

La Turquie, Une Terre Fertile Pour Le Créationnisme



Le 8 novembre 2009, *The Washington Post*, quotidien politique apprécié par un grand nombre de lecteurs dans le monde entier, a publié un rapport intitulé "**La Turquie, une terre fertile pour le créationnisme**". *The Washington Post*, l'un des trois principaux quotidiens américains avec environ un million de lecteurs réguliers, a rapporté des extraits de l'interview de M. Adnan Oktar, constatant une fois encore l'effet des travaux d'Harun Yahya sur le rejet de la théorie de l'évolution :

... le créationnisme... s'est épanoui en Turquie musulmane... Les Turcs ont agressivement imposé le fait que la théorie de Charles Darwin est scientifiquement fautive et qu'elle est la cause responsable de la plupart des conflits dans le monde puisqu'elle exclut Allah des affaires humaines.

"DARWIN EST LE PIRE FASCISTE, LE PIRE RACISTE DONT L'HISTOIRE A JAMAIS TMOIGNE", ECRIT HARUN YAHYA ; LE PLUS FIABLE ET LE PLUS CONNU DES CRITIQUES DE L'EVOLUTION EN TURQUIE, ET DEPUIS LONGTEMPS, LE FAVORI DES CREATIONNISTES AMERICAINS LES PLUS CONSERVATEURS.

... En une année durant laquelle le 200ème anniversaire de la naissance de Darwin et sa contribution à la science sont célébrées partout dans le monde par des conférences, **LE COMBAT CONTRE LA PENSEE DARWINISTE EN TURQUIE EST DEvenu UNE DEROUTE, MEME PARMi LES FUTURS PROFESSEURS DE SCIENCE.**

... "La raison pour laquelle je m'intéresse tellement à voir que le créationnisme réussisse en Turquie est que l'évolution est un concept malin qui a beaucoup endommagé la société", a déclaré John Morris, un chrétien...

Le plus visible partisan turc du créationnisme est... Adnan Oktar, qui écrit et qui apparaît quotidiennement dans son programme de télévision durant deux heures, sous le pseudonyme Harun Yahya. Lui et un groupe de 30 auteurs et jeunes scientifiques ont produit plus de 200 livres et des vidéos qui sont distribués partout et qui attaquent l'évolution comme étant l'équivalent de l'athéisme, du communisme et du pis.

EN 2006, OKTAR A CREE UN MOUVEMENT INTERNATIONAL. Publié sur presque 800 pages de papier glacé, "[l'Atlas de la Création](#)" se met en route pour montrer que les créatures d'aujourd'hui sont essentiellement les mêmes que celles qui ont vécu et se sont fossilisées il y a très longtemps.

En parlant chez lui et dans son studio de télévision avec vue sur le Bosphore, Oktar affirme la responsabilité de "défaire" le darwinisme en Turquie... **IL A CREE UN EMPIRE ANTI-EVOLUTIONNISTE D'UNE GRANDE PORTEE**, dit-il, tandis que les créationnistes américains et les partisans du dessein intelligent se démènent pour être entendus.

Agé de 53 ans, Oktar, habillé entièrement de blanc, a dit qu'il n'était pas un scientifique mais un auteur "suivant le sentier d'Allah"...

THE WORLD

In Turkey, fertile ground for creationism

U.S. critics of evolution help translate their ideas for a society already torn between Islam and secularism

BY MARC KAUFMAN
IN ISTANBUL

Sessa Ergonen teaches biology to Turkish students interested in teaching science themselves, and she has long struggled with her students' ignorance of, and sometimes hostility to, the notion of evolution.

But she was taken aback when several of her Marmara University students recently accused her of being an atheist, or worse, for teaching anything but the doctrine that God created the Earth and everything on it.

"They said I was a liar if I called myself a Muslim because I also accepted evolution," she said.

What especially disturbed — and amused — the veteran professor was that the arguments for creationism presented by some of the students came directly from the country where she was educated in the biological sciences years before — the United States. Translated and adapted for a Muslim society, the purported proofs that Darwinism and evolution were wrong came directly from American proponents of Christian creationism and its less overtly religious offshoot, intelligent design.

Ergonen's experience has become increasingly common. While creationism and intelligent design appear to be in some retreat in the United States, they have blossomed within Muslim Turkey. With direct and indirect help from American foes of evolution, similarly minded Turks have aggressively made the case that Charles Darwin's theory is scientifically wrong and is the underlying source of most of the world's conflicts because it excludes God from human affairs.

"Darwin is the worst Fascist there has ever been, and the worst racist history has ever witnessed," writes Harun Yahya, the most assertive and best-known critic of evolution in Turkey, and long a favorite of more conserva-

the American creationists.

The evolution-creationism battle is playing out against a backdrop of a much larger conflict between the forces of secularism — as represented by the Turkish military and many of the country's more educated citizens — and forces, including the popular ruling party, that want to make religion more important in national affairs. The Islamic anti-evolution campaign is taking place in Turkey, and not Egypt or Saudi Arabia, because it is the Muslim nation where evolution has been taken most seriously. Like the Bible, the Koran says that God created the Earth and everything on it, and in many Muslim nations that ends the discussion.

But Turkey, which is officially secular, appears to be joining its Muslim neighbors on evolution. A recent survey, quoted in a 2008 article in the American journal *Science*, found that fewer than 25 percent of Turks accepted evolution as an explanation of how modern life came to be — by far the lowest percentage of any developed nation. In a year in which conferences worldwide are celebrating the 200th anniversary of Darwin's birth and his contribution to science, the battle against Darwinian thinking in Turkey has become something of a riot, even among aspiring science teachers.

To many Turkish scientists and educators, this is a worrisome development. The founder of modern Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, was an advocate of science, education and, some say, even evolution. Turkish science has been especially strong in the Muslim world. If Turks close their minds to evolutionary thinking, advocates say, it won't be long before religion and politics shut off other scientific pursuits.

To John Morris, president of the Institute for Creation Research in Dallas, however, the news could hardly be more encouraging.

"Why I'm so interested in see-

ing creationism succeed in Turkey is that evolution is an evil concept that has done such damage to society," said Morris, a Christian who has led several searches for Noah's Ark in eastern Turkey. Members of his group have addressed Turkish conferences numerous times.

The Discovery Institute of Seattle, which researches and promotes intelligent design as an alternative to creationism and evolution, also sent speakers to Turkey after being invited by the Istanbul municipal government in 2005. President Recep Çapman said the institute helped bring Turkish evolution critic Mustafa Akyol to a 2005 Kansas school board hearing on teaching critiques of evolution.

"They said I was a liar if I called myself a Muslim because I also accepted evolution."

Sessa Ergonen,
Marmara University

The most visible Turkish proponent of creationism is a former journalist named Adnan Oktar, who writes and appears daily on his own two-hour television show under the alias Harun Yahya. He and a revolving group of about 30 writers and young scientists have produced more than 200 widely distributed books and videos attacking evolution as equivalent to atheism, communism and worse.

In 2006, Oktar created an international stir when he sent a book of high-quality fossil images to biology teachers worldwide. Published on almost 800 pages of glossy stock, the "Atlas of Creation" sets out to show that creatures today are essentially the same as those that lived, and because fossilized, eons ago — an argument also found in American

creationism. The source of funding for the book, which emphasizes North American fossil finds, remains murky.

Speaking in his home and television studio overlooking the Bosporus, Oktar asserted responsibility for "defeating" Darwinism in Turkey and said that Americans had helped him do it. But as he sees it, the student has become the teacher. He has created a far-reaching anti-evolution empire, he said, while American creationists and advocates of intelligent design still struggle to be heard.

The 53-year-old Oktar, dressed entirely in white, said he is not a scientist but an author "following the path of Allah." He said that by aggressively attacking evolution, he has drawn persecution in the form of lawsuits, legal cases and police torture. He is awaiting a ruling on an appeal of his conviction last year on charges that his group — which some in Turkey liken to a cult — had become a criminal, moneymaking enterprise.

Being an advocate for evolution in Turkey has its costs, too. Akyol Kence, who earned his doctorate in evolutionary biology in the United States and now teaches at an Ankara university, has fought back-and-forth lawsuits with Oktar for years. He began to take the creationists seriously when they circulated leaflets with pictures of him and Mao Zedong, publicly equating Kence's teaching of evolution to communism. His defense of evolution, he said, has cost him government funding.

After a decade in the trenches, Kence said he believes aggressive creationism "is part of a larger plan to convert people to a more conservative Islam."

The Islamic-oriented government, elected in 2002 and re-elected in 2007, has telegraphed its views on evolution by adding doses of creationism to a required public school course on "Religion and Morals," proponents of evolution say. This year,



ADNAN OKTAR, who as Harun Yahya is Turkey's best-known and most assertive critic of evolution, says he is "following the path of Allah."

the editor of one of the nation's prominent science journals, *Science and Technology*, was fired by government officials over her magazine's plans to put Darwin on its cover.

Some argue, however, that it is too early to write off Turkish science as being under the thumb of religion. Selman Hameed, a professor of science and humanities at Hampshire College in Massachusetts and author of the

2008 *Science* article titled "Bracing for Islamic Creationism," said secular forces remain strong in Turkey, which is seeking membership in the European Union.

"I think it will be five to 10 years before Turks as a whole make up their mind," he said. "The situation is quite worrisome, and that's why I wrote the article. But I believe the issue is not settled at this point."

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Adnan Oktar, qui, sous le pseudonyme Harun Yahya, est le plus connu et prémuni critique de l'évolution, dit qu'il "suit le chemin d'Allah"

<https://www.harunyahya.info/fr/articles/la-turquie-une-terre-fertile-pour-le-creationnisme-10480>