



Original Article

The Impact of Epistemological Foundations on Theology

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Abstract

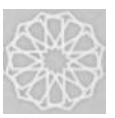
One of the important issues in religious epistemology is the influence of epistemological foundations on theology. Differences in epistemological foundations have played a role in the multiplicity of religions. This article seeks to prove the claim that each epistemological method provides a form of theology and that comprehensive theology depends on a comprehensive understanding of the religious knowledge. In this research, at the beginning, the keywords of research, e.g., religion, epistemology, and religious knowledge are defined, and then the methods of religious knowledge such as rational knowledge, innate and mystical intuitive knowledge, revelatory knowledge and narrative knowledge (obtained from books and traditions). The findings show that the highest level of religious knowledge is obtained from revelation, and such knowledge is specific to the prophets and special saints of God, whose knowledge is from God and the direct observation of truths. However, other methods in religious knowledge each bring us to a level of theology, and everyone's theology is influenced by his epistemological method, and a perfect religious knowledge is obtained through a combination of reason and mysticism and contemplation in the book and tradition. From the ontological point of view, religion is an existential truth with many dimensions and one-sidedness prevents the attainment of the whole truth and is one of the reasons for the emergence of religious pluralism.

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

One of the important issues in the epistemology of religion is understanding the impact of epistemological foundations on theology which makes us think carefully about the epistemological foundations of various theologians. This is due to the diversity of valid methods of epistemology for every scholar. This article seeks to prove the claim that a comprehensive approach to the correct methods of theology leads to a comprehensive religious knowledge. Therefore, this study tries to investigate the issues of religion, epistemology and religious knowledge, methods of religious knowledge such as rational method and innate and mystical intuitive method, as well as revelatory and narrative method (obtained from books and traditions).

2. Method

In the present study, the library method has been used. In this sense, the documentary method has been used to collect data and the data were analyzed through a descriptive-analytical method.

3. Results

Different epistemological attitudes in religious knowledge have led to differences in theology and the emergence of numerous religions and sects, and sometimes the co-existence of their followers. Any understanding of religion based on a solid foundation is more justifiable since the truth of religion from the ontological point of view is a divine thing and has dimensions and levels, and human beings - except the prophets and messengers who face the revelation of this truth - adopt this truth with their own different epistemological tools. Hence, in the foundations of epistemology, those who consider only reason as the criterion of knowledge and discredit other methods, those who consider only

innate and mystical intuition as the basis of knowledge of the truth of religion, and those who are content with prerequisites and insist only on the appearances of religious teachings, each consider one aspect of the truth of religion, insist on the one-sidedness of this knowledge and invalidate and ignore the other aspects of this profound truth.

Therefore, everyone's theology is based on his epistemological foundations of religion, and this difference of understandings leads to the emergence of different types of religious knowledge which may cause division in religion. However, other emotional and socio-political factors are also influential in this regard.

4. Conclusion

As a result, there are three valid sources in religious knowledge (especially in Islam): the book, the definite tradition, and explicit reason. In other words, God Almighty, who is the sender of the true religion, has authenticated the appearances of the book, and the appearances of the book (the Qur'an) have authenticated the definite tradition and explicit intellect. Therefore, using reason, as the key to understand religion, innate intuition and innocent mystical intuition (which is obtained through sincerity in the service of God), it is possible to understand the heavenly truth and learn the right way of gaining faith and doing righteous deeds. It is then that the difference in knowledge will cause the unity of theologians. Therefore, the truth is that to achieve a comprehensive religious epistemology, one must combine intellect, intuition, the Qur'an and Sunnah in four epistemological ways, and become the founder of a transcendent wisdom in theology, because the Qur'an, mysticism, proof and tradition are inseparable and the religious knowledge is perfect when it begins with thought and goes on considering pure Islamic mysticism and



a deep understanding of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

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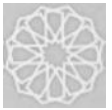
Authors' Contribution

The article has been written individually by one author.

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