

Philosophy of Toleration

Abstract

The article deals with the origins and development of the issue of toleration; it refers to its most prominent moments and practical demonstrations in the history of Europe. In relation to the present-day situation of the human race and of the world plagued by terrorism, it demonstrates that toleration and tolerance are just as topical today as they were in the past and that toleration can only function if based on a symmetrical relationship, i.e. a relationship based on mutual respect.

Key words: *toleration, history of philosophy, ancient and Christian philosophy, Enlightenment, postmodernism, Islam, education*

It is common knowledge that toleration as tolerance towards different opinions and expressions, especially in the areas of religion, ideology, or politics, but also, more generally, towards one's view of the world, used to be, and, more often than not, is still perceived as a concession or, at least, a mark of benevolence in relation to the weaker, of the majority towards the minority.

In the course of history, the issue of toleration emerged whenever radically new, important ideas were born in the intellectual world, which gradually started to show practically in social reality and it was necessary to answer the question of whether to suppress them or let them spread freely. A similar situation arose whenever, thanks to objective circumstances and development, it became obvious that the ruling ideas had had their day and were no longer sustainable, but, nevertheless, some individuals or groups of people would not abandon them.

In the European setting the necessity of toleration arrived with Christianity. In the ancient world, there was no such need, as, under the conditions of polytheistic belief in various cults, toleration was an obvious fact, and a mere formal obligatory respect toward gods was expected. Christianity brought about intolerance. Through