

Autonomy, Diversity and the Common Good

Edited by Ingolf U. Dalferth and Marlene A. Block

[Autonomie, Vielfalt und das Gemeinwohl.]

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Is it true that insistence on autonomy and diversity weakens social cohesion, or that striving for justice, equity and equality undermines individual freedom? A long tradition has seen the common good as the social order in which individuals and groups can best strive for perfection. Liberal societies insist that this perfecting must not be done at the cost of others or by restricting the right to such a striving only to some and not granting it also to others. However, in a time of growing social and cultural diversity and inequality the traditional tensions between individual freedom and social responsibility have increased to a point where the binding forces of our societies seem to be exhausted. How much individuality and what kinds of diversity are we ready to accept? How much autonomy and diversity are possible without destroying social cohesion and human solidarity? And how much social commonality is necessary to be able to live an autonomous life and do justice to diversity?

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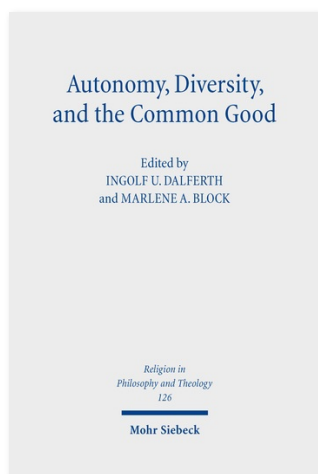
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