

Tolerance as a Founding Value of World Peace

Anselmo Orlando Pinto¹

University of Saint Thomas of Mozambique – Mozambique

ABSTRACT

Societies today have a heightened awareness of their unity and the way in which each individual depends on the other in indispensable solidarity; however, within these societies bitter political, social, economic, racial and ideological disputes persist and with them the danger of a war that could jeopardize world peace. It is in this context that tolerance emerges as a fundamental ethical priority for building and maintaining peace in the world. Tolerance, therefore, does not imply neutrality of thought, on the contrary, each group has space to present their points of view and experiences for everyone's co-reflection, and everyone is asked to respect the essential norms to the functioning of pluralism. The advocacy of tolerance represents a project of emancipation and is based on the strength of human reason. The objective of this thematic proposal is to reflect on the mystery of man and the meaning of his social being through the prism of considering the moral value of tolerance in the political-democratic order and in social coexistence. Democracy, whose assumptions are condensed in the production of consensus in relation to the good of political life and the experience of citizenship, must recognize that social pluralism poses challenges to the idea of tolerance based on the ontology of the person. For a proper approach to the topic in question, which involve a triple joint: 1) The problem of intolerant democracies today; 2) Social pluralism and public security, and 3) Tolerance and world peace, priority will be given to the method of reviewing the vast and rich literature that discusses the subject in question. In conclusion, the study puts forward the thesis that in the face of various existential scenarios that negatively mark the recent history of many peoples and nations - such is the case of violent extremism in the world, electoral offenses and, consequently, barbaric demonstrations post-elections, the human-environment relationship - the moral value of tolerance continues to be an important factor in building world peace and must therefore be cultivated by everyone.

Keywords: Tolerance, Value, Democracy, Peace, Security.

INTRODUCTION

The growing globalization of conflicts, violence and fear is calling into question the democratic ideal of peaceful coexistence between people. This problematic nature of modern democracies allows us to identify some principles that are now seriously weakened, such as tolerance, security and peace.

¹ Ph.D. in Theology from the Pontifical Urbanian University – Rome (2011) and Degree in Philosophy from the University of Saint Thomas of Mozambique (2006). He is a Professor in the Master's and Doctoral programs and Member of the Ethics Council at the University of Saint Thomas of Mozambique. Email: anselmoorlando@yahoo.com.br; anselmo.pinto@ustm.ac.mz

Tolerance has therefore come under attack from various sources and its detractors have always been those who believe that any deeper diversity, be it moral, ethnic or religious, should be eliminated, even if violently, or brought to uniformity through processes of assimilation.

The issue of security² is central to the development of an orderly civilization and was the fulcrum around which the monarchies of the 17th century was established and modern theories of the State were constructed. Ensuring security is no longer an exclusive task of the State, but something that directly involves the individual, the community and society as a whole.

In a context of rising civilizational malaise, the world is experiencing an increasing number of manifestations of violence and a gradual loss of the notion of peace, which is leading the human sciences to rethink the concept of peace and, consequently, to perceive peace as a problem that urgently needs to be rethought. It is within this logic of rethinking peace in the world that this paper is drawn up, articulated in three points, namely:

- The problem of intolerant democracies today;
- Social pluralism and public security;
- Tolerance and world peace.

THE PROBLEM OF INTOLERANT DEMOCRACIES TODAY

It is a fact that democracy is a certain form of political organization that is truly unpredictable, opening up multiple possibilities in the sphere of power. In the democratic movement, divergent visions and perspectives can coexist, all enjoying the same space of legitimacy. This unusual, dynamic character of democracy also constitutes its strength and beauty. The notion of democracy presupposes the encounter between the diverse, the multiple, the different, the paradoxical [i]. Intolerances, empty oppositions, less desirable behaviors in the context of polarization and political disputes do not postulate any democratic freedom [ii].

For Benedict XVI [iii], elections (as a sublime exercise in the democratic game) constitute a space for the expression of the political choice of a people and are a sign of the legitimacy of the exercise of power. They are a privileged moment for a healthy and calm public debate, marked by respect for different opinions and different political groups. Encouraging the smooth running of elections encourages and encourages real and active participation by citizens in political and social life. Failure to respect the national Constitution, the law or the verdict of the ballot box, when the elections were free, impartial and transparent, can reveal a serious dysfunction in governance and also signify a lack of competence in the management of public affairs.

Democracy, in this context, plays a fundamental and irreplaceable role, because the current system is the one in which freedom of expression and discourse finds its greatest recognition. Liberal democracy³ is an open society; its premise is that no one has a monopoly on the truth.

² Protected value, cf. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art.3.

³ The liberal and democratic goal is to include the politics of recognition of nations in the principles, institutions and rules of collective decision-making of liberal democracies to a greater extent. This does not imply adopting a favorable position towards something like the juxtaposition of a variety of uniform communitarianism's. (Requejo, 1999, p. 14).

This is where dissent finds protection and the tyranny of the majority is tempered with respect for minorities.

The ideal of political tolerance has come under attack from many sources. It's most obvious and tenacious detractors have always been the intolerant, those who believe that any deeper diversity, be it moral, ethnic or religious, must be eliminated, however violently, or brought to uniformity through processes of assimilation. What causes intolerance is the unwillingness to tolerate diversity, that is, the refusal to refrain from trying to prevent that which one disapproves of [iv].

Thus, in reflections on the concept of tolerance, one of the most persistent questions is how can two opposing truths be theoretically and practically compatible?

The growing mixture of cultures, customs, religions and civilizations must lead to a greater effort to question values. At the same time, however, some of the foundations of life in common must be established: for example, equal rights and the equal dignity of each person, regardless of their political, ethnic, religious or sexual identity.

Without this awareness, relativism - an important element for democracy - would degenerate into indifference and arbitrariness, and the path of social development would proceed without fixed points and each person would constitute his or her own truth, closing himself or herself off in shielded identities.

Tolerance being the result of freedom of thought, a constitutive value of society as a social virtue, it is legitimate to ask how intolerant behavior should be dealt with. If excessively tolerated, this can lead to the disappearance of tolerance itself, thus undermining democracy [v].

Any solution to the current clash of intolerances must combat insane nationalism, tribal hatred and religious and ethnic intolerance, and must encourage opposition forces to adhere to the values of moderation, tolerance and non-violence. It is difficult to reconcile the idea of dialogue between cultures with the current theory that non-violence is simply a strategy of convenience [vi]. Since it is necessary to believe in the culture of non-violence, a culture of non-violence and tolerance oriented towards the practice of dialogue must be created.

This means that for intercultural dialogue to be authentic, it must be accompanied, supported and tested by a dialogical tolerance. Unlike a dialectical tolerance, in which each voice is confined to pre-established points of view, and unlike an eclectic tolerance, a dialogical tolerance involves both the self-other and the self-being [vii].

The world is diverse and it is important to respect diversity. However, neither international laws nor international institutions are sufficient to guarantee peace and dialogue in the contemporary world. We need to cultivate a dialogical coexistence, which is only possible when there is an interest in listening to and understanding the other person's point of view, and respect for what is considered vital to cultural identities. These are the basic premises and main objectives of a non-violent dialogue between cultures. But we must understand that, in today's

world, the spiral of hatred and violence constitutes an enormous threat not only to international peace but also to the destiny of humanity [viii].

An open and tolerant society must impose limits on its own tolerance, or it will destroy itself. In fact, tolerance must end where the threat of intolerance begins. This is Popper's famous paradox, illustrated in *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, which states: unlimited tolerance leads to the disappearance of tolerance. If unlimited tolerance is extended to the intolerant, if there is no proper preparation to defend a tolerant society against the attacks of the intolerant, then both the tolerant and tolerance will be destroyed [ix].

Throughout the world, in the last ten years, instances of intolerance have increased, for diverse and complex reasons, which put basic democratic institutions at risk [x].

It is from this perspective that institutions become fundamental, as they allow us to maintain a balance between the need for liberal society to be open and the need to protect the individual against instances of closure that may come from an individual or a group.

SOCIAL PLURALISM AND PUBLIC SECURITY

Pluralism and its potential for conflict are at the heart of the modern political problem. Pluralism immediately comes into conflict with political unity, whose assumption of universality is called into question. At the beginning of modernity, moral pluralism regarding fundamental institutions of the traditional doctrine of natural law constituted an incentive for ethical skepticism, that is, for the crisis of the relationship between the moral universal and the historical particular [xi].

It is important to point out that pluralism is not an exceptional or pathological occurrence, but should be understood as a normal result of the free exercise of human reason acting in conditions of freedom.

Pluralism has flourished and developed impressively in the postmodern period, because this is the period of challenges, abandonment and rejection of previous standards and beliefs [xii].

There are several types of pluralism: intellectual, religious, theological, social, ethical-moral. It is worth highlighting that according to the pluralist approach to reality, no human group can boast of being superior to another in terms of truth, since equal and universal recognition must prevail in the public sphere.

The rights and rules of the liberal-democratic game constitute the minimum normative foundations that support the public sphere of liberal democracies in which we recognize ourselves as citizens [xiii].

The issue of security [xiv] represents a multidimensional concept and cannot be configured as a true individual right, as a subjective legal situation in the hands of individuals and as a prerequisite for freedoms, but is above all a complex good that aims to protect the person in their social relations.

Thinking about public security models that respond to the horizon of the defense of rights is, to a large extent, proposing the rigorous and difficult exercise of recognizing that the old security models represent points of view that limit the vision of the problem they seek to solve [xv].

What is the meaning of public safety? It can be agreed that the social issue of public order, chronologically prior to the issue of public safety, is a concept that dates back to the past 19th century, whose objective is to avoid disorder, the disruption of the established political order [xvi].

The concept of public security has emerged as a political and social issue, as one of the governance problems to be resolved by the rule of law in contemporary democracies. It is a complex assessment of the ever-renewed conflict between the rights of people, as rights inherent to the individual, and the protection of these rights as an indispensable condition for their realization.

The issue of citizen insecurity is closely linked to violence and abuse by police officers. The increase in crime rates in increasingly urbanized societies is a serious cause for concern for all those responsible and for governments. It is therefore urgent to establish independent judicial and prison systems to restore justice and re-educate the guilty. It is also necessary to eliminate cases of miscarriage of justice and mistreatment of prisoners, the numerous instances of non-application of the law, which constitute a violation of human rights, and arrests that are delayed or never brought to trial [xvii].

Public safety is one of the most pressing, demanded and requested aspects of modern society, especially in the lower social strata, which are extremely vulnerable to crime. This is why this is an area that must be treated as a priority by political forces [xviii].

In the search for a common thread in matters of public security, a global vision of the concept and public policies in this area must be presented, starting from the critical principle that a police or repressive State produces as much insecurity or fear as States that are permissive or excessively tolerant of crime [xix].

The security of citizens is a basic political function, vital for the exercise of citizens' rights. The right to security must be effective for all citizens. A progressive public security policy aims to overcome inequality in the distribution of a public good, namely security. A public security policy must be effective and based on an appropriate combination of measures for prevention, deterrence, repression of crime and rehabilitation⁴. Escobar & Jaime [xx], going further, consider that public safety refers to the constitutional pact of a society, that is, it is part of the set of duties, rights and guarantees contained in the fundamental norm for all citizens, and not as a feeling of majority, as is generally thought.

⁴ Efficiency, effectiveness and efficacy are fundamental concepts when it comes to public safety systems; the search for efficiency, effectiveness and efficacy is a constant challenge in public safety systems. Critical analysis of these concepts and their appropriate application are essential to improve management and enhance results in this complex and crucial field for society. De Lima, J. V. (2024). *Segurança Pública Eficaz, Eficiente e Efetiva*. <https://www.jusbrasil.com.br/artigos/seguranca-publica-eficaz-eficiente-e-efetiva/2223601024>, Accessed on September 2, 2024.

Violence and crime are issues that have existed, in reality, for a long time and that have been relegated to a secondary or even marginal level, because their victims, in their overwhelming majority, have always been perceived by the elites as being part of the secondary or marginal population [xxi].

Sessa [xxii], considers that public safety is the object of all norms and measures that aim to maintain public order and security and that concern the constitution and functions of police forces, public assemblies and meetings, religious processions, the carrying of weapons, gambling, alcoholism, and public establishments.

Public safety is, therefore, an objective condition that allows individuals to peacefully carry out their activities of any nature, as long as they are lawful [xxiii].

Although the concept of public security has evolved over the years, also in relation to the transformations of the social structure and the different forms of State that followed, it has always found its *raison d'être* in the need to ensure the orderly and peaceful development of social life. The object of public security according to Sessa [xxiv], is public order, that is, the set of ethical and political principles whose observance and application are considered indispensable to the existence of this order and the achievement of its essential purposes.

Public order has been described as the good order or regular course of civil life, which corresponds to the opinion and feeling of tranquility and security in the community.

Behavior that harms one or more individuals will also harm public safety and, consequently, society, which can occur either directly, that is, by jeopardizing the regular course of a certain activity, or indirectly, by instilling a feeling of insecurity [xxv].

The ideal of social security asserts that everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and to the realization, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality [xxvi].

Public security is therefore subject to social and urban developments and must be managed by various levels of government; urban security, a specification of public security, aims to subjectively create a general feeling of security in society.

The tradition of modern legal and political philosophy has its origins in the theme of the lack of security in the state of nature, which requires the construction of an artificial order capable of ensuring predictability of behavior, certainty of expectations and rules. Security often means a situation in which the possibility of events capable of generating a harmful crisis (for individuals, groups, communities and institutions) is neutralized or minimized. Based on these reflections, security was conceived as a global public good. As a primary good, it constitutes the prerequisite for the pursuit of other goods, material and immaterial, individual and collective [xxvii].

In contemporary times, security is understood and sought from a different perspective and for different purposes, at least in its general character. The transition from the liberal state to the

social state and, in particular, the gradual disappearance of dictatorial regimes with the consequent establishment of democratic governments, has led to a substantial change in the objectives as well as in the very concept of security. Indeed, in democratic governments, the objective of the integrity of territorial borders and the protection of institutions against internal and external attacks is maintained, but, alongside this objective, the security of citizens and the community, understood in a broad sense, is also sought [xxviii].

Public safety, which should not be confused with the generic need for security that affects sectors such as the economy and health, constitutes, in fact, a psychological, emotional state, from which an interest emanates [xxix].

TOLERANCE AND WORLD PEACE

Tolerance is the respect, acceptance and appreciation of the richness and diversity of the cultures of our world, of our modes of expression and of our ways of expressing our quality as human beings. It is fostered by knowledge, openness of mind, communication and freedom of thought, conscience and belief.

Tolerance is harmony in difference; it is not only an ethical duty; it is also a political and justice necessity. Tolerance is a virtue that makes peace possible and contributes to replacing a culture of war with a culture of peace [xxx].

The meaning of tolerance is the appreciation of human diversity and the search for living with others in a respectful, healthy way, guiding the resolution of problems and disagreements through dialogue [xxxi].

Tolerance remains a goal that is rarely achieved. On the contrary, the community is often surrounded by its opposite, intolerance. Intolerance towards other religions, cultures, identities, origins and opinions. Tolerance, however, is one of the fundamental pillars of Universal Rights; without it, fundamental rights crumble [xxxii].

Tolerance education should aim to counteract influences that lead to fear and exclusion of others and should help young people develop skills of independent judgement, critical thinking and ethical reasoning [xxxiii].

Alcón (2021) *apud* UN proposes five main areas to combat intolerance:

1. Laws - governments are responsible for enforcing human rights laws, punishing discrimination and ensuring equal access to dispute resolution.
2. Education - laws are necessary, but unfortunately, they are not enough. This is why more emphasis needs to be placed on education, especially for children. Several organizations are encouraging the introduction of educational programs in schools on religious diversity, with the aim of contributing to social inclusion from the classroom onwards.
3. Access to information - one of the most effective ways is to promote freedom of the press and pluralism, in order to enable the public to distinguish between true facts and opinions.
4. Individual awareness - intolerance breeds intolerance. To combat it, individuals must become aware of the link between their behavior and the vicious cycle of mistrust and violence in society.

5. Local solutions - solutions to intolerance must not come from outside alone. Governments and international institutions cannot be expected to act alone; we must start by promoting tolerant attitudes from within.

The diversity of religions, languages, cultures and ethnicities in the world is not an excuse for conflict, but a treasure that enriches everyone.

For Lima [xxxiv], education is the most effective way to prevent intolerance and is a priority imperative. Since values are learned in childhood and solidified in adolescence, teaching tolerance seeks to prepare students for life in a society that is increasingly diverse due to demographic changes.

The basic concept of education for tolerance consists of the rights and freedoms of students, to ensure their respect and to stimulate the will to protect the rights and freedoms of others. The root lies in the very definition of citizenship, as the exercise of rights and duties: by extension, tolerance encompasses the right to be tolerated and the duty to tolerate. The educational objective, therefore, is the development of independent judgment, critical reflection and ethical thinking. Awareness of the cultural, social, economic, political and religious sources of intolerance, which lead to fear, exclusion and violence, must be developed [xxxv].

Within the context of a rise in civilizational malaise, the world is experiencing an increasing increase in the forms of violence and a gradual loss of the notion of peace, which is leading the human sciences to rethink the concept of peace and, consequently, to perceive peace as a problem that urgently needs to be clarified. A problem that affects governments, States and also the lives of citizens and communities [xxxvi].

The peace project for the 21st century will take into account the aspirations of all nations, but above all the desires of all to participate in the global power of democratizing spaces for building peace [xxxvii].

Although the concept of peace is still open and has been built, debated and reflected upon since the ancient world, it is clear that, from a perspective close to Thomas S. Kuhn's paradigm concept, models of peace have been constructed throughout history [xxxviii].

It is stated that the modern paradigm of peace, which has as one of its foundations the idea of perpetual peace developed by Kant, has four central axes, namely: 1) Basic security of the citizen; 2) Predominance of reason and the person; 3) Balance of power between antagonistic forces; and 4) Creation of privileged spaces for international political and diplomatic debate [xxxix]. The modern paradigm of peace is based on concepts constructed by modern thought such as, for example, State, nation, reason, individual, citizenship, autonomy and coercion [xl].

The guarantee of the effectiveness of fundamental and social rights enshrined in constitutional norms is a pillar that enables social peace and the stability of democratic regimes⁵. The welfare

⁵ Developing a culture of peace is a constant process of trust and cooperation between peoples, which can and should lead to the resolution of conflicts through words and not through weapons. Santos, F. S. & Garcez, M. V. S. (2019). The

state policy, despite all the changes it has undergone over time, is still essential today to guarantee social protection, or at least to reduce material inequalities.

Tolerance, in Spode's view ^[xli], is the way to stop conflicts, which allows human beings to achieve their emancipation and overcome their irrationality so that a more just and supportive community can be built, in which coexistence between its individuals is in fact peaceful, since tolerance is an essential element for building peace.

Tolerance cannot be considered as a simple ability to tolerate the existence of different things and people, but rather the ability to see in the other an individual with rights and duties equal to yours, a participant in the same community as yours and to respect their choices, understanding them as essential for a plural and evolved society ^[xlii].

Tolerance is an individual rather than a collective virtue, but it can only be exercised by an individual in relation to others, that is, within the community. Thus, it only has space in a democratic society, in which dialogue and cultural plurality are present and in which each individual is free to exercise their beliefs and other convictions ^[xliii].

The principle of tolerance, in all its aspects, is the foundation of a Democratic State ^[xliv], as only with its implementation can respect and appreciation of human dignity be achieved.

Tolerance is what qualifies all men as brothers, as essentially human beings, dignifying them as rational and compassionate beings. The realization of this principle is the only way to combat situations of intolerance, including violent religious conflicts, as well as to guarantee men and women the right to be who they are and to assume their personalities without fear of coercion from others ^[xlv].

For Costa ^[xlvi], the principle of tolerance is a key instrument for fraternity between peoples, as solidarity is only possible when human beings respect each other, recognize each other and, despite having different customs, beliefs, races, genders and ideals, they must pursue the same goal: peace among all.

The topic of tolerance, therefore, has been discussed throughout time in almost the same way, that is, on issues related to religion, ethnic, racial and gender minorities, but even today there are difficulties faced by individuals in living in society, whether in relation to tolerance or intolerance. This is because in relation to these issues there is no absolute truth to be followed, but only points of view that must be accepted and respected by all.

CONCLUSION

With this reflection it was possible to understand, on the one hand, that the notion of democracy presupposes pluralism, that is, the encounter between the diverse, the multiple, the different, the paradoxical and, on the other hand, to understand that intolerances, empty oppositions, the least desired behaviors in the context of polarization and political disputes do not postulate any democratic freedom. The theme of public safety that was also listed in this research, represents

a multidimensional concept that is not configured only as an individual right, as a subjective legal situation in the hands of individuals and as a presupposition of freedoms, but is above all, a good that aims to protect the person in their social relations.

This study concludes that tolerance and public safety are indispensable means for preserving world peace. Democracy, as a pillar of popular self-government in many countries around the world, therefore needs good institutions and a strong human fabric to ensure that tolerance and public safety are important factors for maintaining world peace. Ultimately, it is necessary to cultivate a dialogical coexistence, which is only possible when there is an interest in listening to and understanding the other person's point of view.

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