

The True Indication Argument from the Viewpoint of Allameh Tabataba'i

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Abstract

From the viewpoint of Allameh Tabataba'i, the existence of God is a primary self-evidence and all arguments for the existence of God are different readings of the True Indication argument. One of these arguments is the one known as the proof of the righteous that has been used by previous philosophers to prove the existence of God. However, Allameh Tabataba'i has taken a new route and has introduced it as a reading of the True Indication argument. In the article at hand, it has been tried to comprehensively analyze this argument for its indicative quality. As this argument is found not to fully include the criterion of the True Indication argument, a new reading of the True Indication argument should be achieved that fully involves this aspect or on which is at a higher level. In the article at hand, these readings are extracted from the works of Allameh Tabataba'i and explained based on the analysis of genesis and analysis of annihilation.

Keywords: Allameh Tabataba'i, True Indication argument, Necessary being, Genesis, Annihilation.

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The Divine Theology in Avicenna's Viewpoint

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Abstract

In this article, the ontological, epistemological, and linguistic aspects of negative theology has been examined in the works of Avicenna based on reasons such as the difference between the creator and the creature, the emphasis on the true unity and the simplicity of the essence of the sublime God, nonexistence of any similar being to Him, His freedom from limitations and quiddity, His absoluteness and infiniteness, human inability to comprehend the sublime Allah, the unfathomability of His sublimity and being to human intellect, the imperfection of the caused compared to the cause, and the human's limited perceptive power. The examination of Avicenna's theological system leads us to the point that Avicennan ontology emphasizes the huge gap that exists between the absolute being (i.e. God) and other beings. He is the cause of creatures, but does not have any generic similarity to them. In the epistemology sphere, Avicenna has rejected the possibility of the existence of a human positive knowledge that is congruent with reality. In the linguistic realm, the negative theology reasons that exist in his theory are in line with the ontological and epistemological dimensions of his viewpoint, i.e. it is natural that if something cannot be known and found, it cannot be expressed, either.

Keywords: Negative theology, Necessary being, Denial of likeness, Avicenna.

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Fat Ego: Murdoch's Interpretation of the Human Representation in Modern Ethics

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Abstract

In this article, Iris Murdoch's – the Irish philosopher of ethics – viewpoint toward modern moral philosophy is examined. In her opinion, ethics is the most important act of the human, which is required to satisfy two demands: it should be realistic and it should answer this question that how we can morally improve ourselves. Based on these two requisitions, she criticizes the ethical discussions of the modern philosophies. She believes that in modern moral philosophies, the scope of human volition is so expanded that it seems as if moral choice is something arbitrary, and is related to personal will. Too much emphasis on the human volition not only does not offer any help to the moral life, but also makes more difficult the selection of the moral choice and the conduction of the moral act. Extreme emphasis on human volition brings about two outcomes: distancing human from moral realism and deluding him. That is to say, it creates a fat ego entangled with a deluded image that distances the human from moral act, since self-centeredness is the main obstacle to moral act.

Keyword: Existentialism, Free will, Fat ego, Moral philosophy, Moral act.

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Theologians' Viewpoints toward the Origination of the World and Criticisms about Them

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Abstract

There are two different viewpoints among theologians about the origination and eternity of the world, i.e. eternity and non-eternity. The author of the present article first states the problem and presents the related discussions and concepts, and then goes on to explain five intellectual approaches (limiting the abstract being to God, considering the origination as a requirement for the principle of volition and will, transformation of anything other than the eternal, the origination of the created as being a reason for the pause and expiration of the eternal past, and the introduction of a startpoint for the previous creations requiring the existence of a startpoint for the whole) along with the qur'ānic and narrative evidences of the proponents of origination. Finally, the author analyzes and assesses their reasons and rejects their argument for the origination theory.

Keywords: Universe, Origination, Eternity, Eternality, Time, Theologians.

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Religious and Mystic Meanings of Freedom

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Abstract

One of the main concepts of mysticism that is known as a quality of human perfection and virtue and is attained only at the high levels of servitude and spiritual conduct is spiritual freedom. Unlike the concept of liberty in the political and social discourses, this quality can be achieved through pure servitude to God and rejection of servitude to non-God. The human can attain spiritual freedom only when he goes through the highest levels of spiritual conduct and gets completely free from the chains of the appetitive self and the material attachments. In this article, we aim at studying this concept from the religious and mystic viewpoints and expressing its semantic scope and spiritual value in mysticism using the words of Gnostics. To this end, after the introduction of the issue, the denotative and terminological meanings of freedom are presented. Then, its relationship with other concepts such as servitude and Perfect Man is examined. In this part, the words of the master of the free humans, Imam Ali (a), are used to explicate the foregoing relationships. Moreover, the opinions of some notables of mysticism and great mystic thinkers are used in this regard. At the end, the results of this study are presented to the seekers of religious knowledge, freedom seekers, and free servants of God.

Keywords: Freedom, Servitude, Free servant, Free Perfect Man.

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Act of God in the World from the Viewpoint of Barbour

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Abstract

The article at hand aims at conducting an analytical investigation of Barbour's process-based viewpoint toward act of God in the world. Following the contemporary scientific viewpoints, Ian Barbour believes that the natural world is run by natural laws. However, he believes in the act of God in the natural world, too, since he is of the belief that these two happen at two different levels. The natural laws express the effects of the physical variables of a phenomenon, while the act of God represents the effectiveness of God from within. In the world depicted by Barbour, natural variables and human volition bring about the future of the world, and even God does not know about the future of the world. Act of God in the world is limited to offering suggestions and introducing facilities to the creatures. In fact, God is represented as a variable in line with other variables. However, such a God is so weak and needy, and is not worthy of being worshipped.

Keywords: Process theology, God, Act of God, Barbour, Whitehead.

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Reforming the Religious Thought Based on Master Motahhari's Opinions

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Abstract

Reason and science have provided the yardsticks needed for the identification of truth and attainment of responses to the ambiguities of human life in the modern era. Accordingly, some people have proposed that religion is not a necessary component in the mosaic of human life, and so, they have abandoned religious teachings because they are allegedly inconsistent with intellectual and scientific solutions. It is an obligation to respond to these accusations, raise the flag of religion, and defend the intellectual and scholarly aspect of religion. Understanding this necessity, Master Motahhari has embarked upon explicating the importance of reason and science and their interrelation with religion in a coherent set of scientific inquiries. He deems that the comprehensiveness of religion is not in offering each and every detail, but in providing a mechanism to extract the details in all eras. Based on this mechanism and process – which is nothing but the intellect- and principle-based Free Investigation – A Muslim Jurist can bring about balance between religious comprehensiveness and religious flexibility and changeability. He agrees with reason's priority in understanding the religious propositions and considers it to be beneficial to legislation. On the other hand, he believes that Islam has not rejected empiricism and science but deems them as subordinate to religion. Therefore, reason and science are certainly interrelated to religious law but considering the priority in terms of rank, reason is prior to science and religious law.

Keywords: Master Motahhari, Religious rationality, Science, Religion, Reason, Free Investigation.

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The Ethical Theory of the Divine Command: The Examination and Criticism of Duns Scotus' Stance

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Abstract

The ethical theory of the divine command explores the basis of the ethical values in the divine decrees that exist in the sacred texts. Duns Scotus – whose theological opinions have emphasized the free volition and the absolute power of God – has been among the adherents of this theory. In line with considering the origin of the ethical obligation to be the divine volition, he presents a balanced ontological exposition for this theory. Ignoring to separate the divine volition from divine command and lacking a clear criterion for the identification of the divine volition, having internal inconsistency and self-contradiction, ruling for the permissibility of nonbelievers not believing in the ethical principles, and lacking a fixed ethical criterion for judging the moral correctness or incorrectness of different affairs are among the main challenges that troubles him in adopting a balanced exposition of the ethical theory of the divine command. Using an analytical-citation analysis method, this article first explains the theory of divine command and different readings of it, and then evaluates the reading offered by Scotus.

Keywords: Divine command, Divine volition, God, Ethics, Scotus.

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Purpose and Purposefulness as a Meaning-making Factor in the Ashura Event

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Abstract

Ashura is one of the main events of the history that has received great attention from researchers. Despite this point, this event has been ignored by the researchers of the philosophy of religion and meaning of life. This study is a meaning-oriented endeavor on the Ashura event that examines the role of meaning in the Ashura event. It mentions the purposes and motivations that Imam Hussein (a) had in Karbala. Purposes such as awakening the Prophet's nation from ignorance and neglect, saving them from materialism, bringing about justice, correction of affairs rather than participation in war, etc. are highly rich and unique in meaning. In this event, the divine purpose and the personal purpose were combined to bring about a novel meaning.

Keywords: Ashura, Imam Hussein (a), Meaning of life, Purpose, Divine purpose, Personal purpose.

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The Methodology of the Determination of the Epistemological Value of the Shī'a Religious Claims

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Abstract

The epistemological value is the same as the conformity with reality. In the discussion of the epistemological value of the Shī'a religious claims, all religious teachings that are used as the positive criteria in the determination of the correctness or incorrectness of knowledge regard the conformity of the claims with reality. In this method, all religious teachings originate from the sublime God and whatever He says are realities that exist in the world, and His words all conform to reality. Therefore, the epistemological value of these teachings proves their issuance by God. The discussion on the epistemological value of religious teachings in this method has been examined via two perspectives. The first one regards how people ascertain the conformity of the religious teachings with reality, which includes discussions such as reason, narrating from and introducing the previous prophets, and miracle. The second perspective regards the way a prophet ascertains the conformity of the religious teachings with reality, which entails topics such as the role of infallibility in receiving and delivering the religious teachings, the role of Holy Spirit in the epistemological value of the religious teachings, and the role of prophets' way of being authenticated in their knowledge about religious teachings. In the religious epistemology, knowledge is attained through God's inspiration and revelation and these two ways have the highest value, while reason and narrations follow revelation and become a source of religious epistemological source in the light of it.

Keywords: Epistemological value of religious teachings, Holy Spirit, Infallibility, Miracle.

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