

Why Human Evolution Can Never Become Part of the Deposit of Faith

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Abstract

In this essay several definitive reasons are given why an evolutionary creation of our first parents can never become part of the Deposit of Faith. This being so, it is imperative that the Catholic Church should without delay not only reject the possibility of such a creation but should also re-affirm those teachings of the Church that hold that our first parents were created as described in the *Book of Genesis*, Chapter 2.

It is indeed unfortunate for both the faith and the moral well-being of Western society as a whole that the theological and scientific research and discussion, permitted by Pope Pius XII in 1950, concerning the possibility of human evolution, was not brought to fruition within a few years after that permission was given.

This should have at least elicited the existence of the theological reasons, binding upon all Catholics, for the rejection of human evolution. In addition, the complex nature of the living cell discovered in 1953 emphatically pointed to intelligent design and so ruled out chance upon which evolution theories rely. Furthermore, in 1953-54 the “evidence” put forward to support the existence of the *Pitdown Man*, strongly declared to be an evolutionary predecessor of man, was found to be a forgery.

It seems, however, that there was never any organized research and discussion and so the decision of the Church has been held in abeyance ever since. This is most unfortunate because of the circumstances described hereunder.

In his book, *The Virginal Conception and the Bodily Resurrection of Jesus*, (the late) Father Raymond E. Brown, S.S., stated, at p. 4, that Pope Pius XII’s 1943 encyclical letter, *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, . . .

. . .instructed Catholic scholars to use the methods of scientific biblical criticism that had hitherto been forbidden them. It took a little over ten years for teachers to be trained in the new approaches and for ideas to filter into Catholic seminaries and colleges, so that the mid-fifties really marked the watershed. By that time the critical method had led to Catholic exegetes abandoning almost all the biblical positions taken by Rome at the beginning of the century.

Father Brown then went on to claim that this alleged instruction was ratified in writing by two non-member officials of the first *Pontifical Biblical Commission*. However, Msgr. John Steinmueller, a consulter to the Commission, showed in his book, *The Sword and the Spirit* (Stella Maris Books, Fort Worth TX, USA, p. 7) that their statements were unauthorized and were condemned by the voting cardinals of the *Commission*.

Thus what happened was an unauthorized revolt of the (modernist) scholars who by the mid-fifties had rejected the teachings of the first *Pontifical Biblical Commission* and had seized control of most of the teaching institutions of the Church. Such scholars not only rejected the historicity of the *Genesis* account of human creation, but on the contrary, they embraced the ideas of the German “higher”(Biblical) critics that had been condemned by both Pope Leo XIII and Pope Pius X. In addition, and most importantly, they lent their support to the secular proponents of human evolution by

endorsing the evolution hypothesis as genuine science. This can be verified by an examination of “The Jerome Biblical Commentary” edited by Father Brown and others.

All of this has been the great tragedy of the twentieth century because, without any powerful Catholic opposition, the secular rationalists, whose predecessors had seized control of scientific education earlier in that century, have been free to inflict upon our society the false claims that only science can provide us with a knowledge of our origins and since science is limited to natural causes, nature is all there is, was or will be.

As a consequence of this, in the second half of the twentieth century, this naturalism not only ousted recognition of supernatural causes in the public sector of Western society, but also became the catalyst whereby Christian morality came to be replaced in most Western countries by the “moral liberalism” of the philosophy of materialism.

Introduction

In this third millennium those of us now living in most Western countries no longer live in a society that pays heed to Christian moral principles. Instead a “moral liberalism” now prevails.¹ This is based upon the philosophy of materialism; namely, that only material things exist. Materialism has gained its predominance in our society through the acceptance of the notion of naturalism, which claims that the universe, the earth and life on it were naturally caused and that therefore nature is all there is, was or will be.²

Acceptance of naturalism has in turn come from the notion of positivism, which claims that only science, through observation and experiment, can give us the positive truth about the origin of the universe and all that is in it, including life on earth.

The alleged scientific explanation of the origin of all things is today given in most educational text books and journals and in encyclopedias and the media in general as three hypotheses: the Big Bang, Uniformitarian Geology and Organic Evolution, all of which are falsely claimed to be scientifically factual. However, there is another form of naturalism, which has been called “theistic naturalism”.³ This is not the contradiction in terms it appears to be, because it not only accepts the way things supposedly came about naturally, but also holds that this way is the way God, our Creator, ordained they should have come about. Theistic naturalism is better known as “theistic evolution”, a term which in the majority of cases embraces acceptance of the evolution world-view.

¹ In the July, 2001, issue of the prestigious monthly, *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, David R. Carlin, Professor of Philosophy and Sociology at the Community College, Rhode Island, USA contributed an article entitled, “Christianity’s Struggle for Survival”. In that article he pointed out that it was not a question whether Christian moral principles in Western Society would survive because they had already given way to a moral liberalism based upon a “personal liberty principle”. “That principle”, he wrote, “holds that people should be free to do what they like provided they don’t infringe upon the freedom of others to do what they like”. He estimated that it would take a century or two for Christianity to regain its former position.

² As to the acceptance of “naturalism” – see Phillip E. Johnson, in *Reason in the Balance. The Case Against Naturalism in Science, Law and Education*, (1995) InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove IL, USA.

³ Cf. *Ibid* at pp. 97-101. Here Phillip Johnson gives an example of “theistic naturalism”. There may be some theistic evolutionists who say that evolution happened in accordance with God’s will and not by chance, yet if they accept evolution as being a scientific process they are tied to natural causes that exclude supernatural intervention.

As noted above, Pope Pius XII in 1950 gave permission to those who were expert both in science and theology to research and discuss the question of whether the human body could have evolved from pre-existent and living matter.⁴ In the final analysis the purpose of that research and discussion was to ascertain whether an evolutionary creation of our first parents could ever become a doctrine of the faith. In terms of theology, therefore, this is a threshold issue.

From the point of view of the philosophy of science, it would seem that in making the above-mentioned concession the Pope acted upon the belief that this question might be one that fell within the scope of the “positive” sciences,⁵ but, of course, he did not exclude research and discussion of that belief or examination of the question of whether the “positive sciences”, so-called, were indeed part of genuine natural science. This last-mentioned question can also be seen to be a threshold issue because, if the hypothesis of human evolution is outside of the scope of genuine natural science, further research and discussion would be irrelevant.

Unfortunately, neither of these threshold issues has ever been the subject of any study within the institutional Church. Instead, for the most part, it is now assumed there are no theological or scientific objections to accepting human evolution as Catholic doctrine. There is also substantial acceptance of the belief that evolutionist text books contain scientific facts and arguments that must be taken into account in giving consideration to these questions. A consequence of all this is that theistic evolution is now generally accepted by the Roman Curia and taught by most teaching institutions of the Church in place of the Genesis doctrine.⁶

There are many within the Church who say it does not matter whether we believe in a literal *Genesis* or evolution; either method could be God’s way of creating the first man and woman. This, it is submitted, is a very shortsighted view, because if Catholics concede that there is nothing wrong with theistic evolution or theistic naturalism, they are conceding that, apart from opposing chance, there is nothing wrong with atheistic naturalism *per se*.

Thus those within the Church, who have done so, have in a sense unwittingly aided and abetted the establishment of atheistic naturalism as the prevailing philosophy in Western society. It is not hard to imagine that if in the twentieth century all within the Catholic Church had, on the contrary, vehemently rejected both atheistic and theistic naturalism, Christian morality in Western society would not have been so readily, if at all, replaced by the moral liberalism of the materialists.

In this essay it will be shown that there are a number of reasons (theological and scientific *cum* philosophical) why the hypothesis of human evolution can never become part of the Deposit of Faith, and therefore, in the Catholic Church, the *Humani Generis* [1950 encyclical] investigation should now be closed in favor of the traditional teaching that *Genesis* (Chapters 1-3) contains “**a narrative of**

⁴ *Enchiridion Biblicum* 616.

⁵ *Ibid* 615.

⁶ For example, David Beyers, executive director of the committee on science and human values of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in the USA, was reported by Laurie Goodstein in the *Dallas Morning News* of October 2, 1996, as having said, concerning Pope John Paul’s letter to the Pontifical Academy of Science, which had just been released: “**The Church went from saying you could either accept evolution or some other form of creationism, to saying, now we’ll accept evolution, which is the *de facto* situation anyway. Who questions evolution now in the Catholic Church? I can’t really think of anybody.**”

things that actually happened; a narrative which corresponds to objective reality and historic truth.”⁷

The First Threshold Issue

— whether there are theological reasons why human evolution cannot become part of the Deposit of Faith

It is submitted that in the first place human evolution cannot become the basis of any doctrinal teaching because it is “new doctrine” within the meaning of *Pastor Aeternus*, a document of the first Vatican Council (Vatican I, 1870). This document (*inter alia*) states:

. . . The Roman Pontiffs, moreover, according to the conditions of the time and affairs advised, sometimes by calling ecumenical councils, or by examining the opinion of the Church spread throughout the world, sometimes by particular synods, sometimes employing other helps which divine Providence has supplied, have defined those matters must be held which with God’s help they have recognized as (being) in agreement with Sacred Scripture and apostolic tradition. For the Holy Spirit was not promised to the successors of Peter, that by His revelation they might disclose new doctrine, but that by His help they might guard sacredly the revelation transmitted through the apostles and the deposit of faith, and might faithfully set it forth. . . . (emphasis added)

(The above is taken from the English translation by Roy Deferrari of *Denziger* 30th edition, 1957, B. Herder Book Co. at paragraph 1836, the full text of which explains that the “affairs advised” are matters that have arisen which bishops have referred to Rome for decision.)

The “new doctrine” referred to is obviously doctrine that is completely outside of divine revelation: that is, it cannot be said to have been founded upon the divine revelation contained in Sacred Scripture and/or the Apostolic Tradition, or in a logical development of doctrine contained in those sources, which has become part of the Deposit of Faith. Examples of the latter are Our Lady’s perpetual virginity, Her immaculate conception and Her assumption, original sin and purgatory.

Lumen Gentium, a document of the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II, 1965), states (with a footnoted reference to *Pastor Aeternus*) that the Roman Pontiff and the bishops “do not admit any new public revelation as pertaining to the divine deposit of faith.”⁸ What else is human evolution in terms of the Catholic religion but a new public doctrine that can never become part of the deposit of faith?

Additional Theological Reasons

Moreover, as shown below, the literal and historical meaning of the passages in *Genesis*, Chapter 2, concerning the special creation of our first parents, are upheld (a) in Sacred Scripture itself, (b) in the opinions commonly expressed by the Holy Fathers, and (c) in the Magisterium teachings of Popes Pius IX, Leo XIII and Pius X. It is therefore further submitted that for each and every one of these reasons human evolution must be rejected by all Catholics. These will now be elaborated.

⁷ As reaffirmed in 1909 by the first *Pontifical Biblical Commission*, with the approval of Pope Pius X. (*Enchiridion Biblicum* 325.)

⁸ See *Lumen Gentium* 25, p. 381, Vatican Council II, English translation by Austin Flannery, O.P.

(a) Sacred Scripture. *Genesis* 2:7 states that God made man from “the dust of the ground” (RSV Catholic Edition). The molecules of the dust of the ground, being non-living matter, are said to be symmetrical and two directional, whereas the molecules of living matter are said to be asymmetrical and right-handed only. In *Genesis* 3:19 God told Adam “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” (same version). It should be noted that when once living human remains decay to dust, that that dust reverts to the molecular structure and direction of non-living matter.

Genesis 2:21 tells us that God took a rib from Adam’s side and “closed up its place with flesh” (RSV Catholic Edition). That flesh would have been the periosteum, the membrane in which bones are enclosed. It is a well-known medical fact that rib bone is frequently removed as a repair substance in the cases of treatment of accident victims and that after the membrane is “closed up” the rib bone grows again. (The preceding statements reflect the historical accuracy of Sacred Scripture.)

The fact that Adam was created from “dust taken out of the ground” is re-affirmed not only in *Genesis* 3:19, but also in *Genesis* 3:23, *Ecclesiastes* 12:7, *Wisdom* 7:1, *Ecclesiasticus* 17:1 and 33:10 and *1 Corinthians* 15:47.

(b) The Common Opinion of the Holy Fathers. In his book, *The Theory of Evolution Judged by Faith and Reason*,⁹ Ernesto Cardinal Ruffini, demonstrates that the Greek, Syrian and Latin Fathers, whom he names and quotes, all held the opinion that the description of the creation of our first parents in *Genesis* 2 is literally true.

(c) The Magisterium Teachings of Pius IX, Leo XIII and Pius X

Pius IX. The year after the publication of Darwin’s evolution thesis, the Provincial Council of Cologne issued the following canon, which was approved by Pope Pius IX:

Our first parents were immediately created by God (Gen. 2.7). Therefore we declare as quite contrary to Holy Scripture and the Faith the opinion of those who dare to assert that man, in respect of the body, is derived by spontaneous transformation from an imperfect nature, which improved continually until it reached the present human state.¹⁰

Pius IX also approved the following teaching of the first Vatican Council :

This sole true God by His goodness and omnipotent power, not to increase His own beatitude, and not to add to, but to manifest His perfection by the blessings which He bestows upon creatures with most free volition, immediately from the beginning of time fashioned each creature out of nothing, spiritual and corporeal, namely the angelic and the mundane; and then the human creation, common as it were, composed of both spirit and body.¹¹ (emphases added)

The emphasized parts of the above quotation were taken by Vatican I from the 1215 teaching of Lateran IV, a Council of the Church. Canons were based upon the Vatican I teaching against materialism, pantheists and materialists. It must therefore be a dogmatic teaching. In order to have achieved that status, it must have been derived from divine revelation either as something explicitly revealed or as a development of what has been revealed. In this instance the obvious source of

⁹ (1959) English translation by John F. O’Hanlon, P.P., S.T.L., published by Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., New York and by B. Herder, London, pp. 124 *et seq.*

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 113.

¹¹ *Denziger*, para. 1783, English translation of 30th edition by Roy J. Deferrari,(1957). B. Herder Book Co., London.

revelation concerning the creation of mundane creatures is *Genesis* Chapter 1, which clearly reveals that the various kinds of creatures known to man were created “immediately” and “from the beginning of time”. Many of the Holy Fathers applied the latter expression to the whole of the creation period.

This part of the Vatican 1 teaching therefore cannot be reconciled with any theory of biological evolution of mundane creatures, which asserts that such life was not created immediately from the beginning of time but arose some millions or billions of years after that beginning and then only as amoeba (a uni-celled organism), which then took millions of years to evolve into the kinds of living creatures specified in *Genesis* 1. Nor can it be said that God used an evolutionary system to create mundane creatures out of nothing.

Arguably also, the last part of this teaching supports the doctrine of the immediate creation of the first man and woman at the beginning of time, since it follows the sequence of creation in *Genesis*, Chapter 1. It is also consistent with Christ’s own words where He used the language of *Genesis* 1.27 to teach us that “from the beginning” (St. Matthew’s gospel), or “from the beginning of creation” (St. Mark’s gospel), God “made man, male and female He created them.”

Leo XIII. On 10 February 1880, twenty-one years after the publication of Darwin’s first book, Pope Leo XIII, issued an encyclical letter on marriage entitled, *Arcanum Divinae Sapientiae*,¹² in which the Pope said:

We record what is known, and cannot be doubted in any way, that God, on the sixth day of creation, having made man from the slime of the earth, and having breathed into his face the breath of life, gave him a companion, whom He miraculously took from the side of Adam, when he was locked in sleep. God thus, in His most far reaching foresight, decreed that this husband and wife should be the natural beginning of the human race, from whom it might be propagated and preserved by an unending fruitfulness through all futurity of time.¹³

Pius X. In 1909 Pope Pius X approved decisions of the first *Pontifical Biblical Commission* concerning the historical character of the first three chapters of *Genesis*. The answer to question No.3 can be seen to conform precisely to the teachings of Pius IX and Leo XIII. Not surprisingly, because it is said by the *Commission* to convey the fundamental or foundational teachings of the Christian religion, and it also agrees with the unanimous opinion of the Holy Fathers. Irrespective of the status Pius X gave to the teachings of the *PBC* in general in his *Motu Proprio* of 18 November 1907, it would seem that this particular teaching, by virtue of what is stated above, already had the protection of the Holy Spirit.

Stated in a positive form, the decree teaches that Catholics may not bring into question the literal and historical meaning of *Genesis* 1-3, where those chapters touch upon the fundamental or foundational teachings of the Christian religion, including (*inter alia*):

- (a) the creation of all things wrought by God at the beginning of time;
- (b) the special creation of man;

¹² Father Brian W. Harrison, O.S., M.A., S.T.D., who drew attention to this teaching of Leo XIII, said that it affirms (*inter alia*) the historical character of Chapters 1 to 3 of *Genesis* and the creation of Adam on the sixth day of creation, including the formation of Adam’s body from the dust of the earth. Father’s articles on this subject appeared in “Living Tradition” numbers 73 and 74 of January-March, 1998. They can be downloaded from the *Forum*’s web site, www.rtforum.com

¹³ English translation from the teachings of Leo XIII, pp. 58 *et seq.*

- (c) the formation of the first woman from man;
- (d) the unity or oneness of the human race;
- (e) the original happiness of our first parents in the state of justice, integrity and immortality.

Some, while admitting that human evolution cannot become part of the Deposit of Faith, might argue that nevertheless it is part of the valid conclusions of a genuine scientific theory, which, being valid, cannot be held to be against faith. However, as shown above, whatever may be a Catholic's personal beliefs, faith requires acceptance of the *Genesis* account of human creation as being literally and historically true. Since the majority of Catholic hierarchy today, who appear to know very little about the case against evolution, accept it as scientific fact, it becomes necessary (1) to deal with the second threshold issue and show why evolution is not a genuine scientific theory; and (2) to show why, in any event, it is contrary to the evidence of nature.

The Second Threshold Issue

— whether the scope of genuine natural science covers historical hypotheses

This issue is concerned with the true scope of natural science. Looked at from a traditional theological point of view it can be seen that God's creation of material things, both animate and inanimate, as described in *Genesis*, Chapter 1, was a once and for all creation. However, together with those material things, He also created laws of nature that would ensure the continuity of His creation. He not only provided living things with the ability to nourish themselves in order to ensure their growth but He also endowed them with a genetic system that would enable them to re-produce offspring or other forms of successive life.

It is submitted that God's creation insofar as it involved bringing into existence out of nothing the first animate and inanimate things, involved unrepeatable acts and so lies beyond the investigative powers of natural science. On the other hand, the operation of natural laws that ensure the continuity of both organic and inorganic created systems are repeatable and can therefore become the subject of testable scientific theories.

Secular science actually agrees with the necessity of repeatable observations for the application of the scientific method, of which the penultimate step is the experimental testing of a theory.¹⁴ Quite inconsistently, however, the propagandists for atheistic naturalism claim that only science through the application of the scientific method can discover the past history of the universe, the earth and life on earth, even though their hypotheses aimed at doing so are based upon observations that are unrepeatable. This situation can be seen to have arisen because the *Genesis* doctrine of creation was rejected by "enlightenment" philosophy and was later replaced by a fallacious "positivism".

The Rise of Positivism

The idea that discovery of our origins lies solely in the domain of science came from "enlightenment" philosophy; (i.e., if we extend that term to cover the rationalist philosophy that followed on from the

¹⁴ See for example, the steps of the scientific method as shown in *Biology: The Dynamics of Life* (1991) authors Bigs *et al*, Merrill Publishing Co. Columbus OH, USA.

philosophy of Rene Descartes (1596-1650). Such a proposition was first proposed by Englishman, John Locke (1632-1704), who advocated the philosophy of “empiricism”. This philosophy claimed that all knowledge came from sense perception and the paradigm of such knowledge was science. Locke was a Unitarian.

Locke’s ideas influenced the Scottish historian and philosopher, David Hume (1711-1776), who, as an atheist, opposed both Christian revelation and morality. He embraced the notion of (what was later to be called) “positivism”. Similarly, the Pre-French Revolution “Encyclopedists”, who followed the ideas of Locke and Hume, claimed that only science could reveal the history of our origins. The “Encyclopedists” were mainly atheists, an exception being Voltaire (1692-1788), who was a deist.

In Germany the “Idealist” philosophers, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) and Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814), believed in a God of morality but rejected the God of Creation revealed in *Genesis*, in favor of an alleged scientific explanation of our origins. Fichte went as far as claiming that “the concept of creation is the absolutely fundamental error of false metaphysics.”¹⁵ He also wrote that this “error” was the first criterion of all (religious) falsehood and that it was the original principle of both Judaism and paganism; thus placing them in the same mould.¹⁶

Concerning the *Old Testament*, G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831), who came after Fichte, preferred the speculative approach of the ancient Greek philosophers to Christian dogmatism.¹⁷ With regard to the *New Testament*, he dismissed Christ’s miracles as being philosophically impossible.¹⁸ Furthermore, he proposed a system of dialectics that was used by the socialist, Karl Marx, and the Tubingen theology professor, F.C. Bauer, to propagate error.

Although German philosophy as a whole wrought great damage to the faith, the Idealists, who pretended to retain some vestige of Christianity, did the most damage because under their influence the nineteenth century theology schools in German universities introduced “higher” Biblical criticism, which, *inter alia*, denied the divinity of Christ and the authenticity of His miracles. And furthermore, apart from producing an hypothesis that rejected the Mosaic authorship of *Genesis*, it also questioned the historical authenticity of the *New Testament*, including the account of the bodily resurrection of Jesus.

Positivism Defined

False philosophy thus paved the way for the widespread acceptance of the false notion of “positivism”, which, although inherent in that philosophy, was not explicated in the form of words until 1830, when

¹⁵ In German “*der absolute grundirtum aller-falschen metaphysik*” cited by Claude Tresmontant in his book, *The Hebrew Christ*. English edition by The Franciscan Herald Press, Illinois, USA. (1989) , p. 218.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 218. Claude Tresmontant, a teacher of philosophy at the Sorbonne in Paris and winner of the 1973 Maximilian Kolbe prize for his overall work from 1953 onwards, wrote in his book that German philosophy from Kant to Nietzsche and Heidegger was fundamentally and not just accidentally anti-Christian. This was true of German philosophy across the board, whether idealist or simply atheistic. He expressed the view that the Judeo-Christian idea of creation out of nothing was the principal object of detestation by German philosophers and that if ever that idea were to disappear, the Judeo-Christian idea of the one true God would also disappear.

¹⁷ G.W.F. Hegel, “The Positivity of the Christian Religion” in *On Christianity*, English translation by T.M. Knox, University of Chicago publication.

¹⁸ G.W.F. Hegel, “The Spirit of Christianity and its Fate” in *On Christianity*, ref. 17.

French philosopher, Auguste Comte, published the first edition of his book, *Cours de Philosophie Positive* (“Lessons from Positive Philosophy”).

Comte is said to have been a social scientist who at an earlier stage of his life was a secretary to Comte de Saint Simon (1760-1825), one of the founders of Socialism, who himself advocated positivism.

In his book Comte claimed that there were three stages of man’s thought: the first was the religious or theological stage where man invented gods and devils to explain his origins; the second was the metaphysical stage where man (unsuccessfully) tried to discover his origins by philosophical abstractions; while the third and final stage, according to Comte, was the scientific stage where men by scientific observation and experimentation will reach the positive truth. This was never anything but a fallacy because (a) the past cannot be observed and (b) since the events of past history are unrepeatable, any hypothesis that postulates such history as science can never be experimentally tested.

Thus Comte used a fallacy to dismiss the *Genesis* history of creation as a human invention and the metaphysics of Aristotle and St. Thomas as having no validity.

Comte endeavored to found a “positive” religion, which he called “the religion of humanity”, with himself as high priest. Although some Positivist Societies, which worshipped humanity instead of God, were formed, the movement as a religion was ultimately a failure. His “positive” philosophy on the other hand enjoyed success among atheist philosophers and scientists. For example, in Britain, Jeremy Bentham, John Mill and John Stuart Mill accepted it, although they rejected Comte’s excesses.

In the twentieth century the “Logical Positivists”, a group of philosophers and scientists in Austria known as “the Vienna Circle”, attempted to restate “positivism” in a more intellectual way. Pursuant to this they introduced the “principle” of “verifiability” and claimed that any non-tautological proposition, which in principle is unverifiable by observation, is devoid of meaning. The targets of Logical Positivism’s attack were theology and metaphysics. The characteristic claims of those disciplines concerning the nature of the world and reality (so the positivists claimed) were unverifiable and therefore had no meaning.

However, the status of the principle itself was suspect. Was it, itself, either a tautology or something that could not be verified empirically? And what about purported scientifically determined historical propositions or scientific generalizations, neither of which can be conclusively verified by observation?¹⁹

The type of alleged scientific history the positivists saw as replacing the theological one was, after all, only untestable and therefore unverifiable pseudoscience. Renowned philosopher of science, Karl Popper (1902-1994), a contemporary of the members of the circle, some of which he knew personally, believes he killed off Logical Positivism with a published work in which he distinguished pseudoscientific theories from testable scientific ones.²⁰

Despite the erroneous nature of “positivism”, the Western World today still accepts the false philosophy that only science can tell us the truth about the origin of the universe, including the earth and life on it. In fact it would be true to say that most of the Western World is saturated with this positivistic misconception.

¹⁹ Cf. *A Dictionary of Philosophy*, (1984 edition) Pan Books, London, pp. 214-215.

²⁰ K.R. Popper, *Unended Quest*, (1982) Open Court, La Salle & London, pp. 87-90.

The Distinction Between Science and Pseudoscience

The fact that untestable hypotheses are not part of genuine natural science has been a traditional concept. Francis Bacon (1561-1677), in advocating the use of the scientific method, stressed the importance of experimental testing of a theory, which is the penultimate step taken in the application of that method. However, such a step cannot be taken if an hypothesis is based upon unrepeatable observations. Isaac Newton also is said to have engaged in ceaseless polemics against what he called “hypotheses”, by which he understood any or all affirmations not derived from sensible phenomena and supported by carefully conducted experiments.²¹

Philosopher of science, Karl Popper (*supra*), recognized the non-scientific nature of untestable hypotheses (which, *ipso facto*, are also unfalsifiable). He therefore had to admit that Darwinism was not a scientific theory. For example, in his autobiography, *Unended Quest*,²² he stated, **“I have come to the conclusion that Darwinism is not a testable scientific theory but (is) a metaphysical research programme”**.

In recent years other non-creationists have also affirmed this distinction between genuine natural science and the pseudoscientific hypothesis of Darwinism. Two biology professors, Paul Ehrlich (Stanford University) and L. Charles Birch (Sydney University) stated that evolution was **“outside of empirical science but not necessarily false” and that “no-one could think of ways to test it.”**²³

Dr. Colin Patterson, who, before his death in 1994, was a leading paleontologist at the British Museum of Natural History, stated that in asking ourselves whether evolution is a scientific theory or pseudoscience, it should be noted that it is purported to be a single process of species splitting and progress. This part of the theory, he said, was about unique historical events, like the history of England, and unique events are not part of science because they are unrepeatable and so not subject to test.²⁴

Neither Popper nor any of the other authorities mentioned above could be accused by evolutionists as having any bias in favor of supernatural creation. But perhaps even more to the point, there is an admission by one of the world’s leading proponents of organic evolution that the hypothesis is untestable. S.J. Gould (deceased) admitted in 1986 that evolution relies heavily upon inference and not on “steel balls rolling down inclined planes in a laboratory”.²⁵ Nevertheless, he criticized creation scientists who claimed that evolution was not part of empirical science.

In 1992, when Gould was teaching biology, geology and the history of science at Harvard University in the USA, he wrote a hypercritical (and most unfair) review²⁶ of Professor Phillip E. Johnson’s book, *Darwin on Trial*.²⁷ In that review Gould claimed that Johnson held “a narrow and blinkered view of science” because Johnson had claimed that Darwin had “started his theory on the wrong road” by never proposing an experimental test for it.

²¹ See Wolfgang Smith (physicist and philosopher) in *Cosmos and Transcendence*, (1984) Sherwin, Sugden & Co., Illinois, USA, p. 16. Smith in support of this conclusion cites in his footnotes the relevant passage from Newton’s *Principia*.

²² Karl Popper, *Op. Cit.*, p. 168.

²³ See P. Ehrlich and L.C. Birch in “Evolutionary History & Population Biology”, *Nature*, Vol. 114, 12 April, 1967, p. 152.

²⁴ Colin Patterson, British Museum of Natural History, (1978) pp. 145-146.

²⁵ Reported by Christopher Joyce in *Genesis Goes on Trial* (republished in Weekend Australian, 27-28 December 1986)

²⁶ S.J. Gould, “Impeaching a Self Appointed Judge”, *Scientific American*, July, 1992, p. 194.

²⁷ Phillip E. Johnson, *Darwin on Trial*, (1991) InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove IL, USA.

Gould, however, admitted that “...Darwin’s method is not generally experimental, for singular and complex events are not so explained by any historical science”.

In trying to support his claim that evolution was nevertheless science and not metaphysics (in this context, pseudo-science), Gould argued that Darwin’s methodology brought his theory within the ambit of natural science. He claimed that Darwin “used Whewell’s ‘consilience of induction’ or bringing widely disparate information under an uniquely consistent explanation.”²⁸

It has been shown above that any hypothesis proposing human evolution (being untestable) can never be part of genuine natural science. It follows from this that the type of evidence Gould sees as providing justifiable arguments favoring organic evolution is no more than circumstantial in character and as such is interpreted in accordance with his materialistic philosophy. It is directly opposed to the natural theology of St. Paul in *Romans* 1:19-20. Thus the issue is not one between science and religion, as the evolutionists would have it, but one between false philosophy and divine truth supported by sound philosophy (i.e., natural theology).

Organic Evolution Refuted

What, in reality, Darwin actually did, in gathering information for the purpose of proposing his evolution hypothesis, was to search for circumstantial evidence from which he attempted to draw inferences in favor of it. No small part of the “evidence” (such as the “horse series” and “vestigial organs”) can now be shown to have been misconceptions, while his prediction – that transitional forms would be found when the fossil record was more fully explored – has been completely refuted. Moreover, what was once regarded as the strongest evidence for the alleged descent of all organisms from a common ancestor, namely, drawings published by German biologist, Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919), have now been shown to have been forgeries.

Haeckel’s drawings of a number of different organisms showed that their embryos in the early days of their existence looked alike but that their appearances changed and became dissimilar after a period of development. However, Haeckel’s drawings of the early stage embryos were fraudulent. Actual photographs of relevant embryos at the early stage of their existence show them to be quite dissimilar.²⁹

If the alleged similarity of early stage embryos was a strong argument in favor of the existence of a common ancestor, then their actual dissimilarity must be a strong argument against the existence of such an ancestor.

In his book, *Evolution. A Theory in Crisis*,³⁰ molecular biologist, Dr. Michael Denton – an agnostic – after a critical examination of all Darwin’s arguments, stated:

Neither the two fundamental axioms of Darwin’s macro-evolutionary theory – the concept of the continuity of nature, that is the idea of a functional continuum of all life forms linking all species together and ultimately leading back to the primeval cell, and the belief that all adaptive design

²⁸ S.J. Gould, *Op.Cit.*, p. 194

²⁹ The photographs taken by Dr. D.M. Richardson and others are reproduced, with permission, in *TJ, A Journal of Creation*, published by *Answers in Genesis*, P.O. Box 6302, Acacia Ridge, D.C., 4110, Queensland, Australia. Dr. Richardson, a lecturer in Medicine, is not known to be a creationist but discovered the fraud through research. His findings are reported in *Anatomy and Embryology*, 196(2), 1997, pp. 91-106.

³⁰ Michael Denton Ph.D., *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* (1983) Burnett Books, London. Also published by Adler and Adler, Maryland, USA.

of life resulted from a blind process – have been validated by one single empirical discovery or scientific advance since 1859.

He added:

Despite a century of intensive effort on the part of evolutionary biologists, the major objections raised by Darwin's critics such as Agazzis, Pictet, Bronn and Richard Owen have not been met. The mind must fill the large blanks that Darwin acknowledged in his letter to Asa Gray.³¹

Denton's book contains a mine of information in which he not only refutes Darwinism but also rebuts the theory of "Punctuated Equilibrium" proposed by S.J. Gould *et al* to explain the absence of transitional forms in the fossil record.³² Denton observes (p.194) that with this admission of their absence it is unlikely that in the future evolutionists will return to the old comfortable notion that the fossils provide evidence of gradual evolutionary changes. However, there are still many die-hard Darwinists who continue to falsely claim that this notion is verified science.

Dr. David Raup, a geologist and paleontologist, has held the position of Professor of Geology at the University of Chicago, and at the time of writing a letter to the journal, *Science*, in 1981, was the Curator of the Chicago Field Museum of Natural History, which has one of the largest collection of fossils in the world. Law professor Phillip E. Johnson draws attention to Raup's letter in his book, *Darwin on Trial*.³³ In brief, Raup states that people outside of geology and paleontology have unfortunately gotten the idea that the fossil record is far more Darwinian than it is. He puts this down to oversimplification in low level text books and to some plain wishful thinking. He said that Darwin and his advocates expected to find predictable progressions, but in general, these have not been found – yet optimism dies hard and some pure fantasy has crept into text books.

Raup is an evolutionist but no doubt he favors "Punctuated Equilibrium" over Darwin's gradualism. Nevertheless, what he says goes to confirm Denton's statements (supra) about the mistaken evolutionist notion that there is a continuum of life-forms linking all species and leading back to the origin of life, and about the blanks in the fossil records that still exist. In his concluding summary Denton states:

One might have expected a theory of such cardinal importance, a theory that literally changed the world, would have been something more than metaphysics, something more than a myth. Ultimately the Darwinian theory of evolution is no more no less than the great cosmogenic myth of the twentieth century.³⁴

The complexity of the living cell with its many minute parts and multitude of functions, all packed into a space no more that one thousand of an inch wide within the cell membrane, is now well known. According to some estimates, the instructions issuing from its DNA alone, if written out, would fill a thousand books of six hundred pages each.³⁵

Moreover, mathematical odds experts say if an event has only one chance in 10^{50} (one chance in one followed by 50 zeros) of happening, it could never happen, whereas English astronomer, Fred Hoyle, calculated the odds against the enzymes in the cell coming about by random changes to be one chance

³¹ *Ibid*, p.345.

³² *Ibid*, pp. 193-194.

³³ Phillip E. Johnson, "Darwin on Trial" *Op.Cit.*, p. 170.

³⁴ Denton, *Op. Cit.*, p. 358.

³⁵ As reported in the *National Geographic Magazine*.

in 10^{40000} .³⁶ H. Morowitz, a Yale bio-chemist, examined the chances of the relatively simple one-celled *E. Coli* bacterium coming about by random changes. When multiplied out these come to one chance in one followed by 100 billion zeros.

Hoyle, who found the odds against evolution through random changes totally unacceptable, adopted the suggestion made by Francis Crick, the famous Nobel Laureate researcher of the living cell, that life might have come from outer space – the idea of panspermia. Hence the name of his book authored with C. Wickramasinghe, *Evolution from Space*. Concerning this, Denton commented in his book (p.271):

Nothing illustrates more clearly how intractable a problem the origin of life has become than the fact that world authorities can seriously toy with the idea of panspermia.

Another intractable problem evolution has with the cell is that certain proteins depend upon DNA for their existence but at the same time the function of DNA has a similar dependence upon those proteins. The only logical conclusion to be drawn from this otherwise vicious circle³⁷ is that they must have been created by God at the same time.

A most important study concerning such a situation was made by Michael J. Behe, Associate Professor of Biochemistry at Lehigh University in the USA. The systems in the living cell, he says are irreducibly complex and if one leaves out any of their parts they won't work. At the conclusion of his book, *Darwin's Black Box. The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution* (1996, The Free Press, A Division of Simon and Schuster Inc., New York, USA), Professor Behe points out:

The simplicity that was once expected to be the foundation of life has proven to be a phantom. Instead systems of horrendous, irreducible complexity inhabit the cell. The resulting realization that life was designed by an intelligence is a shock to us in the twentieth century who have gotten used to thinking of life as the result of simple natural laws.

The impossible odds against the living cell coming about by chance through an evolutionary process are only an initial hurdle that the hypothesis has to jump. There are many more mathematical impossibilities on the way to evolution's supposed summit, the evolution of man. The human person's body consists of 75,000,000,000,000 cells and has numerous tissues, organs and systems. If one looks at only one organ, the human brain, one can see that the chances against it being an end of the line evolutionary product of a single cell are incalculable.

The mature brain possesses 100 billion nerve cells called neurons, as well as other types of cells, but it only makes up 2 per cent of the body's weight. It is said that during every second 100 million bits of information pour into the brain from the various senses. The brain handles this avalanche with ease in two ways. First, there is a network of nerves in the brain called reticular formation. It acts as a control centre monitoring the millions of messages coming into the brain, sifting out the trivial and directing

³⁶ See Denton *Op. Cit.*, p. 323.

³⁷ In 1974 the famous philosopher of science, K.R. Popper (*supra*) referred to this problem in the following terms: “. . .the machinery by which the cell (at least the non-primitive one, which is the only cell we know) translates the code consists of at least fifty macromolecular components which are themselves coded in the DNA. Thus the code cannot be translated except by using certain products of its translation. This constitutes a baffling circle; a really vicious circle, it seems, for any attempt to form a model or theory of the genesis of the gene.” (See *Studies in the Philosophy of Biology* (1974) F. Ayala and T. Dobzhansky, editors, University of California Press, Berkeley CA, USA. p. 270.)

the essential for the attention of the cerebral cortex. It is said that this little network of nerves allows only a few hundred at most to enter the conscious mind. Second, it is said that every two seconds, by means of waves that sweep it, the brains scans itself to ensure that it concentrates only on essentials.

Finally, there is the fact that human persons are rational. How could rationality be passed on from an irrational organism by means of natural selection, which in any case is a very weak mechanism to put forward, as evolutionists put it forward, to account for the supposed astounding changes (from one type to a more complex type) that were needed to have occurred for evolution to be at all feasible? Nor is there any information in the fossil record of transitional organisms, which should have been there by the millions if types of organisms have evolved from different less complex types.

Anyone, therefore, who looks at the facts of life should be able to see that the evolution theory is truly dead.

Conclusion

As shown above, Divine Revelation, theology, science and philosophy all point to the fact that our first parents, and in fact all forms of life on earth, were specially created in their mature form by God as set out in *Genesis*, Chapter 1; and that the evolution theory is merely rationalist philosophy given to us in the form of just-so stories. The following two opinions, given by persons who are regarded as being expert in their own fields, but have the opposing views of the purpose of life, express what has been demonstrated above.

Dietrich von Hildebrand is said to be one of the greatest Catholic philosophers of the twentieth century. In “Teilhard de Chardin: A False Prophet” (an appendix to his book, *Trojan Horse in the City of God*,³⁸ he expressed the traditional Catholic viewpoint when he wrote:

For one thing, every careful thinker knows that a reconciliation of science and the Christian faith has never been needed, because true science (in contradistinction to false philosophies disguised in scientific garments) can never be incompatible with the Christian faith.

The evidence for intelligent design destroys the philosophical position taken by secular evolutionists. Their position is honestly described by a leading evolutionist, the geneticist, (Professor) Richard Lewontin, as follows:

We take the side of science in spite of the absurdity of some of its constructs, in spite of its failure to fulfill many of its extravagant promises of health and life, in spite of the tolerance of the scientific community for unsubstantiated just-so stories, because we have a commitment to materialism. It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomena world; on the contrary, we are forced by our *a priori* adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is an absolute, for we cannot allow a divine foot in the door.³⁹

³⁸ Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Trojan Horse in the City of God* (1967) Franciscan Herald Press, Chicago IL, p. 228.

³⁹ Richard Lewontin, *Billions and Billions of Demons*, New York Review, January, 1997, p. 31.

Addendum

Rev. Father Brian Harrison, in an in-depth theological treatise, “Did Woman Evolve from Beasts?” (*inter alia*) shows that:

(a) as early as 3 February 557, in an epistle to King Childebert I and later in an epistle, *Vas Electionis*, addressed to the whole Church, Pope Pelagius I taught that Adam and Eve “were not born of other parents, but were created: one from the earth and the other from the side of man” (see p. 8); and

(b) in 1312, the Council of Vienne not only affirmed the doctrine of the special creation of Eve from Adam’s side but also taught that it was a profound and beautiful foreshadowing of the mystical foundation of the Church, the immaculate Spouse of the Church, whereby it prefigured the water and blood, symbols of the principle sacraments that flowed from the side of Christ at Calvary. See pp. 8-9. (Copies of this article, sections 1 and 2, can be accessed on the web site of the *Roman Theological Forum*, www.rtforum.org, “Living Tradition” Numbers 97 and 98, or on <http://users2.ev1.net/~origins>)

These traditional papal teachings based upon Divine Revelation, as they are, together with similar teachings of Pius IX, Leo XIII and Pius X (*supra*), surely affirm, without any shadow of doubt, that the creation of our first parents as described in *Genesis*, Chapter 2, is literally and historically true and therefore forms part of the Deposit of Faith. It follows then that this doctrine of creation can never be replaced by the “new doctrine” of an evolutionary creation.

Revised & re-edited April 2004

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