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Mirza Mehdi Isfahani's Theory of Separation of Religious Teachings from Human Sciences in Revealing Religious Knowledge

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Abstract

Since the beginning, the method of revealing (exploring) religious knowledge has been one of the important issues in religion. One such method has been proposed by the great theologian and prominent intellectual Ayatollah Mirza Mahdi Esfahani. Based on this method, religious teachings especially the part related to theology (the study of the concept of God) is innate (*fetri*, that is, part of the constitution of human beings). It is only revealed through piousness (fear of God) and worship of God in the light of an intellect which moves beyond human existence. While

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intellectual data, which are subject to man's intellectual faculty and reasoning based on axioms, are realized through cognitive capacities and bodies of knowledge which are external to religion. These are not involved in the process of revealing religious knowledge. They rather create obstacles which veil religious knowledge. Adopting a descriptive-analytic method, the present study concludes that revealing religious knowledge through an intellect beyond human existence is not free of ambiguities. On the other hand, considering the body of knowledge which rests upon human intellect as an obstacle to gaining religious knowledge is not defensible and faces insurmountable challenges.

Key Terms: *religious teachings, revelation of religious teachings, active intellect, intellectual reasoning.*