THE GREAT DELUSION

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ABSTRACT

The involvement of science with metaphysical doctrines for purposes irrelevant to the aims of science is one of the most important problems in contemporary education and general information. It is necessary to reveal the delusion that evolutionists and materialists have created by presenting their metaphysical doctrines as scientific fact. This paper makes a brief but thorough analysis of the issue and presents a practical proposal for an effective confrontation.

Since the last century, the rapid and fascinating development of the physical or empirical sciences as well as technological achievement has provided the opportunity to use the name of science for purposes of supporting philosophical ideas and metaphysical aims which are out of the scope, competency, and capability of empirical science.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS IN SCIENCE

Let us begin with the fundamental principles in any human activity (and therefore in science) which form the basis of such assumptions. The basic premises for the existence of science itself and any scientific activity are as follows:

a) The self-consciousness of our real existence.
b) The external natural world is real.
c) Our natural senses give us a reasonable, reliable perception of the external world.
d) The natural world is orderly and reproducible and therefore is subject to and worthy of systematic investigation.
e) The laws of logic are valid.

These five assumptions are not pure philosophical assertions, but are mainly empirical ascertainments independent of any philosophical attempt to explain them or to question them.

Because science is by definition, by its nature and purposes, generally accepted as a human empirical attempt to learn more about the natural world, these five admissions are fundamental necessities inherent to science, since without them there is no way to define any kind of scientific activity as a human pursuit.

It is possible, of course, to question these fundamental assumptions. But, in such a case, science is automatically disallowed as a human activity; in its place is set any loose, unconditional thought or proposal, thus engaging in philosophical, not scientific, activity. By definition, science means the agreement concerning some basic, self-evident, reasonable principles. Without such an agreement (explicit or implicit), science loses any meaning and becomes merely a philosophical or metaphysical belief. Professor Dr. J. Mannois says: Science deals in what can be experienced with the five senses. It is an empirical and experimental activity. This principle is the very strength of science. It is at the heart of science to be concerned with making observations of the world. The scientific activity both begins and ends there.(1)

THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD OF RESEARCH

Settling the basic assumptions in science, the scientific method is a next important step.

The scientific method, say Drs. Wayne Frair and Persival Davis in a brief and very comprehensive analysis(2), is a hybrid of two main forms of thought--deduction and induction.

Deduction is probably the most common form of inferential logic in which the necessary consequences of a fact are determined. Induction is the means by which we interpret observations and assess their significance. It is the process of formulating generalizations. The drawback of induction is that it can be used too subjectively. It is easy to make erroneous generalizations, especially when they are drawn from insufficient data. Yet induction is a cornerstone of the scientific method. The only way we obtain the raw material of reason is to make observations and generalize them.

Such tentative generalizations are called hypotheses. An hypothesis is a proposed explanation for some problem or phenomenon that catches the attention of the scientist. A prediction is a logical consequence of that hypothesis. Predictions are validated by attempted observation. To generate the necessary observation, scientists usually design controlled experiments.

The characteristics of a genuine hypothesis that distinguish it most from dogma on one hand and speculation on the other, are that a hypothesis is both tentative and falsifiable. Because the essence of a scientific hypothesis is its falsifiability, a hypothesis that is proposed in such a way that it cannot be discredited even if it is untrue, lies outside the scope of the scientific method. It could be true in fact, but it is scientifically undemonstrable and it is not really a scientific hypothesis at all. Such proposals are usually called unfalsifiable hypotheses and are therefore metaphysical postulates.

To be useful as a hypothesis, Drs. Frair and Davis add that it must be falsifiable and it must suggest predictions of what will be observed if the hypothesis is false. The only way science can progress is negatively--by paring away hypotheses that can be proven false by falsifying their predictions.

We must always remember that the scientific method works in real time. It is impossible or exceedingly difficult to establish historical events or their meaning in the domain of empirical science by the scientific method, because retroduced facts are usually open to a variety of interpretations. It is not possible to obtain scientific knowledge of these natural events of the past.

Professor Sir Karl Popper(3) deals extensively with falsification as an essential element in science.

"The purpose of science as an activity is to form conceptual generalizations about the many particulars of empirical experience," says Dr. J. Mannois. It is concerned with both particular observations and with general concepts, i.e., to form ideas about these observations (hypotheses, theories or mere guesses). He makes a careful examination of scientific activity and points out three important processes: Discovery, Prediction and Confirmation.

The process of discovery is an activity moving from the level of particular observations to general theories. Having arrived at a tentative theory or working hypothesis, it remains to test its truth. The first step of that test is the process we call "prediction." Because most theories are of a general character, prediction is usually a process of moving from general to particular. Predictions are the observable consequences of the theory. They follow from a theory by the logic of deduction and proceed according to a precise and a rigid set of rules that we all use every day in our own thinking. It would almost seem that we are born with rules of deduction stamped in our minds. In any valid deduction, if the premises are true, the conclusion must be true. This element of necessity applies then to predictions drawn from theories. No prediction can ever test a theory unless an experiment is performed. Therefore, it is necessary for science to turn to the domain of sense experience as its ultimate criterion of truth. Here we must point out that the logic of confirmation is inductive while the logic of falsification is actually deductive. While this logic of falsification is deductively valid, the logic of confirmation (induction) is deductively fallacious. It consists of the fallacy of affirming the consequent.

Dr. Mannois, analyzing the process of induction, i.e., the process of using particulars to support a general statement, faces the problem of unexamined cases and leads to the classic problem of induction and concludes that there is a subtle but very profound uncertainty in the theories of science which results from the method by which they are formed. The problem of induction seems inescapable. Thus science, not unlike religion, appears to rest ultimately on faith. Scientists either consciously accept the assumption that the certainty of physical laws, and much more their theories, rest ultimately on faith, or else ignore the issue and accept the assumption unconsciously.

Robert Herrmann(4) asserts: One of the absolute requirements of the scientific method and the logic employed is that a physical hypothesis that can be indirectly verified only, can-

not be absolutely demonstrated as "true in reality." All scientific inquiry that deals with matters of fact and is based upon indirect evidence is probable in character. Herrmann adds: There is one unfortunate aspect of speculative theories that does tend to force a scientist to accept a theory as "fact" at least for a while. History is replete with examples where prominent scientists have greatly embarrassed themselves by such an absolute acceptance of a theory as fact, only to discover at a later date that certain verifiable implications were proven false. Or they have simply accepted a theory as fact since, for political or philosophical reasons, the majority of their colleagues have accepted this popular theory as fact.

Although it is very interesting and useful to say something about the intrinsic uncertainties in science, I omit this topic because of lack of time and space.

What I want to emphasize here is the conclusion that Dr. Mannois mentions--that science is exclusively concerned with the empirical world of sense experience. Scientific knowledge is about the sensible world; it originates in sense experience and ultimately is tested against the standard of sense experience.

Another serious point mentioned by Dr. Mannois is the objectivity of the scientific knowledge which is founded, as we have seen, in sense experience. All scientific findings must necessarily be open to investigation and test by other members of the scientific community. Science fails to be the objective end because, in spite of the fact that pure non-subjectivity is not a feature of any kind of knowledge, scientific knowledge will be inter-subjectively testable and based on the distinction between repeatable and unique events. It is interesting to note what Drs. Ch. Thaxton, W. Bradley and R. Olsen(5) say on scientific theories: it is widely appreciated that from its beginning modern science has been concerned with findings and describing orderly patterns in the recurring events of nature. To do this a well-defined method is used. Data are gathered through observation and experimentation and theories are proposed to explain the behavior or operation of the phenomena investigated. Theories only work if there is some pattern of recurring events against which theories may be checked and falsified if they are false. Because there are recurring patterns of natural events we can test theories about them. They call such theories "operational theories," for these theories are concerned with the recurring phenomena of nature.

On the other hand, an understanding of the universe (and the natural world in general) includes some singular events, such as its origin. Unlike the recurring operations of the universe, origins cannot be repeated for experimental test. The beginnings of life just won't repeat themselves for the testing of our theories.

In the customary language of science, theories of origins cannot be falsified by empirical test, as can operational theories.

Hypotheses of origins (generally dealing with unrepeatable singular events) are not empirically testable or falsifiable since the datum (namely the origin) needed for experimental test is unavailable. The best we can ever hope to achieve with wrong ideas about origins is to render them implausible. Theories of origins and, generally, theories about first and last causes must be distinctly defined and separated from empirical science. The lack of such a distinction today and the minimal recognition of the fundamental difference between theories of origin and operational scientific theories is one of the main reasons that most of today's scientists misconstrue materialistic world views and the theory of evolution as "scientific."

The validity and acceptance of any theory about origins, or about first and last causes, which is purely a metaphysical theory, depends on the preference of each individual and not on scientific evidences or results. It is really a pure act of metaphysical faith and not of scientific knowledge.

The origins perspective of metaphysical/naturalistic evolutionism is spontaneous generation (abiogenesis); of theism the perspective is special Creation. The conflict between those two fundamental metaphysical alternatives and interpretations of the nature of reality is not, as naturalists like to present, merely a conflict between science and the supernatural (religion), but exclusively between two metaphysical assumptions, as demonstrated already.

SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND METAPHYSICAL ASSUMPTIONS

It is of special importance here to clarify further the distinction between scientific knowledge and metaphysical assumptions by defining the boundaries and limits of scientific knowledge. Although this matter is one of the most critical issues in epistemology, we will present only some main points briefly.

Professor Dr. A. Tsirintanis made a very interesting analysis of this issue.(6) Summarizing his remarks, it is evident that there is a barrier that confines our knowledge of reality within certain (albeit always expanding) bounds. There is a barrier that exists, a "fence" that limits our knowledge and which, although it is constantly receding, can never be removed due to the limitations of the human mind. Any proposition or question or hypothesis that, due to its nature cannot be verified either at present or in the future by science through observation and/or experimentation, is not a scientific but a metaphysical issue. It cannot be proven nor tested because it lies beyond the capacity of the human mind to verify or refute it. But we must be careful at this point. The fact that I do not "see" something (says Tsirintanis) is not a proof that it does not exist. We have every right to say that we know nothing about realities which cannot be scientifically tested, but we have no right to say we know there is no reality beyond that which can be checked by science, for no scientific test has ever proven the truth or falsity of such an argument. It is an argument supported only by the fallacy of human omniscience, according to which man knows "positively" everything, and whatever is not known or knowable by man simply does not exist. However, both the history of science and everyday experience reveal new realities which were "positively" unknown before; therefore, according to this materialistic way of thinking, we are being led to the absurd conclusion of their non-existence.

The philosophical doctrine of materialism asserts that sense and empiricism are its fundamental frame of acceptance. But, although materialists put forward this assertion, they deny it at the same time because they reject the worldwide human experience expressed in the impeccable reasoning: "For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God" (Heb. 3:4). In other words, materialism contradicts its basis of acceptance when it tries to support itself on the absurdity of not accepting what sense and empiricism confirm to man. Materialism refuses itself! Whereas it claims to adopt only the data of sense and empiricism, immediately it denies them, since rejection of human experience is the assertion of the spontaneous (without any Creator) creation ex nihilo of our natural world.

So materialists claim they are dealing with science when, in fact, they are dealing with metaphysics without suspecting it--without knowing that they present their metaphysical doctrines (spontaneous ex nihilo creation of the world) as if it were scientifically proven. And this is the great and most important fallacy: the great deception of contemporary man.

According to Professor Sir Peter Medawar, recipient of the 1960 Nobel Prize in Medicine, there is an intrinsic, built-in limitation upon the growth of scientific understanding. It is a logical limitation that turns on a "Law of Conservation of Information," i.e., no process of logical reasoning--no mere act of mind or computer-programmable operation--can enlarge the information content of the axioms and premises or observation statements from which it proceeds.(7)

The law of conservation of information makes it clear that from observational statements or descriptive laws having only empirical furniture there is no process of reasoning by which we may derive theorems having to do with first and last causes.

To continue, a distinction must be drawn between questions of the kind science can answer and questions belonging to some other realm of discourse to which we must turn if they are to be answered at all. My contention in the discussion so far is that it is logically outside the competence of science to answer questions having to do with first and last causes.

Ralph Ancil states, "If we conceive of science as somehow involving a search for the laws of nature, say, like the law of gravity, or the laws of planetary motion, then what are the laws of ultimate origins?"(8)

The singular, historical event of the generation of the cosmos is more of a metaphysical concern than a scientific one. This should be especially clear when it is recalled that science, among other things, relies on the inductive method to derive laws of nature which were not formerly known. How could this method possibly apply in the study of ultimate origins?

Professor Dr. John Moore(9) says about the problem of origins in science that since operational science (according to the terms of Drs. Ch. Thaxton et al) involves the gathering of data through experiment and observation, leading to the formulation of theories which are valid if they are, among others, tested indirectly by repeated observation and experiment. Discussions of origins problems (particularly including the origins of life) are not part of operational science.

This is characteristic of what Dr. Henry Morris writes on this matter: It must also be emphasized that it is impossible to prove scientifically any particular concept of origins

to be true. This is obvious from the fact that the essence of the scientific method is experimental observation and repeatability. This means that, though it is important to have a philosophy of origins, it can only be achieved by faith, not by sight. That is no argument against it, however. Every step we take in life is a step of faith. Even the pragmatist who insists he will believe only what he can see believes that his pragmatism is the best philosophy, although he can't prove it. He also believes in invisible atoms and in such abstractions as the future. Furthermore, it is clear that neither evolution nor creation is, in the proper sense, either a scientific theory or a scientific hypothesis. Though people might speak of the "theory of evolution" or the "theory of creation," such terminology is imprecise. This is because neither can be tested. A valid scientific hypothesis must be capable of being formulated experimentally, such that the experimental results either confirm or reject its validity. A more proper approach is to think in terms of two scientific models--the evolutionary model and the creationist model. A "model" is a conceptual framework, an orderly system of thought, within which one tries to correlate observable data and even to predict data. When neither can be proved, the decision between the two cannot be solely objective.(10)

Also, Dr. Duane Gish(11) underlines the fact that neither creation nor evolution has ever been observed by human witnesses. Neither is subject to the experimental method and neither is capable of falsification. It is evident then that neither evolution nor creation qualifies as a scientific theory.

He mentions, besides others, clear acknowledgment and confessions by distinguished evolutionists that evolution fails to qualify as a scientific theory since it cannot be subjected to experimental test. Thus, it is outside empirical science. It is axiomatic in nature.

Another serious point to clarify is what materialists call "naturalistic explanation." Dr. Karl Fezer(12) remarks: If by this expression they mean that science must be empirical and that ultimate recourse, with which no one could disagree, is the sense data, then they are self-contradictory because they do not admit that unique historical events in the natural world are outside any empirical search and test, hence are excluded from scientific investigation.

The inherent nature and aims of natural science and its existing capability are to deal with the reproducible empirical world. Everything in the empirical world which is not reproducible at least in its main essential and typical characteristics and components is excluded from scientific research. The only way to approach these unique singular events or phenomena of the natural world not reproducible at the time of investigation is the formulation of various tentative explanatory hypotheses or theories which in turn cannot give any certain knowledge since they may be reasonable yet contradictory to each other because of their compulsory metaphysical or religious bases.

Thus the argument that the majority of scientists should agree and adopt a materialistic/metaphysical system such as the theory of evolution is ridiculous. The criterion of scientific research and validity is not a statistical referendum among scientists, but objectively what can be subjected to scientific research by the scientific methods of testing.

Dr. Bert Thompson(13) adds: Truth isn't determined by popular opinion or majority vote. This is a common ploy on the part of evolutionists. In logic the argument is termed "ad populum"--the appeal to the people.

CONCLUSION

Due to the fact that the theory of evolution has inherently a metaphysical nature and character, it abuses the name of science for purposes outside the aims and work of science.

Exposing this reality, in my opinion, should be the most important aim and pursuit of every creationist. It will help to eliminate the prevailing illusion and delusion that the theory of evolution is scientific.

In order to realize effectively such an effort, I propose a draft of a declaration which should be circulated and signed by as many scientists as possible in the USA and abroad.

I have formulated a proposed text of this declaration as brief and explicit as possible (I know a similar declaration made by Dr. R. Kofhal of the Creation-Science Research Center, which, although it is quite good, is rather extensive, involving questionable matters and expositions which are not acceptable to many scientific creationists) so that any unprejudiced scientist, irrelevant of his metaphysical or religious views, can adopt and sign it:

DECLARATION

1. The rapid and fascinating development and achievements of the natural sciences have provided the opportunity to use the name of science for purposes of supporting philosophical ideas and metaphysical aims which are outside the scope and competency of natural sciences.

2. Beyond any philosophical definition or disputation, it is generally agreed that the pursuits of the natural sciences are, on one hand, the systematic description, search and study of various repeatable and reproducible natural phenomena and events in order to identify interrelations and interactions between them so as to formulate general rules for their appearance and forecast, acquiring more and better knowledge about the natural world and, on the other hand, the possible uses of such knowledge for practical and useful applications for the benefit of mankind.

3. Basic admissions and necessary conditions for the existence and realization of the aims of natural sciences are:

a) The consciousness that we are real (self-consciousness of our real existence).

b) The external natural world is real.

c) Our natural senses give us a reasonable, reliable perception of the external world.

d) The natural world is orderly and reproducible and so worthy of systematic investigation.

e) The laws of logic are valid.

4. Every proposal and postulate in the form of hypothesis, theory or model which aims for better understanding or interpreting of a natural phenomenon or event must be consistent or inconsistent with the facts of the real natural world. Therefore, in order that any proposal, postulate, hypothesis or theory to lead to and furnish scientific knowledge and consequently to have any objective scientific value, it is absolutely necessary that it be subject to critical tests for verification or falsification by the existing empirical ways of observation and/or experimentation at any time of appropriate research.

5. Proposals, hypotheses, theories or models which are well known in advance, without any doubt, that are impossible of falsification with the empirical testing ways of observation and/or experimentation due to their inherent objective incapability for such testing are not scientific. They are only philosophical or metaphysical a priori assumptions which cannot provide a scientific knowledge of the natural world. Such assumptions are beyond the capability and competency of the natural sciences.

6. While personal rights of freedom of thought in philosophical, metaphysical or religious faith and doctrines and their public expression by any means are generally recognized and respected, they are absolutely unacceptable if presented as scientific facts or deductions.

7. Any attempt to present philosophical, religious, or metaphysical doctrines as results and facts of scientific research is unjustified and becomes a dangerous violation, adulteration and forgery of the goals and aims of science. Such inappropriate metaphysical insertions are misleading because they look forward to purposes irrelevant to science and consequently should be completely rejected from the scientific field of research.

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