

# Islamic Creationist And A Book Sent Round The World

*The New York Times has issued a comprehensive article about "Atlas of Creation" and Harun Yahya in its July 17, 2007 issue*

## **Islamic Creationist and a Book Sent Round the World**

In the United States, opposition to the teaching of evolution in public schools has largely been fueled by the religious right, particularly Protestant fundamentalism.

Now another voice is entering the debate, in dramatic fashion.

It is the voice of Adnan Oktar of Turkey, who, under the name Harun Yahya, has produced numerous books, videos and DVDs on science and faith, in particular what he calls the "deceit" inherent in the theory of evolution. One of his books, "Atlas of Creation," is turning up, unsolicited, in mailboxes of scientists around the country and members of Congress, and at science museums in places like Queens and Bemidji, Minn.

At 11 x 17 inches and 12 pounds, with a bright red cover and almost 800 glossy pages, most of them lavishly illustrated, "Atlas of Creation" is probably the largest and most beautiful creationist challenge yet to Darwin's theory, which Mr. Yahya calls a feeble and perverted ideology contradicted by the Koran.

In bowing to Scripture, Mr. Yahya resembles some fundamentalist creationists in the United States. But he is not among those who assert that Earth is only a few thousand years old. The principal argument of "Atlas of Creation," advanced in page after page of stunning photographs of fossil plants, insects and animals, is that creatures living today are just like creatures that lived in the fossil past. Ergo, Mr. Yahya writes, evolution must be impossible, illusory, a lie, a deception or "a theory in crisis."

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The book caused a stir earlier this year when a French translation materialized at high schools, universities and museums in France. Until then, creationist literature was relatively rare in France, according to Armand de Ricqlès, a professor of historical biology and evolutionism at the College de France.

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Kenneth R. Miller, a biologist at Brown University, said he and his colleagues in the life sciences had all received copies. When he called friends at the University of Colorado and the University of Chicago, they had the books too, he said. Scientists at Brigham Young University, the University of Connecticut, the University of Georgia and others have also received them.

"I think he must have sent it to every full professor in the medical school," said Kathryn L. Calame, a microbiologist at the Columbia University medical school who received a copy. "The genetics department, the biochem department, micro — everybody I talked to had it."

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In the book and on his Web site ([www.harunyahya.com](http://www.harunyahya.com)), Mr. Yahya says he was born in Ankara in 1956, and grew up and was educated in Turkey. He says he seeks to unmask what the book calls "the imposture of evolutionists" and the links between their scientific views and modern evils like fascism, communism and terrorism. He says he hopes to encourage readers "to open their minds and hearts and guide them to become more devoted servants of God."

He adds that he seeks "no material gain" from his publications, most of which are available free or at relatively low cost.

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Support for creationism is also widespread among Muslims, said Dr. Edis, whose book "An Illusion of Harmony: Science and Religion in Islam" was published by Prometheus Books this spring.

"Taken at face value, the Koran is a creationist text," he said, adding that it would be difficult to find a scholar of Islam "who is going to be gung-ho about Darwin."

Perhaps as a result, he said, Mr. Yahya's books and other publications have won him attention in Islamic areas. "This is a guy with some influence," Dr. Edis said, "unfortunately for mainstream science."

Dr. Miller agreed. He said he regularly received e-mail messages from people questioning evolution, with an increasing number coming from Turkey, Lebanon and other areas in the Middle East, most citing Mr. Yahya's work.

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"My hypothesis is, like all creationists, they believe that they have a startling truth that the public has been shielded from, and that if they present the facts, in quotation marks, that the scales will fall from the eyes and the charade of evolution will be revealed," said Eugenie Scott, director of the National Center for Science Education, which fights the teaching of creationism in public schools. "These people are really serious about this."

On its web site *The New York Times* carried the above report together with examples of the colored illustrations in the *Atlas of Creation*. Some 65,000 other web sites carry links to the *New York Times* site.



**International Herald Tribune, July 18, 2007**

The same report appeared in the *International Herald Tribune*, a global daily published in 180 countries and on 33 web sites internationally, on July 18, 2007.

<https://www.harunyahya.info/en/articles/islamic-creationist-and-a-book-sent-round-the-world>