

# INDEPENDENCE: A NON-REDUCTIVE VIEW OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCIENCE AND THEOLOGY

## (DEEPENING OF BARBOUR'S APPROACH)

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**Abstract:** During the last several decades, the dialogue between science and religion has been influenced by certain approaches in the philosophy of religion and the philosophy of science. Proponents of this movement suggest several models of how to articulate the relationship between these two domains. One of the most influential was Ian G. Barbour and his four views: conflict, independence, dialogue, integration. Although many authors criticized Barbour's views, this paper demonstrates that the second category, independence, is underestimated and has overlooked potential. The paper develops this potential, examines objections to the independence view, and proposes a philosophical argument supporting independence as a non-reductive view of the relationship between science and theology.

**Keywords:** Barbour; science; theology; independence; dialogue; autonomy.

### Introduction

In his famous books,<sup>1</sup> Ian Barbour<sup>2</sup> analyzes important questions about the relationship between science and religion. He proposes four views on the relationship between science and religion: conflict, independence, dialogue, and integration. It is a graduated model, in which the

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1 Barbour, I. G., *Religion in an Age of Science (Gifford Lectures)*, New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 1990; Barbour, I. G., *Religion and Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues*, San Francisco, HarperCollins Publishers, 1997; Barbour, I. G., *When Science Meets Religion. Enemies, Strangers or Partners?* New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2000.

2 Ian Graeme Barbour (1923–2013) was an American physicist, philosopher, and theologian. At the beginning of his career at the University of Chicago, he worked as a teaching assistant to Enrico Fermi. From 1989 to 1991 Barbour gave the Gifford lectures at the University of Aberdeen. He holds the Templeton Prize (1999) and, together with Arthur Peacocke and John Polkinghorne, is considered to be one of the most important authors on the relationship between science and religion at the beginning of the 21st century.

last degree (integration) is the most desirable, according to Barbour. With all due respect to this model and its author, his view of independence is too simplistic and the potential for this view of the relationship between science and religion has been underestimated.

This paper will examine and deepen particularly the independence view on the relationship between religious and social knowledge, especially science. It is important to offer a broader and deeper philosophical analysis of this model and to propose a better justification for why science and theology are independent of each other. “Religious and non-religious people ask whether and how the scientific picture of the natural world might be reconciled with traditional religious views.”<sup>3</sup> Although this question is good and important, science and theology cannot be reconciled in a proper sense, because both of them are separate and independent domains. Barbour respects this independence, but only temporarily. “I believe that the Independence thesis is a good starting point or first approximation. It preserves the distinctive character of each enterprise, and it is a useful strategy for responding to those who say conflict is inescapable.”<sup>4</sup> In contrast, this paper asserts that independence is not only a starting point but also a key interpretive model for describing the potential relationship between science and theology.

### **Why address the relationship between science and theology?**

The current period has witnessed the increased influence<sup>5</sup> of religious groups, opinions, and beliefs, which enter into important decisions of national and international organizations. Jonathan Fox argues that ignoring or underestimating religious phenomena (which is what happens) is dangerous because religion, as a worldview, affects many decision-mak-

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3 Visala, A., ‘Analytic Theology and the Sciences’, In: Arcadi, J. M., Turner, J. T. (eds.) *T&T Clark Handbook of Analytic Theology*, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021, p. 408.

4 Barbour, I. G., *When Science Meets Religion. Enemies, Strangers or Partners?* New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2000, pp. 57-58.

5 See Thomas, S. M., ‘A Globalized God: Religion’s Growing Influence in International Politics.’ In: *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 89, no. 6, 2010, pp. 93-101; and also: Sweetman, B., *Why Politics Needs Religion*, Downers Grove, InterVarsity Press Academic, 2006.

ers on a global scale.<sup>6</sup> It is clear that in many parts of the world, religious beliefs are being transformed into policies that threaten not only human rights but also local and international security. In the Christian European context, the situation is calmer in this respect at present.<sup>7</sup> The relationship between religion and society is not a source of overt conflict (tension remains, but there is no open warfare), although this relative calm has not always been the case in Europe, which has had many so-called religious conflicts and wars in the past. However, it must be acknowledged that the vast majority of these conflicts used religion as a pretext. A rational debate on the relationship between religion and society is important in the current situation in Euro-American civilization.

However, such a debate requires a good understanding of the more fundamental relationship between the sources of human knowledge. Here, philosophy can play a very important role. Because philosophy can identify epistemological boundaries and subsequently formulate the principles of dialogue between partners with different noetic scopes. In the European context, the two phenomena of religion and science played key roles from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. The relationship between the two areas has not always been peaceful. Despite the turbulence of this relationship, it turns out that both spheres - if they work together - can contribute to the development of society and even knowledge. This paper hopes to contribute philosophically to an adequate understanding of this relationship, so that it is not a source of conflict, but, on the contrary, of tolerance and understanding.

### **Who is a partner to whom?**

The most prominent and most influential current social knowledge is science. If someone is trying to influence today's society or gain influence over the decisions of social groups, the most effective way is to use

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6 Fox, J., 'Religion as an Overlooked Element of International Relations'. In: *International Studies Review*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2001, pp. 53-73.

7 This statement refers to the context and the relationship between the majority Christian religion and European society. It does not take into account the extremist religious groups that have attracted the attention of Europe in recent years through terrorist attacks. Legitimate representatives of religious communities, e.g., Islam in Europe, have always distanced themselves from these attacks in Europe.

scientific methodology and spread it to society. But who is to be a partner in scientific discourse concerning religion? The first problem is the question of the relationships among entities - what areas of knowledge to consider. The phenomenon of religion is very broad and dependent on the individual and the relatively arbitrary actions of followers of a particular religious faith. It is very difficult to think of this heterogeneous group of phenomena (beliefs, actions) as a partner of dialogue with science because of their heterogeneity and indefinability. It is obvious that religions intersect with various scientific disciplines (sociology, religion, psychology, and others), but this relationship is descriptive. Various scientific disciplines analyze, for example, sports, but the fact that sports activities are the object of scientific observations does not establish a special relationship between science and sport.

Nancy Murphy argues for the importance of thinking about the relationship between science and theology.<sup>8</sup> She stresses theology, because in her view, religion (and Christianity in particular) is a complex phenomenon that includes various beliefs, morals, worship styles, and various manifestations of religious or sacred practice. The relationship between science and religion or theology involves a mutual or reciprocal relationship in which both partners methodically focus on each other, and based on this relationship formulate some new knowledge. Therefore, it makes more sense to consider the possibility of a relationship between science and theology.

### **Philosophers and theologians**

In the European religious and philosophical context, the Unmoved Mover appears in Aristotle and later in Thomas Aquinas. The Unmoved Mover had one essential feature in common with both philosophers: it (He) was the cause of all things. The unmoved mover is the ontological origin of every single thing, inanimate nature, plants, animals, and of course human beings. According to this principle, nature begins with the impersonal (Aristotle) or personal (Thomas Aquinas) principle. This principle can be inductively devised through the individual stages of being

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8 Murphy, N., 'On the Nature of Theology'. In: Richardson, W. M. & Wildman, W. J. (eds), *Religion and Science. History, Method, Dialogue*. London, Routledge, 1996, pp. 154.

or creation. Nature and its exploration, so to speak, helps a philosopher or theologian who asks for the beginning of all that exists. For philosophers like Aristotle and Aquinas, nature is an ally not only in the knowledge of the laws of nature but also in the knowledge of a transcendent being, God. In this perspective, science and theology can become partners in dialogue, and the results of their research can lead to complementary knowledge.

The Protestant neo-orthodoxy of the late 19th and early 20th centuries emphasized something quite different. In the context of the dynamic growth of knowledge of the natural sciences, with less and less space left for God, Karl Barth and others began to claim that God appears in history rather than in nature.<sup>9</sup> More precisely, the revelation of God to man is limited by the Revelation of man available only through Scripture (*sola scriptura*). This attitude is not surprising in the Protestant tradition. Since the time of Luther and Melancthon, in Protestant theology, the exclusive emphasis on Scripture has also been reflected in the fact that legitimate (natural) philosophical theology was impossible. Knowledge of the Creator through means other than Scripture has always been considered foolish in this tradition.

In this view, theology and science are independent paths of knowledge, which are indifferent to each other. Science is based on an experimental method, its language is mathematical, and its goal is the development of knowledge. Religion uses the hermeneutic method, its language is metaphorical, and its goal is the rebirth of human existence. This is how the factual and existential are separated.<sup>10</sup> If God and the sacred can be known only by methods of faith and Revelation or Scripture, then any knowledge of the natural sciences has almost no relationship to the subject of religion and theology. Religion and theology on the one hand and science on the other hand are almost unrelated.

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9 Barbour, I. G., *When Science Meets Religion. Enemies, Strangers or Partners?* New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2000, p. 18.

10 Kvasz, L., 'Vedecká racionalita a súčasné prístupy k transcencii' ['Scientific rationality and current approaches to transcendence'], In: Slavkovský, A., Vydrova, J., Vydra, A.) (eds.), *Boh a racionalita [God and rationality]*, Pusté Úľany, Schola Philosophica, 2010, p. 214.

## The Two-language Theory

At universities and among scientists in the fields of natural and exact sciences, but also at theological schools, the explanation of the relationship between natural science and theology often employs the so-called two-language theory. It might seem that “it respects the sovereign territory of both science and theology... it is advocated by highly respected persons in both fields.”<sup>11</sup> Exact scientists describe experiential material using their own methodological approach and their own terminology. In this approach, hypotheses are formulated and later verified into theories, which offer a comprehensive picture of some part of human experience or the world, with which people may not even have an ordinary human experience. Theology works with its own methodology and terminological apparatus as well, with theological concepts acting as theories to explain the questions commonly call religious questions.

Can there be any intersection between the areas of knowledge formulated in this way - exact science on the one hand and theology on the other? It seems that questions of theology and questions of science could intersect and, according to the theory of different languages, it does occur. However, the answers science and theology reach differ. The orthodox proponent of the theory of different languages explains knowledge in science and in theology as analogous and even comparable. The key difference does not lie in the content of the claims of science and theology, but rather in their epistemic linguistic expression. Thus, the scientist and the theologian develop a similar type of knowledge, they try to answer the same questions in principle, but their languages—that is, their terminology and conceptual schemes—are different. “A two-language approach also receives philosophical support from instrumentalism. According to instrumentalists, scientific theories are not representations of reality but useful intellectual and practical tools.”<sup>12</sup> Therefore, sometimes science and theology seem to be independent of each other, but according to this theory, they are interconnected and cohesive.

Two arguments serve as a brief critique of the theory of different

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11 Peters, T., *Science, Theology, Ethics*, London and New York, Routledge, 2016, p. 18.

12 Barbour, I. G., *When Science Meets Religion. Enemies, Strangers or Partners?* New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2000, p. 56.

languages. The first argument refutes competition between these “two languages.” However, the theory of two different languages, denying the independence between science and theology, is based on very vague and uncertain premises. First of all, if there are two kinds of knowledge about the same subject of research, it should be possible to decide which knowledge or theory—whether scientific or theological—is more appropriate for a given question. A less adequate response should then be rejected. However, science and theology do not compete with each other in this way.

The second argument is about the absence of a metalanguage. It is the strongest objection to the theory of different languages. Science and theology are not able to find a common ground, the point from which different language constructions derive. The theory of different languages immanently presupposes a point of view independent of science and independent of theology. Science and theology could reach such a point of view only if their different languages were reducible to a common language or to the language of one of them, a situation of which no one seems to find convincing.

### **The relationship between science and theology as independence**

With this background, the independence of science and theology seems most appropriate. This independence must be described in non-reductive terms to avoid the reduction of either science or theology. The following section introduces various aspects of the dependence and independence of science and theology and addresses the potential religious beliefs of naturalists. It will explain whether science and theology can have common themes or whether they can analyze the same experiences.

Science and theology are separate and independent processes of cognition, which have their specific objects of research and different methods. They enter a mutual relationship randomly, as their relationship does not follow from a methodological approach either in science or in theology. The moment of the relationship between science and theology is the boundary point of these procedures. In other words, it is a meta-scientific and meta-theological effort. However interesting the meeting of science and theology may be, it does not produce in a strong sense scientific knowledge or theological knowledge. Thus, the relationship between science and theology is not the subject of research into any of these paths to

knowledge. They work with different types of experience and their goals are for different kinds of knowledge.

The relationship between science and theology is thus a relationship of independence with the following character: science can proceed autonomously in its research, and in an imaginary world without theology, it could exist and solve the problems it solves now. Likewise, theology can proceed autonomously in theological inquiry, and again in an imaginary world without science, it could exist and produce theological knowledge.

There are various objections to such a recognition of the independence between science and theology, including a) the instrumental dependence of science and theology, b) taking into account the religious beliefs of scientists, and c) science and theology nevertheless have common themes and questions.

### **The objection of the instrumental dependence of science and theology**

One of the objections that can be raised to the independence of science and theology is that they use some of the same tools, methods, and procedures. For example, contemporary textual criticism of the Bible cannot proceed without the tools of paleography, archeology, history, ethnology, linguistics, religion, and other disciplines. On the other hand, from a certain point of view, it is possible to deduce some theological concepts in science, such as the concept of infinity in mathematics.<sup>13</sup> Both theology and science use methods such as induction, deduction, and various argumentation procedures, which are, however, more general tools of rationality and cognition.

This objection demonstrates that the dependence of science and theology is, in a sense, evident only at the level of tools or methods. If this objection is legitimate, science and theology are independent at the level of the propositional or intentional contents of their claims.<sup>14</sup> Thus,

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<sup>13</sup> See Tapp, Ch., 'Infinity in Mathematics and Theology'. In: *Theology and Science*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2011, pp. 91-100; Kvasz, L., 'The Invisible Dialog Between Mathematics and Theology'. In: *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith*, vol. 56, no. 2, 2004, pp. III-III6.

<sup>14</sup> Opponents of such an approach include Thomas Kuhn and Paul Feyerabend, who in their theories consider the paradigms in which science and theology are

the relationship between science and theology could be characterized by instrumental dependence but content independence or indifference.

Even instrumental dependence is not absolute, because science and theology differ in many ways in their instrumentation and methodologies. They already differ in principle in that science verifies its knowledge by experiment. On the contrary, faith as the subject of theology comes from the individual experience of hearing.<sup>15</sup> The relativity of instrumental dependence is also confirmed by the fact that theology (including biblical exegesis) existed even before modern scientific tools of textual criticism. According to Kvasz, theology is, metaphorically speaking, scaffolding or a tool or a ladder that has played a very important role in building modern science (Galileo, Descartes, Newton). However, this instrumental task has already been fulfilled. Science no longer needs theology in this sense. After modern science has climbed the ladder to the next level, it can leave the ladder unharmed. Therefore, the integration between science and faith is not possible in the content sense, but in the formal sense (in the way modern science transcends the world of antiquity).<sup>16</sup> In any case, instrumental dependence is too weak an argument in favor of the necessary relationship between science and theology.

### **The objection of considering the religious beliefs of scientists**

Statistics could lead to a different conclusion than the thesis of the independence of science and theology. Undoubtedly, some scientists profess religious beliefs and even build or contribute to theological knowledge. As McGrath argues, “if about 40 percent of active scientists have a true religious belief, it is clear that the issue of the relationship between

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produced. Ruptures or changes of these paradigms can then cause changes in one area, while of course the propositional content of one area affects the contents of others.

15 Verbum externum; ex auditu. See Lindbeck, G. A., *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age*. Louisville/London, Westminster John Knox Press, 1984, p. 43.

16 Kvasz, L., ‘Vedecká racionalita a súčasné prístupy k transcencii’ [‘Scientific rationality and current approaches to transcendence’], In: Slavkovský, A., Vydrova, J., Vydra, A.) (eds.), *Boh a racionalita [God and rationality]*, Pusté Úľany, Schola Philosophica, 2010, p. 229.

science and religion is still present and significant.”<sup>17</sup>

However, this objection has two problems. First, it speaks of the relationship between scientists and their religious beliefs, which only indirectly concerns the relationship between science and theology. Second, statistics do not show a substantial and intrinsic link between the content of scientific knowledge and religious knowledge. Statistics also point to a relationship between science and golf because 41 percent of scientists occasionally play golf. If golf is not a sufficiently intellectual and cognitive activity, for example, the fact that 38 percent of scientists write or read detective stories could lead to the conclusion that the relationship between science and detective stories is significant. A serious researcher would not consider these contingent links as the basis of any serious relationship.

Therefore, neither the presence nor the absence of religious beliefs among scientists says anything about the relationship between theology and science. Even after this second objection has been raised and answered, it is appropriate to regard their relationship as one of independence.

### **The objection that science and theology have common themes and questions**

Research and studies that deal with the relationship between science and theology often raise as points of dialogue the issues of the beginning of the world, the universe, the origin of man, and so on. “Despite ... different functions, science and faith have a common field of their interest. These are for example the space formation, creation of life and person on the earth.”<sup>18</sup> To examine this objection, this paper will analyze whether the theme of the beginning of our universe is really a common theme for science and theology.

What is called the beginning or origin in Christian theology can

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17 McGrath, A. E., *Dialóg přírodních věd a teologie*. Praha, Vyšehrad, 2003, p. 21 (orig. *The Foundations of Dialogue in Science and Religion*, Wiley-Blackwell, 1998).

18 Volek, P. – Labuda, P., ‘Philosophical and Theological Fundamentals of the Dialogue between Science and Religious Belief’, In: *Itinerarium: rivista multidisciplinare dell’Istituto Teologico “San Tommaso” Messina*, vol. 13, no. 31, 2005, pp. 127-134.

certainly be called creation. The first five words of the Pentateuch are: “In the beginning God created...”<sup>19</sup> So, it seems that the very beginning of physis and nomos can indeed be subjects or questions for both science and theology, which interprets the Bible in this regard. However, the primary and crucial difference in asking the question of the origin of the universe to scientists and theologians is the horizon on which this question is asked and on which they seek the answer. A scientist asks questions about the beginning of reality as a matter of the history of the subject of his experience today. Thus, the explanation for the beginning is an explanation of how the history of the subject of the present experience has occurred linearly in time. The result of the scientific description of the beginning is the state of matter or precursor or pre-energy in the first descriptive moment of its existence. Whether science knows the history of the universe from 1.10-43 of the second or from 1.10-99 of the second or from the 2nd second is irrelevant to the theologian.

The theologian seeks a beginning on the horizon of origin and thus for the Author of the beginning, the Author who is the creator of the world and man. As important as the theme of creation is, its theological interpretation does not lie in the study of the origin of the universe as the beginning, but in the study of the Author as the beginning of every possible world and every human being. Some philosophers consider two types of causality in this context. So-called primary causality refers to the Author, the Creator, and secondary causality refers to how the history of the physical world unfolded from the first unit of time of its existence.<sup>20</sup> It is clear from this distinction that the questions of who and how seek answers to different aspects of the problem.

Some speak of an analogy between the laws of nature and God or about the order of the world, which evokes the Author of order.<sup>21</sup> With sim-

19 Bible, Book of Genesis I, 1.

20 Barbour, I. G., *When Science Meets Religion. Enemies, Strangers or Partners?* New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2000, p. 19.

21 In this book, Oxford’ Professor Alister McGrath explicitly argues in favor of using analogy in science (pp. 199-210), but he makes one inaccuracy. All analogies from the history of science are analogies between *the already discovered* scientific principle and *the hitherto inexplicable* subject of the study of science. It is never an analogy from the field of religion that explains the subject of the study of science. Therefore, McGrath must rightly be asked about the adequacy of the analogy of

ilar analogies and such free flow, science does not work in any other way unless it wants to provide an open door for God (and it is not the science that does it).

Theology and science therefore also ask the questions of the beginning of the world or man differently and work with a different type of experience. Therefore, they are not partners who speak about the same issues in different languages, but partners who necessarily speak about different questions. “Science is based on human observation and reason; theology is based on divine revelation.”<sup>22</sup> This statement does not set theology in opposition to scientific reason but distinguishes it and makes it independent of scientific reason.

Squeezing the relationship between theology and natural science into one question of creation (or origin) is reminiscent of an example from Greek mythology about Procrustes, which McGrath<sup>23</sup> mentions in another context. Procrustes had an unpleasant habit of cutting off his guests’ feet if they did not fit the iron bed that he offered them. And so, it seems that the idea that both theology and science have the same beginning is a reduction of either science or theology but most often of both.

### **Do science and theology know the same thing?**

This section’s title question can be reworded as: Do theology and science have the same subject matter? Do science and theology ask the same questions? Is the similarity between science and theology in the processes of research and knowledge acquisition necessary or contingent? Does the consideration of the relationship between the two entities necessarily follow from the nature of one or the other effort?

Historically, relationships between science and theology have been

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order in the world with God. McGrath admits to a certain loosening of the strict scientific method in his analysis of the relationship between science and religion, when he writes at the end of his book with a *poetic license* and an *analogy of beauty and joy* (see pp. 241-43).

22 Barbour, I. G., *When Science Meets Religion. Enemies, Strangers or Partners?* New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2000, p. 18.

23 McGrath, A. E., *Dialóg přírodních věd a teologie*. Praha, Vyšehrad, 2003, p. 52 (orig. *The Foundations of Dialogue in Science and religion*, Wiley-Blackwell, 1998).

built. The nature of theology, but also of science, does not contradict this relationship, but it is arbitrary and does not necessarily follow from the nature of science or theology. The reason for building these relationships lies in the confusion of the questions asked, which do not lead to any new relevant knowledge. A second reason is the interest of individuals in both methods of cognition. This combination of methods can bring an interesting perspective to knowledge and mutual tolerance, but by no means is there an immanent necessity for either discipline to turn to the other.

When discussing science and religion, it must be acknowledged that these are very interesting convergences. These intersections can even provide interesting stimuli for thinking about the meaning of the world and the meaning of man. An explanation of this intersection, however, must be sought either in personal interest in both areas or in extra-religious or extra-scientific questions. These questions are appropriate unless they are described as theological or scientific questions.

Barbour believes that such a separation of scientific and theological responses will prevent a coherent synthesis of science and theology.<sup>24</sup> He is correct, but not in that the position of independence of science and theology will make that synthesis impossible. It is not possible because science and theology employ different methods of cognition.

If one asks whether science and theology are related to what is called the meaning of the world or the meaning of man, the answer is yes. For “meaning questions,” both theology and science have meaningful contributions, as do many other human experiences and activities. However, the answers to questions about the meaning of the world and the meaning of man are not answers from science or theology. These answers are, of course, necessarily human, but they cannot simply be confused with answers that are scientific knowledge nor with answers that belong exclusively to theology.<sup>25</sup> No one would ask those questions anymore; they would simply reach for answers from science or theology.

Thus, the answer to questions about meaning are beliefs that are

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24 Barbour, I. G., *When Science Meets Religion. Enemies, Strangers or Partners?* New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2000, p. 52.

25 However, even though religious faith is close to these questions, it is not in itself a simple answer to an individual’s basic question about the meaning of the world and the meaning of himself.

extra-scientific but also extra-theological, beliefs about what has value and what in the world and in human life is meaningful. The basic answers about the meaning of human existence are not readily available in science or in theology. Suppose one understands theology as a kind of reflection of a set of revealed beliefs, as a reflection of a belief that has its norms outside of the human individual who believes. Are there any results of scientific knowledge that are necessary for today's theological research? Probably not; theology could be developed without (natural) science. Of course, there is no need to be so radical. Without a doubt, it is refreshing and inspiring to learn about current scientific developments. But, in principle, these two realms are independent.

Theology and science do not necessarily meet. There is no essential relationship between them. No correct question of science is, in the exact sense of the word, a question of theology, and vice versa, no religious belief or theological knowledge is the answer to scientific questions.

### Conclusion

If there is no substantial connection between the contents of scientific and theological knowledge, it is necessary as a working hypothesis to assert that their relationship is one of independence, indifference. Therefore, all those who claim that today's science is independent of religion are right; religion is not based on science, nor is science an extension of religion.<sup>26</sup> Confusion exists because many people see a relationship between the two, but they cannot explain why this relationship is necessary or why it necessarily follows from the study of either science or theology. Postulating the relationship between science and theology necessarily requires many more assumptions and uncertain premises than understanding their relationship as indifferent, seeing no relationship between them. Independence could be a "way to avoid conflicts between science and religion... They can be distinguished according to the questions they ask, the domains to which they refer, and the methods they employ."<sup>27</sup>

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26 Kvasz, L., 'Vedecká racionalita a súčasné prístupy k transcencii' ['Scientific rationality and current approaches to transcendence'], In: Slavkovský, A., Vydrova, J., Vydra, A.) (eds.), *Boh a racionalita [God and rationality]*, Pusté Úľany, Schola Philosophica, 2010, p. 229.

27 Barbour, I. G., *When Science Meets Religion. Enemies, Strangers or Partners?*

However, indifference does not create a conflict; on the contrary, it prevents it. “Conflict occurs when people ignore these differences [between science and theology]; when people from the position of religion formulate a scientific claim, or when scientists cross the line of their field...”<sup>28</sup> The justification of the independence of science and theology is not reductive, nor does it hinder the autonomy of either science or theology.

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28 Ibid., p. 2.

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