TOLERANCE AND TRADITION

Tolerance and tradition

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TOLERANCE AND TRADITION

Author(s): Adam B. Seligman
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Summary/Abstract: Adam B. Seligman, in his essay explores the philosophical bases of tolerance. Religious authority can become corrupted if it allies itself with state power; yet Seligman sees the post-Enlightenment solution to this problem, that of separating religion from politics and of seeing individual autonomy as the highest good, as carrying its own risks. The answer, Seligman suggests, is "to find a mid-point between nihilism and post-modern relativism on the one hand, and absolutist claims of faith and reason on the other". As for tolerance, he sees it as lying not in the indifference of liberal secularism, but rather in faith that is tempered by scepticism and is therefore pluralistic: "since we cannot be sure of truth, we cannot be sure of the nature of heresy and hence cannot go to such extremes as burning heretics".

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