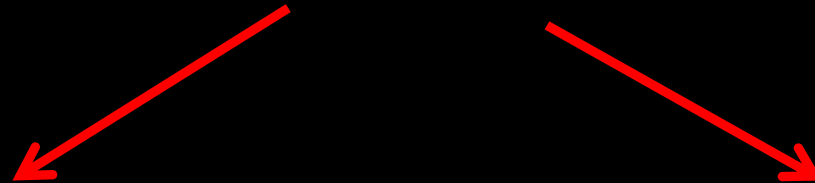


Evolution and the Book of Genesis



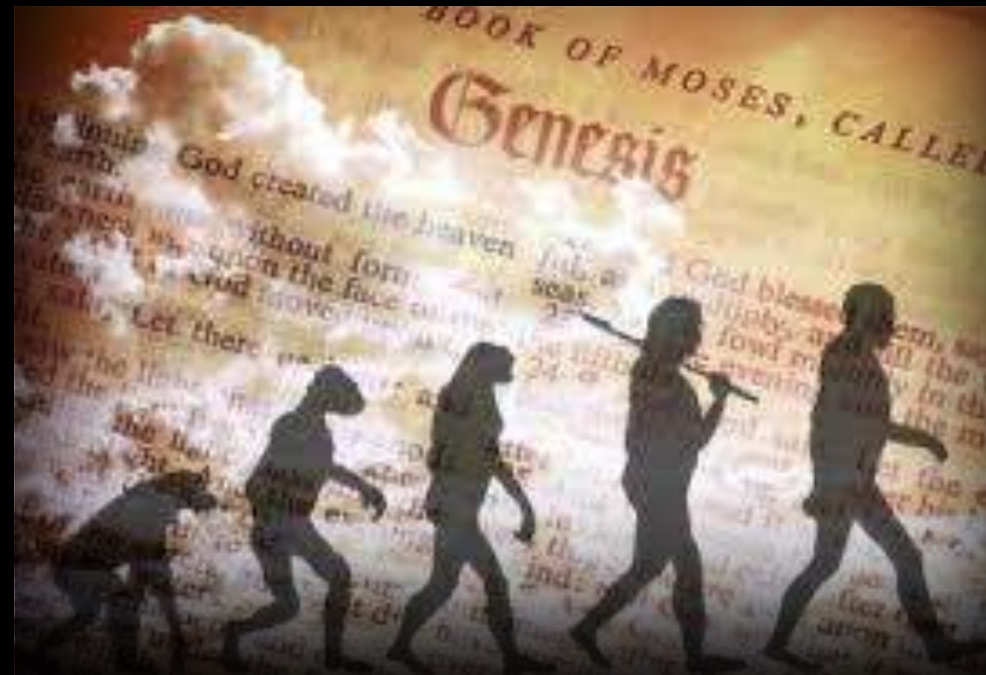
By Fr. Michael Chaberek O.P.

Two opposed interpretations of Genesis in the modern Church



A minority interpretation:
Young Earth Creationism (YEC)

A majority interpretation:
Theistic Evolution (TE)



Young Earth Creationism

PROBLEMS:

- Overwhelming scientific evidence for the old universe (from geology, paleontology, cosmology, physics).
- The Sixth Day is too short to cover the events. The seventh day lasts until now.
- Church tradition is a natural milieu for interpreting the Bible
- Some theologians (like Augustine) departed from the six days of creation understood as six natural days.
- the Church pronouncement from 1909.



Theistic evolution

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God used evolution as a way of creating the universe.

Evolution is a **secondary cause** of creation.



Theistic evolution

PROBLEMS:



--Substantial **redefinition of** the Christian notion of **creation** (direct-indirect, supernatural-natural, finished-continuous)

--**Abandonment** of the **historical** reading of Genesis (against the PBC Decree from 1909)

--**Naive belief in „scientific theories“** at the cost of the scientific facts

--**Philosophical problems** of theistic evolution

Theistic evolution and the Bible (reductionism)

Diminishing the realistic meaning of the Genesis account of creation:

- Genesis 1-3 **echoes** the Babilonian and Middle Eastern cosmogonies and **mythologies** (reduction of history to mythology)
- Genesis 1-2 **is a hymn** praising divine works in creation (reduction to religious poetry)
- Genesis 1-3 teaches „**not how the heaven goes but how one goes to heaven**” (reduction of the metaphysical and historical content to the moral and spiritual)

YEC – diminishes science (and religion)
TE – diminishes religion (and science)

The requirements of the
Catholic biblical interpretation:

- the concept of the TWO BOOKS (one truth)
- the realistic historical reading of Genesis
- the acceptance of scientific FACTS and DATA
(not necessarily the theories)



YEC

TE



Progressive
Creation (PC)

1. God created things by His supernatural and direct power (rejection of TE)
2. God Created things over long time (the time line of the creative events comes from science)

Progressive creation IS NOT

- Creation-**ism** (reduction**ism**)
- Concordism
- Interventionism (occasionalism)

Unlike YEC and TE, **Progressive Creation** provides:

- Compatibility with the historical and literal reading of Genesis 1-3 as well as the interpretative tradition of the Church
- Compatibility with the classical Christian philosophy (*sana philosophia*)
- Compatibility with all scientific **FACTS** and **DATA** (not all theories)

