

To celebrate the 209th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin, we chose the book “On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection” annotated by Francisco Arruda Furtado, contemporary of Darwin and his disciple.

February 12 marks the 209th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin (1809-1882), the British naturalist who revolutionized biological knowledge by proposing the theory of evolution of species that today is still the basis of evolutionary theories considered by the scientific community.

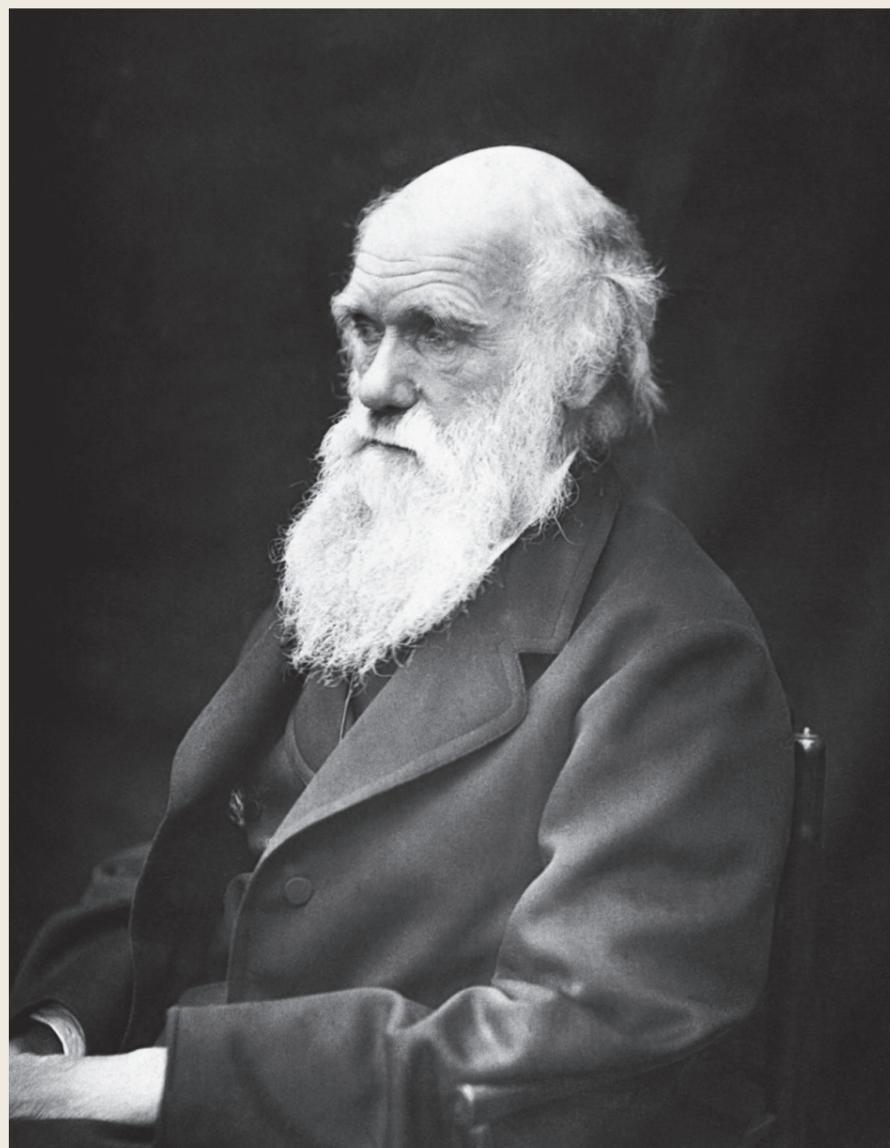
Darwin's interest in natural history began at the university as a medical student. During his five-year expedition aboard the Beagle (1831-1836) for the cartographic survey of the coasts of South America, Maldives, Galapagos Islands, Tahiti, New Zealand and Australia, he had the opportunity to make systematic observations of nature and the study of the variability in the same species that led to the development of the Natural Selection Theory in 1838, the basis of the evolutionary theory later presented and described in his work “The Origin of Species”(1859).

The concept of natural selection assumes that favorable hereditary characteristics in organisms of a population become more common in successive generations, reproducing with a greater chance of surviving than those with unfavorable hereditary characteristics that become less common. Darwin separated the terms “survival” and “reproduction” into the process of natural selection. A specific characteristic may therefore give an individual an advantage for survival and successful reproduction, allowing its offspring to be more likely to survive than an offspring without this variation, which will tend to disappear in the population.

Meanwhile in Portugal, the naturalist Francisco Arruda Furtado, from the island of São Miguel Azores, starts very young in the study of mollusks and anthropology, approaching the revolutionary theories of Charles Darwin, with whom he corresponds for two years, exchanging ideas, asking for advice and books. Arruda Furtado becomes a member of the Zoological Section of the National Museum of Lisbon (now MUHNAC- ULisboa) in 1885. This book “*On*

the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection” from the MUHNAC collection belonged to him and is annotated with his handwriting as testimony of the exchange he made with Darwin.

The exhibition *Francisco Arruda Furtado (1854-1887)*, a disciple of Darwin, on the first floor of this Museum, presents other testimonies of the contact Arruda Furtado kept with Darwin, besides the richness and exclusivity of his scientific work, a self-taught Portuguese who also became famous in his time.



Charles Darwin (1809–1882)