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Scientific Humility: Scientific Honesty – Hypothesis and Science

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It is not that scientists make an hypothesis first, [\[1\]](#) and then try to find the data to fit that hypothesis. Rather, the process is first observation, then an hypothesis is made to describe the data, then conclude that the data has been described by the hypothesis. But this is not an explanation of the phenomenon. It is merely a description of the data in different terms, usually mathematics. It is essentially a tautology.

Thus to observe various points and connect them by a line or curve, then to find the mathematical formula that will construct that curve is said to be the law of the curve or the law governing the data points. If those data points happen to be the positions of a planet in space at different times, then the mathematical equation that produces the points on that curve is called the law of motion of the planets.

Now, in origin of life studies, observation reveals that life comes from life only. There is no evidence whatsoever to indicate that life is produced out of non-living matter. It was Louis Pasteur who disproved this theory of abiogenesis. From a purely empirical viewpoint, therefore, we have no justification for stating that life comes from inanimate matter. The evidence is that throughout the entire history of modern science such a production of life from matter has never been observed.

The question is: Why make a hypothesis about something that has never been observed? If we want to be scientific, then our hypothesis must match the data. Life comes from life is observed all over the Earth, and we might say, all over the universe as far as we have observed it. So where is the justification for claiming otherwise? Rather, we must conclude that the claim that life comes from matter is completely unscientific because it

is not a conclusion based on any empirical observation at all. It is purely wishful thinking — a “naturalistic” or materialistic ideology that is masquerading as science. It is thus doubly deceitful since it is not only an unproven belief but an ideology that poses as a scientific theory.

Another area where ideology overrules scientific observation is the hypothesis of Darwinian evolution. A variety of different species is observed, but what has never been observed is one species producing another. Dogs give birth to dogs, however many breeding varieties may be produced. We have never in the course of human history observed a dog give birth to a horse. We have never observed populations of plants giving rise to a population of insects, etc.

For the sake of a hypothesis based on no conclusive evidence whatsoever, the evolutionary ideology has taken control of biology to such severe degree that any other conception of the nature of life and its origin is not even considered part of science. But as we have noted here, ideology is not science. Or if we assume that ideology is part of science, then we must be willing to accept other ideological premises that at least agree with observed empirical facts.

The facts are: the Cambrian explosion [2] occurs in which (a) species appear suddenly without any precursor species, and (b) no transitional forms have ever been observed being produced from any species in the history of mankind.

The conclusion from the data should be: there is no such thing as evolution of species. This should be the working hypothesis based on observation. If such data is found that this hypothesis must be changed, then we will have to deal with that. But the data available at present has never supported evolution.

The original idea of Darwin was based on specious reasoning only. The change in the size of bird beaks, does not indicate a drastic evolution of giraffes from zebras. Adaption within a species is a well known phenomenon. But this adaptability does not encompass a complete change of species.

Modern advances in biology since the time of Darwin, that have allowed observation of the inner workings of simple cells, have created another great hurdle to Darwinian evolutionary thinking. The vast complexity of even the smallest cell shows that such organisms have no conceivable chance of ever having arisen by a random combination of chemical or biological parts.

Thus advancement of science has provided more substantial evidence against evolution than ever before. The so-called tree-of-life has been completely chopped down to a very tenuous bush [3] due to the tracing of genetic lines through various species. The root of this bush is merely posited an extra, without any evidence whatsoever or even a plausible hypothesis for how a supposed original cell created the bush.

The whole idea that we bring to the study of Nature, is that living organisms are each independent, self-subsisting life forms that somehow evolve or transmutate from one form to another. However, this viewpoint completely ignores the well-known interdependence of life forms on one another and on their environment. The true ecological unity of life on Earth, which is known as the Gaia principle (called *Bhumi* in Sanskrit texts), is not acknowledged in the insular concept of cellular life that is maintained today.

We propose that Life is an organic unity that appears in a myriad of forms throughout the planet displaying its inherently determinate nature (as a unity in difference) as a variegated display of species from the lowly microbe to the dominate *Bhumi* conception, and beyond to encompass the rest of the universe. This is in keeping with the *Vedantic* worldview. Thus Life is a universal organic unity that exhibits itself as a complete spectrum of living unities, as much as white light when passed through a prism exhibits itself as a rainbow of colors. One color does not evolve from another, and so too does

Life exhibit itself in a variety of forms that constitute the wholeness of Life in its full determinateness.

Since the beginning of time, *Veda* has plainly stated the obvious that has always been observed by every man, woman and child who ever lived. “*janmady asya yato*” – the origin of everything is “*abhijnah svarat*” – the unitary Supreme Cognizant Being, as given in the very first text of *Bhagavat Purana*. [4] Consciousness, in other words, comes from consciousness. It does not come from unconscious matter, as materialism dogmatically avers without trace of even the slightest logical reasoning. Where there is cognition or consciousness, there is life. So life comes from life. This is the *Vedic* conclusion “*janmady asya yatah*” – the conclusion of *Vedanta-sutra*. [5] And it is scientific. This implies that whatever contradicts such conclusion must be unscientific, based purely on dogmatic ideology, or misguided ideology.

Our position is that real scientific knowledge is based on the *Vedantic* viewpoint. And we are engaged in presenting that from a purely scientific and rational viewpoint for all the world to confirm and accept, and to overthrow the misconceived materialist ideology that has gained hegemony over the modern mind and soul of Man. This is the aim of the Bhaktivedanta Institute and We are ready to debate any challengers to convince them in the clearest way that *Vedanta* and *Bhagavatam* is to be the paradigm to guide future humanity toward genuine scientific knowledge. We request all scientists to learn this wisdom and verify it in their scientific research in order to establish the *Vedanta* and *Bhagavatam* as the authentic scientific knowledge by which humanity can make real progress in understanding the true nature of material nature and the spiritual self.

References

[1] Of course today, the mathematical system that is adopted for explaining physical phenomena is used to make predictions that are only later observed as proof of the validity of the mathematical equations. Thus the mathematical system of physics has its own symmetry laws that govern its validity without reference to the empirical data. The assumption is that the a priori system yields results that can be verified by empirical observation. But this is the reverse of the original observation-hypothesis-conclusion method of empirical science.

[2] Much has been written about the Cambrian explosion or Biological Big Bang. See for example, Simon Conway-Morris, “The Cambrian explosion of metazoans and molecular biology: would Darwin be satisfied?” Cambridge Earth Sciences Publication ES 7550.

[3] See for example, Graham Lawton, “Why Darwin was wrong about the tree of life”, “New Scientist,” Issue 2692, 21 January 2009. Also, Eugene V Koonin, “Darwinian evolution in the light of genomics”, a review in “Nucleic Acid Research,” 2009.

[4] *Srimad Bhagavatam 1.1.1* (see <http://srimadbhagavatam.com/1/1/1/en1>)

[5] *Vedanta-sutra 1.1.2*

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