



## Saving the principle of Correlation between Reason and Religion

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### Abstract



My goal in this paper is to analyze the relationship The Principle of Correlation maintains between reason and religion. I have not discussed any of the arguments put forward by various thinkers. Furthermore, I have refrained from any exegetical discussion of the Principle. I have raised and discussed three principal questions: first, is it the case that “whatever reason dictates religion does so too”? Second, what is to be done if dictates of reason and religion turn out to be different or incompatible? Third, how are we to ascertain that dictates of reason or inferences made by reason are Satanic/impure/vicious? Some of the Conclusions: 1. To find out whether any particular reason is or isn't Satanic/impure/vicious we have no choice but to evaluate the dictates of reason which in turn leads us into a series of intractable problems. 2. Calling reason virtuous or vicious does not solve the problem of evaluating each and every dictate or inference of reason. This approach is utterly futile and is effectively useless. These difficulties finally lead to The Problem of the Principle of Correlation which cannot be solved unless we somehow give up the independent authority of reason.

### Keywords

The Principle of Correlation, reason's dictates, religion's dictates, Satanic/vicious reason.

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## 1. Introduction

My goal in this paper is to analyze the relationship The Principle of Correlation maintains between reason and religion. To do so, I have refrained from discussing arguments that various philosophers, theologians, and jurists have hitherto put forward concerning The Principle. Furthermore, I have not engaged in any exegetical discussion about the propriety of various formulations or renderings of the Principle that different thinkers have proffered.

## 2. The Principle of Correlation

The first question to raise is that: is not it the case that “whatever reason dictates, religion dictates too”? Secondly, by “whatever reason dictates, religion dictates too” – which is one part of The Principle of Correlation – do we mean that *in principle* religion dictates whatever reason dictates? That is, is it the case that as a matter of principle religion takes the truth of the dictates of reason for granted and, as a consequence, merely endorses the dictates of reason? Put differently, does The Principle maintain the comprehensive and fundamental perspective that religion *follows* the dictates of reason? Does it follow that the main objective of “whatever reason dictates, religion dictates too” is to constrain the dictates of religion? Thus understood, the implication of The Principle would be that if dictates of religion were not to conform with the dictates of reason, then we would have to conclude that dictates of religion have somehow been inferred incorrectly.

Conversely, could it be that The Principle is intended to constrain the dictates of reason? That is, relying on its own resources, religion makes its own pronouncements independently of reason’s dictates. And similarly, reason independently of religion’s dictates makes its own judgment. But this judgment ought to conform with dictates of religion. It is clear that if The Principle is taken to mean thus, then we can conclude that if reason’s dictates do not conform with religion’s dictates then either that reason has been pathological or malfunctioning, or has not been so but has been used incorrectly.

It is entirely possible that someone might find such an analysis misconceived, and then contend that: “The Principle of “whatever reason dictates, religion dictates too” neither intends to subjugate religion’s dictates to reason’s dictates nor the other way round. And that is because The Principle has a second part which equally importantly states that: “whatever religion dictates, reason dictates too”. If the Principle is taken as a whole, it will be seen that it lays no claim about the foundation of any kind of pronouncements: religion pronounces independently of what reason pronounces, and likewise reason makes judgments independently of what religion judges. And the Principle

states nothing more than that these two ways of making judgments always arrive at the same singularly unique judgments or dictates”.

It would seem that one perfectly conceivable question here arises: what is to be done if dictates of religion and reason turn out to be incompatible or simply different?

Is it not clear that faced with such a situation it would be futile to start contriving an array of concepts and inventing a taxonomy of definitions, tautologies, and semi-hidden presuppositions to construct highly idealized systems which have no relevance whatsoever to the realities that we continuously see and hear and feel and face in our real lives?

One response to the objection made above is that: The reason whose dictates are incompatible with the dictates of religion is not reason at all but merely a Satanic or vicious one.

This response is ostensibly a plausible one for it forbids *in principle* the very constitution of the incompatibility, so that the subsequent problem of resolving the incompatibility between the two kinds of dictates will not arise.

Faced with this response, one question forcefully emerges: how are we to find out that the reason in question is vicious/Satanic, as a consequence of which its dictates are not rational? This seemingly simple and trivial question, in its more generalized formulations, entangles the story of reason and reason's dictates so deeply that major Western philosophers since the eighteenth century on have increasingly come to realize the complexity of what has come to be termed as the “The Problem of Reason”.

### 3. Conclusion

Some of the main conclusions of the paper: 1. To find out whether any particular reason is or isn't Satanic/impure/vicious we have no choice but to evaluate the dictates of reason which in turn leads us into a series of intractable problems. 2. Calling reason virtuous or vicious does not solve the problem of evaluating each and every dictate or inference of reason. This approach is utterly futile and is effectively useless. These difficulties finally lead to The Problem of the Principle of Correlation which cannot be solved unless we somehow give up the independent authority of reason.

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