Prejudice, Bigotry, Assertiveness, and Supremacism

Understanding Variations in Political Tolerance as a Key to Democratic Viability

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Prejudice, Bigotry, Assertiveness, and Supremacism: Understanding Variations in Political Tolerance as a Key to Democratic Viability

This article puts forward the proposition that, in the manner that it is measured in most studies today, the current definition of political tolerance is too similar to that of our understanding of what democracy stands for. Consequently, most research has assumed the importance of political tolerance for democracy and then focused most efforts on trying to explain how political tolerance can be protected, upheld, or explained. Therefore current approaches overshoot the more fundamental problem of saying something more substantial about how various forms of political intolerance or tolerance can be related to democratic performance. The critique formulated here – and the solution to it – involves a closer scrutiny of the value systems of tolerant and intolerant individuals. It involves taking into account regime preferences and levels of knowledge when assessing the stance individuals may take regarding the political rights of disliked groups or individuals. This enables us to separate categories of intolerant and tolerant individuals on the basis of their motivation for the position they adopt. Categorization in that way can tell us more about the viability of democracy and the choice of efforts to reinforce it, than can previous measurements and definitions of political tolerance.

One of the "unanswered questions" within the study of democracy in general and political tolerance in particular is how much political tolerance among citizens is needed to keep a democracy stable and viable. A number of political scientists clearly present the position that a political culture based on values of political tolerance is necessary to make democracy viable (Fakir, 2010;

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J. L. Gibson, 1995; James L. Gibson & Duch, 1993; Orcés, 2008; J. L. Sullivan & Transue, 1999; Sullivan, et al. 1982). Their source of inspiration has clearly been Lipset's seminal text on modernization in which he described how certain states in Europe did, or did not, successfully manage important conflicts in society:

> The examples presented above do not explain why different countries varied in the way they handled basic national cleavages. They should suffice, however, to illustrate the worth of a hypothesis relating the conditions for stable democratic government to the bases of diversity. Where a number of historic cleavages intermix and create the basis for weltanschauung politics, the democracy will be unstable and weak, for by definition such political views do not include the concept of tolerance. (Lipset, 1959), p. 94

Nonetheless, this position builds to a large extent on assumptions and sometimes on a circular argumentation. It does so since political tolerance is a kind of virtue that we often tend to assume to be a core part of the very definition of democracy. It is as important to have citizens who to a substantial extent are politically tolerant as it is that a substantial proportion of the population should vote. If no one voted, the government would survive for a while but its democratic quality would soon be lost. In a similar vein we can imagine a state consisting of completely intolerant citizens. It could survive as a democracy for some time perhaps with a strong government enforcing the law, but it would be pointless to call such a state a democracy and it would in all likelihood soon collapse.

Consequently most research has assumed the importance of political tolerance and then focused most efforts on trying to explain how political tolerance can be protected, upheld, or explained. According to some scholars, the key lies in individuals and the degree of tolerance embodied in their views; according to others, the viability of democracy depends mostly on how well state institutions handle rights for minorities. However, while framing the problem in these ways has certainly been fruitful for research on political tolerance, it has become increasingly evident that current approaches overshoot the more fundamental problem of being able to say saying something more substantial about how various forms of political intolerance or tolerance can be related to democratic performance. In other terms, current ways of measuring tolerance blur important distinctions.

The critique formulated here – and the solution to it – involves a closer scrutiny of the value systems of tolerant and intolerant individuals. Current research on political tolerance constantly uncovers new causes for attitudes: genes, personality traits, social capital, human capital, economic resources, regime type, residential environment (ethnic or economic), etc (Cesarini, Johannesson, & Oskarsson, Forthcoming; Duch & Gibson, 1992; James L. Gibson & Gouws, 2000, 2001; J. Mondak, M. Hibbing, Canache, Seligson, & Anderson, 2010). Any

or all of these factors, presumably, may serve to increase or to reduce political tolerance. We might also investigate how quickly or easily changes take place in people's values in this area. How deeply they are seated. How intensely they are felt. However, in most studies a rather simplified definition of intolerance is used which may obscure important differences in how tolerance is learned (or not), and in the degree to which we can be socialized into becoming more tolerant (or less). In response, one might argue that the "question" posed at the beginning will never be meaningfully answered unless we formulate a more refined view of what it means to take a tolerant or intolerant position in relation to other citizens and groups.

However, current research on political tolerance suggests some ways forward. The solution advanced here takes into account individuals' regime preferences and levels of knowledge when assessing the stance they take on the political rights of "others." It also requires that we take very great care when applying the commonly used method of presenting respondents with least-liked groups. If we are to arrive at this solution, we must begin with a discussion of the main positions that researchers have taken in this debate.

Political Tolerance Studies

Political tolerance, according to most of the modern literature on the topic, implies putting up with ideas, persons, and groups that we dislike or find objectionable (J. Gibson & Gouws, 2003; Stouffer, [1955] 1963; John L. Sullivan et al., 1982; Tallentyre, 1906; van Deth, Montero, & Westholm, 2007). At a very general level, it involves the conviction that those who vote for political parties that one does not like, or who are members of organizations to which one objects, should nonetheless have the same rights as oneself. From a selfish perspective, this may seem to be a promising principle: it ensures one's own right to vote for the party of one's choice and to join whichever club or association one prefers, even when the majority holds a very different opinion. We may also, however, appreciate tolerance from a more general perspective. That is, we may realize that universal rights make societies work better. Rules gain legitimacy precisely when they are universal, and societies which apply them may therefore become more stable and humane – even when sharp conflicts of interest divide them (Rothstein, 2011).

But achieving political tolerance is no easy task. The greatest challenge for democracies has persistently been to safeguard pluralism in society – pluralism as in ethnic diversity, freedom of thought, freedom of expression, and freedom from discrimination on the basis of background, sexual orientation or other lifestyle choice, etc. – against forces promoting conformity and absolute unity. This challenge lies in the nature of the democratic project. If we all looked the same, lived the same way, and held the same values, there would be no conflict

or, indeed, even any need for democracy. However, thanks to pluralism, diversity, and the fact that we do have conflicting interests, and as long as we need to share space and resources, we must devise regimes that "deal" with these differences.

A solution commonly proffered by authoritarian ideologies is to create stability by removing differences – by taking away whatever traits are seen as too different, or by simply getting rid altogether of those persons who are considered "too different" from the rest of society. The former approach has characterized various brutal projects of assimilation: for example, Communist re-education programs during the Cold War. The latter approach has involved ethnic cleansing, whether achieved by outright killing or by expelling the "different" groups from the country, as seen also in Germany in the 1930s and 1940s, or in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Democracy, on the other hand, builds on the idea that differences are accepted. We need to agree on certain basic principles in order to make a society and a democracy viable, but beyond that we need to accept variation, dissent, and differences of opinion. People must therefore learn to tolerate one another. However, there are certainly limits to what tolerance can achieve.

In particular after the Second World War, there were strong doubts as to whether democracy could survive at all. It seemed that plural societies always led eventually to so many conflicts that democracy simply could not handle them. To some it even seemed that democracy made conflicts worse (Rabushka & Shepsle, 1972). Very broadly speaking, there are two approaches in modern social science which hold out a less deterministic and pessimistic prospect for democracy.

One has come to focus on the role of the state and its institutions as the main agent for handling diversity and solving major conflicts in plural societies. To James Madison's mind, simply handing out power to units below the central government could lead in the wrong direction, as could a one-sided focus on furnishing individuals with rights:

> If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself. A dependence on the people is, no doubt, the primary control on the government; but experience has taught mankind the necessity of auxiliary precautions.

Madison was concerned that individuals with rights may not be at all tolerant. There was accordingly a risk that a "tyranny of the majority" would arise which would attack minorities: "If a majority be united by a common interest, the rights of the minority will be insecure." If state powers were managed in the

wrong way, moreover, the state would only assist in such a tyranny. Therefore, Madison wrote in Federalist No. 51:

> Whilst all authority in it will be derived from and dependent on the society, the society itself will be broken into so many parts, interests, and classes of citizens, that the rights of individuals, or of the minority, will be in little danger from interested combinations of the majority.

Pushing this view too far can naturally create democratic problems, but Madison's main concern was to provide for a government based on constitutional principles which could break up large constellations of interests. A system of checks and balances was therefore needed. Only then could the state protect minorities properly.

Naturally, many talented scholars have focused on the importance of institutions for democratic performance: e.g., Alfred Stepan, Juan Linz, Ellinor Ostrom, Daron Acemoglu, and James Robinson, just to name a few. But few have extended Madison's principles so constructively as Arend Lijphart. His 'consociationalist' solution provides yet more extensive checks and balances for societies which have been plagued by ethnic conflict. Yet, while Lijphart and many other Madisonians emphasize the design of government institutions, most researchers also presume that we must – if we are to attain a more complete understanding of how conflicts can be resolved under democratic conditions – take into account how citizens act and think.

This takes us to the second approach mentioned above, which focuses more on citizens. Individuals stand at center here: the norms, ideals, and values that they hold; and the extent to which these harmonize or clash with democratic principles and values. The focus is on understanding and explaining how such important attitudes and perceptions can be influenced by environmental factors, by personal traits and skills, and the like: e.g., educational level, economic position, social capital, way of life, etc. Simplifying things a little, one could say there is tradition of thinkers and researchers who have considered these questions, from Alexis de Tocqueville in the 19th century, through Seymour Martin Lipset in the 1950s and Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba in the 1970s, up to Robert Putnam, Theda Skocpol, Ronald Inglehart, and Pippa Norris in more recent times. The contributions of these scholars have clearly shown that, for democratic systems to be stable, democratic values of a general kind must be generally embraced by citizens. Within this broad tradition, moreover, there is a more specialized field of study: namely, political-tolerance studies.

The field of political-tolerance studies in its modern form has been concerned with how people's attitudes, and values are shaped (van Deth et al., 2007). It draws on analyses and research results from both the approaches described above. However, the focus is mainly on the willingness of individuals to accept that persons whom they dislike should have the same rights as themselves. This idea is expressed in the dictum: "I disapprove of what you say, but I

will defend to the death your right to say it."[2] But it was the American sociologist Samuel Stouffer who designed the modern research technique which has allowed us to investigate and evaluate political tolerance in a systematic manner. This technique builds on the idea of investigating the willingness of individuals to accept disliked ideas, individuals, and groups.

It is important to recall the context in which Stouffer conducted his studies. This was a research field that was growing in the 1950s. During World War II, Stouffer had been part of a larger research team that designed survey forms and techniques for better understanding American soldiers and how to motivate them. And after the war, it became virtually impossible not to discuss the issue of tolerance. It was an issue that had come to the fore, due to McCarthyism, the civil-rights movement and, later, the Vietnam War. The rights of dissenters whose views might be seen as "leftist" were challenged. The question of tolerance was also at center in the struggle to establish full civil rights for blacks (Payne, 1995). The Ford Foundation then decided to fund a national study on citizens' views on rights and liberties, especially in relation to communists. James Davis, who himself pioneered the quantitative research revolution in sociology, commented that "Stouffer, an Iowa-reared, War Department vetted Republican, as well as an outstanding scientist, was the inevitable perfect choice to lead the project."[3]

Stouffer then designed and carried out what is still one of the most comprehensive tolerance studies ever done. Six thousand survey responses were collected. U.S. citizens were asked to answer what are now called "standard Stouffer questions." The idea is either to mention a group which is well-known to be disliked, or to let respondents select such a group, and then to ask a number of questions designed to gauge the extent to which respondents are willing to grant rights to members of that group. Hence the term "political tolerance". The report, entitled "Communism, Conformity and Civil Liberties," rejected the notion that most Americans had been brain-washed by McCarthyism. Leading political forces were indeed infringing on civil liberties by playing on fears of communism, but "few respondents had it at the top or even near the top of their worry lists." The study did reveal, however, the central role played by a number of factors in determining levels of tolerance at the individual level: e.g., gender, education, degree of urbanization, perceived threats and fears, age and generational affiliation, and whether or not one had a leading political role. Stouffer's techniques and findings have served as the most important intellectual foundation for studies in political tolerance.

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2   These words are often ascribed to Voltaire, but the quote actually comes from Evelyn Beatrice Hall, who wrote about Voltaire under the pseudonym of "S.G. Tallentyre." in the biography "The Friends of Voltaire" (1906). Tallentyre took her interpretation of Voltaire's thought from this quote, which summarizes most ardently the modern meaning of the idea of tolerance.

3   Davies, in the introduction to the more recent version of Stouffer [1955] 1963. P. 4.

In academic terms, this led to extensive studies and more refined techniques, out of which came "Political Tolerance and American Democracy," by the political scientists John Sullivan, James Pierson, and George Marcus (SPM) (John L. Sullivan et al., 1982). This study remains central for the research field. Above all, it managed to combine perspectives from political science and political psychology in a unique and constructive way. While Stouffer measured attitudes in relation to a few pre-selected groups, SPM developed a content-controlled design featuring the presentation of a long list of groups that people could select as the least-liked. Using more refined statistical techniques than those employed by their predecessors, SPM showed that age and gender played less of a role for political tolerance than previous studies had indicated. Education was more important (albeit less so than in previous studies), but psychological factors were primary. Persons who lacked self-esteem, perceived far-reaching threats, and displayed a dogmatic orientation were far less tolerant than others.

More recent research in the US has opened up new areas of empirical investigation, and refined experimental designs further. A leading position in this respect has been taken by the political scientist James Gibson. Gibson contributed his experience to a highly ambitious study in South Africa, which he carried out together with Amanda Gouws (Gibson and Gouws 2000, 2001, Gibson and Gouws 2003). This study uncovered central characteristics relating to the malleability of political tolerance, and debunked theories which assume that intergroup trust has a zero-sum relationship to political tolerance. The study of political tolerance and of its antithesis, political intolerance (i.e., the denial of political rights to others), is an established field of research which is generally considered crucial for gauging whether a heterogeneous society or community is moving towards or away from open violent conflict. But it is also a field which, to put it somewhat bluntly, seems to have gotten somewhat stuck.

It would appear that, the more we investigate this phenomenon, and the more varied the contexts we include in our research strategies, the more difficult it becomes to say anything certain about how tolerant and intolerant attitudes are shaped. For a long time, as far as researchers could tell, gender, age, and educational level were the strongest determinants. Today it appears they are not. Depending on context, for example, gender can increase tolerance, reduce it, or be completely unrelated to it. In the years since Stouffer's study, moreover, age has been completely dethroned (SPM). Most surprisingly, it seems education is going the same way. It was once seen as the surest predictor of political tolerance. Yet studies have showed that, the greater the number of factors we can control for, the more the effect of education is weakened. When we leave the Western context, moreover, its effect disappears altogether (Widmalm & Oskarsson, 2013). Perceptions of institutional strength are also fairly unreliable, as seen from a more general perspective. The same is true of

social capital and of levels of trust as well. These factors can, apparently, play a great variety of different roles. The only factor that remains really strong is "threat." Almost all studies show that perceptions of threat – against the interviewee him/herself or the country at large – are inversely related to political tolerance. The more a person perceives a threat, the less tolerant he/she will be. However, the extent to which this finding is of genuine interest is debatable. Threat is a variable, namely, that can be placed too close to political intolerance for comfort. If I perceive a person or group as highly threatening to the country, why in the world should I grant such a person or group rights? Consequently we may argue that even if threat is a strong determinant, it is not necessarily always the most interesting one.

So when faced with the question of what makes people tolerant, there is a risk that more answers will lean towards statements along the lines of "Well, it really all depends on the context." However, it may be we get inconclusive evidence because of other factors than the fact that we live in a complex world. It may instead be that we discuss tolerance in too simplified a way, which makes us miss something important about how it works. A too simplified concept may generate false conclusions about what is really decisive for the formation of democratic attitudes. The reminder of this article is therefore devoted to describing what might be the shape of a more productive approach to the study of political tolerance.

Variations in Studies of Political Tolerance and Intolerance

The argument pursued here is that there are important aspects of how tolerant attitudes are constituted that may be obscured if we conceptualize this trait either in dichotomous terms (i.e., one is either tolerant or intolerant) or along a unidimensional continuum with tolerance at one end and intolerance at the other. These two alternatives have been critically discussed in the literature. Mondak and Sanders stress the need to avoid thinking in terms of scales of tolerance, since doing so involves a risk of including "uniquely tolerant" individuals – who basically accept that all persons have rights – including the most objectionable criminals or even killers. To label such persons as "tolerant," however, is simply misleading (J. J. Mondak & Sanders, 2005). A dichotomous variable is the solution for Mondak and Sanders, but only as a first step. First, the task is to sift out from the samples all those who are uniquely tolerant, and then to focus on the most relevant research challenge, which is to explore the breadth and depth of individuals' intolerance. The former can be investigated by considering how *many* groups a person indicates as disliked; the latter by considering the *strength* of the feelings that a person holds against certain groups.

Gibson replies, however, by showing that uniquely tolerant persons are in fact far fewer than Mondak and Sanders assume (J. L. Gibson, 2005). This means that it is still may be quite helpful to use a tolerance scale and doing so does not bar taking the breadth or depth of attitudes into account. Gibson argues, essentially, that as long as samples are not significantly burdened by the inclusion of "extremely tolerant" individuals, it is better to rely on scales, because they allows us to compare findings with those turned up by previous research on tolerance.

The Mondak and Sanders vs. Gibson debate has certainly shed light on some of the methodological shortcomings of currently employed techniques. Moreover, the proposed strategy of investigating the breadth and depth of tolerance is generally accepted as wise. But since breadth and depth are investigated through surveys, the measurements have to be applied in a rather mechanical way. Respondents are offered a long list of groups, and we count how many groups they declare they dislike. Respondents are also offered a long list of rights they would grant or deny to others, and we count them too. And then, perhaps, we get a new index or two new separate variables on tolerance. However, this solution does not get around another possible source for misinterpretation of responses. Investigating breadth and depth does not in itself tell us how respondents have arrived at an "intolerant" position. And this may matter a great deal. I would therefore suggest an approach to at least complement the existing research strategies. The measurements and definitions in current use impel us to overlook the fact that some individuals are fairly open to argument and can be persuaded to become tolerant if furnished with more information. Others are much more rigid in their attitudes. Therefore, if we want to make a more precise assessment of where the gravest threats to democracy arise, and what kinds of policy reform may have an impact, then we must introduce certain distinctions that go beyond any of the options discussed by Gibson or by Mondak and Sanders.

Previous studies have failed to make an important distinction: between individuals who base their intolerance on poor or false information (here referred to as "uninformed intolerant" persons), and individuals who maintain intolerant views even after having access to information that we normally see as supporting tolerant norms (here referred to as "informed intolerant" persons). In the absence of such a distinction, previous research has by and large implicitly described intolerance as arising from poor or false information. Thus various studies have portrayed intolerance as resulting from a lack of education, and/ or a lack of contact with people from other parts of the world or from other groups within the same society (Allport 1954, Sullivan, et al. 1982, Gibson and Gouws 2003, Stouffer [1955] 1963).

My first suggestion here, however, is that tolerance research needs to focus more on what distinguishes informed intolerant individuals from their unin-

formed counterparts. After all, 1) they land in the intolerance "box" for different reasons, and 2) they will most likely have a different kind of impact on the viability of democracies – especially fragile ones. The distinction here – between individuals who maintain intolerant attitudes because they are poorly or falsely informed and those who are intolerant as a matter of principle – suggests a useful new methodology, together with a number of new (and theoretically supported) hypotheses.

The behavior and motivations of *uninformed intolerant* persons originate primarily in a lack of information, or perhaps in indoctrination with false information. Often such false information ascribes a number of unattractive features to the members of an exposed group: e.g., racial inferiority, criminality, and either an inability to hold a job (thereby causing an increase in the cost of welfare systems) or a capacity and inclination to "steal" the jobs of "ordinary people." However, the significant trait of these individuals, sometimes labelled "bigots", is that they respond to factors commonly regarded as important in traditional studies of political tolerance: primarily educational level and other socioeconomic factors.

The other group, composed of informed intolerant persons, is quite different. Individuals in this category pose a considerable challenge to democracies. Here we find individuals who are sometimes labelled "political extremists" or even "supremacists." From a democratic perspective they seem to have "dangerous minds," since they lack a basic understanding of, and/or support for, democratic principles. It seems that, when they are exposed to factors that in other cases would raise tolerance levels, they respond with a mind-set which is more rigid, less flexible, or even "fossilized" (to borrow a useful term from the field of linguistics). In countries struggling with poverty and plagued with weak institutions, such individuals may present a substantial challenge to efforts to entrench democracy. However, their impact on established democracies should not be underestimated either.

Persons in this category may be quite capable of processing information in such a way as to enable them to understand how different systems of governance work, and how to make effective use of modern technology in mobilizing politically. They may also be quite good at hiding their authoritarian preferences when they know they are acting in contexts where such views are regarded as unacceptable. However, it is individuals from this category that tend to surface as leaders or supporters of extremist religious parties, various military-authoritarian movements, etc. We find them in the Hindu Nationalist or *Hindutva* movement in India, for example the Shiv Sena or Bajrang Dal (Anderson and Damle 1987, Tambiah 1996, Jaffrelot 1999, Varshney 2002). We find them in Pakistan as members of the Haqqani network or the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (Titus and Swidler 2000, Rashid 2001, 2002, Zahab 2009). They appear as leaders of the "families" leading separatist movements in Baluchistan, such as the

Table 1. Positions towards strongly disliked groups.

		Knowledge	
		Uninformed	*Informed*
Regime preference	*Democratic*	**A.** Uninformed tolerant: *Prejudiced*	**B.** Informed tolerant: *Assertive*
	Authoritarian/ Sectarian	**C.** Uninformed intolerant: *Bigoted*	**D.** Informed intolerant: *Supremacist*

Bugti clan. In Uganda they are supporters of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) which advocates one-party rule. And we find them in far-right movements in most of Europe: in the "Sweden Democrats", Golden Dawn in Greece, Jobbik in Hungary, Front National in France, and so on.

It is not uncommon for leaders and key actors in organizations representing such movements to be well-educated and well-informed about the predicament and living conditions of at least their political enemies. However, many of them are strongly opposed to regime types based on universal principles of rights. In cases where they support democracy, it is mainly because systems based on democratic principles and universal rights allow them some breathing space.

With those considerations in mind, we can elaborate various hypotheses relevant to the two categories of intolerant persons. A new typology thus emerges, which bears fuller exploration. It is a given from the outset that tolerance has to do with how we relate to people or groups in society whom we dislike. We then distinguish between individuals who do or do not endorse democracy. Finally, we distinguish between those who can be considered knowledgeable about the world around them and those who cannot. This yields a categorization of individuals that can be seen in table 1.:

Naturally, this scheme of classification simplifies reality. Arguably, moreover, the categories it generates are not mutually exclusive. Nevertheless, they have been inspired by previous empirical studies which suggest show that individuals can be characterized according to this matrix.

In the upper left corner, we find individuals that may be prejudiced but who still hang on to basic democratic principles, perhaps because they have been brought up to support such ideals, or because they have other reasons for thinking the advantages of democratic arrangements outweigh their drawbacks.[4] In the upper right corner we find people who still stick to democratic principles even though they claim with conviction that they hold a better and

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4   We can trace this position back to Herbert Tingsten's "democrats by principle": i.e., those who stick with the democratic doctrine because they see it as a supra-ideology which should be supported, even if also implies a number of disadvantages. For a discussion of this, see Hermansson 1992.

more relevant political view than the groups for whom they harbor a dislike. They may even look down, sometimes in an elitist fashion, on other groups in society. But they may also be highly educated, with good access to reasonably unbiased information about the groups they dislike.

Then, in the lower row, we find the intolerant persons discussed earlier. In the lower left corner we place those individuals who reject a democratic order outright, and who do so on the basis of highly limited information or even downright disinformation. In the lower right corner, finally, we find the personality type which, as seen above, must be recognized as posing a special challenge to democracies. The model of governance proposed by these persons is based on giving supreme power to the group to which they themselves belong. We may hence term them supremacists.

It is may be useful to pause here for a moment, in order to make some points about the mind-sets we are trying to capture here, and some of the methodological challenges this ambition entails. As stated above, informed intolerant persons end up where they do because they do not believe in democracy. Simple enough? Not really. Again, we must be careful not to place people in this category because they take a stand against anti-democratic or criminal groups. Where to draw the line in this – between those who can legitimately be denied rights and those who fall outside this realm – is of the essence here. The important distinction in this respect should be between those groups that generally support a democratic liberal model and the values on which such a society is based, and those that would deny essential democratic and liberal rights to others. But making this categorization relies on how the researcher classifies political actors that may be included on the "disliked" list. Let us take a few examples to illustrate this.

Let us consider a right-winger who is considering what rights ought to be granted to sympathizers of a leftist party – for example the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in India CPI (M) – which officially proclaims its support for parliamentary democracy. First of all, it is essential that the researcher has a thorough and deep understanding of this leftist political actor. It should be clear whether the leftist party is serious about being democratic, or whether it actually aims to undermine parliamentary democracy or even to bring it to an end altogether. An outsider, for example, would most likely hesitate to recognize the CPI (M) as democratic. After all, Chairman Mao and Josef Stalin figured prominently in that party's propaganda posters until recently. However, a more in-depth knowledge of the CPI (M) prompts most observers to agree that its democratic credentials are strong. So, we can say this actor "deserves" some toleration. Had the leftist political actor been the Naxalites, on the other hand, it ought not to have been included on the list of disliked groups at all. Even though the Naxalites, in their rhetoric, support the power of the people, they are at this time engaged in a very violent war against the Indian state. So,

after we have evaluated what a "disliked" alternative stands for, as with the CPI (M) in our example, we need then to consider how respondents formulate their position vis-à-vis that party.

Now let us consider a respondent who regards the CPI (M) in a quite unfavorable manner – e.g., as old-school Soviet communists, as anti-capitalists in every conceivable way, and basically as thieves who want to steal from the rich – but who still grants rights to supporters of the CPI (M). We may conclude that this person gravitates towards the upper left corner of the matrix. He/she is a person who may be prejudiced, but who is nonetheless tolerant.

Then we have the case where the right-wing supporter is well-informed about his/her political opponent. He/she may object to the land reforms carried out by the CPI (M) in the state West Bengal in India in the 1980s, but on the other hand he/she also may recognize the instrumental role of the CPI (M) in backing democratic principles during the 1975–77 Emergency (as opposed to the CPI, which sided with the Congress Party at the time). If he/she clearly dislikes the members of the CPI (M), but still thinks they should have full civil liberties and rights, then he/she falls into the informed tolerant category. Naturally, the right-wing person in question still thinks he/she knows better what is the best political opinion to hold, and he/she dismisses his/her political opponents for not holding it. This person thus takes an "assertive" stance.

Then we have the position in the lower left corner. In this case the right-wing sympathizer may equate the CPI (M) with the Naxalites. Anything with any ambition of redistributing wealth is regarded as a threat to democracy itself and therefore, quite understandably, such a person wants to withdraw the rights of CPI (M) members. Hence this person is intolerant and a "bigot." Surely we can claim that the person in question has a distorted view of the CPI (M), but given that he/she actually holds such beliefs, the position makes as much sense as a well-informed individual withdrawing rights for the Naxalites (or in the US, the KKK).

Finally, we have the situation where the right-wing supporter is as well-informed in most ways as the "assertive" person. He/she can clearly see that the historical record of the CPI (M) supports the categorization of that party as being democratic. However, and this is a crucial point, the right-wing person in this case nonetheless refuses to extend rights to members of the CPI (M). The reason for this is that, from the standpoint of this person, supporters of the CPI (M) hold the <u>wrong</u> view. Holding the wrong view means being disqualified from having rights. This may seem at first to be a peripheral problem, but the point here is that it is not. The bigot can become better informed and then change his/her position to one of the alternatives in the "tolerant" row. But the intolerant "supremacist" poses a substantial challenge to a democracy. He or she is very hard to influence by means of information or any sort of persuasion. Naturally, such a position can be taken by members of all political camps.

It may be a republican who wants to disenfranchise supporters of monarchy, even in democratic countries where royal persons only have ceremonial functions. Or pro-life activists who deny rights to pro-choice activists. Or vice versa. And so on. These cases all have in common that norms about universal equal rights are not shared. There are strong reasons for believing that such attitudes are becoming more widespread. So it is a matter of some urgency to try to capture such attitudes and to understand them better.

One of the main tasks is to explain how an individual ends up in one of these different categories. Keeping in mind the many factors we discussed above, which suggest for example the influence of socioeconomic conditions and personal histories, we can specifically ask whether informed intolerant persons arrive at this position from other parts of the matrix. It is perhaps natural to suggest the "uninformed intolerant" position as a candidate.[5] In such a case, an individual has certainly fossilized his/her authoritarian preferences at some stage of life and little or nothing can be done to persuade this person to move from that position to the top row. However, it is quite conceivable that individuals who are well-informed at some point in life lose their faith in democracy and move from the "assertive" position to the "supremacist" one.[6] It is also quite possible to take the diagonal leap downwards to the right, from "prejudiced" to "supremacist." In this case, a person may experience a situation where the process of getting more information about the surrounding world actually triggers cynicism towards democratic ideals.

As a first step, studies are needed to explore these different categories. This is difficult to do in large-scale surveys today. But in-depth interviews allow it, and better operationalization of these positions should allow investigations via large-scale surveys in the near future. Such studies will need to incorporate questions about the "usual suspects" of what increases or decreases tolerance. These include gender, age, economic condition, educational level, religious affiliation, and residential area (i.e., ethnically homogeneous or heterogeneous). However, to meet the challenge of explaining and understanding the mind-set of informed and uninformed intolerant individuals, which may be strongly shaped by interaction effects which include the political and socioeconomic environment in which a person grows up and lives, as well as particular

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5   There are indicators that, in Pakistan, examples of this can be found in the shape of individuals who have first been educated in Madrassas and then studied in Western universities, but who retained authoritarian values. Similar examples can most likely be found in the Hindutva movement and within the military elite of Uganda.

6   The West is full of such examples, from the Weimar Republic to recent times. Worth mentioning are both leftist extremists in Germany, such as the RAF in the 1970s, and some of the leaders of Jobbik, which was formed in Hungary by university students a decade ago. Several leading persons in these movements supported democratic regime types at first, but then developed authoritarian ideas. Another example may be seen in second-generation immigrants from Pakistan in Europe, who have been radicalized by extremist Islamic movements later in their youth.

personal experiences in life, we will need to take two more fields of study into account.

First, the extensive literature in social and political psychology which has explored the authoritarian mind-set needs to be utilized (Akrami, et al. 2009, Araya and Ekehammar 2009). After the Second World War this field expanded rapidly, but not without controversy over the methodologies used to categorize which individuals tended to support fascism. Nevertheless, this field evolved from the early attempts to provide perspectives on when individuals are, or are not, liable to be broad-minded. It came to include perspectives on personal security as well as happiness, and went on to consider how an upbringing in a hierarchical, authoritarian and exploitative environment can transfer authoritarian values to children, and on how ideological indoctrination can create so-called authoritarian tough-minded personalities (Adorno, et al. 1950, Rokeach 1973, Eysenck and Wilson 1978; Augoustinos and Reynolds 2001; Enzensberger 2006). Therefore, hypotheses from this field need to be explored as well, although it should be pointed out that this particular discourse makes no explicit distinction like the one proposed here between uninformed and informed intolerant individuals.

The second involves copying and learning from the way institutionalist theorists have explained how social capital can evolve among individuals (Uslaner 2002, Uslaner and Conley 2003, Uslaner 2004, Rothstein and Uslaner 2005, Rothstein 2011). In spite of the fact that it may be argued that social trust, a tolerance-related virtue so to speak, is formed early in life and seldom changes radically, experiments in political tolerance have indicated that the malleability of political tolerance is decided more by political and institutional contexts (Gibson and Gouws 2003). Consequently, future tolerance studies will need to make use of research produced by those who have argued explicitly that social trust at the individual level is shaped by institutional settings, and in particular by the quality of governance (Knack 2002, Rothstein 2011).

Epilogue

The shortcomings of political-tolerance studies described above are found in an area where theory meets methodology. This essay is an attempt to provide a categorization which will break that impasse. It is however natural to ask, before accepting the suggestion to categorize intolerant and tolerant individuals like the one above: why not just ask individuals if they support authoritarian or democratic principles of governance? Why go through all the trouble of trying to understand the motivations for intolerance? Studies of democratic attitudes have already asked questions about support for democratic principles. The replies to some of these surveys, however, are not very useful. Most respondents tend to give support to democratic principles – when asked about

them in a very general manner. And the same seems often to apply to questions about political tolerance. The way we have so far asked questions about political tolerance makes it difficult say anything well informed, or at least non-tautological, about the viability of a democracy.

The idea here however is to make use of the refined research techniques established in political-tolerance studies. As previously stated, mashing bigots and supremacists together probably only blurs which factors are important in motivating individuals to become tolerant. However, by taking into account regime preferences and levels of knowledge when assessing the stance individuals may take regarding the political rights of disliked groups or individuals we can separate categories of intolerant and tolerant individuals on the basis of the motivation for how they position themselves. Such a categorization can say more about the viability of democracy and which efforts may strengthen it, than previous measurements and definitions of political tolerance.

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