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12. The Good Samaritan and His Genes

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The Good Samaritan, with his expansive vision of who counts as a neighbor, has been a role model for millennia. Although there are secular Samaritans, in the Good Samaritan himself Jesus is illustrating the second of the two great commandments to love God and neighbor, a religiously motivated ethic (Luke 10:29-37). Turning a millennium, we find ourselves in the century of genes; we decoded our genome in 2001. The search now is for how these genes shape behavior, and so we need to fit both the Samaritan's ethics and his underlying religion into a genetic account. But then again, there have been surprises; we have fewer genes than we thought, with more plasticity, especially for cultural achievements.

Since people have to eat daily, reproduce each generation, and care for children throughout much of their adult lives, it is unsurprising that fertility — success in staying alive from one generation to the next — is pervasive in religions that have succeeded. Any religion persisting over the centuries will have accompanied reproductive success. We know that before we look. The most plausible theory is likely to be that such religion contributed to this reproductive success — though it is logically possible that the religion was irrelevant or even detrimental but was hitchhiking on some other skills and practices that were the deeper cause of the success.

Mixed in with this raising of families is this Samaritan behavior — helping non-genetically related others. We need to figure out how we reproduce Good Samaritans, generation after generation. Unless biologists can set this too in a Darwinian framework, perhaps this sort of altruism will be revealing counterevidence to current biological theory. Religion would be generating a social phenomenon that biology is incompetent to handle, either to explain or to evaluate. If so, then such naturalistic accounts of the genesis of religion will be partial, at best. Religious accounts of the genesis of this socially beneficial altruism might be complementary or corrective to the biological accounts.

The Good Samaritan "Biologicized" with Adaptive Genes

The Samaritan — and this is important for our case — is not genetically related to the Jewish victim whom he aids. "Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans" (John 4:9). The Jericho road is out of Samaritan territory. The Samaritan spent time, energy, and money helping an alien (nonkindred) genetic line, a victim that his ethics valued as a neighbor. The straightforward account is that the Samaritan is defending an unrelated other altruistically. Parallel models can be found in other traditions, as widespread variants of the Golden Rule illustrate.

From a genetic viewpoint, this victim, so assisted, will be more likely to have offspring. A tribe of such Samaritans would be likely to do well in competition with societies from which such behavior is absent. But this is not a tribal affair; here we have cross-cultural ethics. The determinant here is an "idea" (helping a neighbor, with sympathetic compassion) that is not just subservient to but superposed on the genetics. Such an "idea" can be transmitted nongenetically, as has indeed happened in this case, since the story has been widely retold and praised as a model by persons in other cultures who are neither Jews nor Samaritans. Persons regularly persuade others and are themselves persuaded to adopt ethical creeds.

There is present both an ideal and the real. Persons fail to form creeds, fail to act on the creeds they do form. There is moral selfishness. There are thieves as well as Samaritans, exploiters as well as missionaries, assassins as well as prophets. But such failure is proof, not disproof, of the norm — an ethics that holds that one ought to help others individually, which will also maximize the general sense of "neighborliness" pervading within and across cultures. Neighbors are whomever one encounters that one is in a position to help. The Samaritan respects life not his own; he values life outside his own self-sector, outside his cultural sector.

But perhaps this straightforward account is also superficial. We need to go deeper and find a naturalized ethics, a Darwinized morality.

E. O. Wilson begins and ends his *Sociobiology* with a "biologicized" ethics:

> What... made the hypothalamus and the limbic system? They evolved by natural selection. That simple biological statement must be pursued to explain ethics and ethical philosophers, if not epistemology and epistemologists, at all depths.... The time has come for ethics to be removed temporarily from the hands of philosophers and biologicized. (1975, 3, 562)

> Human behavior ... is the circuitous technique by which human genetic material has been and will be kept intact. Morality has no other demonstrable ultimate function. (1978, 167)

Michael Ruse, a philosopher, joins Wilson:

> Morality, or more strictly, our belief in morality, is merely an adaptation put in place to further our reproductive ends. Hence the basis of ethics does not lie in God's will... or any other part of the framework of the Universe. In an important sense, ethics... is an illusion fobbed off on us by our genes to get us to cooperate. (Ruse and Wilson 1985, 51-52)

> Morality is a biological adaptation no less than are hands and feet and teeth. (Ruse 1994, 15; 1986, 222)

Bluntly put, ethics results in fertility; that is its deepest explanation.

A morality that conserves human genetic material is welcome enough. But this also brings deeper trouble. More bluntly put, evolution produces this fertility through a radical selfishness incompatible with any genuine altruism in ethics. George Williams claims, "Natural selection ... can honestly be described as a process for maximizing short-sighted selfishness" (1988, 385). Richard Dawkins summarizes: "The logic … is this: Humans and baboons have evolved by natural selection.... Anything that has evolved by natural selection should be selfish. Therefore we must expect that when we go and look at the behaviour of baboons, humans, and all other living creatures, we will find it to be selfish" (1989, 4).

Michael Ghiselin concludes his scientific analysis with memorable rhetoric:

> No hint of genuine charity ameliorates our vision of society, once sentimentalism has been laid aside. What passes for co-operation turns out to be a mixture of opportunism and exploitation. … Given a full chance to act in his own interest, nothing but expediency will restrain [a person] from brutalizing, from maiming, from murdering — his brother, his mate, his parent, or his child. Scratch an "altruist" and watch a "hypocrite" bleed. (1974, 247).

All that natural selection permits are forms of quasi-altruism that are actually self-interest, more or less enlightened or disguised forms of selfishness. Richard Alexander concludes:

> *I* suspect that nearly all humans believe it is a normal part of the functioning of every human individual now and then to assist someone else in the realization of that person's own interests to the actual net expense of the altruist. What this "'greatest intellectual revolution of the century" tells us is that, despite our intuitions, there is not a shred of evidence to support this view of beneficence, and a great deal of convincing theory suggests that any such view will eventually be judged false. This implies that we will have to start all over again to describe and understand ourselves, in terms alien to our intuitions, and in one way or another different from every discussion of this topic across the whole of human history. (1987, 3; 1993)

Dawkins claims that with the Darwinian revolution begun in *The Origin of Species* (1859), all the old answers to the question about how humans ought to live and act are discredited. "The point I want to make now is that all attempts to answer that question before 1859 are worthless and that we will be better off if we ignore them completely" (1989, 1). Challenged about this, Dawkins insists: "There is such a thing as being just plain wrong, and that is what, before 1859, all answers to those questions were" (1989, 267). These are not modest claims. Robert L. Trivers claims that these are "models designed to take the altruism out of altruism" (1971, 35).

So we need to biologicize this Good Samaritan. Let us see if we can take the altruism out, and find Jesus' answer worthless and plain wrong. Let us start all over and describe his behavior in terms alien to our intuitions. Let us scratch this altruist and see if a hypocrite bleeds. Let us see if we can find what David Barash calls "the ugly underside of altruism" (2001).

The Good Samaritan — so the biologicizing theory holds — is constitutionally (= genetically) unable to act for the victim's sake. And so, there must be a self-interested account. Alexander concludes, "This means that whether or not we know it when we speak favorably to our children about Good Samaritanism, we are telling them about a behavior that has a strong likelihood of being reproductively profitable." Conscience is a "still small voice that tells us how far we can go in serving our own interests without incurring intolerable risks" (1987, 102). "The main reward is reputation, and all the benefits that high moral reputation may yield. Reputation as an altruist pays" (1993, 188). Even the Bible enjoins, "Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days" (Eccl. 11:1).

The Deceived Good Samaritan

Of course the Good Samaritan did not think of himself as increasing the likely number of his offspring. He did not even know he had any genes. He knew the difference between crass self-interest and concern for others; thieves had robbed this hapless fellow, and he by contrast was trying to help him. But this concern for others, apparent to him, was only apparent. What the Samaritan intends is not what is resulting. Despite the intended altruism, the Samaritan's act promotes his own genetic interest.

The fact that this appears even to him to be altruism is explained this way: the whole transaction works better if persons are self-deceived. Not only do they not know about their genes; they do not know they are really acting in their self-interest. The Samaritan gets these results by indirection. He has to want what he doesn't really want to get what he really wants. Alexander explains. "I mean that such information is not a part of their conscious knowledge, and that if you ask people what they *think their* interests are they would usually give wrong answers" (1987, 36).

The apparent sincerity guarantees the reciprocity. If the victim knew the Samaritan's real motives (putting genes in the next generation), he would be disinclined later to reciprocate, had he such opportunity. If even the Samaritan knew his real motives, he would be a bad actor and his insincerity would leak out. So the Samaritan has to be blind to his own deepest motives, blind to the genetic impulses that fundamentally frame his behavior; he has to appear convincingly concerned, if the reciprocity is to go through. "If the theory is correct humans could not have *evolved* to know it, and to act directly and consciously in respect to it (1987, 38).

Ruse and Wilson put it this way:

> Human beings function better if they are deceived by their genes into thinking that there is a disinterested objective morality binding upon them, which all should obey. We help others because it is "right" to help them and because we know that they are inwardly compelled to reciprocate in equal measure. What Darwinian evolutionary theory shows is that this sense of "right" and the corresponding sense of "wrong," feelings we take to be above individual desire and in some fashion outside biology, are in fact brought about by ultimately biological processes. (1986, 179)

The Samaritan is operating with an "ideal" of aiding neighbors, but this is his delusion, his hidden reputation-seeking. The Good Samaritan (a half-breed himself, part Jew, part Gentile, really assisted the luckless victim in or-

der to leave more genes in the next generation. What a hypocrite! That selfish bastard!

He doesn't know this, but we can allow no disconfirming or confirming evidence from people's verbal reports. Their conscious motivations are superstructural, epiphenomenal; their deep genetic determinants are not available to them. Genes are microscopic and humans historically knew no more about their genes than do monkeys today. "Genes remained outside the range of our senses in all respects until the twentieth century" (Alexander 1987, 38-39). Humans, however, have long known what it means to be self-interested, and they have had to create an illusion of altruistic morality for the reciprocity to work.

This means that scientists can expect this theory of ethics to be rejected by critics, who continue to deceive themselves. "Natural selection…. appears to have designed human motivation in social matters as to cause its understanding to be resisted powerfully." This is why "evolutionary biologists who attempt to explicate human behavior are ignored or maligned" (Alexander 1993, 192, 189). Here genes make such hypocrites that it becomes difficult for good science to reveal what is going on.

But then it could be the other way around, that this demanding scientific paradigm is governing the way all evidence is interpreted, and skillfully reinterpreting all apparent anomalies, such as this Samaritan, making it difficult for such science to take seriously what is actually going on. We may be headed toward a puzzle about who has an interpretive framework that is preventing seeing the truth.

There is a presumption here that takes the biological level to be final. If *x* can be shown to be biological, then no further explanation is permitted or required. There is also a presumed discovery that takes the biological processes to be deceptive. We are programmed to believe what is not so. Explanatory schemes are difficult to deal with when they make an end run around our capacity to reason. There is, of course, a great deal of rationalizing (unconsciously pretended reasons, hypocrisy) in human behavior, as well as much selfishness; and both do undermine our capacity to think. Psychologists and biologists were not the first to discover either tendency; ethicists and theologians had been lamenting it for centuries — if we can trust those verbal reports.

Even if we can get ourselves freed from this selfish rationalizing enough to examine the scientific claims here, matters are going to be tricky to disentangle. The fundamental claim is that selfish persons out-reproduce unselfish ones; that is where the biology starts. But a further claim to be tested is that cooperative persons out-compete combative ones. Good Samaritans out-

reproduce thieves. Is there any evidence that thieves are declining over generations, that Good Samaritans are increasing? If so, is the cause of this genetic?

We also have to take care when we switch from within populations (tribes) to interactions between populations (tribe encountering tribe). Generally these biologists seem to think that inside tribes the thieves (the selfish, the cheaters) will out-reproduce the Samaritans (the altruists). But recently group selection has been returning to vogue (Sober and D. S. Wilson 1998; D. S. Wilson 2002), and now the claim is that, if within the tribe we can find ways of policing the would-be cheaters, tribes of Good Samaritans will out-reproduce tribes of thieves. Of course we must not forget that the whole point of the Good Samaritan model is out-group compassion.

Meanwhile to get the altruism established, whether within the tribe or without it, we have superimposed the further claim that (really) selfish persons who are self-deceived into thinking they are unselfish out-reproduce selfish persons who know their own selfishness. Really, those damned thieves will leave fewer offspring in the next generation. Neither the priest nor the Levite will do well either. These compassionate Samaritans, though blind to what is really going on, will out-reproduce all the rest.

Halfway to the biologicized ethic, the claim to be tested is that pseudo-altruism (altruism, really self-interest) out-reproduces unenlightened selfishness. Self-deceived Good Samaritans out-reproduce thieves. But to get the ethic fully in place, the claim is also that tacit pseudo-altruism (altruism, really self-interest, but unawares) out-reproduces even enlightened selfishness (persons made explicitly aware of their self-interest in reciprocal altruism). Deluded Good Samaritans out-reproduce nondeceived, wised-up Good Samaritans.

Testing these claims against facts, although we observe some evident altruism along with much selfishness, we find no evidence that altruistic persons are increasing in the genetic pool over selfish ones, or vice versa. Meanwhile, one hardly needs evidence that cooperators frequently do well in society. If there were some evidence of the increasing genetic frequency of altruists, it might be difficult to say whether it was supporting cooperation over combativeness, or genuine altruism over unenlightened selfishness, or pseudo-altruism over enlightened selfishness. Nor is there any evidence that altruists who are deceived about their motives are, over the centuries, out-reproducing altruists who are introspective enough to realize the benefits of mutual cooperation.

The difficulty of interpreting whatever behavioral patterns we find is going to be compounded by the fact that all verbal reports of motives have to be dismissed as unreliable. Since such psychological and experiential evidence is

inadmissible, we could find it difficult to reach any conclusions as to whether biological factors are subliminal and determining the outcome, or incomplete and under-determining the outcome. More complications follow.

Deceiving the Deceiving Good Samaritan

Past this beneficial self-deception — so continue these ingenious accounts — there is risk of harmful deception when a Samaritan moral agent gets tricked into edging past diminishing returns and moves over into what is in fact real altruism. Here the actor not only thinks he or she is an altruist, the actor is indeed an altruist and the advantage passes over to the person aided. Truly altruistic acts cannot be favored by selection, but here is selection for "the ability to induce others to behave altruistically" (Williams 1988, 400).

In such "'induced altruism[5]' an individual is favored who can trick others into believing that altruism is the right thing to do, thus coupling up with the moralist's own native, naive self-deceptions about his or her duties. "We, therefore, would expect the evolution of abilities and tendencies to deceive potential altruists into serving inadvertently the interests of others" (Alexander 1987, 114; 1993). The hoodwinked altruist's kind will be reduced, and the trickster's tribe increase. So trick prevails over truth.

An ethicist who takes philanthropy as authentic "misses the role of manipulation in philanthropy" (Williams 1988, 400). Such donors are really losers. The only philanthropy that wins, though unawares to itself, is really self-seeking and results in actual gain to the donor. Meanwhile philanthropy that knowingly realizes that it seeks its own interest is not convincing enough to succeed.

Super-Good Samaritans are suckers, out-competed by self-deceived but successful Good Samaritans, who in turn out-compete wised-up Samaritans. Always look for the subtler self-interested motive. If you do not find it, look again. It must be there because the theory demands it. If you cannot find it, there must be a mistake, either yours in not finding the genetic self-interest, or a mistake on the part of the actor. "I do not doubt that occasional individuals lead lives that are truly altruistic and self-sacrificing. However admirable and desirable such behavior may be from others' points of view, it represents an evolutionary mistake for the individual showing it" (Alexander 1987, 191). The Good Samaritan must not edge past the point of his own self-interests, not allow the groans of the wounded man to con him into too much risk, not promise to pay at the inn any more money than he is likely to gain as benefits in return. He should not offer a blood donation. He must resist induced altruism.

But further, a super smart Good Samaritan can himself become a trickster. In the struggle between trick and countertrick, he can con the victim into thinking that his rescuer is more of a Good Samaritan than he really is. "Individuals are expected to parade the idea of much beneficence, and even of indiscriminate altruism as beneficial, so as to encourage people in general to engage in increasing amounts of social investment whether or not it is beneficial to their interests" (Alexander 1987, 103; 1993). This is "inflated altruism."

Though the Good Samaritan must not actually let himself be induced into *being* a super-Good Samaritan, if he can manage to appear this way, then the victim (or other admirers) will be all the more disposed to reciprocate with benefits to the Good Samaritan that now exceed the advantage conveyed by the Samaritan to the victim. Alexander is forthright, claiming a "general theory of behavior":

> Society is based on lies… "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." But this admirable goal is clearly contrary to a tendency to behave in a reproductively selfish manner. "Thou shalt give the impression that thou lovest thy neighbor as thyself" might be closer to the truth. (1975, 96)

The Good Samaritan, first found to be only apparently a loser in favor of the victim, is, at this second level of deception, found out to be inflating this appearance even more, so that he can win bigger still. That is why he told the innkeeper he would pay more if needs be, on his return trip. He wasn't being tricked into extra altruism; he was parading his beneficence for future gains. He was image-building. The victim is twice victimized, once by the thieves and a second time by the Samaritan, who inflates his already only apparent altruism and thus will sucker the victim, once he has recovered, into over-reciprocating later on. That selfish bastard is at it again!

Alexander concludes, summarizing both induced and inflated altruism:

> The long-term existence of complex patterns of indirect reciprocity, then, seems to favor the evolution of keen abilities to (i) make one's self seem more beneficent than is the case; and (2) influence others to be beneficent in such fashions as to be deleterious to themselves and beneficial to the moralizer, e.g., to lead others to (a) invest too much, (b) invest wrongly in the moralizer or his relatives and friends, or (c) invest indiscriminately on a larger scale than would otherwise be the case. (1987, 103)

> Now biologists realize that the conflicts of interests that exist because of histories of genetic difference imply... that nearly all communicative sig-

> nals human or otherwise, should be expected to involve significant deceit, (1987, 73; 1993)

Mind initially evolves to know enough truth about the world to be able to cope, to find a way through the world. But later mind further evolves to cope by deceiving others into thinking that they are being altruistically helped, and in such way that the benefactor is self-deceived while doing so. Later still, mind further evolves to deceive by producing virtual altruism, though the weaker minds in these contests are harmed when they are sucked into real altruism by still more clever deceivers.

Perhaps. But first one ought to make sure there is no mistake in the logical structure or empirical adequacy of the core evolutionary theory. We may only be dealing with a blik, that is, a paradigm grown arrogant, resolute about self-interest as the nonnegotiable first axiom of biology, interpreting and reinterpreting all evidence in its favor. The empirical facts, which seem to be frequently examined, may in fact make little difference. The theory absorbs the evidence into its interpretive framework. Perhaps we hardly need bother to bring any further moral behavior into the court of evidence. Alexander knows before he looks that all human behavior, however apparently moral, is selfish (apart from anomalous misfits), just as he knows before he looks that the fittest survive (the misfits soon go extinct).

There *must* be deception here somewhere. The theory demands it, and phenomena cannot gainsay the theory. But the deception could be in the theory, not the phenomena, which is disposing us to interpret as an illusion the altruism that is in fact taking place before our very eyes. So far from understanding what is going on, one will miss a critical new turning point: the emergence of these "ideas," become "ideals" — altruistic love, justice, and freedom.

At this point, one begins to wonder just who is being deceived: the moralist who acts with these altruistic intentions? Or the reductionist scientist whose theory forces a double negation of a positive emergent? The induced blindness as to what is really going on could be either place. Certainly, self-interest is a core principle in biology; but it does not follow that nothing in culture can operate with superimposing principles. There is no particular cause to see ethical advocacy as so much fluff over unconscious genetic determinants. Remember those surprises; we have fewer genes than we thought, with more cultural plasticity. We are still wondering how we reproduce Good Samaritans, generation after generation.

Good Samaritans Converting Others

Samaritans do not just give these victims their time and money, they give them their religion. They convert those thieves too, if they can. Such disciples need not have the genes of the prophets, seers, and saviors who launched these teachings. In a successful world religion, they seldom do. People do better with genes flexible enough to track the best religion, whether their blood kin launched it or not. One does not need Semitic genes to be a Christian, any more than Plato's genes to be a Platonist, or Einstein's genes to adopt the theory of relativity. Religious beliefs overleap genes.

E. O. Wilson claims that the function of religious myths and rituals is indoctrination to produce group loyalty. Such concerted group action conveys survival value on all, on average, so that it is in any individual's probable advantage to cooperate, even though he has some risk of losing (being killed in battle, for instance). Persons act with this pseudo-altruism because it is in their genetic self-interest to bond to others of their kind in this way. "The essential characteristic of a tribe is that it should follow a double standard of morality — one kind of behavior for in-group relations, another for out-group" (E. O. Wilson 1975, 565). Humans are genetically inclined to xenophobia (E. O. Wilson 1975, 249). Possibly natural selection favored those genes that caused the early humans to be altruistic toward members of their own tribe but intolerant of outsiders. Possibly, humans today still have that innate tendency. Plausibly, primitive religions are of this xenophobic kind. Perhaps this explains certain contemporary phenomena, such as the kamikaze pilots of World War II, dying for the Emperor. Group selection, we were saying, has been returning to the biological scene.

But these groups still need to be competing with other groups, so that the benefits gained in out-group competition outweigh the costs of in-group cooperation. David Sloan Wilson finds that group selection builds what he calls "Darwin's Cathedral," an English Westminster Abbey, or a Calvinist Geneva, not (in the universalist sense) a catholic church. "But, alas, group selection merely takes us out of the frying pan of within-group interactions and into the fire of between-group interactions." "Group selection creates a moral world within groups but doesn't touch the world of between-group interactions, . . . Among-group interactions may exhibit the rudiments of moral conduct but are dominated by exploitation on all sides" (D. S. Wilson 2002, 38, 141-43).

David Sloan Wilson, joining with Elliott Sober, finds both self-interest and altruism as we do "unto others." Within the community, we find the patriots in battle, the Rotarians building their public spirit, even the Presby-

terians loving both self and neighbors (as with those Genevan Calvinists, studied by Wilson), But equally, Wilson and Sober insist, there is no "universal benevolence."

> Group selection does provide a setting in which helping behavior directed at members of one's own group can evolve; however, it equally provides a context in which hurting individuals in other groups can be selectively advantageous. Group selection favors within-group niceness *and* between-group nastiness. Group selection does not abandon the idea of competition that forms the core of the theory of natural selection. (Sober and Wilson 1998, 9)

But the Samaritan story is not about between-group nastiness. Nor is its retelling over two millennia an expression of ever-continuing group competition. No doubt people who embody this role model do well in their groups and take care of their children (as with the English or the Calvinists), but there can be too much focus on biological fertility, whether individual or tribal. Michael Ruse asks, "Can Selection Explain the Presbyterians?" and he thinks not if this is group selection with within-tribal charity, out-competing other tribes, as David Sloan Wilson proposes. Rather, biologists can explain the Presbyterians with individualist selection and increased fertility (Ruse 2002).

But religion has also to be understood as reproduction cognitively, believers making more converts, as well as biologically, believers having babies. Religions have fertile ideas, illustrated by this Samaritan parable, and people (such as the English or the Calvinists) adopt them the better to cope. You can say if you like that these ideas out-compete other ideas; you could just as well say that these ideas become widely shared. The transmission process is neural, not genetic. One has to be indoctrinated into a religion.

Biologically speaking, the problem now is that the new adherents soon cease to have any genetic relationship to the proselytizers. There are more Christians in Europe or North America than in the Middle East, and more Christians in Asia, or Latin America, or Africa than in Europe. That does not sound like Semitic genetic tribalism. What good are all these English or Calvinist Christians to the Semitic, Greek, or Roman launchers of Christianity, or their present-day descendants? My problem with natural selection explaining the Calvinist Presbyterians is at the other end of the spectrum from Ruse's individualist fertility in Geneva. There are more Presbyterians in Korea than in any other nation in the world; and those Korean Presbyterians have themselves sent out forty thousand missionaries to over one hundred countries. Similarly, Buddhism spread from India to China and from Japan to California.

When disciples convert to these better religions that these Samaritans bring, people are moved to act not just by their genetic programming. Good Samaritans teach kindness by word and example, and preach about the God of love. Indeed, even Alexander and Dawkins, though they have not been converted to the religious view, seem to have been converted to this ethic. When asked what these Samaritans ought to do, "what people *ought* to be doing, Alexander's answer is that biology has "nothing whatsoever" to say (1979, 276), He somehow agrees that "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" *is* "an admirable goal" (1979, *96),* even if it is an evolutionary mistake. Dawkins concludes, "Let us try to *teach* generosity and altruism because we are born selfish (1989, 3).

This Samaritan missionary activity brings cultural prosperity to these converts too. This good religion has to be universally shared; it generates concern for other humans near and far, leading its followers to relate to them with justice, love, and respect. The commitment that one has to make transcends one's genetics. Any account of in-group altruism to achieve out-group competitive success is powerless to explain the universalism in the major world faiths.

If the function of a religion is to provide fervent loyalty for a tribal group, urging one's religion on aliens is exactly the wrong behavior. Missionary activity is helping to ensure the replication of genes unlike one's own. If one has a religion that serves his genes, holds his society together well, and produces numerous offspring, then the last thing he wants to do is share this religion with others. One would be giving the secret away. That would be altruism of the most self-defeating kind! This preaching to the unconverted is not predicted by the theory, nor explained retrodictively. The Great Commission is, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matt 28:19). But the "catholicism" is counterproductive to leaving more Semitic genes in the next generation. Proselytizing those with foreign genes is the worst religious mistake you can make from a genetic viewpoint; and yet it has been the secret of success of all the world's great religions: evangelism in Christianity, or the bodhisattvas' vow in Buddhism. The question ceases to be what tribe or clan a person is from, whether he or she is ally or enemy. The question is, Can he or she be saved?

The one thing impossible is a xenophobic universal altruism. But the major world faiths have escaped tribalism, not only in ideal but also in the real proportionately to their success. It is impossible to explain this ecumenical "xenophilia" on the basis of genetics. The widely shared faith no longer provides any selectable advantage. Somehow, somewhere, these missionary Samaritans reached insight into a better standard of what is right. "You have

heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies" (Matt. 5:43).

From evolutionary theory one can get some reciprocity with the competing out-groups. The latter form the basis of world trade, both cooperative and competitive. Religion is not adverse to being good neighbors, or to being fair and reciprocating in international business. Maybe the church catholic is a mutually supportive society. But, in the end, when the question is asked, "Who is my neighbor?" the answer comes in terms of who has needs that I can help meet, with my time, or money, or religion, not who is likely to reciprocate with net gain to my genetic line.

The pseudo-altruist will have to say that such missionaries were just setting up a world moral climate in which they themselves were most likely to prosper genetically. One can adamantly hang on to the selfishness paradigm, but this is a topsy-turvy kind of selfishness that has to act on universal altruism, and evangelize this faith to the world, that is, share it with everybody else, before it works most efficiently to one's own benefit. It is odd that to serve their genetic interests people have to go to elaborate efforts to do just the opposite, to believe universal creeds, share them with others, act on universal altruism, and build characters that are caring, fair, sympathetic, forgiving, magnanimous.

One can say, if one insists, that all this is just reputation-building, pretense that creates a climate in which the pretender and his kin prosper owing to the reciprocity generated. But it is difficult to see how they prosper to the detriment of the others who are the beneficiaries of this allegedly pretended altruism. There is no longer any differential survival benefit, because all these out-group converts are also winners. There is no longer that competitive edge that Sober and Wilson required at the core of natural selection. None of this is really very plausible anymore, since it becomes impossible to keep the benefits local and in-group,

These religions crisscross races, nations, and centuries, and involve some logic of the mind that is tracking what is transgenetically right. Genetic success is necessary but not sufficient to explain this universalism. It makes more sense to say that such religions were discovering what is trans-tribally, transculturally valuable. Something has emerged for which biology is not giving us a convincing account.

And if some of these Samaritan missionaries say that "God commands this altruism," that this kind of suffering love is divine, there seems no reason yet forthcoming from the biologists to think otherwise. To the contrary, this appearance of universalist religion with its capacity to generate this generous altruism still needs adequate explanation. "Do to others as you would have

them do to you" helps us to cope because here is insight not just for the tribe, but for the world; indeed, if there are moral agents with values at stake in other worlds, this could be universal truth.

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