

CHAPTER VII

Tolerance, Respect, and Melancholy

In this essay my subject is one of the major ethical themes in the extraordinary philosophical work and life of Raymond Klibansky (1905-2005) which I try to commemorate here.¹ Recalling such a theme in the lifework of such an engaging professional colleague and friend is difficult.² His work is vast, his life was long, and he was an admirable human being.

In the context then of a commemorative essay I will try to assemble but several reminders about two matters only. First, at the biographical and professional level, I will recall briefly the extent of Raymond Klibansky's vast contributions, very often in the name of the *Institut international de philosophie*, to historical scholarship in philosophy. And, second, at the philosophical and personal level, I will try to indicate in a somewhat speculative and personal way to a suggestive connection in Raymond Klibansky's sustained reflections on just one of the several philosophical problems with which he repeatedly struggled, the problem of tolerance.

§1. A Scholarly Life

For more than fifty years, Raymond Klibansky contributed enormously to the *Institut international de philosophie*. He served as its president from 1966 to 1969. He edited many of its contributions. And, two months before his death, he published the definitive history of the *Institut*, *Idées sans frontières: Histoire et structures de l'Institut international de*

¹ This text is a revised version of an invited paper first presented at a meeting of the *Institut international de philosophie* in Tokyo in October 2006.

² See his obituary in, among other places, *Le Monde*, August 19, 2005.

philosophie.³ This fine book is very much like the man – full of good ideas, good sense, and good humour.

From the time of his election to the *Institut* in 1953, Raymond Klibanski founded, edited, and later presided over the appearance of more than 45 volumes of the Institut's bibliography.

That is, he developed the *Nouvelle Serie* of the *Bulletin Analytique* of the *Bibliographie de la Philosophie / Bibliography of Philosophy*, which the prestigious Paris book-seller, Librairie Vrin, continues to publish under the auspices of the Institut, UNESCO, and the French Centre nationale de recherche scientifique.⁴

Raymond Klibansky also edited for the Institut the Second Series of the Institut's *Chroniques de Philosophie*. This project, a set of four volumes that appeared in 1958-1959, he entitled *La Philosophie au milieu du vingtième siècle / Philosophy in the Mid-Century*. He then published a second set of four volumes between 1968 and 1971 entitled *La Philosophie contemporaine / Contemporary Philosophy*.

In 1993, Raymond Klibansky co-edited with David Pears the extensive survey volume, *La philosophie en Europe*. And in 1995, now ninety years of age, he completed a project that he had first proposed in 1951 after the example of André Lalonde's indispensable *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie*. He called this work, published in five European languages, *The Glossary of the Fundamental Terms of Philosophy*. And he described it all too modestly as merely "the first step" in establishing, despite the impossibility of any fully satisfactory intertrans-

³ Raymond Klibansky, *Idées sans frontières: Histoire et structures de l'Institut international de philosophie* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2005); hereafter cited as "*Idées*".

⁴ Bibliographical details of the most important works may be found in Raymond Klibansky: *Le Philosophe et la Mémoire du siècle: Entretiens avec Georges Leroux* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1998), pp. 289-294; cited hereafter as "*Entretiens*". A much fuller, although not complete, bibliography can be found in *The Notion of Tolerance and Human Rights*, ed. E. Groffier and M. Paradis (Ottawa: Carleton UP, 1991).

latability among many philosophical terms, some less imperfect guide to philosophy's basic terms at not just at the European level but at a genuinely international level.⁵

Further, Raymond Klibansky founded and edited for the Institut a series of translations into five European languages of seminal works mainly in twentieth-century English-language philosophy, notably major works by Russell, Whitehead, Popper, Strawson, Austin, Ryle, Quine, and others. Still more, he founded and edited another Institut series, *Textes: "Philosophie et Communauté Mondiale,"* chosen on the recommendation of FISP and the "Conseil international de la philosophie et des sciences humaines."

The objective of this text series was twofold: to show the role of philosophy in contributing to the greater establishment of a world community, and to promote among thoughtful persons everywhere a certain critical spirit of tolerance.⁶ When speaking of tolerance, he was already emphasising the word, "critical."

This series came to include works as different as Locke's *Letter on Tolerance*, for which he prepared the first critical edition of the original Latin text, and an *Anthology of Philosophy in Persia*, or Spinoza's *On Freedom of Thought* from his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* and *The Edicts of Asoka* from before the Christian era. Selected works appeared in a variety of languages such as Arabic, Japanese, Hebrew, as well as in German, Polish, Hungarian, English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese.

Among other works, Raymond Klibansky also edited with Hume's biographer, Ernest Mossner, the *New Letters of David Hume*, a selection from the work of Benedetto Croce, *Essays on the Moral and Political Problems of Our Time*, and, much earlier in his career, a Festschrift, *Philosophy and History*, for his mentor, Ernst Cassirer.

⁵ A further important step in this direction can be seen in the *Vocabulaire européen des philosophies: Dictionnaire des intraduisibles*, ed. B. Cassin (Paris: Seuil-Le Robert, 2005).

⁶ *Idées*, p. 110.

Yet, throughout this immense bibliographical and editorial work, Raymond Klibansky still continued to pursue his own quite specialized reflections on the Platonic and Neo-Platonic traditions. This is the work that he first crystallized in 1939 in one of his major books, *The Continuity of the Platonic Tradition*, a work he went on to revise and to elaborate in successive editions in 1950, 1981, and 1982.

He also continued to deepen this work on the Platonic tradition with such singular contributions as his completion of the first critical edition of the Latin translation of Plato's *Parmenides*. Strikingly, this edition included as a lengthy Appendix the first edition of part of the previously unedited Neo-platonic commentary of Proclus on the *Parmenides*.

At the same time he continued his collaborative work with the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences on the edition of the works of Nicholas de Cusa. Here Raymond Klibansky contributed not just to the edition of the famous, *De docta ignorantia* (1440).⁷ He also edited Cusanus's less well-known yet innovative work on a truly philosophical and not just religious and ecumenical understanding of tolerance, *De pace fidei*.

While busy with so much work over the years Raymond Klibansky still made time to continue the work on the Hamburg edition of the complete works of Meister Eckhardt that Ernst Cassirer had set him working on already in 1927. He persevered as well with the regular preparation of his volumes for the *Corpus Platonicum Medii Aevi*, his four volumes of *Plato Latinus*, his three volumes of *Plato Arabus*, and his nine volumes of *Medieval and Renaissance Studies* for the Warburg Institute in London.

Throughout his life he was associated with Aby Warburg's Library and Institute. Just after his earliest years as a student in Heidelberg in 1923 with Karl Jaspers, his rival Heinrich Rick-

⁷ For one striking example only of R. Klibansky's extraordinary editorial abilities see his "*Editionsprinzipien des lateinischen Textes*" and his "*Zur Geschichte der Überlieferung der Docta ignorantia des Nikolaus von Kues*" in *De docta ignorantia: Die belehrte Unwissenheit*, ed. H. G. Senger, 2nd ed. (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1999), pp. xvii-xviii and pp. 209-240 respectively.

ert, and Max Weber, Raymond Klibansky went on to Kiel as the Assistant of Ferdinand Tönnies. While living in Hamburg during this time with the Cassirer family, he met Aby Warburg.

And, thanks to his dramatic assistance just before the outbreak of the War, Raymond Klibansky was able to help substantially with the resettlement to London of Aby Warburg's magnificent oval library in Hamburg and then with its transformation into The University of London's Warburg Institute. In later years, the Warburg Institute continued to sponsor many of his extensive editorial and scholarly projects.

§2. Saturn and Melancholy

Perhaps Raymond Klibansky's most creative scholarly work, however, evolved from his quite critical conversations in Hamburg beginning in the 1920s with the art historian, Erwin Panofsky, and the Warburg librarian, Fritz Saxl.

These protracted discussions turned on what Raymond Klibansky took to be the scientific as well as philosophical inadequacies of their recently published 1923 book, *Dürer's Melancholia I*. The two older and seasoned scholars were much struck by the rigour and erudition of the very young man's extensive critical remarks. They then proposed to redo the entire work on a much larger scale with Raymond Klibansky as their co-author.

Raymond Klibansky continued this collaborative work devotedly. The infamous National Socialist anti-Jewish laws first blocked the manuscript from publication. Then war-time bombings destroyed the printer's plates. A reconstructed and expanded version was then first published in English in London and New York in 1964. But by then Fritz Saxl had already died in 1948 and Erwin Panofsky died in 1968.

Raymond Klibansky managed to complete the final revisions and elaborations for the vastly extended, definitive French version that Gallimard published in 1989. The title in French now reads: *Saturne et la mélancholie. Études historiques et*

philosophiques. Nature, religion, médecine et art. Besides much new material, the French text now included the new Greek text that Raymond Klibansky had finally established in 1988 for the pseudo-Aristotelian work, *Problems XXX.1*, on melancholy.

Although published very much later, this landmark work of enormous erudition and searching philosophical reflection had already reached a scholarly maturity during the terrible years both leading up to and including those of the Second World War. Its philosophical maturity Raymond Klibansky developed in exile in England.

For once in England, with his mother and sister at last safely and permanently resettled beyond the deathly reaches of the Shoah even into France, Raymond Klibansky accepted an invitation to contribute to the British intelligence effort, especially to its Political Warfare Executive. He finished the war as a full colonel in the British Army. He also finished the war like so very many others, physically, psychologically, and spiritually exhausted by his previously unimaginable experiences.

For his family, his friendships, and his completely unexpected war work brought him into close personal and life-long association with the manifold puzzles and mysteries of wartime evils and human suffering generally.

These experiences seem to have been closely related to the maturing of his work on the Saturn and melancholy opus. They also seem to have contributed greatly to his quite surprising renunciation in 1946 of what he judged to be his all too comfortable postwar appointment in philosophy as a Fellow of Oriel College at Oxford.

Although remaining an Oriel Fellow for life, later being made as well a Fellow of Wolfson College, and returning to Oxford regularly, Raymond Klibansky deliberately chose to renew his interrupted scholarly and philosophical career mainly in the far less prestigious philosophy department of McGill University in Montreal. There, with the later help of Charles Taylor, he worked unceasingly to raise the university's scholarly and philosophical profile to the level of the very best in Canada.

Over his many years across an entire century, his vast oeuvre and his untiring services earned Raymond Klibansky numerous honours, including distinguished honorary doctorates such as the one from Bologna that he shared with his friend, Isaiah Berlin. Moreover he was also awarded Italy's prestigious Nonino Prize, Germany's even better known, Lessing Prize and, despite his birth, his early years in Paris, and his war work in England, Germany also awarded Raymond Klibansky its highest distinction, the *Ordre de mérite*.

And this vast oeuvre also earned him the continuing gratitude of many members of the *Institut international de philosophie* and their enduring esteem and friendship over the years.

In retrospect, one might first suspect that Raymond Klibansky's scholarly work touches on so many areas that this work lacks any unity. But if, on second thought, one parses any talk of unity here in the looser terms of multiple lines of convergence rather than in those of any one, single, unifying theme, then what comes to light is something very much like the letter and the spirit of an admittedly polymorphous oeuvre.

The letter of that work, I think, has to do with drawing both critical philosophical and nuanced personal consequences from the limits of knowledge. However, for Raymond Klibansky, the vague expression, "the limits of knowledge," did not denote any well-formed set of philosophical claims about knowledge. Rather, Raymond Klibansky took this expression to designate a quite basic philosophical attitude.

This pervasive philosophical attitude reached back from his earliest literary, scientific, and Kantian studies through Hume and Locke to Cusanus on learned ignorance, to Eckhardt on genuine intellectual humility, to the metaphysics of light in the School of Chartres, to Dionysius the Aereopagite on not-knowing, to Plotinus on the one, to the philosophical manuscripts of the Middle Platonist, Apuleius, and to Plato himself on grasping the idea of the good.

Still, Raymond Klibansky was certainly not one of Isaiah Berlin's foxes. Nor, despite his neo-Platonic predilections, was

he any hedgehog either. And this curiously mixed character of his mind, neither fox nor hedgehog, is what brings me to the second and last part of my remarks today for introducing our commemorative discussion. Allow me then to say something briefly, not on the letter of Raymond Klibansky's work, but on what we may call, perhaps just as loosely, the spirit of both the work and the man.

§3. A Philosophical Life

Among others, I have come to think, perhaps mistakenly, that Raymond Klibansky's lifelong philosophical and personal struggles with both the nature and the experiences of what he continued to call, with quite purposeful vagueness, melancholy, deeply affected his abiding philosophical attitudes towards other philosophers.

These experiences and reflections afforded him a unique insight into both the conceptual shortcomings of propounding mere tolerance in philosophical matters. And they opened up for him the deeper, perhaps less argumentatively compromised necessities of a quite basic respect for philosophers as persons.

I do not want to suggest, however, that Raymond Klibansky's recurring experiences of and reflections on melancholy provided him with any strictly philosophical reasons to move from courting tolerance in philosophy matters to espousing respect. Rather, my suggestion is that such experiences and reflections accompanied at a deeply personal level his own independent argumentative dissatisfactions with advocating just mere tolerance for divergent philosophical views.

I cannot of course try to argue such a vague conjecture in detail. Instead, let me expand on connections only among three very different matters. These connections, without actually unifying his oeuvre, I believe hold throughout much of Raymond Klibansky's most important work.

The first matter is general and concerns the limits of tolerance in philosophical matters. The second is unique and con-

cerns Raymond Klibansky's most fundamental personal experiences of melancholy. And the third, and perhaps most important, is particular. It concerns the quite nuanced understandings of respect that Raymond Klibansky's arguments against any unlimited tolerance in philosophy as well as the immensities of certain of his own life experiences seem to have generated.

Consider first the loose notion of what we call in English "tolerance." However we generally delimit the general notion of tolerance, and however difficult the traditional issues of political and religious tolerance are today, the issue of tolerance in philosophical matters is in some senses even more difficult.

For in philosophical matters we have finally no good excuses for breaking off our inquiries. That is, in philosophical matters we do not repeatedly come up short against either brute political force or rationally recalcitrant claims about religious revelations. Rather, we regularly try to pursue rational inquiry to its immanent term by critically assessing the truth or falsity of various propositions, claims, theses, hypotheses, and so on.

Of course philosophers have always recognized that they cannot conduct many philosophical claims finally before the bench of impartial reason. They cannot secure a plain speaking verdict of either true or false. For many philosophical claims can at best receive no more than a Scots verdict of "not proven."

That is, besides other considerations, many philosophical claims draw their support from very different kinds of evidence, each more or less reliable. Moreover, many philosophical claims are not sufficiently well formulated to allow of any clear determination of truth or falsity. And so on.

Nonetheless, many philosophers characteristically do, in fact, succeed in putting some of their claims into proper form and in adducing appropriate kinds of reliable evidence for the supposed truth of these claims. They then go on to carry through the tedious but necessary processes of critical adjudication of arguments either for or against the supposed truth of the claims they want to advance. And often they do reach reasonable conclusions.

Still, some philosophers occasionally have to face up to failure – perhaps this is an understatement. That is, some philosophers do not always reach reasonable enough conclusions. And what then often appears is a somewhat derived version of the general issue of tolerance in the social, political, and religious domains. This issue is the particular and still quite problematic issue of understanding, justifying, and taking the critical measure of practicing tolerance in philosophical matters.

We might try to articulate this problematic notion of a specifically practical philosophical tolerance in some such provisional terms as these. The particular practical problem of philosophical tolerance appears to consist in having to work regularly with other philosophers in such a way as to reconcile the tensions between, on the one hand, some general principle of tolerance for any set of reasonably well-supported philosophical views, and, on the other, one's own reasonably well-supported countervailing views.

For example, if you continue to argue with me validly and soundly that, *pace* Gettier's counter-examples, knowledge is indeed justified true belief, and I hold, also on the bases of valid and sound arguments that, *pace* your considered views, the counter-examples do go through and hence that knowledge cannot be justified true belief alone, then you and I have more than one serious problem.

For we have a serious particular problem about our rational disagreement concerning the ultimate success or failure of the Gettier counter-examples and hence about the nature of knowledge. And we also have a serious general problem.

That problem is how to reconcile, on the one hand, our principle of tolerating well-argued philosophical views with which we reasonably disagree, with, on the other, our pervasive and well-founded philosophical ethos never to condone rationally what we have quite reasonably come to believe is false.

Some of us may then overhear ourselves protesting: "tolerance, of course, and tolerance in philosophical just as well as in political, religious, and other matters as well." But, as Locke himself insisted, there are reasonable limits to tolerance.

And when sound and valid arguments lead to conflicting although reasonable philosophical convictions, however sincere, then some philosopher needs to stand up and remind us all that “tolerance must finally yield to truth.” As Raymond Klibansky liked to say, reason certainly has its limits; but reason has its rights too.

Often enough, however, the *agon*, the struggle and the strife if not always the unpleasantness, starts right there. For reasonable people usually have some reasonable convictions. And some of these reasonable people usually hold some of their reasonable convictions strongly, vigorously, even at times polemically. And they express themselves accordingly – sometimes loudly, sometimes stubbornly, sometimes, even ungraciously.

Now, as a connoisseur of ancient rhetoric and not just in the treatises of Quintilian but especially in the trial speeches of Cicero, Raymond Klibansky often recalled philosophical differences. He also recalled heated polemical discussions at several of the annual meetings of the Institut.

Sometimes the discussions were between two different sets of strongly held ideological views. For example, long ago several Soviet Marxist colleagues disagreed strongly with several other Chinese Marxist colleagues. Other times, the heat arose from discussions between members speaking the same language. Raymond Klibansky recalled heated discussions between Freddy Ayer and Austin over whether one could rationally exempt any strictly verificationist criterion for meaning from the stringent demands of self-referential inconsistency.

And on still other occasions members of the Institut disputed hotly with one another, as in the Heidelberg *Entretiens* of 1969, not just about what Hegel, Dilthey, Heidegger and, very differently, Husserl called truth and historicity. Raymond Klibansky himself argued with Gadamer, Löwith, Ricoeur and others on the proprieties of the Institut’s sending telegrams or public letters of support for politically endangered philosophers.

To their credit, they and the Institut did support many endangered philosophers, including Jan Patočka whom some of

the Czech security forces of the time eventually murdered in his hospital bed by provoking further cerebral hemorrhages which they had first caused him during their terrible interrogations of him about Chapter 77.

The all too familiar consequences of such heated philosophical polemics were sometimes hard feelings, bad feelings, even hurt feelings. And, to everyone's disadvantage, often those feelings fed back in unconstructive ways. The result was to obscure many initially quite challenging arguments about the limits of tolerance specifically in philosophical matters.

Or, at least, that was one of the views Raymond Klibansky held. That is, he held with others that tolerance in philosophical matters had at least some quite definite limits. For, as he liked to point out with a smile, tolerant philosophers could not tolerate intolerance. But he also held other views about the limits of tolerance in philosophy.

§4. On Tolerance

Take, for example, several of his comments in his magisterial introduction to his 1965 first critical edition of the Latin text of Locke's *Letter on Tolerance*. After carefully yet concisely situating this seminal work in the complicated political and religious contexts in England and the Netherlands from 1667 on, Raymond Klibansky proceeded to highlight the social and political argument for religious tolerance in the *Letter* published in 1689 only.

Here was an argument based on Locke's distinction between the quite different functions of the two institutions of state and church. Since the functions were quite different, Locke argued shakily, their respective competence had to be quite different too. Hence the need for tolerance on both sides, church and state.

Raymond Klibansky next contrasted this political and social kind of argument to Locke's epistemological kind of argument for religious tolerance in the *Essai sur l'entendement humain* (IV.16.4) published in 1690.

Here was a different argument, one based on certain weaknesses of understanding generally. For Raymond Klibansky, Locke was arguing here that, since the powers of human understanding are in general weak, one particular person's powers of properly understanding the arguments of his or her opponents are correspondingly weak. Hence the need for tolerance on both sides of good arguments.

Raymond Klibansky then proceeded to confront both of Locke's somewhat shaky arguments with different, and, he concluded following Cassirer, stronger arguments. These arguments, he believed, could be constructed on the basis of the rights of conscience.

They were the arguments that Pierre Bayle was propounding at roughly the same time as Locke, not just in his *Dictionnaire historique et critique* from ca. 1695 but in his less well-known *Commentaire philosophique sur ces paroles de Jésus Christ "Contrains les d'entrer"* from 1686.

The result of this confrontation was a clear presentation of both what is distinctive in Locke's arguments for religious tolerance in the *Letter*, the social and political slant, and yet what remained lacking in those famous arguments nonetheless, the metaphysical and the ethical slants. Raymond Klibansky, however, left to others the much stricter work of argumentative reconstruction and critical evaluation.

In addition, however, to having provided a lucid presentation of the contents as well as the strengths and weaknesses of Locke's position in the 1689 *Letter*, Raymond Klibansky made a further contribution, this time in his own right. He succeeded in articulating one of the basic issues that cluster around not religious toleration but tolerance in philosophical matters.

Klibansky's key point, I think, turned out to be not the necessity of limits both for philosophical as well as for philosophical toleration. Rather, he elucidated the specific nature of what he took to be the most important of those limits.

For Raymond Klibansky, Locke's superb example of so many "sober arguments" and so much "moderate language," each so

well informed by Locke's large and quite mixed experiences of life both in England and on the Continent (Locke wrote the last version of the *Letter* in exile in Amsterdam), gave rise to a genial idea.

For Raymond Klibansky came to believe quite firmly that the weight of arguments, in philosophy as elsewhere, must always be joined with what Locke himself called "l'humanité et la bienveillance des raisons."⁸ And in making his own what we might suggestively call in English by deliberating echoing both Kant and Hume "the humanity of reasons" as well as "the benevolence of reasons," Raymond Klibansky succeeded in recovering under a more general ethical theme Locke's particular epistemological emphasis in the *Essai* on the general weaknesses of understanding.

§5. On More than Tolerance

Thus, for Raymond Klibansky, the weaknesses of the understanding require of philosophers in particular a properly self-critical appreciation both of their own limited intellectual capacities as well as of those of others.

This properly self-critical twofold appreciation in turn does two things. First, this appreciation occasions certain intellectual experiences of melancholy at the recognition and the ensuing realisation of one's own inexorable contingencies. And, second, this appreciation motivates a required shift in philosophical discussion from mere tolerance to genuine respect for others in their shared contingency within the pluralistic community of ongoing philosophical inquiry.

For Raymond Klibansky went on to hold like both Montesquieu and Goethe that tolerance, at least in philosophical matters, was clearly two-faced. For one of the many limits of tolerance was not just a refusal to tolerate intolerance. The limits of tolerance were also evident in the condescendence and lack of respect that the very notion of tolerance is built upon.

⁸ Cited in Locke, ed. Klibansky (1965), p. xxxi.

For merely to be tolerant of someone else's view implies the conviction that one's own view is to be rationally preferred. Moreover, the other person's inferior view, given the constraints of politeness, collegiality, and social hypocrisy, is merely to be noted, with the usual mental reservations, in silence.

"Well," we sometimes hear ourselves saying, "if indeed that is your opinion, then I respect your right to hold it." And, moving on to engage some less parochial colleague at the bar, we leave behind the poor benighted soul who can at last give himself over entirely to basking ignorantly in the rays of our quite sunny but finally condescending and destructive tolerance.

But tolerance here can lead not just to a passing melancholia but to a fatal philosophical melanoma. For some good philosophers, finding themselves all too frequently simple "tolerated," sometimes simply give up doing good philosophy. And to our common loss.

Raymond Klibansky would have none of this mortal condescension. Like the early Renaissance Florentine Latinist, Poliziano, he took a wicked pleasure in rejecting any degenerate renderings of "*tolerare*" in the vulgar Latin senses of merely "to tolerate." Instead, he went back to the original senses of the classical Latin term, "*tolerare*". And, with an enthusiasm almost audible in his written discussions, he retrieved several of Cicero's earlier uses of "*tolerare*" as "*tolerantia*" and "*toleranter*."

He found in some of the letters, for example, Cicero speaking of *tolerantia* as "endurance," a "*tolerantia rerum humanum*." Elsewhere in the letters he found Cicero complaining about "a forcing of himself" to put up with something or other ("*cum me cogere illa ferre toleranter*") Or, in another example from the *Tusculan Disputations*, Raymond Klibansky found Cicero using the expression, "toleranter," in the sense of "undergoing" certain things, even, notably, of "suffering" them.⁹

Raymond Klibansky took from these antiquarian re-readings the idea that tolerance has mainly to do with what he called

⁹ *Entretiens*, p. 213.

the enduring and suffering with firmness of the cruel vicissitudes of life. The proper connotation of the word “tolerance,” he claimed while citing Diderot’s *Encyclopédie* article on the differences between “*tolérer*,” “*permettre*,” and “*suffrir*,” was not positive but negative.

Properly understood, tolerance, he insisted, means “*l’aptitude de subir quelque chose de désagréable, de douloureux*,”¹⁰ the habitual capacity to face up to and to endure something disagreeable and painful.

The stress here clearly fell on the negative, on what Diderot called “bad things,” or “things one believes are bad.” And, in support of this negative interpretation of tolerance, Raymond Klibansky went on to cite a remarkable passage from Tom Paine’s late Enlightenment work, *The Rights of Man* (1791-1792).

“Tolerance,” wrote Paine, “is not the opposite of intolerance, but its counterfeit: both are despotisms. The one arrogates to itself the right to prohibit the freedom of conscience, the other to concede it.”¹¹ Being merely tolerant of another philosophical view for Raymond Klibansky became the pretention of conceding to someone what was already his or her right.

What emerged from these scholarly retrievals was a clear picture, Raymond Klibansky believed, of just where the limits to tolerance especially in philosophical matters lay. They lay not so much in the logic of self-reference, self-consistency, and self-refutation.

Rather, the limits to tolerance were to be found in the unmistakable human propensities for error, in the troubling phenomena of the erring conscience, and in the specific pains and sufferings of each person’s unknowing.

And with this insight into the limits of tolerance, he was now back in touch with his former preoccupations in his work on Cusanus and Eckhardt and on the still earlier texts of the Neoplatonic tradition in all its manifold varieties.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*, cited, p. 214.

§6. On Respect

This thinking through his dissatisfactions with mere tolerance also brought Raymond Klibansky to fresh personal recollections and novel critical reflections on his wartime experiences. Here, what was at stake was taking the proper personal and not just critical measure of his knowledge of the Shoah's horrific upheavals and its still felt aftershocks.

What he kept remembering too was the genuine bewilderment, his own and others, in his many interrogations of German officers and in his frequent attendance at de-nazification trials. Something much more basic than mere tolerance was missing in many of these people: what was missing was a most fundamental respect for persons.

Recall my earlier mention of Raymond Klibansky's experiences of and reflections on melancholy. These struggles with a pervasive melancholy that he remained reluctant to acknowledge allowed him, I believe, to effect a gradually lived transition from strictly philosophical claims, from conceptual difficulties with properly formulating Lockean arguments for even a limited tolerance, to the primacy of certain philosophical attitudes.

Raymond Klibansky came to insist finally on moving in philosophical matters beyond mere tolerance of other reasonably supported views to a much more basic respect for other persons and their struggles to support such views satisfactorily. Whether that respect for persons in philosophical matters reached as far as forgiveness in political and religious matters, I do not know. But such a respect reached very far nonetheless.

For Raymond Klibansky's view arose from his deepening philosophical conviction and personal realisation of the rightness of Locke's insistence on the general weaknesses of the understanding.

And he came to believe that these general weaknesses of the understanding – what Augustine had called “the darkness of the mind” – when overlooked or misconstrued or disregarded led to an entirely unfounded self-confidence in one's own intellectual superiority.

What merited respect rather than mere tolerance were indeed the limits of one's colleagues' philosophical understanding. But what also merited respect, and perhaps more, were the limits of one's own philosophical understanding.

Too often, and all too tragically in his experience, Raymond Klibansky had found that proper respect for others in their weaknesses arising from a proper respect for oneself in one's own weaknesses had gone missing. It deeply saddened him. And others noticed.

§7. On Melancholy

For perhaps the most striking commemoration of the very many tributes to Raymond Klibansky after his death was to be seen at the *Galeries nationales du Grand Palais* in 2005, just five days after what would have been his one hundredth birthday. And the same commemoration was to be seen again a few months later at the *Neue Nationalgalerie* in February, 2006.

A very extensive exhibit had opened, first in Paris on October 10th and then in Berlin on February 17th. And on both occasions the richly detailed and much remarked upon catalogue bore the same subtitle: "en hommage à Raymond Klibansky (1905-2005)." The exhibit took as its theme the polyvalent notion of melancholy.

After the exhibition's extensive presentations of different painterly representations of melancholy, the catalogue went on to explore this dark notion in detail. The exploration was thorough, moving from ancient to contemporary times across medical, psychological, artistic and philosophical texts, under the disturbing subheading of "genius and madness in the West."

The catalogue included twenty one essays by a number of scholars and writers, including Yves Bonnefoy, Marc Fumaroli, Roland Recht, Jean Starobinski, as well as shorter contributions from almost fifty more scholars mainly from France and Germany. And Raymond Klibansky's name and work was often in view.

Despite the bewildering metamorphoses of their chosen theme, all the many collaborators in the exhibition as well as all the contributors to the comprehensive catalogue were able continually to keep their bearings. For they in view the inestimable resources of an unmistakable landmark.

That landmark was the towering work, articulated, consolidated, and extended over many decades in the divergent contexts of wartime destructions, manifold exiles, painful resettlements, and much suffering, that Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky, and Fritz Saxl had first recast in the unstable years of the Weimar Republic.

The lighthouse work that gave rise to the exhibit and gave repeated bearings to its collaborators and contributors was of course *Saturn and Melancholy: Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion, and Art*.

This work throughout the long years from 1923-24 that Raymond Klibansky worked towards its completion in 1989 from the time he was 19 until he was 84, also provided more than merely philosophical bearings for Raymond Klibansky himself.

For continuing this work provided an unremitting drive to privilege, specifically in philosophical matters, the thick ethical and metaphysical attitudes of basic respect for philosophers as persons over the much thinner notion of a mere tolerance for different philosophical opinions.

Envoi

Saturn and Melancholy was, and remains, an extraordinary work. It is about, among other matters, the deep pathos of things and the negative sublime. The book is Raymond Klibansky's legacy.

Still, in its even longer history, slow maturing, and continually suggestive philosophical import, what may prove to be his most thoughtful legacy is not Raymond Klibansky's magisterial book, but his philosophically tempered melancholy.