

Analyzing the Roots of Incompatibility Between Science and Religion and the Factors Contributing to its Continuation from the 16th to the 20th Century

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Abstract

Incompatibility between science and religion is one of the most heated debates in the history of humanity. This study adopted a deeper-level analysis compared to previous related studies to inspect the reasons for the appearance and continuation of this issue. To this end, a descriptive-analytical method was adopted using the inductive approach. The factors found included church leaders' opposition to science, their textualist view of the Bible, amalgamation of the Medieval theology with Aristotelian philosophy, consideration of scientific findings as definitive, lack of a true understanding about the real origin of religion, scientism, the appearance and expansion of anti-metaphysical schools, amalgamation of science and ideology, and incorrect generalization of scientific theories. Nonetheless, further induction and exploration of historical sources on science and religion may lead to the identification of more factors.

The most important finding of this study is that the foregoing incompatibility will continue as long as reasons such as the "lack of a true understanding about the real origin of religion," "scientism," and "the appearance and expansion of anti-

metaphysical schools” are not removed by the Western scientific community. Indeed, these are the main pillars for the continuation of the incompatibility between science and religion. Therefore, it would be apt for the contemporary Islamic studies of science and religion to focus and contemplate the reasons for the continuation of the incompatibility and to provide their solutions in order to reduce or settle the incompatibility between religion and science.

Keywords

Incompatibility roots, factors for the continuation of incompatibility, science and religion, 16th and 20th centuries

1. Introduction

It seems that the incompatibility between science and religion cannot be labeled as merely an illusion, because this quickly leads to the question of why all these conflicts and debates exist among followers of science and religion. The answer to this question is nothing but the incompatibility between science and religion. This is not surprising, though, for the conflict between the two is in fact the conflict between theologians’ religious understandings and scientists’ scientific understandings. It is so natural that when applied to a single matter, one of these two sets of human understandings or both are wrong. This leads to their incompatibility, a stance that is built on an intellectual necessity that cannot be rejected.

In this study, we have tried to examine the reasons for the appearance and continuation of the conflict and incompatibility between science and religion. This has been done through the descriptive-analytical method using the inductive approach.

The significance of this study is in that it provides a deeper understanding of this human life conflict. Then, truth seekers can have their own fair judgment about this important issue following its findings. Moreover, it paves the way for contemporary Islamic studies on the relationship between science and religion. They can focus on the reasons for the continuation of incompatibility. This way, they might be able to give proposals to modify or solve the incompatibility of science and religion.

With appearance reasons we mean those that functioned as the starting point of the incompatibility and conflict. Reasons for continuation, on the other hand, are those that had no role in the initiation of incompatibility but have led to its later continuation.

The reason for the selection of the 16th century as the starting point is that the largest blow to the Christian theology occurred in that century following the proposal of heliocentrism (Durant, 1989, vol. 6: 1028).

Regarding the previous related literature, it should be mentioned that the incompatibility of science and religion has various aspects, with various studies written about each aspect. For example, some works have been written to simply prove or reject the incompatibility of religion and science. Some others have sought to provide solutions to remove this incompatibility. Still other works have examined the relationship between science and religion from the viewpoints of various figures. Finally, some works have tried to explicate the roots and causes of this incompatibility. In sum, two groups of works can be identified in this regard. The first group is comprised of works that have treated the root causes as an implied, limited, and peripheral discussion beside their main topic of interest. Examples include a master's thesis titled "Barrisī-yi 'Ilm wa Dīn az Dīdgāh-i Shahīd Muṭahharī wa 'Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī wa Muhandis Bāzargān" by Muḥammad Kāḍim Ṣābirī. This work presents "distortion of religious scriptures," "human-like image of God," "mixing up scientific theories with religious teachings, and "the Church's violence" as reasons for the conflict between science and religion in the West.

The second group involves works that have specifically tried to find the root causes. The following cases are examples of this group. We will present each and will express the difference of each one with our study.

A) The article "Asbāb wa zamīnihā-yi tawahhum-i ta'āruz-i dīn wa 'ilm" by 'Abd al-Qāsim Karīmī. Its first version was published in 2004 and its second version was published in 2005.

The first version presents merely the causes that regard the belligerence shown by followers of Christianity toward science. In the second version, the given list of causes is limited to scientism and its two consequences – i.e., the appearance of various schools such as Laïcité, secularism, etc., and the appearance of modern

colonialism and the passive role of the Pope and other church leaders during scientism. However, our study does not take some causes mentioned in the second version of that article as causes for incompatibility. Rather, we have found some other causes in this regard. In brief, concerning the identified causes, there is a “partial inclusion-absolute inclusion relationship” between our study and that article. Second, unlike our article, the cause roots and other factors have not been separated in that article.

B) The article “Mushkil-i dīn az kujā nāshī mī shawad” by Ghulām Ḥusayn Muqaddam Ḥaydarī, published in 2006.

This article concentrates on only one of the root causes of incompatibility between science and religion: lack of knowledge about the quiddity of science and its formation and evolution stages.

The last noteworthy point here is that in this study, we have provided responses to the following question: what are the root causes of the incompatibility between science and religion and the causes of its continuation from the 16th century to the end of the 20th century?

We will provide answers to this question in the following sections.

2. Root causes of the incompatibility between science and religion

2.1. Church leaders’ opposition to science

From the beginning of the 13th century to the 19th century, inquisition tribunals were held throughout Europe by the Church and Christian Popes to prevent anti-religious beliefs. Horrible crimes were committed for that cause by Christian Popes, priests, and leaders in the name of defending religion. In these tribunals, natural science scholars and philosophers were harshly convicted because their scientific opinions and views did not match those of the Church (Nūrī, 1963: 356). As an example, take the case of Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) who was convicted and forced to sign a repentance letter in June 1633 (Rousseau, 2007: 220-226; Durant, 1989, vol. 6: 253-264).

Such harsh and illogical measures by the Church brought about two negative consequences in the minds of people, especially scientists. First, they came to believe science and religion were incompatible. Second, it incited feelings of revenge and opposition in them toward religion and its principles (Nūrī, 1963: 35).

2.2. The textualist view of the Bible

Many Christians took the Bible as a source of knowledge free from any mistake, which included scientific matters, and every word of which had been revealed by God. Those who held this view opposed Copernicus' theory, because they found it incompatible with the text of the Bible that implied geocentrism. Ultimately, this textualism led to one of the causes of the conviction of Galilei by the Catholic church (Barbour, 1995: 35, 63; Durant, 1990, vol. 7: 712-718).

2.3 Amalgamation of the Medieval theology with the Aristotelian philosophy

Barbour suggests that the largest source of conflict in Galilei's era was the amalgamation of Medieval theology with Aristotelian philosophy, such that any opposition to the Aristotelian cosmology was taken as opposition to Christianity (Barbour, 1995: 63). It should be noted that the modern cosmology was opposed by the Church because it was against the credibility of Aristotle and the Bible. However, another reason was that it opposed the general Aristotelian proposal and interpretation of the meaning of universe, which was based on considering the physical location of the human equivalent to his station in the universal hierarchy (Ibid: 40). The reason was that geocentrism theory justifiably agreed with the theological stance that took the creation of everything to be because of the human; however, the then novel cosmology suggested that the human resides on a small planet that rotates around like a ball in the space (Durant, 1989, vol. 6: 1028).

2.4 Taking scientific findings for granted

Reading through pages of the history of conflict between scholars of science and religion, we come to an interesting conclusion. As long as the new scientific findings were not deemed opposite to the Christian theology or as definitive and factual, their owners or followers were not persecuted and convicted by the Church. In other words, if the opposing scientific finding was suggested as a "hypothesis," no persecution and conviction followed it. For instance, scientific findings by Copernicus (1473-1543) about heliocentrism were suggested by him as a hypothesis, sparing him from conviction by the Church. However, another scientist named Giordano Bruno, who took heliocentrism as a definitive fact and did not step back on his belief, was eliminated harshly by the inquisition system (Ibid: 1019-1027).

3. Reasons for the continuation of incompatibility between science and religion

3.1. Lack of an accurate understanding about the true origin of religion

To know God, what is possible and how much is possible for humans are questions that happen in the realm of Divine Attributes rather than the realm of Divine Existence (Shaykh Bahāyī, 2005: 86-8). There are several pieces of intellectual and narrative evidence for this stance – i.e., impossibility of knowing the Divine Existence – as follows.

Intellectual evidence: God is unlimited and is not restricted to any boundary. Any being other than God is limited. Evidently, it is impossible for the limited to comprehensively know the unlimited. Therefore, the human comprehension system does not have the ability to comprehensively know the unlimited.

Narrative evidence: The qur'ānic verses express the restriction of the human knowledge. Consequently, such restricted knowledge cannot comprehensively know God. A qur'ānic verse in this regard is “He knows what is before them and behind them, though they do not comprehend Him in their knowledge” (Qur'ān 20:110; Mu'minī, 2008: 11). Moreover, many narrations have been issued in this regard. An example is a sentence by Imām Husayn (a), issued when he was elegantly talking about Unity: “In the same way that eyes do not have the ability to see Allāh, intellects do not have the ability to understand Him” (Ibn Shu'ba Ḥarrānī, 2008: 245).

It should be noted, though, that knowing the Divine Attributes is possible in two ways: simple knowledge and compound knowledge. Simple knowledge is one which is innately inbuilt in every human. However, due to the intervention of some factors, the human neglects this type of innate simple knowledge within him. On the other hand, in the compound knowledge (knowledge of knowledge), the human pays attention to his simple knowledge about God based on robust intellectual and sound narrative evidence.

Based on what we said, it is evident that many Western scholars – including philosophers and natural science scholars – have fallen short of knowing God; despite contemplation in this regard, they have not been able to find a way to gain this knowledge (Barbour, 1995: 38-39, 89-90). The reason is that they did not have access to true narrations due to the distortion of Christianity. This makes it

impossible to gain a sound understanding of God using that method. The noble Qur'ān has evidently invalidated Christian beliefs: “They are certainly faithless who say, ‘Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary’” (Qur'ān 5:17, 72) and “They are certainly faithless who say, ‘Allah is the third [person] of a trinity’” (Qur'ān 5: 73). Likewise, they have faced challenges in knowing God through intellect. For example, the old reading of “the argument from the perfection of creation” was strongly challenged after Darwin’s theory of evolution (Barbour, 1995: 48, 111, 16).

Now the question might arise that by challenging the argument from the perfection of creation and its inability to show knowledge about God, what will happen to “knowledge of the horizons and the self” proposed by Islamic sources such as “Soon We shall show them Our signs in the horizons and in their own souls until it becomes clear to them that He is the Real. Is it not sufficient that your Lord is witness to all things?” (Qur'ān 41: 53)?

In response, it can be said that the new reading of the “knowledge of the horizons and the self” – which has been proposed after Darwin and in the 20th century – has been effective in knowing God (Barbour, 1995: 16). Moreover, normally the knowledge gained through “the horizons and the self” is general knowledge. That is, it is an introduction to knowing God rather than knowing God in detail. This means that when we know “the horizons and the self” and consider them as being issued by God and His signs, we will come to the point that God, who has created them, is not like them. He is free from their imperfections, because the creator is more noble and higher than the created (Hā'irī Yazdī, 2014: 349-352). Of course, it should be noted that believing in God based on contemplation about “the horizons and the self” is true and acceptable. That said, the most common type of faith among believers is the one that comes from contemplation about the horizons (Mu'minī, 2008: 123).

In brief, although knowledge about “the horizons and the self” can help with general knowledge about God, it does not lead to detailed knowledge of God and cannot help in this regard. Rather, the only way to know God in detail is the knowledge granted by God Himself onto the angelic heart of the human. This is the same knowledge that is referred to as “knowing God by God” (Kulaynī, 2004, vol. 1: 85; Ṣadūq, 2008: 226-227; Isfahānī, 2008: 154-155, 173-174).

Based on what we said, it is not surprising that the Western scientific community has been even unable to gain general knowledge of God. To corroborate this, we might rely on the words expressed by Barbour about a Christian theologian named Karl Barth (1886-1968) who had the greatest effect on the 20th-century Protestantism. He states that Barth, defying those opinions, assertively suggested that God is always a “completely other” Being. And He is a sublime Lord that can be known only when He wants to reveal Himself, as He has revealed Himself in the being of Jesus greater than in anyone else. This Holy and Everlasting Lord is completely different from the world, and there is a distance between Him and the human that can be removed only by Him not by the human. The starting point for theology should be the revelation and manifestation of God onto the human – not the humans’ quest for God (Barbour, 1995: 144-145).

There are some points in the foregoing paragraph that relate to our discussion. First, this 20th-century Christian theologian confesses that the human does not have the ability to know God. To better explain this, note that the human is unable to know the essence of God (we presented intellectual and narrative evidence for this in the previous sections). Nonetheless, knowing the Divine Attributes – at least generally – is possible for the human.

The second point is that this Christian theologian believes that knowing God is possible only if God wants to be known. This suggestion may resemble the Islamic concept of “Ma’rifat Allāh.” This Islamic term refers to the detailed knowledge about God. Of course, detailed knowledge about God will not be granted to anyone but the most special divine saints who have tried to remove the dark and light veils in this regard.

The third point regards his utterance “God is always a ‘completely other’ Being. And He is a sublime Lord that can be known only when He wants to reveal Himself.” The first and last parts of this assertion are contradictory. For when it says, “God is always a ‘completely other’ Being. And He is a sublime Lord,” it means that we just know that He is a Being other than us, superior to us, and not comparable with us. This, then, is nothing but the general knowledge about God. However, this contradicts the subsequent clause “that can be known only when He wants to reveal Himself,” unless we believe that he means with this second part the detailed

knowledge of God. This is implausible, because there is no reference to these two types of knowledge and their difference in the foregoing quotation from Barth.

Now, as it is proved that God is not known in the West, its prerequisite – i.e., not knowing the true origin of religion – has also been proven. We can see that various sociological, economic, psychological, etc., proposals have been given by some Western scientists about the origin of religion. Cases such as ignorance and superstition, self-alienation of the human due to socioeconomic conditions, and even suppression of sexual desires during childhood are given as the origin of religion! (Kumpānī, 1980: 53-54; Maḥmūdī, 1980: 53-54).

Therefore, when a scientist takes such factors – instead of the sublime God – as the origin of religion, it will be natural for him/her to take science essentially incompatible with religion.

This reveals one of the key factors in the consideration of science and religion as incompatible in the West: lack of an accurate understanding of the real origin of religion, i.e., God. It seems that as long as the Western scientific community does not attain an accurate understanding of the origin of religion, the consideration of science and religion as incompatible will continue.

3.2 Separation of science and philosophy realms and the subsequent negligence of philosophy

The word “philosophy” has a Greek root. It is used in two general and specific meanings. Its general meaning for the past scholars included all genuine branches of science (including theoretical and practical ones). Only conventional sciences such as philology and syntax were excluded from its scope (Ṭabāṭabāyī, 2023, vol. 1: 40; Gulshanī, 2011: 321). However, its specific meaning is given as a series of issues based on intellectual argument and analogy that discuss the absolute form of being, decrees, and their results. Philosophy in its specific meaning is merely theoretical and intellectual, and in various situations, it has been given titles such as “first philosophy,” “true philosophy,” “general knowledge,” “theology,” and “metaphysics” (Ṭabāṭabāyī, 2023, vol. 1: 40-44). When we talk about philosophy in this article, we intend its specific meaning.

One of the important points in the history of science is the separation of the realms of science and philosophy. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) separated an important part of the science realm and set it as the exclusive realm of philosophy. He limited science to sensible matters, and in this way caused science and philosophy to be separated (Rousseau, 2007: 442-443). This rendered philosophy unpopular and neglected, while it led to the upsurge of science.

After defining philosophy and clarifying the main cause for its negligence, we now turn to the discussion of the similarities and differences between philosophy and science. The similarity between these two – i.e., their common aspect – is their effort to create an accurate match between human comprehension and the reality to be comprehended.

However, the most essential indicator of philosophy is that it looks for generalizations that clarify truth completely, such that without those generalizations, any truth will be floating in the world of abstraction. However, science relies on abstraction and is satisfied with understanding just the essential aspects of the complete truth. This difference deprives a scientist – no matter how expert in some aspects of reality – of the ability to claim to completely know what goes on in the world of being. Contrarily, a philosopher has the claim to completely know the generalities of the world and so, sees that ability existing in himself (Ja‘farī Tabrīzī, 2021, vol. 7: 250-251).

Now that the similarity and the difference between science and philosophy is made clear to some extent, we can turn to the relationship between philosophical matters and scientific issues. To this end, we will consider a simile that contains the relationship between these two sets. In this simile, philosophical matters are likened to water that penetrates all parts of a tree (i.e., scientific issues). When you look at the tree, though, you see nothing but its parts such as trunk, buds, flowers, and fruit. In this situation, it is not possible to clearly distinguish between them, i.e., we cannot label an issue as merely philosophical and another one as completely scientific. Therefore, the belief that philosophical proposals have nothing to do with scientific discoveries is just an illusion (Ja‘farī Tabrīzī, n.d.: 54-55).

Now we examine one of the most important negative consequences of ignoring philosophy.

3.2.1 Scientism

In the past few centuries, following vast and unprecedented scientific discoveries, some people were afflicted with scientific arrogance. They came to believe that all mysteries of the universe are discoverable by science (Nūrī, 1963: 358-359). This scientific arrogance led to an understanding of science called scientism. Scientism is the notion that only science is the trustable guide to truth (Haught, 2014: 42). Beliefs such as “science can explain everything, every event, or every construct based on rules,” “the only path to achieve bliss is science,” and “all problems should be solved by science and the conclusion to every problem should be found by science” are representations of scientism.

Scientism is the result of ignoring limitations of science and neglecting its boundaries. Science itself cannot determine its boundaries; rather, philosophy can do so. Many scientists are unaware of this point. For they imagine that all their claims are based on pure scientific findings and there is no room for philosophy in them. Therefore, they do not pay attention to philosophy, and naturally remain unaware of the limiting boundaries of science (Gulshanī, 2001: 36).

When such a belief is present in a scientific community – that the only trustable path to truth is science and nothing else – incompatibility and conflict with religion will emerge as the consequence of the exclusiveness inherent in this belief. The reason is that in this view, religion is not taken as a trustable guide.

It seems that as long as the problem with scientism – i.e., exclusiveness – is not removed by the Western scientific community, the incompatibility between science and religion will continue to exist.

3.3 The appearance and expansion of anti-metaphysical schools

The word “metaphysics” has Greek roots. It is made of “meta” (beyond) and “physics” (nature). The first philosophy (i.e., philosophy in its specific meaning that regards beings in their absolute meaning) is what Aristotle called metaphysics because he classified it after natural sciences. Of course, this word has been wrongly translated in Farsi into *mā warā’ al-ṭabī’īyya* (the world of abstraction) (Ṭabāṭabāyī, 2023, vol. 1: 50-51).

We have taken the term “metaphysics” here to mean what some thinkers have called knowledge about “absolute reality” and the knowledge of the creatures’ beginning and end. In the Western philosophy, from the time of Aristotle, this has inappropriately been set as a branch of philosophy (Naşr, 2000: 101-103). In other words, metaphysics here is different from the first philosophy (i.e., philosophy in its specific meaning) that was labeled by Aristotle as metaphysics.

Before we start the discussion, it is apt to overview the uses of this term by science and philosophy scholars. This will help prevent the assumption that every person from every field uses it in one single meaning. In a valuable commentary on the book “Modes of Thought” by Alfred North Whitehead, the late ‘Allāma Ja‘farī provides eight meanings that are used for this term. He notes that the common aspect among all these meanings is intangibility. Those eight meanings are as follows.

- Any intangible truth whose reality is accepted by all thinkers but is not presently actual, such as our ancestors who lived five generations before us;
- Truths whose reality is accepted by everyone but their actual reality is not tangible, such as thinking, pleasure, will, and human emotions;
- What lies beyond physical representations, such as the relations between problems and rules; e.g., the cause-effect relationship, which does not have a physical aspect;
- Any truth that is beyond common scientific investigations, such as the whole system of nature whose examination is not considered scientific, because it is impossible for a researcher to know it completely;
- Very public abstract concepts, such as existence and reality;
- “Thing-in-itself” that can never be examined or known, such as the absolute matter of objects in Kantian theory;
- What lies behind all nature, such as Plato’s forms, angels, and other abstract beings;
- The principles and fundamentals of the universe that are deemed as the basis for the realization, movement, and purposefulness of the universe (Ja‘farī Tabrīzī, 2021, vol. 7: 407-408).

Two examples of anti-metaphysical schools are positivism and logical positivism. Positivism came to maturity by the works of Auguste Comte (1798-1857). However, its roots can be found in the works of William of Ockham (1285-1349), Francis

Bacon (1561-1626), and other British empiricists. From this viewpoint, anything that cannot be understood by senses is non-scientific, and any effort to comprehend it is illogical (Gulshanī, 2001: 22; Id., 2011: 3). To the positivists, discussing the fundamental issues about existence requires using concepts that are not precisely definable and so must be avoided (Gulshanī, 2011: 42). Positivism does not necessarily reject the external reality independent from the human mind, but it does not deem it as genuine. From the viewpoint of this school, what we can know is about our own deeds and observations, and the search for realities that lie behind events is not a scientific undertaking. This school suggests that the purpose of science is to bring about an order to our observations and to present regulations that enable us to predict the results of future tests based on past observations (Ibid: 147). Positivists have two important claims about scientific theories:

- Scientific theories are not trustable as long as they are not based on empirical principles.
- A theory should be formulated precisely so that its empirical results are unambiguous.

These claims put positivism against metaphysics. For metaphysical issues cannot be experimented, and they use general concepts – such as reality – that cannot be precisely defined (Ibid: 54).

Logical positivism appeared in the 20th century (around 1930). It was to some extent the revival of the empiricism started by David Hume (Barbour, 1995: 151; ‘Alīzamānī, 1996: 46). Relying on the principle of verifiability, followers of this school believe that if a stance can be verified empirically, it is meaningful; otherwise, it is meaningless (‘Alīzamānī, 1996: 47). Consequently, they set empiricism as the criterion for verifiability. Then, metaphysical issues are meaningless because they are not empirical.

In sum, empiricism, reliance on sensory observations, and estrangement from metaphysics were features that these two schools and other ones like them promoted among scientists. These are still dominating the thoughts of the scientific community (Gulshanī, 2001: 23).

In fact, the positivist interpretation of science means completely deleting its ontological aspect by demoting the importance of that aspect (Naṣr, 2000: 20). This leads science to contradict religion. It seems that as long as metaphysics is not returned to its real station by the Western scientific community, the incompatibility between science and religion will continue to exist.

3.4 Science and religion scholars do not bound themselves to their respective domains

One of the reasons for the incompatibility between science and religion is that science and religion scholars do not bound themselves to their respective domains. That is, each group comments on the topics of the other domain. These unjustified comments might lead at times to incompatibility. Ultimately, these instances of incompatibility might be labeled as the general incompatibility between science and religion. Some of these instances regard theologians' interest in commenting on scientific theories or the scientists' interest in presenting their scientific findings in the form of metaphysical systems (Barbour, 1995: 66).

3.5 Amalgamation of science and ideology

Contemplation on scientific propositions reveals that these propositions are not merely based on science; rather, they are mixed with researchers' and scientists' presuppositions. That is, when the discussion in natural sciences extends to fundamental issues, decision-making in natural sciences becomes too difficult or at times even impossible. In such conditions, scientists rely on their mental records and refer to non-scientific premises. In fact, when presenting scientific data, they always rely on premises that are full of non-scientific aspects. Therefore, hidden premises with an outer surface of science but irrelevant to science must be identified (Gulshani, 2001: 163). According to a thinker, we have two aspects in every branch of science. One aspect is made of natural realities or truths. The other aspect is the person's view who classifies these truths, forms them as theories, and develops concepts. These two should be distinguished (Ibid: 152).

Scientists should not present a finding as a purely scientific piece of data if it is based on a mixture of scientific and non-scientific (ideological) foundations. If they do, they commit a plain treachery. It might be the non-scientific aspect that is incompatible with religion, but it is wrongly labeled as the incompatibility of science

and religion. For instance, based on observations made in the first two decades of the 20th century, it was concluded that multiple examinations of an atom-scale being does not provide an identical image of it. In other words, the results obtained from different experiments cannot correspond to a single objective reality. It was then that physicists changed their view to the reality of quantum beings. They chose a new stance that was highly anti-realist. According to this new view, one should not be after explication of the reality of things; rather, he/she should be content with theories whose results match observations (Gulshanī, 2011: 6). However, before the quantum theory, science accepted the existence of the external world, and scientists aimed at explicating their experimentations and observations based on the external behaviors of things (Ibid: 277). The key point is that the generalization of the quantum theory from atom-scale beings to all creatures definitely has not been based on observation and experimentation. Then, the essential question is that if this generalization by physicists is anything but one based on non-scientific bases and premises? The answer is evident: what they have done is mixing science and non-science (i.e., ideology).

3.6 Incorrect generalization of a scientific theory

Generalizing a scientific theory obtained in one specific domain to other domains is not only non-scientific but also can be a pretext for introducing science and religion as incompatible. For example, Darwin's Theory of Evolution has been known in the Western scientific community as a successful theory (Copleston, 1997, vol. 8: 118-12). However, things get bizarre when evolution is taken out of the limited domain of biology and generalized to the whole universe (i.e., cosmic evolution) or introduced to philosophical schools such as naturalism (Barbour, 1995: 140). Moreover, in the domain of physics, the relativity theory is presented in a way as if there is no absolute matter, as the principle of indeterminacy is taken to mean freedom of human will or lack of any causal network among phenomena (Naşr, 2000: 25).

3.7 Illogical and unscholarly attacks on new scientific theories

Unprovoked attacks by religious scholars on new scientific theories leads to the view among scientists that religion is against modern science (Riḍāyī Isfahānī, 2008: 41). The logical path to reject a scientific theory is that the contender first has

comprehensive knowledge of the details and aspects of the intended theory. Second, he/she uses robust evidence and reasons to reject that theory. It is unacceptable that a religious person who does not have authority in scientific issues rejects any scientific theory that is seemingly incompatible with religion and labels it as disbelief and blasphemy simply because he/she is sympathetic to religion. It is natural that when scientists face such believers, they accuse religion of being incompatible with science.

3.8 Religious people taking scientific theories as definitive

Taking scientific theories as definitive and relying on them to explicate religious content gradually causes those theories to be considered as part of religion (Ibid). Over time, when new scientific theories replace the older ones, the followers of the new theories do not see the previous theories as merely outdated scientific theories. Rather, they take them as religious theories, too, and perceive the new theory as opposing the religion.

4. Conclusion

- Factors that contribute to the perception of science and religion as incompatible can be divided into root causes and continuation factors.
- The root causes for the incompatibility of science and religion from the 16th century to the 20th century are as follows: church leaders' opposition to science, their textualist view of the Bible, the amalgamation of the Medieval theology with Aristotelian philosophy, and consideration of scientific findings as definitive.
- The factors that have led to the continuation of the incompatibility of science and religion from the 16th century to the 20th century are as follows: lack of a true understanding about the real origin of religion, scientism, the appearance and expansion of anti-metaphysical schools, religious and scientific scholars' non-restriction of themselves to their own related fields, the amalgamation of science and ideology, incorrect generalization of a scientific theory, illogical and unscholarly attacks on new scientific theories, and consideration of scientific theories as definitive by religious people.

- Scientism is one of the negative consequences of ignoring philosophy, and ignorance of philosophy is in turn the cause for the separation of science and philosophy domains.
 - A positivistic interpretation of science means completely removing the ontological aspect of science, which has been done via ignorance of its ontological importance.
 - In some cases, a scientific theory is not a problem per se, but its inappropriate generalization leads to incompatibility with religion.
 - As long as factors such as “the lack of a true understanding of the real origin of religion,” “scientism,” and “the appearance and expansion of anti-metaphysical schools” (as the main causes for the continuation of the incompatibility of science and religion) are not removed by the Western scientific community, the aforementioned incompatibility will survive.
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