

A Content Analysis of the Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion Literature Published in the West between 1950-2010 in Terms of Definition, Method and Subjects

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Abstract : Although philosophy is inherently a theoretical and intellectual activity, it should not be denied that environmental conditions influence the formation and shaping of philosophical thought. In this context, it should be noted that the Philosophy of Religion has been influential in the debates in the West, especially since the beginning of the 20th century, and that this influence has dimensions that cannot be limited to academic or intellectual fields. The issues and problems that fall within the field of interest of Philosophy of Religion are followed with interest by a significant proportion of society through popular publications. Philosophy of Religion has its share in many social, economic, cultural, scientific, political and ethical developments. Philosophy of Religion, in the most general sense, can be defined as a philosophical approach to religion or a philosophical way of thinking and discussing religion. Philosophy of Religion tries to explain the epistemological foundations of concepts such as belief and faith that shape religious life by revealing their meaning for the individual. Thus, Philosophy of Religion tries to evaluate the effect of beliefs on the individual's values, judgments and behaviours with a comprehensive and critical eye. The Philosophy of Religion, which tries to create new solutions and perspectives by applying the methods of philosophy to religious problems, tries to solve these problems not by referring to the holy book or religious teachings but by logical proofs obtained through the possibilities of reason and evidence filtered through the filter of criticism. Although there is no standard method for doing Philosophy of Religion, it can be said that an approach that can be expressed as thinking about religion in a rational, objective, and consistent way is generally accepted. The evaluations made within the scope of Philosophy of Religion have two stages. The first is the definition stage, and the second is the evaluation stage. In the first stage, the data of different scientific disciplines, especially other religious sciences, are utilized to define the issues objectively. In the second stage, philosophical evaluations are made based on this foundation. During these evaluations, the issue of how the relationship between religion and philosophy should be established is extremely sensitive. The main thesis of this paper is that the Philosophy of Religion, as a branch of philosophy, has been affected by the conditions caused by the historical experience through which it has passed and has differentiated its subjects and the methods it uses to realize its philosophical acts over time under the influence of these conditions. This study will attempt to evaluate the validity of this study based on the "Introduction to Philosophy of Religion" literature, which we assume reflects this differentiation. As a result of this examination will aim to reach some factual conclusions about the nature of both philosophical and religious thought, to determine the phases that the Philosophy of Religion as a discipline has gone through since the day it emerged, and to investigate the possibilities of a holistic view of the field.

Keywords : content analysis, culture, history, philosophy of religion, method

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