Textual Holism in the Structure of Religious Knowledge

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Abstract

Epistemic Holism is one interpretation of Coherentism in justification. Both Coherentism and Holism emerged within the frameworks of Skepticism, Relativism, and Idealism, and as acknowledged by their originators, they are inherently tied to such philosophical positions. Nevertheless, a committed Muslim scholar, overlooking the philosophical foundations and implications of Holism, has promoted a particular version of it within the realm of religious knowledge and sciences. In works such as "The Network of Religious Knowledge" and "The Architecture of Religious Science", he introduces this approach as "Textual Holism".According to Textual Holism, the validity of all forms of religious knowledge and sciences is contingent upon, dependent on, and suspended by a shifting network of both human and religious knowledge some of which is uncertain. As a result, Textual Holism undermines the certainty, absoluteness, and stability of all religious knowledge and sciences, ultimately making access to the essence of religion by ordinary humans seem impossible. Clearly, if no certain, absolute, and stable religious knowledge exists, the very existence of a true and divine religion cannot be established with certainty. Therefore, in order to defend the integrity of religion and to affirm the validity and truth of religious knowledge, it is essential to critique and refute Textual Holism. This article adopts a descriptive-analytical method to examine and demonstrate the invalidity of the theory of Textual Holism, with particular focus on the arguments presented in "The Network of Religious Knowledge".

Keywords: Foundationalism, Textual Foundationalism, Coherentism, Holism, Textual Holism.

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