

A Critique of Materialist Neo-Darwinism based on the Views of Thomas Nagel

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Abstract: According to materialist neo-Darwinists, life and all things related to it are merely the results of the operation of material laws, and no immaterial or transcendental factor has been involved. Therefore, in order to provide a comprehensive and ultimate explanation of living things, it is enough to know the material laws and reduce everything to these laws.

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Thomas Nagel, a prominent philosopher of the mind and one of the opponents of materialism, argued that the existence of life from inanimate matter was improbable, that physical laws are not self-sufficiency, that consciousness existed and that it could not be reduced to physical matters, and then natural selection theory cannot explain reason. But he also critiques materialist neo-Darwinism. But it also criticizes the theistic view, arguing that it firstly creates a dilemma and explanatory gap between the mental and the physical, and secondly that it does not, as the materialists' view, bring the explanation to an end. In contrast, he proposes the theory of panpsychism for the constitutive aspect of his view and natural teleology for its historical aspect.

Keywords: Material neo-Darwinism, Panpsychism, Theism, Inference of the Best Explanation.
The purpose of this analytical-critical article is, firstly, to critique materialist neo-Darwinism using Nagel's critical views, and secondly, to argue that, based on the principle of inference of the best explanation, theism in A comparison with Nagel's materialism and the panpsychistic hypothesis is a more plausible explanation.

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Introduction: Since the theory of neo-Darwinism is the most serious theory in explaining the way life is formed and diverged, this theory has been the most important support and tool of materialists to defend an atheistic worldview. According to the followers of neo-Darwinism, the emergence of life and its evolution was merely the result of the operation of material laws, and no intelligent immaterial factor was involved in its creation. Therefore, to understand the way life evolved and its diversity, it is enough to know the material laws that govern nature and to explain everything according to these laws. Thus, according to materialist neo-Darwinists, material laws, especially the constitutive laws of physics, are the final point of explanation for beings.

In contrast to this materialistic view of the evolutionary process, there are two other views: the theistic view and the immaterial naturalistic view. Adherents of both views

accept the theory of evolution as the process or mechanism by which all kinds of beings came into being, but argue that there is no reason to regard this process as a purely material process, or as proof of materialism. In addition, they believe that the narration of the materialists is incapable of a definitive explanation of the world. The theistic view considers God as the final point of explanation, and the view of immaterial naturalism, by giving originality to the mental aspects of nature, considers nature itself as the final point of explanation. Thomas Nagel, a prominent philosopher of the mind, is one of the most prominent followers of the latter view.

Methodology: In this article, which is done analytically-critically, our aim is first to critique materialist neo-Darwinism by relying on Nagel's views and then to defend the superiority of theistic explanation over

materialist explanation and Nagel's view.

Findings: The most important criticisms of Nagel against materialist neo-Darwinism are:

1. The impossibility of the emergence of life from inanimate matter and then its evolution,
2. Insufficiency of the basic laws of physics as the ultimate explanation,
3. The emergence of mind, consciousness, and reason in nature and the inability of material expression to explain them.

In the next section, we discuss Nagel's criticisms of the theistic explanation, which are generally:

1. Incomplete theological explanation because God does not explain His existence and how He works.
2. The theistic view, because it explains nature through supernatural concepts, causes explanatory disconnection and, in simpler terms, explanatory gap.

After criticizing these two views (theism and materialism), Nagel offers an alternative hypothesis that is in a sense a combination of both views. Because, on the one hand, like theists, he believes that mere material laws are not sufficient to explain nature, and that other immaterial factors must be involved. But on the other hand, contrary to the theists, he considers these immaterial factors, not outside nature but inside nature, and in a precise sense, an inherent feature of nature, and that is why he has called his view immaterial theism.

Nagel believes that any comprehensive and ultimate explanation of the world must have a constitutive aspect and a historical aspect. The constitutive of the explanation is that it should show what intrinsic properties the world has in which things such as life, mind, consciousness, reason, etc. have been created. Historically, it also means why creatures have reached their

current state, why, and for what purpose.

Discussion and Conclusion:

Nagel proposes the theory of panpsychism for the constitutive of his view and natural teleology for its historical aspect. According to the panpsychistic hypothesis, all the particles of the universe have had minds and consciousness from the very beginning of creation. The mind is not a by-product of physical affairs but has existed in the fibers of physical affairs since the beginning of existence. Therefore, beings, nature, or in a more general sense, the whole universe is not a whole physical thing, but a physical-mental phenomenon in which the mind and matter are intertwined in each of its particles and evolve in an intertwined way.

According to natural teleology, Nagel believes that, given life, mere material principles and laws, including natural selection, genetic mutations, etc., are not enough to elevate

organisms to more complex stages, such as the evolution of a single cell into a human. According to him, there must have been other stimuli to pave the way for evolution through their actions. Nagel considers this factor or stimulus to be the inner ends of nature. Therefore, he believes that nature has a purpose.

In the concluding section of the article, while endorsing Nagel's criticisms of materialist neo-Darwinism, we have argued, using the views of theists such as Plantinga and Swinburne, that theism is both simpler and easier to understand than Nagel's proposed hypothesis. Therefore, based on the principle of the inference to the best explanation, theism is the best ultimate explanation for the universe.

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