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Evolutionary philosophy has affected our lives drastically. We may not realize it, but it has. Evolutionists teach that man has descended from lower animals; he has gone from the slime to the sublime. He is here by chance, not through choice of a Creator. He continues to be here by struggle, not by a “love-thy-neighbor” existence. Essentially, evolution is the dogma that all humanity is a highly developed species of animal.

In 1859, Charles Darwin brought to the public a bombshell that had been smoldering in the minds of infidels for ages. Through the publication of *The Origin of Species*, Darwin awakened a sleeping giant of skeptical thought that since has captivated the minds of all who have desired to eliminate God from their worldview. Unfortunately, the popularization of evolutionary thought in the *Origin* has affected the worldview of the unsuspecting ever since. Vergilius Ferm wrote: “Truly, the year 1859, in which appeared Charles Darwin’s *The Origin of Species*, marks a turning point in Western thought” (1936, p. 307).

Evolutionary philosophy since 1859 has left no field of science unscathed by its infidelic tendencies. E.G. Bawkes stated: “There is not a single field of scientific and academic study which has not been greatly modified by the concept of evolution” (1940, p. 549). Speaking concerning the era of America’s history from 1860 to 1915, Raymond F. Surburg correctly observed, “In this epoch of American history anthropologists, sociologists, historians, political theorists, and economists were led to evaluate the implications of Darwinian concepts for their disciplines” (1959, p. 197). That, of course, also is the picture today of a major part of the scientific fields of research.

Yes, Charles Darwin has affected our lives. The philosophy he popularized over a century ago is influencing and affecting society today. Will Durant was right when, in speaking of Darwin, he said, “It may well be that for posterity his name will stand as a turning point in the intellectual development of our Western civilization” (1931, p. 22). Indeed, Darwin **did** turn Western thought; but it was

a turn for the worse. Darwin did change thought as a whole. Western civilization has not been the same since. It is the intent of this paper to examine how evolutionary philosophy has changed the attitudes of American thinking.

A CHANGED ATTITUDE TOWARD THE BIBLE

When evolutionary philosophy began to make its inroads in the mind of Western man, the view of the Bible as an inspired, inerrant revelation from God was knocked into a cocked hat in the minds of many. “The Bible was viewed,” says Surburg, “as a product of natural evolution, as a collection of books displaying man’s progressive understanding of God” (1959, p. 173). When higher criticism came along in the latter part of the nineteenth century, “theologians” conveniently ushered into the text all sorts of human “errors.” The Bible suddenly became a product of fallible men, not a product of a transcendent Creator. And Surburg was right when he remarked that “revelation was redefined as human insight into religious truth or human discovery of religion” (p. 174).

Harry Emerson Fosdick portrayed a good example of modernistic theological thought concerning the Bible. In his book, *The Modern Use of the Bible*, Fosdick stated: “We know that every idea in the Bible started from primitive and childlike origins and, with however many setbacks and delays grew in scope and height toward the culmination of Christ’s Gospel” (1924, p. 11). That is rank modernism. Walther Eichrodt was correct when he called Fosdick’s book, *A Guide to Understanding the Bible*, “the obituary of a whole scholarly approach and investigation” (1946, 65:205ff.). But Fosdick is just one example. The religious world today is flooded with those who look through the glasses of evolution in their interpretation of the Bible.

What else should we expect, however, from a philosophy that says the Bible is a myth—the result of an evolutionary process? Evolutionist Charles Smith once stated: “Evolution bankrupts the Bible. It discredits the Word of God” (1952, p. 112). Our universities today are filled with those who contend that the Bible is not only **not** the Word of God, but is in fact saturated with fables and fairy tales of an ancient, superstitious people. It is these professors who are teaching our children, determining our world view, and forming our futures.

A CHANGED ATTITUDE TOWARD RELIGION

During the pre-*Origin* days, faith, religion, and worship were the norm of social being. Evolutionary philosophy since 1859, however, has changed all that in Western minds. John Dewey, the famous educator and evolutionist, asserted: “*The Origin of Species* introduced a mode of thinking in the end that was bound to transform the logic of knowledge, and hence the treatment of morals, politics, and religion” (1910, pp. 1-2). Evolutionary philosophy weakened religious faith between 1859 and 1900.* It continues to do so today.

Darwin himself is a good example of the weakening influences of evolutionary philosophy. He was first a theist. Soon after his theory began to take his mind to its logical conclusion, however, he began to remove God from the picture. He became an agnostic (Mandelbaum, 1958, 19:374-378), and later in his life wrote: “Thus disbelief crept over me at a very slow rate, but was at last complete. The rate was so slow that I felt no distress, and have never since doubted even for a single second that my conclusion was to be true...” (as quoted in Mendelbaum, 1958, 19:87).

Evolutionary philosophy destroyed Darwin’s faith. And it has destroyed the faith of many ever since. Sir Julian Huxley wrote: “The god hypothesis is no longer of any pragmatic value for the interpretation or comprehension of nature, and indeed often stands in the way of better and truer interpretation” (1957, p. 58).** That is atheistic, evolutionary philosophy, and the type of thinking that, since 1859, has influenced Western thought radically.

So where have we gone religiously? It is as if a “new Christianity” has arisen (Surburg, 1959, p. 175). We would call it “**humanistic Christianity**”—a Christianity satisfied only with this life. After all, if God is removed from the picture, and if the Bible is merely the invention of men, then why all the commotion about life after death? If this life is all there is, then why not forget about all those fu-

* Oscar Riddle (1954) gives a good discussion concerning this weakening of religious faith during this period.

** It is interesting to note that this statement is quoted by John A.T. Robinson (1963) in support of his own skeptical views. Robinson is supposedly one of the more outstanding religious leaders of the twentieth century.

ture life dreams and concentrate upon the present? Suddenly the non-Christian religions of the world became very popular. Surburg assessed the situation correctly when he wrote:

The school of “comparative religions,” or as the Germans called it, the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, was a direct result of the application of evolutionary thinking to man’s religion in general. When the evolutionary theory became widespread, it was proclaimed that all religions were evolutionary products. This meant that no one religion could be considered better than the others (1959, p. 175).

And why not, if evolutionary philosophy is true? When the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* finally began to filter down to the ranks of religious bodies throughout America, a new outlook on foreign missions began to take place. No longer was there the urgency or need to evangelize the “non-Christian” religions of the world. After all, Islams, Buddhists, and Hindus had just as much right to exist in the view of evolutionary philosophy as any other religion.

I once had the opportunity to travel through the island of Barbados in the Caribbean. During my trip, I happened to read an article in the *Caribbean Contact* (July 1978) concerning the beliefs of a Catholic priest. He stated: “...our understanding of mission must take new shape when it comes to dealing with other religions. We Christians must look at the entire concept of mission once again. If we accept other religions as valuable, truthful and dispensers of grace, why this mad attempt at Christianizing the entire world.” And he is right **if** evolutionary philosophy is right. Matthew 28:18-20 means nothing if all religions are just the result of evolutionary history.

A CHANGED ATTITUDE TOWARD PHILOSOPHY

Evolutionary philosophy has influenced greatly the thinking of world societies and world governments. It has found itself in the midst of all sorts of philosophical absurdities. Surburg was right when he wrote: “The influence of Darwinism in the field of philosophy has been negative because evolutionism has allied itself with such antitheistic systems as atheism, materialism, agnosticism, skepticism, pragmatism, naturalism, and secularism” (1959, p. 181).

When responsibility to an eternal Righteousness is subtracted from the world view of any person or group, nothing remains as an objective moral standard. When life is understood only in terms of

struggle—a “might makes right” type of philosophy—then what is left to restrain the atrocities of man upon man? Remember Hitler?

While Sir Archibald Geikie was traveling through Austria in 1868 and 1869, he observed a definite grasp by the German mind of evolutionary philosophy. He later remarked, “...what specially struck me was the universal sway which the writings of Darwin now exercise over the German mind” (1869, 1:22). Robert E.D. Clark, in *Darwin: Before and After*, stated, for example, that “Mussolini’s attitude was completely dominated by evolution” (1967, p. 115). Mussolini once was even given credit as the originator of the following statement, which actually was a quotation from Darwin: “Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object of which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life...” (Barzun, 1958, p. 65). Only a warped attitude toward social behavior would say that there is grandeur in war. Nevertheless, that is what evolutionary philosophy generates. The following statement from Carl Wallace Miller is only one example from those who see no evil in war.

Thus war, with its obvious violation of the sanctity of human life, may be an inexplicable necessity for correcting evils present in the body politic, and may eventuate in the ultimate good of society. It may on occasion be viewed as the better of two alternatives, **as a drastic but essential operation for the removal of intolerable obstacles from the pathway of human progress** (1957, pp. 92-93, emp. added).

Such is the result of evolutionary thinking. Sir Arthur Keith, the famous British evolutionist, said of Hitler: “Hitler is an uncompromising evolutionist, and we must seek for an evolutionary explanation if we are to understand his actions” (1947, p. 14). Hitler’s actions are excellent proof of the logical end result of evolutionary philosophy put in force.

A CHANGED ATTITUDE TOWARD EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

“In the field of education, the influence of Darwinism has been felt in the adoption of a naturalistic philosophy of life, together with an anti-Scriptural psychology” (Surburg, 1959, p. 203). Edgar Knight correctly affirmed that “the most powerful influence in the United States in recent years arose out of the work of Charles Darwin” (1951, p. 36).

Education and science are so closely related that it is difficult to separate them when it comes to philosophical attitudes. That is why the philosophy of evolution has had, and continues to have, such a great impact on our schools. Instead of God-fearing men who can represent the Bible adequately, evolutionary professors are in many of the classes. Generally, that is true of colleges and universities across America.

Then, when the “religious” leaders of the land turn toward evolutionary philosophy, what may we expect to happen next? The answer is provided by the modernist Robert S. Alley who wrote in his book, *Revolt Against the Faithful*: “Our anthropology, geology, biology, physics, chemistry and astronomy are all out of harmony with the creation myths of Genesis” (1971, p. 88). If evolutionary philosophy is right, then Genesis really is a myth. When people therefore decide to remove God as their explanation of origins, evolution becomes the only other alternative. There are many religious leaders of today who have swallowed evolutionary philosophy, “hook, line, and sinker.” This is, needless to say, one thing that is causing the deterioration in Western society.

The latest evolutionary “bomb” to be unleashed on the American mind has been the concept of **sociobiology**, behind which is the belief that the deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) of the cells of all living things is the actual controlling feature of life. DNA, we are told, is running things—not our minds or our free-moral agency.* In other words, instead of it being “the devil made me do it.” it has become, “my **genes** made me do it.”

Sociobiology has become an attempt by some scientists to explain the concept of behavior. Actually, sociobiology is true evolutionary philosophy gone to seed. The plant which that seed produces is every mixture of hideous social behavior. There really is no science about it. Logically, if our genes are in control, if everything is planned out in the DNA as the sociobiologist contends, then how can we condemn even the most absurd crime of man against man? Sociobiologists would say that Hitler’s war was not the result of sin, and did not constitute a moral evil. Rather, it was only the planned result

* Robert Trivers is one of the most avid supporters of this philosophy (see *Time*, August 1, 1977, p. 36).

of the mechanical working of genes. It was a war manipulated by genes, not a war maintained by guns. It was a conflict of cells, not a conflict of societies. So, if evolutionary philosophy is true, then who can condemn (or even judge) such “earthly happenings”? And that is exactly what they would be—just “earthly happenings,” without the slightest moral overtones.

When we hear scientists speak of evolution as **fact**, not theory—even though it is **impossible scientifically** to prove evolution true—then we can better understand the great impact evolutionary thinking has had upon society. Stella Henderson, an evolutionist, frankly affirmed, for example, that “all scientifically educated people accept as truth that man evolved from lower forms of animal life” (1947, p. 20). That is an example of the type of thought commonly portrayed by most scientists today, and is the opinion of thousands of professors in colleges and universities. There is no doubt about it: evolutionary philosophy has affected, is affecting, and will continue to affect our lives. It is changing the historical destiny of Western civilizations.

A CHANGED ATTITUDE OF MAN TOWARD MAN

Actually, this point is related to the preceding discussion, but is specifically a consideration of sociological behavior—sociology. How has evolutionary philosophy affected sociology? Surburg stated: “Evolutionary students of historical sociology have undoubtedly led the science astray by making cultural evolution identical with organic evolution” (1959, p. 200). Indeed, it is difficult not to! Those who ardently believe that organic evolution is a fact transfer that belief into sociology. They have to. And therein lies the problem. Surburg quotes Meiklejohn as saying, “Darwin established naturalism as the ruling principle for all science of human behavior” (p. 181). Harry Barnes wrote: “Unquestionably the most potent influence contributing to the rise and development of truly historical sociology were Spencer’s theory of cosmic evolution and the Darwinian doctrine of organic evolution, and their reactions upon social science” (1948, p.13).

It is when evolutionary philosophy becomes the predominant worldview that real problems occur. For example, a statement made in a Bible-Science Association leaflet correctly pointed out that “the theory of evolution is basically responsible for the moral, spiritual and educational decay of our

times and the spirit of anarchy so prevalent today. It does away with God, and makes man another animal, subject only to animal instinct for survival or reproduction” (n.d.). Surburg reminded us that “Another important influence of evolutionary Darwinism in history may be seen in the development of Marxian socialism and its materialistic philosophy of history” (1959, p. 194). With evolutionary philosophy, war can be justified and murder can be condoned, but neither can be condemned. Speaking of those who have caused such wars, Max Nordau wrote after the Franco-Prussian War: “Since the history of evolution has been promulgated, they can cover their natural barbarism with the name of Darwin and proclaim the sanguinary instinct of their inmost hearts as the last word of science” (1889, p. 194). That should make us wonder today concerning those who accept evolutionary theory. What is their real attitude toward war? If they are consistent, of course, they can give no condemnation of such—at least on a moral basis. Michael H. Day, an evolutionist, stated: “Whatever views are held upon the origin of mankind, nobody seriously doubts that man is descended from animals...” (1971, p. 4). If we are simply evolved “animals” in a “struggle for survival,” who is to say that war is wrong? No moral evil is involved when two dogs fight. If men are mere animals, then no moral evil is involved when two people fight. If I want to kill another animal (man), and in fact do so, am I wrong according to evolutionary philosophy?

CONCLUSION

“The history of the last century has shown over and over,” warned Bolton Davidheiser, “that as the evolutionary theory is accepted by a society, Christian faith deteriorates” (1969, p. 161). Western society was constructed upon Bible principles. But Western society is reaping the bitter fruits of evolutionary philosophy. Wayne Jackson was right when he wrote: “As is sown, so will be reaped. And man has sown to an evolutionary mind. Accordingly, he is reaping a devastating whirlwind, and he will continue to reap such until he abandons this false philosophy” (1974, p. 46).

No deadly philosophy such as evolution can be sown in the minds of men without bitter fruits being the result. The seeds of evolutionary philosophy have been sown irretrievably within the minds of generations of people around the world since 1859, and we now are reaping the results. We shall

continue to reap those distasteful fruits in the future. Evolutionary philosophy is by no means a dead teaching. It has molded Western thought unto this present day and undoubtedly will continue to degrade objectivity and moral thought in the future. It is a powerful influence in our world today—a giant beast that will not be killed easily.

Darwin did not originate evolutionary philosophy. But he did formalize and awaken a “sleeping giant” that since has crushed under foot the souls of many men and women. That giant continues to march around the world with an unmerciful stride in a concentrated effort to destroy the destiny of men.

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