



The Origins of Life: From the Birth of Life to the Origin of Language

John Maynard Smith, Eörs Szathmáry

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When John Maynard Smith and Eörs Szathmáry published *The Major Transitions in Evolution*, it was seen as a major work in biology. *Nature* hailed it as a book of "grand and daunting sweep...A splendid and rewarding *tour de force*." And *New Scientist* wrote that it captured "the essence of modern biology," calling it "an extremely significant book which, as a bonus, is very readable." Now, in *The Origins of Life*, Maynard Smith and Szathmáry have completely rewritten *Transitions* to bring their ideas to a wider audience of general readers. Here is a brilliant, original picture of how life evolved on earth, focusing primarily on six major transitionsdramatic breakthroughs in the way that information was passed between generations. The authors offer illuminating explorations of the origin of life itself, the arrival of the first cells with nuclei, the first reproduction by sexual means, the appearance of multicellular plants and animals, the emergence of cooperative animal societies, and the birth of language.

The Origins of Life represents the thinking of two leading scientists on questions that engage us allhow life began and how it gradually evolved from tiny invisible cells into whales and trees and human beings.

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