

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910456792703321
Titolo	Discourses of tolerance and intolerance in the European Enlightenment // edited by Hans Erich Bodeker, Clorinda Donato, and Peter Hanns Reill
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Toronto, [Ontario] ; ; Buffalo, [New York] ; ; London, [England] : , : University of Toronto Press, , 2009 ©2009
ISBN	1-4426-8788-6
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (270 p.)
Collana	UCLA Center/Clark series ; ; 8
Disciplina	323.094/09033
Soggetti	Toleration - Europe - History - 18th century Enlightenment Toleration Discrimination - Europe - History - 18th century Electronic books. Europe Social conditions 18th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Includes index.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Acknowledgments -- Contributors -- Introduction / Reill, Peter Hanns -- Prologue: Towards A Reconstruction Of The Discourse On Tolerance And Intolerance In The Age Of Enlightenment / Bödeker, Hans Erich -- Toleration And Ration Di Stato: Jews And Protestants In The Savoyard State, Ca. 1650-1750 / Symcox, Geoffrey -- Locke And The Problem Of Toleration / Ashcraft, Richard -- Political Parties And The Legitimacy Of Opposition / Ball, Terence -- Millenarianism And Tolerance / Popkin, Richard -- The Practice Of Religious Tolerance And Intolerance In Late Eighteenth- Century Württemberg / Lehmann, Hartmut -- Jewish Emancipation In France In The Eighteenth Century / Malino, Frances -- The Jewish Question In Eighteenth-Century Germany / Sorkin, David -- Discrediting Slavery: From The Société Des Amis Des Noirs To The Haitian Revolution - Ideological Patterns And Anthropological Discourses / Lüsebrink, Hans-Jürgen -- The Intolerable Other /

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Sommario/riassunto

The principle of tolerance is one of the most enduring legacies of the Enlightenment. However, scholarly works on the topic to date have been primarily limited to traditional studies based on a historical, 'progressive' view or to the critiques of contemporary writers such as Adorno, Horkheimer, Foucault, and MacIntyre, who believed that the core beliefs of the Enlightenment, including tolerance, could actually be used as vehicles of repression and control rather than as agents promoting individual and group freedom. This collection of original essays by a distinguished international group of contributors looks at the subject in a new light and from a number of angles, focusing on the concept of tolerance at the point where the individual, or group, converges or clashes with the state. The volume opens with introductory essays that provide essential background to the major shift in thinking in regard to tolerance that occurred during the eighteenth century, while considering the general problem of writing a history of tolerance. The remaining essays, organized around two central themes, trace the expansion of the discourses of tolerance and intolerance. The first group treats tolerance and intolerance in relation to the spheres of religious and political thought and practice. The second examines the extension of broad issues of tolerance and intolerance in the realms of race, gender, deviancy, and criminality. While offering an in-depth consideration of these complex issues in the context of the Enlightenment, the volume sheds light on many similar challenges facing contemporary society.
