

Summary

„Rousseaus Konzept einer Zivilreligion“

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The article contains an interpretation of the last chapter of Rousseaus Contrat Social.

Rousseau was the first philosopher of the Elightenment who acutely criticized the philosophical premises of the modern liberal constitutional state. In his eyes an enlightened and free civic society needs a civic religion strengthening the moral bond of the citizens and their altruistic patriotism necessary for the conservation and flourishing of their political community. His concept of a civic religion gives an answer to the question, how such a religion is possible without destroying the autonomy of the citizens and the private religious pluralism of the society and without binding the citizens to superstition or even fanaticism.

The article tries to expose the consistency of Rousseaus concept of a civic religion and to show that, with a view to our modern civic societies his thoughts do not earn thoughtless affirmation or rejection but serious discussion.