

# Problems with Theistic Evolution

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### Introduction

In this essay we discuss theistic evolution or evolutionary creationism from a biblical point of view and a philosophical standpoint.

Wikipedia defines 'theistic evolution' as follows:

Theistic evolution has been described as the position that 'evolution is real, but that it was set in motion by God', and 'Theistic evolution, which accepts that evolution occurred as biologists describe it, but under the direction of God'. [Dec 2013]

'Evolutionary Creationism'<sup>1</sup> (EC) is the new name for 'theistic evolution' (TE).<sup>2</sup> The phrase is bringing together evolution and creation. In biblical terms, 'to create' is 'to act'—creation is an **intentional act**. Contrawise, 'evolution' is a term for a set of natural processes, the set being regarded as an historical and developmental process. The expression 'evolutionary creationism' is therefore a misnomer because creation is not a process but an act. If 'evolutionary' has adjectival intent, then the phrase 'evolutionary creationism' carries a mistake.

If we add God to the theory of evolution by saying, 'God created the natural processes of evolution', what we have is 'Creationary Evolutionism'. This reflects the order of the older tag, 'theistic evolution'. If we go in the opposite direction and add evolution to the doctrine of creation, then we are doing nothing more than enumerating something (a set of processes) that God has created, but it has no precedence over other things that God has created to be given its own tag.

### Three Views

There are three potential theistic evolutionist views. The first is that God created evolution in the beginning and then stepped back, knowing the outcome. The second is that God not only created evolution but **guided** evolution through history. The third is that God is in every causal moment of evolutionary pathways.<sup>3</sup> The first allows the 'freedom' implicit in evolution to reign supreme while the second and third do not and involve 'guidance'.

The first view is **not** evolutionary creationism, but just creationism: it says God created evolution in the beginning and stepped back, much as you might say that God created gravity. If the second view is evolutionary creationism, then it is not clear that evolution remains evolution when it is guided; a similar point can be made against the third view.

There is an alternative to theistic evolution/evolutionary creationism here: we can say that within the created order evolution remains **unguided** and it is an expression of freedom in creation. This alternative has all the weight of Science behind it whereas the theistic evolutionist's insistence on guidance from God has no support from Science. **Old Earth Creationism** (OEC) relegates any evolution to the pre-Adamic space<sup>4</sup> and this framework for handling evolution is therefore superior to TE/EC, because it doesn't insist that such evolution (whatever we say that is, however, likely or unlikely<sup>5</sup>) is guided.

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<sup>1</sup> D. Alexander, *Creation or Evolution* (Oxford: Monarch Books, 2008), chap. 8.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of 'theistic evolution' see Antje Jackelén, "A Critical View of 'Theistic Evolution'" *Theology and Science* 5/2 (2007): 151-165.

<sup>3</sup> The philosophy of this notion is set out in A. Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, & Naturalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

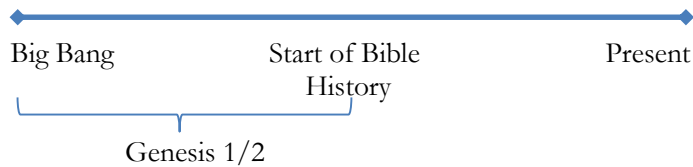
<sup>4</sup> See Plantinga, *ibid.* for this notion.

<sup>5</sup> This qualification is important because it allows for a range of attitudes towards evolution on the part of Old Earth Creationists.

## Theistic Evolution and the Bible

**Concordist**<sup>6</sup> ‘Theistic Evolution’ is a harmonisation of the Bible and Science that posits Genesis 1 is metaphorical for the currently understood evolutionary history of life on earth as a whole. Our interest in this harmonisation is not on the evolution side of things but in how the Bible is interpreted and how this harmonisation differs from ‘Old Earth Creationism’. See diagram:

### Concordist Theistic Evolution



Typically,<sup>7</sup> ‘Theistic Evolution’ will place divine action at the beginning: God initiated the big bang, the natural laws and the variables that led to the origin of life on earth and its subsequent emergence and development. Genesis 1:1 is taken as a reference to the creation of the universe with v. 2 being a stage in the history of the planet in which there was no life. The days of creation are taken to be a schematic metaphor of the history of the planet charting the development of the atmosphere, the emergence of land, the growth of plant life, the emergence of water based life, the emergence of land-based life culminating in the evolution of humankind. The ‘schematic’ in ‘schematic metaphor’ is important to this harmonisation because it is not being said that Genesis charts a sequence of stages that can be matched to the sequence of geologic history; rather, the metaphor is a *logical* order.

Questions can be asked about whether Genesis 1 can be read as metaphorical for the current consensus of opinion in the historical sciences. We would make the following points:

- The whole interpretation is alien to the thought world of the Genesis account, the ANE context in which it has its catalyst.<sup>8</sup>
- The living creatures of the earth are just the domesticated beasts and (perhaps) the game animals over which man would have dominion (Gen 1:24, 28, 30).
- If Gen 1:1 is the big bang, why are the lights and stars mentioned on Day Four; wouldn’t a theistic evolution metaphor place these on Day One?
- Why isn’t there a divine fiat in relation to the big bang?
- To what part of the geologic column does v. 2 correspond?
  - If it corresponds to the pre-Cambrian stage of the earth’s history why is there water?
  - If it corresponds to the earliest stage in earth’s history that led to the first sedimentary deposition, how is it that there is land *and* water?
  - If it corresponds to some other stage in the column, why is the one selected the right choice?
- Why is water-based life not mentioned until Day Five? Shouldn’t it be there in v. 2 if there is (or has been) sedimentary deposition?

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.asa3.org/ASA/education/origins/concordism.htm#genesis> [Cited 02/2013—thanks to JB for the link].

<sup>7</sup> This is just one presentation of ‘Theistic Evolution’; it is not intentionally set up as a ‘straw man’, but obviously, there are other ways to develop this approach which might meet some of my objections. For a defence see F. J. Ayala, *Darwin’s Gift to Science and Religion* (Washington: Joseph Henry Press, 2007).

<sup>8</sup> It is beyond our scope to identify which ANE context.

- Darkness and light are contrasted first; at what stage in the evolutionary history of the planet should we think of the entrance of light?
- The waters in the form of the *seas* are to teem or swarm with life first, but the origin of life itself is not usually told in this way; the evolutionary story typically hypothesizes about swamp-like conditions or hydro-thermal vents.<sup>9</sup> Is the evolutionary origin of life therefore absent from the metaphor of Genesis?
- Is the verb ‘to create’ a metaphor for ‘to evolve’ in v. 21. Can water based creatures (fish and birds) be said to evolve when the account says that they were created? If ‘to create’ is literally true of the big bang in v. 1 can it be reasonably held to be a metaphor in v. 21?
- The verb used for the coming about of plant life and land-based life is ‘to bring forth’ (vv. 12, 24). Why would a different verb be used; how does this metaphor map onto the evolution story?
- The subjects of ‘to bring forth’ and ‘to swarm/teem’ are, respectively, the land and the waters. The correspondence of these natural bodies in the evolutionary story is not obvious: is water or dirt a progenitor of life?
- Both plant life and animal life is said come about in ‘kinds’. The evolution story is long and species evolve over time, but the Genesis account is logically<sup>10</sup> simultaneous; how does this map onto a timescale of millions of years?
- Why does the account have an agricultural interest rather than more general terms?

These questions have a common theme: concordist theistic evolution is a ‘large-scale’ harmonisation requiring the modern reader to think in terms of the evolutionary history of the planet; yet Genesis 1 has particular local details and an agricultural interest. The ‘local’ details are the horizon of the narrator looking out upon the land (v. 2); the setting of a boundary to the sea and the appearance of new land (vv. 8-10); the choice of things to itemize is limited—birds, domestic animals, grass, fruit trees; and the critical verbs are those of the subsistence farmer and fisherman—‘to bring forth’, ‘to swarm/teem’—and, moreover, they are literal verbs of appearance.

**Non-concordist**<sup>11</sup> theistic evolution does not seek to harmonise anything in Genesis, but simply posits that Genesis shows God is the creator of everything; the evolutionary story tells us something of this creative work. The reason why we cannot match anything in Genesis to Science is simply the fact that Genesis is an Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) account using the ‘language of the day’. On this view, a proponent might hold to the literal creation of Adam and Eve; or it might be held that they were selected from the existing evolved human population; or it might be held that ‘Adam’ and ‘Eve’ are just part of the ANE way of accounting for origins and not to be taken as anything more than characters in such a story; see diagram below,

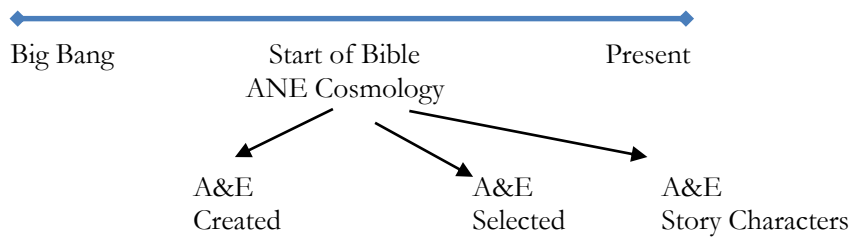
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<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of the question of the origin of life see P. Boyd, “The Origin of Life” in *Reasons* (ed. T. Gaston; Sunderland: Willow Publications, 2011), 55-69.

<sup>10</sup> By ‘logically simultaneous’ we do not mean that the account presents the creation of plant and animal life as simultaneous in time; rather, we mean that it presents the creation of such life from God’s point of view in terms of kinds created simultaneously—no relationship between the kinds is stated as required by evolution.

<sup>11</sup> We use this term for convenience, but any exposition of Genesis that is positioned in relation to Science – even the minimum proposition that ‘God is a creator’ – is concordist.

## Non-Concordist Theistic Evolution



This approach suffers from a number of objections, some of which apply to only one or two of the three options for Adam and Eve.

- If Adam and Eve are not real individuals, this makes a nonsense of Biblical Theology regarding sin and the atonement. The proposal that they are story characters, while consistent with treating the creation accounts as an ANE origins story, does not cohere with biblical use of Adam and Eve.
- If Adam and Eve are regarded as literal people, created on the sixth day, this really begs the question as to why the account of Day Six should be regarded as more factual than the first five days of creation. Why should the ‘making’ of Adam and Eve be regarded as a true detail constructed by the ANE writer, when the ‘bringing forth’ and ‘making’ of the flora and the fauna were not literally true?
- If Adam and Eve are held to be real individuals that were selected from an existing population, this faces the problem of explaining why the terms of the story are about ‘making’ rather than ‘choosing’. Biblical history has many examples of ‘choosing’; so why would the story detail about Adam and Eve not be upfront on this matter? It also makes a mockery of the Bible’s account of the origin of sin and death in humans if the peer population was mortal.
- Non-concordist theistic evolution is a form of ‘cultural relativism’ – the Biblical account is relativized to its historical context of origin—relevant in its day as a commentary<sup>12</sup> on ANE mythology, but not relevant *to us* in its detail—only for the general truth that God is a creator and any spiritual (temple) typology.
- All Scripture is profitable for doctrine, but the restriction in value placed upon Genesis in this approach begs the question as to what doctrine other than the simple proposition ‘God is a creator’ we are meant to gather from Genesis 1. The account instead looks like a specification of ‘how and why’ God is a creator.
- If the account was ‘true’ in its day, why is it not ‘true’ today? What is ‘false’ in the account for its day and why is God so woven into/committed to the ‘falsities’ of the account?
- Biblically, there is a chain of descent back to the creation of male and female in Gen 1:26-27; but such a geologically recent chain is not compatible with the evolutionary story as currently told. If we reject this chain, we lose the biblical doctrine of the special creation of male and female. If, however, we accept this chain, we have made some of Genesis 1 relevant to us despite the evolutionary story. It is inconsistent to discard the rest of Genesis 1 while keeping Gen 1:26-27, an integral part of Genesis 1.
- Other usage of Genesis 1 elsewhere draws on the creation account for types and patterns. On this approach, this usage has no basis in reality—God did not literally *do* the things attributed to him – (e.g.

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<sup>12</sup> Genesis 1 has many points of difference with ANE creation myths and so we are describing ‘non-concordist theistic evolution’ as a correcting commentary on ANE mythology rather than an ‘agreeing’ account. A proponent of this approach could demur and argue that Genesis 1 is an agreeing account. We would then have to evaluate any points of agreement and disagreement—but there is quite a lot of disagreement.

say something at a certain point in time). If in the face of this objection we say that he did do these things, but not literally, then we are back in the business of matching Genesis to Science, albeit metaphorically.

- ANE cultural relativism is not a recent scholarly point of view; it derives from the German Higher Critics. It isn't an interpretative approach to be found in Jesus' day. It is foreign to the context of understanding in which Jesus and the NT writers worked. It makes the wrong correlations between Genesis and ANE myths.
- The concept of 'Scripture' is not relative to a culture or a time in such a radical way. The concept of 'Scripture' in Jesus' day is addressed to people who are no longer 'of the ANE' and yet Genesis is treated literally. If we want to have that concept of 'Scripture' among our beliefs, we cannot dismiss Genesis 1 as 'just of its day'.<sup>13</sup>

For these reasons (above) we dismiss ANE cultural relativism and non-concordist theistic evolution. It isn't doing enough to make the Bible relevant to us today and it has capitulated to a critical approach to the text.

### In the Beginning

Turning to philosophy, the first variation of theistic evolution that might be proposed is simply that God created evolution in the beginning. In one sense, this is creationism, but we need to consider the idea further.

The idea that God created a set of processes that amount to an historical process of evolution is not in conflict with creationism because it is allowed that God can intervene in the natural order at any time and on any level. Since evolution is a purposeless process in scientific description, God has presumably **created** a process that is open ended as to its outcomes. Natural selection is not random because there is a principle of selection, but the mutations/changes upon which it operates are random/chance matters. Hence, this view would imply that God values freedom of expression in the natural order for much the same reason he created free-will in humanity. The consequence of this view is that anything that comes about and falls within an evolutionary pathway is not *specifically* created. This means that this view is not evolutionary creationism but it could be 'Theistic Evolution' or 'Creationary Evolutionism'.

An alternative view would be that God created a wholly deterministic world in which all things that have happened were determined by him in the initial set of conditions that he created in the beginning of the universe. This is not because he *knew* what would as a matter of fact happen, but because he has caused all things that have or will happen in virtue of the conditions of his initial act of creation. This view doesn't exclude future creative acts by God. The problem for this latter view is how you can reconcile determinism with the randomness and chance inherent in the theory of evolution and with free-will in the human sphere.

The commitments in this first variation of theistic evolution are few. In fact, it is difficult to see what is being added by the adjective 'theistic'. We can see this if we consider why theologians do not talk about 'theistic gravity'. Gravity is a consequence of bodies in an arrangement, created and independently in place. Since all creation is theistic, including the creation of gravity, there is nothing specially added to evolution as a created set of processes that warrants the adjective theistic. The rationale for the tag 'theistic evolution' doesn't lie in this first variation, but in making evolution palatable to theology and in giving it a competing place alongside creation. Our argument below is that theistic evolution fails to do this and Old Earth Creationism succeeds.

### Guidance and Evolution

The minimal apparatus of evolution is mutation and natural selection. Let us suppose God created this setup in the beginning. This would be creationism. Let us further suppose that it is mostly left alone but

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<sup>13</sup> We are deliberately not specifying what date we ascribe to Genesis 1; critics might typically date the text to the exile or the post-exilic period, rather than situate its traditions in the antediluvian era. This issue obviously affects the choice of what culture it is to which Genesis is relativized.

that God initiates certain mutations, which means they are not chance matters, and ‘guides’ evolution in this way. Most mutations have been matters of chance, but some have not been. Is this evolutionary creationism? With an act of creation involving the bringing about of a mutation, how is this not just creationism? How is that act in and of itself evolutionary? Someone might say: because it is *part* of the process of evolution; there is a wider evolutionary whole. But the evolutionary whole was created in the beginning and that is just creationism.

So, since creationism+creationism=creationism, it would seem so far that there is no such thing as ‘evolutionary creationism’; it looks like a tag devised to make evolution palatable to Christians, but it has no coherent meaning. Someone might reply that evolution is fact, Science has shown this, and God must have ‘guided’ or ‘controlled’ or ‘directed’ or ‘influenced’ (choose any intentional verb you want) evolution. We should ask: Why? If evolution is fact, why can’t we say God has **not** directed it but carried out his creative acts **on top of** and in addition to unguided evolution?

There are two things more to this point. The first is the ‘how’ question – how has God guided evolution? Philosophers of Religion tackle this question, and we review this material in Chapter Nine. The second thing is this: would God’s involvement in evolution (however conceived) not turn evolution into something other than evolution, i.e. creation?

Why do I pose these questions? It’s simple. Theistic evolutionists present the Science and say evolution is a fact; what they don’t do is say how theistic evolution is a fact or even *can be* a fact. (It is the ‘can be’ that is interesting.) They keep their presentation of theistic evolution vague and highly generalized offering not much more than ‘God guided evolution’. But this is just a smoke and mirrors sentence and we need to know if there is anything underneath the sentence. Essentially, the ‘guidance’ is a black box and we do not know what is in the box, if anything.

A theistic evolutionist might say that we can see a divine hand at work in natural history, intervening at key times to nudge evolution in the right direction to bring about the evolution of the human race. This postulates a plan (i.e. action towards the right direction) to bring about the human race, maybe at the beginning of the evolution of life, or at some time into that evolution, and then maybe multiple nudges towards that plan. How would we justify this theology?

Let us suppose we see the divine hand at work in natural history and we agree an example back in the mists of time. How would we know that God had a plan for humans at that time? Could it not be that the decision to make the human race was instead rather recent and not planned back sometime before the hominid line began? These questions are all about how we can justify theistic evolution as a theology and not about casting doubt on evolution.

We have documentary evidence of a decision to make the human race and so we can construct a theology of special creation, but how would we time index God’s planning to a point in natural history in order to couple theology to evolution? Where’s the reasoning going to come from and what is it? It doesn’t appear that we can do this and there doesn’t therefore seem to be much mileage in the idea of ‘God guiding evolution’.

## Design and Evolution

Daniel Dennett, a well-known advocate of evolution, in his book *Darwin’s Dangerous Idea* says, “Evolution is not a process that was designed to produce us, but it does not follow from this that evolution is not an algorithmic process that has in fact produced us.”<sup>14</sup> How can theistic evolutionists marry evolution to God’s design-intentions when it is not designed to produce us? Creative acts are full of design intentionality but the process of evolution is not: so, any fair theological use of evolution should not relate evolution to acts of creation. This means that ‘evolutionary creationism’ is not fair to the process of evolution as scientists

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<sup>14</sup> D. Dennett, *Darwin’s Dangerous Idea* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1995), 56. Genesis 1 ends with the creation of us, so how can evolution be part of that creative work when it is not designed to produce us?

have described it, and possibly incoherent as a theological system if Dennett is correct in his description of evolution.

There is a difference between a 'how' question and a 'can' question. How God has used evolution is one thing, but whether God *can* use evolution is another, especially if it is to remain evolution. So, whereas special creationists may point to 'Let us make...' or 'God made...' and have nothing more to say on any 'how', they are not left wanting on whether God *can* make or create. In this way non-evolutionary creationism is theologically superior to evolutionary creationism.

### Process and Outcome

Take any two natural processes, whether God can intervene in either or both depends on the nature of the two natural processes. This means that for any two processes you have to describe the processes and show why God can intervene in either or both. We can't presume for our convenience that God cannot have set up processes which need no intervention. This isn't about a 'how' but a 'can' and in what way God has created the two processes to operate. The phrase 'natural process' as used of the weather (say, convection rainfall) and evolution has a different import. To say "'this is a natural process' and 'that is a natural process' therefore God can intervene in either" doesn't enter 'into' the problem of randomness as that is built into descriptions of evolution.

Theistic evolution puts forward the view that God intervenes to guide evolution. We should not ask 'how' this is done but 'can' this be done and 'would' this be done. It is said that God intervenes in the weather, so he 'can' intervene in evolution. This is a superficial comparison. We need a description of a weather process and the process of evolution, and we need to be shown what it is about the two processes that allows God to intervene and guide in both.

The opening words of Wikipedia's introduction to evolution says, "Evolution is the process of change in all forms of life over generations". And again, here is a quote from Wiki about convection rainfall, "Convection occurs when the Earth's surface, mainly in the equatorial region, within a conditionally unstable, or moist atmosphere, becomes heated more than its surroundings, leading to significant evaporation." More is said, but my point is that the concept of 'process' used in any description of convection rainfall is clearly not going to be the same as that used in Wiki's introduction to evolution, which involves the concept of 'generations'. The critical point here is that evolution is an *historical* process.

Suppose we have an evolutionary pathway of 100 generations. God set up the pathway in generation 1 and then left it alone completely subject to chance. God creatively intervenes in generation 50. Because of that intervention, a specific change occurs in generation 51 and because of the specific change in generation 51 a specific change occurs in generation 52, and so on until generation 100. Why is this not an evolutionary pathway up until generation 50 and then a creative pathway thereafter until generation 100?

Conversely, suppose instead that God intervenes in generation 50 and because of that intervention a specific change occurs in generation 51 but thereafter the pathway continues completely subject to chance until generation 100. How is the life-form of generation 100 a guided creation? Why is it that God's creative interest was not just confined to generation 50 and 51?

What this argument shows is that once you have God intervene, evolution is stopped dead in its tracks. The theological variation of theistic evolution that has God occasionally intervening, making this the definition of what is theistic about evolution, is incoherent. However, this is not an argument against the definition of theistic evolution which says 'God set evolution up in the beginning' or that 'God is in every causal moment of an evolutionary pathway'.

Again, suppose you create a process that intrinsically has an outcome built into it, with the intent of it leading to the particular 'a'; then when that process leads to the outcome, say the formation of 'a', then you have created 'a'. Suppose you set in place a totally free and open process, which has no specific outcomes (particulars) built in, then the intentionality of the act of creation is divorced from any particular outcome that occurs, we cannot connect the initial act of creation to the outcome. Evolution cannot be a form of

creation, because as it is currently defined, it cannot be a form of creating a particular 'a', 'b', 'c', etc.; it can only be a form of creating 'something or other'.

We should ask whether there is anything left over that is particularly evolutionary when evolution is combined with theism. We can illustrate this question as follows: Suppose God is a system designer and he creates the system of evolution in the beginning and then tracks and manages the system. This scenario is not particularly evolutionary even though we have used the word 'evolution'. We haven't specified what, if anything we are bringing from evolutionary theory into our theology. We need to explain how our tracking and management is consistent with evolutionary theory. Does this include the randomness that is intrinsic to evolutionary theory? How can there be management of randomness?

If evolution operates 'as planned', and evolutionary theory tells us the plan, then evolution is open-ended in what it delivers: the plan is 'some life or other will come about'. If that is the design, how is God managing it? God's intervention is actually not management of that plan but action 'on top of and in addition to that plan'. Thus, it seems that theistic evolution does not have a coherent story to tell about how evolution can be 'guided'. The 'some life or other will come about' plan is not altered by God's tracking and management. The tracking and management model of theistic evolution is no different to the 'nudge movement' model or the 'guide a ship model' above – the involvement of chance in the historical process of evolution kills the idea of guidance.

What is missing from theistic evolution is a discussion of the definitive position of randomness in evolution and how divine action is possible in relation to such randomness. Evolution and creation are both universal acids; you can have both in isolation for different moments in time but they cannot come together. (Evolution can be created, but creation cannot be evolved.)

### *Causal Moments*

We have shown that 'God guided evolution' is not possible through divine intervention because of chance in the evolutionary pathway. The alternative defence for theistic evolution is to say God is in every causal moment of an evolutionary pathway. It has been said that God works through natural law and God works through time and chance and we cannot exclude him from any natural causal moment. This is a different theology of theistic evolution/evolutionary creationism. The guidance is placed in every causal moment. God is supervenient over all natural causality.

We might suspect that this version of theistic evolution is even less 'evolutionary' than the 'occasional guidance' approach and we would be right. The whole point of the theory of evolution is that it explained how life appeared to be designed without using a notion of actual design. Popular Science has presented evolution in terms of spontaneous mutations and non-random natural selection and without recourse to notions of purpose or plan. If God is in every causal moment, we have to ask what is wrong with natural causality and why can God not have wanted open-ended natural causality? What is wrong with it?

The alternative theology is that God is not in every causal moment; he has created an independent natural causality and he can act in the natural order at any time and at any level. This theology will not yield theistic evolution, but it does allow any evolution we consider well-founded to exist in natural order. Special creation will consist of acts of God 'on top of' the natural order as he works 'with' natural law and 'with' time and chance alongside his creation.

Is God in every causal moment? If theistic evolutionists say 'No', then they lose the theistic side of 'theistic evolution' because chance prevents God guiding evolution; if they say 'Yes', they lose the evolution side – they lose both spontaneous mutation and 'natural' selection. The success of Science is evidence for the causal independence of the natural order which is to say that the natural order can be causally sufficient. This shows that God is not in every causal moment. A view of divine action which retains the causal independence of the natural order is more consistent with Science. It is also more consistent with the Bible: theistic evolutionists say that God works 'through' time and chance, placing God inside time and chance, but the Bible says God works instead 'with' time and chance placing God alongside natural causality.



Evolutionary Creationism is therefore a weaker theology of creation all-round than OEC. Evolutionary Creationism also has the problem that the concept of creation in the Bible is tied to particulars and not the generality that is evolution. So, it has no licence to use 'create'.

### *Conclusion*

We have introduced theistic evolution and outlined the main biblical and philosophical criticisms. Even though the phrase 'evolutionary creationism' expresses a category mistake (mixing the categories of act and process)<sup>15</sup> we could still use it and its sister expression 'theistic evolution' to refer to those views that try to cement the ideas of creation and evolution together.

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<sup>15</sup> On 'category mistakes' see G. Ryle, "Categories" in *Logic and Language: Second Series* (ed. A. G. N. Flew; Oxford: Blackwell, 1953), 65-81.