



PNU University

Religious text in English (1)

(For Religions and Mysticism Students)

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امروزه کتاب‌خوانی و علم‌آموزی، نه تنها یک وظیفه‌ی ملی، که یک واجب دینی است.

مقام معظم رهبری

در عصر حاضر یکی از شاخصه‌های ارزیابی رشد، توسعه و پیشرفت فرهنگی هر کشوری میزان تولید کتاب، مطالعه و کتاب‌خوانی مردم آن مرز و بوم است. ایران اسلامی نیز از دیرباز تاکنون با داشتن تمدنی چندهزارساله و مراکز متعدد علمی، فرهنگی، کتابخانه‌های معتبر، علما و دانشمندان بزرگ با آثار ارزشمند تاریخی، سرآمد دولت‌ها و ملت‌های دیگر بوده و در عرصه‌ی فرهنگ و تمدن جهانی به‌سان خورشیدی تابناک همچنان می‌درخشد و با فرزندان نیک‌نهاد خویش هنرنمایی می‌کند. چه کسی است که در دنیا با دانشمندان فرزانه و نام‌آور ایرانی همچون ابوعلی سینا، ابوریحان بیرونی، فارابی، خوارزمی و ... همچنین شاعران برجسته‌ای نظیر فردوسی، سعدی، مولوی، حافظ و ... آشنا نباشد و در مقابل عظمت آنها سر تعظیم فرود نیاورد. تمامی این افتخارات ارزشمند، برگرفته از میزان عشق و علاقه فراوان ملت ما به فراگیری علم و دانش از طریق خواندن و مطالعه منابع و کتاب‌های گوناگون است. به شکرانه‌ی الهی، تاریخ و گذشته ما، همیشه درخشان و پربار است. ولی اکنون در این زمینه در چه جایگاهی قرار داریم؟ آمار و ارقام ارائه‌شده از سوی مجامع و سازمان‌های فرهنگی در مورد سرانه‌ی مطالعه‌ی هر ایرانی، برایمان چندان امیدوارکننده نمی‌باشد و رهبر معظم انقلاب اسلامی نیز از این وضعیت بارها اظهار گله و ناخشنودی نموده‌اند.

کتاب، دروازه‌ای به سوی گستره‌ی دانش و معرفت است و کتاب خوب، یکی از بهترین ابزارهای کمال بشری است. همه‌ی دستاوردهای بشر در سراسر عمر جهان تا آنجا که قابل کتابت بوده است، در میان دست‌نوشته‌هایی است که انسان‌ها پدید آورده و می‌آورند. در این مجموعه‌ی بی‌نظیر، تعالیم الهی، درس‌های پیامبران به بشر، و همچنین علوم مختلفی است که سعادت بشر بدون آگاهی از آنها امکان‌پذیر نیست. کسی که با دنیای زیبا و زندگی‌بخش کتاب ارتباط ندارد بی‌شک از مهم‌ترین دستاوردهای انسانی و نیز از بیشترین معارف الهی و بشری محروم است. با این دیدگاه، به‌روشنی می‌توان ارزش و مفهوم رمزی عمیق در این حقیقت تاریخی را دریافت که اولین خطاب خداوند متعال به پیامبر گرامی اسلام (ص) این است که «بخوان!» و در اولین

سوره‌ای که بر آن فرستاده‌ی عظیم‌الشان خداوند، فرود آمده، نام «قلم» به تجلیل یاد شده‌است: «اقْرَأْ وَ رَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ. الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ» در اهمیت عنصر کتاب برای تکامل جامعه‌ی انسانی، همین بس که تمامی ادیان آسمانی و رجال بزرگ تاریخ بشری، از طریق کتاب جاودانه مانده‌اند.

دانشگاه پیام‌نور با گستره‌ی جغرافیایی ایران‌شمول خود با هدف آموزش برای همه، همه‌جا و همه‌وقت، به‌عنوان دانشگاهی کتاب‌محور در نظام آموزش عالی کشورمان، افتخار دارد جایگاه اندیشه‌سازی و خردورزی بخش عظیمی از جوانان جویای علم این مرز و بوم باشد. تلاش فراوانی در ایام طولانی فعالیت این دانشگاه انجام پذیرفته تا با بهره‌گیری از تجربه‌های گرانقدر استادان و صاحب‌نظران برجسته کشورمان، کتاب‌ها و منابع آموزشی درسی شاخص و خودآموز تولید شود. در آینده هم، این مهم با هدف ارتقای سطح علمی، روزآمدی و توجه بیشتر به نیازهای مخاطبان دانشگاه پیام‌نور با جدیت ادامه خواهد داشت. به‌طور قطع استفاده از نظرات استادان، صاحب‌نظران و دانشجویان محترم، ما را در انجام این وظیفه‌ی مهم و خطیر یاری‌رسان خواهد بود. پیشاپیش از تمامی عزیزانی که با نقد، تصحیح و پیشنهادهای خود ما را در انجام این وظیفه‌ی خطیر یاری می‌رسانند، سپاسگزاری می‌نماییم. لازم است از تمامی اندیشمندانی که تاکنون دانشگاه پیام‌نور را منزلگاه اندیشه‌سازی خود دانسته و ما را در تولید کتاب و محتوای آموزشی درسی یاری نموده‌اند، صمیمانه قدردانی گردد. موفقیت و بهروزی تمامی دانشجویان و دانش‌پژوهان عزیز آرزوی همیشگی ما است.

دانشگاه پیام‌نور

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Preface

The purpose of this book is to improve students' ability in dealing with texts in their own specific area. It has now widely been acknowledged that students need to read a considerable amount of reading material both intensively and extensively in order to improve their comprehension, reading fluency, and other skills that they need to develop for their future target tasks. This book has been designed to provide Religions students with a good opportunity to practice reading and its important related skills through working with a relatively wide variety of texts in the discipline of Religions that students are likely to find interesting, relevant, and useful. One of the fundamental assumptions of this book is that improving students' expertise in the reading of texts in their disciplinary area is contingent upon dealing with a wide variety of texts and reading exercises.

To help students get an overview of the reading passages in the book, they are given **Passage main points** to come to an overall understanding of the text they are about to read. Perhaps one of the most distinctive features of this work is its extensive coverage of **new words and their definitions**. The reading passages students encounter in this book are relatively long and usually have a wide variety of new words whose meanings students may not already know. An attempt has been made in this book to illuminate the meaning of such words along

with some other useful information such as their parts of speech or usage. Following new words is the main part of each unit: **Passage**. Reading passages used in this book have been for the most part taken from a seminal work: **Encyclopedia of Religions**. The order of passages in this book almost corresponds to that of the encyclopedia so that students can follow different discussions in a more understandable way. Following each of the passages are **comprehension exercises: True-false exercise and multiple-choice items**. The purpose of these exercises is to help students check their understanding of the passage.

Language exercises also make an important part of this book as the developer of this textbook presumes that content and language are intricately inseparable. Probably the main purpose of such exercises is to help students learn, remember, and use the words they have encountered in the reading passages. These exercises are **sentence completion** and **matching exercise**. A **cloze test** also follows language exercises. The purpose of this exercise is to help students improve their ability to use the words in the right context especially because this ability has been shown to be directly related to reading expertise and even the whole language proficiency and therefore, this exercise can check a good number of reading skills.

Finally, each unit ends with **translation practice**. In **part one** exercise, students are asked to translate a paragraph following the text they have already read. In **part two** exercise, students should try to find good Persian equivalents for some of the new words they were introduced to at the beginning of the unit. Of course, it must be mentioned that there is a glossary at the end of the book, where students can find the alphabetical list of all new words with their corresponding Persian equivalents. Needless to say, like other textbooks published in Payame Noor University, all answers for different exercises have been provided at the end of the book to help students check their own answers.

I hope that this book can take students of Religions one step

further towards a good understanding of texts in their specific disciplinary area. I would be glad if I could receive the feedback from all students, colleagues, or other interested readers using this book.

I am grateful to Miss Fahimeh Niknazar, who aided me in completing this book.

Ali Reza Jalali
Spring/ 1393

Part One

Unit One

Methodological Issues

General objectives

- Introducing students to methodological issues in the study of religion
- Helping students to learn the important words in this regard

Behavioral objectives

- Students should be able to read and discuss some basic issues in the methodology of the study of religion.
- Students should learn a large number of words in this discussion.
- Students should be able to translate some technical texts into English

New words and their definitions

alien **adj.**
foreign, from another country; unfamiliar

apologist **n.**
a person who tries to explain and defend something, especially a political system or religious ideas

appreciative **adj.**
feeling or showing that you are grateful for something

ascend **v.**
rise, go up, climb up

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astounding **adj.**
so surprising that is difficult to believe; astonishing

astute **adj.**
very clever and quick at seeing what to do in a particular situation, especially how to get an advantage; shrewd

authentic **adj.**
1. known to be real and genuine and not a copy
2. true and accurate

bias **n.**
a strong feeling in favour of or against one group of people, or one side in an argument, often not based on fair judgment

consciousness **n.**
1. the state of being aware of something
2. the state of being able to use your senses and mental powers to understand what is happening

consequence **n.**
a result of something that has happened

constituent **adj.**
forming or helping to make a whole

contemporary **n.**
a person who lives or lived at the same time as somebody else, especially somebody who is about the same age

Crude **adj.**
simple and not very accurate but giving a general idea of something

cunning **adj.**

able to get what you want in a clever way, especially by tricking or deceiving somebody; clever and full of tricks

deliberate **adj.**

1. done on purpose rather than by accident
2. done slowly and carefully

depreciate **v.**

make something seem unimportant or of no value

despise **v.**

dislike and have no respect for somebody/ something

elicit **v.**

get information or reaction from somebody, often with difficulty

eminent **adj.**

1. (of people) famous and respected, especially in a profession
2. (of good qualities) usual: excellent

era **n.**

a period of time, usually in history, that is different from other periods because of particular characteristics or events

evolution **n.**

the gradual development of something

faculty **n.**

any of the physical or mental abilities that a person is born with; a natural ability; capacity; capability

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figure n.

a person of the type mentioned

forerunner n.

1. a person or thing that came before and influenced somebody/ something else that is similar; herald
2. Sign or warning that something is coming

founder n.

a person who starts an organization, institution, etc. or causes something to be built; creator

giant n.

any very large or important person or thing; superhuman

heuristic adj.

helping to find out or discover

ignorant adj.

lacking knowledge or information about something; uneducated; uninformed

imposition n.

an unfair or unreasonable thing that somebody expects or asks you to do

influential adj.

having a lot of influence on somebody/something; powerful; effective

inherent adj.

that is basic or permanent part of somebody/ something and that cannot be removed; intrinsic; essential

intimate **adj.**

very close

laud **v.**

praise something/ somebody

medieval **adj.**

connected with the Middle Ages (the years from about A.D. 500 to about 1450)

multiplicity **n.**

a great number and variety of something

perceive **v.**

1. notice something through the senses

2. became aware of something

phenomenon **n.**

a fact or an event in nature or society, especially one that is not fully understood

posthumous **adj.**

happening, done, published, etc. after a person has died

preconception **n.**

an idea or opinion that is formed before you have enough information or experience of something; prejudice

pristine **adj.**

not developed or changed in any way

prologue **n.**

a preliminary event that leads on to something else

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proponent **n.**
a person who supports an idea or course of action

rudimentary **adj.**
to be learned or studied first;
elementary; introductory; basic

salient **adj.**
most important or noticeable

salutary **adj.**
(of an experience) having a good effect on somebody /something,
though often seeming unpleasant; beneficial

scholar **n.**
a person who knows a lot about a particular subject because they have
studied it in detail; a learned person

scope **n.**
the range of things that a subject ,an organization, an activity, etc.
deals with

seminal **adj.**
very important and having a strong influence on later developments;
influential

speculative **adj.**
involving, based on, or constituting intellectual speculation:
theoretical rather than demonstrable; intellectual

superstition **n.**
the belief that particular events happen in a way that cannot be

explained by reason or science

sympathetic **adj.**

1. showing that you approve of somebody/ something or that you share their views and are willing to support them
2. kind to somebody who is hurt or sad: showing that you understand and care about their problems

synthesize **v.**

combine separate ideas, beliefs, styles, etc.

thrust **n.**

the main point of an argument, a policy, etc.

transcend **v.**

be or go beyond the usual limits of something

vantage point **n.**

a position from which you watch something; a point in time or a situation from which you consider something, especially the past

venture into/ on something **phr v.**

do something even though it involves risks

vigorous **adj.**

very energetic or strong

weighty **adj.**

important and serious

Passage main points

- In the study of religion, it is difficult to separate method from theory:

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the "how" of the study of religion necessarily implies something about its "what."

- Hume challenged the natural religionists' view of the pristine purity and nobility of primitive man, asserting that primitive (or prehistoric) religion arose out of fear, superstition, and irrationality, and that polytheism, not monotheism, was the religion of man in his crude, primeval state.
- While the philosophers of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment in France viewed religion as the invention of cunning priests to secure their rule over the ignorant masses by playing on their fears and superstitions, German philosophers were venturing toward a broad and deep understanding of the variety of religions and their historical development.
- As a reaction against Enlightenment thought, Romantic emphasized individuality, feelings, and imagination, and it urged an openness to remote, ancient, mystical, and folk culture and religion.

Reading Passage

Methodological Issues (1)

In the study of religion, as in other studies, it is difficult to separate method from theory: the "how" of the study of religion necessarily implies something about its "what." The question arises whether religion is to be broadly defined from the start or defined gradually in the course of inquiry. A wider or narrower definition of religion (e.g., whether or not to include nontheistic or nontranscendent traditions) necessarily affects the scope and thrust of the research. Moreover, there are theoretical elements found in methodological inquiry that involve decisions as to

what can and cannot be known and as to how thought and expression are to be ordered. Method involves choices as to the procedures of investigation, the scope and limits of the subject matter, and the mental faculties and conceptual tools that are involved in particular kinds of study. On all these there has been a wide variety of opinion.

Many scholars in the study of religion have viewed any deliberate concern with theory and method as a speculative matter that does not contribute to the concrete advance of knowledge. However, a silence about theoretical assumptions need not imply their nonexistence, and quite often rather astute, though unstated, methods may be discerned in the creative work of scholarly practitioners.

Morris Jastrow began his classic work, *The Study of Religion* (1901), with an insistence on the salient importance of method in the study of religion. He perceived method to be the principal protection against the "personal equation" (i. e., the assumptions and beliefs of the author) that had distorted the study of religion. He saw the dangers of such distortion coming not only from traditional faddists, dogmatists, and apologists, but also from the "cultured despisers" of religion, who had their own subjective biases and closures. The "true believers" studied religions only to laud the superiority of their own and to depreciate those of others, while the skeptics started with the preconception that all religions were false and entertained a simpleminded theory of the nature and origin of religion. According to Jastrow, the cure for such naïveté and distortion was to adopt a historical approach. This approach consisted of gathering data from all times and places, arranging them systematically, interpreting them within a strictly natural and human framework, exploring their inner, emotional aspects, and doing a comparative study to discover the essential laws of the development of religion. All this—and only this—could, in Jastrow's view, prepare the ground for an authentic philosophy of religion. If one adds to this seemingly nineteenth-century positivistic view Jastrow's insistence on a methodological naturalism or agnosticism (i. e., a holding back of one's own views on

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ultimate truth and value) and on a sympathetic understanding of other faiths and ways, one has a thumbnail view of the problems and concerns of the study of religion up to the last quarter of the twentieth century. However, scholarly approaches to religion would take turns that were unimaginable at the time Jastrow's work was published.

Influences on the Modern Scholarly Study of Religion

From his vantage point Jastrow looked back on the development of the critical study of religion in the modern West. Of prime importance were the great geographical discoveries and explorations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which confronted Western man with the fact of other ways of behavior, thought, and belief and required a broadening of the Western-centered view of human nature, culture, and religion. The discovery of these alien ways and faiths, occurring at the same time as the great advancements in the natural sciences, had intellectual consequences. The terms nature and natural became honorific and normative for truth and right. As the concept of natural law became dominant in political philosophy, so the idea of natural religion became the rage in religious philosophy.

Natural Religion. This new turn rested on the idea of a common human nature from which religious beliefs arise, eliciting universal agreement. In its Deistic form natural religion was acclaimed to be independent of and superior to revealed religion, and, unlike medieval or modern notions of a natural knowledge of divine things, to be a prologue to or an alternative to revelation. The proponents of natural religion assumed that belief in God (supreme power), divine providence, and other familiar Christian concepts were universal, but this God tended to be abstract and his governance rather remote. If the founder of the Deistic natural religious view was Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1583-1648), as most surveys declare, it was David Hume (1711-1776) who was its would-be executioner. His posthumously published *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* (1779) contained

vigorous arguments against the capacity of natural reason to attain truths about ultimate realities transcending sense experience. And in his *Natural History of Religion* (1757), Hume challenged the natural religionists' view of the pristine purity and nobility of primitive man, asserting that primitive (or prehistoric) religion arose out of fear, superstition, and irrationality, and that polytheism, not monotheism, was the religion of man in his crude, primeval state. Hume's basic concept was that of linear evolution from a rudimentary to a higher, more complex stage of thought and culture, an idea that was to play a dominant role in the later study of religion.

The Enlightenment. While the philosophers of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment in France (e.g., Voltaire) viewed religion as the invention of cunning priests to secure their rule over the ignorant masses by playing on their fears and superstitions, German philosophers were venturing toward a broad and deep understanding of the variety of religions and their historical development. Preeminent among these philosophers was J. G. Herder (1744-1803), who viewed religion within the context of the development of human culture and the history of ideas. Thus viewed, religion in all its varieties is a universal and natural expression of the human mind, and its practices are the expression of basic religious ideas. Herder's method was a genetic analysis of the development of ideas, which related early to later stages, appreciating rather than depreciating the primitive and archaic forms. He is considered the founder of the genetic method of historiography and of the historical approach to the study of religion.

His contemporary Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781) also viewed religion as a constituent element in the unfolding of the human mind and lauded the contribution of all religions to human development. Another contemporary, Christopher Meiners (1747-1810), who wrote solid critical works on the general history of religions, was one of the first modern writers to assert that no people has ever existed without a religion, despite the imperfect accounts of travelers to the contrary, and he thereby implied that religion is

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inherent in human nature.

Although these German thinkers were men of the Enlightenment era and spoke from a basically naturalistic viewpoint, they, unlike their French confreres, were open and appreciative of the various expressions of the religious spirit. This difference lay by and large in their genuinely historical point of view and their perception and appreciation of the particularities of human culture. However, it should be noted that the French Enlightenment thinkers (e.g., Voltaire, Montesquieu, Turgot, Condorcet), whatever their biases in the field of religion, were by no means non-historical and did substantial historical work.

Romantic Idealism. Another important German contribution to modern approaches to religion was Romantic idealism. As a reaction against Enlightenment thought, it emphasized individuality, feelings, and imagination, and it urged an openness to remote, ancient, mystical, and folk culture and religion. It included many eminent philosophers and literary figures, of whom one of the most influential for the study of religion was Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), a Protestant theologian who was deeply marked by his early Pietistic experience as well as by his later study of idealistic philosophy. Of the three elements that he saw as constituting human personality—thinking, doing, and feeling—he assigned religion primarily to feeling, specified originally as the immediate experience of the infinite and later as the feeling of absolute dependence. Schleiermacher emphasized the social and historical context of religion, its corporate, communal character as well as its individual aspect. He viewed language as the essential medium of thought and made a seminal contribution to the theory of hermeneutics that was influential in cultural studies down to the mid-twentieth century. His theory of religion and emphasis on religious experience were also of wide influence down to that time.

A giant in post-Kantian idealism was G. W. F. Hegel (1770-1831), who synthesized and transcended all the currents of thought in his time, and out of whose work came salient nineteenth- and twentieth-century philosophical movements, such as Marxism, existentialism, and

phenomenology. From a basically historical and evolutionary stance he proceeded not only to give a general account of the development of "mind" or "spirit" to its ultimate state, but also to examine the philosophies of history and religion, including consideration of Asian and primitive cultures. In his philosophy of religion (he was the first to use the term) he proceeded from an examination of religion as a unique mode of consciousness, to an analysis of the religious consciousness (as feeling, perception, and idea) and attitude, and finally to a speculative idea of religion. He then went on to consider actual historical religions in terms of ascending stages of consciousness, from the immediacy of primal religion to the absolute religion of Christianity. For Hegel the concrete history of religions is the realization of the abstract idea of religion. His critics have held that this interpretation is wrong both in method and in content, that the right way is to proceed inductively from the historical data, and, moreover, that Hegel's interpretation is a factually incorrect view of the development of religion. Yet even his critics acknowledge his salutary inclusion of the whole world of religious phenomena in principle, and the weighty influence of his evolutionary viewpoint on nineteenth-century thought.

Comprehension exercises

A. True/ False exercise: Use the information in the passage and write T if the sentences are true and F if they are False.

1. Herder is considered the founder of the genetic method of historiography and of the historical approach to the study of religion. ☐
2. French philosophers of 18th century were venturing toward a broad and deep understanding of the variety of religions and their historical development. ☐
3. Hume asserted that primitive religion arose out of fear, superstition and irrationality. ☐

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4. Thinking, doing and fearing were three elements that Schleiermacher saw as constituting human personality. ☐
5. Theory involves choices as to the procedures of investigation, the scope and limits of the subject matter and the mental faculties and conceptual tools that are involved in particular kinds of study. ☐
6. According to Jastrow, the Skeptics studied religions only to laud the superiority of their own and to depreciate those of others. ☐
7. Vlotaire, Montesquieu, Turgot, Condorcet, Meiners, Lessing and Herder were Romantic Idealism thinkers. ☐
8. For Hegel the concrete history of religions is the realization of the abstract idea of religion. ☐

B. Multiple-choice items: Choose the best answer.

1.emphasized individuality, feeling and imagination and it urged an openness to remote, ancient, mystical and folk culture and religion.
 - a. existentialism
 - b. Enlightenment
 - c. Surrealism
 - d. Romantic Idealism
2. Herder's method was a genetic analysis of the development of ideas, which related early to later stages , rather than depreciating the primitive and archaic forms.
 - a. lifting
 - b. appreciating
 - c. suiting
 - d. putting
3. The terms nature and natural became honorific and normative forand right.
 - a. truth
 - b. saying
 - c. way
 - d. vent

4. Method involves choices as to the procedures of..... , the scope and limits of the subject matter, and the mental faculties and conceptual tools that are involved in particular kinds of study.
- a. idea
 - b. way
 - c. investigation
 - d. concept
5. His theory of religion and emphasis on religious experience were also of influence down to that time.
- a. intensive
 - b. wide
 - c. vague
 - d. idiosyncratic
6. The founder of Deistic natural religious view was..... .
- a. Lord Herbert of Cherbury
 - b. Fredrick Schleiermacher
 - c. Raymond Aron
 - d. Karl Jaspers
7. According to Jastrow, the cure for such naïveté and was to adopt a historical approach.
- a. evaporation
 - b. perception
 - c. construction
 - d. distortion
8. Hume's basic concept was that of linear evolution from ato a higher, more complex stage of thought and culture, an idea that was to play a dominant role in the later study of religion.
- a. innocent
 - b. rudimentary
 - c. sophisticated
 - d. advanced

Language exercise

(1) Sentence completion: Complete the following sentences by the words given.

Cunning, prologue, lauded, rudimentary, inherent, medium, pristine, separate, salient, depreciating, posthumously, consciousness

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1. Meiners implied that religion isin human nature.
2. Hume`s basic concept was that of linear evolution from ato a higher, more complex stage of thought and culture.
3. In its Deistic form natural religion was acclaimed to be ato or an alternative to revelation.
4. Jastrow began The Study of Religion with an insistence on theimportance of method in the study of religion.
5. In the study of religion, it is difficult tomethod from theory: the how of religion necessarily implies something about its what.
6. Hume`s published Dialogues concerning Natural Religion contained vigorous arguments against the capacity of natural reason to attain truths about ultimate realities transcending sense experience.
7. Schleiermacher viewed language as the essential of thought and made a seminal contribution to the theory of hermeneutics.
8. Philosophers in France viewed religion as the invention of priests to secure their rule over the ignorant masses by playing on their fears and superstitions.
9. Hume challenged the natural religionist`s view of the purity and nobility of primitive man.
10. Herder`s method was a genetic analysis of the development of