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A Critical Examination of Science from Richard Dawkins' Perspective

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Abstract

Dr. Richard Dawkins, a contemporary evolutionary biologist and one of the most influential proponents of Darwin's theory of the evolution of species, stands among the foremost advocates of the evolutionary worldview. He upholds the *conflict model* in describing the relationship between science and religion, asserting that the theory of evolution renders any reconciliation between the two impossible. Consequently, Dawkins seeks to exclude religion from human life entirely—even as an abstract construct within human consciousness.

A central tenet of his worldview is the scientistic claim that science alone possesses the capacity to resolve the fundamental mysteries of existence. Although Dawkins is an ardent defender of scientism, he diverges from the classical positivists in that he does not deem non-scientific propositions meaningless. Instead, he endeavors to reinterpret religious assertions as meaningful statements, translate them into the language of science, and subsequently refute them through empirical and rational analysis.

This paper aims to present and critically evaluate Dawkins's position through the perspectives of notable scholars such as Alister McGrath, Alvin Plantinga, Michael Behe, and others. Given that Dawkins formulates his critique within a primarily Christian intellectual context, the present study also draws predominantly upon the views of Christian thinkers in its examination and assessment of his arguments.

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Foundations of Dawkins' View of Science

A. Science as the Ultimate Measure of All Things and the Source of All Meaningful Answers

Dawkins maintains that science is capable of explaining everything, and that belief in God is no longer necessary to account for the phenomena of the world—great or small. In his view, scientific progress continually reduces the intellectual space once occupied by belief in God, rendering such belief increasingly redundant.
He writes:

> The name 'God' represents a kind of folder constructed in the human mind throughout the centuries—into which people have placed all questions that lacked an answer. Yet as human science has advanced, many of these questions have been explained, and, correspondingly, this mental folder—labeled 'God'—has gradually emptied. Eventually, Darwin provided a solution that resolved many of humanity's problems and offered natural explanations for matters that had long seemed mysterious.[1]

Dawkins further asserts that Darwin's theory of evolution scientifically answered humanity's fundamental questions about the origins of living beings. Nevertheless, the "empty folder" of God remains in many minds and, like a virus, continues to infect other areas of thought. One of Dawkins' well-known claims, illustrating the explanatory power of science, is that "the existence of God can be treated as a scientific hypothesis." He concludes that, given the capacity of science to answer all human questions and uncertainties, theological explanations offered by theists are no longer necessary.
As he puts it,

> In the age of science, interpreting the world through the concept of God is a kind of disease.[2]

Dawkins thus establishes a form of competition between scientific and religious explanations. Relying on astonishing scientific advances and discoveries, he argues that explaining the world by reference to God constitutes a mental pathology—a "virus of the mind."[3] According to him, such beliefs originated in pre-scientific ages, gradually embedding themselves in the human psyche. Even in the modern era—an age of science and technology—people remain unable to detach from these inherited mental patterns. Dawkins compares these religious ideas to human genes, suggesting that they replicate and persist across generations, and he articulates this in his theory of *memes*.

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[1] Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, trans. A. Farzam (Tehran: n.p., 2006). P. 97.
[2] Dawkins, *The God Delusion,* P. 37.
[3] Ibid

1. The Theology of the Gaps

Elsewhere, Dawkins contends that the gaps and deficiencies in scientific understanding have historically led people toward belief in God—a view he calls *theology of the gaps*. This theology centers its faith upon the unexplained areas of the natural world, where science has not yet provided answers. In such frameworks, God becomes the "God of the gaps."

Like many critics of religion, Dawkins strongly opposes this approach. However, his opposition differs from that of traditional theists: because he views empirical science as the only valid means of explaining reality, he believes that accepting the exclusive explanatory authority of science leaves no room for a "God of the gaps."

From Dawkins' perspective, although science is currently unable to explain certain phenomena, such limitations are merely temporary. Future discoveries, he argues, will inevitably fill these gaps. Consequently, he rejects the *Intelligent Design* movement, which claims that certain irreducible complexities in nature point to a designer. Dawkins deems this line of thought *unscientific*, calling it a special case of *argument from ignorance*. He accuses its proponents of relying on the flawed logic of the "God of the gaps."[1]

In Dawkins' view, the best response to the theology of the gaps lies within Darwin's own theory of evolution. Given the validity of evolutionary theory, he argues, there remains no place for divine intervention in the realm of organic life.[2]

2. Dawkins' Scientism

2.1. Science Denies God

Dawkins is among those scientists who equate reality with empirical science. From his perspective, the existence or non-existence of any conceivable entity must be subject to empirical scrutiny — even if that entity is the invisible and immaterial God of the Abrahamic religions. Dawkins deserves credit for demystifying science: he rightly argues that the acceptance of scientific theories must rest upon abundant and credible evidence. However, since for him such evidence is restricted exclusively to sensory and observable data, he deems religion and sacred scriptures invalid and devoid of epistemic value[3].

Nevertheless, Dawkins admits that human beings do not have direct access to reality itself; rather, each organism perceives the world through a *model* constructed from sensory data — "selected and arranged in such a way as to be useful for getting by in the real world"[4]

[1] Dawkins, *The God Delusion,* P. 120.
[2] Ibid. P. 118.
[3] Ibid. P. 282.
[4] Ibid. P. 371.

2.2. The Existence of God as a Scientific Hypothesis

Unlike the logical positivists, who dismissed the statement "God exists" as meaningless, Dawkins considers it meaningful and subject to scientific investigation. Yet he seeks to demonstrate its falsehood. In his view, the truth or falsity of certain propositions — such as "God exists" — is, in principle, discoverable, even if no practical answer is ever reached. The *presence or absence of a super-intelligent creator* is, therefore, "undeniably a scientific question, even if, in practice, it cannot be answered."

2.3. Science Opposes Religion

From this standpoint, Dawkins' view of the relationship between science and religion becomes clear: he sees an inherent conflict between scientific knowledge and the content of sacred texts, and insists that reconciliation is impossible. The only way out of this dilemma, he argues, is either to discard scripture altogether or to interpret it purely symbolically[1].

He vehemently rejects the common idea that science deals with "how" questions while religion deals with "why" questions, considering this division a mere cliché[2]. For this reason, he also opposes the theory of *Non-Overlapping Magisteria* (NOMA) proposed by the American biologist Stephen Jay Gould, who claimed that science and religion occupy distinct domains of authority.

Although Dawkins respects Gould as a scientist, he accuses him of evading rather than solving the problem: "By separating science and religion, Gould has erased the question instead of answering it." The real issue, Dawkins insists, concerns the acceptance or rejection of a God who influences both the universe and its immutable natural laws. Such belief—or its denial—profoundly affects the way we view reality[3].

Thus, if God's influence extends to both the "how" and the "why" of existence, there remains no legitimate separation between science and religion. Dawkins goes so far as to label Gould's theory "political," suggesting that Gould, under pressure from religious communities, attempted to satisfy believers while simultaneously protecting science from theological intrusion.[4]

2.4. Religion as Superstition in the Age of Science

For Dawkins, both his distinctive version of Darwinian evolution and his radical scientism led to the same conclusion: religion is a human superstition. Since the empirical method of science suffices to explain the structure of existence, any competing worldview is rendered obsolete. When science encompasses all truths under its domain, nothing remains for religion but illusion and myth. Consequently, Dawkins doubts that theology—or any discipline dealing with the supernatural—deserves to be regarded as an academic field at all.

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[1] Dawkins, *The God Delusion,* P. 258.
[2] Ibid. P. 56.
[3] Ibid. P. 50.
[4] Ibid. P. 54.

2.5. Theology Is Neither a Science nor an Academic Discipline

Although Dawkins treats the existence of God as a legitimate scientific hypothesis, he denies theologians any intellectual credibility in this debate. Theologians, he argues, rely on abstract and philosophical reasoning rather than empirical methods. While acknowledging that the scientific truth or falsity of the "God hypothesis" may never be resolved, Dawkins insists that this does not justify theology's speculative and irrational discourse. In his words, "Theologians have nothing of value to say about anything."

Hence, although he recognizes biblical history and literature as legitimate fields of study, he refuses to grant theology even that minimal academic status[1].

2.6. Is Science Also a virus?

In *The Virus of the Mind*, Dawkins extends his evolutionary memetic theory to religion, arguing that belief systems, traditions, and cultural practices spread like mental viruses that infect human minds. According to him, God and religion do not exist independently but are constructs of a "viral mind" that replicates itself across generations.

After developing this analogy, Dawkins poses the question: *"Is science itself a virus?"* He answers in the negative, illustrating his point through a computer metaphor:

"A useful computer program spreads because people recognize its value and recommend it to others; computer viruses, however, replicate only because their code instructs the machine to copy them."

Scientific ideas, he argues, undergo a form of *natural selection*: only those that withstand rigorous empirical testing survive. The selection forces acting upon scientific ideas are not arbitrary but governed by strict rules that exclude falsehood. Religious faith, by contrast, spreads regardless of evidence or truth. In the history of religion, Dawkins sees only *viral contagion* — an uncritical transmission of belief. People believe not because of rational evaluation, but simply because they were born into a particular culture or geography.

3. The Magic of Reality

In another of his works, *The Magic of Reality*, Dawkins seeks to present science as real and religion as unreal, using scientific discoveries to demonstrate the explanatory power of reason. He begins by discussing different kinds of "magic." For example, he cites Norse mythology, in which "the rainbow is the bridge between God and Earth." He identifies three kinds of magic:

1. **Supernatural magic**, found in fairy tales and miracles;
2. **Conjuring magic**, which occurs in real life as illusion or trickery; and
3. **Poetic magic**, which expresses human awe—such as calling a sunset or a piece of music "magical."

[1] Dawkins, *The God Delusion,* P. 54

It is the third kind—the poetic magic of wonder—that Dawkins celebrates. Yet he rejects supernatural magic entirely, asserting that any "supernatural explanation of a phenomenon is equivalent to explaining nothing at all," since by definition the supernatural lies outside the realm of natural explanation.

Science, grounded in evidence and progress, stands in direct opposition to such thinking. Throughout the book, Dawkins contrasts scientific accounts of natural events with mythological or religious explanations, demonstrating that natural phenomena such as the rainbow, earthquakes, seasons, or the diversity of animals can all be explained by science alone.

By juxtaposing these myths—often drawn from primitive or tribal traditions—with scientific reasoning, Dawkins aims to expose metaphysics as vacuous and religion as a relic of superstition. He notes, for instance, that "many peoples of West Africa, Australia, and the Americas once believed the rainbow to be a great serpent rising from the earth to drink the rainwater."

Essentially, The Magic of Reality combines elements of astronomy, biology, physics, and geography in an accessible style to convince readers—especially younger audiences—that science alone reveals the truth about the world.

Finally, Dawkins addresses the problem of evil, asking: Why do bad things happen? After recounting ancient myths and religious superstitions, he turns—somewhat inconsistently—to causal reasoning, invoking philosophical notions of cause and effect. Yet after several pages of digression, he ultimately evades the question without offering a definitive answer.

Citing David Hume, Dawkins concludes:

"In order to recognize a miracle as such, the evidence for it must be so extraordinary that its falsehood would be even more miraculous than the fact it seeks to prove. If someone claims to have seen a cow jump over the moon, it is more reasonable to suppose he is mistaken or lying than to believe such a thing actually occurred."

B. Darwinism and the Theory of Natural Selection as the Basis for Explaining Everything

1. Where Did We Come From?

> Today, the theory of evolution is almost as indisputable as the heliocentric model of the solar system. Yet, the complete concept of Darwinian evolution is still not fully understood by many. Undoubtedly, this will change with time.[1]

In *The Selfish Gene*, Dawkins, before beginning his discussion on genes, attempts to clarify the context of his argument through an illustrative example—though we shall avoid reproducing it here for brevity. He then asserts that we are created by our genes; in other words, we are

[1] Richard Dawkins, The *Selfish Gene*, trans. Shahla Bagheri (Tehran: n.p., 2010).

machines built by our genes. Dawkins argues that the dominant characteristic we should expect in a gene is selfishness. This selfishness in genes normally manifests as selfish behavior in individuals, though sometimes altruistic behavior at the level of individuals may serve the gene's selfish goals.

It is worth noting that by "altruism," Dawkins refers to altruistic behavior, meaning actions that increase or decrease the likelihood of the survival of the beneficiary organism. The most common example of altruistic behavior in animals can be seen in the care of parents toward their offspring.

2. Replicators

> In the beginning, everything was simple. Explaining how the universe began in simplicity is not an easy task. I assume we all agree that explaining the sudden appearance of a living, complex, and ordered world is even more difficult.[1]

According to Dawkins, Darwin's theory of natural selection provides a pathway that explains how simplicity can evolve into complexity. Darwin's solution, he claims, is the only rational one ever proposed for the riddle of our existence. He maintains that the world is full of stable entities aggregations of atoms that have achieved some degree of permanence, such as mountains or raindrops. The Darwinian principle of the "survival of the fittest" is, in fact, a specific case of a broader principal Dawkins calls "the survival of the stable."

He argues that it is impossible to imagine that a suitable number of atoms could, by random motion and external energy, spontaneously form a human being. Even if we could randomly form a molecule, a human organism composed of over a quadrillion molecules—could not arise by chance within the age of the universe. It is precisely here that Darwin's theory comes to our aid in its most general form.

Dawkins admits that his explanation for the origin of life is hypothetical. He proposes that, in the early Earth, simple chemical compounds such as water, carbon dioxide, methane, and ammonia were abundant—similar to what is observed on other planets of the solar system. Chemists have simulated this *primordial Earth* in the laboratory by placing these simple substances in a chamber, exposing them to an energy source (such as ultraviolet light or electrical discharges resembling lightning), and producing, after a few weeks, a dilute brown "soup" containing complex molecules—particularly amino acids, the building blocks of proteins. More recently, laboratory simulations have shown the formation of purines and pyrimidines, the building blocks of DNA molecules.

Dawkins continues: "At some point, by chance, an exceptional molecule came into existence one that could make copies of itself. We will call it a *replicator.* This event may seem

[1] Dawkins, The *Selfish Gene.*

improbable, but it happened. We are accustomed to calling events impossible simply because they are improbable within a human lifetime—but improbability does not mean impossibility. Once replication began, errors in copying inevitably occurred, just as mistakes were common in hand-copied manuscripts before the invention of the printing press. These copying errors were, in fact, the driving force of progress."

He argues that for evolution to occur, errors in replication are essential. The earliest replicators must have been far less accurate than modern DNA molecules, which today replicate with remarkable reliability. Yet even they are not perfect—and it is precisely these imperfections, accumulated over time, that drive evolution.

As the number of replicators increased, the "primordial soup" became populated not with identical copies but with numerous variants descended from a common ancestor. Whether we consider the first replicators "alive" or not, they are the ancestors of all life—the progenitors of our biological lineage.

Competition, Dawkins asserts, was inevitable. The early ocean could not sustain all replicators indefinitely. As the available raw materials became scarce, replicators began to compete for limited resources, leading to natural selection among them.

3. The Immortal Helix

All living organisms' animals, plants, bacteria, and viruses are survival machines, built by and for their genes. These machines are innumerable and vary widely in form, from octopuses to mice. Yet chemically, they are strikingly similar, for all are composed of a single fundamental molecule: DNA, the universal replicator.

Each DNA molecule is a long chain of subunits called nucleotides, of which there are only four types, abbreviated as G, C, T, and A. These nucleotides form paired strands twisted into an elegant double helix. The only difference among organisms lies in the sequence of these nucleotides while the nucleotide G in a human is identical to that in a snail, their respective sequences differ.

Inside every organism, DNA resides not in a single location but throughout the body. One may liken it to a blueprint stored in a central library (the nucleus), where the "books" are the chromosomes forty-six in the human case each containing thousands of genes arranged in sequence.

Natural selection, Dawkins argues, favors those replicators that construct more efficient survival machines. Reproduction mixes genes in new combinations, meaning each body is merely a temporary vehicle for its genes, which themselves can persist for vast stretches of evolutionary time. Each gene can thus be viewed as a unit that has survived countless generations, continuously passing from one body to another.

Dawkins acknowledges that the definition of a gene is somewhat ambiguous:

> There is no universally accepted definition of a gene; even if there were, it would not be immune to revision.[1]

He describes point mutations changes analogous to typographical errors as rare but evolutionarily significant. Another, even rarer, process is inversion, where a chromosome segment breaks off, reverses, and reattaches. Genes, unlike bodies, do not age; they migrate through successive generations, shaping organisms and leaving them before death or decay.

Following Peter Medawar, Dawkins notes that a key feature of a "good gene" is selfishness, while another is the ability to delay the death of its survival machine—at least until reproduction has occurred. Genes that cause premature death are known as *lethal genes*, while *semi-lethal genes* cause weakness or dysfunction. Natural selection favors genes that suppress lethal effects and promote beneficial ones. Much of evolution, Dawkins concludes, results from such gene-controlled modifications that occur during the earliest stages of gene expression[2].

4. The Survival Machine

In Dawkins' view, survival machines initially served merely as containers for genes—preserving the molecules that carried genetic information. When the food in the primordial soup was exhausted, one branch of these survival machines, which we now call plants, learned to synthesize complex molecules directly from simpler ones using the energy of sunlight. Another branch, now known as animals, discovered how to exploit the products of plants, either by consuming them or by feeding on other animals.

Both groups of survival machines—plants and animals—gradually developed more innovative and efficient ways of maintaining their existence, leading to remarkable diversity in living forms. The variety of life that resulted from these evolutionary branches is, according to Dawkins, the source of our wonder at nature's complexity.

One of the most fascinating characteristics of these survival machines is their apparent purposiveness a behavior that closely resembles human goal-directed action. When we observe animals searching for something, we cannot help but project our own sense of purpose onto them. Dawkins asks whether animals are truly conscious or whether their behavior is merely programmed. His answer is that genes control the behavior of their survival machines indirectly, not as a puppeteer manipulates strings, but rather as a computer program sets a process in motion. Once programmed, the survival machine functions autonomously.[3]

5. The Nature of the Selfish Gene

Continuing his discussion, Dawkins poses a central question: What is a selfish gene? It is not merely a fragment of DNA as it existed in the primordial soup; rather, it refers to all

[1] Dawkins, The *Selfish Gene.*
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid. P.143

copies of a particular DNA sequence distributed throughout the world. The ultimate aim of the selfish gene is to increase its own representation in the gene pool.

Crucially, a gene may promote the survival of other copies of itself located in different organisms. Though this behavior is genetically selfish, its outward expression may appear as altruism at the individual level.[1] (*Dawkins, The Selfish Gene, p. 273*)

In another major work, *The Blind Watchmaker*, Dawkins revisits the theory of evolution and maintains that it is capable of explaining all biological phenomena. "We animals," he writes, "are the most complex entities in the known universe, and everything complex requires a special kind of description." Biology, he asserts, is "the study of complicated things that give the appearance of having been designed for a purpose."

After numerous examples from animal biology—particularly concerning the mechanisms of vision—Dawkins concludes that natural selection sufficiently accounts for the development of these intricate systems.

6. The Illusion of Design

Dawkins likens natural selection to a *blind watchmaker*: an unconscious process that produces design without foresight, purpose, or intention. Although it appears as though a skilled craftsman has built life with prior planning, natural selection operates blindly—its "designs" are the product of countless iterations over time. Dawkins identifies his main goal in *The Blind Watchmaker* as resolving this paradox for readers.

Using examples such as the bat, Dawkins explains how natural selection compelled these animals to adapt to nocturnal life, developing echolocation as an alternative to sight.[2]

Following this discussion, he poses two critical questions:

1. **Could the human eye have arisen directly from nothing?**
   His answer is an emphatic *no*, as there are innumerable reasons to reject such a claim.
2. **Could the human eye have evolved from something only slightly different—call it X?**
   His answer is *yes*, provided the difference between the current eye and X is sufficiently small—that is, that they are structurally similar in nearly every respect.

Dawkins defines *X* as something "so similar to the human eye that only a single minor change would produce it." If one's imagined X fails to make the eye's origin plausible, he suggests refining X to be even more eye-like until its transformation appears reasonable.

Once X is established, Dawkins repeats the process: each X must itself have evolved from a preceding X_1, differing only minutely. This chain of incremental changes continues backward until one arrives at a structure vastly different from the modern eye. Evolution, he concludes, traverses this vast "morphological space" through a long sequence of small, cumulative steps.

[1] Dawkins, The *Selfish Gene.* P.273
[2] Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1986), p. 34

He then reverses the question:

3. **Could there exist a continuous sequence of Xs transforming a fully formed eye back into complete eyelessness?**
   Dawkins answers yes—so long as the number of steps is sufficiently large.

Finally, he asks:

4. **Given this hypothetical chain of Xs, is each successive form explicable by random mutation?**
   He argues that the answer lies in **embryology**, not genetics. Mutations, he notes, manifest as changes in the developmental process of embryos, and certain developmental patterns are more predisposed to variation than others. Logically, the smaller the structural difference between X and X_2, the more plausible it is, from an embryological perspective, that one could mutate into the other.[1]

C. Dawkins on Miracles

For Dawkins, so-called *miracles* are not supernatural events; rather, they are part of a continuum of improbable occurrences. If miracles exist at all, they are simply the result of chance. Hence, he rejects any categorical division between "natural" and "miraculous" phenomena.

Addressing the question of how much the origin of life depends on chance, Dawkins concludes that the "inorganic mineral" hypothesis provides the best explanation. This theory, originally proposed by the Glasgow chemist Graham Cairns-Smith roughly two decades earlier, suggests that life began on the surfaces of mineral crystals capable of self-replication. Dawkins notes that Cairns-Smith has elaborated this idea in three major books since its initial proposal.[2]

D. Constructive Evolution

After extensive examples and theoretical discussions, Dawkins summarizes his position as follows:

The selection of genes occurs not because of their intrinsic qualities but due to their interactions with the environment—especially with other genes. Since genes themselves evolve across generations, this interaction becomes dynamic. As a result, genes that cooperate effectively with others in a given environment are favored by natural selection.

This principle applies most clearly within a single species, where genes frequently share cellular contexts, forming large networks of cooperative interactions. Ultimately, this cooperation gives rise to the evolution of the organism itself as the collective product of many genes working together.

[1] Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker*
[2] Ibid.

Every living body, Dawkins concludes, is a **large survival machine**—a vehicle constructed through the teamwork of genes, whose function is to preserve copies of each member of this cooperative ensemble.[1]

E. The One True Tree of Life

The central theme of *The Blind Watchmaker* is evolution—the key that unlocks the mystery of life's intricate designs. Dawkins presents evolution as the *true explanation* for the appearance of design, which traditional theology attributed to a divine watchmaker.

He argues that the "God" imagined by believers as a detached creator—a divine clockmaker who designed the universe and then abandoned it—is a misinterpretation. The real "watchmaker," Dawkins asserts, is natural selection itself—a blind, purposeless process that, through chance and necessity, has produced the complexity of the living world. Because of this blindness and lack of foresight, he calls it *"the blind watchmaker."*[2]

Critical Analysis of Dawkins' View of Science

Before addressing the critiques raised against Dawkins' scientific outlook, it is necessary to clarify the distinction among three key scientific terms—**hypothesis**, **theory**, and **law**—and to explain how they differ from one another.

The Difference Between a Hypothesis and a Theory

A hypothesis is a mental model or provisional explanation proposed to solve a particular problem. When a hypothesis is logically proven, it becomes a scientific law; when it is empirically confirmed, it is termed an experimental (or scientific) theory. Therefore, a *law* differs from a *theory*, and both differ from a *hypothesis*.

Few people, including scientists themselves, pay close attention to this distinction. Although it may seem minor, understanding the difference clarifies the scope and certainty of scientific claims. An informed reader can usually infer from context whether an author uses the terms "hypothesis," "theory," or "model" in their technical or colloquial sense.

For example, when someone who rejects Darwin's proposal refers to the "Darwinian hypothesis," they clearly mean it as a hypothesis. Even if they occasionally use the term "Darwinian theory," they do so in its *popular*, not *technical*, sense—since one cannot coherently reject a claim one already considers a verified theory.

From the standpoint of experimental science, therefore, a scientific theory is a hypothesis supported by empirical evidence, not definitively proven. Philosophically speaking, empirical evidence cannot provide *logical certainty*; it only establishes *functional confirmation*. In formal logic, such reasoning is known as inference from effect to cause (argumentum a posteriori), or

[1] Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker*
[2] Ibid.

burhān inni in classical logic. While the general public may take such inferences as certain, rationalist philosophies consider them probabilistic, not demonstrative.

Based on this distinction between hypothesis and theory, it follows that Darwin's hypothesis remains, strictly speaking, a *hypothesis* rather than an established scientific theory.[1]

Examining the Origin of Life

Can life arise through purely natural processes, or does it require an intelligent, supernatural cause?

All living organisms are composed of cells, whose basic structural element is the protein molecule, itself made up of amino acids. The question thus becomes: *Can nature produce even a single amino acid on its own?*

Amino acids cannot form in the presence of oxygen; yet without oxygen there could be no ozone layer, and thus no possibility for life. In 1953, a scientist named Stanley Miller, working with Harold Urey at the University of Chicago, sought to demonstrate that life could have emerged under the conditions believed to exist billions of years ago.

Miller's Experiment

Miller's objective was to show that amino acids could form spontaneously under early-Earth conditions. He placed a mixture of hydrogen, water vapor, ammonia, and methane in a sealed chamber—gases that do not naturally react with one another. To simulate lightning, he added an electrical discharge source and boiled the mixture at 100°C for a week.

After a week, he observed that three amino acids had formed artificially. The experiment generated great excitement among advocates of Darwinian evolution, who triumphantly declared that "Miller has created life." In reality, he had merely synthesized a few lifeless molecules under highly controlled laboratory conditions.

Following this, evolutionists constructed new scenarios: amino acids, they claimed, formed by chance in nature, then randomly combined into proteins; proteins assembled into cell membranes, and eventually into complete cells. Later, however, it became evident that Miller's experiment had been methodologically flawed, and his results could not be replicated.

The Legacy of Darwinism and Miller's Experiment

Today, even evolutionary biologists have abandoned Miller's experiment. In the February 1988 issue of *EARTH* magazine—known for its Darwinian stance—an article titled *"The Crucible of Life"* stated:

"Most geologists now believe that the early Earth's atmosphere consisted largely of carbon dioxide and nitrogen. These gases are far less reactive than those used by Miller in 1953. Even

[1] Ahad Faramarz Qaramaleki, *The Position of Science and Religion in the Creation of Man* (Tehran: Arayeh Cultural Institute, 1994).

if Miller's atmosphere had been accurate, how could we explain the subsequent combination of amino acids into complex polymers like proteins?"

Even Miller himself, unable to solve this problem, admitted in frustration:

"It's a real problem—how do you make polymers? It's not that simple."

Neither Miller's experiment nor any other scientific attempt has yet explained how life began on Earth. All available research indicates that the spontaneous formation of life is statistically impossible, and therefore suggests that life was created rather than accidentally assembled.

On the Impossibility of Random Protein Formation

Assuming amino acids exist, can their random combination produce functional proteins? Or does this process require intelligent design?

The formation of a single functional protein depends on three simultaneous conditions:

1. All amino acids must be of the *correct type* and in the *proper sequence*.
2. All amino acids must be left-handed (L-form) in orientation.
3. All amino acids must be linked through peptide bonds.

For a protein to form, all three conditions must occur simultaneously. The probability of this happening is the product of the individual probabilities of each condition—yielding a vanishingly small likelihood.

Evolutionary theory, therefore, not only fails to explain the origin of cellular complexity but also cannot account for the formation of even a single protein molecule—the smallest functional unit of the cell.

Proteins are large, complex molecules composed of chains of amino acids arranged in specific sequences. Even the simplest proteins consist of around 50 amino acids, while others contain up to 1,000. Each sequence must be exact; otherwise, the resulting molecule will not function. Hence, the spontaneous assembly of such structures is mathematically implausible.

As *Chandra Wickramasinghe* put it:

"Since my days of scientific training, I was conditioned to believe that science could never support the idea of creation. This conviction had to be painfully uprooted. Now, I see no rational reason to reject the concept of a Creator. Keeping an open mind has led me to realize that the only logical explanation for life is creation, not a random and purposeless process."

Even if we suppose that, billions of years ago, a cell somehow managed to acquire all the components necessary for life and came to exist by chance, the theory of evolution still collapses.

Such a cell, even if alive for a brief period, would ultimately die, leaving no descendants—since reproduction requires an immensely complex system of genetic and biochemical mechanisms.

A functioning hereditary system requires not only DNA but also:

- Enzymes capable of reading DNA sequences,
- Messenger RNA (mRNA) molecules transcribed from DNA,
- Ribosomes that bind to mRNA and synthesize proteins,

- Transfer RNA (tRNA) that brings amino acids to the ribosome, and
- Numerous intermediary enzymes that catalyze and regulate these intricate reactions.

Such an organized environment could exist only within an isolated and highly regulated structure—that is, within a living cell equipped with the necessary raw materials and energy sources to sustain these processes.

Critique of Richard Dawkins' View by Alister McGrath

Professor Alister McGrath, a scholar of historical theology at the University of Oxford and Senior Research Fellow at Harris Manchester College, first studied chemistry before pursuing systematic theology, having previously conducted research in molecular biophysics at Oxford. He himself states:

"I was once an atheist. I was born in Northern Ireland in 1953. I used to think that God was a childish illusion suitable only for the elderly, religious charlatans, or the intellectually weak. The natural sciences I studied in high school led me to believe that there was a direct link between atheism and science. This convinced me to question religion altogether. When I began studying molecular biophysics at Oxford in 1971, I felt an even greater excitement toward exploring the natural world. Yet despite my passion for science, I started to reconsider my atheistic convictions. It is never easy to question one's core beliefs, but I realized that things were not as clear-cut as I had assumed. I call this period my *crisis of faith*. Gradually, I came to see that the arguments of atheism were not as convincing as they seemed."[1]

1. Science Does Not Disprove God

In response to Dawkins, McGrath asserts:
"It is well known that the scientific method is incapable of judging the hypothesis of God — either positively or negatively. Those who claim to prove or disprove God's existence misuse science beyond its legitimate boundaries and thereby discredit it."
McGrath, while deeply respecting science, is also aware of its limitations and seeks to remind its enthusiasts of these boundaries. Unlike Dawkins, he approaches science from multiple philosophical angles, including:

2. Empirical Science Is Only One of Several Ways of Explanation

The belief that "science refutes God" forms one of the central claims in *The God Delusion*, where Dawkins portrays theists as superstitious and irrational. Thus, for Dawkins, atheism appears to be the only worldview capable of satisfying a modern, intellectual mind.[2]

[1]Alister McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, trans. Behrouz Hadadi (Qom: Center for Studies and Research in Religions and Denominations, 2005). P. 1-6.
[2] McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction,* p.33

However, McGrath notes that Dawkins' interpretation of science is far from universally accepted among scientists. He cites evolutionary biologist Stephen Jay Gould, who denied any necessary link between science and atheism, arguing that religious faith lies outside the jurisdiction of empirical investigation. Gould famously remarked:

"Either half my colleagues are incredibly stupid, or Darwinism is just as compatible with conventional religious beliefs as it is with atheism." [1]

In a 1992 article, Gould further wrote:

"Science, by its very methods, cannot judge God's existence, and Darwinism has nothing to say about whether God exists or what His nature might be."

Gould held that evolutionary biologists can be either atheists or believers. Even the agnostic humanist G. G. Simpson and the devout Orthodox Christian Theodosius Dobzhansky both acknowledged this compatibility[2].

McGrath appreciates this perspective and concludes that nature can be interpreted through both atheistic and theistic lenses — both being scientifically and rationally possible.

He also cites scientists like Richard Feynman and Martin Rees (Nobel Laureate in Physics, 1965), who maintained that:

"Science consists of statements that carry varying degrees of confidence. Some are uncertain, others highly probable, but none are absolutely certain.[3]"

According to McGrath, a fundamental issue in science lies in how we understand multi-faceted realities. The natural sciences rely on inductive inference, which deals with evidence and probability, not with logical certainty. Therefore, one must acknowledge that multiple explanations can coexist and compete.[4]

3. The Limitations of Science

McGrath further criticizes Dawkins' belief that science is the *only reliable path* to understanding the world — a path without limits. Simplified, Dawkins' position implies that there is no longer any "gap" in which God might reside, since science will eventually explain everything, including why people still believe in non-scientific ideas like God.

McGrath argues that Dawkins treats Darwinism as a rational highway leading directly to atheism, yet this route actually ends in agnosticism. Dawkins bridges the logical gap between Darwinism and atheism not with evidence, but with rhetoric and persuasion. Genuine conclusions, McGrath insists, must rest on sound reasoning and proof — not assertion.[5]

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[1] Stephen Jay Gould, *Wonderful Life: The Burgess Shale and the Nature of History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1989). P. 267

[2] Gould, *Wonderful Life: The Burgess Shale and the Nature of History,* p.118-127.

[3] McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction,* p.20

[4] Ibid. p.35

[5] Ibid. p.8

Although McGrath successfully exposes Dawkins' lack of evidence and reliance on emotional language, he also notes that some of the misunderstanding stems from inadequate theological conceptions of God. Many believers interpret divine action as direct and episodic intervention, which appears to conflict with natural law. Consequently, they find evolutionary explanations threatening to faith.

If, however, a proper understanding of God's continuous creative presence was adopted, Dawkins' arguments would lose their persuasive power. The real issue, McGrath implies, lies not in Darwin's theory itself, but in limited human conceptions of God.

The Bible and the Theory of Evolution

Alvin Plantinga seeks to examine the issue of evolution in relation to the Bible. Before addressing the topic directly, he introduces three preliminary points:
(1) the theory of evolution is by no means neutral;
(2) to what extent is it probable that the evolutionary theory is true?
(3) Christian intellectuals and academics must assist us in this area.[1]

According to the popular myth of our time, nature is all there is—there is no religion and no God. Plantinga strongly rejects this view, describing the situation as a "three-way battle." On one side stands *naturalism*, which denies the existence of God and claims that nature is all there is and humanity is merely a part of it. The second side is *enlightened humanism*, which goes back to Kant's ideas in the eighteenth century. This view asserts that we, as human beings, create the world—whether through the existentialist notion that each of us is personally responsible for creating it, or through Wittgenstein and his followers' belief that we collectively create it through language, or even through Kant's claim that the *self* constitutes the world. On the third side of this battle stands *Christian theism*. Plantinga describes this as a genuine struggle concerning the human spirit[2].

Plantinga quotes Dawkins as saying: *"If a being from outer space were to look at Earth to assess the level of our intelligence, the first question it would ask is: 'Have they discovered evolution?'"* Plantinga considers this attitude toward science to be shallow and contemptible. He notes that there was a time when belief in evolution could cost someone their career, whereas now disbelief in it can lead to the same result—referring to the historical shifts in public and academic reaction to evolutionary theory[3]

Plantinga asks: *What is all this controversy about?* In his view, evolution is deeply rooted in religion. While many may be reluctant to teach this to their children, evolution is, in fact, humanity's self-interpretation—a way to understand ourselves at the deepest religious levels, a way of answering who we are, where we came from, and where we are going (Religion, p.19).

[1] Alvin Plantinga, "Agustinian or Duhemian Science," *Journal of Studies in Philosophy of Religion* (2001). p. 16.
[2] Plantinga, "Augustinian or Duhemian Science," p.17.
[3] Ibid. p.18.

Plantinga adopts the model of complementarity between science and religion and proposes what he calls *Augustinian science*, arguing that there are two sources of knowledge: revelation and reason. From his standpoint, science and religion can engage in dialogue within certain domains. However, he emphasizes that science, as currently conceived, is profoundly shaped by the ontological assumptions of naturalism. As a result, parts of modern science are not neutral and often conflict with a theistic worldview. Therefore, Christians, he argues, should adopt a theistic stance toward the sciences, calling this approach *Augustinian science*.[1]

If a conflict arises between faith and reason, Plantinga insists, we must follow divine revelation and faith, since God does not err—though our human understanding may. Modern science can correct our interpretation of Scripture, just as Scripture can correct science[2]. The probability of evolution, he argues, differs drastically when viewed from naturalism versus Christian theism, for evolution and naturalism are implicitly connected.

Within the framework of naturalism, evolution is the only available explanation for the origin of biological order and diversity. Plantinga, however, contends that combining naturalism and evolution is self-contradictory and irrational[3]. He maintains that evolution is, at its core, religious in nature[4].

Theists believe that God created all things, yet He could have done so through any means He willed. The problem, according to Plantinga, is that many evolutionists are atheists and interpret the process according to their own presuppositions. For him, the "Grand Evolutionary Scenario (GES)" is not religiously neutral[5]. He identifies three main categories of evidence for evolution:

a) numerous laboratory experiments conducted on animals;

b) fossil records suggesting common ancestry; and

c) vestigial organs such as the appendix and certain ear and nasal muscles.

Plantinga argues that evolution should not be dismissed for foolish reasons. His method provides a general guideline for Christian researchers and scientists: we must approach science theologically, developing methods and tools capable of uncovering the divine nature of the cosmos and the existence of God. The human soul, he argues, should be investigated scientifically—but through a God-centered perspective, not by denying its existence [6].

One objection to the standard evidences of evolution concerns the mammalian eye, a highly complex organ. According to evolutionary theory, this organ developed gradually—but not in isolation. The surrounding muscles, the corresponding brain regions, and ultimately the entire organism must also have evolved. Thus, it is the *entire visual system* that evolved, not merely one organ. Plantinga then asks: what role can Christian intellectuals, historians, and scientists

[1] Plantinga, "Augustinian or Duhemian Science," p.6.
[2] Ibid. p.20.
[3] Ibid. p.18.
[4] Ibid. p.24.
[5] Ibid. p.23.
[6] Ibid. p.17.

play in providing sufficient evidence for the existence of God? Some, he notes, have tried to refute evolution through weak mathematical arguments—claiming, for instance, that given the Earth's age and population growth rates, the planet should already be overcrowded with humans. Plantinga dismisses such reasoning and insists that the debate represents a genuine intellectual and spiritual conflict between Christians and unbelievers[1].

3. Examining the Epistemic Probability of Evolution and the Common Ancestry Hypothesis

Plantinga argues that the prior probability of evolution under naturalism differs significantly from that under Christian theism. For naturalists, evolution is the only available explanation for biological order and diversity, which explains why the a priori probability of evolution, given ontological naturalism, is quite high—and thus why naturalists often claim certainty about it. Under Christian theism, however, the a priori probability of the Grand Evolutionary Scenario (GES) is much lower, since (1) naturalistic origin theories are themselves improbable from this standpoint, and (2) the probability of the theory of common ancestry (TCA) is even lower than its negation[2].

According to Plantinga, the epistemic probability of TCA within Christian theism is less than one-half. This is because, first, in theism God continuously interacts with and sustains the world; second, He frequently acts in extraordinary and miraculous ways—such as preserving human beings unharmed in a fiery furnace. These examples show that God is not opposed to acting specially in creation. Therefore, it is slightly more probable that He would also act specially in other major domains[3].

Given that humanity was created in God's image, Plantinga concludes that the a priori probability of special creation under Christian theism is slightly greater than one-half though empirical evidence such as the universal genetic code supports common ancestry more strongly than special creation[4]. Still, he contends that even when empirical data are taken into account data complicated by large gaps in the fossil record and the absence of unambiguous examples of large-scale evolution the overall probability of TCA remains below one-half[5].

Moreover, numerous examples of irreducible complexity in nature such as ciliary molecules suggest that no simpler form could perform their functions, implying that such systems could not have evolved gradually. Plantinga argues that if Darwin had known the evidence available

[1] Plantinga, "Augustinian or Duhemian Science," p.26.
[2] Ibid. p.19.
[3] Ibid. p.20.
[4] Ibid. p.16.
[5] Ibid. p.20.

today, he would have been neither a Darwinian nor a supporter of the theory of common ancestry[1].

Despite these challenges, Plantinga maintains that the only reasonable stance for Christians toward TCA is a form of *mild structuralism*, since Christian theology does not specify the precise method by which God created the world—and it remains possible that He used a process akin to common ancestry.

According to the theory, life began from a single origin on Earth, and all other organisms arose through hereditary descent from that original living being—making all creatures distant "cousins." Plantinga points out, however, that this claim presupposes demonstrable links connecting present life forms to that initial ancestor through random genetic mutations. Yet, fossil evidence fails to establish continuous Darwinian lineages, and no clear transitional forms exist that connect the earliest representatives of distinct taxa. Thus, even if all life forms share a genetic code, this only increases the probability of common ancestry slightly—it does not prove it conclusively.

An important aspect of Plantinga's critique is his rejection of scientistic assumptions within the science–religion debate. He argues that empirical evidence cannot, by itself, conflict with religious belief; rather, it is when naturalists import their metaphysical assumptions into scientific reasoning that apparent conflicts arise. Consequently, Plantinga concludes that the hypothesis of common ancestry is not necessarily opposed to theism, and indeed may be compatible with it[2].

In contrast to scientists such as Richard Dawkins, who claim that the doctrine of common ancestry is certainly true, scholars like McMullin argue that the evidence supporting it is necessarily incomplete, since evolutionary explanations are historical in nature. Unlike physics or chemistry, historical explanations deal with unique and unrepeatable events and are therefore inherently incomplete[3]. Plantinga thus considers any hypothesis supported by incomplete evidence to be a weak one and therefore rejects the claim of certainty concerning common ancestry.

Michael Behe's Critique

In his influential book *Darwin's Black Box* (1996), Michael Behe challenges Darwinism and Dawkins' notion of simplicity through his theory of *irreducible complexity*. Although Behe's critique is based purely on scientific reasoning, his opposition to Darwinism led to professional repercussions, including his dismissal from his university. Despite such pressures, he has continued to promote his views in various forums.

Behe observes:

[1] Plantinga, "Augustinian or Duhemian Science," p.24.
[2] Ibid. p.157.
[3] Ibid. p.162.

"Many scientists like to believe that they can explain all features of the universe. Consequently, they resist those who suggest that science might not be able to do so. Ultimately, some scientists especially those in elite academic institutions deny the existence of God altogether and reject anything beyond nature. They will fiercely oppose anything that might reveal they are mistaken."

Professor Michael Behe, an American biochemist and prominent biologist, drew global attention to himself through his concept of *irreducible complexity*, which challenges the Darwinian principle of natural selection. The publication of his provocative book *Darwin's Black Box* in 1996 dramatically altered the landscape of debate between *evolutionists* and *creationists*.

Because of his unconventional ideas rarely voiced within the mainstream scientific community Behe faced numerous accusations, including claims that his arguments amounted to an "appeal to ignorance." His theory of irreducible complexity closely associated with the Intelligent Design movement provoked particularly strong reactions in the United States.

According to this theory, certain biochemical systems are so intricately interdependent that they cannot be reduced to simpler functional precursors and therefore could not have evolved gradually through incremental mutations. If examples from biological systems such as the nervous or digestive systems demonstrate that cellular structures did not, in fact, develop progressively over time, then Darwin's evolutionary framework would face a fundamental challenge.

Behe's book *Darwin's Black Box* raises profound questions concerning natural selection, mutation, and the mechanisms of biological development. Although advocates of *creationism* have often been marginalized or subjected to legal and institutional pressures for promoting what many in European academia dismiss as "pseudoscience," Behe has remained steadfast. After achieving international recognition in 2006, he continued to defend his ideas even amid criticism and threats, and in 2007, he agreed to present his arguments as an expert witness in court.

Behe's core claim can be summarized as follows: contrary to Darwin's assertion, some biological structures are so essential and complex that they could not have emerged suddenly after a long period of nonexistence. Their presence is vital to the organism's very survival, meaning they must have existed from the outset in their complete form. Thus, new traits do not simply arise through environmental interaction or temporal necessity.

Some scientists have countered Behe's argument by pointing to examples such as the giraffe—arguing that it evolved from a short-necked ancestor through gradual adaptation over thousands of years to reach higher foliage. Behe, however, maintains his critique of Darwinian gradualism and defends his scientific reasoning.

It is noteworthy that Behe is not a clergyman or theologian but a professional biochemist whose objections to Darwinian evolution are purely scientific in nature. Initially, he accepted Darwinian evolution, but his views began to shift after reading *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, a book that critically examined the theory of evolution. Behe's engagement with that work prompted deeper research and ultimately led him to question Darwinian assumptions (Gharamaleki, Faramarz).

Faramarz Gharamaleki's Critique of Richard Dawkins' View

1. The Nature of Empirical Hypotheses and Theories

One of the defining features of an empirical theory is testability. Therefore, if someone claims that the hypothesis of the evolution of species has been empirically proven, they must be able to demonstrate experimentally that one species can actually transform into another.

It must be noted, however, that no one denies microevolution (i.e., evolutionary changes within a single species). Critics of Darwinism reject macroevolution the transformation of one species into another not the small adaptive variations within a species. Thus, the Darwinian hypothesis must be verified through direct experimentation that shows the transformation of one kind of organism into another.

Some may respond that such a transformation takes place over millions of years and therefore cannot be experimentally tested. Yet, if that is admitted, it follows logically that the hypothesis has not been empirically proven and if it has not been proven, it cannot properly be called an empirical theory. If a hypothesis cannot be subjected to empirical testing, it remains non-empirical until such testing becomes possible. Only when it passes experimental verification can it rightly be called an empirical theory.

The central claim of Darwin's hypothesis concerns the transformation of species—not merely similarities among fossils, the possibility of genetic mutation, or microevolutionary change. Unfortunately, evolutionists often conflate these separate ideas, thereby obscuring the real issue for their audiences.

If, on the other hand, Darwin's hypothesis is to be understood as a philosophical theory rather than an empirical one, then its advocates must offer a philosophical argument in its defense. Yet, according to Gharamaleki, Darwinists do neither: they neither verify their claims experimentally nor support them with philosophical reasoning. Instead, they rely on archaeological and paleontological methods, which are not strictly empirical in the experimental sense, but rather speculative inferences drawn from ancient findings. Attempting to prove an empirical hypothesis through such methods, he argues, is a *category mistake*.

2. Dogmatism as a Hallmark of Darwinism

According to Gharamaleki, many proponents of Darwinism reject opposing viewpoints without having carefully read or understood them—much as the medieval Church once condemned

scientists like Galileo. Today, Darwinists often accuse their critics of *religious bias*, claiming that opposition to evolution arises from *faith-based prejudice*. But why, asks Gharamaleki, should disagreement with a scientific theory automatically be dismissed as religious dogmatism? Is this not itself unscientific and intolerant?

If it was wrong for Christian clerics to persecute Galileo, it is equally wrong for "scientific fundamentalists" to ostracize or dismiss scientists such as Michael J. Behe and many others who question Darwinian orthodoxy. Dogmatism—whether stemming from the *Church of religion* or the *Church of scientism*—is equally objectionable.

Worship, he adds, can take many forms: whether it is the rational theism of Ibn Sina, the superstition of medieval Christianity, or the "Darwin-worship" of modern evolutionists. To show blind devotion—religious or scientific—is a form of idolatry. If one worships truth, one worships rightly; but if one worships falsehood, that too is a kind of misplaced devotion.

Gharamaleki asks: Why do Darwinists resort to insults and ad hominem attacks instead of engaging in rational debate? Why are critics of evolution silenced rather than debated? Why should scientific inquiry not allow *freedom of thought* and *criticism*?

3. The Questionable Reliability of Fossil Evidence

Critics of Darwinism, says Gharamaleki, are fully aware of the arguments made by evolutionists—but they are denied the opportunity to independently test the fossil evidence. How can we be certain that the fossils presented as proof of evolution are not fabricated or tampered with? History itself shows that many such cases of fraud have occurred within the Darwinian framework.

At times, entire arguments have been built upon forged fossils—only for the deception to be discovered decades later. For example, recent reports revealed widespread fossil fraud in China: Li Chun, a researcher at the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, announced that about 80 percent of marine reptile fossils displayed in Chinese museums were either fake or altered. He stated that such artifacts distort scientific education, especially among children, and undermine public trust in science.

Recognizing this issue, China passed a new Fossil Protection Law in 2011, prohibiting museums from displaying counterfeit or modified fossils (Gharamaleki, Faramarz).

Conclusion

From Gharamaleki's perspective, Richard Dawkins lacks *philosophical depth* in his reasoning. His arguments rely exclusively on material phenomena, as though the entirety of reality were reducible to matter. Yet, as many scientists themselves admit, empirical science is built upon the principle of doubt and cannot claim absolute certainty. Moreover, experimental science is inseparable from rational sciences such as mathematics and logic without which empirical research would be impossible.

Dawkins, however, insists on deriving atheism from evolutionary theory. Even if we were to grant, for the sake of argument, the truth of evolution, this conclusion would still be invalid. First, evolution remains a hypothesis, not a proven fact. Second, even if true, it could just as well demonstrate the intelligence of a Creator who endowed creatures with diverse capacities over time not the absence of a Creator.

From a logical and philosophical standpoint, Gharamaleki views Dawkins' rhetoric as popular rather than profound intended to persuade the general public rather than provide rigorous reasoning. In the age of modernism, he argues, humanity sought to replace the "dead God" of traditional religion, and evolutionary theory became the most convenient substitute serving as the intellectual pillar of secularism. Thus, the persistence of belief in Darwinism, despite awareness of its hypothetical nature, may stem from this cultural necessity.

Because Christianity, in Gharamaleki's view, fails to align with scientific rationality due to the corruption of its sacred texts and theological confusion, Dawkins came to see religion as mere superstition the product of human mythmaking. Having grown up within a Christian context, Dawkins gradually distanced himself from religion. His major mistake, according to Gharamaleki, lies in equating Christianity with religion as such: he assumes that all faiths suffer from the same weaknesses as Christianity and thus wages war not only on Christianity but on religion in general using science as his weapon.

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