

The essence of God and the distinction of his attributes in Spinoza's philosophy

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Abstract:

Spinoza thinks that God is the only substance that exist and all the things are his manifestations. According to him, God will manifest himself in infinite worlds by his attributes which is infinite numerally and in essence. He will manifest himself by two main attributes of *thought* and *extension*. Of course his conception of God is so ambiguous that his commentators had constantly problems in its interpretation; So that some of them have called him as a Deist thinker, some as an Atheist, and the others as pantheist. These paradoxical interpretations made it important to analyze his conception of God. There are two important theories in regard to the relation between nature and attributes of God: the theory of collection, according to which God's essence is a collection of distinct attributes; and the theory of totality, according to which God's essence is identical with totality of his non-discrete attributes. The present paper tries to assess these different interpretations of Spinoza's conception of God.

Keywords: attribute, collection, extension, nature, substance, thought, totality.

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Abd ál-Razzaq Lahiji on Divine Wisdom: A Critical Assessment

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Abstract

This paper is going to examine Abd ál-Razzaq Lahij's view on divine wisdom. According to him, divine wisdom is the same as divine purposefulness. That is to say, God's actions are always purposeful. But these purposes, in fact, belong to the creatures, since when a purpose is achieved, a need of the purpose-setter would be satisfied, but God is all-rich, i.e. God has no need at all. Lahiji presents two arguments in favor of his claim; one is based on intrinsic good or evil in actions, and the other one, is based on God's free will. This paper, first of all begins with analyzing of Lahiji's attitude toward "purposefulness" of creature and tries to determine its connection with "free will" and "satisfying the needs of the purpose-setter". The conclusions will be drawn from it is as follow: (1) Achieving a purpose does not satisfy only the needs of the purpose-setter, but might also do the others' needs; (2) The mechanism of setting a purpose should not be tied to either "free will" or "determinism". Then, Lahiji's two arguments is taken into consideration and we proved that both arguments are weak and cannot be used in defense of divine wisdom.

Keywords: divine wisdom, free will and determinism, essential good and evil, purposefulness.

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Instrumentalism in science, as a way of resolving the conflict between religion and science

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Abstract

Instrumentalism in science refers to a view that considers scientific theories as nothing more than instruments for prediction. The traces of this attitude sometimes have been found in the writings of Plato and Aristotle; but mostly the pioneers of the theory have been thought to be the priests who regarded the scientific propositions as mere hypothesis, in order to defend religious doctrines. George Berkeley and Pierre Duhem, among others, could be considered as defenders of this view. Most of the new instrumentalists choose this approach only in theoretical terms; and they do not regard scientific laws as instrumental. Instrumentalism has close relationship with many other scientific schools of philosophy (like positivism, conventionalism, pragmatism, and linguistic analysis school). Some people with appealing to this theory and asserting that the scientific propositions (as opposed to religious doctrines) represent no reality at all have tried to resolve the apparent conflict between science and religion.

Keywords: instrumentalism, religion-science conflict, theoretical terms.

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The process of Jewish theism with emphasis on Quranic witnesses

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Abstract

The story of theism in the history of the Jewish folk, who are categorized in the Abrahamic or monotheistic religions, is a long path which had begun from Animism and believe in natural spirits till dissolving all the godes in one God. The history of the Jewish folk's deity in fact start from Deism in nomadic Hebrews and continues to the God of Moses, the Israelites introduced and eventually picked up the Jewish commentators like Maimonides and Spinoza. For these reasons, the story of Israel and their theistic course has an important role in Qur'an verses. In this Scripture, God has depicted the vicissitudes and distortions of this folk in their theistic trends in personal and social development. And it invites people to learn from the strengths and weaknesses points of this tribe. In this research we will survey issues like: internal factors; such as myths, ethnic believes, religious distortion, and external factors; such as other nations, influence on the process of theistic in this religion and it's reflection in the Bible and the holy Quran.

Keywords: Israel, Jehu, Kabbalah, Moses, the Ten Commandments, Torah.

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The role of transcendental reason in understanding of the religion

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Abstract

One of the main issues in religious studies and philosophy of religion is the role of reason in understanding of the religion. There are many questions in this respect Such as: What is the role of reason in understanding of religion? Is reason only an instrument for understanding of religion or a source? And etc. In Islamic thought, there are various approaches toward this problem, including the *formalism*, *rationalism* of the Mu'tazilites, and *transcendent reason* (Shi'ism). *Formalists*, from Sunnis (Ahle-Hadith) and Shiite (Akhbaris) groups, have essentially focused on the religious aspects and opposes any kind of rational method in understanding of the religion. *Rationalists* like Mu'tazilites (both old and new Mu'tazila) believe that reason itself can understand all the content of religion. And *Moderate rationalism* (Shiite reason or transcendental reason) believe that there is coordination and Compatibility between reason and Sharia. They also believe that reason is a source of understanding of the religion and instrument for understanding it. This article attempts to shows the position of reason (as a tool and source) in each part of the religion (beliefs, laws, ethics, etc.).

Keywords: instrumental reason, reason, religion, religious knowledge, transcendental reason, understanding of religion.

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Review of Propositional and non-propositional revelation in Christian Theology

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Abstract

The phenomenon of *revelation* and its explanation is one of the most important topics in the field of divine religions. The mysterious and supernatural nature of this phenomenon has led religious scholars to various approaches. In Christian theology, there are two general approaches for explaining revelation: i.e. propositional and non-propositional. According to the first approach, the revelation includes set of consciousness which manifest itself in the form of terms and propositions; while in the second approach, revelation is only a disclosure and not a kind of proposition. This paper is going to investigate, analyze and criticize both approaches in order to determine their defects and deficiencies. In both approaches, The reduction of *revelation* to the status of mere proposition in the propositional approach, (disregarding the principles of anthropology and ontology), and reduction of *revelation* to the low level of human experience in non-propositional approach (and neglecting linguistics in the realm of the religion language), are among the most important defects of Christian theology in explaining the phenomenon of *revelation*.

Keywords: Christian theology, non-propositional, patterns of revelation, propositional, revelation.

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Value art and non-value art from the perspective of Plato

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Abstract

Since Plato is regarded as the first philosopher who started writing on aesthetics and had influence on next aesthetics views, examining of his artistic aesthetic perspective has crucial importance. Although in that time the idea of *fine arts* had not been proposed yet, from his ideas we could drown the unrefined theory of fine arts. As we know, there are two different explanation of Plato's perspective on fine arts. Some of his commentators believe that he has been defender of fine arts so that they have tried to justify his explicit objections to art as whole. Some others have taken him against art. This study reviews Plato's ideas on art irrespective of the views of his opponents and proponents. Our findings show that he is neither an absolute proponent nor an absolute opponent of fine arts. That is, Plato believes in two types of art: "Value art" and "non-value art". He expresses some features for each type and regards absolute aesthetic (i.e. having a divine origin) as the most distinctive feature of art.

Keywords: absolute aesthetic, features, fine arts, non-value art, Plato, value art.

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Philosophical and theological foundations of social management in view of Islam

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Abstract

The philosophical and theological foundations of social management in Islamic thought are taken into consideration in this paper. As we know, according to *Islam* and also *reason*: first, human beings are social beings and they will attain happiness and perfection only in society. Second, each society; including Islamic and non-Islamic society, essentially need to a government. Third, each government depends on two main factors: i.e. Law and Managers. According to rational and religious foundations, a good manager for conducting the society toward happiness must, first of all, himself possess perfection attributes and virtues. This article will discuss about four rational and philosophical principles of Islamic management. Then, we will point out to characteristics of Islamic manager in accordance with Quran verses and traditions. Some of this characteristics are as follow: faith, piety, justice, ethical perfections, consulting with wise peoples, election by vote, defender of human being's right, guardians of public treasury, and etc. these are such attributes that everyone who suppose them, will verify such a management.

Keywords: Islamic government, Islamic manager, philosophical foundation, social management, society.

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