

Preface and Acknowledgments

This booklet deals with the molecular evolution before the evolution of species. One of my intentions for writing this book was to raise questions on molecular beginnings of life. The problem is that there are no simple answers. However, hopefully, the questions inspire and spark curiosity and passion for science and pleasure especially in younger readers. I feel it is imperative to show that the essence of science is the idea and the ensuing enquiry, and in addition, its thrill. It is exciting to read about the unknown and to discover and explore the stunning beauty in Nature's complexity. The intellectual pursuit of the origin of life is more than fascinating fun.

According to Karl Popper, the method of science is the method of bold assumptions, of inventive and serious experiments to disprove. Karl Popper said that our knowledge based on hypotheses is assumptions. Knowledge of assumption has no final validity. For instance, Newton's theory of gravitation cannot explain the orbital properties of the planet Mercury; Einstein's theory, however, took account of them.

The book consists of several parts. The first is a short introduction to the guiding principles and building blocks of chemical evolution. It contains a chapter on the important aspects of chirality or handedness of biomolecules. The second part is an attempt to describe up-to-date most plausible hypotheses and visions of the ancient world scenarios. References and specific websites will be helpful for those who wish to know more on specific topics.

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