

The Relationship Between Evolution And Religion

Posted on September 2, 2019

Introduction

At one point in time, the evolution and religion of the word simply being discussed in one sentence was itself ironic because both the words in their orthodox perspective quite contradict each other. The word religion depicts the existence and presence of a supernatural deity (Brennan), whichever may vary from one belief system to another. It also means faith in someone or something and does not necessarily include logic and rationale when talking about certain things, such as creation. However, evolution, which instinctively brings to memory the name of Charles Darwin, does not require believers to have blind faith in it; it pertains to using science and logic when it comes to discussing things like creation (Michel Ruse). This paper will discuss the relationship between evolution and religion and will expand on how there have been troughs and crests in this relationship. It will also, for reference, discuss one of the four models of Barbour and Moritz to explore how these two entities interact in the real world.

Main Body

It has been more than one hundred and fifty years since Darwin (Michel Ruse) wrote his groundbreaking work on the origin of species, and yet scientists, experts, philosophers, and even religious scholars are still arguing about the extent to which this can be true or false. Therefore, the topic of evolution still remains one of the more controversial topics that always causes subgroups to appear in a group of people (Barbour). However, it is undeniable that evolution interacts with religion on a daily basis, and perhaps it will until the day Homo sapiens perish.

Four Models

Barbour and Moritz, in their book, introduce four models with which they compare science and religion and apply them in several different fields of knowledge, which can vary from quantum physics to even human nature and god (Religion and Science).

The first model observed in the interaction between religion and science, as stated by Barbour, is the conflict. This model is relatively observable in overt conditions and is especially seen in media. The conflict model stresses, as is self-explanatory from the term itself, the conflict that exists between both entities of the world (Plantinga). The perception behind this model is such that one or the other

party, as is the case with any conflict, is false. In this case, however, either religion can be false or science can. Here is where the rift comes in between different-minded people, as some would advocate the righteousness of religion while others would argue on the basis of the rationality of science(Plantinga).

The second model is of independence, which is the opposite of what the conflict model predisposes; that is when talking about religion and science, both are independent in terms of their meaning and functions in an individual's life; hence, according to this perspective, it does not matter at the end of the day whether any view is false or not because in truth they are both independent and free from the other's influence. However, this model is somewhat used as a mediator in terms of maintaining peace between two entities, which in this case are religion and evolution (Religion and Science). For this reason, only the people who are agreeable with this model are termed 'accommodationists' who try to be both religious and rely on scientific evidence at the same time.

The third model in this category is called the dialogue model, which depicts the parallelization between science and religion and concentrates instead on the hand-in-hand progress of both entities (Richard Soiss). It relies on the cooperation of both institutions, and the perception behind it is of extracting common knowledge from both and then using it for the benefit of mankind. However, this model has become slightly impractical when it comes to dealing with real-world problems because scientists and theologians often do not see eye to eye with each other.

The fourth and last model that Barbour talks about is the integration model, which relies on the dialogue model ever so slightly and then takes further the concept of cooperative progress in terms of both science and religion (Richard Swiss). It suggests that the concept of both science and religion can be viewed holistically and can be integrated into one entity. Some academics, however, posit the impracticality of this model and further exemplify the absoluteness of both science and religion. They suggest that combining both can possibly conjure bad results.

The Conflict Between Evolution And Religion

The conflict model, as mentioned above, focuses on falsifying one entity and holding one entity in high esteem; therefore, when it comes to the conflict between evolution and religion, one tries to falsify the other, as has been the case for almost throughout the twentieth century where each theologian would try their best to disregard the theory proposed by Darwin and would even extend to term it as an 'evil' just so that it could be regarded as a false theory(Kirkpatrick). The conflict once brewed to such an extent that schools in Tennessee were not allowed to teach the theory of evolution to their students.

However, even such efforts were not able to devalue the theory and negate it as shortly after the incident, around the beginning of the '60s era, the Supreme Court passed an order commissioning strict penalties on those who would omit the theory of evolution from their curriculum (planting). Such

conflict has existed for many years, only moving the scenario back and forth to no avail.

The debate about the fact that man was born due to some divine intervention and/or by evolution from ape to man has not only existed in prestigious institutions and courtrooms but has also been the center of the peoples' focus for several years. As mentioned before, the scenario of such discussion almost always makes this topic look like a bad marriage because one always tries to outdo the other. In the 2013 Pew research survey, public opinion was to be found regarding their belief in either of the entities (Brennan). The results concluded that 24% of Americans believed in the presence of a divine being assisting in creating life on Earth, while 32% believed in the process of natural selection and eventual evolution. The odd ones out in the debate were the 33% of those who concluded in their belief of the fact that humans had pre-existed in their current form from the beginning of Earth or time.

Despite the presence of oddities and perceptions in other models of Barbour, this model stands as the most widely discussed and debated one since to agree with one answer in this model means to disagree with another that also does not answer all the questions humans have had about their creation.

Naturally, scientists contend that evolution is the logical explanation for the creation of all species, and they also support their perception of the extinction of species or, in their view, the natural selection of the species (Michel Ruse). On the basis of these factors, they argue that scientific theories are not well-informed guesses, as has been previously said; rather, they are sure-shot explanations of the natural phenomenon occurring throughout the world.

However, the supporters of religion argue on the basis of the missing link between Homo sapiens and the apes, as the anthropologists suggest about the line of descent and of evolution (Michel Ruse). A problem, though, has arisen over the past many years, which has almost caused people to lose belief in the religious perspective, which is the falsified belief system of some people on a flat Earth (Kirkpatrick). This belief itself ridicules the ascent of man and the Earth entirely and has caused a certain amount of stereotypes to hold place.

Evolution Vs. Religion – Analysis

The question, after much debate on the merits and demerits of believing in any entity, arises if this really is a competition of evolution versus religion and if this gives humans any answers about their origin. Since Darwinism and the theory of the origin of species were absolute items of the scientific method and of science itself, it is rather unfair for both significant entities to be compared to one another because, for a large number of people, the theory of evolution does not overrule religion and its premises as the two are entirely different aspects of a person's life and belief system (Plantinga). However, it is believed by some that the theory of evolution and the concept of natural selection have posited danger to humanity in general by giving rise to fascist beliefs and giving a foundation to

dictators to justify the crimes they have committed against people.

Conclusion

Even though the debate on the conflict between religion and evolution is a tiring one even for scientists and scholars, and it could continue forever, it still remains an intriguing one as it brings about the most important question for humans, that is, their creation (Barbour). It is also an argument of what is to be called natural – the gradual descent of the species to the eventual Homo sapiens or beginning from the intervention of a divine entity which will perhaps remain for many years to come.

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