behavior toward alternative views.

This shift in attitude toward one's own and others' beliefs can be epistemically or psychologically motivated. Under epistemic consideration, one can ask what good reasons there are for accepting as justified a shift in attitude toward greater tolerance. Under psychological consideration, instead, one asks about the internal and situational conditions that cause or promote such a shift in attitude.

This article deals with both aspects. The structure is as follows: First, I refer to Philip L. Quinn's influential argument, which seeks to develop an epistemic basis for tolerance regarding (religious) world-view beliefs. Second, I evaluate this argument. Third, I provide a short sketch of what characterizes a (religious) world-view and I outline two possible attitudes towards them. This marks the transition to the fourth section, where I present psycho-

logical conditions, which according to empirical research appear to be particularly significant in order to be able to adopt an attitude of tolerance.

PHILIP L. QUINN'S ARGUMENT FOR (RELIGIOUS) TOLERANCE

The starting point of Quinn's argument is the idea that different (religious) beliefs are accompanied by comparable justificatory strategies. Just as, for example, Christianity can point to sacred texts, miracles, religious experiences, arguments from reason, or authorities, so can Islam, Judaism or Buddhism. There is, so to speak, an argumentative stalemate between different religious world-views, i.e. their epistemic degree of certainty (credence) is about the same.[2] In view of this situation, one argumentation strategy states that a functioning internal belief-forming process can prove one's own world-view to be rational despite tensions with beliefs of other world-views. One is justified to hold on to one's own world-view although obviously alternative world-views with comparable epistemic degree of certainty exist.[3]

Quinn sees this proposal as one move one can make; however, he emphasizes that in the face of pluralism of world-views another possibility, following Kant's distinction between appearance and thing-in-itself, is to argue that we are phenomenally justified in holding to our (religious) beliefs but that this does not yet provide us with reliable information about how things actually are in the realm of religious reality. Quinn writes:

> I conclude that, though it would be rational practitioners of CP [Christian Practice] to continue to engage in it, it is not the only rational course of action for them in light of the facts of religious diversity. It would also rational for them to revise CP in a Kantian direction and to make efforts to get the modified practice socially established. (2001, 63)

And as a general conclusion, Quinn holds that the degree of certainty of epistemic justification in a situation of pluralism among world-view beliefs is considerably diminished in contrast to a counterfactual situation where no such pluralism exists:

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[2] It has to be borne in mind that central beliefs of these world-views often contradict each other, and that each world-view justifies its truth claims primarily by recourse to the reliability of the belief formation process, which is primarily based on religious experiences and practices inherent in the respective tradition.

[3] This argument is defended, for example, by Alston (1998).

> For those Christians who are sufficiently aware of religious diversity, the justification that the distinctively Christian world-view receives from all its sources is a good deal less than would be the case were there no such diversity, even if the level of justification for the Christian belief system were not on that account reduced below the threshold for rational acceptability. And, other things being equal, the same goes for other world religions. (2005, 137–38)

Thus, for Quinn, (religious) pluralism concerns not only the degree of certainty of rational justification of specific beliefs but the entire belief system, that is, one's world-view. Such a general decrease of epistemic justification of one's world-view is a crucial building block for Quinn's philosophical strategy of calling for tolerance. In doing so, he invokes an idea that Kant runs through in his *Religion within the Bounds of Bare Reason*, using the well-known example of the inquisitor who condemns a good citizen to death for his disbelief.[4]

For Kant, such a judgment is not morally permissible, even if the inquisitor has good reason to believe, for instance, because of passages from sacred writings, similar cases in the tradition, or even a divine vision, that the death sentence is justified and willed by God. This is so because on the one hand, the available sources of justification can be prone to error and, on the other hand, we have an immediate insight into the moral principle that one should dare nothing at the risk of it being wrong ("Quod dubitas, ne feceris!") in particular when a decision has a far-reaching impact (ibid.). In extreme cases of religious intolerance like the one in the example, this immediately accessible moral principle (according to Kant) beats, so to speak, possible epistemic justifications for intolerant behavior as humans are epistemically limited subjects. Do things change, however, when it comes to less extreme cases?

Quinn discusses the historically documented example of a state church forcing all school children to participate in religious education regardless of personal religious beliefs while all alternative forms of religious education are prohibited and sanctioned. Views such as "only true faith leads to eternal life," "no false teachings should be spread," or "children have a right to know the true Savior God" may well justify the exercise of religious coercion by members of the state church. For Quinn, such reasons might well suffice in a largely religiously uniform society to rationally justify or even demand such a discriminatory behavior against religious minorities. As soon as the fact of

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[4] KANT, *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft* (AA 06), 4. Stück, 2. Teil, § 4, "Vom Leitfaden des Gewissens in Glaubenssachen".

religious pluralism is taken into account, however, according to Quinn the situation changes fundamentally, since the degree of justification of the prevalent religious beliefs is diminished:

> But the factoring in of religious diversity may be enough to lower the claim's justification below threshold, thereby rendering it rationally unacceptable even for members of the church who are sufficiently aware of such diversity. And an appeal to the epistemological consequences of religious diversity may be the only factor capable of performing this function in numerous instances. (2005, 139)

Quinn's idea is that members of the state church may be well aware of moral principles, for example, "it is inadmissible to restrict freedom of conscience by coercion and force," which speak against the state church's implemented policies of enforced religions education. However, as long as the state church can act as an unchallenged religious authority and has a large part of the country's population behind it, the epistemic status of moral principles in favor of religious tolerance may be unclear and can be rejected with reference to the aforementioned assumptions regarding the right religious instruction leading to salvation.

A situation of religious pluralism, instead, results in a profound re-evaluation of the situation: as the credence of one's own religious beliefs is lowered if other epistemic peers hold different religious views, the epistemic fundament for coercion and intolerance is shattered. It is highly unlikely among epistemic peers that one gets it all right and the others all wrong. For this reason, other views are to be given greater epistemic weight. Quinn writes:

> But when the strategy is employed in cases of moral principles with a lower epistemic status, it may well turn out, other things being equal, that religious claims which support intolerance have a higher epistemic status than such principles do…. The negative epistemic impact of religious diversity reduces the epistemic status of religious claims supporting below what it would otherwise be. (2001, 76–77)

A LIMITATION ON QUINN'S ARGUMENT FOR TOLERANCE

Quinn's account makes clear that, in his view, someone with particular religious beliefs is challenged, given the presence of alternatives views. And it is important to keep in mind that the justificatory task refers not only to

individual beliefs but to the entire belief system, resp. world-view, in which specific beliefs are embedded. One has to justify why he continues to hold to his world-view in the face of alternative understandings of reality that seem equally plausible and comprehensible.

This does not imply that it is irrational to continue to stick to one's world-view. However, it does mean that one must admit that his world-view has a comparable degree of justification to alternative views, and that it is epistemically unclear which world-view—if any—is the true one. Therefore, tolerance towards these alternatives is the rational consequence of such a situation of epistemic ambiguity.

Against this consideration one could object that the existence of alternative world-views does not necessarily entail a reduction of the degree of justification of one's own overall understanding of reality. Someone can hold to this understanding even though there are relevant objections against it, and no independent or non-circular reasons are available to reject the raised objections. Alvin Plantinga emphasizes, for instance, that the justificatory grounds of basic beliefs do not consist in independent evidence and arguments but arise from the functioning belief formation process itself (PLANTINGA 2000, 371).[5] Plantinga gives the example of someone, let us call him Adam, trying to bribe a colleague into giving a positive review of Adam's project proposal. The colleague wants to report this misconduct to the head of the department in a letter. Mysteriously, this letter disappears from the office of the department's director and the obvious suspicion is that Adam has stolen it. To make matters worse, Adam is known to be a liar, and therefore the colleague does not believe Adam that he has nothing to do with the disappearance of the letter. But Adam himself remembers very clearly that on that day when the letter was placed in the office of the department's director and then disappeared, he had gone on a hike that had been planned for a long time. Adam still has the pleasant autumn light and the lush green of the alpine meadows before his eyes, and he recalls the pleasant warmth of the midday sun. It is clear to Plantinga that, in view of these vivid memories, Adam has no reason to accept his colleague's suspicion, even if he can understand that, objectively speaking, they are obvious and rationally justified. Plantinga's example shows that someone can have experiences which remove any epistemic uncertainty about held beliefs even though these beliefs can be challenged substantially from a perspective of objective reason.

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[5] He speaks of an intrinsic defeater.

Accordingly, the presence of religious pluralism need not have any undermining force for an individual if he disposes of robust religious experiences and has good reasons to assume that the experience-generating processes functioned properly. In such a situation, epistemic parity is no longer given since the person can refer to religious experience as the decisive ground of internal justification. Since most people do not have such experience, however, the argument for tolerance will affect most ordinary believers. In the section to follow, I would like to draw attention to the structure of world-view beliefs and argue that their "nature" already suggest a tolerant behavior towards them. Thus, an argument in favor of tolerance can be developed not only in the light of religious pluralism but also on the basis of an analysis of the structure of world-views per se.

THE STRUCTURE OF WORLD-VIEW BELIEFS AND TOLERANCE

I briefly introduce the concept of world-view itself. Call a world-view a bundle of fundamental beliefs that form the core of a person's overall belief system about reality. That is, this system includes beliefs about what there is at all, of what kind these existing entities are, how they relate to each other and what value they have. A world-view fulfills the function of explaining, interpreting, evaluating, and structuring all that what a person encounters in her life into an overall, ideally as coherent as possible, understanding of reality. Thus, every person has at least implicitly a world-view; it can be religious but it is not necessarily so. The representation of reality offered in a world-view is a type of explanation in the sense of a classification. The content of our experience and our knowledge about reality is distinguished into different domains with their specific explanations.[6] Therefore, one can ask, as Patrick Riordan puts it,

> how the different domains are related to one another, and articulate the significance which the content of one area might have for another. (1992, 527–28)[7]

A world-view represents, so to speak, the horizon of understanding within which we conceptualize implicitly or explicitly the different realms of reality

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[6] Liquin et al. (2020), for instance, investigate different criteria for explanation in the domain of science and religion.

[7] Riordan's reflections primarily take up the concept of world-view as developed by the Austrian philosopher Otto Muck. See the collection of Muck's major papers in LÖFFLER (1999).

and our place within it. It is the attempt to integrate the complexity of what we experience into an ordered framework which gives us orientation for our cognizing, deciding and acting. Accordingly, one can speak of an integrative explanation or interpretation as the distinctive function of a world-view. This means that depending on a world-view's structure, domains of reality are interpreted differently. For instance, someone for whom a religious belief such as "there is a loving God who created everything" belongs to the core of a world-view, may grant to the natural sciences a quite important role when it comes to understanding the material domain of reality. This person, however, will not accept the naturalistic credo that everything that exists is somehow material and thereby can be best described by the natural sciences. Rather, the material domain is complemented by a spiritual domain or a domain of transcendence, and one may add further domains such as (a non-naturalistic understanding of) consciousness or objective (non-naturalistic) values. Whatever such a concrete world-view may look like, the crucial point is that it goes far beyond the mere acceptance of the material. Someone who, on the contrary, subscribes to a materialistic world-view will see reality rather differently. Presumably, the central claim is that the universe came into being by chance through blind natural forces and these forces is all there is. There is no deeper meaning, a teleological direction or objective values underlying its existence. Richard Dawkins characterizes this view as follows:

> In a universe of blind physical forces and genetic replication, some people are going to get hurt, other people are going to get lucky, and you won't find any rhyme or reason in it, nor any justice. The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind, pitiless indifference. (DAWKINS 1995, 132)

This brief characterization of the concept of a world-view makes it clear that they are very general and comprehensive belief systems. It is therefore likely that some beliefs of a world-view are not correct or that different beliefs within such a system show inconsistencies and incoherences, since we are not able to survey all individual beliefs of one's world-view and formulate them explicitly. Usually, it happens that someone becomes aware of inconsistencies himself or is made aware of them by others, and then rationality demands to eliminate these inconsistencies or to integrate new, not yet considered evidence and experiences into the existing world-view by modifications and adaptations of it (or, in the most extreme case, it can also be

replaced with a new one). Central demands of rationality such as consistency, coherence or recognition of new knowledge and experiences can be applied to world-views and examine their rational structures.

In this respect they have a foundation open to an analysis of epistemic justification though this complex network of beliefs is continuously fragile, in flux and incomplete due to its comprehensive character. Overall reality, including our existence in it, is not a clearly delineated thing amenable to fine-grained theoretical analysis but at best a vague construct of state of affairs that may belong to quite different domains—such as the physical, biological, psychological, social, normative, or religious.

A world-view, thus, always has a preliminary and imperfect character; it changes during our life in the light of new experiences, biographical data, personal decisions and knowledge, and it is subject to doubts and objections. This means that appropriate caution must be exercised in judging the epistemic justification of a world-view. Its structure reminds us to adopt an attitude of epistemic humility. Such an attitude does not imply agnosticism towards one's own or other world-views.[8] As indicated, one may well classify one's own world-view in the light of rational analysis as well-justified but still accept that there is a decent likelihood that it may be wrong in crucial respects.

A second factor in favor of an epistemic humble attitude is a world-view's relation to one's personal experiences. Personal experiences are formed differently by each person. Recently, Matthew Ratcliffe introduced the concept of existential feeling in order to refer to a rather neglected component of human experience, namely that each person already finds herself at each moment in her existence in the world and thus, has a specific sense of reality and being in it (RATCLIFFE 2020).[9] Existential feelings constitute a sense of how one perceives and finds oneself in the world as a whole in contrast to feelings that are directed towards a more specific object in the world.

Against this background, it is hardly surprising if an argument in favor of one world-view is not able to convince a person who has a rather different experiential background. The argument simply does not find a point of contact in the personal horizon of experience in order to be able to develop a persuasive power.[10]

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[8] See, for instance, JONES (2015), 83–84.

[9] As Ratcliffe indicates, his concept of existential feeling draws upon ideas such as "mood" (*Stimmung*) and "attunement" (*Befindlichkeit*) discussed in Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*.

[10] On the issue of persuasion in regard of religious arguments see FAUST (2008).

This fact, however, should not worry us. An argument's sole or primary function is not necessarily to persuade the other. It can also serve to reveal one's own point of view and to make it comprehensible to another person. As a result, the other is able to understand better how someone sees reality as a whole, why certain attitudes and values are in the foreground and which experiences play a special role. An argumentative debate in regard of different world-views, thus, has the important function of increasing the common horizon of understanding, that is, to see more adequately the central beliefs of the other and to get to know her reasons for it. The main task of such an argumentation is explicative, not persuasive. One may add that the fact that a primary function of such an argumentative exchange is to illuminate a point of view and make it more comprehensible to others does not exclusively apply to religious questions, but it is a characteristic of "big" philosophical questions and the answers given to them in general.[11]

A world-view—even if one considers it false or weakly founded—has a certain value and raison d'être in that it represents a rational attempt to understand and interpret the world. What may appear, so to speak, from an external-objective point of view merely as a problematic system of beliefs, can be valued from a second-person perspective in a dialogue as an authentic expression of a person's attempt to make sense of the world. This does not mean that accepting another world-view as such an expression of understanding results in a suspension of any serious rational discourse about it. Rather, the beginning of a serious dialogue about different conceptions of reality must first of all consist in the enlargement of the common horizon of understanding, so that an adequate understanding of the personal belief of the other and an acquaintance with her reasons, that is, the perception of the other as a rational interlocutor, can result. Tolerance towards another world-view goes hand in hand with the respect of the other person as a (more or less) rationally acting autonomous subject (BYRNE 2011, 292–94).

World-view beliefs do not only exhibit a degree of epistemic justification dependent on the quality of their reasons, but someone can hold a belief with greater or lesser certainty. A world-view belief may be poorly justified but nevertheless someone holds it with great certainty and doggedness. Thus, in addition to the epistemic question of justification, the psychological question regarding the mechanisms that lead someone to be willing to hold a belief

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[11] Conversions regarding fundamental philosophical positions through arguments are rather rare. Hardcastle (1996), for instance, illustrates this point in regard of discussions in the philosophy of mind.

more strongly or more weakly and, in turn, to be inclined to accept alternative beliefs more or less openly is also relevant. Therefore, I turn in the next section to the question of under which psychological circumstances someone is more likely to view a pluralism of world-views as a threat or in a positive sense as a challenge and, as a consequence, is more likely to be open to arguments in favor of tolerance.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WORLD-VIEW BELIEFS

In psychological literature, religious beliefs are often interpreted as a response to existential challenges that life poses to us. These include, for example, the inevitability of death, personal transgressions, unsuccessful social interactions, or the search for meaning in life.[12] Existential approaches in psychology in particular are guided by the idea that religious attitudes represent a kind of attempt to provide answers to these challenges and thereby create a sense of existential security. The "terror management theory" that has become prominent in this context assumes, for example, that the awareness of finitude and death continuously triggers existential fears that must be managed. An effective form of coping is the development of a so-called "cultural" world-view, which includes religious world-views as a sub-species. The motivation to develop a world-view, then, is a coping strategy for our finitude and existential uncertainty. The function mentioned before in the characterization of world-views to design a comprehensive horizon of understanding—in which experiences and considerations can be integrated continuously—aims thus under psychological consideration at generating sense, meaning and overcoming of existentially fragile situation.[13]

A crucial question here is in what way these attitudes are present. In the literature, a distinction is often made between a so-called defensive religious attitude ("defensive religion") and a so-called existential or quest religious orientation ("existential religion" or "quest religious orientation") (BECK 2006).

A defensive religious attitude means that religious beliefs primarily serve to cope with said existential challenges. The primary motive of such an attitude is to provide comfort, security and optimism. Expressions of a defen-

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[12] See, for instance, VAIL ET AL. (2010) or STEGER ET AL. (2010).

[13] See, e.g., PYSZCZYNSKI, SOLOMON, and GREENBERG (1997). Hogg, Adelman, and Blagg (2010) argue similarly, seeing an essential religious function in attempts to respond to the existential uncertainties of human existence.

sive attitude include beliefs such as "God protects me from illness and misfortune," "God gives me signs of what to do," "I can come to God with all my concerns," "There is a special plan of God in my life," or "Everything that happens is part of divine providence." Someone with a defensive religious attitude tends to adopt a higher degree of certainty regarding the truth of one's religious beliefs and to feel oneself in some way chosen, especially protected, and blessed. These attitudes are motivated by mechanisms to suppress or gloss over existentially threatening moments of disorientation, challenging experiences, or the inability to fit irritating experiences into the existing belief system.[14]

An existential religious attitude, on the other hand, is reluctant to view religious beliefs as "solutions" to existential challenges. Rather, it is a religious attitude that is willing to face questions and doubts. Religious belief is accepted as something uncertain that can rarely provide certainties. By being very cautious about truth claims of religious beliefs, someone with an existentially religious attitude is open to modifications of their own belief system and shows interest in alternative worldviews. Religious belief is seen as a kind of journey characterized by questions and ambiguity rather than answers and clarity. People with other worldviews are seen less as a threat and more as an interesting enrichment of one's understanding of reality (VAN TONGEREN et al. 2016, 213–14).

Thus, depending on one's psychological attitude toward one's world-view beliefs, one will tend to react positively or negatively to people with different world-views. In the light of terror management theory, one could say, for example, that questioning one's own world-view through criticism or even the mere fact of religious pluralism is more likely to trigger in persons with a defensive ideological attitude, aggression, negative attitudes toward other beliefs, or a strong social relationship with persons holding similar views, since these behaviors represent attempts to defend the existential security associated with one's own understanding of reality. I elaborate on this relationship in the next section by referring to empirical findings on the relationship between world-view attitudes and tolerant behavior.

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[14] Such an attitude does not necessarily reduce religion to a mere means to an end as someone can generate genuine religious experiences with a defensive attitude. The idea is that an essential function of a religious belief system is to create an existentially satisfying and psychologically stabilizing situation in the face of human imperfection and finitude.

SIGNIFICANT PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS
FOR AN ATTITUDE OF TOLERANCE

In the psychological attitudes just outlined, the question of the function of existential certainty is paramount. Religious beliefs, however, also go hand in hand with different degrees of certainty, since someone can adopt a defensive or searching religious attitude in a stronger or weaker way. The particular degree of internalization of a belief plays a significant role in the degree of tolerance that someone displays: someone who has strongly internalized religious beliefs understands their own existence, actions, and the world in light of those beliefs. Religious beliefs belong, so to speak, to the core of the person's worldview and, accordingly, religion has a calming effect on her when it comes to existential challenges as she experiences herself at home in her "religious cosmos" and finds orientation in it.

In a recent study, the relationship between the degree of internalization of religious beliefs, tolerance, and fear of continued existence in the afterlife was investigated in this context (VAN TONGEREN et al. 2013). The research hypothesis was that religious priming decreases anxiety about an existential challenge in individuals with a high degree of internalization of religious beliefs because they can find answers to this challenge in their religious worldview. In contrast, religious priming has the opposite effect for individuals who describe themselves as religious but have a low degree of internalization of religious beliefs. This is so because, first, incongruencies between the religious world-view and its demands on the one hand and the factual life practice deviating from it on the other hand become visible, and, second, the presence of different world-views, as outlined before, can trigger existential fears resulting in defensive reactions. The authors write:

> Thus, we hypothesize an interaction between priming condition (i.e., religious vs. neutral) and intrinsic religiousness, such that priming religion decreases existential concerns (as evidenced by greater tolerance and reduced death anxiety) for those high in intrinsic religiousness but increases existential concerns (as evidenced by less tolerance and greater death anxiety) for those low in intrinsic religiousness. (VAN TONGEREN et al. 2013, 511)

This hypothesis was tested in two experimental studies, one focusing on the degree of religious tolerance and the other on the fear of the afterlife. The results of both studies suggest a confirmation of the hypothesis:

> Based on our theorizing, priming religion appears to promote existential security for the intrinsically religious, whereas it appears to undermine such security for those low in intrinsic religiousness. (ibid., 518)

As these results indicate, the respective degree of internalization of religious beliefs seems to have an essential influence on tolerant behavior. People who live with a healthy religious self-awareness and understanding of the world generally perceive alternative world-views as less threatening and existentially challenging than those whose religious beliefs are less pronounced and who behave incongruently with their own world-view beliefs. In addition, it is also a major factor determining social behavior: Individuals with a defensive religious attitude clearly prefer their own social group to groups with alternative world-views as criticisms, objections and doubts are experienced as a threat and therefore the willingness to expose oneself to different world-views is only weakly developed. Persons with the same worldview are rated as more talented, more intelligent or more honest compared to persons with a different world-view (BECK 2006).[15]

On the other hand, the opposite is true for persons who adopt an existential-seeking attitude toward world-view beliefs. They exhibit a higher degree of tolerance toward alternative interpretations of reality and tend to prefer persons with alternative worldviews to persons with their own, since in them the motivation to come to terms with new models of understanding of reality as a whole has an action-shaping character—even if this occurs at the expense of existential security (VAN TONGEREN ET AL. 2016, 219–22).

Such an existentially searching attitude toward religious beliefs also shows a positive correlation with an attitude of epistemic modesty (HOOK ET AL., 2017). This can be described as an awareness of one's own epistemic limits and possibilities for error on the one hand, and the accompanying willingness to discuss alternative ideas in an interpersonally respectful manner on the other. Empirical studies on the relationship between tolerance and epistemic modesty show that both factors correlate positively. Higher levels of epistemic modesty are associated with greater tolerance, whereas low levels of epistemic modesty are not found to have a positive effect on religious tolerance, even when there is exposure to different world-view beliefs. This seems to suggest that awareness of pluralism of world-views as such does not yet lead to a more tolerant attitude toward alternative beliefs; rather epistemic modesty has already to be present as a character-shaping factor.

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[15] See also HAIDT und ALGOE (2004) in regard of moral evaluations of other social groups.

Studies from social psychology and personality psychology identify the assessment of a person's moral character as another decisive factor for tolerant behavior. For example, Goodwin, Piazza, and Rozin emphasize: "Moral character information powerfully determines the overall impression we form of another person with whom we have or expect to have an important or meaningful relationship" (2014, 164).

The assessment of moral character seems to be more significant than social competencies such as sociability, straightforward behavior, sociability, or friendliness. In general, morally outstanding people are preferred over morally average people in social contacts. While it is correct that people normally prefer their own social, religious, ethnic, or however distinguished by certain characteristics, and rank them as more moral over other groups. However, this phenomenon no longer applies in the case of morally outstanding persons; instead, they are generally judged more positively, irrespective of religious, ethnic, political or social affiliations. Thus, Brambilla et al. draw the following conclusion: "The irrelevance of the target membership might suggest that the primacy of morality is a stable effect, unaffected by the intergroup context" (BRAMBILLA ET AL. 2011, 142).

A certain difference can be identified in the case of persons with a pronounced existential-seeking attitude, since here morally outstanding persons with a different worldview are preferred over those with their own worldview. The reasons for such an evaluation are complex and not clearly clarified. For example, a morally outstanding person with a different worldview may make a greater impression than morally outstanding persons with a world-view similar to one's one; the desire for new religious insights may go hand in hand with a particularly positive assessment of such a person; or there may be a fundamental skepticism toward members of one's own group, since quite a few of them may hold a defensive religious attitude. Be that as it may, the crucial insight for the present discussion is that a positive-friendly attitude toward another person is shaped in a fundamental way by the assessment of her moral character while other factors seem to be of secondary importance.

CONCLUSION

What makes people tolerant and how can tolerance be promoted? Undoubtedly, philosophical arguments such as Quinn's identify epistemic con-

nections between personal world-view beliefs, pluralism of world-views, and tolerance. Quinn's argument is persuasive since with pluralism comes the rational demand to place one's own world-view in relation to its comparable alternatives. Once these are seen as similarly justified as one's own, a certain epistemic uncertainty results from it, which commends tolerance towards them.

Quinn's argument for tolerance can be complemented with insights about the epistemic-rational nature of world-view beliefs as such. The effort to understand reality as a whole and one's place in it constantly presents itself anew and always has a provisional character in view of new insights and experiences. This dynamic character of world-view beliefs one the one hand and our natural epistemic limitation commends tolerance. We ought to keep in mind that—as long as a world-view is subject to fundamental standards of rationality such as consistency, coherence, openness towards new insights, etc., it represents a genuine expression of another person's desire to understand and interpret reality. As a consequence, the structure of rational world-view beliefs itself demands tolerance.

However, since human persons do not solely live in the space of reasons, psychological factors also play an important role here. Current psychological literature examining the relationship between (religious) beliefs and tolerance makes it clear that factors such as a searching-existential attitude, epistemic modesty or the positive assessment of a person's moral character have a considerable impact on one's degree of tolerance. Philosophical insights in favor of tolerance develop their argumentative thrust only when they encounter these and other psychologically favorable conditions.

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PLURALISM IS NOT ENOUGH FOR TOLERANCE. PHILOSOPHICAL
AND PSYCHOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON PLURALISM AND TOLERANCE

Summary

The issue of religious tolerance is increasingly raised in a globalized world with societies becoming more and more religiously diverse and inhomogeneous. Religious tolerance can be defined as the practice of accepting others as acting in accordance with their religious belief system. Philosophers have recently begun to study more thoroughly the relationship between religious pluralism and religious (in)tolerance with a main focus on the epistemic question of whether the recognition of and reflection on religious pluralism might lead to greater religious tolerance. The major thrust of this idea is that any genuine reflection of a person about her epistemic peers adhering to other religions will weaken the person's epistemic justificatory basis for believing that her own religious beliefs are better warranted than the religious beliefs of her peers.

The rational consequence of the recognition of this justificatory fact, in turn, should lead to more religious tolerance and to a weakened dismissive attitude towards adherents of other religions. The main aim of this paper is to investigate the plausibility of this account against the background of existing empirical, in particular psychological literature: Does increased contact with adherents of other religious traditions indeed lead to more tolerance? How are we able to show a deeper understanding for people with different religious beliefs and to take on—at least partially—their perspective? What are potential psychological obstacles to these achievements? Resources from research on intergroup toleration, social identity-theories, developmental psychology and personality traits will be used for tackling these questions. This shall help to broaden the so far rather narrow epistemic philosophical perspective on religious pluralism and (in)tolerance by embedding it into the larger context of constitutive traits of the human psyche.

Keywords: religious pluralism; rationality of worldview beliefs; psychology of tolerance; personality traits and tolerance.

PLURALIZM NIE WYSTARCZY DO UZNANIA TOLERNACJI.
FILOZOFICZNE I PSYCHOLOGICZNE ROZWAŻANIA
NAD PLURALIZMEM I TOLERANCJĄ

Streszczenie

Kwestia tolerancji religijnej nabiera coraz większego znaczenia w zglobalizowanym świecie, w którym społeczeństwa stają się coraz bardziej zróżnicowane i niejednorodne. Tolerancję religijną można zdefiniować jako praktykę akceptowania innych jako postępujących zgodnie z ich religijnym systemem przekonań. Filozofowie przystąpili ostatnio do dokładniejszych badań nad relacją między pluralizmem religijnym a religijną (nie)tolerancją, koncentrując się na pytaniu epistemicznym, czy uznanie pluralizmu religijnego i namysł nad nim może prowadzić do większej tolerancji religijnej. Główna idea, która im przyświeca, jest taka, że przeprowadzony przez osobę namysł nad tym, że osoby, które są z nią równorzędne pod względem epistemicznym, osłabi jej epistemiczne uzasadnienie dla jej przekonania, iż jej własne przekonania religijne są lepiej uzasadnione niż przekonania religijne osób, które są z nią epistemicznie równorzędne.

Racjonalną konsekwencją uznania tego faktu dotyczącego uzasadnienia powinna być tolerancja religijna i mniej lekceważące podejście do zwolenników innych religii. Głównym celem tego tekstu jest zbadanie wiarygodności tej koncepcji na tle istniejącej literatury empirycznej, a zwłaszcza psychologicznej. Czy większy kontakt ze zwolennikami innych tradycji religijnych rzeczywiście prowadzi do większej tolerancji? W jaki sposób jesteśmy w stanie lepiej zrozumieć ludzi o innych przekonaniach religijnych i – przynajmniej częściowo – przyjąć ich punkt widzenia? Jakie możliwe przeszkody psychologiczne stoją temu na przeszkodzie? Aby odpowiedzieć na te pytania, Autor odwołuje się do wyników badań na temat tolerancji międzygrupowej, psychologii rozwojowej i cech osobowości. Celem jest poszerzenie jak dotychczas dość wąskiej epistemicznej perspektywy filozoficznej na pluralizm religijny i (nie)tolerancję przez wpisanie jej w szerszy kontekst konstytutywnych cech ludzkiej psyche.

Słowa kluczowe: pluralizm religijny; racjonalność przekonań światopoglądowych; psychologia tolerancji; cechy osobowości; tolerancja.