

Transcendent Philosophy, Na'eeni School, and Muhammad Taghi Ja'fari on Free will and Necessity

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The relation between free will and necessity is one of the most important issues regarding the problem of “free will”. This is because of the rule which indicates that “being not necessary, an event would not be came off”. There has been an ongoing debate among theologians, philosophers and Jurists on whether this rule includes free actions. Sadrain Philosophers believe that this rule is inclusive of human free actions, while followers of the Na'eeni school endorse the opposite. In this article, after reviewing the views of philosophers and jurists on the stages of a free action, I shall explore the question whether human actions, stages of which are understood deterministic, could be regarded as free, and so, whether Na'eenian criticisms against philosophers are justified. Besides, I shall put forth some innovative ideas of Allameh Ja'fari concerning the issue, whose view, while revises some philosophers', is not compatible with that of Na'eeni.

Keywords: will, desire, seeking, freedom, causality, necessity, homogeneity, preponderation, self-supervision

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Critical Analysis of J.L. Schellenberg's Views on the Problem of Divine Hiddenness

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In 1993, for the first time, John L. Schellenberg, the contemporary philosopher of religion, proposed the "Hiddenness Argument". According to this argument, as God doesn't provide for many people sufficient evidence for His existence, He is hidden. In other words, that many people inculpably fail to find sufficient evidence for the existence of God constitutes evidence for atheism. Schellenberg argues that since a loving God would not withhold the benefits of belief, the lack of evidence for God's existence is incompatible with divine love. This paper argues that his defense of two controversial premises of his argument is unsuccessful: one is that God's love is incompatible with His allowing some to remain in doubt about His existence, and the other is: the nonbelief of some agnostics is inculpable. Theistic Religions have plausible reasons, which Schellenberg has not succeeded in refuting, for thinking that every nonbelief is culpable.

Keywords: Hiddenness Argument, Divine Hiddenness, Inculpable nonbelief, John L. Schellenberg, Robert T. Lehe

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Philosophical justification of divine speech in the view of Mulla Sadra

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Although there is a consensus among theologians and philosophers of diverse schools about ascribing speech to God, there are some differences about the way in which it is ascribed to Him. Mulla Sadra have been mentioned that speech refers to the inside and insight of the speaker. He also believes that divine speech involves all creatures and God's actions, profitability of creation of which is representing the hidden. So, application of "the word" to the world is accurate and based on this, God is a speaker. By distinguishing three stages in divine speech, Mulla Sadra believes that the highest word is the divine world ('alam al-amr), the middle word is spiritual world, and God's lower word is law (shariah). From Sadraian point of view, the difference between "word" and "book" is not their stage. Rather, they are two faces of one reality. Word is related to the necessity and the active origin and the book is related to the possibility has passive origin.

Keywords: Divine Speech, Mulla Sadra, Divine World, Spiritual World, Law

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Allameh Hilli and Thomas Aquinas on semantics of divine attributes

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One of the major issues in the names and attributes of God, is the semantic interpretation of how to interpret and apply the concepts and predicates that talk about God. A historical survey proves that Imami theologians' theological views are derived from the Qur'an and hadith. The Quran ascribed some attributes to God that prompted scholars to discuss and analyze the applicability of these concepts to God; accordingly, different views emerged including Allameh Hilli's apophaticism which is similar to the apophatic-cataphatic way of Thomas Aquinas. We'll explain how three meanings of the apophatic-cataphatic. Erigena stated one of the meanings and Thomas Aquinas and Allameh Hilli stated another one which seems similar to each other. While Hilli's negates the anti-attributes, Thomas negates the attributes which are specified to creatures. Then we explain the meaning of the attributes regarding creatures and God, and then, will discuss the "gradation theory" of Allame Hilli and "Analogy theory" of Thomas Aquinas.

Keywords: Semantics, apophatic, cataphatic, analogy, gradation

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The rise and development of Reward theory in theological approach

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Ignoring scripture as the main factor in development of Reward theory, it could be claimed that Reward theory is represented for the first time by some earlier Mutazilites and then, other theologians such as Mutazilites, Zaidis, Shiah and Asharites developed it. There are some concepts of Reward theory in different eras. According to some of them, Reward theory is rejected while in the light of some expositions, it is God's favor and in accordance with some others, Reward sometime based on merit and sometime is God's favor. In scripture, Reward has been used literally without merit condition. It seems that Islamic theologians added merit condition under the influence of hadiths. Reward theory is one of the important explanations for the problem of evil and has the main role among Islamic thinkers. This paper analyses various concepts of Reward theory in different eras and clarifies its formation and development.

Keywords: Reward, primary pains, validity (grace), merit

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Virtue Ethics and the Relation between Religion and Morality: The viewpoint of Allameh Tabatabaie

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As an approach in normative ethics, virtue ethics emphasizes the virtuous actions in a teleological context which aims at happiness and good. In such an ethical system, the actualization of human (natural and spiritual) potentialities is considered, which entails epistemologically the human happiness and good. Virtue ethics focuses on moral agent who pursues the aim of moral goodness. It is important for this viewpoint, which pays attention to the human perfection, to be compared to religious commands, which are also take the human perfection into consideration. In this article, I shall explore the relation between religion and virtue ethics, according ethical theory of Allameh Tabatabaie. Tabatabaie believes that religion and morality are ontologically independent and morality is innate for human beings. He, however, uphold that epistemologically, morality could not be recognized by pure reason. Rather, there are some laws in religion, as the guide, which should be followed by morality.

Keywords: Virtue Ethics, Allameh Tabatabaie, Ultimate perfection, Happiness, Ethics, Religion.

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Zagzebski's Theory of Divine Motivation about the Relation of Religion and Morality

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Divine Motivation theory is an ethical theory with a theological foundation, attempting to explain the relation between religion and morality in the context of Christian theology with emphasizing on neo-Aristotelian and motivation-based ethics. This theory that is presented by Linda Zagzebski, provides a new form of virtue ethics that God's motives, especially that of love, are foundations of moral life and these motivational states are considered ontologically and explanatorily the basis for all moral properties and values. This theory uses five steps to advance its destination. In the first step, this theory proves the personhood of God. In the second step, it argues that God has perfect virtues and motives. In the third step, it shows that God's motive in the Creation is motive of love that is the central and fundamental divine motive. In the fourth step, it discusses the doctrine of imitatio Dei and focuses on the problems of this doctrine. In the last step, it attempts to link this doctrine to the doctrine of the incarnation to resolve its problems .

Keywords: Divine Motivation theory, religion, morality, divine motives, imitatio Dei, doctrine of the Incarnation, Zagzebski

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A Comparison between Swinburne's and Mutahari's views on the Problem of Evil

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The problem of evil, as raised by Mutahari and Swinburne, is one of the most important and complicated problems concerning belief in God and teleology of the world. Both of philosophers face the problem through the standpoint of "justice" as the most important divine attribute and, relying on divine grace and will, they seek to respond to it. The complexity of the problem of evil is mainly due to the logical method of putting forth the problem, which emphasizes incompatibility rather than mere contradiction. That is to say, supposing the existence of an omnipotent, omniscience, and wholly-good God, there is no justification of the existence of evil whatsoever. The present paper attempts to explore the problem of evil on the basis of two well-known philosophers' views. These two thinkers seek to explain and justify evils on the basis of theodicy. This article discusses Mutahari's views in two sections: discrimination and evils. His view about evils will be studied under three headlines: non-existence of evils, relativity of evil, and inseparability of good and evil. Besides, Swinburne's views will be discussed in three sections: moral evil, natural evil, and animal suffering. Finally, two philosophers' views will be compared in the headline of: the motivation for positing theodicy; the method adopted by two philosophers for positing the theodicy; the nature of evil; the classification of evils; the benefits of evils; the best created world and animal suffering. Then the article makes the conclusion that although both of philosophers agree upon emphasis on human will, existence of the best created world and the benefits of evils, they disagree about the nature of evil, the classification of evils, and about some justifications for the existence of evil. Therefore, the article attempts to explore the differences and similarities between the two philosophers.

Keywords: Swinburne, Mutahari, evil, the logical problem of evil, free will theodicy, grace, the best created world

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