

The Origin of Life

Magnus Verbrugge¹

The problem of evolution has interested me since 1936. My botany prof. C. Stomp and the zoologist W. Ihle, adherents respectively to its sects of mutation and of Lamarkianism (that believed acquired characteristics are hereditary) taught evolution at the U. of Amsterdam. After an exam, Stomps once mused about the time when we would create life in a test tube (abiogenesis). In spite of consistently negative results of experiments to do this, and billions of \$\$ having been wasted around the world, the media still push it today. And strangely, many Christians are still swayed by it, also by its *theistic* version, since, “why could not an omnipotent God use the ‘mechanism’ of evolution to accomplish His purpose?”

Reading the book *Science in Faith* by our friend Arthur Jones reinforced my desire to find a logical way for demonstrating that theistic evolutionism is as rationally vulnerable as its materialist variety. Recently I had an animated discussion with a professional biochemist and a devout Christian, about general evolution, the special theory on the origin of life (abiogenesis) and its analysis in my book *Alive, an Enquiry into the Origin and Meaning of Life*. (Valecito CA: Ross House Books, 1984 and still available for under \$10!)

As a Christian, he adheres to “theistic evolution.” This theory claims that, after God created a physically qualified universe, He then set atoms and molecules, all physical entities, to work in a (random!) process of combining into the first DNA. Next, as the Creator, He must have directed the (random!) interaction of some of these inert molecules into forming a complex entity that began multiplying itself, also *through random changes* and yet under direction of the Lord and so evolve into the first living organisms.

Next, God *must have* noted that during these processes of propagation many random accidents occur in the duplication of their DNA, and these are usually

¹Email letter to <thinknet@redeemer.on.ca>, December 18, 2000. Verbrugge is a son-in-law to Herman Dooyeweerd.

deleterious. However, according to the theistic scenario, the Lord, as the all-powerful Creator, at times *must have* interfered and directed the molecules to stop interacting at random and at His bidding to produce “beneficial accidents.” And behold, a new species sometimes showed up! In this manner He led millions of new random combinations to result in new specimens of algae, plants, animals and man, for millions of years. It seems to escape some sincere Christians that a directed random process is self-contradictory i.e. an oxymoron.

In this fashion, theistic evolutionists believe to have offered a scientific solution to the problem of being scoffed at for believing in God. They believe that their theory saved His position as the Creator! Of course, this does not convince the orthodox evolutionist, since he finds this theistic scenario as objectionable as that of orthodox believers. Both require the *belief* in God! Nor does it sway an orthodox Christian into accepting it. The only honest position seems to be that of Dooyeweerd, who believed that no scientist can explain that which is beyond our ability to understand. It ranks in position with that of our belief in the Lord, the Creator of the universe.

The Origin of all Species

Every Christian scientist will admit that his belief in the Creator is a religious choice. And using the observation and rigorous logic that he ought to share with all serious scientists he can conclude that ***every evolutionist bases his theory also on a religious belief***, not on science.

All biologists and both doctrinaire and theistic evolutionists know that living beings make specific molecules of fat, protein, carbohydrates, vitamins etc., out of ingested nutrients, inert atoms and molecules, all in order to stay alive. They know that these nutrient molecules are not responsible for creating living beings. They also know that, among all these complex molecules, organisms make their DNA and use their “self-made” genes in their DNA for all their functions, including those required for making their sperm and eggs cells. Also the DNA inside a living sperm cell and egg is only an inert molecule. Serious scientists will not claim that

this DNA makes sperm or eggs that propagate, no more than that the molecules in our brain think; they know that **we** think and that **we** use the cells and their atoms and molecules in our brain for it. And so we must conclude that:

All honest scientists observe that only living organisms make inert matter called DNA. Both can also observe that the reverse is not true, that DNA makes no organisms. Hence when both brands of evolutionists, of both theistic and orthodox variety, maintain that DNA has made and still makes living organisms, they do not act like scientists. They suffer from a form of irrational arguing called reasoning backwards.

When we form a new concept, we give it a name. We use the word *epistemology* from the Greek *episteme* for science and *logos* for discourse (Webster). We talk of *bio-logy* from the Greek word *bios* for life, and *logos* for discourse. This **reasoning backwards** of evolutionists we may call **opisology** from the Greek words for backwards, *opiso*, and for reasoning or discourse, *logos*.

I have found that this approach can embarrass honest evolutionists. Some will admit that their position is indeed based on belief, not reasoning. They may, like another one of my friends, a professor of psychiatry did, begin to waver and say, "You may be right in your view of evolution as mythological, but aren't you trying to replace one myth, that of evolution, with another one, that of creation?" This may give you an opening and you may say, "Indeed I am, so let's talk about what you call myths but what we might better call our belief."

Most people have no idea that the theory of evolution is not a scientific but religious proposition, and that it should be taken down from its pedestal of undoubtedly being a marvel of Scientific Reason. At least an honest scientist might admit that this is a fair proposal and even begin to hesitate about his materialistic views. And since public schools around the world tend to give a monopoly to the teaching of the materialistic basis for all their scientific disciplines, it behooves us Christians to broadcast the truth about its tragic consequences.

I hope that some of you may find this of some merit in teaching. Since I may be wrong somewhere in all this, I offer this for your critique, be it from a philosophical, logical, emotional or stylistic angle. So, please let me hear from you.