

# CRITIQUE OF EVOLUTIONARY THEORY

## A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS

Edited with Introduction by Usman Bakar

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“More than a century after Darwin’s publication of *The Origin of Species* (which was first published in 1959), opposition to the theory of evolution still continues and in fact has been more widespread in the past several years. What is the nature of this opposition? There are many evolutionists who would like us to believe that whatever opposition there has been, has come solely from the nonscientific quarters; especially those who have their religious views and interests at stake. That such belief actually prevailed in the minds of most people for quite a long period of time and is still widely held, is due mainly to the evolutionists vast and well-established propagandas machine which ensures that no potential scientific opposition be given the opportunity to gain a foothold in the scientific establishment.<sup>106</sup>

Critique of Evolutionary Theory demonstrates that the theory of evolution is rejected for intellectual; and not sentimental reasons by a significant and ever-increasing segment of the western academic and scientific community. In this collection of essays the reader is presented with criticism of scientists and scholars from all different fields. If nothing else the most stubborn and impervious reader will be forced to admit that the theory of evolution, far from being an accepted fact in the intellectual and scientific forum, is a mounting controversy.

The book opens with an essay by a contemporary biologist, W.R. Thompson, who was formerly Director of the Commonwealth Institute of Biological Control in Canada. His essay, “*The Origin of Species: A Scientist’s Criticism*”, was written originally at the request of the publishers for the

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<sup>106</sup> Osman Bakar and others, “The Nature and Extent of Criticism of Evolutionary Theory” *Critique of Evolutionary Theory: A Collection of Essays* (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: The Islamic Academy of Science and Nurin Enterprise, 1987), p. 125.

introduction to the 1958 edition of Darwin's *The Origin of Species*. Thompson states at the beginning of his essay, "But I am not satisfied that Darwin proved his point or that his influence in scientific and public thinking has been beneficial." (p. 16). He acknowledges that his views will no doubt be received as "heretical and reactionary" by the establishment but remarks that in no field of science are heresy and reaction more desirable than in evolutionary theory." (p. 16).

Thompson prefaces his actual criticism with a basic statement of the Darwinian and neo-Darwinian proposition:

"This is, that all the organisms that exist or have existed have developed from a few extremely simple forms or from one alone by a process of descent with modification". (p. 17)

He then proceeds to describe the mechanism the evolutionists allege effect the supposed transformations; namely natural selection, whereby they purport that the progeny of an organism acquire traits of an adaptive value which are inherited by successive generations in a cumulative fashion. In other words, as E. Shute, author of *Flaws in the Theory of Evolution*,<sup>107</sup> which is frequently quoted throughout the essays under reviews, has said so succinctly: "micro-variations" lead to "macro-variations".

Having stated what the evolutionary theory is, Thompson shows why it is biologically untenable. The first point he makes is that "the theory of modification by natural selection" is not proved by experimental evidence, but "by speculative argument" (p. 21)

Thompson continues: "The argumentation used by evolutionists, said de Quatrefages, makes the discussion of their ideas extremely difficult. Personal convictions, simple possibilities, are presented as if they were proofs, or at least valid arguments in favour of the theory. As an example de Quatrefages cited Darwin's explanation of the manner in which the titmouse 'might become transformed into the nutcracker, by the accumulation of small changes in structure and instinct owing to the effect of natural selection; and then proceeded to show that it is just as easy to transform the nutcracker into

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<sup>107</sup> Nutley, New Jersey, U.S.A., 1976.

the titmouse. The demonstration can be modified without difficulty to fit any conceivable case. It is without scientific value, since it cannot be verified; but since the imagination has free rein, it is easy to convey the impression that a concrete example of real transmutation has been given. This is the more appealing because of the extreme fundamental simplicity of the Darwinian explanation. The reader may be completely ignorant of biological processes yet he feels that he really understands and in a sense dominates the machinery by which the marvellous variety of living forms has been produced.” (p. 22)

In summation he remarks that Darwin doesn't explain how natural selection happened, but simply how it “might” have happened.. Thereafter, Thompson states that these speculations are no longer convincing, and he bluntly declares:

“We now know that the variations determined by environmental changes the individual difference regarded by Darwin as the material on which natural selection acts--are not hereditary. (p. 22)

He goes on developing his criticisms in detail; substantiating what he says. It is noteworthy that in The manner of a truly disinterested scientist, he calls upon biologists to disavow the dogma of evolution in the name of the integrity of science, deploring that for the sake of a baseless theory the progress of biology in being greatly impeded. He quotes another eminent biologist, Suyenot, to the effect that the obsession with natural selection “was to delay the progress of investigations on evolution by half a century.” (p. 32) Thompson further quotes D'Arcy Thompson who was of the opinion that the Darwinian theory exerts a “stultifying effect” on the development of biology.

S.H. Nasr refers in “Eternity and Temporal Order,” (which is the seventh essay in the book we are reviewing) to a statement, similar to Suyenot's and D'Arcy Thompson's, made by R. Fodi, an Italian biologist and co-author of an anti-evolutionary book:

“Biology will not get any advantage out of the . attitudes of Lamarck, Darwin and the modern hyper-Darwinists; on the contrary, it must soon move out of the constraints and the blind alleys of the evolutionary myth, to

take again its safe way along the open and bright paths of Tradition.” (N. 13, pp. 111-112)

These several men are biologists of no mediocre calibre. They are otherwise proud of the science to which they dedicate themselves and simply want to see it rid of evolutionary biases because they are unscientific and unproductive.

In “Evolutionary Contradictions and Biological Facts,” (p. 65) we have another critique by a professional scientist, R.M. Morrell, an Australian fossil expert. Morrell tells us that Darwin knew that the fossil record did nothing to substantiate his theory, but he hoped that further research would bear his theory out. However, Morrell informs us that although since (1859 geologists have laboured to fulfil his expectation,” their labours have been in vain, for “the hoped-for evidence has not turned up.” (p. 65). He then quotes a distinguished geologist, Dr. John Challinor, to the effect that the fossil record doesn’t prove anything. (p. 65).

What evolutionists purport is that divergent taxa (taxonomic classifications) descended from common ancestors, and they postulate between a primitive taxonomic form and newer forms which supposedly descended from it; a complete range of intermediate forms with each successive form showing greater divergence. However Morrell insists that the fossil record provides such evidence of continuity. Perhaps the most embarrassing consideration for evolutionists which Morrell puts forward, is the sudden appearance in the geological record of fossils representing over 900 phyla (a major taxon comprehending genus and species) in the era known as Cambrian. In fact, the usual criteria employed in distinguishing the precambrian strata in geological deposits from the Cambrian is the very absence of fossils. Morrell remarks about the fossils which suddenly appear in the record:

“Many of these species are both complex and highly specialized and demand an evolutionary history, if the theory is to get off the ground.” (p. 67)

A third essay written by a professional scientist is titled “Life as non-Historical Reality.” The author, Guiseppe Sermonti is a leading

contemporary biologist in Italy, where he is Professor of Embryology at the University of Perugia. Sermonti is co-author of a book with R. Fondi, quoted above. The book, "Dopo Darwin, critical all-evoluzionismo" is highly critical of evolutionary theory and is an important work in the campaign against evolution. The essay on it in the book under review is so technical that much of it will pass over the heads of readers without a strong university background in life sciences, especially genetics and biochemistry. Sermonti confirms what Morrell says about the sudden appearance of taxa. He writes: "The explosive 'radiation' of taxa, with all their subdivisions and the virtual absence of intermediate links, is the rule in paleontology (fossil study) (GRASSE, 1979)." (p. 95) He concludes his essay with the following statement:

"Since the beginning, life has an essentially constant genetical and biochemical structure. Its morphological variability is moreover under the control of physico-mathematical constants also invariant in time. In both regards: the complexity present from the beginning and the geometrical rules present (as Widsom) outside time, life is non-historical." (p. 98)

This statement is easier understood in light of remarks that Sermonti makes at the beginning of his essay; where he argues that the biochemical, genetic and palaeontological evidence is considered by an increasing number of scientists that once life originated a "stationary, balanced, cyclic situation" (p. 88) existed. He points out: "This emerging view opposes the evolutionary view according to which life as a general phenomenon is a progressive process....."(p. 88)

Martin Lings has reviewed a book by the American biologist Douglas Dewar, 'The Transformist Illusion.' Much of the material in E. Shute's important book mentioned previously (Flaws in the Theory of Evolution) is based on Dewar's book. Indeed, Dewar's book provides such an armory of thoroughly scientific criticism of evolutionism and, for this very reason, constitutes such an important landmark in the campaign during this last half of the twentieth century to dislodge the dogmas of evolutionary theory that it is quoted again and again in the essays of Critique. Douglas Dewar spells trouble and embarrassment for the evolutionist clique; indeed, they must regard him as a big tattler because as Martin Lings observes, he draws a "sharp line of demarcation between fact and theory" (p. 57).. For example

Dewar discloses to the layman in his chapter, "Alleged fossil links between Man and Non-Human Ancestors," that "there exist fossils of men of modern type which are far older than those of 'Pekinman' and other supposed 'missing-links.'" (p. 57) Another characteristic tactic of Dewar is to render the high-sounding and cumbersome expatiations of the evolutionists in plain English intelligible to the layman so that he may see for himself the absurdity of their pretensions. For example, in his chapter, "Some Transformations postulated by the Doctrine of Evolution," he renders in plain English an account by Dr. R. Broom on how, supposedly, a mammal evolved from a reptile:

"Some reptile scrapped the original hinge of its lower jaw and replaced it with a new one attached to another part of the skull. Then five of the bones on each side of the lower jaw broke away from the biggest bone. The jaw bone to which the hinge was originally attached, after being set free, forced its way into the middle part of the ear, dragging with it three of the lower jaw bones, which, with the quadrate and the reptilian middle-ear bone, formed themselves into a completely new outfit. While all this was going on, the Organ of Corti, peculiar to mammals and their essential organ of hearing, developed in the middle ear. Dr. Broom does not suggest how this organ arose, nor describe its gradual development. Nor does he say how the incipient mammals contrived to eat while the jaw was being rehinged, or to hear while the middle and inner ears were being reconstructed!" (p.59)

Here Dewar is asking how the incipient mammals could bear or eat while these organs were supposedly developing. The point is that it can not even be imagined, let alone demonstrated on the basis of empirical facts, how the supposed animal could survive the period in which the transformation was coming about; for either the organs in question are perfect and useful or imperfect and useless, and in which case they would be devoid of any adaptive value. Elsewhere in an analogous way, Dewar challenges evolutionists to postulate what could be intermediary between an animal without sight and an animal with sight!

In the outlandish postulations of evolutionists we have something dramatically ironic. Dewar observes that evolutionists ask us again and again to believe in miraculous transformations, yet "one reason why the evolution theory was so readily accepted, was the belief that, while the theory of special

creation involves the miraculous, that of evolution does not.” (p.60) At this point it seems very appropriate to quote from Titus Burckhardt’s essay “Evolution and the Traditional Idea of Immutability of Species” where the celebrated biologist Jean Rostand is quoted:

“I firmly believe because I see no means of doing otherwise that mammals have come from lizards, and lizards from fish; but when I declare, and when I think such a thing, I try to avoid not seeing its indigestible enormity and I prefer to leave vague the origin of these scandalous metamorphoses rather than add to their improbability that of a ludicrous interpretation.”

(p.158)

Someone remarked somewhere after quoting this statement that what, in short, Rostand is advocating is an act of faith. Given the “enormous indigestibility” of such an act as he himself admits, one might fairly wonder why he cannot bring himself to put faith in the Divine origin of the world.

The essays in Critique include criticisms from other scientific disciplines apart from biology. In his essay, “The Nature and Extent of Criticism of Evolutionary Theory,” Osman Bakar describes critical works in the fields of mathematics and physics. In mathematics, Bakar cites the work of Richard Z. Thompson, “Mechanistic and Non-Mechanistic Science: An Investigation into the Nature of Consciousness and Form.” In this study, Thompson draws arguments from the field of information theory which employs theories of probability. Bakar writes:

“Thompson shows that configurations of high information content cannot arise with substantial probability in models defined by mathematical expressions of low information content. This means that complex living organisms, which possess a high information content, could not arise by the action of physical-chemical laws considered in modern science since these laws are represented by mathematical models of low information content.” (p.146).

Osman Bakar mentions that the British astronomer Sir Fred Hoyle and the astrophysicist Chandra Wickramasinghe, using information theory, arrive

at conclusions similar to Richard Thompson's. Bakar refers to the work produced by them jointly, *Evolution from space: A Theory of Cosmic Creationism* from which he quotes their conclusion: "the complexity of terrestrial life cannot have been caused by a sequence of random events but must come from some greater cosmic intelligence." (p.147).

Seyyed Hossein Nasr points out in his essay in *Critique*, "Evolution: A Metaphysical Absurdity," that the theory of evolution contradicts a fundamental law of physics, the law of entropy, whereby it is found that all things tend from a situation with a high amount of organization and work to a situation with the least amount of organization and work. (p.47) This second law of Thermodynamics maintains that the whole universe is running down like a wind-up clock. In his essay 'Reactions to the Theory of Evolution' Michael Negus also describes the incompatibility of the theory of evolution with the second law of thermodynamics.

One may start to wonder upon realizing the seriousness of the criticism to which evolution is subject, viz. how it gained and how it can continue to claim so many adherents. A full treatment of this question requires an historical account of the intellectual regress (to use the term so aptly employed by Rene Guenon) by western man since the Renaissance. Able accounts have been provided, for example, by Rene Guenon in *Crisis of the Modern World*,<sup>108</sup> Lord Northbourne in *Looking Back on Progress*<sup>109</sup>, Marting Lings in *Ancient Beliefs and Modern Superstitions*<sup>110</sup> and Huston Smith's *Forgotten Truth*<sup>111</sup> those readers who are interested in a comprehensive answer may refer to these works. In the essays in *Critique* for lack of space the answer has had to be given in brief and in passing. Basically evolution has provided a much-desired philosophical pretext. S.H.Nasr writes in his essay, "Evolution a Metaphysical Absurdity":

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<sup>108</sup> Dehoff Publications, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, 1957

<sup>109</sup> Translation: Pallis and Nicholson (London, 1962; rpt. Lahore Pakistan: Suhail Academy, 1981).

<sup>110</sup> London, 1970; rpt. Lahore: Suhail Academy 1981.

<sup>111</sup> New York, 1976; rpt. Lahore, Pakistan: Suhail Academy, 1981.

7. 2nd ed., (London: Unvin, 1980)



“Rarely in fact has a theory connected with a particular science had such wide acceptance, perhaps because the theory of evolution itself, instead of being a scientific theory that become popularized, began as a general tendency that entered into the domain of biology. For this very reason it soon gained acceptance more as a dogma than as a useful scientific hypothesis.” (p.43)

The “general tendency” to which Nasr refers here is the individualist spirit which was born during the European Renaissance and which rebelled against subordination to God and denied its dependency on Him. The individualist, with the aid of reason and its product i.e. science, sought its fulfilment in the greatest earthly good for the greatest number of people. When the theory of evolution came along, it showed as such potential for secularizing people’s world-view as no other idea could, and it was embraced en-masse. W.R. Thompson writes: “For the majority of its readers, therefore, the Origin (Darwin’s magnum work on evolution) effectively dissipated the evidence of providential control.” (p.36) S.H.Nasr comments in his essay, “Eternity and Temporal Order”:

“Moreover, this defence of evolution involves a battle for ‘faith’, not scientific truth; for it provides the only ‘secular’ means of providing some kind of seemingly acceptable scheme to enable man to live in this world amidst the bewildering variety of the forms of nature while forgetting God.” (p.106)

While evolution and the philosophies of which it was a product, enabled man to free himself from the service of God once the notion permeated thought in history, sociology and politics -- it also compelled him to believe that, and seek for his utopia on earth. S.H. Nasr writes:

“Materialistic and secular philosophies have been born, which are based on the view that the historical process is ultimately real itself, and that through material progress man is able to attain that perfection which was traditionally identified with the paradisaal state...” (p.104)

Martin Lings observes that at the time Darwin conceived his theory, there was “a widespread belief that the nineteenth century European represented the highest human possibility yet reached. In the name of this

belief fortified by the notion of evolution Europeans overran, subjugated and attempted to acculturate the “inferior” peoples of Africa and Asia. With unprecedented arrogance they deemed, their aggression was part of a “civilizing mission”.

Once the theory of evolution was properly instated in biology, another factor came into play in promoting the idea, and it pertains to what Cuenon has so aptly termed: “the superstition of facts”. Let us explain what this means. The fantastic results achieved through science has been the conscious or unconscious measure of its validity and the reason for its prestige. These impressive results have only been possible on account of science’s meticulous attention to detail and its accurate assessment of facts.

However, science in practice is more than just facts, for it all too frequently overreaches its rightful domain; the physical order, and trespasses in the domain of philosophy and metaphysics where for lack of the adequate tools of cognition, it flounders hopelessly. Speaking realistically, one should speak of “scientism” and not “science” for science is inextricably woven with philosophy. However, scientific philosophy also bears although unrightfully, the hallmark of objectivity the theory of evolution included- In this connection S.H. Nasr in “Eternity and Temporal Order” writes:

“Other speak in categorical terms of the scientific method, then defend evolution on scientific grounds without being at all aware that their manner of accepting evolution as scientific has nothing to do with their own definition of what science is.” (p.105)

Indeed, evolution is, what S.H.Nasr indicated it was a dogma, and its adherents are just as unreasonable as the adherents of any false dogma can be. Nasr quotes a statement from E. Shute’s *Flaws in the Theory of Evolution*: “For in its turn, Evolution has become the intolerant religion of nearly all educated western men. It dominates their thinking, their speech, and the hopes of their civilization.” (p.105) W.R. Thompson refers to this intolerance when he remarks with respect to his militant views: “I am, of course, well aware that my views will be regarded as heretical and reactionary”. (p. 16) He alludes to evolutionists’ sectarianism when he refers to “the reckless statements of Hackel, and in the shifting, devious and histrionic

argumentation of T.H. Huxley (who along with Haeckel was a celebrated biologist).” (p. 3x)

Martin Lings writes in his essay, “Science Knows Nothing about the Origin of Man”-:

“There is no doubt that many scientists have transferred their religious instincts from religion to evolutionism, with the result that their attitude towards evolution is sectarian rather than scientific.”“ The French biologist Professor Louis Bounoure (author of ‘Determinisme et finalite double loi de la vie,’ a book critical of evolution) quotes Yuen Delage, a former.

Sorbonne professor of Zoology: ‘I readily admit that no species has ever been known to engender another, and that there is no absolutely definite evidence that such a thing has ever taken place, nonetheless, I believe evolution to be just as certain as if it had been objectively proved.’ Bounoure comments: In short what science asks of, us here is an act of faith and it is in fact under the guise of a sort of revealed truth that the idea of evolution is generally put forward.” (pp.53-54)

The intolerant aspect of evolutionary faith is clearly demonstrated in the case of Douglas Dewar. Osman Bakar (p.2) and S.H. Nasr (n.3, p.45) refer to the difficulties that Dewar, an evolutionist who turned “heretic” confronted in getting his monumental critique of evolution, ‘Transformist Illusion’ published. Both observe that some libraries which have all of Dewar’s earlier works, written while he was evolutionist, have apparently boycotted his critique. S.H. Nasr exclaims that ‘Transformist Illusion’ could only be published in an outof-the way town in Tennessee.

Evolutionists share another trait with sectarianists i.e. deviousness; W.R. Thompson cites its two cases:

“A .striking example which has only recently come to light, is the alteration of the piltdown skull so that it could be used as evidence for the descent of man from the apes; but even before this a similar instance of tinkering with evidence was finally revealed by the discoverer of Pithecanthropus who admitted, many years after his sensational report, that he had found, in the same deposits, bones that are definitely human.” (p.34)

Osman Bakar points out that those whose real purpose is objectivity welcome criticism. He then remarks that evolutionists' "non-scientific behaviour and reactions towards criticisms can only be interpreted in one way: that they are harboring a certain fear." (p. 4) Their position, prestige and beliefs are threatened.

## PART II

So far in this review, we have paid attention to the scientific criticisms presented in Critique. This seemed appropriate, given how little Muslims in Pakistan and elsewhere even realize that such criticisms exist, being swayed by "the superstition of, facts" as we described above. Now it is necessary to turn to the metaphysical and philosophical criticisms advanced in Critique, for indeed, metaphysics provides the antidote not only to the theory of evolution, but to each every illegitimate notion which created the intellectual or, rather, unintellectual climate favourable to the conception of the theory in the first place.

Firstly, it is necessary to clarify what metaphysics is given, how rampant is the confusion about its meaning today. Osman Bakar quotes Nasr:

"Metaphysics is a science as strict and exact as mathematics and with the same clarity and certitude, but one which can only be attained through intellectual intuition and not simply through ratiocination. It thus differs from philosophy as it is usually understood. Rather, it is theoria of reality whose realization means sanctity and spiritual perfection, and therefore can only be achieved within the cadre of a revealed tradition." (n. 11, p. 127)

Osman Bakar, in his essay 'The Nature and Extent of Criticism of Evolutionary Theory, has included a section with the sub-title: "Metaphysical Criticisms of Evolution".

(p. 130)

It comprises eight pages where he traces the history of the rediscovery of integral metaphysics in the West after the Renaissance and its application in criticism of evolution. S. H. Nasr, in both his essays: Evolution a Metaphysical Absurdity" and "Eternity and Temporal Order", presents the metaphysical argument in general terms, while Titus Burckhardt, in his essay,

“Evolution and the Traditional Idea of Immutability of Species”, gives the argument in considerable and particular detail. Burckhardt observes that the eclipse of metaphysical knowledge, was the factor which permitted the development of materialist and evolutionary thought in the first place: “In a word, evolutionism results from an incapacity peculiar to modern science to conceive ‘dimensions’ of reality other than those of purely physical sequences...” (p. 162). After remarking that “metaphysics criticizes evolutionary theory at its very root,” Osman Bakar quotes a passage from Frithjof Schuon in which Schuon observes that modern interpretations of the world are invalidated from the outset because they do not comprehend “the supra-sensible degrees of Reality, or of the ‘five Divine Presences.’” (p. 135) Schuon in mentioning the Divine Presences is referring to the Islamic and traditional Doctrine of Emanation which, as Bakar explains, conceives of the universe as a progressive manifestation of the Absolute Divine Essence or Non-Being or Beyond Being, the self-determined Divine Being which is the ontological principle; the supra-fc:mal or angelic world; the subtle state and the corporeal or material state. He writes:

“Objects in the world ‘emerge’ from what is called in Islamic metaphysics the ‘treasury of the unseen’ (Khazan-i-ghaib). Nothing whatsoever can appear on the plane of physical reality without having its transcendent cause and the root of its being in divinis.” (p.136)

Bakar goes on to elaborate on form and matter explaining that species is an “idea” in the Divine Mind and an archetype not an individual reality which is first manifested as individuals belonging to it in the subtle state (Alam-i-Mithal). He describes the preexistence of animals in the subtle state and their “descent” into this world, remarking that the true genesis is this; the “vertical” genesis as opposed to the “horizontal” genesis that is effected within the physical order and not from beyond it, as postulated by evolutionists. Bakar makes it very clear when describing the “vertical” genesis of creatures that there is no question of transformation of species wherein lies the error of modern thinkers, for as Schuon says in the passage quoted by Bakar, the modern mind absurdly tries to replace the true causality which is the transcendent one with imagined causes from the material world.

Burckhardt explains the classical doctrine of hylomorphism (materialization of the subtle state) in even greater detail than Bakar. In this

doctrine as Burckhardt explains: “the ‘form’ of a thing or being; seal of its essential unity, is distinguished from its ‘matter’, namely the plastic substance that receives this seal while conferring on it a concrete and limited existence.”

(p. 154)

This form is “an indivisible essence”; “a reality that can neither be counted or measured”. Burckhardt observes that one consequence of the ontological unity of form is the fundamental and frequently particular similarities between taxa and species. This phenomena is nicely explained by the metaphysical approach..

Burckhardt further considers the phenomena of “mimicry”, of one species by another, of discontinuity” in the succession of species as evidenced in the fossil record, and of “missing links”, and he provides answers which show his characteristic and consummate ability to apply metaphysical principles to contingent and particular instances.

Whereas Bakar and Burckhardt have considered particulars, S.H. Nasr contents himself with the general criticism that the greater cannot come about from the lesser, so consciousness or spirit could never evolve from matter. Even W.R. Thompson who is a biologist and not a metaphysician, appreciated this argument for he wrote:

“Between the organism that simply lives, the organism that lives and feels, the organism that lives, feels, and reasons, there are, in the opinion of respectable philosophers, abrupt transitions corresponding to an ascent in the scale of being, and they hold that the agencies of the material world cannot produce transitions of this kind.”

(pp. 36-37)

Scientists restrict themselves to the \*study of the material world, and so far as they remain within their rightful domain, their pursuit is legitimate. However, as soon as they turn to questions whose answers necessarily comprehend the transcendent order, they fail miserably because they are not equipped with the methodologies for knowing things of that order. Scientists would do well to leave metaphysics for metaphysicians and pay heed to the worthy advice of Douglas Dewar quoted by Martin Lings:

“It is high time that biologists and geologists came into line with astronomers, physicists and chemists, and admitted that the world and the universe are utterly mysterious and all attempts to explain them have been baffled .... “ (p. 55)

It should be fairly obvious that in the whole controversy there are only two possibilities: either evolution is true and the principle of life and speciation is to be found within matter, or evolution is false, for the principle of life is a conscious one, and outside and beyond matter. However, to add confusion upon confusion apologists have appeared seeking to reconcile the two mutually contradictory propositions. Bakar discusses this phenomenon with particular attention on Teilhard de Chardin under a section of his essay, sub-titled “Teilhard and the ‘Darwinization’ of Theology”. (pp. 112-117)

Bakar mentions that only in the Indian sub-continent, “as a result of Anglo-Saxon education with its heavy emphasis upon such evolutionary philosophies as Herbert Spencer’s there has appeared not only a figure such as Aurobindo but a whole army of evolutionary thinkers of lesser eminence.” (p. 113)

Although the main offenders to which Bakar is referring, are products of the Hindu tradition, “the army of evolutionary thinkers of lesser eminence” includes a sufficient number of men who are products of the Muslim tradition, but determined to show that evolution is something compatible with the Qur’an. From the contemporary scene here in Pakistan we may cite the apologetic efforts of Dr. Israr Ahmed, Fateh Ullah Khan; author of “God the Universe and Man” and Dr. Wasiullah Khan: author of “Evolution and the Qur’an.” From France Dr. Maurice Bucaille, a new Muslim has written “Origin of Man” in which he too attempts to reconcile evolution with religion. Historically, Mohammad Abduh in Egypt and Sayyid Ahmad Khan in the Indian subcontinent were the first apologists to attempt the reconciliation of evolution with Islam. These apologists generally make the pretension that, although God originated matter in the first place, He brought about the diverse life forms through the mechanism of evolution. This proposition is reminiscent of Deism in which God is regarded as having withdrawn himself from the creation which He originated. As S.H. Nasr mentions, Deism was an element in “the general philosophical climate of eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe” (p.144)

Propitious to the development of the theory of evolution in the first place. It is true that when God speaks in the Qur'an of creating the universe in six days, this may refer to long periods of time or aeon; since, as the Qur'an itself declares, 'a day with God is one thousand of fifty thousand years of human measure. But to insist that God created any of his creatures in a process is to attribute imperfection to Him and to contradict the Qur'an which declares that, when God wishes a thing to be, he says to it "Be!" and it becomes. The conciliatory proposition contradicts other Qur'anic texts including those which state that God made Adam from clay, and that He created from the substance of Adam his mate and brought forth from his loins all his descendents asking them: "Am I not your Lord?"

Those apologists who exert themselves to reconcile the two mutually contradictory propositions are tempting Muslims to entertain what is perhaps the most pernicious bias which militates against faith in modern times, for evolution is the nefarious artifice which discounts the supreme proof of the Divinity: creation, which so articulately declares to be the handiwork of the Creator; indeed, creation has been termed the First Book of God (*al-awwal hitabu Ilah*). Legions of souls, beguiled by evolution, have lost their faith and many are on the verge of doing so.

Critique of Evolutionary Theory and books like it are therefore of incalculable importance in impressing upon those who have been indoctrinated in Western thinking that the theory of evolution is intellectually worthless. Since the idea is at the foundation of the notion of progress, when it falls, progress too "the idol of modernity" will topple. Then and only then will Muslims be able to turn in confidence and earnest to resurrect their own tradition. Evolutionary critique is one of the most important elements of an appropriate kalam for this age.

Muhammad Yusuf