

ANNEXE TEXTE 1 : THOMAS SCANLON (1940 -)

What is tolerance? - Tolerance requires us to accept people and permit their practices even when we strongly disapprove of them. Tolerance thus involves an attitude that is intermediate between wholehearted acceptance [*approbation pleine et entière*] and unrestrained opposition [*opposition sans retenue*]. This intermediate makes tolerance a puzzling attitude. There are certain things, such as murder, that ought not be tolerated. There are limits to what we are able to do to prevent these things from happening, but we need not restrain ourselves out of tolerance [*sous prétexte de tolérance*] for these actions as expressions of the perpetrators' values. In other cases, where our feelings of opposition or disapproval should properly be reined in [*freinés*], it would be better if we were to get rid of these feelings altogether. If we are moved by racial or ethnic prejudice, for example, the preferred remedy is not merely to tolerate those whom we abhor [*que l'on exécra*] but to stop abhorring people just because they look different or come from a different background.

Perhaps everything would, ideally, fall into one or the other of these two classes. Except where wholehearted disapproval and opposition are appropriate, as in the case of murder, it would be best if the feelings that generate conflict and disagreement could be eliminated altogether. Tolerance, as an attitude that requires to hold in check [*contenir*] certain feelings of opposition and disapproval, would then be just a second best [*un pis-aller*] – a way of dealing with attitudes that we would be better off without but that are, unfortunately, ineliminable. To say this would not be to condemn tolerance. Even if it is, in this sense, a second best, the widespread adoption of tolerant attitudes should be a vast improvement [*amélioration*] over the sectarian blood-shed [*divisions sectaires*] that we hear of every day, in many part of the globe. Stemming [*endiguer*] this violence would be no mean feat [*ne serait pas une mince affaire*].

Thomas Scanlon, *The Difficulty of Tolerance*, CUP, 2003, p.187.