Rosemary Rizo-Patrón (ed.): Tolerancia: Interpretando la experiencia de la tolerancia / Toleration. Interpreting the Experience of Tolerance, Lima: Fondo Editorial de la PUCP, 2006, 604 pp.

I should like to start by thanking the invitation that was coursed to me to offer some remarks on the book *Interpretando la experiencia de la tolerancia* (Interpreting the Experience of Tolerance), edited by Dr. Rosemary Rizo-Patrón. It is an honour and a pleasure to partake in this presentation, and rememorate the great endeavours that were the XV Interamerican Congress on Philosophy and the II Ibero-American Congress on Philosophy, both of which dealt with the issue of tolerance.

This brief contribution of mine to the book´s presentation in no way intends to span the 35 papers that comprise it. I shall restrict myself to referring to but a few chapters in it, namely, those which are more narrowly confined to the phenomenological tradition founded by Husserl.

These chapters reveal that tolerance leads us to the deepest confines of our existence, and that its meaning cannot be reduced to a matter of political correction in our relationships with others.

While other of the approaches in this book are interesting and perfectly valid, they tackle the issue of tolerance from a more historial perspective –as a sensibility arising in a certain age –or in terms of political philosophy –by relating it to the theme of democracy– or from lineaments that are quite different from those of phenomenology. The chapters to which I shall now refer take on tolerance from the vantage of *our individual experience of the other*, thus striving to place tolerance in the midst of what we are experiencing on a more personal level, through reexploring our relationships with the others in our lives.

In a simple fashion, I shall try to account for some of the dimensions of this experience which seem to me to be amongst the most compelling in the studies of the phenomenological tradition that are afforded us by this book. I shall do so freely, without delving into too much detail, and with the intention of revealing a possible lead that might be presented as the relationship with the other that is based on the depth of the tolerance which can be gleaned in these chapters, going from “empathy” to the “assymetrical relationship”, as posed by Levinas.

I

I shall then begin with the *phenomenon of empathy*, a first aspect of the exploration this book conducts with referrence to Husserl. In a paper that is focused on the pathologies affecting this relationship, such as schizophrenia or autism, one of the authors underlines that empathy consists in the "normal" relationship with another. Empathy, she tells us, means that the subject feels as if he were in a body invested of a form of self-security, which makes it capable of "exiting itself". As a normal subject, she remarks, I know that I exist as a body, as a "centre of orientation of the world", and even so, it is from that same centre that I can put myself in another's situation, and not through fusion with another, but in such a way that my body comes to be a "registry of the other's movements" (p. 68). This density of the self, which allows for the "outwards" movement of the normal subject, is what the afflicted one has lost. And it is this density of the certainty of our own consistency that supports itself –and this is the crux of the matter– on the continuity of our experience, that is to say, on the continuity of the temporal relationship we establish, firstly and before any explicit thought, with the world. Esperanza Gonzáles Durán points out that the schizophrenic dilemma is the lack of this pre-reflexive coexistence with the world and with the self, which renders them both (that is, the world and myself) as familiar and trustworthy, as known even before they are acknowledged as such. It is this pre-given foundation for natural experience that the schizophrenic lacks, sparing the self from the reality of actual experience. For the normal subject, on the other hand, the praxis of this experience is what bestows a sense of biographical continuity, what grants historicity with "affirmation", to the subject in the context of intersubjectivity, whereas for the schizophrenic, this continuity is broken (p. 69).

However, if I am a "normal" subject, my body, which appears as that which centers me onto myself and renders me as irreducibly unique, is –paradoxically- also that which relates me to the other. I quote the text: "What my body permits me is to empathize, to configure the other as my peer, and thus, to also known how the others can govern their own bodies" (p. 71).

This presuposses an ability to exit oneself, to put oneself in the other's place, to "imagine" oneself as being outside the here and now, of experiencing the virtual, a capacity that relies on our own temporality. It presupposes our ability to live beyond our present time without becoming lost in the world, of transcending ourselves towards the world in which we find the other.

II

These observations on our ability to extrude towards the world as what makes the relationship of empathy with another possible to the normal subject can introduce us, as a second point -and by way of the "biographical continuity" of experience- *to the problem of the temporal relationship with the world and with others* that is based on empathy. In all of the chapters to which I shall refer, we are met with a constant reexploration of Husserl's analyses of our pre-reflexive relationships with the world and others.

The world that we experience through perception, says Husserl, is not a world possessed or fully constituted, it is a world in nascent form that our body does not cease to explore. And the things that this exploration brings into emergence are not whole and finished, but rather, things that lead us to expect new sides to them which, as has been said, our exploration finds to be somewhat left "ajar". As a consequence of this, the world of our pre-reflexive experience, that of our body previous to objectivating reflection, is an open world that is presumed and not entirely present. And precisely on account of this, this is not a captive world, but a world which admits beforehand perspectives other than mine. The bodies of others constitute the centres of different perspectives, other centres for the temporary exploration of the world that I can perceive and truly understand as others: I am in my body and they have their own, but in such a way that this alterity does not conform an abyss, given that we are articulated by one same world through which we can communicate.

Thus, a world that is uniquely presumed to exist through my own temporality renders the acknowledgement of others perspectives on it as possible. These outlooks do not compete with mine –rather, they come to complement it- because an open and presumed world is one that can be shared by other bodies. The other and myself are permanently borne into the world in the present, and the survey that we make of it is like a plural and exchangeable perception of it.

These meditations brought to us by Husserl, which I have given but a briefest outline of, are implictly or explicitly present in several chapters of the book. Perhaps they do not offer us a new dimension to the relationship with the other as much as an explicitation of what is already at work in the operations of empathy. What grounds empathy is our belonging –for as long as it runs through our body- to the same world that offers itself to be shared by other bodies. We can speak of intercorporality and intersubjectivity, and several of the articles devoted to Husserl's disciples in this book acknowledge that the founder of this meditation on the relationship with the other through our temporality was Husserl himself.

III

We shall now move onto another aspect of the relationship with the other, another explicitation of its complexity that is addressed by this book, and which is based on Husserl's primordial intuitions. So far, we have spoken of the relationship with the other as an empathic one, underscoring that the foundation for this empathy is the temporality that runs through our body and which points to an open world which renders alternative outlooks possible.

Certainly, I have a body, or better yet, I am a body that is located in a "here" and a "now" but which exceeds this "here" and "now" and constitutes the experience of the other as another centre of perspective on the world, a perspective to which I can open myself. I am capable of transcending towards these other centres of perspective and of receiving a decentration from them. By virtue of this experience –and here is what I should like to highlight as a third point for this commentary– I acquire a *history*, because the prints of these communications with the other serve as sediment to my experience, lending it its very own specificity, that's made up by the processing of thousands of encounters.

This intermingling of communications is also the experience of my peers; our individual histories conform a web of interdependence and, as we pry deeper into this dimension, we come to discover that they are all enveloped in the tissues of communication that preceed us. Several chapters in the book dwell on this intersubjectivity, born of our temporality, and how it forms an acquisition, a sedimentation that marks us and our vital environment and which can be descibred as our *historicity*, which always leans on the traditions of the past.

The wealth of commentaries that this book affords us on the matter is quite large, and relate essentially to the considerable works of Gadamer. I shall note only some of the hints that can be obtained from the remarks on his work.

In the first place, taking our own historicity into account in our relationshop with "the actual other" opens us up to an initial orientation. To the extent that our experience is always signalled by its genesis and its own historical becoming, it can never consider itself as an absolute truth or an absolute knowledge. Our "truths", if we consider them to be the truths of each of us, will each comprise their history, and there is no point of view "outside the world" that can warrant them. To claim, however, that they have their history does not substract them the right to the truth. But this

"plurality" is a demand of decentration for each of them, and an invitation for the other to listen, so that we may cease to consider that our own criteria are based on an absolute truth. We let ourselves be "altered" by the other. Several studies in this book underline the validity of this attitude, both at the individual and the intercultural levels.

Another aspect I should like to underscore is that which refers to our relationship with the "others" in our past. Faced with the idea of a truth comprised by pure facts –which would be the historic truth– and taking our personal historicity –namely, that which has preceded us– into account, implies admitting two conclusions. The first is that there is no neutral vantage on the past that might help us focus it outstandingly, so to speak, as if the historian himself were standing at the terminus of human enterprise and held the secret to its outcome. The second is that the interests and prejudices of the present are not an obstancle for the comprehension of the past. Contrarily, they are the true spur to getting us interested in this past as a specific answer to the questions that are posed to us by our belonging to the world. It is in the same spirit, I would think, that Paul Ricoeur said that, if we intended to place ourselves at the margin of historical currents, as if we were "objective thinkers" free from every situation, we should come to know everything and understand nothing. The fact is we would seek nothing, as we should not feel moved by the stimulus of, or concern for, any problem.

IV

I'll conclude this most allusive survey with a fourth point I should like to commit to the relationship with the other in Levinas' thought. I shall do it on the basis of a work in our book that is dedicated to this author.

In the different approximations to the relationship with the other that are more or less explicitly inspired on Husserl's analyses, the other is always perceived as being susceptible to a relationship of symmetry with any other individual. When Gadamer, for example, speaks of the fusion or connection of horizons, he is assuming there is a certain reciprocity between the interlocutors who exchange, a reciprocity based on its pertinence to an identical historicity, which serves as a mediator for its own belonging to this same world. Generally speaking, the themes of intercorporality, intersubjectivity and a common world that may be shared are based on the implicit conception of the possibility of a symmetrical sharing experience amongst interlocutors.

In contrast to these conceptions, Levinas' thinking is here presented as the rejection of all possible symmetry, a rejection by another that could be my peer. We had already mentioned, in referring to Gadamer, the decentralizing demand that arose from the deepening of my own historicity, which led me to discover that my truth is only one in many, in a world of "others" who have histories themselves. But this operation unto itself also holds the possibility of disclosing my own identity through my interrlation with the other. At the very least, it presupposes a certain community in the process of becoming with the other. What Levinas is wary of, given this perspective, is the return to a totality, to a universal and seamless reciprocity which does not genuinely make way for a true decentralization towards an absolute and radical alterity. He ironically designates this false totality as sociality: a unity of multiple consciences that have gained admittance into the very thought at the heart of which their reciprocal alterity becomes supressed.

Levinas is a great student of Husserl's but, according to the author of the work we are commenting (Pedro Enrique García Ruiz), he reproaches the latter for having led his fundamental thinking to the theoretical and towards knowledge. Levinas is perfectly aware that Husserl's theory of intentionality veritably implies a double register: an "objectifying" register at the level of judgment, and a register that's prior to it, based on the affections and the senses, namely, the "operant intentionality". But he argues that the pre-reflexive level in Husserl, even if closely studied, is subordinated to the reflexive and "objectivating" one, which in its turn is aimed at an intersubjectivity that is more concerned with warranting the objectivity of science, than with the acknowledgement of the other as such.

To acknowledge the other as such is, on the other hand, the axis of Levinas' concerns, and –according to him–it has nothing to do with knowledge. Levinas goes as far as claiming that knowledge is a form of violence through which we strip the other of his otherness. He seeks, instead, to clarify a relationship that is grounded on a sensible relation with the other, without knowledge, and which would be the starting-point of ethics.

We move, as it were, from an alterity of acknowledgment or reciprocity to an assymetrical alterity which leads us towards those who do not have belonging in a possible community, those who are excluded from it and whom I have to adress without any hope for reciprocity.

I shall not tackle the question of knowing whether Levinas' philosphy does justice to Husserl's or not, or if it is really a coherent philosophy, or a theological one. I merely believe that the themes that are introduced by

Levinas, those surrounding the "assymetrical other" or the liberality in our relationship with another –and without reciprocity– can ultimately make us wary of an excessive optimism in dialogue that may overlook these situations of exclusion which Levinas underscores and to which he has the merit of drawing our attention.

I hereby conclude this review, and congratulate anew the enormous effort involved in organizing these reflections. I thank the lovely gift of this book, and hope that reading it shall help us make room for some hope, even when confronted with the cases of profound intolerance we know; instilling us with the enthusasim to plow ahead in the countering of this spiritual malaise that threatens our personal and collective humanity alike.

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If presenting a book means, as it often does, describing its contents and accounting for some aspects in the biographies of their authors, we would have to say that the presentation of this tome is already given in the enlightening prologue by its editor, Rosemary Rizo-Patrón, which precedes the papers, and in the section including the resumés for the writers which closes the book. It should, however, be mentioned that this is a 604 page-long volume collecting 35 papers, organized into six sections, by writers from ten different countries: the United States, Mexico and Canada, in Northamerica; Spain, Ireland and Portugal, in Europe; Peru, Colombia and Argentina in Southamerica; and Egypt, hailing from the Arab world. Last but not least, I should like to note that this is the second tome in a collection of six volumes the purpose of which is to collect –and we hope sooner, rather than later– the papers presented to the XVth Interamerican Congress of Philosophy and the II Ibero-American Congress on Philosophy, as well as the symposia held in this event, hosted by the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú in January 2004, thanks to a team effort spurred by Miguel Giusti, among others.

If we wanted to add some critical keystones to our descriptive presentation, we would have to make a survey of the articles, dealing with them separately, because each author is exclusively accountable for his or her own intervention.

But this descriptive and critical manner of boarding the text-object by way of the present-subject is –precisely because of its intended "objectivity"

and its manifest desire to be no more than a record– far from being the central axis of what we are here remarking: hermeneutics as constitutional to the experience of tolerance. This is why I shall here understand the "presentation" to be not an "objective" representation of what was said January 2004, but a "presentification" of what was discussed at the time and continues to be discussed by us now, by summoning ourselves forward, so as to launch an enrichening conversation.

As with every form of philosophical knowledge, the dialogue begins, as in Antiquity, with asking. If that which distinguishes the physician is the ability to form a diagnostic, and the signal of an engineer or an architect is the ability to design, what is most becoming to philosophy is to inquire. In this tome, Carlos B. Gutiérrez reminds us that "a hermeneutical philosophy is more interested in the questions than the answers", and adds that: "…the only possibility of understanding an enunciation depends on grasping the question from which it can be seen as an answer" (p. 443).

I ask myself, then: why is tolerance the fundamental issue of philsophical thought today? This question –phrased implicitly, explicitly and diversely in the studies we shall now comment– can be understood, by following traditional causalism, as an interrogation for the cause (that is, the traditon or the actual historical reality) producing an effect (the thinking on tolerance). Without shirking the importance of such an interpretration of this question –especially for the traditional manner of conducting the history of philosophy– what is of interest to us, from a hermeneutical vantage, is the disclosure of the relationship of co-belonging between our time, tolerance and hermeneutics.

For reasons that certainly impinge on the history of our societies and of our own philosophical tradition, tolerance has become an essential component of our time. It is not possible for us to think of it without thinking of tolerance. In other words, all the serious thinking of our time remits to tolerance, and all thinking on tolerance hails back to our time. This does not mean we should fail to recognize other histories and traditions, but that we should bring them to the fore, comprehending them as constitutional to our present and, as Vattimo suggests, listening to their messages with compassion and letting them speak for themselves.

It can also be said that, currently, hermeneutics remits to tolerance and tolerance to hermeneutics. And it is not so much that hermeneutics are the most adequate method which which to speak of the "experience of tolerance", but that hermeneutics are inscribed within the realm of tolerance, and tolerance inscribed in hermeneutics.

In summary, I would say that, in our time, tolerance and hermeneutics have a relationship of co-belonging, insofar as each of these extremes hails to the other two without becoming dissolved in it, and thus mutually lending the other theoretical density, ethical legitimacy, authenticity of symbolic representation and criteria for action as concerns both social subsystems and the life-world.

Even as the times and themes of the conferences and symposia are not enough for the authors included in this tome to assume the position of "professional thinkers" (as criticized by Pepi Patron in p. 282), who withdraw from the world in order to return to it and tells us how to live, there are some among them who come close to the thinking of the masters so as to reconstruct what they once thought, and not (as is suggested by Pedro Enrique García Ruiz in p. 240) to glean that which the masters did not glean, by dialoguing with their messages, as Vattimo would say. In this case, we are drawing the philosophy of history in the traditional manner of representing what was thought by others, and not by bringing it into presence so that one is spoken through it or made to feel engaged by the unthought.

Other authors featured in the essays collected in this tome nurture the dialogue of our present by collectively reworking a tradition that starts with Nietzsche, reaches Gadamer, Ricoeur, Habermas and Kearney and passes mainly through Husserl, Heidegger, Arendt, Ortega and Levinas. It is noteworthy that only slight, if any, attention, is afforded to such thinkers as Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Merleau-Ponty, Taylor and Vattimo.

One way or another, the essays here included, especially those which remark on the co-belonging of our time, tolerance and hermeneutics, help elaborate an "ontology of actuality" –to use the term coined by Foucault and rescued by Vattimo–, that is, a deliberately weak ontology which, without renouncing to the need for theorization, dissolves the solidities and securities of traditional metaphysics and modern science. It carves itself a path that knows the non-definitiveness of what is known, comprehends the truth as openness, assumes the unbeatability of cultural belonging but preserves an elective attitude in the face of its own traditions by recurring to concepts such as "diacritical hermeneutics", "pre-understanding", "structural horizon of experience", "fusion of horizons", etc. in order to explore the possibilities of intercommunion with the other, instead of trying to appropriate it within one's own horizon, or positing an irreducible and dismal difference with it.

This same ontology of actuality, coursed by tolerance and interpretation, is leading up to something that appears to be of an enormous histori-

cal-philosophical transcendence: the West begins to see itself as a particularity among others, and Western thought –as opposed to the totalizing efforts of Western economics and politics– is finally resigning the universality it learned from its own traditions and which modernity was in charge of renewing by thinking of a supposedly valid project for all humanity and every man, entirely.

It is, in any case, worth asking (as does John Panteleimon Manoussakis in p. 299), "Is toleration enough, then?", or, in Alain Tourine's words, "Shall we be able to live together?" In order to answer these questions, one must ground them in the realm of co-belonging between tolerance, hermeneutics and our time. It is true that what is unconcealed in our time co-belongs to hermeneutics and tolerance, but it is also true that the concept of tolerance comes to us with an etimological and historical burden of which it cannot be too readily released.

Originally understood as bearing, and later as refraining from forbidding; the concept of tolerance, as noted by Marie-France Begué (p. 555), can even be understood as an admission of difference: it cannot, however, mean something that is *in nuce* in our time –namely, the liberation of our differences and the enjoyment of diversity– without first renouncing its traditions.

By this I mean to say that, even as I cannot develop it here –despite equalizing or fundamentalist efforts, on one hand and the other– two phenomena, that is, the liberation of differencces and the enjoyment of diversity, arise as hallmarks of our time. And even as they are both akin to hermeneutics, they are hardly as kindred to tolerance.

By "liberation of differences" I refer to the fact that all forms of diversity –whether these be cultural, gender-oriented, related to sexual orientation, notions of a good life, and so forth– are speaking for themselves to, among other reasons, recover their own languages and tell us their own stories. It cannot be denied that the temptations of disgregation and alienation prowl at the edge of this tendency, but they appear in a context in which an open way is left, at the same time, for the "enjoyment of diversity", wherein diversity is understood as a source of enrichment and individual and social dynamism.

Without naturally refuting the historical-philosophical importance that the concept and practice of tolerance have exercised with relation to each other, I am, however, of the opinion that the two are already theoretically and practically too narrow for us to self-confirm them and know what to be prepared for in a context in which interculturality is starting to be-

come the "natural" environment of the life-world. It no longer has to do with tolerating the other, even if we were to take tolerance in the best of senses –which is like saying we admit the other–, because even admittance implies bringing that other into the realm of oneself. If anything, it is more about "recognition", a term and a debate which, considering a number of expections (Begué and Mensch, among them), are fundamentally absent in the present tome.

By recognition we must understand not just an admittance of the other, but also an acceptance of the other in his diversity; a willingness to let him speak and –what is yet more important– to let ourselves be spoken by him; a thanking of his presence for its difference and, thus, the construction of dialogical entities that come to enrichen each other through mutual recognition. That is why, in essaying a reply to the question posed by Manoussakis –"Is toleration enough, then?"–, I rephrase Ricoeur's question in the following terms: can we live fairly and with dignity in togetherness by being and acknowledging ourselves as different? This, it would seem to me, is the question of our time, the one which –in Heideggerian terminology– merits the most thought.

Taking advantage of Rosemary Rizo-Patrón's thoughts, I should not like to end without including a few of words on the most significant display of tolerance in Peru's recent history. I am referring to the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (TCR, or Comisión de la verdad y la reconciliación). What is most important to me about this experience and the report that the Commission issued is the co-pertinence between the different aspects of the problem. On the one hand, the others –those whose rights were violated and the world to which they belong– were allowed to speak and tell us their own story; on the other, we –that is, those who, either wittingly or unwittingly, belong to the world of the violators– have felt ourselves being put across by them. The first of these steps was doubtlessly important, because it allowed for the disclosure of the facts and contributed to the self-dignification of the speakers. But if it had stopped at that, perhaps their words would have stirred the outrage of many, but the intolerance of only those who knew themselves to be involved in criminal acts. The silence and indifference with which society, in hiding its intolerance, processed this experience, disclose that we feel ourselves to be spoken through them with words which do not beckon us to confrontantion but, rather, to an enhanced awareness of the historical and current responsibilities that correspond to us, and to a reconciliation not just with the recent past, but also

with the past of a present that is not particularly distinguished by the dignified and joyous coexistence of the many diversities that people our land.

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1. Meaning

What makes for the excellence of the book we are here presenting is that it has managed to unite, after what I know has implied great efforts and enormous labour, phenomenology and hermeneutics –as of now, mother and daughter– in the III Latinamerican Congress on Phenomenology and the I Latinamerican Congress on Phenomenology and Hermeneutics. Hermenutical philosophy, as we all know, is the offspring of phenomenology, but it is fair that we acknowledge it as being a grown child that no longer shares its parent's home, that has a place of its own; a child that is undergoing a process of change and that has broadened its stealthy relations with other philosophical traditions which are foreign to the phenomenologic family.

I must confess that at first I felt somewhat skeptical about reuniting them, in great part, because I think that interfamilial dialogues can *often* be just so much more difficult. They are, however, also the most fruitful ones, as was proven by this case. To have brought together this mother and grown daughter to converse on tolerance is, in itself, an example of tolerance, a commendable merit that I did not wish to let pass at the beginning of my presentation.

2. Structure

The structure of the book itself confirms this to be so. The first three parts, which are basically thematic, make up what I deem to be the first section. Issues that are shared by phenomenologists and hermeneuts are delved on , and «Tolerance, Plurality and Otherness from the Vantage of Hermenutics and Phenomenology» could have been its title. In strict faithfulness to the hermeneutical pathos, thoughts suggestive and inconclusive are developed about what may be understood as an ethics of alterity or as a propositive, rather than privative, version of tolerance. For tolerance is not just the absence of explicit harm or violence, it is a proposal for coexistence.

The fourth, fifth and sixth parts are basiccaly committed to lodging hermeneutics in the phenomenological home. Parting from a very broad, open cirteria, we are presented with a series of studies based on the «great authors» of the hermeneutical tradition, particularly Hans-Georg Gadamer, Paul Ricoeur and, as a fair concession to Hispanity, Ortega y Gasset. The «second section» presents us with novel studies that conduct in-depth forays into topics that are rarely addressed by the phenomenological-hermenutical tradition. We thus have some works by Mexican philosophers who introduce the debate on contemporary political philosophy into philosophical hermenutics –especially as concerns, for example, what is pressuposed by the exercise of political deliberation in multicultural contexts such as our own– in a quite productive and creative manner. For public debate to be truly democratic, it is necessary that it be also a dialogue between rationalities, and this dialogue, within the public sphere, implies – as remarked by Mariflor Aguilar of the UNAM in her "De la hermenéutica a la política" (From hermeneutics to politics)– the construction of a common space which, unlike liberalism and communitarism, stems from the vantage of alterity. In other words, it is established on the basis of the ethical-practical acknowledgement of the others' differences simultaneously to the acknowledgement of his (like) dignity as a specific interlocutor that is distinct from me (p. 405), and not as the abstraction of universal contents of rationality (Habermas) or as universal forms of the good and the fair (Rawls) (p. 404). Neo-republicanism, and not liberal or communitarian multiculturalism, turns out to be far more attuned to the challenges that cultural diversity affords current democracies –including ours– with.

3. Contributions to the thematization of tolerance

Tolerance becomes progressively more necessary in the present world, precisely because of the regressive –that is, fundamentalist– tendencies that are becoming more relevant on daily basis. Is fundamentalism a perversion of foundationalism? This is one of the key questions on which the text reflects. Intolerance is regressive, pre-political, it is the denial of reasonable coexistence because it entails the negation of otherness. The irruption of the other –of the strange–, of the unfamiliar, tears us from what's usual, it indisposes and exposes us and thus, lays our vulnerabilities bare. The appearance of the other is habitually experienced not as a gratifying encounter but as a threatening presence. This is why the relation to the foreign and the unfamiliar, to «the stranger», is originally an experience of conflict. The encounter is neither a before nor an after of this conflict ; rather, it is

the conflict that functions as the mover of coexistence: there is no coexistence without conflict, and the reasonable management of conflict through discourse and concerted action is what is properly human. But reasonable coexistence is no gift: it is an intersubjective accomplishment, or, to put it in phenomenological terms, an «infinite task». The transit from pure conflict to dignifying coexistence entails the development of a relational disposition in each and every citizen that is unnatural to character. That disposition is tolerance, the public virtue par excellence of coexistence. It is not a natural disposition, but an acquired habit.

Likeness is not tolerated, it is shared; one tolerates that which is different. Tolerance is not indulgence. In a positive snse, it basically implies the inclusion of the other as a valid interlocturor in citizen debate. It is evidence in the «positive respect and room for liberty that is afforded to the beliefs and opinions of others as regards religion, politics or ideology and, yet more fundamentally, the respect for the other in his radical ethnic and cultural (linguistic and racial) alterity, without paternalism and without incurring into hidden colonizing agendas», as affirmed by Rosemary Rizo-Patrón in "Tolerancia: entre el conflicto y la difícil verdad" (Tolerance : between conflict and the hard truth, p. 142).

There is, however, a complication that is intrinsic to the praxis of tolerance and which is underscored by several studies. Firstly, tolerance demands of universal, irrestricted, application; secondly, its survival demands the identification of its limits with intolerance, which curbs its universal intent. How are we to establish the bounds of tolerance without lapsing into unreasonable intolerances? How are we to establish the frontier between the tolerable and the intolerable: with tolerance? Or, as previously asked by James Mensch, «why must we practice tolerance?» (p. 101) Is it only a way of avoiding the negative consequences to which we have seen intolerance drives us, or is there something positive, and even beneficial, in the *praxis* of tolerance per se? The question is thus not "what is deterred?", but rather "what is the *plus* that it lends coexistence?». It can be historically proven that the great developmental period in humanity's advance coincides with those times in which the encounter between cultures proved eventful. Everything seems to pinpoint to the fact that the practice of tolerance enriches human life, that tolerance is the condition of possibility for enrichening openness to the unfamiliar and for the emphathic recognition of alterity. Intolerance is that which severs, enclosing us into «the same» and barring us from otherness.

4. The case for the TRC

On a last note, I should like to make special reference to the suggestive work that is offered us by the editrix of this tome, Rosemary Rizo-Patrón, because in it she succeeds in investing the TRC's narrative with its adequate epistemological frame. We should be able to epistemologically ground, with plausible reasons, that the Report issued by the TRC is not just another version amongst others of what has been woven over and around the facts that befell the country between 1980 and 2000. We should support that it is possible to ground a non-dogmatic conception of the truth without lapsing into epistemological relativisms of the sort that are deployed in politics to avoid moral and penal responsibilties.

The truth, seen as the perfect adequacy of the intellect to the thing, is a regulative ideal far before it is a realization. We are faced, once again, with an infinite task. As Rosemary sustains, the so-called «objectivity» and «truth» of a narration is the correlation of an *approximative* certainty, and is intersubjectively construed (p. 156). Or, as a philosopher not to her greatest liking says, it is «a dialogic event». And it is that, indeed, but it is also more than that alone, something that Rosemary knows too well. The truth of an historical narration –such as the TRC's– is a process oriented at a *télos* that lends it dynamism and sense, even as it points out its bases and limits. It is a process through which the according intersubjective experiences of (diverse) human communities come to gradually override their inherent relativism and to guide themselves (asymptotically to the *télos* or) to the ideal goal of an absolute truth (*ibid.*).

Analogously, we might say that the TRC's narrative is not just one interpretation among others. Rather, it is a narrative that has become a synthesis of consistent agreements through time which does not, however, claim to be definite, conclusive or closed. It does not exclude future corrections hailing from experiences that lead to seeing previously unconsidered aspects. That said, it is the most throrough, objective and persuasive narrative available to us now, insofar as it is based on rigorous scientific work, and broadly backed by intersubjectively contrasted experiences (hence, its objectivity) (p. 158).

In closing, I hope this presentation –which, in the purest post-Husserlian style, is both approximative and incomplete– has achieved its purpose, which has been no other than to invite you to this family reunion and coax you, with a hermenutic spirit, to peruse the book.

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(Translated from Spanish by Monica Belevan)