

REACTIONS

Readers are invited to submit their reactions to the articles in our journal. Please address contributions to: ORIGINS, Geoscience Research Institute, 11060 Campus St., Loma Linda, California 92350 USA.

Re: Chadwick: Of Dinosaurs and Men (ORIGINS 14:33-40)

As a reader of ORIGINS since its inception, I have long noted its negativistic and defeatist attitude towards Creation studies. The article “Of Dinosaurs and Men” by Arthur Chadwick especially shows this. Regardless of whether or not there are valid human tracks in “pre-human” strata, I feel Chadwick misses the point of these studies.

Chadwick chides Creationists for their alleged lack of objectivity. Does he for a moment suppose that the evolutionists have been willing to seriously consider the Paluxy data? On the contrary, they did everything to discredit these markings at all costs. They were attributed to practically everything: dinosaur toe pads, tail drag marks, etc. etc. before being now ascribed to tridactyl dinosaur footprints. What will be next on the “grocery list” of evolutionistic rationalizations for these markings?

I object to the characterization of the “man tracks” as just active Creationist imagination. The finding of possible human tracks alongside dinosaur tracks in the Soviet Union [*Moscow News Weekly* No. 24 (1983), p 10] proves that one does not have to be a Creationist to (correctly or incorrectly) recognize ancient human tracks in “pre-human” strata. If Creationists have made a mistake, so what? Ichnology is a subjective science, and Creationists should have nothing to be ashamed of. I find it curious that Chadwick accepts the anti-Creationist line that “everything that creationists have proposed will go down after careful scrutiny.” I see precisely that happening with evolutionistic theory, and I do not find evolutionists beating their breasts because of it. They simply move on, and invent new theories. So should Creationists.

A controlled experiment should be done. Photos of the possibly human Paluxy tracks should be blindly intermixed with indisputably human footprints from “recent strata”. All these should be sent to experts in human footprints in order to ascertain whether or not the Paluxy tracks would then be recognized as human. The factor of preconceived notions would thus be eliminated.

John Woodmorappe

Chadwick replies:

Perhaps Mr. Woodmorappe has missed the point not only of my article, but of numerous other articles in ORIGINS as well. It is important for creationists to be positive, but difficult in the wake of a string of poorly supported con-

tentions which have been passed off as “creation science” These arguments have provided an effective barrier to prevent any interested scientist from being able to seriously consider far more fundamental precepts of creation.

When I began my career as a professional scientist some 18 years ago, I had aspirations of being able to verify scientifically many of the arguments then being used by creationists in support of their beliefs. My colleagues and I wondered why other scientists, creationists or otherwise, had not worked to verify these imposing claims. We soon discovered why. Those creationists who were trained as scientists were not practicing science, but were busily involved in debates and in sharing these “scientific evidences.” Evolutionists for their part were too busy arguing among themselves about what evolution really was to take swipes at creationists. I was sorely disappointed to discover, in case after case, that the data being used either did not exist, or were misapplied, or were interpreted in ways that defied common sense. Fortunately, since my belief in creation was not rooted in those interpretations, I was able to recognize that the problem was in the interpreters and not in the theory itself. Most of these ancient “evidences” were promoted by lay people who had little appreciation for the value or methods or power of science.

As a creationist and a scientist, I want to make my theory as attractive as possible to individuals who are looking for internal consistency and elegance in a theory of origins. I have a vested interest in promoting healthy science by creationists. If this occasionally requires excision of a cancerous growth or necrotic tissue, then, painful though it may be, let us operate to promote the health of the patient. Bear in mind that the Paluxy River problem is a problem with the foot, not the head or the heart of the theory!

I am pleased that we agree that creationists have been mistaken on the tracks and that we should go on from here. But let’s not continue to make mistakes because we were not careful. There is no virtue in being wrong.

Re: Roth: Science, A Good Place to Begin ... (ORIGINS 14:5-6).

I recently subscribed to receive “Origins” and I usually subscribe to the articles and always to the creationist position.

I must share my reaction to the last statement in the editorial in Vol. 14, No. 1, 1987.

The editorial stated: “Truth must look beyond science for many explanations. That is where God comes in.”

My immediate reaction was: “Oh? I thought God came in from the start! The things we can explain demand a creator-God as much as or more than the things we can’t yet explain!”

Leon W Gillaspie
Vice-President, Southeastern Bible College
Birmingham, Alabama