

A Comparative Study of Human Dignity in the Thought of Ayatollah Javadi Amoli and Nathaniel Branden

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Abstract

Human dignity, understood as a sense of self-worth, is among the most fundamental anthropological concepts and forms the basis of many human rights and entitlements. This study employs an analytical-comparative approach to explore the perspectives of Ayatollah Javadi Amoli and Nathaniel Branden, focusing on three key dimensions: the foundations of dignity, its contributing factors, and its practical implications. The findings reveal that, unlike Branden, Ayatollah Javadi Amoli grounds human worth in a theocentric framework. Both thinkers, however, emphasize the role of cognitive and behavioral factors in the development of self-worth. From Ayatollah Javadi Amoli's viewpoint, self-knowledge encompasses both physical and spiritual dimensions, and ultimately requires a knowledge of God. In contrast, Branden confines self-knowledge to the recognition of personal strengths and limitations. Despite their differing foundations, both perspectives attribute epistemological, ethical, and behavioral effects to the sense of human dignity. While many of their practical implications align, Branden's emphasis on self-assertion and individualism diverges from the theologically rooted perspective of Ayatollah Javadi Amoli, who does not endorse such emphases.

Keywords

Human Dignity, Self-Worth, Honor, Javadi Amoli, Nathaniel Branden.

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