

Does Microevolution Exist?

by Per A. Larssen

The driving force of the modern theory of naturalistic evolution, Neo-Darwinism, is random mutations. There cannot be an evolutionary process without mutations. Those mutations that are deemed to be beneficiary will be picked up or favored by natural selection, a passive process, which really is no process at all. Before proceeding, it is necessary to show that natural selection is powerless on its own to have any affect whatsoever on evolution.

Natural selection means that the next generations of an organism will survive in the struggle for life with other organisms when other less favorable or even damaging mutations occur. These surviving generations are naturally selected, we are told, but what they represent is simply survival of the fittest. Natural selection is not some kind of an active agent that picks those that will survive.

The recognized French zoologist, Pierre-Paul Grassé, former president of the French Academy of Sciences and editor of the 28 volume *Traité de Zoologie*, rejects both the assumed mechanisms for evolution: mutations and natural selection. Both of these assumed mechanisms really say very little, he says. About the role of natural selection he says: ³It is not based on a single fact. Further, guided by the overwhelming selection, randomness becomes some kind of a providence which, under the cover of atheism is not mentioned, but is worshiped in secrecy². Several prominent evolutionists admit openly that the theory of natural selection is a tautology, a way to say the same thing twice. The theory predicts that the most viable organisms will produce more offspring, and the most viable organisms are defined as those that produce more offspring.

Let us assume that there are no mutations when parents produce their offspring. What happens? The laws of genetics will control, and the offspring will share only the characteristics of the parents. Shared traits from parents will continue in the next and following generations. There is nothing new for natural selection to work with. Natural selection is effectively dead as a factor in evolution in this case. Natural selection depends on the existence of mutations. No mutation, no natural selection, no evolution.

Large mutations can have external causes (radiation) or internal (foreign elements, contamination) that result in damage to DNA and its genes. Medical science has now identified several thousand mutated genes that lead to serious illnesses and death. These destructive macromutations cannot be a driving force in evolution.

For the purposes of this analyses we can therefore forget about natural selection and macromutations as primary factors in evolution.

Micromutations are believed by both evolutionists and many creationists to be the cause of microevolution, i.e. the cause of variation within the species. Many evolutionists stretch this process further to the formation of new species and the development of all life over aeons of time. These micromutations are so small that the cell can tolerate them without causing destructive genetic effects in the genes. These

smallest mutations are the result of copying errors that happen when chromosomes duplicate themselves in cell division. The copying errors are random, which is a requisite in naturalistic evolution. The remarkable thing is that the cell has the ability to proofread and correct the errors. Although errors remain, this correction reduces copying errors a hundredfold. These tiniest of micromutations cause an error in a single nucleotide, a subgroup in the DNA molecule. These tiny errors, then, are supposed to drive evolution. Strange to think about, our educational system is actually teaching us that we, human beings, homo sapiens, are the result of copying errors!!

We can see right here that these extremely small errors demand an evolutionary process over millions of years to be able to produce anything new. Believers in the creation model, however, are of the opinion that this strange property of self-correction is part of the Creator's plan to maintain the basic kinds as they were created.

A problem for the theory of evolution is that the copying errors are extremely rare. Their frequency is carefully set at one per 10 billion transcriptions per nucleotide for most organisms. Lee Spetner, former professor of biophysics at MIT, (who wrote the book: ³Not by Chance. Shattering the Modern Theory of Evolution, 1997), has made some very interesting quantitative calculations to test the possibility that a chance formation of new species could take place by micromutations.

One factor Spetner uses in his calculations is the number of transitional steps needed to form a new species. These steps (intermediates or missing links that survive are estimated to be around 500). He finds that the chance for this to happen is 2.7 times ten to the negative power of 2739. An impossibility for an event to happen is generally accepted to be 10 to the negative power of 50. These micro mutations are so rare that they will disappear in the population and therefore cannot result in a new species.

The conclusion is that the random micromutations that occur in organisms will not result in microevolution. Other biologists have come to the same conclusion using different approaches than Spetner.

What, then, is the cause of variation within the species? The answer is found in genetic changes that are not random. Unfortunately, these changes are still referred to as ³mutations², although the very essence of evolution is based on randomness. In Spetner's own words: ³Genetic rearrangements seem to be as normal an activity of the cell as cell division, even though they do not happen too often. They are mediated by specific enzymes which, as far as we know, the cell synthesizes just for that purpose.² They show signs of having been initiated by the environment (climate, temperature, food supply). Some of them are adaptive to the environment.

Some changes are denoted as recombinations. For example, chromosomes can exchange parts. Recombinations can produce duplications, inversions, deletions and other internal alterations of DNA's molecular groups. Sections of DNA, transposons, (comprising of several thousand nucleotides), can jump from place to place in the chromosome. Transposons consist of components of DNA that encode two enzymes which they need to do their job. The cell itself contributes with other necessary enzymes. These "mutations" are under detailed cellular control and is therefore not a random process. Some of the more notorious transposons carry genes for resistance to several kinds of antibiotics. Plasmids, smaller rings of DNA, are found naturally in bacteria. They are copying themselves without external control and are passed on to their offspring. Transposons can move from a plasmid of the bacterium into its DNA. The transposon carrying resistance to ampicillin, streptomycin and sulfanilamide has about 20,000 nucleotides. They can move from one bacterium to another. Aside from spreading antibiotic resistance, we do not yet

know exactly what their normal function is. This internal control of antibiotic resistance is not evolution.

The possibility of adapting to the environment exists already in the genome. There are indications that these genetic rearrangements that occur in response to the environment and stress can result in changes in the phenotype (variations), but not in new species. Examples of these variations are the long and short beaks of the finches in the Galapagos Islands and the dark and light peppered moths. Spetner says that variations among the finches could have come from nonrandom changes through a built-in genetic switch under the direct influence of the environment. The variations of these two species (finches and moths) are spelled out in their respective gene pools. The variations are always there to a greater or lesser degree.

It should be emphasized again that all of these rearrangements cannot contribute to neodarwinian evolution, because they do not increase the information and do not occur as a result of randomness.

This writer does not believe that God works or creates through a random process, nor does scientific evidence, as shown, support this.

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Literature

Not by Chance. Shattering the Modern Theory of Evolution. Dr. Lee Spetner. 1997. The Judaica Press, Inc. Brooklyn, New York 11218.

Icons of Evolution. Science or Myth? Why much of what we teach about evolution is wrong. Dr. Jonathan Wells. 2002. Regency Publishing, Inc., Washington, DC.