

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the
Hare Krishna Movement



FOUNDER

(under the direction of His Divine Grace
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Prabhupāda) His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

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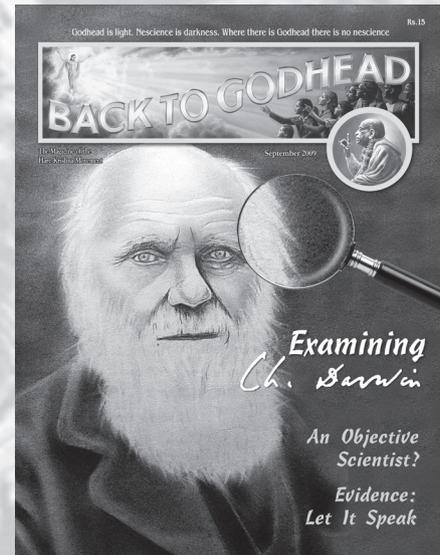
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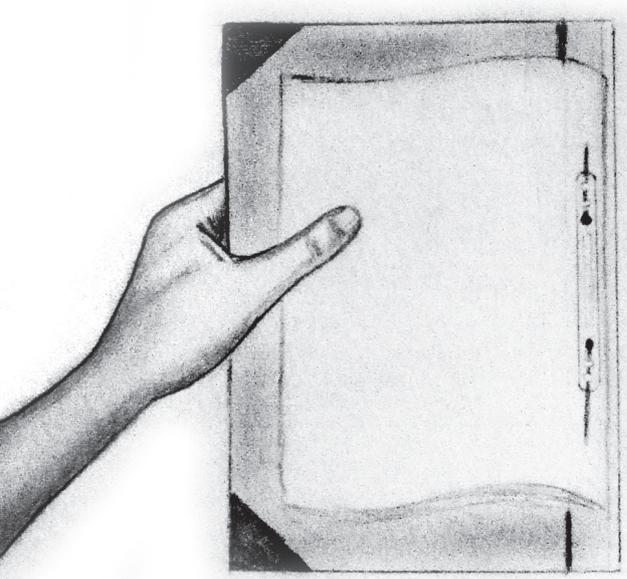
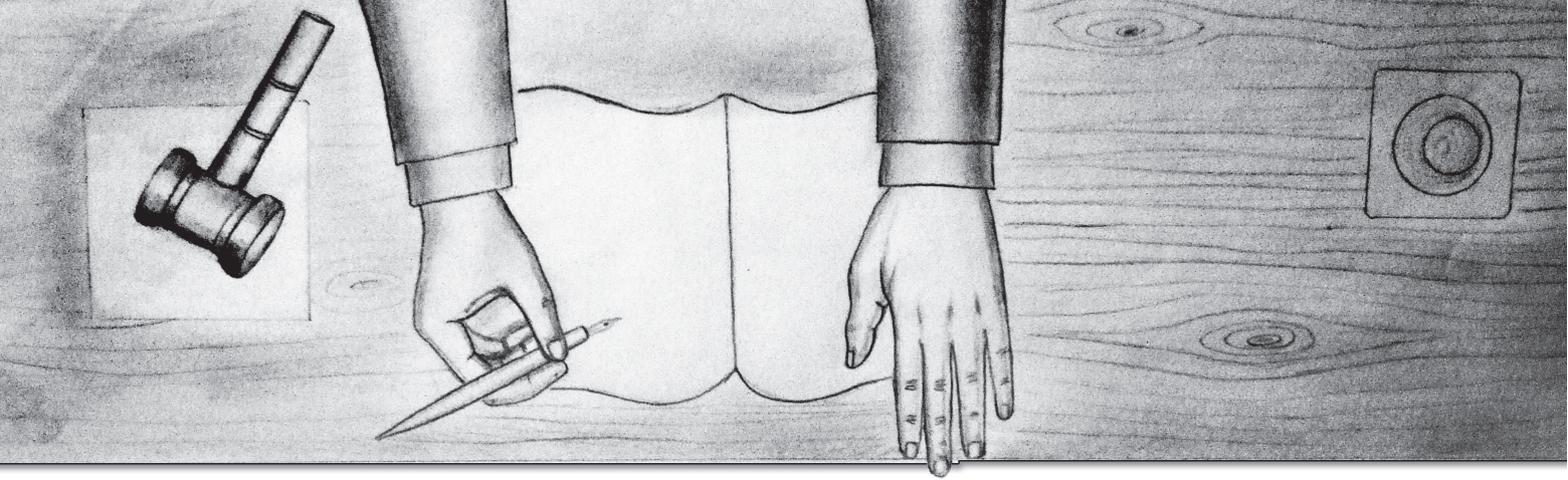
TRYING TO MAKE SENSE OF IT ALL *Holding on to the traditions is a wise choice in the modern times.*



Cover painting by Dinesh

OUR PURPOSES

- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.



need for this issue

A local newspaper reported the “Atheist Bus Campaign” from UK. The campaign consists of placing atheistic messages on buses throughout the country in response to evangelical Christian advertising. I was intrigued. While finding out more, I learned that the year 2009 happens to be the 150th anniversary of the publication of Charles Darwin’s book *The Origin of Species* and 200 years since his birth. To celebrate the occasions, people from all over are planning pompous events called “Darwin Day” celebrations. There will be symposiums, exhibitions, lecture series by eminent scientists etc. A replica of H.M.S. Beagle, the ship that carried Darwin around the world, will retrace his path. This January, Stanford University let a group of 90 people do something similar—albeit more comfortably, on a private Boeing 757. Anything else that

could further the cause is also welcome.

My trail got lengthier and deeper.

A magazine is a complex affair. You have many people who take care of their own responsibilities like writing, editing etc. Others who perform intermediate tasks complete the whole show. Nevertheless the magazine team represents one single unit—one that has to be unified in its purpose. The reason why I bring this up seemingly abruptly has a reason. During the course of working on the present issue, I came across a queer situation. One of our team members expressed his doubt to me about the need for an entire issue discussing Darwin and his contribution to the world. A mention here and there or a reference to some of his work was understandable to my friend but a thorough discussion was certainly unwarranted. There was no need. Surely, there were

many important concepts in the realm of spirituality that needed urgent discussion.

To set things straight, I explained to him whatever I could, and he became pacified. But this had me thinking. If a member of my team itself was not clear about why such an analysis was necessary, other probable readers were not to blame if they would put forward their doubts. It is then that I concluded the need for a brief explanation such as the present one.

I found some statements by leading atheists of the day. Some of them are very blatant about their views on God and religion. They didn't mince words when it came to describing their hatred for anything that is even remotely sug-

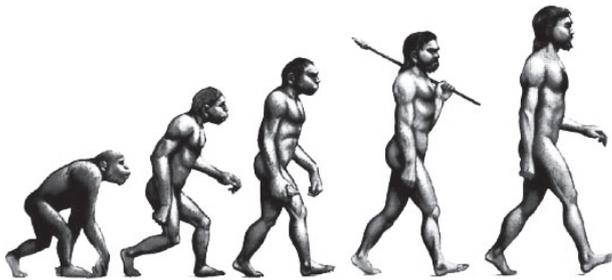
gestive of religion or belief in it. Our editor revealed that the BBC portal on religion treats atheism as another religion. Atheism indeed has its own prophets, its own sacred scriptures. In fact it has its own (faithful) followers too who won't give up their allegiance no matter what.

Delving deeper into the origins, I found out time and again, the pointers for any materialistic/atheistic thought would eventually point in the direction of Darwinist thought. The explanations provided by Charles Darwin in 1859, in a simple way took God out of the picture and placed all control in the hands of nature. What more could benefit the atheists more?

Thus was born the idea for the current issue. We have tried to inspect Darwinian thought through a variety of angles. This is an attempt to give the readers the most in a single issue. Hopefully, our purpose will be served. We want to present in front of the masses our case against Darwin. Our tiny squeak may not even be noticed by the opposite party but our only hope is to attract the merciful glance of previous *ācāryas*, especially His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda who always showed an undaunted spirit for repudiating atheism in all forms. If we can please him we are successful.

- Nanda Dulāl Dāsa

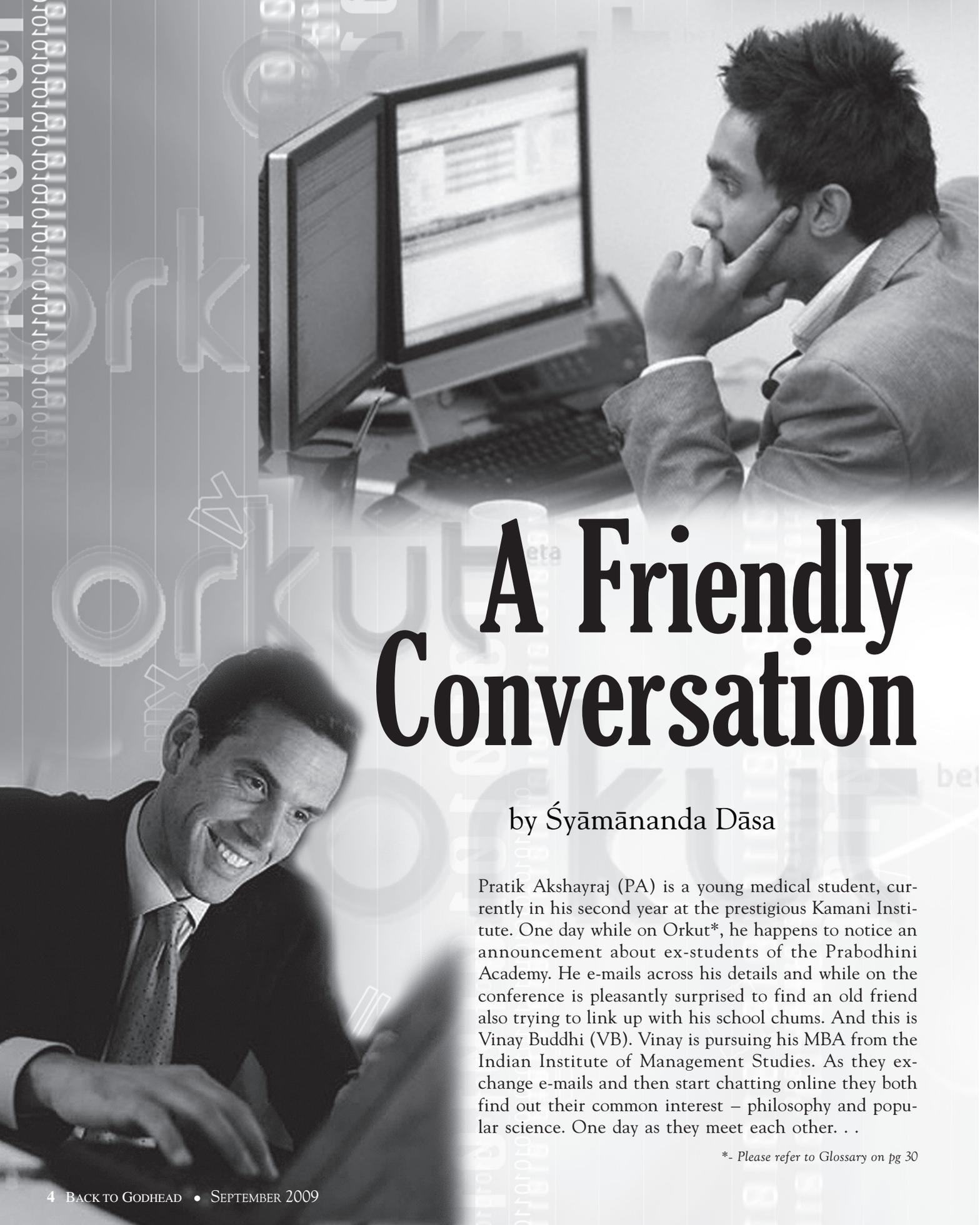
Evolution Simplified



In short, Darwin's whole concept is that small, random, heritable differences among individuals result in different chances of survival and reproduction—success for some, and death without offspring for others—and that this natural screening leads to significant changes in shape, size, strength, armament, color, biochemistry, and behavior among the descendants. Excess population growth drives the competitive struggle. Because less successful competitors produce fewer surviving offspring, the useless or negative variations tend to disappear, whereas the useful variations tend to be perpetuated and gradually magnified throughout a population. This is one part of the evolutionary process, known as *anagenesis*, during which a single species is transformed.

There's also a second part, known as speciation or *cladogenesis*. Genetic changes sometimes accumulate within an isolated segment of a species, but not throughout the whole, as that isolated population adapts to its local conditions. Gradually it goes its own way. At a certain point it becomes irreversibly distinct—that is, so different that its members can't interbreed with the rest. Two species now exist where formerly there was one. Darwin called that splitting-and-specializing phenomenon the "principle of divergence." This is an important part of his theory, explaining the overall diversity of life as well as the adaptation of individual species. ☀





A Friendly Conversation

by Śyāmānanda Dāsa

Pratik Akshayraj (PA) is a young medical student, currently in his second year at the prestigious Kamani Institute. One day while on Orkut*, he happens to notice an announcement about ex-students of the Prabodhini Academy. He e-mails across his details and while on the conference is pleasantly surprised to find an old friend also trying to link up with his school chums. And this is Vinay Buddhi (VB). Vinay is pursuing his MBA from the Indian Institute of Management Studies. As they exchange e-mails and then start chatting online they both find out their common interest – philosophy and popular science. One day as they meet each other. . .

*- Please refer to Glossary on pg 30

"My theology is a SIMPLE MUDDLE: I CANNOT LOOK AT THE UNIVERSE AS THE RESULT OF BLIND CHANCE, yet I can see no evidence of beneficent Design." (Charles Darwin, letter to Joseph Hooker, 12 July 1870)



PA: Hi VB, how are you?

VB: I'm fine. Nice to hear from you.

PA: As a part of the "Darwin Day" celebrations I have been elected Secretary of the Organizing Committee. We are planning to have exhibits, seminars, lectures and AV presentations. I wish that I could really do justice to properly glorify this remarkable personality-one of the greatest brains of the modern age.

VB: I do recognise that Charles Darwin is very famous and his theory is cited as the definitive answer to the question of the origin of species. But if you may allow, can we have some sort of intelligent, civil and structured dialogue on this subject?

PA: You mean you are a creationist ???

VB: Hey, hold your horses! I would like to play by the rules. Let us agree to express our thoughts freely.

PA: AGREED!!

VB: Let me begin. I find the explanation given by experts about the "Theory of Evolution" to be actually what it is - simple.

PA: Well, thank you for that compliment.

VB: To put it properly, when Thomas Huxley (a friend and colleague of Darwin) read the *Origin of Species*, he remarked, "How stupid not to have thought of it before!" In fact Huxley was over-

whelmed by its importance and devoted so much of his life to defending and popularizing the Theory of Descent with some changes (of course!) that he earned the name of Darwin's BULLDOG.

PA: I would like to add here that the book *Origin of Species* was a huge success. The first printing sold out on the day of its publication. This alone distinguished it from most other great theories in the history of science.

VB: Could you tell me something about the time at which Darwin published his notes?

PA: Certainly. By 1859 it seemed that 'evolution' was an idea whose 'time had come'. I recall someone describe it like this – They failed to 'see' what Darwin 'saw', not because they were short of facts, but because they had reasons for 'seeing' the facts in a different way.

Hey! I want to show you something.

I am sending you one image(fig. 1 below). Please check your inbox.

A minute later....

VB: What is this? Seems like a rabbit to me!

PA: So you did get to see the rabbit. Now see it from another angle. Do you see a duck there? So Darwin taught them to see the duck which other scientists could not recognise.

VB: At that time one of the main preconception prevailing was the notion of special creation – the idea that God or some other intelligence formed this world and stocked it with clearly distinguishable living forms.

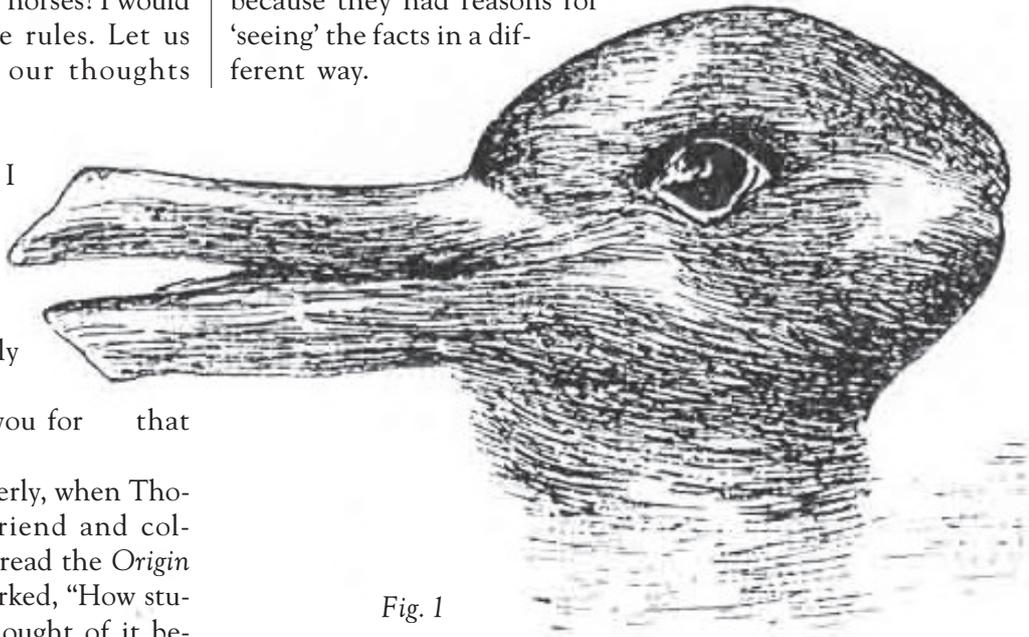


Fig. 1

The offshoots of this idea were

1. There was no gradual change.
2. The earth therefore, was relatively very young.
3. The permanence of the earth's physical structure.
4. The permanence of living things.

Furthermore this was the time when scientific thought was desperate to break free of the shackles imposed by religious institutions in Europe. As the wheels of industrial progress were rapidly moving forward, public opinion could be easily swayed away from theological pursuits. By now, the fruits of industrial progress were becoming too attractive.

But, wait a minute, do you have any other explanation for the origins of life or how species evolved?
VB: I do. The *Vedas* do not deny the idea of evolution. But they put a wholly different point of view.

PA: Which part of the evolution theory clashes with the Vedic idea of evolution .

VB: Darwin thought that the organism is the material body and therefore he attributed evolutionary change to the body; while the *Vedas* assert that the body is like an apartment in which the organism is a temporary tenant.

Therefore there is absolutely no problem if changes occur due to any reason whatsoever to the outer apartment. For example, due to sudden prosperity someone may leave his humble dwelling and move on to a spacious mansion. Also, someone living in a palace might be forced to move into a dilapidated slum. These changes are part of our life in this material world.

Now, I have something to ask from you. Was the idea of a “de-

signer behind a design” or “a watchmaker behind a watch” plain nonsense ?

PA: No. Of course not. As scientists probed human and other bodies they started to admire the various limbs within these bodies. Fins, feathers, hearts, lungs, eyes, stomachs, ears were functioning so well that it seemed inconceivable that they would have arisen spontaneously – let alone by chance. They must have been deliberately designed, to put it mildly. Bishop William Paley's famous argument – “Suppose one who had never seen a watch before. How could one explain its existence? The efficiency of its mechanism would force one to assume that it had been deliberately designed and that would automatically imply the existence of an intelligent designer. That person is God!

Darwin had studied Paley and even for Huxley, intelligent creation remained the most plausible explanation for the beautiful efficiency of nature.

VB: Did you know that Charles Darwin's father was a wealthy country doctor and his grandfather, Erasmus Darwin too was a famous speculative biologist. Erasmus and his friend Josiah Wedgood were members of an informal club called the Lunar Society of Birmingham. This club had scientists, technologists, manufacturers among others as its members. They used to meet on the occasion of the new moon and chat on harnessing technology and exploiting material nature.

It can be said that these personalities were responsible for nudging English minds towards the feeling that God is not necessary when science and technol-

ogy are available. The profits reaped from treating nature as a manageable process rather than a divine energy of God led them to disregard its godly purpose. This thought can be singularly held responsible for the best of brains focusing on the laws that governed nature rather than the quest to search out the lawmaker.

PA: I cannot say that I agree with this wholeheartedly. At the same time, I'm also not able to understand it fully well.

Is there something wrong with exploiting material nature?

VB: See it's like this. You had previously used that duck and rabbit picture, do you remember? I liked it very much. The image can show two facets but it's upto us to dwell on one particular facet. In similar fashion the *Vedas* describe material nature as both gentle, beautiful, benevolent and insurmountable, hideous and cruel.

PA: Wow!

VB: Visualise this! Green rolling meadows, serene pastures, waterfalls, azure skies, lofty mountains, rainbows – all this is a riot of color, symmetry, harmony and sound. Nature loving poets lamented thusly,

*What is this life if, full of care,
 We have no time to stand and stare.
 No time to stand beneath the boughs
 And stare as long as sheep or cows.
 No time to see, when woods we pass,
 Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.
 No time to see, in broad daylight,
 Streams full of stars, like skies at night.
 No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
 And watch her feet,
 how they can dance.
 No time to wait till her mouth can
 Enrich that smile her eyes began.
 A poor life this if, full of care,
 We have no time to stand and stare.
 - William Henry Davies*

“Would any one TRUST in the CONVICTIONS OF A MONKEY’S MIND, if there are any convictions in such a mind?”
(Charles Darwin, letter to Graham Will iam, 3 July 1881)



At the same time, when she peels away even a millimeter of her cosmetic makeup, what do you see? – Blazing forest fires, devastating tsunamis, massive land slides, earthquakes, floods and erupting volcanoes.

From prehistoric ages to *Homo sapiens* (whether he is entralling thousands at a rock carnival or discussing merger deals in the corridors of financial power) man is always engaged in a struggle with material nature. If you are accustomed to seeing only one side of the image then you are engaged in (what the *Vedas* call) ‘sense gratification’.

PA: Pardon me, but is it wrong to engage in the pursuit of happiness...

VB: Oh no. A human being, or for that matter, all living beings are described as *ānandamayo’bhyāsāt* (pleasure seeking).

If for a moment I decide to look at only ONE facet of the image, say the duck side, and if this corresponds to me projecting myself as an exploiter of material nature for my own satisfaction then what do I see? – I see that I have got senses . My five senses are used for acquiring knowledge – Eyes, ears, nose tongue and skin. Then I use five working senses – voice,

legs, hands, anus and genitals. In this material nature I encounter five objects for my senses - smell, taste, form, touch and sound. When I work very hard in order to achieve something I like the taste of it. This is defined by the *Vedas* as sense gratification.

PA: When a person sees that all these match perfectly well, then why is he not allowed to engage in sense gratification?

VB: Now , if I concentrate on the rabbit facet what do I see – My working senses, knowledge gathering senses, mind and intellect do have energy. Whenever and wherever I see any energy, my experience states that there has to be an energetic source, from which the energy flows. What is that source? What could be the purpose in me being provided this energy?

PA: Do you compulsorily need a source? Could it just be a “chance occurrence?” An aberration? A mistake perhaps?

VB: I can understand why you may be pulled towards these answers. It is true that I cannot make you see the rabbit while you have CHOSEN to ONLY see the duck. All I am asking is this – Is there a possibility of an intelligence, a cosmic intelligence, an entity whose identity is much beyond the scope of our faculties.

PA: You mean something like – “Let the number be X”. (☺)

VB: Thank you for being such a sport.



Beautiful nature as glorified by poets

PA: What about the overwhelming evidence in favour of natural selection? Do you have anything to say about the way science conducts research? Moreover, science is angry at the way in which blind faith gatecrashes in its territory. Here is a classic rant from a famous evolutionist –

“Science feeds on mystery. As Matt Ridley has put it: “Most scientists are bored by what they have already discovered. It is ignorance that drives them on.” Science mines ignorance. Mystery — that which we don’t yet know; that which we don’t yet understand — is the mother lode that scientists seek out. Mystics exult in mystery and want it to stay mysterious. Scientists exult in mystery for a very different reason: it gives them something to do.

Admissions of ignorance and mystification are vital to good science. It is therefore galling, to say the least, when enemies of science turn those constructive admissions around and abuse them for political advantage. Worse, it threatens the enterprise of science itself. This is exactly the effect that creationism or “Intelligent Design Theory”* (ID) is having, especially because its propagandists are slick, superficially plausible and, above all, well financed. ID, by the way, is not a new form of creationism*. It simply is creationism disguised, for political reasons, under a new name.

It isn’t even safe for a scientist to express temporary doubt as a rhetorical device before going on to dispel it.

“To suppose that the eye with all its inimitable contrivances for adjusting the focus to different distances, for admitting different amounts of light, and for the correction of spherical and chromatic aberration, could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree.”

You will find this sentence of Charles Darwin quoted again and again by creationists. They never quote what follows. Darwin immediately went on to confound his initial incredulity. Others have built on his foundation, and the eye is today a showpiece of the gradual, cumulative evolution of an almost perfect illusion of design. The relevant chapter of *Climbing Mount Improbable* is called “The fortyfold Path to Enlightenment” in honour of the fact that, far from being difficult to evolve, the eye has evolved at least 40 times independently around the animal kingdom.

The distinguished Harvard geneticist Richard Lewontin is widely quoted as saying that organisms “appear to have been carefully and artfully designed”. Again, this was a rhetorical preliminary to explaining how the powerful illusion of design actually comes about by natural selection. The isolated quotation strips out the implied emphasis on “appear to”, leaving exactly what a simple-mindedly pious audience wants to hear.

The deceitful misquoting of scientists to suit an anti-scientific agenda ranks among the many unchristian habits of fundamentalist authors. But such Telling Lies for God (the book title of the splendidly pugna-cious Australian geologist Ian Plimer) is not the most serious problem. There is a more important point to be made, and it goes right to the philosophical heart of creationism.

The standard methodology of creationists is to find some phenomenon in nature which Darwinism cannot readily explain. Darwin said: “If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down.” Creationists mine ignorance and uncertainty in order to abuse

his challenge. “Bet you can’t tell me how the elbow joint of the lesser spotted weasel frog evolved by slow gradual degrees?” If the scientist fails to give an immediate and comprehensive answer, a default conclusion is drawn: “Right, then, the alternative theory; ‘intelligent design’ wins by default.”

Notice the biased logic: if theory A fails in some particular manner, theory B must be right! Notice, too, how the creationist ploy undermines the scientist’s rejoicing in uncertainty. Today’s scientist in America dare not say: “Hmm, interesting point. I wonder how the weasel frog’s ancestors did evolve their elbow joint. I’ll have to go to the university library and take a look.” No, the moment a scientist said something like that the default conclusion would become a headline in a creationist pamphlet: “Weasel frog could only have been designed by God.”

I once introduced a chapter on the so-called Cambrian Explosion* with the words: “It is as though the fossils were planted there without any evolutionary history.” Again, this was a rhetorical overture, intended to whet the reader’s appetite for the explanation. Inevitably, my remark was gleefully quoted out of context. Creationists adore “gaps” in the fossil record.

Many evolutionary transitions are elegantly documented by more or less continuous series of changing intermediate fossils. Some are not, and these are the famous “gaps”. If a new fossil discovery neatly bisects a “gap”, the creationist will declare that there are now two gaps! Note yet again the use of a default. If there are no fossils to document a postulated evolutionary transition, the assumption is that there was no evolutionary transition: God must have intervened.

The creationists’ fondness for

*- Please refer to Glossary on pg 30

“gaps” in the fossil record is a metaphor for their love of gaps in knowledge generally. Gaps, by default, are filled by God. You don’t know how the nerve impulse works? Good! You don’t understand how memories are laid down in the brain? Excellent! Is photosynthesis* a bafflingly complex process? Wonderful! Please don’t go to work on the problem, just give up, and appeal to God. Dear scientist, don’t work on your mysteries. Bring us your mysteries for we can use them. Don’t squander precious ignorance by researching it away.

VB: Wow! This guy seems to be pretty angry indeed ! I sympathise with your need for being objective in search for knowledge. But even then there are serious limitations in the way you do research.

Now let me describe the tools with which we undertake research. *Vedas* describe evidence in these broad categories – *Pratyakṣa*, *Anumāna* and *Śabda*.

Are you ready?

PA: Yes.

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VB: What follows is the most elementary level understanding of *Pratyakṣa*, *Anumāna* and *Śabda pramāṇa* –

According to the Vedic system, knowledge which is achieved from the greatest authority is to be considered perfect. According to the *Vedas*, there are three kinds of proof: *pratyakṣa*, *anumāna* and *śabda*. One is by direct visual perception. If a person is sitting in

front of me, I can see him sitting there, and my knowledge of his sitting there is received through my eyes. The second method, *anumāna*, is auricular: we may hear children playing outside, and by hearing we can conjecture that they are there. And the third method is the method of taking truths from a higher authority. Such a saying as “Man is mortal” is accepted from higher authorities. Everyone accepts this, but no one has experienced that all men are mortal. By tradition, we have to accept this. If someone asks, “Who found this truth first? Did you discover it?” it is very difficult to say. All we can say is that the knowledge is coming down and that we accept it. Out of the three methods of acquiring knowledge, the *Vedas* say that the third method, that of receiving knowledge from higher authorities, is the most perfect. Direct perception is always imperfect, especially in the conditional stage of life. By direct perception we can see that the sun is just like a disc, no larger than the plate we eat on.

From scientists, however, we come to understand that the sun is many thousands of times larger than the earth. So what are we to accept? Are we to accept the scientific proclamation, the proclamation of authorities, or our own experience? Although we cannot ourselves prove how large the sun is, we accept the verdict of astronomers. In this way we are accepting the statements of authorities in every field of our activities. From the internet, newspapers and

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radio we also understand that such and such events are taking place in China and India and other places all around the earth. We’re not experiencing these events directly, and we don’t know that such events are actually taking place, but we accept the authority of the newspapers and radio. We have no choice but to believe authorities in order to get knowledge. And when the authority is perfect, our knowledge is perfect. **PA:** Could you be more elaborate? **VB:** Alright, here goes... *Pratyakṣa* means the direct contact of the senses with their sense objects. This most certainly produces an experience, but is that experience ‘knowledge’? Hardly. Show an ignorant man a piece of complicated machinery and ask him to make it work. Sure he can see that it is not working but the mere fact of seeing it does not make any sense to him at all.

Once, on a highway a person

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was driving his car and suddenly it came to a stop. He opened the hood and tried his best to see what he could do but the car could not be started. Exasperated, he called a mechanic, who in similar fashion opened the hood, looked inside and then taking a heavy hammer gave a mighty blow to the engine. Then he told the driver to start the car. Surprisingly, the car started. When asked about his wages, the mechanic said, "Only a thousand rupees, sir?"

"What! A thousand rupees for merely giving a hammer-blow!"

"Of course, not that way, Sir. The blow only costs you ten rupees, the rest are for where to give the blow and how hard should it be."

Under the spell of ignorance, one cannot understand a thing as it is. Instead, we perceive only whatever impressions our materially conditioned senses are able to convey: sound, touch, form, taste and smell. We cannot know beyond these impressions what actually is out there. Hence, perception is occult, since its cause is ever-hidden. Any knowledge that depends upon the authority of *pratyakṣa* is curtailed on all sides by our ignorance of the substance of reality. Not only is *pratyakṣa* limited to impressions, our senses grasp these impressions imperfectly. Our senses are able to perceive only objects that are within their range. They cannot detect those that are far away or very near. An object too small or too great likewise cannot be perceived. And when the mind is distracted, we miss even those objects that are within the range of perception. Sense objects obscure one other, as when the sunshine covers the shining of the stars, or when milk and curd mix together.

We perceive a candle flame as a steady light, when in reality, moment by moment, the flame comes into being, transforms and passes out of existence.

Sometimes, due to a mirage, we perceive water where there is only dry land.

We perceive an object reflected upon a moving surface as moving when in fact it is not.

Western philosophy likewise admits that sense perception is defective.

Four standard examples are:

1) the same object sometimes appears different to the same person, as when a green tree appears black at night;

2) the same object sometimes appears different to different persons, as when a green tree looks red to a person who is color-blind;

3) we derive the forms and other qualities of sense objects from the functions of our sense organs, but objects and organs are really just atoms arrayed in empty space;

4) what we perceive cannot be what really is at the moment we perceive it, since it takes time for perception to occur (for instance, if sunlight takes eight minutes to reach the earth, we only see the sun as it was eight minutes before).

Each of these examples further underscores the problem of the occult quality of perception: what's really out there? The grave difficulty with the attempt of experimental scientists to solve this problem is that their proposed solution just renews the problem. Experimental science questions existence, and answers those same questions, from the standpoint of *pratyakṣa* (experience and experiment).

In Vedic terms, such philosophy is called *pratyakṣavāda*. There are two types of *pratyakṣavādis*: empiricists and skeptics.

Empiricists equate sense perception with knowledge. Though that knowledge is presently incomplete, they argue that it should be increased by advances in experimental technique. Vedic authorities reject this attempt as being inherently flawed. Even if we extend the range of our senses by using scientific instruments, the defects of the senses stay apace of the senses' range.

In conclusion, four facts about *pratyakṣa* will be summarized. The first is that it is generated from ignorance. Therefore knowledge limited to sense perception is not knowledge at all. The circular arguments of the empiricists and sceptics demonstrate that on the level of sense perception, mind and matter cannot be distinguished. The second fact is that perception indicates the presence of an objective reality. But we are unable to directly connect with that reality through *pratyakṣa*. That is because of the third fact: our senses are defective. On Vedic authority, then, we should simply accept that perception evinces that something is really out there. If we doubt the Vedic causal explanation of *pratyakṣa*, it is only because, being enamored with our senses, we are stubbornly blind to their imperfections. The fourth fact about sense perception is that everything we perceive has a beginning. The evidence is so strong that it is only reasonable to accept it.

PA: Thank you for such an elaborate explanation. One question still remains: Why does God hide Himself? Why should I as a scientist unravel the mysteries of mate-

[DARWINISM] SEEMS SIMPLE, because you do not at first realize all that it involves. But when its whole significance dawns on you, your heart sinks into a heap of sand within you. There is a HIDEOUS FATALISM ABOUT IT, a ghastly and DAMNABLE REDUCTION OF BEAUTY AND INTELLIGENCE, of strength and purpose, of honor and aspiration. —George Bernard Shaw, *Back to Methuselah* (1921)



rial nature?

VB: This is like asking, “Why does God not submit to my will? Why does He not surrender the codes of nature?”

Let us imagine that there is a student of journalism. His name is Sam Spencer and he writes the following email to Bill Gates (Fig. 3 below).

Do you think this person can surely get a positive response? Or for that matter, can Sam think that

if Bill does not send me his jet then I won’t have any faith that he is one of the richest person in the entire world? After all, for him to send a jet will not be difficult at all, so why won’t he do it?

PA: I think that Sam is deluded by his own imagination to harbour such a belief.

VB: At the same time there could be some people, Paul Allen (a close friend of Bill Gates’), for example, who can actually claim that

they can spend time with Bill whenever they feel like doing it. Why? That’s because they are already having a very close relationship with him. Similarly it is only for those people that God is not visible who do not have a loving relationship with him. A person with a completely twisted idea of what science is, is like a hacker trying to gatecrash through a computer code.

PA: Although I would still pursue

Darwin’s way of understanding how species evolved I thank you for giving me a Vedic view of evolutionary process.

VB: Thank you. Will continue our conversation later. 🌸

Śyāmānanda Dāsa serves as the editor for English and Marathi editions of Back to Godhead magazine.

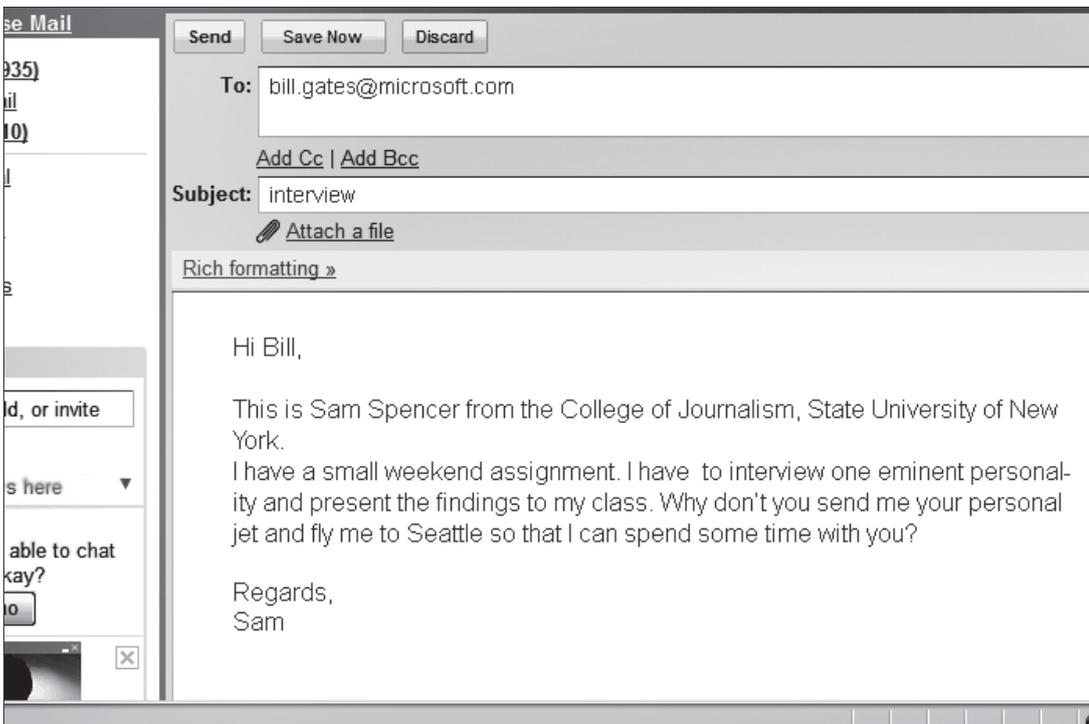


Fig. 3



An Objective Scientist?

by Nanda Dulāl Dāsa

Man is a social animal goes a famous saying. This statement highlights the fact that man is distinct from animals around him in that he has tendencies to socialize. It would mean that society has an impact on him and his thinking. The culture around us certainly shapes the way we think. Charles Darwin was no exception to this. To understand why some theories gained wide acceptance at a particular time, one needs to examine the economic, social and political context in which they flourished. Science, or what is claimed as science is a product of culture – like any other human activity. What seems in hindsight as intelligent and sensible could have

been the object of ridicule in its own times. What is now seen as absurd or naive could have seemed reasonable in its era. The social and cultural scene prevalent in England and more broadly, in Europe is described in this article, giving the reader a deeper understanding of the times in which Darwin was born and lived his life.

THE SCENE IN ENGLAND

England was undergoing a metamorphosis in the 19th century. A lot of important changes happened during this time. England became the world's first industrial society during this time. It also became the first urban society. Living in the cities meant

"I am a firm believer that WITHOUT SPECULATION there is no good and original observation..."(Charles Darwin, letter to A.R. Wallace, 22 December 1857)



Early industries in Britain

could not make it for some other reason, it meant that half the population did not go to church. A similar survey in 1881 increased the number of church-absentees further to only about 1/3rd of the population. These facts indicate that religion was already on the decline. People were already

saying farewell to God in England.

THE SCENE IN EUROPE

France had seen a major upheaval in its political and social structure in the form of the French Revolution in the late 18th century (1789–1799). French history was rewritten post this era. The absolute monarchy guided by Catholic clergy was overthrown and a new system was implemented highlighting principles of citizenship, based on the principles of Enlightenment. The revolution snatched absolute power from the Roman Catholic Church and transferred

it to the state. Under the old system, the Church had been the biggest landowner in the country. New laws put into force in 1790 changed the Church's fate. The Church could no longer levy a tax (called *dime*) on the crops. Special privileges for the clergy (the priestly class) were abolished and the Church property was confiscated.

In addition to this, there was a big program for the dechristianisation of society by destroying first Catholicism, and eventually all other forms of Christianity.

This included:

1. Removal of statues, plates and other iconography from places of worship
2. Destruction of crosses, bells and other external signs of worship
3. The institution of revolutionary and civic cults, including the "Cult of Reason" and subsequently the "Cult of the Supreme Being."
4. The enactment of a law on October 21, 1793 making non-obeying priests and all persons who harboured them liable to death on sight.

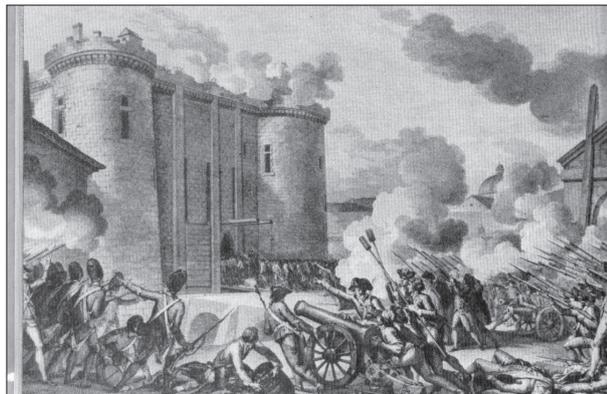
leaving one's family and culture behind and adopting the competition-based city culture.

The telegraph was invented in 1837. A cable was laid across the Channel in 1851 and after 1866 it was possible to send messages across the Atlantic. Technology was slowly becoming the norm in England. However, this did not solve problems of living.

Many people emigrated to North America and Australia to escape poverty. About 15 million people left Britain between 1815 and 1914. Divorce was made legal in 1857 but it was very rare in the 19th century. This meant that the sacred bond of marriage was also open to change and dissolution in modern England.

In the early 19th century a group of Evangelical Christians called the Clapham Sect were active in politics. They campaigned for an end to slavery and cruel sports.

According to a survey conducted in 1851, only 40% of the population attended a church or a chapel on a given Sunday. Even allowing for those who were ill or



*A scene from the French Revolution:
Attack on the Bastille*

5. Under threat of death and imprisonment, military conscription or loss of income, about 20,000 constitutional priests were forced to abdicate or hand over their letters of ordination and 6,000 - 9,000 were coerced to marry, many ceasing their ministerial du-

ties. Some of those who abdicated covertly ministered to the people. By the end of the decade, approximately 30,000 priests were forced to leave France, and thousands who did not leave were executed. Most of France was left without the services of a priest.

6. The climax was reached with the celebration of the Goddess "Reason" in Notre Dame Cathedral on 10 November, 1793.

Thus, the dechristianization campaign in France was the implementation of materialistic philosophy which did not see the necessity of nor permit religion in the social structure. Indeed, it sought to completely eliminate any



The famous installation of the goddess "Reason" in Notre Dame cathedral.

form of religion from the scene, as is evident from the above facts.

THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

The Age of Enlightenment is

a time roughly calculated from the start of the eighteenth century to approximately the end of the French Revolution. Some consider the start of the Napoleonic wars as the time when this period ended. This term represents the time when western philosophy underwent a major shift and highlighted intellect or reason as the main basis for authority. Thus, all previous conceptions that alluded in any way to any form of religion were erased during this time.

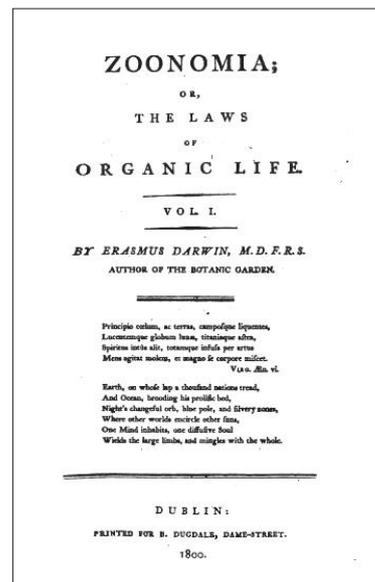
The phase in time does not represent a single movement or school of thought, for these philosophies were often mutually contradictory or divergent. The Enlightenment was less a set of ideas than it was a set of values. At its core was a critical questioning of traditional institutions, customs, and morals. Everything that was based on traditional authority was questioned and a new authority based on human rationality was established.

Post this period, the primary belief was that society could progress socially and culturally by intellectual progress alone. People believed in their own efforts and sought to improve the social state of humankind by this method.

THE FAMILY PICTURE

Shaped by the constant urge to think rationally, excluding all possible traditional explanations, many thinkers argued that one should expect to find such a progressive upward rise in the world of nature. From the most simple to the most complex, ending ultimately with humankind. One such early progressionist was the grandfather

of Charles Darwin, the British physician Erasmus Darwin. He was forthright in seeing upward trends in the organic world, ones we today would label "evolutionary." Erasmus Darwin was a freethinker and had a Lunar Society formed in London. This society had rich capitalists, among others as its



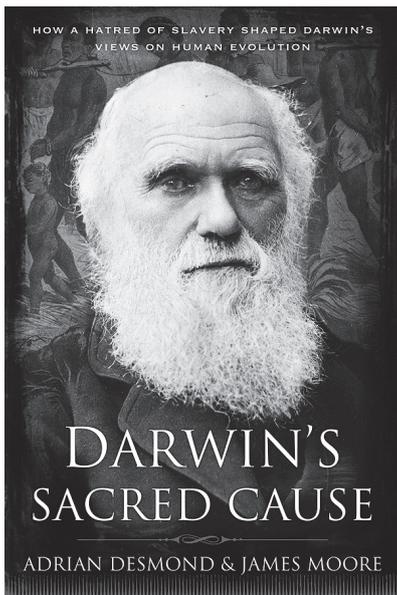
members. In the 1790's Erasmus wrote *Zoonomia*, in which he argued that all life came from a common ancestor and developed through the laws of nature alone. In 1802, he wrote a poem *Temple of Nature*, in which he described the evolution of life from ordinary forms to the diversity found today.

Thus, it is clear that Darwin was born at a time that was ripe with atheism and rejection of God. Any theory that rejected God from the picture would be welcome in such times. Any explanation that was exclusive of God would be accepted in an environment like that. He was raised in a family environment of influential people that were already inclined to radical thinking. Previous philosophers had already laid ground for an explanation to propose a common ancestor for all species. Many

think that Charles Darwin was an objective scientist. They think he formulated his theory based on his observations aboard HMS Beagle. He did that but whether those observations were objective or not demands reconsideration.

RECENT UNDERSTANDING

Darwin's newest biographers, Adrian Desmond and James Moore have highlighted a very different and radical aspect to explain Darwin's theory of evolution. In their book titled *'Darwin's Sacred Cause: How a Hatred of Slavery Shaped Darwin's Views on Human*



Evolution,' they argue that Darwin had a natural aversion to slavery. In those days, with England as ruler of many parts of the world, there was abundance of slavery.

His published journal of the Beagle voyage in 1845 listed the iniquities in gory detail. "I thank God," he wrote, "I shall never again visit a slave-country."

This aversion must have shaped his theory of evolution too. A theory resting on the assumption of "common descent," or converging bloodlines, by which any two races or species share an ancestor

eliminates the chance for one race dominating another as slaves. Evolution surprisingly seems to have had humanitarian roots.

Research reveals that Wedgwood women (a group that included Darwin's mother and wife) were the philanthropic backbone of the family. Sarah Wedgwood, Darwin's aunt, gave more to anti-slavery charities than any woman in Britain. His grandfather, the pottery patriarch Josiah Wedgwood, depicted a slave imploring "Am I Not a Man and a Brother?"

Darwin too shared in this concern. He hated medicine, but he didn't mind sitting with an ex-slave from Guyana for a whole term to learn about bird preservation. The "blackamoor" became his "intimate" friend.

Where white masters denigrated blacks as another, for Darwin the great moral truth was "one blood" for all peoples: the black slave as a "Man and Brother." In a notebook, he castigated slave-masters for their separate-species lie; he unquestioningly accepted a common racial parentage. Since races eventually became species, these too must also have a joint ancestry: All life must therefore be

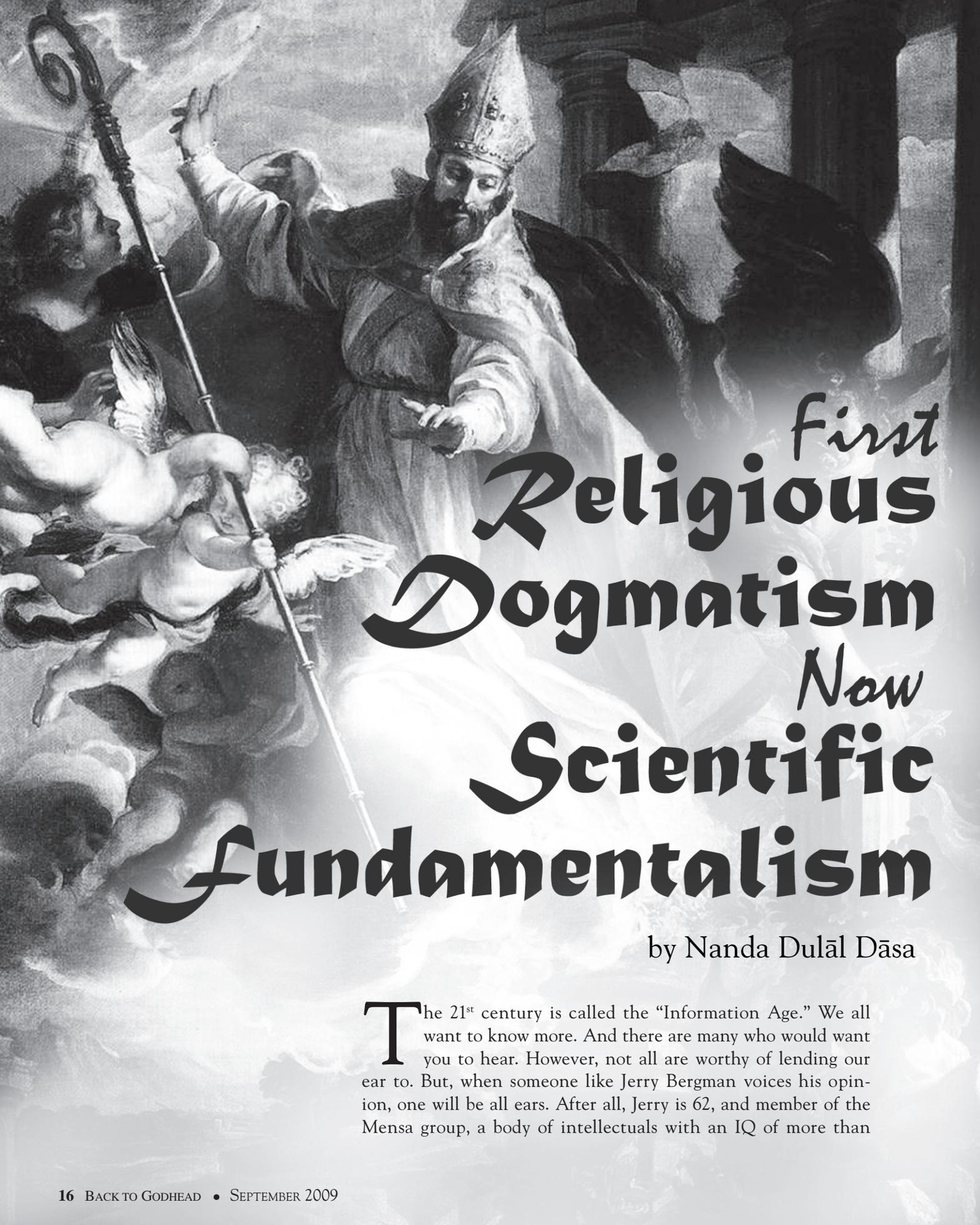
connected by billions of common descents back to a first parent in a grand genealogical "tree." Still, Darwin was apprehensive about



publishing his theories. Even then, in 1857, just before starting *On the Origin of Species*, he suddenly decided to exclude humans from its analysis, partly because the subject was "so surrounded with prejudices." He treated this matter separately in his book "Descent of Man," released in 1871. 🌱

Nanda Dulāla Dāsa has a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering. He is a part of the editorial team of Indian English BTG. He stays at ISKCON Mumbai where he teaches Kṛṣṇa consciousness to college students.





First
Religious
Dogmatism
Now
Scientific
Fundamentalism

by Nanda Dulāl Dāsa

The 21st century is called the “Information Age.” We all want to know more. And there are many who would want you to hear. However, not all are worthy of lending our ear to. But, when someone like Jerry Bergman voices his opinion, one will be all ears. After all, Jerry is 62, and member of the Mensa group, a body of intellectuals with an IQ of more than

"I am sorry to have to inform you that I DO NOT BELIEVE IN THE BIBLE as a divine revelation, & therefore not in Jesus Christ as the son of God." (Charles Darwin, letter to Frederick McDermott, 24 November 1880)



130. Their IQ's are among those of the top 2% of the world's population. This time, he is out with his new book titled *Slaughter of the Dissidents: The Shocking Truth about Killing the Careers of Darwin Doubters*.

Bergman, for the last 30 years, has interviewed hundreds of people in academia and documented cases in which he contends that many careers were derailed because of their doubts about evolution.

The book documents tales of people whose careers were jeopardized because of harboring

has taught college-level courses in biology, microbiology, chemistry, biochemistry, genetics, pathology, anthropology, geology, and statistics, among other subjects, and has published more than 800 academic papers.

While speaking with reporters, he says, "It's unlikely today that an out-of-the-closet Darwin doubter will survive in academia." According to him, there's much at stake because a Ph.D requires a huge investment in time and money, averaging nine years of school and \$300,000 to \$500,000 in costs. Rather than risk losing everything over one's personal beliefs, Mr.

Bergman said he now advises people to "stay in the closet until things change" and to seek change through legislation. A few "Darwinian fundamentalists" rule and stifle out any free speech and scholarly debate in academia as per Bergman.

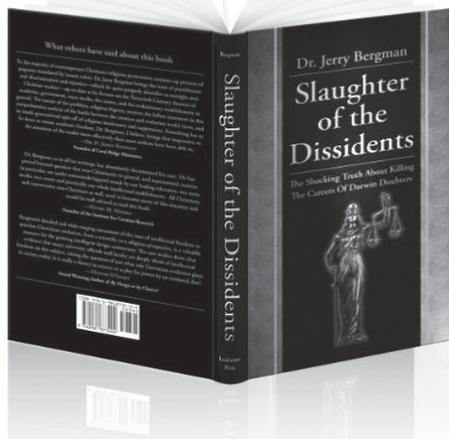
When he tells people that doubting Darwinism can lead to discrimination in universities, Mr. Bergman said he gets two responses, neither sympathetic to his cause: "First, it's not happening. Second, yes it's happening and it should be happening."

IRREDUCIBLE ANGER

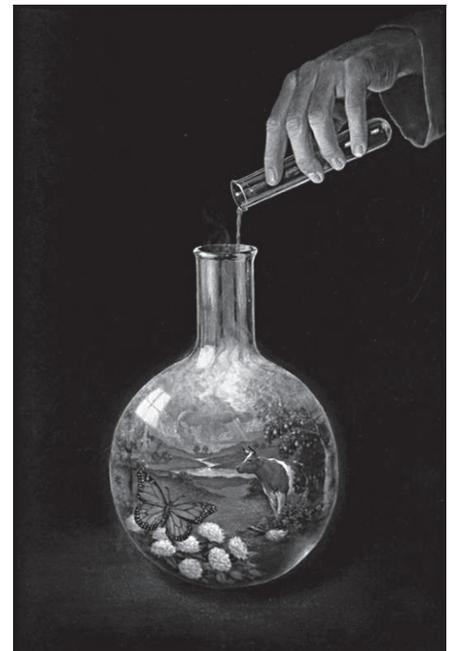
And findings match with the opinions of Bergman. One scientist who has seen the dark side of the pro-Darwinian establishment of scientists and academia is Prof. Michael Behe. Owing to his pro-

ID inclinations and writings, his own department of biological sciences at Lehigh University, has publicly disowned him, by the disclaimer on its web site: "While we respect Prof. Behe's right to express his views, they are his alone and are in no way endorsed by the department. It is our collective position that intelligent design has no basis in science, has not been tested experimentally and should not be regarded as scientific." Nevertheless, Behe continues to teach and propagate his views which are "his alone" in the form of scientific books, which are well-received by the scientific readers.

In 1996 Behe published *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*. The



doubts regarding the mainstream theory of Evolution of Life, proposed by Charles Darwin. Mr. Bergman, himself has nine academic degrees, including a doctorate in education from Wayne State University, and currently teaches at Northwest State Community College in Archbold, Ohio, USA and the University of Toledo's Health Science campus. In 35 years as an educator, Mr. Bergman



Behe concludes that a superior intelligence has to exist to account for the complexities in nature

main thesis of the book was that science has discovered in the cell biochemical systems that are what he called “irreduc-

ibly complex,” where the removal of one of the components of the system causes it to lose its function, and that such systems are very difficult to explain in Darwinian terms. He argued that irreducibly complex biochemical systems are better explained as the product of deliberate intelligent design. The book was quite controversial and has been vehemently criticized by Darwinists.

In his second book “The Edge of Evolution: *The Search for the Limits of Darwinism*” Behe takes the argument further. As it turns out, we now have more powerful microscopes and have found that there are irreducibly complex systems regulating the irreducibly complex systems! Behe points out that there are little trucks that build the irreducibly complex cilium (a hair-like projection from the surface of a cell; provides locomotion in free-swimming unicellular organisms). These “trucks” bring in parts and take them away. The trucks even have for-

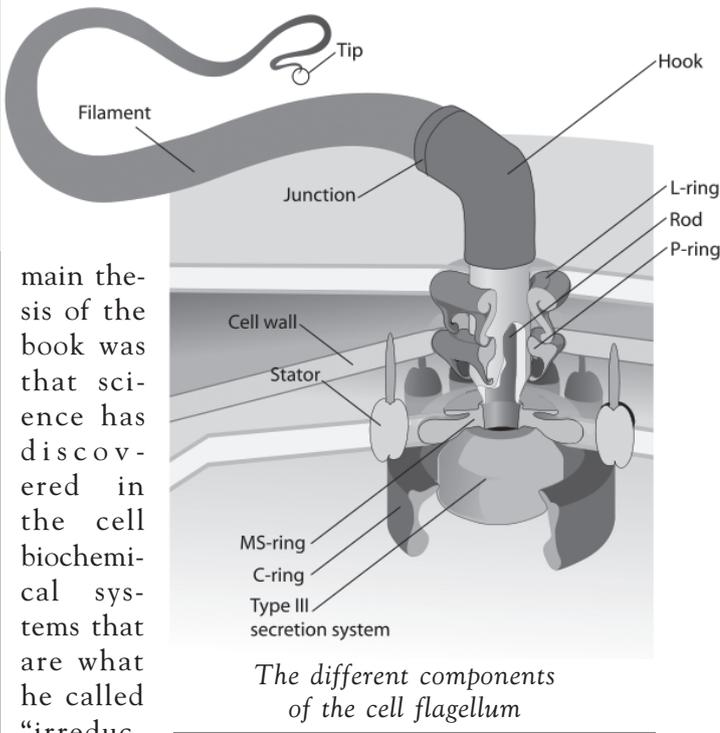
ward and reverse motors! And they know when to stop work and conserve energy if there is a damage. Moreover, these machines assemble via a complex set of assembly instructions that represent far greater complexity than the final irreducibly complex machine itself. Thus Behe says that biology contains not just irreducible complexity but “irreducible complexity squared.”

of *Evolution*, arch-rival pro-evolution Darwinist Richard Dawkins wrote the following in a critical review in the *New York Times* on July 1 2007, “...The best way to find out is for Behe to submit a mathematical paper to *The Journal of Theoretical Biology*, say, or *The American Naturalist*, whose editors would send it to qualified referees...[Behe has] bypassed the peer-review procedure altogether, gone over the heads of the scientists he once aspired to number among his peers ...” In fact, Dawkins, famous for his frequent ad hominem attacks starts off his review not by any scientific arguments, but by saying that the book is by a man “who has given up.” He also very wisely puts in his review, the entire disclaimer put up on the website dishonoring Behe as an argument that “real science ... has publicly disowned him.”

This insistence of getting everything “peer-reviewed” reminds me of something. Seemingly a diversion, this one example could help us understand the situation at hand in a better way.

The early 17th century is an example of a stronghold of the Church in Europe. A large majority of philosophers and astron-

omers still subscribed to the geocentric* view (that the Earth remained motionless at the centre of the universe). Galileo’s championing of the heliocentric* view (that the Sun was the centre of the universe) was very controversial. After 1610, when he began supporting



The different components of the cell flagellum

SO MUCH FOR PEER REVIEW

Against those who wage a solemn battle against evolution, one of the often-repeated allegations is that they do not have published research papers supporting their positions in “peer-reviewed” scientific journals. For instance, when Prof. Michael Behe published his second book *The Edge*



Another of Behe’s example of irreducible complexity: the human eye

*- Please refer to Glossary on pg 30



Galileo was seen as a heretic for proposing heliocentrism

heliocentrism* publicly, he met with bitter opposition from some philosophers and clerics, and two of the latter eventually denounced him to the Roman Inquisition early in 1615. Although he was cleared of any offence at that time, the Catholic Church nevertheless condemned heliocentrism* as “false and contrary to Scripture” in February 1616, and Galileo was warned to abandon his support for it—which he promised to do. When he later defended his views in his most famous work, *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*, published in 1632, he was tried by the Inquisition and found “vehemently suspect of heresy.” He had to spend the rest of his life under house arrest.

When Galileo presented his

own department has ostracized him, we can get a small glimpse of how difficult it must be to get something not conforming to the standard Darwinist model printed in a scientific, “peer-reviewed” journal.

And even if something really gets published in a peer-reviewed journal, the reactions are strikingly different from expectations.

Amongst many who have faced the brunt of the pro-evolution academia in this regard is Dr Richard Sternberg, editor of a peer-reviewed journal “*Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington*.” On 4 August 2004, an article titled, “The origin of biological information and the higher taxonomic categories” by Stephen C. Meyer was published in this jour-

views based on his observations and recordings, there must have been a lot of tension in his mind. Here was the establishment believing in one view. There must have been severe opposition from his peers. If he would have waited for his theory to be approved by his peers and get his thesis “peer-reviewed,” how far could he have gone? We have to answer this fundamental question.

In the case of Behe, by understanding how his

nal. Stephen C. Meyer is the director of the Discovery Institute, a body of scientists that believe in non-evolutionary concepts and are propagators of the Intelligent Design (ID) movement*. He holds a doctorate in ‘History and Philosophy of Science’ The publisher claimed that the Dr Sternberg had disregarded certain review procedures to allow Meyer’s article to be published in the journal. An official statement released by the Council of the Biological Society of Washington on 7 September 2004 stated, “...and the associate editors would have deemed the paper inappropriate for the pages of the *Proceedings* because the subject matter represents such a significant departure from the nearly purely systematic content for which this journal has been known throughout its 122-year history.”

Needless to say, the publishers of the magazine were very unhappy with the appearance of Meyer’s article. It is also important to note that Dr Sternberg holds two PhDs in the area of evolutionary biology, one in molecular (DNA) evolution and the other in systems theory and theoretical biology, has published more than 30 articles in peer-reviewed scientific books and publications, and his current areas of research and writing are primarily in the areas of evolutionary theory and systematics. In order to avoid making a one-sided, unilateral decision on a potentially controversial paper, he even discussed the paper on at least three occasions with another member of the Council of the Biological Society of Washington (BSW), a scientist at the National Museum of Natural History. Still, Dr Sternberg has faced humiliation
(please turn to page 29)

*- Please refer to Glossary on pg 30



FIG. 12.
Skull of E. S. Gory.



EVIDENCE

Let it Speak

by Caitanya Carāṇa Dāsa

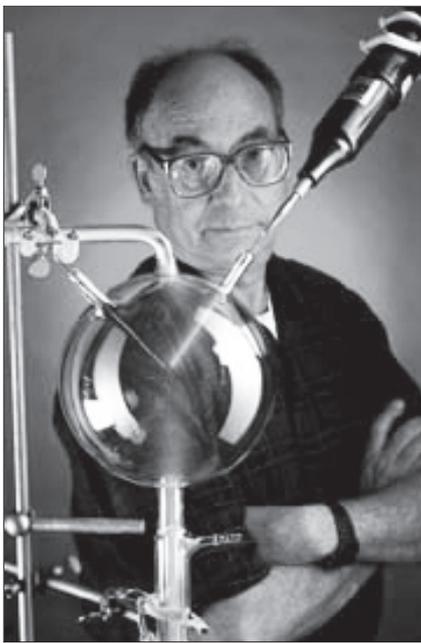
Consider the following five examples adapted from the article “Survival of the fakest” by Jonathan Wells published in the leading American magazine *The American Spectator* - December 2000 / January 2001

LIFE IN A BOTTLE: MILLER’S EXPERIMENT

Anyone old enough in 1953 to understand the import of the news

remembers how shocking, and to many, exhilarating, it was. Scientists Stanley Miller and Harold Urey had succeeded in creating “the building blocks” of life in a flask. Mimicking what were believed to be the natural conditions of the early Earth’s atmosphere, and then sending an electric spark through it, Miller and Urey had formed simple amino acids. As amino acids are the “building

blocks” of life, it was thought just a matter of time before scientists could themselves create living organisms. At the time, it appeared a dramatic confirmation of evolutionary theory. Life wasn’t a “miracle.” No outside agency or divine intelligence was necessary. Put the right gasses together, add electricity, and life is bound to happen. It’s a common event. Carl Sagan could thus confidently pre-



Stanley Miller with his apparatus

dict on PBS (a television channel) that the planets orbiting those “billions and billions” of stars out there must be just teeming with life.

There were problems, however. Scientists were never able to get beyond the simplest amino acids in their simulated primordial environment, and the creation of proteins began to seem not a small step or couple of steps, but a great, perhaps impassable, divide.

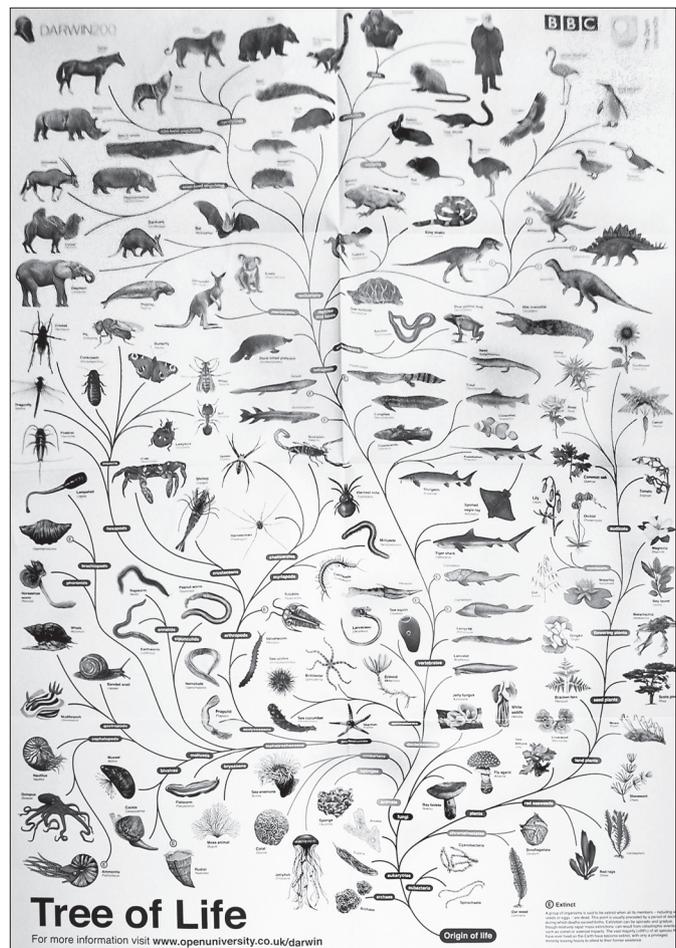
The telling blow to the Miller-Urey experiment, however, came in the 1970's, when scientists began to conclude that the Earth's early atmosphere was nothing like the mixture of gasses used by Miller and Urey. Instead of being what scientists call a “reducing,” or hydrogen-rich environment, the Earth's early atmosphere probably consisted of gasses released by volcanoes. Today there is a near consensus among geochemists on this point. But put those volcanic gasses in the Miller-Urey apparatus, and the experiment doesn't work – in other words, no “building blocks” of life. What do textbooks

do with this inconvenient fact? By and large, they ignore it and continue to use the Miller-Urey experiment to convince students that scientists have demonstrated an important first step in the origin of life. This includes the above-mentioned Molecular Biology of the Cell, co-authored by the National Academy of Sciences president, Bruce Alberts. Most textbooks also go on to tell students that origin-of-life researchers have found a wealth of other evidence to explain how life originated spontaneously – but they don't tell students that the researchers themselves now acknowledge that the explanation still eludes them.

IMAGINATION IN FULL FORM: DARWIN'S TREE OF LIFE

Darwin's theory claims to account for the origin of new species – in fact, for every species since the first cells emerged from the primordial ooze. This theory does have the virtue of making a prediction: If all living things are gradually modified descendants of one or a few original forms, then the history of life should resemble a branching tree. Unfortunately, despite

official pronouncements, this prediction has in some important respects turned out to be wrong. The fossil record shows the major groups of animals appearing fully formed at about the same time in a “Cambrian explosion,”* rather than diverging from a common ancestor. Darwin knew this, and considered it a serious objection to his theory. But he attributed it to the imperfection of the fossil record, and he thought that future research would supply the missing ancestors. But a century and a half of continued fossil collecting has only aggravated the problem. Instead of slight differences appearing first, then greater differences emerging later, the greatest differences appear right at the start. Some fossil experts de-

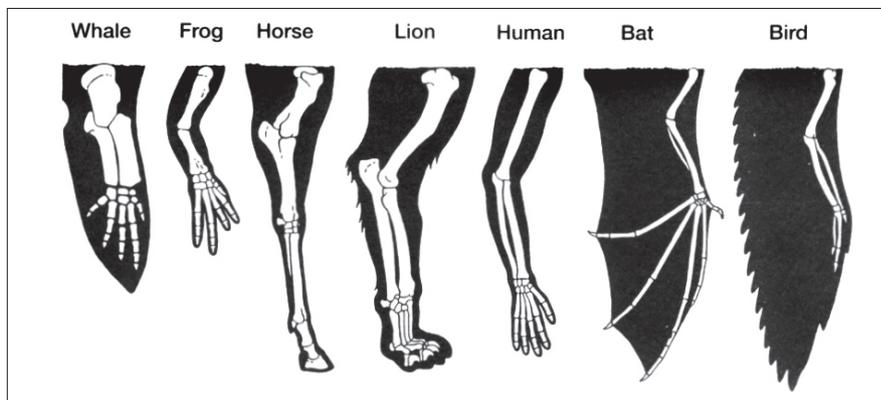


A modern rendition of Darwin's “Tree of Life”

*- Please refer to Glossary on pg 30

scribe this as “top-down evolution,” and note that it contradicts the “bottom-up” pattern predicted by Darwin’s theory. Yet most current biology textbooks don’t even mention the Cambrian explosion*, much less point out the challenge it poses for Darwinian evolution. Then came the evidence from molecular biology. Biologists in the 1970’s began testing Darwin’s branching tree pattern by comparing molecules in various species. The more similar the molecules in two different species are, the more closely related they are presumed to be. At first this approach seemed to confirm Darwin’s tree of life. But as scientists compared more and more molecules, they found that different molecules yield conflicting results. The branching-tree pattern inferred from one molecule often contradicts the pattern obtained from another. Canadian molecular biologist W. Ford Doolittle doesn’t think the problem will go away. Maybe scientists “have failed to find the ‘true tree,’” he wrote in 1999, “not because their methods are inadequate or because they have chosen the wrong genes, but because the history of life cannot properly be represented as a tree.” Leading evolutionist Stephen J Gould admitted, “The evolution tree that adorns our text books have data only at the tips and nodes of their branches, the rest is all inference, however reasonable, not the evidence of fossils.”

Nevertheless, biology textbooks continue to assure students that Darwin’s *Tree of Life* is a scientific fact overwhelmingly confirmed by evidence. Judging from the real fossil and molecular evidence, however, it is an unsubstantiated hypothesis masquerading as a fact.



Homology between different species

LOOK-ALIKE ILLUSIONS: HOMOLOGY

Most introductory biology textbooks carry drawings of vertebrate limbs showing similarities in their bone structures. Biologists before Darwin had noticed this sort of similarity and called it “homology,” and they attributed it to construction on a common archetype or design. In *The Origin of Species*, however, Darwin argued that the best explanation for homology is descent with modification, and he considered it evidence for his theory. Darwin’s followers rely on homologies to arrange fossils in branching trees that supposedly show ancestor descendant relationships. In his 1990 book, *Evolution and the Myth of Creationism*, biologist Tim Berra compared the fossil record to a series of Corvette models: “If you compare a 1953 and a 1954 Corvette, side by side, then a 1954 and a 1955 model, and so on, the descent with modification is overwhelmingly obvious.” But Berra forgot to consider a crucial, and obvious, point: Corvettes, so far as anyone has yet been able to determine, don’t give birth to little Corvettes. They, like all automobiles, are designed by people working for auto companies, or in other words, designed by an outside intelligence. So al-

though Berra believed he was supporting Darwinian evolution rather than the pre-Darwinian explanation, he unwittingly showed that the fossil evidence is compatible with either. Law professor (and critic of Darwinism) Phillip E. Johnson dubbed this: “Berra’s Blunder.” The lesson of Berra’s Blunder is that we need to specify a natural mechanism before we can scientifically exclude designed construction as the cause of homology. Darwinian biologists have proposed two mechanisms: developmental pathways and genetic programs. According to the first, homologous features arise from similar cells and processes in the embryo; according to the second, homologous features are programmed by similar genes. But biologists have known for a hundred years that homologous structures are often not produced by similar developmental pathways. And they have known for thirty years that they are often not produced by similar genes, either. So there is no empirically demonstrated mechanism to establish that homologies are due to common ancestry rather than common design. Without a mechanism, modern Darwinists have simply defined homology to mean similarity due to common ancestry. According

*- Please refer to Glossary on pg 30

“The MYSTERY OF THE BEGINNING OF ALL THINGS IS INSOLUBLE by us; and I for one must be content to remain an Agnostic.” (Charles Darwin, Autobiography)

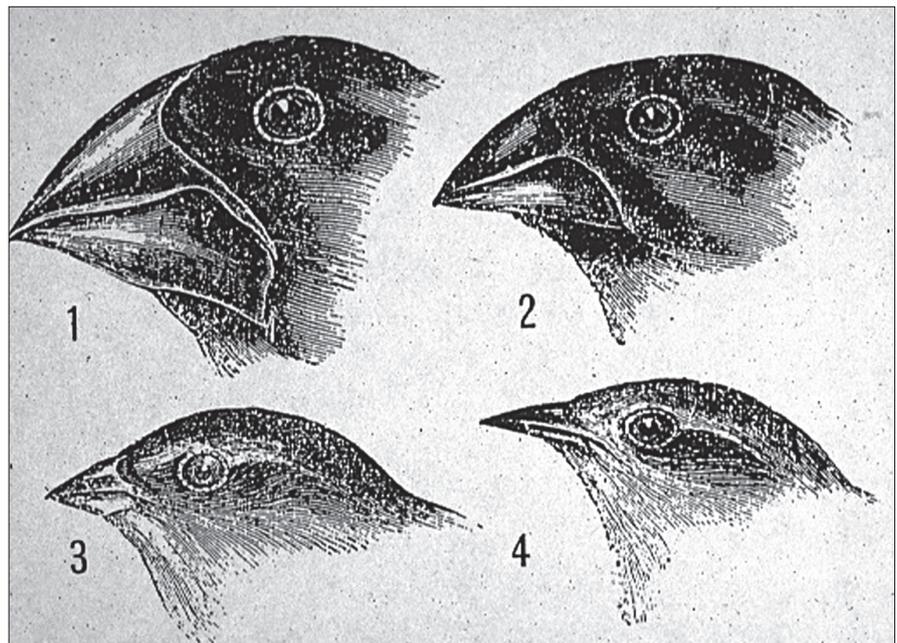


to Ernst Mayr, one of the principal architects of modern neo-Darwinism: “After 1859 there has been only one definition of homologous that makes biological sense: Attributes of two organisms are homologous when they are derived from an equivalent characteristic of the common ancestor.” This is a classic case of circular reasoning. Darwin saw evolution as a theory, and homology as its evidence. Darwin’s followers assume evolution is independently established, and homology is its result. But you can’t then use homology as evidence for evolution except by reasoning in a circle: Similarity due to common ancestry demonstrates common ancestry. Philosophers of biology have been criticizing this approach for decades. As Ronald Brady wrote in 1985: “By making our explanation into the definition of the condition to be explained, we express not scientific hypothesis but belief. We are so convinced that our explanation is true that we no longer see any need to distinguish it from the situation we were trying to explain. Dogmatic endeavors of this kind must eventually leave the realm of science.” So how do the textbooks treat this controversy? Once again, they ignore it. In fact, they give students the impression that it makes sense to define homology in terms of common ancestry and then turn around and use it as evidence for common ancestry.

BEAKS AND BIRDS: DARWIN’S FINCHES

A quarter of a century before Darwin published *The Origin of Species*, he was formulating his ideas as a naturalist aboard the British survey ship H.M.S. Beagle. When the Beagle visited the Galapagos Islands in 1835, Darwin collected specimens of the local wildlife, including some finches. Though the finches had little in fact to do with Darwin’s development of evolutionary theory, they have attracted considerable attention from modern evolutionary biologists as further evidence of natural selection. In the 1970’s, Peter and Rosemary Grant and their colleagues noted

a 5 percent increase in beak size after a severe drought, because the finches were left with only hard-to crack seeds. The change, though significant, was small; yet some Darwinists claim it explains how finch species originated in the first place. A 1999 booklet published by the U.S. National Academy of Sciences describes Darwin’s finches as “a particularly compelling example” of the origin of species. The booklet cites the Grants’ work, and explains how “a single year of drought on the islands can drive evolutionary changes in the finches.” The booklet also calculates that “if droughts occur about once every 10 years on the islands, a new species of finch might arise in only



The four different types of finches observed by Darwin

about 200 years.” But the booklet fails to point out that the finches’ beaks returned to normal after the rains returned. No net evolution occurred. In fact, several finch species now appear to be merging through hybridization, rather than diverging through natural selection as Darwin’s theory requires. Withholding evidence in order to give the impression that Darwin’s finches confirm evolutionary theory borders on scientific misconduct. According to Harvard biologist Louis Guenin (writing in *Nature* in 1999), U.S. securities laws provide “our richest source of experiential guidance” in defining what constitutes scientific misconduct. But a stock promoter who tells his clients that a particular stock can be expected to double in value in twenty years because it went up 5 percent in 1998, while concealing the fact that the same stock declined 5 percent in 1999, might well be charged with fraud. As Berkeley law professor Phillip E. Johnson wrote in *The Wall Street Journal* in 1999: “When our leading scientists have to resort to the sort of distortion that would land a stock promoter in jail, you know they are in trouble.”

Here is one more example from *Forbidden Archaeology* by Michael J. Cremo.

APEMEN OR CONMEN – JAVAMAN THIGHBONE

In August 1892, Eugene Dubois discovered a fossilized humanlike femur on the bank of the Solo River in central Java, near the village of Trinil. 45 feet from this location he found a skullcap and molars. Dubois believed the molars, skull, and fe-

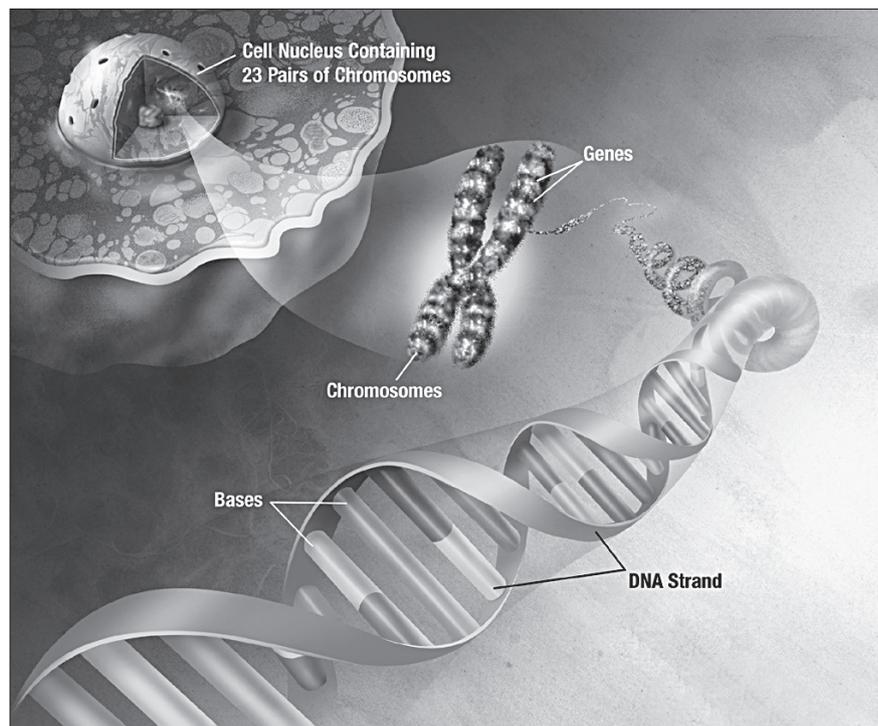
mur all came from the same being. However, the fact that these bones were found 45 feet from the place where the skull was unearthed, in a stratum containing hundreds of other animal bones makes doubtful the claim that both the thighbone and the skull actually belonged to the same creature or even the same species. In 1895 Dubois presented his findings to the Berlin Society for Anthropology, Ethnology, and Prehistory. The president of the society, Dr. Virchow declared that the femur was human and the skull belonged to an ape. Late in his life, Dubois concluded that the skullcap belonged to a large gibbon, an ape not considered by evolutionists to be closely related to humans. But this concept of the “missing link” is still widely promoted today! [pp. 464-465, *Forbidden Archeology*]

SHEER SPECULATION

The extent of speculation especially regarding human origins

is evident from the following statement by a leading archaeologist, “I shall discuss the broad patterns of hominoid evolution, an exercise made enjoyable by the need to integrate diverse kinds of information, and use that as a vehicle to speculate about hominid origins, an event for which there is no recognized fossil record. Hence, an opportunity to exercise some imagination.” [*American Anthropologist, Distinguished Lecture; Hominoid Evolution and Hominoid Origins*, by David Pilbeam. Vol. 88, No. 2 June 1986. p. 295.]

According to paleoanthropologist Misia Landau, theories of human origins “far exceed what can be inferred from the study of fossils alone and in fact place a heavy burden of interpretation on the fossil record – a burden which is relieved by placing fossils into pre-existing narrative structures.” In 1996, American Museum of Natural History Curator Ian Tattersall acknowledged that “in



paleoanthropology, the patterns we perceive are as likely to result from our unconscious mindsets as from the evidence itself.” Arizona State University anthropologist Geoffrey Clark echoed this view in 1997 when he wrote: “We select among alternative sets of research conclusions in accordance with our biases and preconceptions.” Clark suggested that “paleoanthropology has the form but not the substance of science.” Biology students and the general public are rarely informed of the deep-seated uncertainty about human origins that is reflected in these statements by scientific experts.

Instead, they are simply fed the latest speculation as though it were a fact. And the speculation is typically illustrated with fanciful drawings of cave men, or pictures of human actors wearing heavy make-up.

II. MISINTERPRETED EVIDENCES

Let’s analyze some other common examples of evidence that people uncritically assume to be supporting the idea of evolution.

(The following section is adapted from the *Origins* magazine published by BBT Science):

SIMILARITY OF DNA

In recent years, geneticists have discovered that in species of similar form the DNA and other proteins have similar molecular structures. So just as evolutionists have deduced ancestral relationships among species from similarities in physical form, some of them now deduce such relationships from the genetic similarities. It is not, however, very surprising that similar species would have similar ge-

netic materials. But the main point is that such similarities show nothing definite about how the organisms originated and cannot be used as proof of Darwinian-style evolution.

Further, talks about genetic similarities can be quite deceptive, considering the level of complexity of genetic structures. For example, some evolutionists argue that since humans and chimps have 98.4% similar DNA, it’s clear that they have an evolutionary linkage. But Dr. Barnay Maddox, leading genome and genetic researcher, points out that the 1.6% difference in DNA amounts to a difference of 48 million nucleotides. And a difference of only 3 nucleotides proves fatal to an animal.

BREEDING

Ever since the time of Darwin, the changes resulting from breeding have been put forward as evidence for evolution. If man can produce limited changes in plants and animals over a few generations, then just imagine the possibilities of change over the course of millions of years. So goes the reasoning.

But evolution by natural selection and inducing changes in plants and animals by breeding are not at all comparable. In breeding there is a deliberate intent to obtain specific results—a bigger apple, a cow that produces more milk—but in the process of natural selection there is no intelligent directing plan.

Also, all available evidence shows that there are limits to the changes that can be brought about by breeding. The French zoologist Pierre-P. Grassi points out in his book *Evolution of Living Organisms*, “The changes

brought about in the genetic stock [by breeding] affect appearances much more than fundamental structures and functions. In spite of the intense pressure applied by artificial selection (eliminating any parent not answering the criterion of choice) over whole millenia, no new species are born. ... Ten thousands years of mutations, cross-breeding, and selection have mixed the inheritance of the canine species in innumerable ways without its losing its chemical and cytological [cellular] unity. The same is observed of all domestic animals: the ox (at least 4,000 years old), the fowl (4,000), the sheep (6,000), etc.”

The process of breeding is something like stretching a rubber band. It stretches only so far—and then it either breaks or snaps back. For example, during the nineteenth century, domesticated rabbits were brought into Australia, where there were no native rabbits. When some of these domesticated rabbits escaped, they bred freely among themselves, and very quickly their descendants reverted to the original, wild type.

In short, it may be possible to induce changes in the existing form by breeding (making the creature smaller or bigger, for example), but it does not appear possible to generate entirely new complex structures in the organism in this way. If this cannot happen by man’s conscious efforts, why should we assume it could happen by blind natural processes? ❁

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Trying To Make Sense Of It All

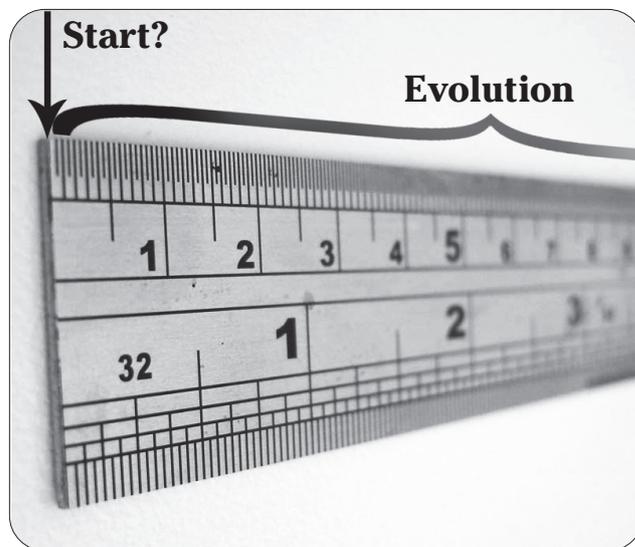
Overlooking frequent use of the words ‘if’, ‘but’, ‘perhaps’ and ‘must,’ answers provided by Darwinist thought look so right and convincing. But it is strange. There is a lot of uncertainty on one side and so much certainty on the other side. Here we try to pose some common sense questions that require answers by such a “certain” theory.

1. WHAT ABOUT THE START?

Darwin’s theory starts off from a point. It doesn’t talk about how did life start in the first place. This fundamental question is very important. Without understanding where life came from, how can we be sure about how did it evolve after that?

Some supporters are very quick to explain very tacitly—living things emerged spontaneously from the chemicals present in warm, shallow waters on the early Earth. But what chemicals?

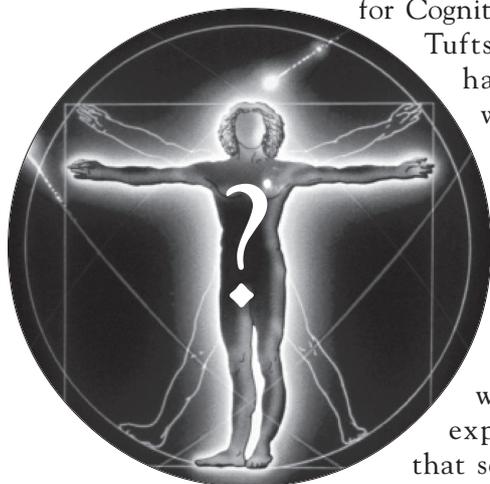
And what more complicated chemicals emerged from that primordial soup with the ability to reproduce themselves and evolve by some kind of Darwinian process? No one yet knows.



2. WHAT ABOUT CONSCIOUSNESS?

They simply have no good answers. When does matter combine to produce consciousness? What causes this change? Why is it caused?

Daniel C. Dennett, the director of the Center for Cognitive Studies at Tufts University, has come up with a book title quite audaciously, “Consciousness Explained.” He has tried to come up with a scientific explanation for that sense of being that everyone feels.



Ever since Emil Du Bois-Reymond demonstrated in 1843 that electricity and not some supernatural life force travels through the nervous system, scientists have tried to explain mental life biologically. It’s been a long, slow haul. An important step was taken in the early 1940’s when the neurologist-philosopher Warren McCulloch and the teen-age prodigy Walter Pitts showed how webs of neurons exchanging electrical signals could work like little computers, picking out patterns from the confusion buzzing at our senses. Inspired by this metaphor, neuroscientists have been making the case that memories are laid when the brain forms new connections, linking up patterns of neurons that stand for things in the outside world.

But who, or what, is reading these neurological archives? The self? The ego? The soul? For want of a theory of consciousness, it is easy to fall back on the image of a little person — a homunculus, the philosophers call it — who sits in the cranial control

room monitoring a console of gauges and pulling the right strings. But then, of course, we're stuck with explaining the inner workings of this engineer-marionette. Does it too have a little creature inside

it? If so, we fall into an infinite regress, with homunculi embedded in homunculi like an image ricocheting between mirrors.

And where do we stop?

3. WHAT ABOUT MALES AND FEMALES?

It is common knowledge that some organisms reproduce by asexual reproduction (process in which an unicellular organism just divides into two to form two organisms which will undergo the same process further for propagation) while some by sexual reproduction (the male and female of a specie come together and produce the offspring which could be a male or a female). These two systems are completely different in their workings. In the course of evolution, how and when did the transition take place? When did the organisms undergoing asexual reproduction stop doing so and start sexual reproduction consisting of union of male and female forms?



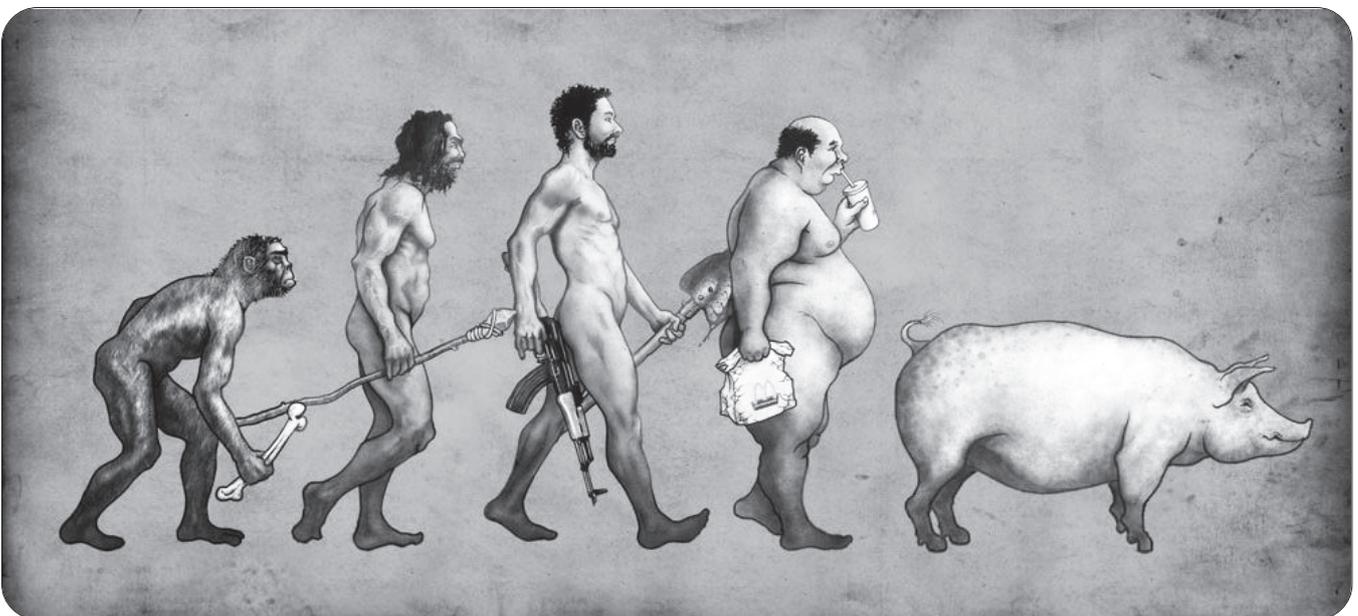
4. WHY DOES IT STOP AT HUMANS?

As per the evolution theory, the current man is at the peak of evolution. Do we really feel so? Is the nature/ behavior/ culture of modern man really the best? There is a lot of technology around than ever before but what about the people who use that technology? Are they better than ever before too? We have to answer this question to guide us to the

final answer.

This also smells of anthropocentrism (human centeredness). Modern scientists' findings always start off from lower life forms and end with the modern human being as the very emblem of development and betterment. But is it compulsory?

There could be more advanced life-forms than present-day humans right now.



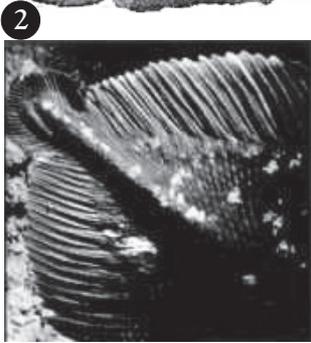


Fig 1: 70 million year old fossil of Coelacanth fish. A comparison of fig 2 (tail of present day Coelacanth fish) & fig 3 (tail of fossil) reveals hardly any difference.



6. WHAT ABOUT CO-EXISTING HUMAN BEINGS WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS OF ADVANCEMENTS?

Were future scientists to discover the remains of twentieth century aboriginal tribes in some undeveloped, tribal African country untouched by modern technology, and find primitive weapons like knives etc., would it be valid for them to conclude that such were the dominant form of human life in the twentieth century? Is it valid to understand that the whole of earth at such a time was inhabited by human beings of this undeveloped culture? Of course not. Right when African tribes are living using primitive goods, people in most advanced Western countries are using the most advanced technology. However, this is exactly what the scientists predict with fossil findings. Because one particular fossil is dated at a particular date, they



conclude that similar people must have inhabited the entire world at the prevalent time. But the particular fossil may represent only a tiny fraction of the entire human race on the planet at that time.

7. WHAT ABOUT CREMATION?

Even today, followers of Hinduism following the Vedic culture cremate the dead bodies by burning

them. Such bodies are completely destroyed by the fire, thus leaving no evidence for future paleontologists to speculate about. Some accidents



which might involve death in a non-conventional way might leave behind some unburnt skeletons, to be later discovered by paleontologists as fossils. But majority will be incinerated. As per the vedic texts, till around 5000 years ago, the world was primarily following Vedic culture, with the exclusion of a few exceptions. Thus, there is a very less chance of getting bones from the ages bygone. Proof of Darwinism rests on a very thin surface of empirical guesswork. It is actually no proof at all.



First religious...

(Continued from page 19)

till date for allowing a pro-ID article to appear in a “scientific, peer-reviewed” journal.

There are more like Dr Caroline Crocker, who was sacked from her job because of mentioning Intelligent Design in a class.

Crocker had a position as a part-time faculty member of George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia. She alleges that, in April 2005, her department barred her from teaching evolution and intelligent design after she mentioned intelligent design while teaching her second-year cell biology course. The dean of the College of Arts and Sciences stated that the university did not have a policy or a rule on whether certain topics should be discussed, but questioned whether a concept with theological underpinnings

belonged in a science course. He added “I’m a Buddhist, but I don’t think we should teach reincarnation in biology classes.”

NO CONFRONTATIONS PLEASE!

Around the world, evolutionists systematically have been anti-creationists. But they willfully try not to meet with any creationists. Posing unilateral arguments and ad hominem attacks, they clearly know that evolution is not a laboratory science and hence is non-testable. They use all kinds of scientific jargon and confuse the minds of the simple. Experimental evidence is minimal. Most reliance is on fossil evidence, about which several have expressed their doubts.

Why do the modern educationists not include any other explanation of life or its appearance in the textbooks of today? In an age when the masses rule by their opin-

ion, when the media is ruled completely by the public taste, it is strange to observe that the educational curriculum is one-sided when it comes to answering questions about life.

They say ‘history repeats itself.’ The very crimes that modern scientific academia accuses religionists of, are being committed by themselves now, albeit with a tag of being scientific. Science, they say, is about finding out the truth. It appears though that not all are welcome in this pursuit. A few who will comply with the conditions laid down are favored while others are put to test. First, it was religious dogmatism and now it is scientific fundamentalism. The world, it appears has hardly changed. ☸

Readers may also want to visit the website www.expelledthemovie.com for more details on the subject.

Glossary

Cambrian Explosion: The theory holds that, beginning some 545 million years ago, an explosion of diversity led to the appearance of a huge number of complex, multi-celled organisms over a relatively short period of 5 million to 10 million years. Moreover, this burst of animal forms led to most of the major animal groups we know today, that is, every extant Phylum (group of animals based on general body plan, as well as developmental or internal organizations). The Cambrian explosion gave rise to the first shelled animals and animals with exoskeletons.

Creationism: Creationism is belief in the literal interpretation of the account of the creation of universe and of all living beings described in the scripture. Since this term is popular in the West, the word “scripture” refers primarily to the Bible.

Fossils: Fossils are the preserved remains or traces of animals, plants, and other organisms from the remote past.

Geocentrism: In astronomy, the geocentric model of the universe is the theory that the Earth is the center of the universe and other objects go around it. Belief in this system was common in ancient Greece. Most of ancient Greek philosophers assumed that the Sun, Moon, stars, and planets circle the Earth.

Heliocentrism: In astronomy, heliocentrism is the theory that the Sun is at the center of the Universe. Historically, heliocentrism was opposed to geocentrism. Though discussions on the possibility of heliocentrism are quite old, it was not until the 16th century, that the Polish mathematician and astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus presented a fully predictive mathematical model of a heliocentric system.

Intelligent Design (ID) Movement: The movement is a campaign, prominent in the US, that calls for broad social, academic and political changes derived from the concept of “intelligent design” (the theory of “intelligent design” holds that certain features of the universe and of living beings are best explained by an intelligent cause, not by an undirected process such as natural selection). They try to promote public awareness of this concept, persuade policymakers to include its teaching in high school science classes. Proponents believe that the theory of evolution implies that humans have no spiritual nature, no moral purpose, and no intrinsic meaning. The movement’s proponents seek to defeat the materialist world view represented by the theory of evolution.

Orkut: Orkut is a free-access social networking service owned and operated by Google. The service is designed to help users meet new friends and maintain existing relationships.

Photosynthesis: Photosynthesis is a process that converts carbon dioxide into organic compounds, especially sugars, using the energy from sunlight. Photosynthesis occurs in plants, algae, and many species of bacteria.

CENTRES IN INDIA

Founder-Acarya: His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivendanta Swami Prabhupada

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as of
31 July
2009

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Vaiṣṇava Calendar 1 Sept - 15 Oct 2009

- 1 SEP:** Break fast (Mumbai) 06:24 am - 10:34 am, Appearance of Lord Vāmanadeva (Fasting till noon on Ekādaśī (31 August 2009), feasting today.), Śrīla Jiva Gosvāmī Appearance
- 2 SEP:** Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura – Appearance (Fasting till noon)
- 3 SEP:** Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura – Disappearance
- 4 SEP:** Śrī Viśvarūpa Mahotsava, Acceptance of sannyāsa by Śrīla Prabhupāda, Third month of Cāturmasya begins (Fast from milk for one month.)
- 11 SEP:** Śrīla Prabhupāda's arrival in the USA
- 15 SEP:** Fasting for Indirā Ekādaśī
- 16 SEP:** Break fast (Mumbai) 06:26 am - 08:51 am
- 28 SEP:** Rāmacandra Vijayotsava, Śrī Madhvācārya – Appearance
- 30 SEP:** Fasting for Pāśāṅkuśa Ekādaśī
- 1 OCT:** Break fast (Mumbai) 06:29 am - 09:06 am, Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī – Disappearance, Śrīla Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī – Disappearance, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavīrāja Gosvāmī – Disappearance
- 4 OCT:** Śrī Kṛṣṇa Śaradiya Rāsāyatrā, Śrī Murāri Gupta – Disappearance, Lakṣmī Pūjā, Fourth month of Cāturmāsya begins (Fast from urad dahl for one month.)
- 9 OCT:** Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura – Disappearance
- 11 OCT:** Appearance of Rādhā Kuṇḍa, Snāna dāna, Bahulāṣṭamī
- 12 OCT:** Virabhadra – Appearance
- 14 OCT:** Fasting for Ramā Ekādaśī
- 15 OCT:** Break fast (Mumbai) 06:33 am - 10:27 am

Giving Something Special

Dear Readers,

The issue you are holding in your hands is a special one.

It is fully dedicated to 'examining' the work of Charles Darwin. Darwin had himself suggested that none of his ideas should offend the religious sensibilities of anyone. Similarly we hope that none of the views presented in this issue should offend the 'scientific' sensibilities of anyone. If they do, then we welcome your comments.

Our articles begin with the need of dedicating a whole issue to Darwin. It is a fact that his views have challenged the age-old beliefs about the process of creation and have the right to commandeer so many pages. Next we have tried to explain the socio-economic climate in which this theory took root. A lot more than just a simple voyage on the HMS Beagle has contributed in making this theory acceptable - The Industrial Revolution, the frustration in dealing with institutionalised religion, the favourable climate for new thought, the greed for exploiting material nature and so forth.

'A Friendly Conversation' tries to understand how today's youth perceive the contribution of Darwin and how they can come to terms with it. The article 'Evidence - Let It Speak' takes a cold, hard look at the dark side of science which has sometimes presented facts incorrectly, sometimes has misinterpreted observations and sometimes has even stooped down to the level of forgeries and other tactics in order to claim authenticity. The article 'Trying to make a sense of it all' critically examines some of the irregularities which challenge Darwin's thought.

We plan to dedicate one more issue to address this topic in further detail.

As always, your feedback is most welcome! ❁

- Śyamānanda Dāsa

