WORLD PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy of Religion

A Different Islamic View

Hamidreza Ayatollahy

NOVA

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Preface

It has been over 100 years since the independence of the philosophy of religion from theology. The philosophy of religion rationally evaluates fundamental religious beliefs without commitment to them, leading to the acceptance, denial, enhancement, or modification of certain beliefs. The evolution of philosophical perspectives has significantly influenced the growth of this field. Various philosophical approaches have not only posed new questions for religious thought but have also provided fresh perspectives for understanding, evaluating, and even enhancing religious concepts and beliefs.

In the century of serious academic activity in the philosophy of religion in the West, a wealth of philosophical ideas has accumulated in this field. However, since the philosophy of religion primarily involves the rational examination of fundamental religious beliefs, and these beliefs in Western thought have mostly been Christian beliefs, the analyses, arguments, and evaluations have remained within that scope. Despite the commonalities between Christian and Islamic doctrines as two Abrahamic faiths, the distinct Islamic perspective on many religious beliefs necessitates the expansion of the philosophy of religion within the Western tradition. An Islamic approach to the philosophy of religion opens new horizons, not only introducing new ideas but also broadening the scope of its activities. This book attempts to rethink the discussions of the philosophy of religion from an Islamic perspective and the philosophical tradition in Islamic societies, charting a new path for it.

On the other hand, the issues in the philosophy of religion have become widespread among Islamic thinkers, offering them new perspectives in religious studies. However, many of them are keen for these approaches to be examined from an Islamic standpoint so that the content of the philosophy of religion can also be evaluated based on Islamic thought, thus highlighting the differences between the Islamic perspective and the existing ideas in Western philosophy of religion. This book can help many of these scholars not only become familiar with the discussions in the philosophy of religion within Western philosophical thought but also demonstrate how they can rethink the issues of Western philosophy of religion from an Islamic perspective. These evaluations can also reveal how those ideas relate to the tradition of Islamic philosophy.

In this book, various philosophical discussions are presented on topics such as arguments for the existence of God, epistemology and religious belief, the concept of God and His attributes, reason and faith, the problem of evil, the relationship between science and religion, religious language, life after death and resurrection, and the meaning of life within different Islamic traditions. It is hoped that through these analyses, new perspectives in the philosophy of religion will be introduced that can foster fresh contributions.

Due to the limited pages of this book, other topics in the philosophy of religion, such as the analysis of atheism, religious experience, ethics and religion, religious pluralism, religion and the environment, interfaith dialogue and interaction, religion and politics, religious anthropology, and religiosity, did not find space to be addressed. It is hoped that these topics will be examined from an Islamic view in another volume.

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