

EVOLUTIONARY THEORY AND ITS CONTRADICTIONS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims at unveiling some of the inherent contradictions surrounding the theory of evolution propounded by Charles Darwin. Charles Darwin, after his five years ocean voyage concluded that lives originated from the lower animals and all living things share the-same ancestry and have a common characteristics. He also x-rayed, the process of human transformation from the lower animals into the-present human form. That all lives evolved from the invertebrates to vertebrates, before metamorphosing into fish, which later evolved into amphibians. Amphibians evolved into Reptiles and this turned into Birds, which later metamorphosed into mammals. In recent times, some of the main assumptions of the theory of Evolution have been widely criticized by scientists who carried out several researches on genes, mutation, DNA and breeding of animals as well as fossils etc.. It was discovered that mutation cannot reproduce an entirely new species of animals and that there is nothing like the tree of life because living things have different origins. Biologists concluded that all living things reproduced their young ones. Based on the above, the following recommendations were made: generalizations should, not be based on assumptions, rather it should be based on scientific facts, etc.

Keywords: Mutation, Evolution, Natural selection, Genes and Fossils.

INTRODUCTION

There are several explanations regarding the origin of man on earth. It remains a mystery and also contradictory, because there are several views, perceptions, theories and beliefs about the origin of man. It was based on this, that Fadeiyi (2005:34) "states that some of the theories are controversial as they cannot be scientifically proved or subjected to empirical analysis." "Modern geologists believe that the earth is more than 4 billion years old and that life began about 3.5 billion years ago. From simple, unicellular organisms, new life forms arose and changed in respond to environmental pressures, producing the past and present biodiversity." (Mader 2001:282).

The above assumptions and explanations are in sharp contrast to the Biblical account of creation, which holds that, God created all life and that living things are made according to their kinds (Genesis 1:11- 21,24). In similar vein, the mythological view and perceptions of the various ethnic groups on earth about the origin of man also contradicted with the above assumptions and beliefs. It's also far away from the assumptions of the Evolutionary theory. For the sake of this paper, emphasis will be placed on the theory of Evolution and its contradictions

in the 21st century. Its main assumptions will be dissected, analyzed and criticized based on all the available scientific studies carried out by contemporary scientists.

Charles Darwin, on his five years ocean voyage, which was supposed to transverse the Southern Hemisphere, or South America and the south pacific, concluded that life originated from unicellular organisms and evolved through several processes, over the years. He added that all living things share common characteristics because they have a common ancestry. This is to say that all living things have a history that can be traced through their fossils to their ancestors.

Definition of Terms

(1) Common Ancestors: This refers to a belief that everybody on earth or living things originated from the same parents, or came from the same origin.

(2) Primates: According to Onyia (1009:15-16), primates are defined as mammals that have fingers-nails and toe nails rather than claws, an opposable thumb and four incisors (biting teeth, in both the upper and the lower jaws).

(3) Mutation: Idodo (2010:582) defines mutation as that sudden changes in genetic make up (NDA) either in gene or chromosome resulting in a new characteristics or trait that can be inherited.

(4) Evolution: It is defined as a scientific process by which one thing develops into another over the years, through a gradual process (Irikana and Deedam, 2014:6).

CHARLES DARWIN AND THE HISTORY OF THE THEORY OFEVOLUTION

Charles Darwin was only 22 years old in 1831 when he accepted the position of naturalist aboard the HMS beagle, a British naval ship about to sail around the world. Darwin's major mission was to expand the navy's knowledge of natural resources (e.g. water and food) in foreign lands. The captain was also hopeful that Darwin would find evidence of Biblical account of creation. The result of Darwin's observations were just the opposite" (Mader, 2001:282). According to Irikana and Deedam (2014), "The theory of evolution was propounded by one of the most celebrated thinker and English philosopher in the 19th century, name Charles Darwin, The term 'evolution' is a Latin word, which literally means to unroll like a scroll".

Darwin's study of biogeography, including the animal of Galapagos Islands, allowed him to conclude that adaptation to the environment can cause diversification including the origin of new species. And finally, all organisms shared a common decent, or living things shared a common chemistry or cellular structure because they are all descended from the same original source (Marder, 2001). Charles Darwin was influenced and motivated in his early life by his grandfather's work and carrier, he was by name, Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802), and he was a naturalist and a physician. He was also influenced by reading in other fields. The book "Principles of Geology" which he read during his voyage, led him to think about the age of the earth and changes in landforms. Back in England, Darwin read an essay by an Economist called Thomas Malthus that described human population growth and the fierce competition for resources that occurs among people trying to survive" (James, Lissa and Laine, 1991:497).

In addition to the above facts, when Darwin signed in as naturalist aboard HMS Beagle, he had a suitable background for the position. He was an ardent student of nature and had long been a collector of insects. But his sensitive nature prevented him from studying medicine, and

he went to divinity school at Cambridge instead. Even so, he attended many lectures in both biology and geology. He spent the summer of 1831 doing fieldwork with Adam Fredrick, a geologist at Cambridge and it was Henshire who recommended Darwin for the post aboard the HMS Beagle. (Mader, 2011:285).

Main Assumptions of the Evolutionary Theory

This theory holds that man developed from the lower animals over millions of years ago through a very gradual process. It emphasized that the original form of life consisted of unicellular organisms (single celled organisms) which evolved through several stages before assuming the present form of man. "Darwin thought all life might be traced to a common ancestor. He imagined that the history of life on earth resembled a grand tree. It was believed that the "tree of life" started as a single trunk with the first single cell. New species branched from the trunk and continued to divide into families of plants and animals, and then into twigs, all the species within the families of plants and animals alive today" (Watch Tower, 2010:22).

Darwin emphasized that "some of the offspring resembled their parents, but occasionally a few of them changed as a result of mutation emanating from certain changes in the cells of the parent's organism. This gradual changes in offspring caused by mutation, produced offspring that are distinct and different in shape, and structure as well as physical characteristics from the original ancestor" (Irikana and Deedam, 2014). According to Schick and Toath (1999:45-46). In considering human origins, this facts, that somewhere between 8-6 million years ago, we shared a common ancestry with other apes for many millions of years, and many aspects of our anatomy, genetic makeup, and behavior are rooted in the shared ancestry. The strong morphological similarities between humans and the great apes were brought to lime light as a result of several archeological discoveries carried out in Africa and other parts of the world. Fadeiyi (2005:36) asserts that the scientific theory of evolution of man claimed that man descended from the apes. The processes of the evolution from the ape form into Homo sapiens (early man) were gradual. While Ezewu (1986) cited in Fadeiyi (2005):36 supported the above argument, as he said, in the process of mutation and heredity, the ape-form aided by the environment transformed to homo habilis (a handy man) - the ape man moved closer to the physical characteristics of man. This stage of development was called the homo erectus, meaning an erectman. It was from this stage, that the final man as it is now, was arrived at, the Homo sapiens (intelligent man). Folly and Plug (1996) cited in Onyia (1999:16) emphasized that primates shared certain distinguished structural and behavioral characteristics including five fingered feet and hands adapted for grasping, exploring and manipulating all purpose dentition suited for omnivorous diet, and a dependence on vision rather than smell to gather information.

In another hand, Anikpo Mohammed, Ezegbe and Salau (2002:3) advocated that evolution holds that the higher plants and animals which are multicellular developed along different lines from common basal unicellular organism. In the animal kingdom, invertebrates like insects, snails, worms, crayfish are said to have evolved into vertebrates. The evolutionary process continued through the fishes to the amphibians such as toads and frogs, to the reptiles like lizards, and snakes, reptiles evolved into birds which later metamorphosed into mammals such as rats, cats, goats, monkeys developed.

This can be illustrated as follows:

Invertebrates ———^Vertebrates ———»> Fish———>Amphibians
Reptiles ———>Birds ———>Mammals

Specifically speaking, Onyia (2009:82) avers that "the classical evolutionist believed in the doctrine of natural selection and survival of the fittest, which says that superior organisms within an environment are better equipped to utilize the resources of environment and survive, while the weaker ones die out.

Evolution and its Contradictions

It is obvious and indeed reasonable to point to the fact that so many recent researches conducted by evolutionary biologists and geneticists have debunked some of the major assumptions of the evolutionary theory, propounded by Charles Darwin in his famous book titled "The origin of species." In recent times, contemporary evolutionists have categorized evolution into two broad groups, namely: micro-evolution and macro-evolution so as to actually provide scientific prove to the study of evolution.

An evolutionary scientist, Dawkin Rich states that many scientists have noted that over time, the descendants of living things may change slightly. For example, humans can selectively breed dogs so that eventually the descendants have shorter legs or longer hair than their fore bears. Such slightly changes are called micro evolution. However, when small changes accumulated slowly over millions of years and produced the big changes needed to make fish into amphibians and ape-like creatures into men. This proposed big changes are defined as macro-evolution (Watch Tower, 2010:18-19). It is important to state that the teaching of macro-evolution and its contradictions rested on three main assumptions, which are as follows:

- (i) Mutation provides the raw materials needed to create new species.
- (ii) Natural selection leads to the production of new species,
- (iii) The fossil record documents macro-evolutionary changes in plants and animals.

The above claims and generalizations by Charles Darwin (Evolutionary Theory) will be adequately x-rayed, analyzed and proven from all angles as thus:

Mutation: Evolutionary theory states that mutation has the ability and the required ingredients needed to create new species of living organism. Many details of a plant or an animal are determined by the instructions contained in its genetic code, the blue prints that are wrapped up in the nucleus of each cell. Researchers have discovered that mutations or random changes in the genetic code can produce alterations in the descendants of plants and animals. In 1946, Hermann J. Muller, Noble prize winner and founder of the study of mutation genetics claimed that "indeed, the teaching of macro-evolution is built upon claims that mutation can produce not only new species but also entirely new families of plants and animals. Is there any way to test this bold claimsm" (Awake, Sept., 2006, 14 and 15). In reaction to this generalization and question raised, so many biologists and geneticists including breeders in particular were highly disturbed; hence they decided to carry out several researches so as to unravel the mystery behind evolutionary claims.

According to Awake (2006:14), Loglin who has spent some 28 years studying mutation genetics in plants, said "By the 1980's, the hopes and euphoria among scientists had ended in worldwide failure. Mutation breeding as a separate branch of research was abandoned in western countries. He emphasized that data gathered form 100 years of mutation research in

general and 70 years of mutation breeding in particular enable scientists to draw conclusions regarding the ability of mutation to produce new species. Mutation cannot transform an original species of plant or animal into an entirely new one. This conclusion agrees with all the experiences and results of mutation research in 20th century taken together as well as the laws of probability" (Watch Tower, 2010:20).

Natural Selection: One of the cardinal assumptions of evolutionary theory is that natural selection leads to the creation of new species. Darwin believed that human beings and even plants developed and changed through a process of natural selection. It is only the species that adapt to their environment that survived and reproduced, while those species that cannot adapt to the environment died. Modern evolutionists argued that as species spread and become isolated, natural selection chose those whose gene and mutations made them most fit for their new environment. These isolated groups eventually developed into totally new species (Awake, 2006:15).

In 1999, an evolutionary theorist, Jeffrey H. Schwartz wrote that "natural selection may be helping species adapt to the changing demands of existence, but it is not creating anything new" (Awake, 2010:21). Beside the above fact, a brochure was published in 1999 by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) in the United States, refers to the 13 species of finches studied by Darwin on the Galapagos Islands, now known as Darwin's finches. They noticed or discovered that some of the different species of finches were inter breeding, it resulted in the fusion of "two species into just one" (Watch Tower, 2010:21). This analysis and research concluded by the National Academy of Science in America shows that natural selection does not really create entirely new species.

Fossil Record document macro-Evolutionary Changes

The theory of evolution claims that one thing develops into another over the years through a gradual process. Niles Eldredge, a Staunch evolutionist, states that "the fossil record shows that, not that there is a gradual accumulation of change, but that for long periods of time, little or no evolutionary change accumulates in most species. Today, scientists worldwide have unearthed and cataloged some 200 million large fossils and billions of small fossils. Many researchers agreed that this vast and detailed record shows that all major groups of animals appeared suddenly and remained virtually unchanged with many species disappearing as suddenly as they arrived (Watch Tower, 2010:22).

It has also been strongly and authoritatively concluded from several researches conducted by evolution biologists and other scientists "that the major kinds of plants and animals appeared abruptly and did not evolve into other kinds, even over eons of time: (Watch Tower, 2010:22). Again, do they provide solid proof of evolution in action? That is photographs showing when a fish is turning into amphibians, and when reptiles is turning into mammals? The comparative size of the creatures placed in the reptiles-to-mammal sequence is sometimes misrepresented. They are not similar in size. Some creatures in the series are huge, while others are small. Another serious challenge is the lack of proof that those creatures are somehow related.

According to Henry (2004: 116-117) "to take a line of fossil and claims that they represent a lineage is not a scientific hypothesis that can be tested, but an assertion that carries the same validity as a bed time story, amusing, perhaps even instructive, but not scientific. Even

the Darwin's tree of life, which claimed that all lives came from the same ancestor had been widely criticized, debunked and faulted, after series of researches were carried out." Malcon (1999:335) asserts that "in recent years, scientists have been able to compare the genetic codes of dozens of different single celled organisms as well as those of plants and animals. They assumed that such comparison would conform the branching of tree of life proposed by Darwin. However, this has not been a single root. The traditional version of the theory of common descent apparently does not apply to kingdoms as presently recognized. It probably does not apply to many, if not all phyla, and possible also not to many classes within the phyla". The research conducted and published by New Scientist Magazine states that "there is no evidence at all that the tree of life is a reality. The tree of life is being politely buried" (New Scientist magazine, 2009:34).

Another point of contradiction is that Darwin assumes that life began with unicellular organisms and gradually metamorphous through several stages before arriving at the present stage of man, through a gradual process over the years. This definitely paves way for certain questions such as, how authentic was the research carried out by Darwin? Why is it that fish is no longer turning into amphibians and birds are no longer turning into mammals? Are all creatures no longer reproducing their kinds or offspring? Why is it that the number of years for the transformation of one living thing into another is not definite, did he have any knowledge of genes and chromosomes? These and other questions need to be answered by his staunch associates or evolutionists who believed in the generalization made by Charles Darwin. However, the various researches conducted revealed that generalization of Charles Darwin and other scientists who shared the same vision with him are flying in the faces of scientific facts. The generalization by evolutionists that one organism evolved into a distinct organism that are not related to the previous one in terms of their structure, eating habit, habitat, mode of movement and mode of reproduction etc, further contradicts with the scientific proof by biologists, who affirmed that certain insects undergo both complete and incomplete metamorphosis in their process of growth. James, Lissa and Laine (1991:497) confirmed that butterflies and ants, undergo complete metamorphosis. Complete metamorphosis has four stages, egg, larva, pupa and adult." This implies that these insects cannot produce entirely new species that are not related to the parents.

Charles Darwin was only interested and fascinated by the way traits are passed along from one generation to the other, but he knew little about the laws of genetics and even less about the mechanisms within the cell that govern heredity. Presently, biologists have studied human genetics and the detailed instructions that are embedded in the amazing molecule called DNA. Genes are small parts of the DNA, and are responsible for resemblance that passes from generation to generation. Its present in all animals, therefore, it becomes difficult to belief, and its entirely out of place that one animal evolved into the other. These changes, contradictions associated with the theory of evolution as well as the recent findings, justified the paradigmatic science propounded by Thomas Kuhn in his famous book, titled "The structure of scientific revolution" published in 1962. According to Ritzer (2012:47);

One of Kuhn's goals in the structure of scientific revolution was to challenge commonly held assumptions about the way in which science changes. In the view of most lay people and scientists, science advances in a cumulative manner. Kuhn acknowledged that accumulation plays role in the advance of science, but the

truly major changes came about as result of revolution. He saw a science as any given time as being dominated by a specific paradym. Normal science is a period of accumulation of knowledge in which scientists work inevitably spawns anomalies, or findings that cannot beexplained by the reigning paradym. A crises stage occurs if these anomalies mount, and this crises ultimately may end in a scientific revolution. The reigning paradigm is overthrown as a new one takes its place at the centre of the science. A new dominant paradigm is born, and the stage is set for the cycle to repeat itself.

The above illustration or theorization by Kuhn indicates that the evolutionary theory propounded by Charles Darwin reigned for a period of time, evolution of life from one stage to the other was generally accepted by all. In this circumstance, evolutionary theory is regarded as paradigm I, this is the period of anomalies, crises, and revolution which will definitely result to a (new paradigm) paradigm II.

The Important of Evolutionary Theory

- (1) It provides a comprehensive and holistic view of the forerunners of man, and also unveils their general characteristics.
- (2) It also unveils a comparative anatomical features and genetic composition of both primate and man. It is this analysis and comparative study that forced some evolutionists to belief that ape is the ancestor of man.
- (3) The theory of evolution introduces the biogeographical evidence of species. Biogeography is the study of the distribution of plants and animals throughout the world, thisdistributions are consistent and corroborated the hypothesis that related forms evolved in one local and then spread out into other accessible regions.
- (4) Evolution theorists also provided the bio-chemical evidence of species, which states that almost all living organisms use the same basic bio-chemical molecules, as well as many identical or nearly identical enzymes.

Recommendations

- (1) Generalization should not be based on assumptions, myth and oral tradition, rather it should be based on sound and comprehensive empirical analysis as well as test. All propositions and theories should be scientifically tested using appropriate techniques and tools before generalization.
- (2) The contradictions and challenges that are inherent in the theoiy of evolution should be presented or taught along side with the theory itself to the students. This will certainly unveil the nakedness of the theory and the level of academic advancement in the 21st century.

Conclusion

Charles Darwin, after his five years expedition, concluded that all living things shared a common characteristics because they have a common ancestry. Again, he hypothesized that life started from the lower animals, through a gradual process over the years before assuming the present form of man. Darwin's study of biogeographyincluding the animal of Galapagos Islands

allowed him to conclude that adaptation to the environment can cause diversification including the origin of new species.

However, most recent researches carried out by biologists contradicted and punctured the idea and generalization made by Charles Darwin. Recent scientific researches showed that the tree of life does not exist and life appears to have had so many origins. More importantly, he was challenged that plants and animals appeared abruptly and did not evolve into other plants or entirely different organisms. He had no knowledge of biochemical data that became available after his demise. Charles Darwin had little or no knowledge about genes, chromosomes and DNA that are responsible for hereditary and resemblance as well as the fact that all living things reproduce their kinds. Therefore, it is concluded that some of his assumptions and generalizations are flying in the faces of scientific facts.

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