For some time Islamic publishing in the West has been associated with pamphlets in awkward English printed on pulp. Strolling through Islamic bookshops in Britain one notices a realization: prices have changed: beautifully edited books are offered for considerable prices. A notable part of these publications are dedicated to the defence of Islam against the challenges of Christianity and materialism. Outstanding examples for this new trend are the writings of the prolific Turkish author Harun Yahya (pseudonym of Adnan Oktar), whose list of Turkish publications includes about 180 titles, most of them dedicated to the refutation of Darwinism.

The Islamic Creationism of Harun Yahya

The bulk of the publications by Harun Yahya just reiterates—adorned with beautiful illustrations—the basic claims proposed in his most popular work Evolution Deceit (The Evolution Deceit) with detailed references to certain phenomena. The religious response to the theory of evolution—as well as modern science in general—has been seriously neglected by Islamic studies. The few research works that deal with the topic concern the acceptance of the concept of evolution by secular-minded intellectuals like Ismaili Mazhar, whereas his opposition in Islamic circles has almost passed unnoticed,2 although early from on Islamic thinkers like Mawdudi stressed the contradiction between religious creeds and the design of nature by God; and they denounced the harmful effects of the theory of evolution on society.

Scientific creationism

It was not before the 1980s that the anti-evolutionism became a major issue in the Islamic world. This happened in the most Westernized and secularized country of the Islamic world: Turkey. Under military and later Motherland Party (ANAP) rule evolution was not only condemned in ‘religion and ethics’ lessons but was even deleted from the biology curriculum. This occurred when a leftist version of Islam was supposed to legitimize military rule and deligitimize ‘leftist materialism’ by promoting ‘spiritual values’. In this period the writings of a new generation of American Protestant fundamentalists were transplanted into Turkish. Authors like Duane Gish and John Morris claim that their ‘scientific creationism’ is not only based on scriptural evidence but also on scientific evidence. Yahya’s far from original refutation of the theory of evolution is based on the latter’s main assertions:

- Chance cannot explain the formation of proteins let alone the complex composition of cells whereas a conscious creator can.
- The perfect adaptation of all living creatures shows that they are products of intelligent design.
- Evolutionists have not been able to present ‘missing links’ between species let alone higher taxa. The examples proposed up to now were forgeries.

Yahya’s scientific advantage over Christian ‘scientific creationism’ notwithstanding, Harun Yahya kept certain subjects, which expose the latter to ridicule in scientific circles, but which have become popular in the Islamic world. He keeps certain subjects, which expose the latter to ridicule in scientific circles, but which have become popular in the Islamic world.

In view of the deep impact of Protestant creationism it is not surprising that the same flaws characterize the writings of Harun Yahya. He takes arguments of biologist and creationists about the evolution of in their context and presents them as refutations of evolution as such. He also puts forth unfounded claims like the one that australopithecine had prehensile feet like chimp and not like men, enabling them to walk upright.

The dangers of materialism

Although Harun Yahya does great efforts to endow his writings with a scientific ve-

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