The Problem of Hell Revisited: Towards a Gentler Theology of Hell
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Abstract:
The doctrines of hell and the existence of God seem to pose a formidable paradox for both Christianity and Islam. The paradox can be stated as follows: Given that God is perfect in every sense, how can he allow any of his creatures to suffer eternal perdition? In this paper, I undertake a critical examination of the arguments for and against the doctrine of hell and conclude that on balance, arguments against the existence of hell heavily outweigh those for its existence. This calls for a radical revision of the traditional doctrine of hell. I contend that what is needed is a gentler and more sinner-friendly theology of hell that recognizes God’s mercy and infinite patience. Nevertheless, belief in hell can serve the social function of deterring potential sinners from sinning.