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The foundation of this paper is the generation of all life by evolution. By this assumption, 'everything' has to be compatible with Darwin's theory. I discuss some issues that concern animate beings. I ask some rhetorical questions. Answers are provided by speculations. I present arguments for evolution and general thoughts. I show that some properties of animate beings are compatible with an evolution. The arguments except those in the chapter 'Homosexuality' are ideas of mine. All points only are personal views.

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Darwin's Legacy: The Peacock Paradox

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ABSTRACT

The foundation of this paper is the generation of all life by evolution. By this assumption, 'everything' has to be compatible with Darwin's theory. I discuss some issues that concern animate beings. I ask some rhetorical questions. Answers are provided by speculations. I present arguments for evolution and general thoughts. I show that some properties of animate beings are compatible with an evolution. The arguments except those in the chapter 'Homosexuality' are ideas of mine. All points only are personal views.

I. INTRODUCTION

I assume that each life on earth is generated by evolution. Of course, this claim is not provable. Some questions about the properties of animate beings are discussed. Basically, I ask how such a thing as 'evolution' can create the properties, for instance, people who have an interest in mathematics.

II. PREJUDICES

In the first question, I talk about prejudices. I believe that the property that people have prejudices are innate. Of course, I cannot prove it.

A funny example is from the German comedian Johann König. In his show, he described the situation: 'Imagine that you return at home, and there is a lion in your flat.' Even if you never had bad experiences with a lion, you see the claws and teeth, and you will be cautious. This is a good decision! The animal could be dangerous. Although there are friendly lions, it is better to be suspicious and to be careful. This prejudice may save your life.

I think that prejudices are inborn, since for millions of years they have been useful, even though it has had consequences for a few wrong decisions. It helps us to act as fast as lightning. Of course, today some prejudices may not be suitable for a modern life.

III. ACORNS AND BEECHNUTS

In this chapter, I discuss the question of why oaks and beeches have relatively big fruits, i.e. acorns, and beechnuts, compared to willows or poplars. Big fruits need a large amount of material. The question is, why do these trees invest material into the production of big fruits? In my opinion, the answer is animals. The Eurasian red squirrel (Sciursus vulgaris) and the jay (Garrulus glandarius) use acorns and beechnuts as a winter store. The German names ('Eichhörnchen' and 'Eichelhäher') advert to this fact. Of course, they prefer big fruits. They stockpile up to 1000 stores in the autumn. The animals remember most of them, but some they forget. From these forgotten buffer stocks new trees grow. In this way, these trees accrete.

Therefore, evolution pressures to produce bigger fruits. In contrast, willows and poplars need the wind to spawn.

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IV. Booze

Everbody knows the effect of alcohol. The production of wine or beer has been a part of human culture for thousands of years. Beer may have been an important food in the past. Also, it was a beverage of high quality, instead of water, which often was polluted. The human liver has the ability to deteriorate the alcohol, but only ethyl alcohol (C_2H_5OH), while the related methyl alcohol (CH_3OH) is toxic. Fortunately, by the fermentation, the fungi produce nearly always ethyl alcohol. From where does come the difference? This means I ask why the liver can deteriorate ethyl alcohol, but not methyl alcohol. The speculated answer is that people have eaten fruits in autumn. The fruits often had fallen down. They often have started the fermentation process already, i.e. they have contained some alcohol. Those who could digest the fermented fruits have survived, the others perhaps died of hunger. This property was handed to the next generation. Thus, people can digest some ethyl alcohol, but not a bottle of vodka each day. Finally, they detected the positive effect of alcohol, and they invented the ability to generate a fermentation.

V. MATHEMATICS

Some people have a talent for mathematics. A part of them likes it, too. For instance, the German mathematician Gauß started in his youth to deal with mathematics. I ask why evolution has generated people which like mathematics, although the possible application would be in the future. I estimate that less than one percent of the created mathematics is exerted. Hence, people do not know whether their mathematics will be used or not. Anyway, these people can not be deterred from keeping busy with mathematics. Why has evolution done that? The possible answer lies in the past.

Many years ago, the Stone Age people often starved. Some people have begun to make loops as a form of hunt to trap animals. In this way, they perhaps have survived, and their genes were preserved. Those who did not have the ability to do so have died.

Making loops is a very complicated procedure. You have to anticipate what happens if an animal steps in the loop. This requires a lot of abstract considerations. (Apart from that, it was a horrible death for the trapped animal. It may last hours or even days until death has put it out of its misery.)

I have gotten the idea in a hospital. I have lain there in a room with a few television sets without sound, to not disturb the others. To hear the sound, there were two small tannoys. First, you had to put the tannoys with two cables in the plug socket. Sometimes it has happened that the two cables were knotted. At this time, I was not able to unbraid them without the aid of others.

I believe that putting loops was a clever way to hunt, for those who could do so. This was perhaps a decisive way for survive. This would explain the joy of some people about abstract thinking.

VI. SEX

Bacteria spawn by cleavage. For them, one sex is sufficient. Why generally, in highly developed animals, there are two sexes? The answer is, of course, the rearrangement of the genes. When animals accrete, the genes are stirred. Hence, the fact that there are two sexes is clearly superior to only one sex. It makes an evolution possible.

Some people have the opinion that there is a third sex. I believe that this is nonsense since there is no reason for evolution to generate that.

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VII. SWEAT

In the times before farming a decisive way for Stone Age people for survival was a successful hunt. I imagine that youngsters early began to exercise the hunt. One foundation was the ability to run. The body overheats easily. The evolution generated perspiratory glands. The hunter could transpire and in this way, he or she could cool down. Therefore, the hunter could run longer, and this resulted in a more successful hunt. Perhaps the evolution of perspiratory glands was a crucial development for survival.

VIII. SUGAR AND SALT

In this chapter, I deal with the fact that generally, people like sweet and salty food. (usually not together, except in ketchup.) The answer to the first is that nearly all sweets are healthy, with one possible exception of honey. Of course not now, but millions of years ago, only in autumn did you get sweets in the vegetable form of fruits. In those times without cookies and chocolate, there was nearly only one possibility to eat sweet things. You had to gather ripe fruits in autumn. On some rare occasions, you have found a beehive, and you were able to eat honey. You probably got some painful bee stitches, but this you put up.

When you live near the coast, the supply of salt is no problem. Your food contains enough salt. The difficulties start when you settle afar from the coast. It might be a problem to get enough salt. For a successful hunt you need salt since when you sweat, you lose not only water, but also salt (NaCl). Therefore, evolution has developed an appetite for salty food.

IX. HOMOSEXUALITY

This chapter contains ideas that are not my own. I have read them elsewhere.

Here, I ask why homosexual people exist, even though they do not reproduce directly. The answer may be that groups of people are more peaceful if a minority of members is homo-sexual. For a man, another homosexual man poses no threat, as he unlikely to attempt to take his wife. The same applies to women. Life in the Stone Age was extremely challenging, and survival depended on living and cooperating in groups. This required certain social behaviors, as it was important to regard others as allies rather than rivals. One way to foster a feeling of cohesion was through common activities, such as dancing or making music together. A book that discusses this topic is [1].

I assume that the genes inducing homosexuality are not only present in homosexual individuals but also exist in other members of the group.

X. PEDOPHILIA

This chapter deals with the phenomenon known as ‘Pedophilia’. I only discuss a possible genetic basis for it. I do not consider the power imbalance between an adult and a child, and I do not take any position on the morality or legality of the behavior.

One million years ago, a child could play anywhere, usually under the supervision of two people (typically the parents). They did their best to protect the child, but could not watch everything. Behind every bush could hide a lion, ready to kill and eat the child. The probability of survival increased significantly when a third person also looked after the child. The third person might have been an uncle, an aunt or even a completely unrelated individual, who has fallen in love for the child, or had only a sexual interest in them.

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The similar situation could occur today, without the threat of a lion, but I believe that the impact on survival probability would be minimal.

Similar to the previous chapter, I presume that the genes provoking pedophilic tendencies are not present only in pedophiles, but also in other members of the group.

XI. NAILS

Probably you are a neat person and cut your nails regularly. This is necessary since the fingernails and toenails grow. In this chapter, I ask why this is necessary. Why do the nails grow faster than they are worn off? The answer is that the speed of growth is just the right one. Of course not now, but in the Stone Age life was so hard that the nails grew as quick as they were worn off. I speculate that the speed of growth was just the right one. Now they grow to fast.

XII. MIGRATORY BIRDS

Some birds are migratory, for instance, the White Stork (Ciconia ciconia). Others are stationary, for instance, the Greenfinch (Chloris chloris). Why has evolution done that? It seems, that any migration is a `disadvantage' since it is a dangerous journey. I believe that in the beginning there were no migratory birds. In the north, the weather conditions were as bad as today. But the animals have learned that even in the north during the summer the temperatures are pleasant. Those who could migrate, i.e. some birds, have learned to fly in warmer areas in autumn. In spring, they fly back, to raise their offspring since in the warmer climate also there is more food. I believe that finally this knowledge has gone into the genes. A few birds have learned to handle the harsh weather conditions in winter, and for them, there is no reason to migrate. They kept to be stationary.

XIII. WITCHES

In the Middle Ages, the Christianity was very intolerant. It was a common practise to burn people on the stake, if they were aspersed to be in league with the devil. Mostly the victims were female. For instance, the mother of Johannes Kepler, the man who have found that in space two celestial bodies move around each other in ellipses, was accused to be a witch. Fortunately, her son managed it to absolve her from the accusation. Burning ‘witches’ makes happy. Not the witch, of course, which suffered a horrible death, but the others probably felt good. Perhaps mostly they have thought ‘God is very fair. The bloody witch gets what she deserves’. Some have felt pity with the ‘witch’, but they did not show it since this has been dangerous. It was better to hide the emotions, otherwise perhaps they were accused to be in league with the devil, too.

XIV. CHIMPANZEES

It is well-known that chimpanzees are social animals. Furthermore, their children are very cute. Some researches were confused as they detected that also chimpanzees are effective and successful hunters. They hunt and eat smaller apes. Some chimpanzees remain on the ground to cut of any escape way, others go into the treetop to hunt and kill the prey. After a successful hunt they brotherly share the poor victims with those apes who have remained on the bottom. In this way, the chimpanzees get flesh, what normaly is impossible since mainly they eat plants. It only works because the apes cooperate, and they are intelligent animals. The chimpanzees have learnt that cooperation increases their personal abilities enormously. I believe that finally this property has gone into the genes; or, in other words, evolution has taught them this capability since those who did not have the competence to be social died out.

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XV. MILK

Some Asian people can not digest the lactose in milk. A great part of the Europian people digest it without problems. The ability to drink milk has been a big advantage when people started livestock breeding. Their survival no more depends on a successful hunt. This means, they could have more children since they had a constant supply of food. Of course, in this day and age, this ability is not of great importance since few people starve, and mostly people do not depend on livestock farming.

XVI. WAR

War is regarded as a big problem among human societies. Many attempts were made by politicians to solve problems between states. Some remain unsuccessful. I believe that to risk one's life is a very social action since life is the most important thing we can give. To sacrifice the own life for other people, maybe the 'crown', or the 'nation' or the believe or something else is a very social act. This distinguishs us from animals. Generally animals do not risk their own life for others.

XVII. MEDICAL SCIENCE

Fortunately, in many human societies there are medical care. For instance, I would not live anymore without it. On the other hand, we are products of an evolution. Medical science is the contrary to evolution. Nature kills someone who has an anomalous behaviour or appearance. It is cruel and merciless. Nearly all creatures suffer a violent death. It is very rare that animate beings die of senile decay. Evolutionary progress comes by death, although it would suffice to exclude them from reproduction.

XVIII. CUCKOOS

The cuckoo (Cuculus canorus) is a well-known migratory bird. It is famous for its call and infamous since the just hatched birds throw eggs and other birds out of the foreign nest. If they survived the fall, they die of undercooling. This policy is a clever way to accrete, so long as the major part of birds pursue a different way. I believe that evolution has created these conditions, although this strategy seems to be 'mean' for a social thinking being.

XIX. ENEMIES

Enemies are important. For a human, the idea of something very evil is helpful. An enemy image makes happy. The imagination of the 'ill' helps to distinguish between the 'good' and the 'bad'. This common belief generates a feeling of togetherness. For instance, Adolf Hitler considered the Jews as 'bad'. Having an enemy image is a general property of human beings, made by evolution.

XX. SPIDERS

Nearly all people find spiders disgusting. Both the slow, hairy ones and the quick ones. I strongly believe that it is innate since animals like butterflies evoke sympathy. Why has evolution done this since in Europe do not live dangerous spiders? This is a hint that people did not develop here (It is only possible to live in Europe when you have a heat source, because of the foul weather), but in a region where dangerous spiders exist, for instance, in Africa.

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XXI. THE PEACOCK PARADOX

In this chapter, I mention peacocks (Pavo cristatus), and magpies (Pica pica). Even Darwin wondered about the 'Peacock Paradox'. Male peacocks have a beautiful embellishment, while female peacocks wear an inconspicuous plumage. The solution of the paradox is that female peacocks choose the males to breed. Of course, they prefer the most eye-catching males. Also magpies are conspicuous birds. They are the most beautiful birds in Germany with its salient white and black feathers and a long tail. It is the contrary to a camouflage. Females look similar to males. I don't know why. Perhaps at magpies the appearance is genetically connected with the sex.

XXII. CORRUPTION AND CRIME

In this chapter, I deal with the question why the government can not stop corruption, although it causes heavy damage to a human society. The answer is that corruption is advantageous both for someone who gets money for any service and for somebody who engrosses anything. Therefore, corruption presents itself more as a social act than a crime. I believe that this behaviour is generated by evolution since it has an advantage for both. Of course, today the government has to continue to fight against it since in a our society it generates more damage than benefit.

Also, delinquency will not disappear since to commit a successful crime has an advantage for the criminal.

XXIII. FASCISM

Two famous dictators have behaved similarly. Both il Duce (the leader) Benito Mussolini and der Führer (the leader) Adolf Hitler stood above and gave speeches, while many others were below and hailed the speaker. I believe that this is more a social act than a wrong behaviour. People unify behind a seemingly wise leader. He (generally the leaders are male) promises to lead them into a bright future. I think that this behaviour is innate and it is generated by evolution. The leader makes all important decisions; some are terrible. Unfortunately the leaders mostly are not 'wise'. They like to have power. It ends in a dictatorship instead of a bright future. I believe that the majority of people are not suitable for democracy.

AFTERWORD

As I have already said in the ABSTRACT, the above notes are my personal opinions. Therefore, I have abstained from giving more references. Further, I always made an effort to write as briefly as possible.

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[1] William H. Calvin: *The River That Flows Uphill* (2001).

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