

The Illusion of Universalism: How Liberals Misunderstand “Tolerance”

By
Alex Foulger-Fort

A Thesis Submitted to
Saint Mary’s University, Halifax, Nova Scotia
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Political Science.

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Approved: Dr. Stella Gaon
Professor

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Abstract

This paper seeks to investigate the ties between liberalism and imperialism. Although liberalism is not often associated with imperial tendencies, the social relationship between liberal and nonliberal peoples does not reflect the equality that is advocated by liberal theorists, but instead resembles an unequal power relationship. This relationship is indicative of imperialism which implies a clear delineation between the ruler and the ruled. How does this unequal power relationship between liberals and nonliberals go unnoticed? In an analysis of what I call the “rights-recognition” model of liberalism, I argue that the concept of “tolerance” is the key to understanding how this unequal relationship is maintained and made invisible. Specifically, I argue that liberals have misunderstood the concept of “tolerance” and, when properly understood, the concept implies the existence of an imperialistic power relationship. Furthermore, the way in which the concept of “tolerance” is understood and applied in liberal theory conceals that power relationship between liberals and nonliberals by masking it in a guise of universalism and inclusion. What I hope to show is the misconception of “tolerance” that is promoted in liberal theory can potentially lead to harmful consequences for nonliberal peoples.

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Perhaps it is because of the liberal rhetoric of universality, tolerance, and equality, but liberalism has for hundreds of years now escaped the label of “imperialist”. Yet despite this rhetoric of universal freedom and equality, the social relations between liberals and nonliberals have frequently reflected the power relationship implied by imperialism. From the late-middle ages during the height of European empires, to American foreign policy today, there is a clear trend of imperial action among liberal states. To be clear, I understand imperialism as the practice of aggressive territorial or ideological expansionism. Territorial expansion refers to the unlawful occupation of foreign land; and ideological expansion refers to the unwanted imposition of an ideology upon foreign peoples. But more fundamentally, imperialism implies a clear delineation between ruler and ruled, and it is this unequal social relationship that I argue is present in the treatment of nonliberals by liberals. Imperialism, however, is by no means a feature of liberal theory, and so it raises the question, where does this power relationship come from? Why is it that the encounters between liberal and nonliberal peoples reflect the social dynamic implicated in imperial policies? My research investigates the following question: do liberals simply ignore their history of intolerance, or is there a reason that it goes unrecognized? In this paper I argue that inequality is embedded in the conceptual structure of liberalism itself and in the principles it embodies. This is what tacitly allows for the imperialistic power relationship between liberal and nonliberal peoples to appear as normal and amicable, rather than to be recognized for what it is.

Specifically, my argument is that the concept of “tolerance”, widely promoted in liberal discourse by theorists such as Jürgen Habermas, John Rawls, and William Connolly, is key to understanding the social relations between liberal and nonliberal states. For, the way in which the concept of “tolerance” is understood and applied in liberal theory conceals the inequality of the social relationship between liberals and nonliberals by masking it in a guise of universalism and inclusion. In what follows I undertake an analysis of the “rights-recognition” model of liberalism (hereafter RR) to explain how the concept of “tolerance”, properly understood,

presupposes a power relationship between “us” and “them” (i.e. liberal and nonliberal peoples) and maintains the status of nonliberals as the “other”. RR liberalism is a widely-espoused, contemporary variation of liberal theory which promotes secularism and human rights as a way for people to recognize one another as fundamentally equal, rights-holding individuals, rather than in terms of cultural or personal identities. This theory is based fundamentally on the liberal principle of “tolerance”, and therefore is suited to the research at hand.

In this paper, I demonstrate that despite its claims to universalism, liberalism is, as an ideology, culturally-specific, rather than universal. Furthermore, the employment of tolerance in liberal theory is based on a crucial misconception of the term that sustains a false appearance of universality. The actual definition of tolerance, I argue, requires the presence of an “other” and, as such, implies the existence of a power relationship. For this reason, I make the case that the employment of the concept of “tolerance” allows for the imperialistic power relationship between liberals and nonliberals to seem normal, while also allowing it to continue.

I begin by defining what I mean by “liberalism” in general and by the RR version of it that will be focus of this analysis in particular. I describe how liberalism, as an ideology, functions on the basis of what I refer to as its “principles” and the “ideas” through which they are expressed. In Section II, I demonstrate why RR liberalism should be seen as a culturally-specific ideology, despite its claims of universalism. My position is that the ideas which constitute RR liberalism developed out of the European tradition and remain biased towards that culture. Following that, Section III introduces the concept of “tolerance” and explains the contrast between the liberal conception of the term and the actual meaning of it based the definition of word. I argue here that the liberal concept of “tolerance” mistakenly associates it with the ability to produce equality, when, in fact, tolerance requires “others” and maintains their status as marginalized and separate from the dominant group. In the fourth and final section, I describe the implications of the power relationship that “tolerance” entails, when properly understood. Moreover, I show how

this power relationship goes unrecognized in liberal discourse, and the potentially harmful effects that it can cause. The outcome of this analysis is the conclusion that the imperial power relationship noticeable in liberal encounters with nonliberal peoples can be explained by the employment of the concept of “tolerance” in liberal theory; this concept both presupposes an unequal social relationship between liberals and “others”, and conceals that inequality behind the mask of liberalism’s supposedly universal principles.

I. What is liberalism?

“Liberalism”, according to Duncan Bell, is a term that has been “employed in a dizzying variety of ways in political thought and social science” (2014, 682). Indeed, its “overuse and overextension have rendered [the term] so amorphous that it can now serve as an all-purpose word, whether of abuse or praise” (Shklar, 1989, 21). It is for this very reason that Gary Gerstle, in his essay on the nature of American liberalism, identified its “protean character” (1994, 1043). The ideas behind liberalism have morphed and evolved over the years, and so it is quite difficult to identify its essential core. In the broadest sense, there are two (related) ways of understanding it. The first, as articulated by James Fitzjames Stephen, sees liberalism as an ideology that counters tyranny: it is that which “wishes to alter existing institutions with the view of increasing popular power” (Stephen, 1862, 2). The second, closely related to the first, is that liberalism aims “to secure the political conditions that are necessary for the exercise of personal freedom” (Shklar, 1989, 21).

However, as Jeremy Waldron points out, these conceptions are “too vague and abstract to be helpful” (Waldon, 1987, 131). They gloss over the evolution of liberalism and its constituent ideas. What liberalism means today is quite different from what it meant at the beginning of the twentieth century, and what it meant in the early twentieth century is quite

different from what it meant during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For instance, more classical versions of liberal theory stress the negative nature of the freedom it claims to embody. This was noted by Leonard Hobhouse in the early twentieth century: liberal theory, it seems, urges us “not so much to build up as to pull down, to remove obstacles which block human progress, rather than to point the positive goal of endeavour or fashion the fabric of civilization. It finds humanity oppressed, and would set it free” (1911, 10). Contemporary liberals, on the other hand, tend more towards what Isaiah Berlin called “positive freedom” (Berlin, 2017). For example, contemporary liberal theory (based on the RR model described below) encourages the enactment of rights so as to empower us and give us the capacity to achieve whatever our personal goals may be. It is giving us something with which to achieve progress through our own means, rather than removing the external obstacles that block progress.

It is precisely because of the elusiveness of the core of liberal theory that I endorse Gerstle’s conception of liberalism. Gerstle writes: “however much [liberalism] changed, it never abandoned three foundational principles: emancipation, rationality, and progress” (1994, 1046). He identifies what he calls the “foundational principles” of liberalism, to which I would add liberty, moral autonomy, individualism, and respect for others (which takes the form of ‘tolerance’ in many liberal theories)¹. This brings us to a new total of seven foundational principles which can be said to characterize liberalism. In what follows, I pay specific attention to the foundational principle of “respect for others”, which often goes by the name of “tolerance” (and is how it will be referred to hereafter), because this concept is particularly problematic. Gerstle continues: “liberalism’s evolution can be understood as a series of efforts to reinterpret these principles in light of unexpected historical developments” (1994, p. 1046). In other words, according to

¹ The four principles that I have added are inspired by a list of liberal principles drawn up by Michael Freedman (1996) which include “liberty, individualism, progress, rationality, the general interest, sociability, [and] limited and responsible power”.

Gerstle, liberalism is the ongoing interpretation and application of its foundational principles. As explained below, these interpretations are represented by various ideas. Gerstle thus acknowledges liberalism's amorphous form while also identifying its fundamental pillars. This understanding reveals two components of liberal theory - its seven foundational principles and the various ideas through which they are interpreted.

Before the nineteenth century, for instance, the foundational principles of liberalism (emancipation, rationality, progress, liberty, moral autonomy, individualism, and tolerance) were represented in terms of such ideas as freedom from tyranny, a capitalist economy, and negative liberty. Today, on the other hand, the foundational principles are represented by ideas such as democracy, secularism, and human rights. In other words, we interpret individual principles differently based upon prevalent social values and conditions. As values change, so does the way the foundational principles are interpreted, and this produces a variety of forms of liberalism. In the simplest terms, the principles of liberalism are supposed to be the foundation of a free and equal society (however that is construed), and the vision of this society is expressed through the ideas that are currently valued. Ideas such as democracy, secularism, human rights, and positive liberty are the predominant ideas that represent the foundational principles of liberalism, and that reflect its meaning in contemporary liberal theory. They are ideas which have become increasingly popular over the past two centuries.

Liberalism, today, is undoubtedly the dominant ideology of the West. As Michael Freeden and Marc Stears put it: "liberalism possesses the unusual capacities of durability and adaptability"; "although liberalism has an identifiable core...its variants allow for an astonishing variety, and it has consequently provided both inspiration and opposition to a multitude of political programmes and movements" (2013, 329; 344). Its ubiquity is, in some ways, easy enough to understand. The liberal focus on the individual, rather than the collective, makes it very attractive. Liberals have taken age-old concepts such as freedom, justice, and equality

(among others), and they have refocused them on the individual subject. As such, liberals envision a society wherein, even without substantial wealth or land, one can have a reasonable degree of personal freedom and political representation. As Freedman and Stears say:

More than any other ideology, it has paved the way to the implementation of modern political practices in its methods of governing as well as in its slow but steady drive towards a social inclusiveness that embraces individual recognition and participation, as well as in its resolute commitment to safeguarding fundamental human well-being (2013, 329).

Because liberalism is based on the principle of rationality and on the belief that all humans are capable of being rational, it follows for liberals that all individuals, regardless of background, are able to recognize the value of liberal principles. These claims of universality are recognized by non-liberals as much as they are by liberals, and while there is debate over whether or not they are valid, there is no question of their existence. George Crowder, for instance, recognizes that there is “inherent in liberalism a pressure toward more universal forms of justification” (Crowder, 1998, 8). Shklar, as well, sees in liberalism a “universal and especially a cosmopolitan claim” (Shklar, 1989, 29), while Wendy Brown decries “liberalism’s conceit about the universality of its principles” (Brown, 2009, 21). Whether or not one agrees that the principles of liberalism are actually universally valid, there is broad agreement that an effort to be universal is embedded in liberal claims. The supposed universality of liberalism means that its principles are applicable to all of humanity, and this implies that no one would disagree with them. A liberal society, under this understanding of universality, is based on principles which would disadvantage no one (liberal or nonliberal) and so the liberal society is thought to be open to anyone and everyone regardless of background or culture. In other words, If the society is one in which no one could disagree with the basis upon which it is constituted, it suggests that no one would be opposed to, or disadvantaged by, living there.

While different variations of liberal theory all, in some way or another, represent these foundational principles (rationality, progress, emancipation, liberty, moral autonomy, tolerance, and individualism), each one interprets them through different ideas. The particular version of liberalism that I address in this paper is 'rights-recognition' liberalism (RR), which has been popularized by the well-known philosophers Jürgen Habermas and John Rawls. This contemporary form of liberalism is an ideal case to consider because it very clearly embodies the foundational principle of "tolerance". As I have suggested, this concept is key to understanding how the imperial relationship between liberals and nonliberals has gone unnoticed. The problems that are apparent in the RR model thus provide valuable insight into the question of how imperial relationships, characterized by an unequal balance of power, are tacitly encouraged by liberals, even though liberals explicitly advocate equality.

The RR model of liberalism is established on the foundational principle of "tolerance", but like all other liberal principles, "tolerance" is interpreted through various ideas. The two primary ideas which represent this principle in RR are human rights and secularism. A society based on the RR model of liberalism is one which recognizes other individuals as fundamentally-equal, rights-holding citizens whose collective action is based in a public space free from cultural and religious authority. As such, each member of the political community is recognized as a human, notwithstanding their memberships in various identity-based groups. The underlying claim is that individual members of the political community should be tolerated on the grounds that they have equal rights and are acting in a public sphere free from cultural and religious influence. Rawls expresses this idea as follows:

I understand these ideas of justice to contain three main elements: (i) a list of certain basic rights and liberties and opportunities (familiar from constitutional democratic regimes); (ii) a high priority for these fundamental freedoms, especially with respect to claims of the general good and of perfectionist values; and (iii) measures assuring

all citizens adequate, all-purpose means to make effective use of their freedoms” (Rawls, 1993, 43).

Rawls can be seen to be advocating the rights-recognition version of liberalism here because he is saying that justice means the assurance of rights and freedoms for individuals and the mutual recognition of one another as fundamentally equal.

Habermas, similarly, puts it in the following terms: “I think that liberalism does allow for an interpretation of equal rights that requires the state to grant the equal coexistence of majority and minority cultures; and that it should do so in terms of individual rights to cultural memberships of various sorts” (Habermas, 1995, p. 850). He says that liberal ideas allow for majority and minority cultures to coexist equally in society through the recognition of individual rights. To be clear, by individual rights Habermas is also referring to human rights since, in this context, both refer to human beings as individuals, rather than as members of a larger group. Habermas, then, also can be accurately described as an RR liberal in his advocacy of individual rights as the means for achieving the liberal goals of freedom and equality.

The other fundamental component of rights-recognition liberalism is secularism. As I elaborate below, secularism provides the space for human rights to be recognized in place of religious or ethnic identities. By separating church and state, public space is freed from cultural authority and, instead, the rational justification of human rights becomes the basis of recognition. Secularism and human rights are the fundamental ideas through which the foundational principle of “tolerance” is interpreted within the RR model of liberalism. Together, they form the basis of that model.

Proponents of RR liberalism, like other liberals, claim their principles and ideas are universal. Both Rawls and Habermas, for example, have made these claims about their theories. Rawls says of the human rights associated with RR liberalism that they “are distinct... they are of a special class of rights of universal application and hardly controversial in their

general intention” (Rawls, 1993, 59). Habermas, similarly, notes that “human rights are connected with a universalistic claim to validity” (Habermas, 2010, 475) as part of the “universalist project of the political Enlightenment” (Habermas, 2008, 21). Human rights claim to be universal even in name. The word ‘human’ suggests that these rights apply to all human beings, regardless of culture or background. Even if one would prefer to call them individual rights, the same connotation exists. The universal claims made by liberals are, in this case, built into the very concepts with which they are working. The society based on the RR model of liberalism, according to Rawls, has a constitution that “all citizens as free and equal may be reasonably expected to endorse in the light of principles and ideals acceptable to their common human reason” (Rawls, 2005, p. 137). But, as I argue in what follows, this conception misrepresents RR liberalism as universal, when it is actually culturally specific. This misrepresentation masks the inequality of nonliberals vis-a-vis liberals.

II. The Cultural Specificity of Liberal Principles

Culture, today, is identified “with the particular, local, and provincial” (Brown, 2009a, 21), whereas universalism is identified with the whole, global, and cosmopolitan. In the effort to proclaim their principles as universal, RR liberal theorists such as Rawls and Habermas go to great lengths to separate the principles of their theory from particular cultural values.

Rhetorically, they have somewhat succeeded in this endeavour, as “the notion that liberalism, as a politics, is cultural, is catachrestic” (Brown, 2009a, 21). That is, the notion that liberalism is culturally specific is thought to be a paradox. In her essay “Tolerance as a Discourse of Depoliticization”, Brown outlines three broad ways that liberals have essayed to cement a separation between liberalism and culture. “There is, first, liberalism’s conceit about the universality of its basic principles: secularism, the rule of law, equal rights, moral autonomy,

individual liberty” (2009a, 21)². Second, there is “liberalism’s unit of analysis, the individual, and its primary project, maximizing individual freedom, which stands antithetically to culture’s provision of coherence and continuity of groups—an antithesis that positions liberal principles and culture as mutual antagonists” (Brown, 2009a, 21). The third basis that Brown identifies is that liberalism,

presumes to master culture by privatizing and individualizing it, just as it privatizes and individualizes religion. It is the basic premise of liberal secularism and liberal universalism that neither culture nor religion are permitted to govern publicly; both are tolerated on the condition that they are privately and individually enjoyed (Brown, 2009a, 21).

This is the most important point that Brown makes. Liberals are not simply trying to distinguish their ideology from culture, they are trying to master culture, to subordinate it to liberal principles. Culture becomes positioned as “necessarily antagonistic to [liberal] principles unless it is subordinated—that is, unless culture is literally ‘liberalized’ through privatization and individualization” (Brown, 2009a, 21). Culture is understood as an accessory of liberal universalism which has no governing power, it is a sort of optional extra.

In another essay describing how liberalism separates itself from and puts itself above culture, Brown explains how “liberal theory produces the figure of an individuated subject by abstracting and isolating deliberative rationality from embodied locations and cultural practices” (Brown, 2006, 300). Indeed, she says, “the formulation of rationality that has nonreason as its opposite presumes a Cartesian splitting of the mind from embodied, historicized, cultured being” (Brown, 2006, 300). The liberal subject as constitutively separate from culture implies an “optional relationship with culture, religion, and even ethnic belonging; it

²Although they are not identical, the principles identified by Brown correspond roughly to the seven principles listed in Section I.

sustains as well the conceit that the rationality of the subject is independent of these things” (Brown, 2006, 300). By positioning culture outside the liberal subject, “culture and religion, as forms of rule are dethroned, replaced by the self-rule of men” (Brown, 2006, 301). Broadly speaking, liberalism, insofar as it is portrayed as a master of culture, is universalized. To be a-cultural in this sense means that liberalism is not local nor particular, but rather what encompasses the whole.

On Brown’s view, however, liberal ideas are not universal, they are culturally-specific. In fact, liberal theory is teeming with cultural elements. As she says, “liberalism is not only itself a cultural form, it also is striated with nonliberal culture wherever it is institutionalized and practiced” (Brown, 2009, 23). In other words, not only is liberalism itself culturally specific, but its institutions and practices contain elements of other nonliberal cultures as well. Liberalism, like any other culture “involves a contingent, malleable, and protean set of beliefs and practices about being human and being together; about relating to self, others, and work; about doing and not doing; about valuing and not valuing select things” (Brown, 2009, 23). The specific nature of liberal culture becomes more apparent when one considers the origins of the two ideas which constitute RR liberalism, namely secularism and human rights. While the origin of RR liberalism is different from the origins of the ideas that constitute it, the fundamentality of these ideas to the ideology means that if they are culturally-specific, so too is RR liberalism.

Charles Taylor takes on the first aspect of this task in his article “Modes of Secularism” (1998). “Secularism”, Taylor says “is an invention of this [European] civilization and, by implication, does not travel well and should not be imposed on other cultures. For many Muslims...the attempt to apply its formulae in Muslim countries is perceived as an attempt to impose on them an alien form.” (1998, 31). The word “secular” he explains, derives from the latin word ‘*saeculum*’ which, according to Taylor, essentially denotes “a requirement of distance, or non-coincidence between the Church and the world”, of which the state was a part (1998,

32). Even though there was significant overlap between the Church and state, there was a still “a separation of spheres” (Taylor, 1998, 32). This term became particularly relevant during the “Wars of Religion” after the Reformation which marks the origin of “secularism” as a modern Western practice (Taylor, 1998, 32). The extreme violence and horror of these seemingly endless wars required some form of secularism (as we understand it today) as a ground for coexistence. Secularism, as a political practice, thus began as a solution to a specifically European problem, and it has been deemed to be inapplicable outside of the European context.

Elizabeth Shakman-Hurd elaborates on Taylor’s work by analyzing the effects of secularism today, specifically in International Relations discourse (although it is applicable in the broader context as well) (2004). Hurd identifies two different types of secularism that are prevalent now, laicism and the Judaeo-Christian model, and outlines how they both fall prey to the same problem of cultural specificity that Taylor highlights. The first type, laicism is “the belief in the need to privatize religion” (Hurd, 2004, 242). “The state upholds no religion, pursues no religious goals, and religiously-defined goods have no place in the catalogue of ends it promotes” (Hurd, 2004, 242).

This type of secularism began with Kant and came to be understood as a sort of “rational religion” which sought to create “an authoritative public morality based on a singular conception of reason” (Kant, 1979; Hurd, 2006, 243). However, as William Connolly correctly points out (1999), this “rational religion” can “be thought of as a generic form of Christianity” (Hurd, 2004, 242). Connolly shows how Kant essentially took the moral command system of Christianity and shifted its emphasis from the Christian God to the moral subject (1999). As Connolly explains, Kant’s “rational religion” shares several qualities with the ecclesiastical claims that it purportedly rejects:

First, [Kant’s ‘rational religion’] places singular conceptions of reason and command morality above question. Second, it sets up (Kantian) philosophy as the highest

potential authority in adjudicating questions in these two domains and in guiding the people toward eventual enlightenment. Third, it defines the greatest danger to public morality as sectarianism within Christianity. Fourth, in the process of defrocking ecclesiastical theology and crowning philosophy as judge in the last instance, it also delegitimizes a place for several non-Kantian, nontheistic perspectives in public life.

(Connolly, 1999, 32)

Laicism, then, is not universal but derived from the Christian culture in Europe. Moreover, by claiming to expel religion from politics, “laicists set the terms for the delineation of what constitutes ‘religion’ [and] in doing so they implicit set the limits of public space” (Hurd, 2004, 245).

Because it is inherently Christian (and not universal), laicism is biased in favour of Western culture and against non-liberal cultures. This may explain why “laicism has indeed been hard to swallow for many Muslims” (Hurd, 2004, 245); “What to one side is a more strict and consistent application of the principles of neutrality is seen by the other side as partisanship” (Taylor, 1998, 36-7). As Taylor points out, laicism “does not travel well outside its heartland” (1998, 37)—that is, outside non-Western cultures. What Hurd is able to show very comprehensively is why that is, namely because the laicist version of secularism is inherently Christian in character.

It is the same story with the other form of secularism identified by Hurd, the Judaeo-Christian model. Unlike laicism, the Judaeo-Christian version acknowledges a role for religion within politics. “In this variety of secularism...members of a political community agree upon an ethic of peaceful coexistence and political order based on doctrines common to all Christian sects, or even to all theists” (Hurd, 2004, 247). In the history of the West since the Reformation, the Judaeo-Christian model of secularism provided a relatively effective method for mediating between warring Christian sects. The problem, however, “is that this Judaeo-Christian secular

ground ends abruptly at the edge of Western civilization, however defined” (Hurd, 2004, 251). In other words, this model of secularism was not meant to be able to mediate conflicts involving non-Western belief systems in non-European states.

From this point on, the fault lines between the West and the non-West realize themselves effortlessly. For once it is acknowledged that secularism is a unique Western achievement, it follows that those who are *not* secular are not Western, and those who are *not* Western cannot be secular (Hurd, 2004, 251).

Unlike laicism, which has a pretence of universality, the Judaeo-Christian model of secularism exhibits a strong sense of belonging to its nominal culture.

Secularism, then, which is one of the two ideas through which the liberal principle of “tolerance” is interpreted, is “still conceived within a broader Christian framework” (Hurd, 2004, 241). Hurd demonstrates that secularism is not universal, but culturally-specific. She concludes that secularism “exhibits a tendency to close the political space” to non-Western systems of belief; “it occasionally acts as a faith intolerant of other faiths” (Hurd, 2004, 256). The two forms of secularism, as Hurd demonstrates, were born out of the European-Christian culture and remain today biased towards it. Since secularism is culturally-specific, it is difficult to maintain that the RR model of liberalism is universal because secularism is so fundamental to it.

The other fundamental feature of liberalism that is not universal in its nature is the idea of human rights. The concept of universal human rights, like secularism, emerged in Europe and continues today to be biased towards that cultural context. This development is traced comprehensively by Anthony Pagden in his article “Human Rights, Natural Rights, and Europe’s Imperial Legacy” (2003). He begins by highlighting the long-held objection from non-Western states towards this concept. Even during the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the delegation from Saudi Arabia complained that the committee had “for the most part

taken into consideration only the standards recognized by Western civilization” at the expense of other, non-liberal cultures (quoted in Pagden, 2003, 171). As Pagden argues:

What all of these criticisms have in common is their clear recognition of—and objection to—the fact that “rights” are cultural artefacts masquerading as universal, immutable values. For whatever else they may be, rights are the creation of a specific legal tradition—that of ancient Rome, and in particular that of the great Roman jurists from the second to the sixth centuries, although both the concept and the culture from which it emerged were already well established by the early Republic. There is no autonomous conception of rights outside this culture. This may be obvious. But whereas those who are critical of the idea take it to be the self-evident refutation of the possibility of any kind of universal or natural human entitlement, champions of rights, in particular of “human rights,” tend to pass over the history of the concept in silence (2003, 172).

Human rights, then, originate from the ancient roots of the European tradition and so are, like the two forms of secularism, culturally-specific. Pagden goes so far as to suggest that no other conception of rights exists outside of this culture. He traces the historical development of rights to determine “why we continue to believe that ‘our’ values are necessarily conterminous with those of the human race as a whole” (Pagden, 2003, 173).

In Pagden’s account, the history of rights begins with the Latin term “*ius*” which in Roman law referred more broadly to a legal claim to something. “Early Roman law lacked any notion of a right as we understand the word” (Pagden, 2003, 174). The Roman right was something one claimed under the law, not something that one had by virtue of being human. In the sixth century, this notion evolved into the concept of “natural law”. Initially introduced by the Emperor Justinian, it referred to “merely those patterns of behaviour—procreation, eating, and so on—which are shared by all living beings” (Pagden, 2003, 174). However, the term was modified by

later jurists to refer to “forms of behaviour proper only to humans...and in the thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas would transform it into a body of universal, and innate, principles which would act as a bridge between the human and the divine” (Pagden, 2003, 174). It was on the basis of these legal principles that the modern idea of “human rights” developed.

The connection between human rights and European culture is so pronounced that Pierre Manent referred to them as “the moral and political referent of the West” (2001). In fact, Pagden argues that rights can only ever be cultural artifacts. The idea of a universal conception of rights is impossible:

For unless, as some modern theologians have insisted, we accept the idea of a transcendent deity who has simply given us our rights as our property in the same way that He or She has provided us with hands and the capacity for speech, the very notion of a translocal, transcultural human right only makes sense within the context of a conception of “humanity,” and since humanity is, empirically, and for whatever historical reason, social, then it can, in effect, only make sense in the context of a given understanding of what a society should be.” (Pagden, 2003, 192)³

In their attempt to prove the universality of liberalism, theorists of the RR ideology such as Rawls, and Habermas have tried to separate liberal principles from culturally-specific values. Liberal theorists postulate an “individuated subject” in an attempt to distinguish human reason from culture and to give humanity a mastery over culture as a sort of optional extra. Despite these attempts, the origins of secularism and human rights prevent RR liberalism from achieving universal applicability. As Taylor, Hurd, and Pagden all show, the two fundamental ideas of RR liberalism were born out of, and remain attached to, the European tradition. As such, RR liberalism, which relies so heavily on these two ideas, is not universal but culturally-specific.

³ Despite these arguments, Pagden nonetheless concludes that we should still promote human rights. Why he draws this counter-intuitive conclusion is outside the scope of this paper.

III. Tolerance

Despite the cultural specificity of RR liberalism, it has certainly accomplished an appearance of universality. This false appearance of universality, I argue, is caused by the foundational principle of “tolerance”. However, what exactly is “tolerance”? Before analyzing the implications of the concept (which is done in the next section), this section explores what “tolerance” actually means. The concept of “tolerance” is integral to liberalism. It is one of liberalism’s foundational principles and Brown describes it as “an emblem of Western civilization” (2009b, 37). Indeed, according to Will Kymlicka, “liberals are often defined as those who support toleration because it is necessary for the promotion of autonomy” (1998, 97). Moral autonomy is an integral part of the liberalism’s “individuated figure” and, as Bernard Williams says, “if toleration as a practice is to be defended in terms of its being a value, then it will have to appeal to substantive opinions about the good, in particular the good of individual autonomy” (1998, 24). Habermas as well alludes to the necessity of tolerance when he describes a liberal society as one that “that allows autonomous citizens to coexist in a civilized manner” (Habermas, 2008, 24). The term “coexistence” implies the presence of “differentness” and thus requires a concept to regulate difference. That concept is “tolerance”.

However, what exactly do we mean by tolerance? As Ahmet Insel asks,

Tolerance is proposed as the central axis of a modern times policy to allow the coexistence of differences. But what coexistence? The one based on a general principle of equality of differences, particularly on the political and legal level, or the one based on an acceptance of the other from a commonly accepted hierarchy of differences? (Insel, 2019, 1-2).

The former definition is a typical liberal understanding of tolerance, and the latter is a more of historical understanding (based, in Insel's article, on the model of the Ottoman empire). The liberal conception, I argue is not a valid understanding of the term, whereas the historical understanding is closer to the actual definition of the concept.

As a foundational principle of liberalism, the understanding of "tolerance" depends on how it is interpreted in the contemporary social context. In the RR model of liberalism, as I have shown, tolerance is interpreted through the ideas of secularism and human rights. In other words, tolerance, on this understanding, involves the presence and adoption of those two liberal ideas. Human rights and secularism, however, are culturally specific to the European, liberal tradition which means that "tolerance" is constituted by ideas that are exclusive to liberal peoples. To be tolerated in this sense, one must already be liberal (or at least willing to become liberal) since being tolerated (in the liberal sense) presupposes that one is liberal oneself, given that human rights and secularism are a prerequisite of being tolerated. As Brown puts it, the liberal conception of "tolerance thus requires in advance what it also promotes" (Brown, 2006, 302). To put it another way, the liberal understanding of "tolerance" promotes liberal ideas, while simultaneously requiring their prior adoption.

This understanding is more like a model of assimilation, then, rather than of tolerance, because it only applies to, and recognizes, liberals. To tolerate nonliberals, in this sense, is to impose liberal values upon them, and this is not to tolerate, but to assimilate. This can easily go unrecognized because of the perceived universality of liberalism (described earlier) because if liberal principles were truly applicable to all of humanity, there would be nothing to assimilate. Actual tolerance, however, which is based on the historical understanding outlined by Insel, requires the presence of the "other", and as soon as the "other" disappears—whether because it has been accepted or rejected—tolerance is no longer relevant. As the proceeding definition will show, tolerance can only exist while there is an "other".

A more accurate understanding of tolerance is provided by Brown—which corresponds with Insel’s historical version—who begins with the dictionary definition:

The *Oxford English Dictionary* identifies the Latin root of tolerance as *tolerare* meaning to bear, endure, or put up with and implying a certain moral disapproval. The *OED* offers three angles on tolerance as an ethical or political term: (1) ‘the action or practice of *enduring* pain or hardship’; (2) ‘the action of *allowing*; license, permission granted by an authority’; (3) ‘the *disposition to be patient with or indulgent* to the opinions or practices of others; freedom from bigotry...in judging the conduct of others; forbearance; ‘catholicity of spirit’ (2009b, 26, emphases hers; Oxford English Dictionary, 1971).

The actual meaning of tolerance, then, is radically different from the liberal conception of the term. “The OED definitions together make clear that tolerance involves neither neutrality towards nor respect for that which is being tolerated”, unlike the liberal understanding (Brown, 2009b, 26). Tolerance, rather, is simply a protection against intolerance, nothing more. It does not require any further concession to be granted to the tolerated subject other than the acceptance of their existence. The three definitions offered by the dictionary—“enduring”, “licensing”, and “indulging”—imply the presence of something that one would prefer not to exist. To endure something, to license its presence, or to indulge its existence suggests that one is “suffering something one would rather not, but being positioned socially such that one can determine whether and how to suffer it, what one will allow from it” (Brown, 2009b, 26). The concept of “tolerance”, then, properly understood, is predicated on the presence of the “other” and is employed to regulate it. It is a conceptual tool of governance designed to be the mediator between “us” and “them”.

Based on this understanding, it becomes clear that the liberal concept of “tolerance” mistakenly associates it with the ability to produce equality. By masquerading a model of

assimilation as tolerance, liberals propound the benefits of assimilation under the name of tolerance. Whereas tolerance is incapable of producing equality, assimilation is, and so liberals have essentially found a way to promote the idea that tolerance is capable of producing equality (even though it is not). Furthermore, secularism and human rights are both liberal ideas that promote a liberal conception of equality. Human rights are attributed equally to everyone by virtue of their humanity, and the secular public space is said to be open to all kinds of people. By understanding the concept of “tolerance” as being constituted by these ideas based on equality, liberals imagine that tolerance can help create an equal society. The concept of “tolerance”, however, when properly understood, cannot produce equality. As the historical, actual definition of the concept shows, one can only practice tolerance with respect to a group which is set apart from the dominant, liberal group and is unequal in status. Properly understood, the concept of “tolerance” thus presupposes the existence of a power relationship and, as long as the act of tolerating remains relevant, so too does the power relationship (a point which will be returned to shortly).

The liberal concept of “tolerance” is based on the rhetoric associated with the term, rather than on its actual meaning. In particular, “tolerance” carries with it a language of multicultural inclusion. The employment of the concept during the religious wars after the Reformation associated it with a reputation for successful conflict resolution and multicultural accommodation. From its success in that context, it is easy to understand how “tolerance” became associated with ideas such as universalism, inclusivity, and openness in the West. As such, tolerance, today, is viewed as a concept which enables or even produces multiculturalism, openness, and equality. The concept of “tolerance”, however, is capable only of enabling multiculturalism, not producing it. It does allow for multiple faiths to live together in relative security, but it cannot produce inclusivity or equality.

No matter how ones theorizes about “tolerance”, the concept cannot be made into something it is not. Liberals such as Connolly, Insel, and Habermas have tried to align the meaning of tolerance with the value of inclusivity, but this is to misrepresent what “tolerance” is. In his essay “Pluralism and Faith”, for example, William Connolly makes this mistake (2006). Connolly recognizes some of the limitations of tolerance, namely that, as Leo Strauss argued, tolerance “pushed to the extreme...becomes perverted into the abandonment of all standards and hence all discipline” (Strauss, 1968, 63). Strauss’ concern was that an unlimited promotion of tolerance leads to intolerance, and so Connolly’s solution is to set limits on the concept in the context of what he calls ‘cultural pluralism’. A cultural pluralist “is one who prizes cultural diversity along several dimensions and is ready to join others in militant action, when necessary, to support pluralism against counter drives to unitarianism” (Connolly, 2006, 280). In other words, Connolly advocates a society where a plurality of faiths all live equally without one particular faith dominating, and he thinks that a limited form of tolerance can help to achieve this vision and protect against the threat of intolerance. “Pluralists set limits on tolerance to ensure that an exclusionary, unitarian movement does not take over an entire regime” (Connolly, 2006, 281). By “limits”, Connolly is referring to measures which cut off the promotion of tolerance before it becomes intolerance. By doing so, Connolly hopes to avoid the concern raised Strauss that the concept of “tolerance”, in an extreme and unlimited form, can result in intolerance. The form of “tolerance” promoted by Connolly would be limited so as to not reach the extreme form that Strauss describes.

The issue with Connolly’s conception of “tolerance”, however, is that he imagines that (even in a limited form) it can be part of an egalitarian society which “prizes cultural diversity” and “supports pluralism against counter drives to unitarianism” (Connolly, 2006, 280). Yet, as the definition of actual “tolerance” shows, as long as the concept is employed, an unequal “other” must be present. In other words, the concept of “tolerance” actually supports

unitarianism which places one group above the rest. While a limited form of tolerance may well protect against intolerance, it will not support Connolly's idea of cultural pluralism in which diversity is celebrated and all different groups are on more or less equal footing. Setting limits on "tolerance" does not make the concept any more compatible with equality or an egalitarian society, it simply means that within the scope it is given, an unequal "other" will be present.

A similar, but unlimited conception of "tolerance" has been articulated by Habermas:

Tolerance means that believers of one faith, of a different faith and non-believers must mutually concede one another the right to those convictions, practices and ways of living that they themselves reject. This concession must be supported by a shared basis of mutual recognition from which repugnant dissonances can be overcome... Therefore, the basis of recognition is not the esteem for this or that characteristic or achievement, but the awareness of the fact that the other is a member of an inclusive community of citizens with equal rights, in which each individual is accountable to the others for his political contributions (Habermas, 2008, 22).

The conception of "tolerance" advocated by Habermas entails the idea that tolerance itself can produce equality, which, as the definition of actual tolerance shows, is logically impossible.

Unlike Connolly, who which imagines a limited form of tolerance *as part* of egalitarian society, Habermas takes it further by ignoring Strauss' concern and imagining that "tolerance" represents the equality that he sees is part of a liberal society. Such an understanding of "tolerance" is clearly at odds with the definition of the term and misrepresents the concept as something it is not.

Insel makes a similar error in his article. He suggests that there are two versions of tolerance, one based upon principles of equality, and another based on hierarchy. Historically the latter has been employed he says, and so moving forward "we must always be alert to the

assertion of majority tolerance if this posture is not supported by general principles of equality and policies to achieve them in practice” (2019, 5). Insel provides a very accurate analysis of the problems associated with the concept of “tolerance”, yet he maintains that (under the right circumstances) tolerance can be a part of an egalitarian society. As we have seen, however, of the two concepts of “tolerance” only one is logically supportable. That is the historical, actual conception of “tolerance” which, under no circumstances, is compatible with equality. Even if the concept of “tolerance” was supported or surrounded with principles of equality, it would not make the concept itself any more supportive or congruent with that equality. As long as “tolerance” is employed, the society in which it is being promoted will not be equal.

In short, the liberal conception of “tolerance” is a poor reflection of the concept when compared to the actual understanding of “tolerance” based on the definition of term. The liberal concept of “tolerance” mistakenly suggests that it is capable of producing equality when, in fact, the actual concept of “tolerance” requires the presence of an unequal “other”.

IV. The Power Relationship of Tolerance

While the liberal concept of “tolerance” is associated with equality, inclusion, and openness, the actual understanding of the concept presupposes the existence of, and is predicated upon, a power relationship. The liberal presentation of term covers over the power relationship implied by “tolerance” through an appearance of universality that makes that relationship appear innocuous, but the concept is only relevant when there is a preexisting power relationship in place. Furthermore, covering over this power relationship has potentially harmful effects. As long as the concept of “tolerance” is employed, the “others” (nonliberals) cannot achieve equal footing with the dominant liberal group. The concept of “tolerance” requires the presence of “others” and they become placed in an awkward limbo wherein they are neither fully accepted

nor fully rejected—they occupy a sort of middle ground. When the the act of tolerating ceases (for whatever reason), it implies that the “other” has been removed from the middle ground and have now been either outright rejected (deemed intolerable) or assimilated (accepted as the same as the dominant group). For this reason, as long as the concept of “tolerance” remains a foundational principle of liberalism, social minorities will continue to be marginalized, while their relationship with the dominant group is made to appear amicable and equal.

As explained in the previous section, the concept of “tolerance” therefore does not produce equality; it produces a relatively functional multicultural society that is vulnerable to social discord because its minority groups can never achieve equal status. This concept should not be viewed as part of the egalitarian society imagined by liberals. Emerging as a solution to the incessant religious wars after the Reformation, tolerance was merely meant to provide a relatively functional multi-religious society, not an egalitarian utopia. As Brown remarks, “tolerance was initially embraced not as a moral or principled conviction but as a practical solution to an impossible impasse” (2009b, 32). In the context of the religious wars, the concept of “tolerance” was an ideal solution because it produced a certain level social stability. However, in the modern context where there already is a degree of social stability, tolerance simply covers over inequality.

What emerges from this analysis is that the concept of “tolerance” is the prerogative of those who have power over those without it. The second *OED* definition (cited previously) highlights this specifically: “the action of *allowing*; license, permission granted by an authority” (OED, 1971). To tolerate is to presuppose that one is positioned socially in such a way as to be able to license the presence of another. For example, a state decides if it will tolerate the presence of a group of refugees or not. Kant made this observation concerning the relation between tolerance and power early in the history of liberalism: “a prince who does not find it beneath him to say that he takes it to be his *duty* to prescribe nothing, but rather to allow men

complete freedom in religious matters, [is one] who thereby renounces the arrogant title of *tolerance*" (Kant, 1996, 62). As Kant says, to tolerate is arrogant; it implies that the "other" is beneath me and that, out of sheer kindness, I will tolerate his or her presence. The concept of "tolerance" is thus a "posture of indulgence toward what one permits or licenses, a posture that softens or cloaks the power, authority, or normativity" of the act (Brown, 2009b, 26). "Tolerance" can be understood as a method for cloaking or softening the power relationship that is necessarily present.

Indeed, as long as the concept of "tolerance" is in play, a power relationship is actually required. "Tolerance", however, produces an appearance of universality that makes the power relationship invisible. It masks inequality in the language of universal inclusivity and openness with which it has become associated, while allowing for the unequal relationship to continue. To show how this works, Brown describes the image that becomes associated with liberalism as a result of the employment of "tolerance". For Brown, liberalism's appearance of universality is closely related "with the capacity for tolerance" and, moreover, "tolerance itself is identified with civilization" (2006, 310). Liberalism's capacity for tolerance connects it with an appearance of universality that identifies it as above culture, rather than ruled by it. In other words "'culture' is what nonliberal peoples are imagined to be ruled and ordered by, but liberal peoples are considered to *have* culture or cultures" (2006, 299, emphasis hers).

Nonliberal societies and practices, especially those designated as fundamentalist, are not only depicted as relentless and inherently intolerant but as potentially intolerable for their putative rule by culture or religion and concomitant devaluation of the autonomous individual, in short, their thwarting of individual autonomy with religious or cultural commandments" (2006, 310).

The image of universalism associates liberalism with civility, rationality, and equality because liberals are deemed to be above the rule of culture, whereas non-universal regimes, by contrast,

become associated with the opposite qualities—intolerance, fundamentalism, and a dangerous disregard for individual rights. Universal liberalism, then, becomes “the broker of what is tolerable and intolerable” (Brown, 2006, 310-11). Imperial power relationships that start under the banner of universal liberalism disavow “the cultural imperialism that such aggression entails because the aggression is legitimated by the rule of law and the inviolability of rights and choice, each of which is designated in liberal discourse as universal and noncultural” (Brown, 2006, 314). For Brown, then, liberalism is associated with universalism on the grounds of tolerance, civility, rationality, and equality, whereas nonliberal regimes are thought to be incapable of achieving these goods. As a result, liberalism is thought to be the sole ideology capable of providing equality among different groups because it is not governed by culture which is associated with particular locations or regions. The association with the capacity for tolerance and civility connects the liberal ideology to an image of universalism that covers over unequal power relationships.

Such associations as Brown describes can have potentially dangerous effects. To cover over a power relationship and treat it as unproblematic can lead to harmful consequences. Specifically, states acting under the liberal ideology can inadvertently legitimize aggression towards nonliberals. To reiterate Brown’s point, cultural imperialism under the liberal ideology is disregarded because “the aggression is legitimated by the rule of law and the inviolability of rights and choice, each of which is designated in liberal discourse as universal and noncultural” (Brown, 2006, 314). In his work, Pagden shows the potential effects of the power relationship that liberals fail to recognize between themselves and nonliberals. While he is not talking about the concept of “tolerance” explicitly, he is talking about the image of universality which, as Brown describes, becomes associated with liberalism as a result of the employment of tolerance.

Pagden demonstrates how the appearance of universality that is associated with RR liberalism can potentially justify aggression towards nonliberals in some extreme cases. To make this point, Pagden considers the issue of human rights. As shown earlier, human rights are products of European culture and descriptive of typically European subjects. The majority of nonliberal regimes are in contravention of these rights by the mere fact that they are nonliberal and this, as Pagden argues, seems to justify aggression towards them as a civilizing mission. Pagden's work on the language of universal rights in liberal theory shows the potential effects of an unequal power relationship going unrecognized.

Specifically, Pagden outlines three broad categories of rights which liberal empires have used to soften the impact of imperial power: "(1) the right to preemptive strike, (2) the right to the use of "vacant" lands, and (3) the right to punish those who transgress the law of nature" (Pagden, 2003, 181). The first right effectively justifies the conquests of liberal regimes in the name of defence. "If you are getting evidently stronger than me, I have a right to strike at you, before you are able to strike at me" (Pagden, 2003, 181). Rights (2) and (3) focus on the use of land, and they introduced something new to international relations:

Both suppose that war may be made against both individuals and societies on the basis not of their behaviour towards potential belligerents but merely on the basis of the entirely non-belligerent customs they practice amongst themselves (Pagden, 2003, 182).

Under the guise of universality, the liberals that Pagden describes claim to know what is good for the world, and this is presumed to give them the right to invade the land of those who appear to be conducting their society incorrectly. Rights (2) and (3) were closely related in practice, moreover, since the cultivation of soil "not only deserves the attention of a government because of its great utility, but in addition is *an obligation imposed upon man by nature*. Every nation is therefore bound by natural law to cultivate the land which has fallen to its share" (Quoted in

Pagden, 2003, 183, emphasis his). Barbarians who left land unoccupied, then, were thought to be in violation of the law of nature, and so liberal regimes were presumed to have the right to seize that land without opposition. Natural rights became a way for liberals to justify any desired conquest on the ground that, because they were universal, they had the power to determine what was good and right for humankind and what needed to be fixed. In other words, because the unequal relationship between liberals and nonliberals was being covered over, the law of nature, in effect, became a way to justify expansionism in the name of civilization. As Pagden puts it:

Since the law of nature had no obvious limits, any deviation from the more central normative rules by which civilised beings lived their lives could be construed not simply as different but as unnatural. Simply, the arguments came down to the claim that those who do not have cultures which perform as we assume cultures should perform can be dispossessed by those who do (Pagden, 2003, 183).

Pagden shows that the appearance of universality can potentially justify aggression towards nonliberals by framing as a civilizing mission, as if they are bringing development to the barbarians.

In another article, Pagden provides an in depth description of the Spanish conquest of the Americas, which exemplifies his argument (1987). The article investigates how the Spanish justified their invasion of the Americas: the majority of the arguments in favour of the conquest emphasized their need to civilize the indigenous barbarians. Pagden addresses the work of Francisco de Vittoria in particular, a theologian of the time, who sought to understand how the Spanish Crown could justify the conquest on the basis on natural rights. The Spanish had argued that the Americans had violated their natural rights and, as such, the Europeans had a good reason to invade their territory and help bring civilization to this new region (Pagden, 1987). This example demonstrates very clearly the variety of ways that the Spanish, in belief of

their own universality, could cover over a dramatically unequal relationship by emphasizing the helpful nature of their colonial efforts. These rights cover over the inequality between liberals and nonliberals by justifying aggression as a legal prerogative founded on the rule of law, when it is arguably the exploitation of supposed inferiors.

Brown and Pagden each show in a different way how liberalism's appearance of universality masks the imperialistic power relationship between liberals and nonliberals. Brown, on the one hand, observes that by achieving the appearance of universality, liberalism becomes associated with civility and equality, while nonliberal regimes are seen as intolerable, fundamentalist, and unequal. Pagden, on the other hand, shows us the potential effects of the unrecognized power relationship by describing how liberals can use the language of universal rights to legitimize conquest against nonliberals on the basis of natural law.

V. Conclusion

Tolerance, when promoted by contemporary RR liberals, prevents the realization of equality while continuing to cover over the power relationship between liberals and nonliberals. In this paper, I have argued that the RR model of liberalism, in spite of its rhetoric, is not universal, but rather culturally-specific. The RR model of liberalism is founded on the liberal principle of "tolerance" which is interpreted (in this model) through the ideas of human rights and secularism. I have demonstrated that both of these ideas originated and developed in the European tradition, and therefore are specific to that cultural region. In spite of its cultural specificity, however, RR liberalism has maintained an illusion of universality that is sustained by the liberal concept of "tolerance" which mistakenly associates the term with the ability to produce equality among different groups. I show how, when properly understood, the concept of "tolerance" cannot produce equality because it requires the presence of an unequal "other".

Furthermore, the actual meaning of “tolerance” entails a power relationship that is covered over and normalized by the ideas which have become associated with that concept and, by extension, with RR liberal theory more generally. Covering over this power relationship, however, has potentially harsh effects on nonliberal peoples as was demonstrated through the work of Pagden. Overall, I hope to have shown that the concept of “tolerance” is the key element in RR liberal theory that explains how the power relationship between liberals and nonliberals is maintained and continues to go unrecognized.

In order to achieve the liberal goals of freedom and equality, the mask of equality provided by the concept of “tolerance” must be pulled off. For a long time now, the imperialistic power relationship between liberals and nonliberals has gone unnoticed in liberal discourse and it is a misunderstanding of the concept of “tolerance”, I have argued, which has allowed the inequality between liberals and nonliberals to persist. Perhaps with a better understanding of the concept of “tolerance”, liberals can begin understand the limitations of their ideology and recognize the reality of the relationship between liberal and nonliberal peoples.

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