

Sympathetically Criticizing and Critically Unsympathizing: Judging between Soroush and Fanaei, From Qabz va Bast to Royahaye Rasoolaneh

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Abstract

Abdolkarim Soroush in his *Qabz va Bast* (QB) has assumed that religion (Islam) is perfect, unchangeable and free of error, though our understanding of it is imperfect, changeable, and falsifiable. However, in *Royahaye Rasoolaneh* (RR) he first tries to find some cases of imperfections, errors, and paradoxes in the Quran. Then, he gives an explanation for them from a phenomenological point of view, according to which, the Revelation and generation of the Quran are natural phenomena. Abolghasem Fanaei in his critique against QB and RR has tried to show that the philosophical and theological implications of this explanation are unacceptable, and also inconsistent with its ontological presuppositions. Although I agree with Fanaei's main claims against QB and RR, some of his arguments are not convincing. In the first part of this paper, Fanaei's main critiques will be examined. It will be shown that more satisfactory interpretations of QB and RR can be found if some of their presuppositions are changed. The problem, however, is that this cannot be of any help to Soroush since the changes are not compatible with his views. In the second part of the paper, we will show that both QB and RR face with essential problems in the areas of ontology, epistemology, phenomenology, and methodology. So, the claims of both QB and RR are argued to be both erroneous and unacceptable. Finally, we will briefly explain why such problematic views often receive an overwhelming reception in Iran.

Keywords: Soroush; Fanaei; Qabz va Bast; Royahaye Rasoolaneh; Quran.

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