

SCIENCE AND RELIGION
GRADED PAPER 2 REVIEWS
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Paper 1

The format you've chosen—inserting numerical markers into the original text—is potentially a good idea, but the formatting of the original text itself is tragic, making your feedback more difficult for the original author to absorb. Moreover, there's plenty that you could have written about this paper, but your feedback is sparse and superficial. You needed to read more critically and help this author more substantially.

(1) “Developed” would be incorrect here. “Develops” is the correct suggestion, but it is correct **because** it brings the verb into agreement of number with the subject. You have to be more clear with the author about your reasons for certain corrections.

Grade: B-

Paper 2

Again, the format of this review makes it difficult to identify the most critical elements of your feedback. Again, your feedback is sparse, superficial, and sometimes insufficiently specific. This paper had substantial problems not only with the technical aspects of writing, but also with the content. You indicate, in your leading summary, that the thesis is not clearly stated, and that the arguments do not drive any specific points; those are critical observations that should have been made more thoroughly and clearly, for they are fatal flaws for this paper.

Grade: B

Awful formatting.

Religion and Science: A Failed Emulsification

Using observation and experimentation, science provides explanations of the natural world. (1) With that as its purpose, science can never be static, as it must always be

ready to change due to new discoveries from additional observation and experimentation.

Contrastingly, religion, using scripture and faith as support, develops (2) explanations about

the natural world that are not nearly as yielding (3) as scientific explanations. (4) Because religious, in particular Christian, explanations of the natural world are based in a metaphysical entity, they cannot be disproved or proved, as science has no way to assess

their validity. Therefore, by attempting to explain the same worldly phenomena, the inevitable conflicting of perspectives prohibits science and religion to coexist.

Occurring prior to the origin of Christianity, the idea that the Earth was created below a firmament that rested on pillars was developed by Ancient Egyptians. However, as time progressed, Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle challenged this idea by suggesting that Earth was round. (5) During this same time period, Christianity was established and their

unfledged hypothesis was incapable of persuading the masses, especially fathers of the Church. In accordance with his interpretation of the New Testament, Eusebius argued that because the end of the world was imminent their argument was “useless labour,” and that as a result, it is necessary to turn “our souls to better things”.¹ This example of using interpretation as a means of denying the validity of a hypothesis illustrates a significant reason why religion and science are irreconcilable. By asserting his interpretation (6) as nearly as equally valid as biblical text, Eusebius circumvented obtaining

empirical evidence to support his claim. In science, empirical evidence cannot be omitted

if a hypothesis is to be deemed valid. Consequently, that religion allowed the omission to

occur established a distinct difference in the methods in which religion and science support their claims.

However, religion uses more than just interpretation to produce explanations of the natural world. In combination with Scripture and interpretation, faith and logical reasoning made it difficult for science to persuade the Church to accept scientific explanations of the natural world. Defined by geneticist Francis Collins as “evidence of things not seen,” faith, in conjunction with logic and biblical text, was used by the Church against the scientific idea of antipodes. Lactantius raised the following logical questions: “Is there any one so senseless as to believe that there are men whose footsteps

are higher than their heads...[and] that the rains and snow and hail fall upward toward the

earth?”² Prior to the conception of gravity, as was the case in this situation, these were reasonable questions that hindered the acceptance of antipodes. The Church’s argument

was furthered with biblical support. In the sixth century, Procopius of Gaza argued that if antipodes with people existed, Christ would have had to go to the other side of the Earth to die for their salvation and by extrapolation, an additional Adam and Eve must have existed prior to his coming. Because the antipodes had not been seen, the Church's faith resided in Scripture and logical reasoning. Centuries would pass before observations of people at the antipodes would be made. Yet even with the discoveries of Columbus and Magellan, both of which were non-scientific expeditions, the Church still failed to be persuaded.

The Church's tendency to resist change, even with the presentation of new evidence, provides another reason for the inability of religion and science to coexist. Because the results of scientific experiments are predictive models, science must be willing to change these models if an outcome occurs that goes against the prediction. By rejecting or modifying the model, science can adapt to the phenomena that occur in the natural world. Unlike science, religion cannot change by simply re-writing the bible. Furthermore, as the Church was a source of power for many aspects—access to printing presses, persecution and the Inquisition, owner of large amounts of land—to admit that its beliefs were wrong on the basis of scientific empirical evidence ran the risk of losing its power and followers; as was the case with Galileo and evolutionist Richard Dawkins. The latter will be discussed first, as it is an example of how religion alone can prove to be incompatible with science.

Raised in a Christian household, Dawkins began to question the validity of religion when at age 9 he learned that multiple religions existed. He concluded that they cannot all be right, thus they cannot be trusted. This idea can be applied more directly to Christianity if one considers the multitude of denominations, each attempting to explain the natural world. Furthermore, the Bible itself contains discrepancies in trying to describe the same events. This can be seen in the records of the creation of the Earth in

Genesis and in the accounts of the life of Christ written by the Apostles. If such divisions and discrepancies exist, Dawkins argues that the bible should not be interpreted literally but rather as a work of literature to understand our culture. If presented with the aforementioned issues and the support of experimental evidence, religion finds difficulty in maintaining their explanations. Galileo's discoveries are a prime example of this struggle.

With observations made from his telescope, Galileo disproved the heliocentric theory that the earth was the center of the universe. Evidence gained from the telescopic observations prevented the Church from forming a legitimate counterargument. Consequently, the Church made Galileo to recant his discoveries. Despite their efforts,

that Galileo's discoveries supported the predictive models made by science forced the Church to accept geocentrism. (12)

Because science relies on observation and experiments to gain empirical evidence to support its explanations it is difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile the views of religion and science, as religion requires nothing but faith to uphold a belief.

¹ Eusebius of Caesarea as quoted in White, p.107

² Lactantius as quoted in White, p. 116

General Comments:

Really?

This paper is pretty well written. It clearly states your ideas and how it pertains to your thesis. However, arguments at the end did not seem to contain same vigor as the start. Also, conclusion needs to be worked on. When talking about specific people, try to include an explanation as to who it is or why their opinion is important.

Specific Comments:

1. There is a possible use of redundancy in this sentence

| Be specific!

2. I believe that "developed" or "develops" is a better use of the verb.

X "conjugation" ①

3. The verb choice of yielding here does not clearly articulate the argument trying to be made.

4. Try splitting this into two sentences.

5. The sentence just seems to have awkward wording

6. This sentence is confusing and hard to read.

7. I believe it should say "were".

8. Are we talking about re-writing the bible, or just the doctrines?

9. The use of words here is not ideal. | More ...

10. I believe you have mixed up heliocentric and geocentric models.

11. Eliminate the "to" on either side of Galileo

12. The same issue as number 10 becomes prevalent.

Christianity's crippling fight for power.

(1)Thorough out the battle between science and Christianity, science has continuously proven Christianity wrong. It does so with enough evidence that Christianity is forced to adopt the scientific view. And full adaptation usually means straying from scriptural reasoning. **(2)** Science appears to be a response to holes in Christianity's explanations. However, science and religion take a similar approach to solving problems. Both attempt to piece together facts based on evidence. Scientific evidence is based only on observation of the natural world**(3)** while Christianity relies on scripture and its interpretation. **(4)**Christianity derives strength and validity from scripture. These documents are claimed to be the only proof needed to explain the universe. That validity gives the church great power. Christianity does not accept proof that does not appear in scripture, as it would weaken their base. However, scripture seems to overlook some important points. **(5)**Christianity does give fleshed out reasons for happenings in the world as well as evidence for it in scripture. However, it strongly shuns outside evidence and labels it heretical. Through science**(6)** new evidence's validity is noted over and over leaving need for an explanation. Science does not pose a new method to problem solving, it just draws from a broader source. It also is not a single institution seeking power. While the two modes of thought are not fundamentally different, **(7)**science could only have developed in opposition to Christianity because of the latter's fight for control using strict adherence to evidence in the bible.

One early example is the notion of the earth as a sphere. It was proposed loosely by the Greeks and swayed the minds of a few early fathers of the church. However most of the clergy saw this as a potential attack against scripture. At first science itself was attacked. Clergymen wondered how it would enrich lives to know the shape of the earth. But this argument was not good enough. It needed to be based on scriptural evidence. Others found the evidence within the bible. They quoted passages like "windows of heaven", "like a curtain", and "like a tent to dwell in" as evidence that the earth was flat, with the sky suspended above it. Christianity explained the movement of the sun and relation of "heavenly bodies" to each other. It analyzed religious tools such as the table of shew-bread and used its shape as evidence of the flatness of the earth. And all of this combined was enough proof that the earth was not spherical. Then, to keep power, it is said that any who did not hold this idea of the world would be subject to Gods**(8)** wrath. Slowly, great men of the time accepted the view of the earth as a sphere and as more of the earth was discovered**(9)** the church was forced to alter biblical theories to it. But still according to interpretations of the bible the earth must be flat. And the church would adhere to this until undeniable scientific evidence was shown. This is the mode for most of the conflicts between science and Christianity.

When the idea of the antipodes was introduced **(10)**two men of the church, Nazianzen and Lactantius, were immediately skeptical. Lactantius wondered how it made any sense that a person would stand with their feet above their head or how crops would grow down and so on. And this was a logical argument at the time. However, like denouncing science, this was not based enough on scripture for the church. The church notes that persons on the other side of the world would not be able to see the second coming of Christ. It was also argued that the apostles reached

the whole world and there is no mention of the antipodes in their travels. Later on, Pope Zachary's interpretation of Job is held as evidence against the antipodes. And centuries later it is still believed that the antipodes do not exist. Other men of the church sought to uphold the scriptural evidence and found more support. However upon the voyage of Magellan religious doctrine lost its hold on the notion of the antipodes. **(11)** It was soon after, when empirical evidence, like the measurements of the earth, was collected that Christianity lost the battle.

A less blatant argument between Christianity and science is the one over hygiene. However it shows Christianity's full turn upon the solidification of scientific evidence. At one point it was thought that "filthiness was akin to holiness". **(12)** That to be clean was to be vain. And it was thought that disease was a pestilence bestowed by God or a saint as punishment for sins. St. Gregory the Great perpetuated this idea when he saw the archangel sheathing his sword to signify the end of the pestilence. **(13)** The persecution of persons as agents of the devil, specifically witches, was not based entirely on scripture. It had influences from older religions that fed into Christianity. However the teachings of clergy men and the papal bull of Pope Innocent VIII were instrumental in spreading a hatred for witches. In the attempt to stave disease countless persons were tortured and killed and numerous fetishes were used in an attempt to appease God and the saints. It was in the 17th century that Robert Boyle noted that some disease was a result of nature. He attempted to reconcile disease as a punishment with disease as something that could be prevented. But it proved difficult to explain why it was that the most pious suffered the greatest number of deaths, while the most heretical went unpunished. When persons insisted on cleaning prisons and cities there was a radical change in the spread of disease. The church was forced to acknowledge its fault, again because of unquestionable evidence. In fact it changed so much that now Christianity states that "*cleanliness* is near to godliness".

After conflicts like these it seems reasonable to establish that science and religion are enemies. Despite their similarities Christianity continuously shunned scientific evidence. Because of the power of the church the evidences fell out of favor for long stretches of time, only to be reinforced by some new discovery in the future. Science builds upon itself. It starts from understanding simple objects and uses them to decipher the more complex. As it addresses more complex questions it shows and creates holes in Christianity's explanations. Christianity assumes that it had the answer on the first go and does not seek to change its understanding. When science reveals a problem, rather than attempt to incorporate the new evidence Christianity fights it and holds on to its older explanations. This seems to be the nature of Christian knowledge. But as science moves forward it leaves Christian thought further and further behind until it becomes undeniable that Christian thought is wrong. Christianity is then weakened and needs to adapt to the scientific view in order to maintain some validity. Since this happens almost cyclically it seems established that scientific discovery weakens Christianity and thus Christianity seeks to stifle science.

General Comments:

Yes

Try to be more specific in your arguments or better define your thesis. It is difficult to follow the direction you are heading in this paper. The examples you have used are fine, just try to better present the argument and how it relates back to your thesis.

No. Just repeated history.

Specific Comments:

Yes

1. I believe you are trying to say throughout. , " ?
2. Does this argument make sense? Is it possible that science is only a response to Christianity?
3. There is a possibility for a comma in this sentence. ← Be more specific.
4. This sentence seems awkward.
5. Try to reorganize or restructure this sentence.
6. I believe there could be a comma after science ,
7. The same issue as number two becomes prevalent .
8. There should be an apostrophe on God.
9. This sentence seems to be a run on and redundant.
10. I believe you are trying to say "to two" .
11. This sentence seems a bit awkward.
12. There is a lack of understanding of what you are trying to say
13. Does this argument support your thesis? I thought it was Christianities battle.

Christianity's