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The relationship between religion and science

Illustrated through creationism and humanism

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ABSTRACT

This paper is going to examine the relationship between science and religion with humanists and creationists as examples. The research done in this study is inductive and inspired from grounded theory, furthermore, aims to be explanatory. This is, more specifically, a literature analysis. The ambition of this essay is to identify the relationship science and religion share via humanism and creationism exclusively through secondary sources. The analysis will be inspired by Ian Barbour's (1998) typology within religion and science, however this essay will only have three divisions. These three divisions are, science a threat to Christianity, harmonizing and different domains/ purposes. The research done in secondary literature proved that no singular solution is suitable being that the subjects' religion and science are so immense with various perspectives and theories. Understanding and knowledge is what is needed in order for this vast subject to be well-defined. However, if the subject is to become more accurate then it needs to be more all encompassing. This can in turn lead to a clearer understanding of the field religion and science.

Key words: Creationists, humanists, relationship, religion and science, Ian Barbour, inclusive

1.0 Introduction

This section begins with a presentation as to why this topic was chosen, with a personal touch and a brief description of the field, will be introduced. Lastly, the purpose, research questions and delimitations will be announced. After that a definition and background of humanism and creationism will presented.

1.1 Background

This essay will take a closer look at the relationship between science and religion with a humanist and creationist perspective. Science and religion are two of the most fascinating and significant domains around the world. Religion and science have over time clashed and caused chaos along with change. Religion came first and set its roots in human history. Science emerged over time and became extremely controversial for religions and cultures. Many religions have lost followers and received a lot of critique because of scientific discoveries that contradict religious philosophies of life. Regardless to all the modern science that exists and discoveries that contradict certain religious beliefs, the majority of the world is still religious. Additionally, new religions develop all of the time (Barbour 1998 introduction).

Ian G. Barbour (1998) argues, in his book *Religion and science- Historical and contemporary issues*, that the 18th century gave meaning to life for many in the west world. Prior to this, religions such as Christianity were the sole providers of answers and explanations as to where human kind originates. The age of enlightenment was, according to Barbour, made up of a wide range of loss in faith in religions, such as Christianity, since science proved different facts than what had been preached all those years. Barbour claims that people were no longer in a dependent relationship with their religion because they could, with hard proof, trust what they believe in to be true on a completely different level. Science began to answer previously supposed and unanswered questions, backed-up with evidence and with that said, the author does not believe that all of the science and technology that arose during this period was negative. He reasons that religions from all over the world could make use of the new technology and congregate, which was an impossible thing to do earlier. This also led to religions expanding and spreading faster and farther outspread (Barbour 1998 introduction).

Through the lens of a humanist and a creationist, I would like to find out if they can agree on anything in their faith or not, or possibly meet somewhere in the

middle. More specifically if religion (creationists) and science (humanists) can harmonize or not or even both. I believe that Humanism embodies science in this day and age and creationists, being that they believe in the bible precisely as it was written, represent Christianity. The relationship between the two will be examined in three parts. These three divisions are inspired by Ian Barbour's four divisions, which are conflict, independence, dialogue and integration. One of the three divisions that will be used in this essay is science as a threat to religion and vice versa. Another division is religion and science having different domains and concerning two different parts of life. Lastly, religion and science harmonizing with one another. The aim with dividing this essay into three rather large assertions is to cover as much ground as possible in this vast subject while still delimiting. Barbour's model will be the theoretical framework for this paper. That is, this paper's theory is grounded in Barbour's typology (Barbour, P. 77).

Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill (2012) discuss in their book *Research methods for business students* how to generate a good research topic. They believe that the core to a successful topic choice is that the writer is particularly interested in the chosen topic. This was in fact their number one tip in coming up with a research topic. The topic chosen for this essay has been of interest to me for all my life. I grew up in a traditional Christian family, in America. Every Sunday we went to church even though we were not fanatic about it. Sometimes we valued sleep over church. We were by no means controlled by our faith. It was more an interest to us than a lifestyle. Ever since I moved to Sweden, 2012, my faith has changed significantly. I grew up in a small town, in upstate New York. In school, we did not have a religion course, which they offer here in Sweden. Our history classes definitely had a Christian influence. This is extremely depriving and selfish to only provide students with one point of view on life (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012 Pp, 30-31).

The short time I have been in Sweden has completely changed my whole life's perspective. Even before I started studying religion I understood that most Swedish people are not religious. I observed this through daily encounters and through my four internships in Swedish high schools. Students, from a very young age, are taught how to critically analyze everything. They are taught that it is okay to question and are even advocated to always do so. Their religion classes are not like history classes where information is presented and that is it, but rather they interpret, analyze and question everything they are taught. This is extremely beneficial for the students when deciding their own interests and beliefs.

All of the religious knowledge that I have attained over the years has not caused me to distance myself from faith entirely, but rather become more new religious and, in a way, an agnostic. That is, I believe that something or someone created earth but nothing more. I am not a deist who believes that something or someone has created life and is still very present and active but rather a theist who only believes that someone or something has created life. Intelligent design follows along the lines of theism because it is the theory that an intelligent thing or person must have created life and all that occurred it because it is far too complicated and sophisticated to have occurred from the big bang (Barbour 1998 introduction).

Humanists and Creationist are extremely different. I chose these two as an example of the relationship between science and religion because I want to present a true believer of Christianity and likewise, science. I chose Christianity because it is one of the largest religions and because I am most familiar with it. Humanism is, what I believe, the closest belief to science.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this essay is to examine the relationship science and religion share with creationism and humanism as an illustration. This study, as mentioned earlier, will be divided up into three divisions that concern the relationship science (humanists) and religion (creationists) share. Science and religion will be primarily in the line of focus, meaning that they will be spoken of generally and when examples are drawn then a creationists and humanist perspective will be applied.

1.3 Research question

- ❖ How can the relationship between science and religion, with humanists and creationists as an example, be understood within the selected empirical data?

1.4 Delimitations

The field of science's effect on religion is massive; therefore this essay will be delimited by only presenting the relationship of science and religion through Christianity. To delimit even more, I have chosen to only apply on one category of Christians, as examples of the relationship, creationists. Likewise, with those who believe in science, I

will only exemplify humanists. With that said, I will not be presenting any other religions or science believers.

1.5 Definitions

1.5.1 Humanism

Richard Norman (2012) alleges that the terms Humanist and humanism did not become applied until the twentieth century. Prior to that, people referred to themselves as freethinkers and secularists or even rationalist (Norman 2012 Pp, 13-14). Christer Sturmark (2006) defines humanism in his book *Tro och vetande 2.0* as a conception of life. He claims that humanism has several definitions but to capture it most accordingly, he applied Oxford dictionary and International humanist and Ethical Unions (IHEU) in an effort of defining the term. To sum it up, Oxford dictionary and IHEU claim that humanism is a philosophy of life with human kind in the line of centrum without religious influence. Furthermore, a humanist has no need for religion, spirits and supernatural things. Lastly, a humanist believes in science and that it is the solution for all (Sturmark, Pp. 43-46).

Sturmark claims that many people believe that humanists believe in nothing, however this is a misconception and that they actually believe in the contrary. Humanists believe in everything and anything that consists with how the world actually is. The authors concurs that humanism is no religion but rather a philosophy of life and is grounded in nature without any sort of God. The reason why humanists believe in science is because scientific methods have proven to be successful in describing the world we live in and with their future predictions. Experience is confirmation and evidence (Sturmark, Pp. 58, 89).

1.5.2 Creationism

Richard Norman (2012) describes in his book, *On humanism*, that creationism is the belief of the first chapter on the bible. The first chapter in the bible is the story of our creation and creationists believe everything about it, as it was written. That is that earth was created a few thousand years ago and in a period of six days. Creationists do not believe in the scientific theories of the universes and solar system origin, as well as evolution (Norman 2012 P, 43).

Ian Barbour (1998) submits in his book *Religion and science: Historical and contemporary issues* that in 1981 a legislature passed in Arkansas that required “scientific creationism” to be taught in schools and be given equal amount of space and time as Darwin’s evolution theory. Scientific creationism is the argument that there is scientific evidence for the earth having been created within the last few thousand years. This law was invalidated a year later only because it favored one religion, which dishonored the constitutional separation of church and state (Barbour 1998 P. 83).

2.0 Prior research

This segment will present what research exists in this field. Humanism and creationism are rarely studied in the same sphere but they are studied quite a bit separately. That is why they will be presented independently, in this portion of the essay, and then later compared and combined in the analysis, as well as the discussion section.

Alister McGrath argues that there is no “master narrative” for the relationship between religion and science. The scientific revolution contained conflict, adaptation and alliance between religion and science. McGrath writes that the Christian doctrine of creation molded the intellectual world of early modern Europe where lives were harmonized by the thought of a divine creator. When Charles Darwin’s theories on evolution arose they became more and more widespread and putative in the late 19th century. Darwin’s theories contradicted the biblical stories, which initiated a chronic conflict between the two that exists even to this day. McGrath argues that it is important to understand that science’s sole purpose is to question and solve mysteries with evidence and confirmation. He deems that the real conflict exists between cultural traditionalism and scientific innovation (McGrath, Pp. 11-12).

McGrath believes that the relationship science and religion share is not always conjoint, but certainly not always in conflict with each other either. Neither of the two are completely comprehensive and have answers to everything. McGrath suggests that religion and science possibly work better at different levels, working with the same questions, but from different angles. McGrath makes it clear that neither science nor religion has all of the answers but together they can possibly, “offer a stereoscopic view of reality denied to those who limit themselves to one’s discipline’s perspective on things” (McGrath, P. 2). Together they complement each other’s weak side. McGrath concluded that there is no fixed explanation of the relationship between

religion and science. He believes this because if something is fixed then it is unchanging and that is not the case with religion and science. The reason why many people believe that religion and science are solely in conflict with one another is because that is typically what is shown in the media, according to McGrath (McGrath, P. 13).

Common ground needs to be found, in the pluralistic landscape we live in today, between science and religion, according to Zinial Aldin Bagir (2015). In his paper *The "Relation" Between Science And Religion In The Pluralistic Landscape Of Today's World* he articulates the fact that in the world we live in today, it is unavoidable for religion and science to not conjoin. He also argues that it is near impossible to categorize religion and science in order to initiate such an assembling. The subject's religion and science are interpreted and understood in uncountable number of ways around the world nowadays. A fact that seemed to be undisputed in his study is that there is a focus on the subject of religion and science as a relationship, which assumes that they are two separate entities, also that the focus lies on their cognitive dimensions. Bagir mentions that the problem in defining the relationship between the two lies in the "and" between them because that implies that there is in fact a relationship of some sort. It also suggests that the two are similar ideas in their cognitive kind and status. The author believes that Barbour's typology, where religion and science are presented in four categories: conflict, independence, dialogue or integration, also assumes that there is an equivalent understanding of science and theology (Bagir 2015 Pp. 404-406).

Bagir suggests three steps in making the field of religion and science more inclusive and comprehensive. First, the field needs to be more inclusive and this can be done by religious diversity. That is, by widening the scope of religions in the discussion. Every religion is different with unique practices and cultures, which can, in turn broaden the field profusely. The second step is acknowledging indigenous religions because most of the knowledge that exists today is predominantly on well-known world religions. The last step is being open to new life perspectives, even if they do not correlate with science or even if they are completely incomprehensible (Bagir, P. 407).

The term science arose during the 19th century as a modern discipline, according to Bagir, prior to that, science was not a set term. The term arose with new techniques and methodologies. Previously, natural philosophy and history were the only resembling things to the current term science. The author suggests that it is no coincidence that science came in to conflict with religion because one way in defining the term science was by distinguishing it from religion or by proving the fact that they

were in conflict with one another. Bagir believes that by taking the previously mentioned three steps, in making the subject of religion and science more inclusive, can result in a reformation of the boundaries in this subject and to help us further understand the discourse. Another conclusion is that theologians, scientists and philosophers should base their engagements on whatever that contributes to the welfare of the human community (Bagir, P. 408).

3.0 Theoretical framework

In this section, the theory in which this essay is based on will be presented and defined in which way it will be applied throughout the essay.

3.1 Barbour's typology

The theory that this essay will be based on is Ian Barbour's four divisions within religion and science. Barbour's first division, conflict, suggests that religion and science are in warfare and this is a common point of view since this is usually what is presented in media whereas the contrary is not. Barbour believes that biblical literalism and scientific materialism embody an ill use of science. Scientific materialists believe in two things: Science is the only trustworthy knowledge and that matter is the ultimate certainty in our universe. Barbour claims that science is favored because it can be, more often than not, reproduced. Religion, on that contrary, cannot reproduce such studies, which in turn causes scientists and others to weaken it (Barbour, Pp. 78, 83). Ian barbour writes:

“Science seems to be the only reliable path to knowledge. Many people view science as objective, universal, rational, and based on solid observational evidence. Religion, by contrast, seems to be subjective, parochial, emotional, and based on traditions or authorities that disagree with each other” (Barbour 1988 P. 77).

This essay has a division called: Science a threat to Christianity, which has the same intention as Barbour's, to understand if religion and science are in fact in conflict with one another.

The second division is called independence and with that Barbour means that religion and science should be separated and stick within their own domains. Ultimately, they both answer different questions and have different perspectives on life. Science is objective and unattached whereas religion is based on emotions. Barbour concludes that if the two spheres were to be completely independent and separated from one another then there would be no conflict between them. Yet again, if they were completely separate then they would not be able to mutually benefit and enrich each other (Barbour, Pp. 84, 89). One of my divisions was inspired by this one and is called: Different domains/ purposes. This division will be very similar to Barbour's.

The third division Barbour presents is termed dialogue. This division is based upon religion and science sharing a dialogue and being able to foresee each other's negative sides. Science and religion could combine and broaden their perspectives, focusing on the spirituality in life. According to Barbour, New age movements are in touch with this life perspective. Barbour claims that the theme here is "power of mind over matter" (Barbour, P. 97). In this paper, a similar perspective is presented, called: harmonizing, but with different content.

The last division Barbour presents is called integration. This division is based on a mixing of theology and science. This relationship is more direct than in the dialogue division. Barbour claims that there are three distinct versions of integration, natural theology, theology of nature and systematic synthesis. Barbour defines these as such:

In natural theology, it is claimed that the existence of God can be inferred from the evidence of design in nature, of which science has made us more aware. In a theology of nature, the main source of theology lie outside science, but scientific theories may affect the reformulation of certain doctrines, particularly the doctrines of creation and human nature. In a systematic synthesis both science and religion contribute to the development of an inclusive metaphysics, such as that of process philosophy (Barbour, P.98).

There will be no similar division as integration in this paper.

4.0 Research approach

The purpose of this section is to present what research approach this essay will have and how it will be applied.

4.1 Method

Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill's (2012) book *Research methods for business students* will be applied here because it provides a detailed and suitable explanation of the methods that can be used. Their methods were compared to an onion, being that a method has several layers to it. That is why this essay has three research styles: research opinion, research design and research strategy. Since this field is very large, the method used must be established and fitting.

4.1.1 Research opinion

Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill state that there are two different research approaches, deductive and inductive. A deductive study has one or more premises and they should be true and result in a true conclusion. Induction is the opposite of deduction. A study that has an inductive research approach customarily has a wide variety of premises. With induction one can use several outcomes or occurrences with the empirical data. The biggest difference between the two is that deduction is based upon one theory and with that theory spawns a general theory whereas induction is based upon qualitative observations and with those generates a theory based up generalizations (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012 Pp. 143-150).

This study will be inductive because there will be numerous generalizations produced from analyzing secondary literature and because the focus is on describing why rather than what. Deduction is the better choice when trying to describe a phenomenon as opposed to understanding why it is the way it is (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, P.148).

4.1.2 Research design

Induction is this essay's opinion but the design is explanatory. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill compare a research project with an onion because of all the layers required.

They believe that an explanatory study is ideal when wanting to gain insight on a specific topic. An explanatory study can be conducted through literature and is flexible as well as adaptable, which are all key ingredients for this particular essay. The study of religion and science is extremely immense which is why flexibility and adaptability is key for the final outcome of this study. This study will also be descriptive research because of the fact that existing literature will be referred to and described. The authors claim that such a study that is both descriptive and explanatory is called descripto-explanatory (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, Pp.170-171).

4.1.3 Research strategy

The last layer in this study is the strategy. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill claim that the studies strategy is a plan of action that will lead it to the finish line. "It is the methodological link between your philosophy and subsequent choice of methods to collect and analyze data" (Denzin and Lincoln 2005 & Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, P.173). This essay will be inspired from grounded theory but will be a literature analysis. The authors state that grounded theory is used to analyze, interpret and explain something. They also claim that grounded theory usually correlates with an inductive approach. This essay, as mentioned earlier, will have an inductive approach and its purpose is to analyze the relationship that religion and science have with humanists and creationists as examples. Data will be collected through secondary data and then analyzed, interpreted and explained (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, P.185).

Coding is, according to the authors a key ingredient in grounded theory. There are several different styles of coding; open coding, axial coding, selective coding, initial coding and focused coding. This essay will be using a similar strategy as axial coding, which is the recognizing of relationships between groups or categories. The authors allege that coding is constant comparison. Each data collected is a code and those codes are compared, categorized and analyzed. This strategy is notable for this paper being that the field chosen to study is sizeable. The combination of humanism and creationism is seldom made making coding a perfect strategy in attaining new data in this field. Each secondary source used in this essay will either present one or more new codes to be analyzed here or the entire source will be one code. This process will be repeated until saturation has occurred, that is when a conclusion can be drawn (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, P. 186). Being that this essay is a literature analysis,

grounded theory will serve as a source of inspiration because it bears a resemblance to literature analysis. The procedure of using several different sources to find and create new conclusion is how it resembles grounded theory.

5.0 Material

Since this is a literature analysis, the entire essay is based on relevant material. First material for prior research was found. The study of religion and science is massive however humanism and creationism are seldom combined. That is why the section prior research will present the field of religion and science in short, and then introduce humanism and creationism individually. Then, the theory in which this essay is based on, was found. Ian Barbour's theory was discovered in another student's paper and then closer examined in Barbour's actual book. This student's paper was found on DiVa portal with the search words: science and religion. After that, the research method was found. I also found this research book in another student's paper. After an extensive search for empirical data, three books were chosen to carry out the analysis with. As pointed out earlier, humanism and creationism are difficult to find in combination. For this reason, this essay will primarily study the relationship religion and science share but with a minor perspective from humanism and creationism. Hopefully, new material in this field will be found. This section starts with a description of the employed search methods, then an introduction to the empirical data that was chosen for the analysis.

5.1 Search methods:

Several search databases were used in finding relevant material for this paper. First, the schools library catalog (Högskolan i Gävle) was searched for books. The search words used were: Religion and science, creationism, and humanism. These search words brought about all of the chosen books for this essay. Also, through the schools database, which is allied with several other search databases, all of the articles were also found with the same search words. The articles on the school's search database were from DiVa-Portal. The search for material for this paper was not very difficult being that these two topics (religion and science) are massive and have been studied by many.

5.2 Introduction material

Below is the material used in the introduction section of this essay.

5.2.1 Christer Sturmark

Christer Sturmark (2006) book *Tro och vetande 2.0* will be used in the introduction to define humanism and their conception of life.

5.2.2 Richard Norman

Richard Norman's (2012) book *On humanism* will also be used in the introduction on defining humanism and its history as well as creationism.

5.2.3 Ian Barbour

Ian Barbour's (1998) book, *Religion and science: Historical and contemporary issues*, includes a definition of creationism, which is presented under definitions in the introduction. Barbour's book is one of the most important publications in the field of religion and science. This is why, when introducing this field in the background segment, Barbour should be incorporated.

5.3 Prior research material:

The material that follows is used to present previous research done within the range of this study. A description for why each was chosen will be displayed below.

5.3.1 Alister McGrath

Alister McGrath's book *Science and religion: A new introduction* projects a simplified introduction to the relationship science and religion share. This will serve as a compliment to Barbour's book in introducing religion and science.

5.3.2 Zaniel Abidin Bagir

Zaniel Abidin Bagir's article *The "relation" between science and religion in the pluralistic landscape of today's world* provides an overview on the relationship between religion and science today. This article will aid the discussion in connecting everything together.

5.4 Empirical material:

The empirical material is the most important material for this essay since it will hopefully lead to new information in the field religion and science.

5.4.1 Richard Norman

Richard Norman (2012) has written an entire book on humanism and its history. This book is focused on secular humanism, but presents other perspectives as well. Norman also discusses Creationism as well as the relationship religion and science share. That is why Norman's work is fit for the particular study.

5.4.2 Alister McGrath

Alister McGrath (2010) discusses science and religion's history and why the two have a complicated relationship. This book was presented in prior knowledge and will be coupled with the discussion.

5.5 Material used to interpret result:

The material chosen to interpret the outcomes of this study, within the field religion and science, is described below.

5.5.1 Ian Barbour

The four dimensions Barbour (1998) presents in his book concerning religion and science, is the theory upon which this essay is based. The three divisions this essay will have are not exactly the same as his but rather inspires by them. The reason being that they are not identical is because Barbour's divisions are grounded in atheism and Christianity and he has four divisions whereas this essay has three divisions. These three divisions will be used interpreting the new found information, in order to reach a result.

6.0 Empirical findings/ analysis

As pointed out earlier, this analysis is divided up in to three parts. The specified empirical data will be used to reach a conclusion as to what relationship religion (creationism) and science (humanism) have.

6.1 Science a threat to Christianity

One of Ian Barbour's divisions, that is named conflict, discusses why religion and science are in conflict with one another. Ian Barbour presents Edward O. Wilson, a sociobiologist who claimed that religion was necessary for humanity in the past because those practices were worthwhile survival mechanisms and produced a community. However, Wilson believes that religion will be replaced by science and become ancient history. This is because science will eventually prove all religions to be false. Barbour argues that Wilson's statement is illogical because religion is not set out on replacing science. What he means is that religion offers other, broader meaning to life than science. They are not in conflict, but serve different purposes (Barbour, Pp. 77-84).

According to Alister McGrath, some scientists believe that religion and science will always challenge each other and this challenge might not stop until one of the two is eliminated. In his book, he discusses that some religious believers feel that science is a threat to their faith. Despite these two facts, historians do not feel the same way about science being in conflict with religion. McGrath means that historians feel that science has opened up religious questions as opposed to shutting them down forcing them to be insignificant (McGrath, P. 1).

Norman believes that the Darwinian evolutionary theory should, just like religion, not just be accepted. What he means is that, even though biologists worldwide generally accept this theory, should not brand it correct. Most often people simply take for granted what higher educated and positioned people say. Some examples that Norman presents are life on mars and that earth's rainforests are disappearing at a frightening rate. These are two facts that almost everyone knows or has heard something about, but has never been proven or shown. What scientists claim about the world is generally accepted without many questions asked. Norman means that the status of scientists comes with great power (Norman, P. 45).

Norman states that there is a problem with Darwin's evolution theory, which is that it, cannot be tested. "We cannot engineer genetic mutations, test them in

the appropriate environments and see whether they confer advantages which facilitate survival and whether they are then inherited and become dominant''(Norman, P. 46). Norman makes it clear that people should be more speculative to anything that cannot be tested, proven and connected to experience (Norman, P. 47).

Norman argues that it is strange that we can accept Darwin's theory of evolution but not creationism's. Fossils are what make creationists story of creation possible. Creationists suggest that there was a great flood, called Genesis, that covered the earth's surface and the only survivors were the fittest of them all. Norman contends that this Creationist example is simple compared to Darwin's theory. He continues that Darwin's evolution theory is more economical because it is more comprehensive than Creationism. What he means by economical is that it is more detailed and diverse. Creationists believe that God simply creates earth and all living things with no reason as to why or how. The detail Darwin's theory contains makes it more stable and plausible (Norman, Pp. 48-50).

Moreover, Darwin's theory correlates with geological phenomena whereas the biblical story does not. Modern genetics has further proven Darwin's theory. In fact, each and every modern scientific and biological discovery further supports and proves Darwin's different theories. According to Norman, people do not have to blindly believe in what scientists say is true because they can see proof of their work everyday, in everything they do. Our lives would not be the same if it were not for scientist. Some examples the author presents are airplanes, electricity and the internet. These are all things that most people do not understand yet still put their faith in them, by means of using them. Norman believes that one can have rational trust in scientist because of all the existing evidence of their labor. Further, the author suggests that modern science chips away at religion, but he does not believe that religion and science are in opposition with one another, rather just in a dilemma (Norman, Pp. 50-52).

Norman suggests two possible circumstances where religion could either be in conflict with science or not. It all grinds down to how the religious beliefs are interpreted and applied. They can either be, interpreted and applied in a way that conflict with science, or the contrary, in coherence with scientific theories that are accepted. The first suggestion causes faith in science and rejection of religious beliefs. The latter suggestion would cause religious beliefs to be superfluous because they then do not explain anything more than scientific theories already have. Nonetheless, the author does believe that the scientific theories that exist can be linked to a divine creator

but then again, he sees no reason as to why it would be necessary to do that. Ultimately, he claims that this fusion should not be opposed, but yet he does not think it is necessary to approve it either. What it all boils down to is that science has a better foundation than creationism (Norman, Pp. 53-54).

6.2 Harmonizing

Norman presents the very famous quote, “If God does not exist, then everything is permitted” from the novel *The Brothers Karamazov*. Norman contends that this is a very real problem that without the thought of God people fear that people would unlearn their morals and act as if there were no laws to abide. Without God many people would possibly have no good reason to live morally correct with the hope of getting in to heaven. God symbolizes unwritten ethical rules or a moral code that is still to this day a present philosophy, even to people that are not religious. The fact that no one knows if God exists or not makes it understandable how these beliefs still exist (Norman, P. 92).

Alister McGrath also discusses sciences limited ability to answer ethical questions that religion can. The author claims that most scientists would agree that scientific methods do not cover moral questions (McGrath, P. 3). Richard Dawkins wrote in his book *The best American science and nature writing* that “science has no methods for deciding what is ethical” (Dawkins, 2003, P.34). Because of this religion is, according to McGrath, as important as science.

Alister McGrath claims that neither science nor religion is absolute, meaning that they do not have all the answers. He proposes that they work best together. The two fields are different which should enable them to harmonize and work to complement each other instead of contradicting one another (McGrath, P. 2). McGrath writes, “The science and religion dialogue allows us to appreciate the distinct identities, strengths, and limits of each conversation partner. It also offers us a deeper understanding of things than either religion or science could offer unaided” (McGrath, P. 2).

McGrath argues that a dialogue should be put in motion between science and religion but that it is understandably difficult for many reasons. First of all, not many people are willing to, especially not scientific atheists and fundamentalist. The author points out that if these individuals were to dialogue with the other’s side that they could be seen as traitors to their own side. Another reason why such a dialogue is problematic is because the terms religion and science are extremely vague. There are

numerous different religions with completely different conceptions of life as well many different scientific disciplines (McGrath, Pp. 4-5).

6.3 Different domains/ purposes

Ian Barbour's second dimension of religion and science is independence which is a path to avoid conflict entirely, and that is by separating the two. If the two were to be completely independent and autonomous then Barbour believes that they would not have any conflicts. He argues that this could prove to be a challenge because the two would have to agree to stay off each other's turf and not intrude in one another's business. Nonetheless, Barbour maintains that this separation could prove advantageous because the two concern two different aspects of life. Barbour presents Landon Gilkey, who shares the perspective of the separation of science and religion. Gilkey contends that science answers questions that people wonder how and religion answers the questions of why. Religion is more connected to emotion while science is objective and straightforward (Barbour, Pp. 84, 86).

As stated earlier, McGrath suggests that religion and science feasibly work better at different levels, however working with the same questions, but from different angles. Even when discussing the same topic they present different perspectives. Historians believe this fact that science and religion should not try to be good at what they are not. McGrath deduces that religion more often than not tries to answer "why" whereas science focuses more on "how". Barbour argues the same thing as McGrath, that religion and science have different purposes. Religion presents meaning to things while science searches for clarification (McGrath, Pp. 2-3) (Barbour, P. 82).

Barbour claims that an effective way of separating science and religion is to contend that they speak two different languages. These two languages would, in this case, be unrelated because they ultimately have different purposes. Like, for example, a doctor and a lawyer would not be able to understand each other's work tongue. They employ a different vocabulary that is only understood in their specific sphere. The author suggests that scientific language is used mainly for control and calculations. The main function of religious language is, to endorse a way of life and an attitude towards life. Barbour states that it is obvious when reading a religious text and a scientific text that that are extremely unlike each other and have different meanings in them (Barbour, P. 87).

7.0 Discussion

In this section, the analysis from the empirical data will be discussed in relation to the prior research and theoretical framework.

7.1 Conclusion

Richard Norman presented several interesting aspects to the relationship between religion and science. He argues that since scientists have prominent positions in society, that they receive respect heedlessly. Norman means that since scientists have through out time proven their reliability, warranting them unquestionable trust. On the contrary, to question religion, has over time been common matter. The fact that more people believe in Darwin's evolutionary theory more than the creationists all boils down to Darwin's theory being more economical, according to Norman. With economical, Norman means that it has more evidence to back it up and that it is a more established theory than the biblical version. However, Norman does not suggest that this fact makes Darwin's theory any more relevant than creationists. Furthermore, proof of science exists in everyday and everywhere. This means that people do not have to blindly believe in scientific developments. If there were not so much everyday proof of societal advancements, perhaps more people would turn to faith instead of science. Norman deems this rational faith because most people believe in science even though, more often than not, they do not understand it nonetheless they see and use the product of belief in their daily lives. The convenient life one can live today is thanks to scientists and modern technology (Norman, Pp. 45, 50-52).

Norman argues that people should learn to criticize even the most accepted theories. Being that scientists generally accept Darwin's evolutionary theory worldwide has led to most people instinctively believing in it as well. Norman suggests that just because biologists worldwide generally accept this theory, should not brand it correct (Norman, P. 45).

Barbour introduces sociobiologist Edward O. Wilson's evaluation that science is a threat to religion because it will one day eliminate it. Barbour believes that Wilson's theory is completely illogical because religion and science serve two different purposes and cannot replace one another. However, Wilson's theory is still a belief of

many (Barbour, Pp. 77-94). Alister McGrath is, for example, someone who believes that religion and science will always be in conflict with one another, so much so that one of the two will overtake the other. Nevertheless, McGrath points out that some historians suppose the contrary, that religion and science compliment each other (McGrath, P. 1).

Norman concluded that there are two possible scenarios where religion is in conflict with science or not. He deems that it all depends on how one interprets and applies their values. What he means is, a creationists could either align their faith with scientific theories or the contrary. Either way Creationists would be on the losing side, according to Norman, because if Creationists were to ally scientific theories then they would be superfluous and if they did not then they would remain in conflict. Science has the high ground because it has a further established field than religion. The author finds no reason as to why a divine creator could not be connected to scientific theories but he also sees no reason as to why this connection should be made. Norman settles that a fusion could be made between the two but then one of the two would become unnecessary because it would become repetitive which is why he finds no reason for a fusion of the two (Norman, Pp. 53-54).

Humanism and creationism might very well be able to associate with one another without conflict. If humanists were as open to the biblical story of creation as they as Darwin's then perhaps a new common ground could come to exist. Humanists are grounded in science but the question as to when and how we came to exist is not whole meaning that they should be able to open up to the thought. However, the contrary is a different story because creationists must believe in the biblical story in order to stay true to their faith. Humanists really have nothing to lose, whereas creationists would be unfaithful if they were not be considered creationists if they were to open up to the belief in Darwin's evolutionary theory. As Norman pointed out, if they were to conjoin then one of the two would most likely prove to be redundant.

Conversely, Norman does argue that religion and science serve two different purposes and that both are necessary. He points out that science does not cover ethical questions, whereas religion does. Religion provides a moral code to live by, even to those who are not religious (Norman, P. 93). McGrath concurs with this fact and argues that this is why religion is equally as important as science. The fact that neither religion nor science is absolute is, according to McGrath a valid reason as to why they work best together. The two fields cover a different sphere, which is why they should work together and compliment one another's weak sides (McGrath, Pp. 2-3). Humanism

is one of the few philosophies of life without some sort of god and is grounded in science. Regardless, humanism a conception of life. This makes Norman and McGrath's argument invalid, that science provides no moral code. Now it is important to point out that people who believe in science are not automatically called humanist. Humanism is much more than that. But, Norman and McGrath's argument is not one hundred percent accurate. With that said, Norman and McGrath's notion that science and religion concern two different spheres is more or less correct when concerning humanism and creationism. Less because both creationism and humanism are philosophies of life but more because humanism is more connected to nature whereas creationism is more correlated to God.

Even if a relationship between science and religion could lead to a large amount of advancements, the path to affiliating is challenging, according to McGrath. Creationists have a strong belief system and band to their faith. If they were to converse with humanists then they would quite possibly be shamed from their group and likewise with humanists. McGrath concludes that religion and science work best as different levels. They can work on the same questions but answer this question in different ways. McGrath means that religion answers "why" questions whereas science reflects "how" questions. Barbour suggests the same thing and argues that religion offers meaning whereas science searches for clarification. McGrath pointed out that historians believe that religion and science should not try to be good at what they are not. Being that humanism is both grounded in science and is a type of religion makes these types of statements ambiguous. Humanism can both answer "how" and "why" questions but that does not necessarily mean that it provides the most correct answer just because it is grounded in science. As Norman pointed out, just because science is more evidence based, does not make it any more valid than creationism (McGrath, Pp. 2-5 & Barbour, Pg.82 & Norman, P. 45).

One of Barbour's four divisions was independence and this is way to entirely avoid conflict. If the two spheres are separated then there is no possible way for conflict, according to Barbour. However, this would be challenging considering that the two would have to agree to never cross boundaries, which could prove to be an impossible task. Nevertheless, the author truly trusts that this separation could be strategic because he believes that the two concern to different aspects of life. He argues that even when the subject is the same the answer would be different from both of them because they have different perspectives, which unsurprisingly leads to different

answers. Landon Gilkey, who was presented by Barbour, shares Barbour's perspective on separating science and religion. Gilkey established the fact that science answers questions that people wonder "how" and religion answers the questions of "why". Religion is linked to emotion whilst science is objective and straightforward (Barbour, Pp. 84, 86).

Barbour claims that a possible solution in separating religion and science is to see them as two different languages. This means that they would be completely unrelated. An example that was raised was a doctor and a scientist, two equally powerful spheres that have a different internal language that neither of the two would understand. They serve different, but equally vital purposes. Barbour points out that the main use of scientific language is for control and calculations whereas religious language function is to endorse a way of life, an attitude. He makes it clear that this separation can already be found when comparing a religious text and a scientific text; they are extremely unlike and present different meaning in them (Barbour, P. 87).

The separation of humanism and creationism is, according to me, unnecessary because neither of the two have intentions on eliminating the other. Humanists believe in science and nature whereas creationists believe in the bible and God, two entirely different beliefs that concern only those involved. However, considering Barbour's solution on considering them as two different languages is appropriate because that is precisely what they are, two dissimilar beliefs.

Zinial Aldin Bagir concluded that in this day and age it is inevitable for religion and science to find common ground. In the pluralistic world we live in today such a separation that Barbour describes would be impossible, according to Bagir. The author has no explanation as to how this combination would look like and work, being that it is impossible to categorize religion and science, but strongly believes that this assimilation must and will occur. The author suggests in fact the contrary of what Barbour advocates. Bagir concluded that by making science more inclusive might be the answer to the continuing conflict. If we were to include even the most indigenous religions in the subject then the author believes that we would have a clearer and more comprehensive understanding on the topics religion and science. He suggested three steps in making these subjects more inclusive, religious diversity, indigenous religions, and by opening up to new perspectives. Bagir claims that these three steps can aid in the reformation of the boundaries between religion and science, and they would also be useful in attaining further knowledge within the discourse (Bagir, Pp. 404, 407-408).

7.2 Personal summary

The vast field of religion and science is understood and interpreted in numerous ways. Some believe that religion and science have always been in conflict and will continue being that. Others believe that science can compliment religion and that their relationship is by no means negative. The theme of the two opposing arguments is it all depends on the commentator. That is, everyone has their right to their opinions and beliefs.

If a discussion is to happen without conflict then people need to firstly, learn about other cultures and religions and secondly, be tolerant towards them. Thenceforth, a better understanding of the field religion and science can be reached that is more comprehensive. Inclusion, diversity and open-mindedness are key for a efficacious future relationship. Another alternative, that is a more difficult path, is separating the two fields completely. This could prove to be an impossible challenge, however, some believe it is the only way for science and religion to not conflict with one another. As pointed out earlier from the empirical data, science and religion can very well harmonize with one another since they answer two different questions, meaning they have two completely different perspectives. Religion can answer “why” questions and science “how” questions. The two, being that they are unrelated in many ways, can complement each other. For example, science cannot answer to ethical questions whereas religion can. Therefor, the unreasonable task of separating the two spheres should be reasoned to be redundant.

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