

MASTER'S THESIS

A critical evaluation of Alvin Plantinga's proper functionalism: from theory of knowledge to belief

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**A Critical Evaluation of Alvin Plantinga's
Proper Functionalism:
From Theory of Knowledge to Belief**

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ABSTRACT

Alvin Plantinga advances proper functionalism as a theory of epistemic warrant, which is part of his project of Reformed Epistemology to defend the Christian faith. His purpose is to show that theistic beliefs are warranted even when there is no propositional evidence for them. In order to argue for this, Plantinga has to first develop a theory of warrant for beliefs in general. I argue that the theory of warrant can be an analysis of the positive epistemic status of a belief. While Plantinga's criticisms of many theories of epistemic justification are not as cogent as he originally thought, proper functionalism is nevertheless plausible and it is not subject to the various alleged counterexamples. Furthermore, under proper functionalism, theistic beliefs are very likely to be warranted, hence the *de jure* objections like those raised by Freud and Marx can be rejected.

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