

# **An Open Letter to Mr. Guy Lengagne from The Protestant Creation Research Group in Hungary**

Dear senator Lengagne,

We, the Protestant Creation Research Group in Hungary would like to respond to your document entitled „The dangers of creationism in education", also known as document 11297, put forth on 8 June, 2007.

Our basic opinion of the document is that it expresses a superficial and malinformed view on creationism, with a number of factual mistakes in it. For example, the first creationist group called the CSM was established in 1932 in England - the cradle of Darwinism. Also, creationists do publish in peerreviewed journals; we have four journals of our own where we publish articles with dozens of references to other scientific works. You mention in point 105 that not one single creationist group was consulted when drawing up your rapport. Therefore one can only come to the conclusion that your representation of the issue is one-sided. One cannot but notice that the document is basically an anti-creationist polemic, aimed at supressing Christian views.

We find it worrisome that you as a senator of one of the highest parliaments of Europe would make such a statement that „there is a real risk ... of an advent of an 'all things are equal' attitude, which may seem appealing and tolerant but is actually disastrous“. Also worrisome is the way that you seem to lament the fact that the great majority of American citizens express their opinion that it would allowable to teach intelligent design besides evolution in public schools. This is the voice of the people. Where has the battle-cry of „liberté, égalité, fraternité“ suddenly gone off to? Such an attitude one must admit is the real threat to democracy and human rights when one wants to restrain from giving publicity to all sides of an issue. Not to mention

that there are a great number of scientists themselves who believe in the existence of God and the creation of the universe.

Creationists mainly only want a fair hearing of creation and its scientific proofs in public education. There are many scientists from all scientific fields and disciplines who have at least PhDs who oppose evolutionary theory as well as espouse either intelligent design or creation (which is, by the way a more specialized form of intelligent design).

We have nothing to do with a supposed agenda the goal of which is to turn Europe back to the middle ages or oppress scientific opinion like in the case of Galilei. The idea of men being equal has everything to do with the idea of creation as espoused by the signers of the American Declaration of Independence: „We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal“. We believe that if people would accept the Creator it would do a lot against racial discrimination, for example.

The creationist movement which is mainly led by Protestant denominations had nothing to do with Galilei who was oppressed by the Roman Catholic church (whose scientific views were drawn not from the Bible but from Aristotelean philosophy), but rather during those times gave asylum to others who were persecuted for their views (themselves having been persecuted at the hands of Rome). In fact, Protestantism gave a great boost to scientific inquiry beginning in the 17th century. Therefore we ourselves would be quite sensitive as to persecuting anybody about their worldviews. Our ultimate goal is not to destroy evolutionists and what they have built up, „little by little" but simply to have equal time. If you deliberately determine to shut out a certain point of view in an issue than how can you claim yourself to be open-minded? If science demands that a theory be able to stand up to criticism, why would you be the first one to rescue evolution from scientific scrutiny on the part of creationists?

In points 13 and 76, you state the opinions of popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI that evolution is more than a theory and that „the creationist position is based on an interpretation of the Bible that the Catholic church does not share“. As Protestants we have nothing to do with the Catholic interpretation of the Bible, and therefore the popes' opinion is not binding on us.

Much less if there is a plurality of opinions within the Roman Catholic church itself on this issue.

You claim in point 83, quoting Charles Otis Whitman, that „Facts without a theory is chaos, but theory without facts is fantasy“. This means that scientific facts can only be interpreted really well if they fall within the framework of a theory which makes sense out of everything observed during scientific experiments and measurements. By stating this, please note that you are inadvertently admitting that no scientific research can be done without an underlying platform, a scientific research program, if you will, something which is subjectively defined at least to some degree. This is why Theodosius Dobzhansky stated that „nothing makes sense in biology except in the light of evolution“.

Also, you state in point 102 that „Science provides irreplaceable training in intellectual power. It seeks not to explain 'why things are' but to understand how they work“. If this is so, then ultimately, evolutionary science cannot say that God doesn't exist, and that God didn't create the world, because this is the realm of philosophy, and God is also above being observed by the tools of science. However – and this is important – if science does not say anything about the supernatural world, then how can we exclude the universe from having a supernatural cause – a supernatural universe in which intelligent human beings are capable of using the tools of science to make some sense of their origins? This is why creationism does have legitimate scientific aspects, belonging to the same category as evolution.

When dealing with scientific creationism, creationist scientists do respect the scientific method – their models deal with scientific phenomena. Scientific experiments have an independence of their own in the field of scientific inquiry – the end result of which are numerous facts, data, and observations. However, these facts and observations do not stand alone by themselves but must be interpreted within the framework of a theory, as you state correctly. It's just that some interpret facts in a materialistic framework, while others interpret them in a framework which harmonizes with the idea of creation and the Bible.

As to whether creationists publish in peer-reviewed journals, please visit the following website:

<http://www.creationontheweb.com/content/view/3486>

We would also like to put forth certain scientific proofs and arguments which either harmonize with or give scientific support to the idea of Biblical creation.

### **The concept of species according to the Bible**

If we follow closely the narrative of the creation of the universe in the Bible we can read the following in Genesis 1, verse 12: „And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.“ This means that the Bible doesn't speak about the fixity of species. Rather it mentions kinds of organisms, which reproduce and bare offspring which resemble the original kind.

This concept would allow the variation within kinds of organisms. In fact, this idea of kinds of organisms is quite intuitive to understand – we have cats, dogs, pigeons, horses, basically all kinds of different animals and plants in which there are many similar species, within which variation such as hybridization is evident, which however do not intermix with one another. It is interesting to note that Darwin himself was a pigeon breeder and noted in one of his major works that all pigeons originated from a single pigeon species, the rock pigeon.

This concept of limited variation within animal and plant kinds was part of natural theology in the 19th century, and which was also pursued by American zoologist Louis Agassiz, who in his day inhibited the advent of Darwinism in the United States for 10 years. Much practical knowledge gained from animal breeding experiments and common knowledge supports the idea of kinds of animals, and the burden of proof lies with evolution in proving that genetic variation goes further than kinds of organisms. In fact, the discovery of monophyletic groups (that is, a whole group of species which all originate from a single founder species) and their being reported in the

scientific literature all across nature at the level of mainly order, family and genus overwhelmingly proves the reality of organismic kinds.

Also, the phenomenon of adaptive radiation, as observed in the family Geospizidae (Darwin's finches) also lends support to this idea. Adaptive radiation basically means that species stem from a single founder species through slight modifications and then inhabit different ecological niches due to adaptation to that specific niche.

### **Gaps in the fossil records – harmonizes again creation with nature**

We would also like to mention how creation theory nicely harmonizes with what is observed in the fossil record, as well as explaining difficulties coming from the clashing of two well-known evolutionary theories, gradualism and punctuated equilibrium. Darwin stated in his book, the Origin of Species that species are born through slight graduations. This would mean that there would have to be a long line of species starting from the first primordial cell all the way up to the human being, full of intermediate forms which are infinitesimally different from one another. This is the view of gradualism. This would harmonize with genetic mutations turning one organism into another. However, in Darwin's day the fossil record was very incomplete, with huge gaps between different groups of organisms. Darwin argued from silence, stating that with time all the intermediate forms will someday be discovered.

About 150 years later the situation hasn't changed. There is no hard proof that all the gaps between all major transitions have been found. In fact, the major trend is that whenever a new fossil is found, it is either listed as a member of an already known taxon, or, if it is a new species, being totally different from other species, then it is put into its own new taxon. Fossil finds either resemble known taxons or are generally different.

The late Stephen J. Gould noticed this fact and therefore along with Niles Eldredge fathered what is known as the punctuated equilibrium theory. This theory basically states that during a species' lifetime, a great deal of time is spent in stasis, that is, almost no change occurs in the genetic or morphological make-up of a species. However, due to certain environmental stimuli such as catastrophic events, species tend to undergo rapid transformations.

We must note that the underlying genetic mechanisms for such macromutations has still not been satisfactorily explained by evolutionists. This is because small mutations such as base mutations would tend not to be enough to cause such a phenotypic change in the species so as to make it be able to adapt. The great majority of mutations are harmful in nature thereby bar organisms from undergoing macromutational changes.

However, as we mentioned previously, this is precisely what the creation model has predicted all along. The creation model states that the organismic kinds have been created individually and have undergone certain limited genetic and morfological variation. It is the lack of variation and intermixing between species of different kinds which is evident from the large gaps in the fossil record, which is totally unexplainable by evolutionary theory.

### **New virus and bacteria strains**

In Document 11297 it is stated repeatedly that creationism would mean an end to medicine, such as AIDS research. This is absolutley not true. As we explained previously, variation between kinds of animals or plants, or bacteria or viruses is perfectly acceptable to creation theory. This has been attested to by numerous creationist articles and writings on this subject.

Let us take a look at bacteria, for example. Very many times bacteria develop a resistance to drugs because a certain enzyme is turned on, which breaks down antibiotics when it enters the bacterial cell. This, however many times happens because of a loss of genetic material. This means that change happens through the loss of genetic material, although evolution would need many many new genes in the line from bacteria to human beings. These medical cases are not direct proofs for evolution and can be amply explained by creation theory, which posits that mutations are harmful and destroy genetic material, not build it up. In the bacterial cell there are certian kinds of regulatory genes which produce proteins which inhibit the expression of the enzyme which is responsible for degrading the antibiotic.

If a chance mutation happens to disrupt the protein structure of this regulatory gene and its protein, then this would mean that the enzyme would be produced in amounts much larger than normal in the bacterial cell. As a result, since this mutant strain of bacteria is capable of breaking down the anti-

biotic, it is therefore able to survive and spread within hospitals, often infecting more and more people. The evolutionary view is that somehow a new strand of resistant bacteria evolved, and therefore attempt to develop new kinds of drugs which are capable of destroying the new resistant strain.

However, there exists quite a simple solution to this problem. If the patient is allowed to come in contact with wild strains of bacteria (which occur in nature), then due to interspecific competition the wild strains would thereby be able to stop the mutant strains from spreading. This is because the energetic cost would be too much for the mutant strain to keep on producing the enzyme, and would therefore be selected against. This is proof more in line with creation than evolution. One must also take into mind that this involves creative intelligent input into the development of medication, which is antithetical to the blind, random chance of evolution.

### **The case is similar in the case of new strains of agricultural pests**

We could also look at the example of vestigial organs. According to Darwinism, vestigial organs are leftover organs from a previous stage of development in a species. In the 19th century approximately 100 such organs in the human body had been listed as vestigial, thus taken to have no function. However, since then science has found functions for these organs, for example the appendix, tonsils, the coccyx, the thymus, the pineal gland, the thyroid gland, and the pituitary gland. A number of times such vestigial organs had been cut out through surgery, since they were deemed to be functionless, only to be found to be necessary. Some of these surgeries ended up in death.

### **Mitochondrial Eve and Neanderthals**

In 1997, a paper was published by Parsons et al. in the journal Nature Genetics about mutation rates in human mitochondria. Mitochondria are small organelles in cells which are responsible for energy production. Since there are many mitochondria in cells (for example in muscle cells), they have their own DNA and are capable of dividing. Parsons studied the mutation rate in 327 parent-child relationships, and found that it was more than 20 times faster than the rate hitherto used by evolutionary models which use evolutionary assumptions. They also calculated in this article that the oldest female from whom all our mitochondrial material comes from is but 6500

years old, which is perfectly compatible with the Bible. The reference for this article is:

Parsons, T.J. et al 'A high observed substitution rate in the human mitochondrial DNA control region', Nature Genetics Vol. 15: 363–368, 1997

We would further like to make mention of Neanderthal man, *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*. Until today science has held Neanderthal man to be a side branch of human evolution. Since science develops, many scientific views also change. Nowadays Neanderthals are known to have made musical instruments and other tools. They also had religion and buried their dead. A number of mixed human and Neanderthal graves have been found in Europe and the Middle East. It is also thought that Neanderthals have intermixed with each other. Also, many mixed human-Neanderthal skeletons have been found which show characteristics of both subspecies. The thickness of Neanderthal bones can be accounted to diseases such as lack of vitamin D or scurvy. Therefore Neanderthal man can be considered human.

I could give more evidences on creation, but the space in this letter is too short to do so. In conclusion I would like to stress that it would be simply wrong to exclude the creationist viewpoint from public education and public acceptance. I sincerely hope that by writing this letter I have been able to give new thoughts on this subject.

Sincerely,

Matyas Cserhati,

in representation of The Protestant Creation Research Group, Hungary

*Der Brief wird im TheoBlog.de mit freundlicher Genehmigung angeboten.*