Spontaneous Generation vs. Biogenesis

In 1668, Francesco Redi started an experiment with three jars, flies, maggots, and rotting meat to disprove the theory of Spontaneous Generation.

Step 1

He sets up three jars. Each jar contains a rotting meat, where people thought life could suddenly appear from. Each jar had a different setup. Jar A was open, jar B was closed, and jar C had some sort of gauze on top.

Step 2

He observed each jar as flies start breeding and laying their eggs. His prediction was that the flies will easily lay their eggs in jar A while jar B will have no maggots then jar C may have maggots or not.

Step 3

He then found out that in jar A, maggots and eggs were clearly seen in the rotting meat. In jar B, maggots and eggs weren’t seen. Then in jar C, maggots and eggs were clearly seen on the gauze, while little had been seen in the meat itself.

Conclusion

Redi concludes this experiment with the clear fact that life doesn’t just appear out of nowhere, but rather life has to come from life. In this case, the life of a fly has to come from a fly.

Note: Because spontaneous reproduction was still a prevailing concept, Redi was deceived into thinking that it could still happen in other circumstances. Redi’s experiment later became the basis for other scientists to develop experiments that disproved “spontaneous generation” and proved the theory of “biogenesis”, which states that living things can come only from other living things.