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Evolution, Creationism and

...the normalization of human error...

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Then He spoke a parable to them: “No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was *taken* out of the new does not match the old. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. And no one, having drunk old *wine*, immediately desires new; for he says, ‘The old is better.’ Luke 5:36-39 NKJV

ABSTRACT

The main aim of this thesis is to investigate how human errors become normalized so that a distorted perception of reality comes to represent the truth for a given group, field or other combination of people. With that, it also investigates whether it is possible for us to develop laws and implement regulations that aim to defend and secure human rights while, on a seemingly unconscious level, actively counteracting the very principles that the same laws and regulations rest upon. If this is possible, then how and why does it happen?

Realizing that a distorted perception must be supported or generated by cognitive errors and that these errors are or can be visible, this scientist conducted a cognitive conceptualization analysis of the material of study, namely, document 11375, "The danger of creationism in education." This was done by identifying and mapping the central concepts in the document and the meaning that they were given in this particular situation. The mapped material was then analyzed in order to identify, firstly, symptoms of dysfunctional decision making and then, cognitive errors, followed by a discussion in regard to the predicative value of cognitive errors.

This research has established that distorted pictures of reality in the form of constructed truths can be accepted as constituting truth. In this case, a distorted pictures of reality did constitute truth, not just for one person but for the majority of the committee, the council, the national agencies who implemented the regulations, and lastly, for the schools who accepted them. In fact, it is likely that collective entities engage in cognitively erroneous thinking on a regular basis, and they see this as the regular way of doing things. This is possible because members of thought communities, whether at a national or supranational level, share core beliefs and implement schematas that need collective errors in order [for the schematas themselves] to exist"

This study teaches us that it is possible to develop laws and implement regulations that aim to defend and secure human rights while, on an unconscious level, actively counteracting the very principles that the same laws and regulations rest upon. This can happen because core beliefs do not need single individuals in order to exist but can rest safely in collective communities in the form of thought collectives, and errors can become invisible. In the studied case, the likely influence, among others, is the focus on terrorism and on "who to trust" schematas. This research also confirms the usability of cognitive conceptualization analysis in that it can make the invisible become visible.

Keywords: Cognitive Sociology, Schemata, Dogma, Creationism, Core Beliefs, Cognitive Errors.

Index

Key terms	6
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Aim of study.....	2
1.2 Methodology	3
1.3 Delimitations.....	4
2.0 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DISTORTIONS AND BELIEFS.....	5
2.1 The two realities.....	5
2.2 The problem of experience.....	7
2.3 How beliefs trigger error	10
2.3.1 Understanding Core Beliefs	10
2.4 Where do we find distorted perceptions?	12
2.5 The function of perception—A conclusion.....	14
3.0 OUR CAPABILITY TO DEVELOP ERRONEOUS CONSTRUCTS.....	16
3.1 Cognitive errors	16
3.2 The particular nature of collective errors.....	17
3.2.1 The collective construction of a people	17
3.2.2 Applying a filter on reality	18
3.2.3 Unification of beliefs.....	18
3.2.4 Symptoms of defective decision making.....	19
3.3 The danger of errors	19
3.3.1 Developing a bad trend.....	19
3.3.2 Stuck in a dysfunctional pattern	20
3.3.3 Cognitive errors fuel anger	20
3.4 How one justifies violence and persecution.....	21
3.4.1 Transferring responsibility.....	21
3.4.2 Violence for a good cause is not a crime.....	21
3.4.3 No other options	22
3.4.4 Preventive measures	22
3.4.5 Normalization of violent acts and prejudice.....	22
3.5 The predicative value of errors.....	23
3.5.1 Predicting prevalent core beliefs.....	23
3.5.2 Predicting violence	23
3.6 No exit?.....	24
3.7 Summary	24
4.0 DOCUMENT 11375	28
4.1 Introduction to document of study—Our mutual history.....	28
4.2 Introduction to document of study—Organizational features.....	29
4.3 Introduction to document of study—Case history	30
4.4 Conceptualization in document 11375.....	34
4.4.1 Which beliefs must be separated from science?.....	34
4.4.2 Science and its whereabouts.....	34
4.4.3 Evolution	36
4.4.4 Creationism.....	41
4.4.5 Danger, threats, attacks and finally war.....	47
5.0 ANALYSIS and CONCLUDING REMARKS	49
5.1 Analysis of the discourse in document 11375.....	49
5.1.1 <i>Symptoms of dysfunctional decision making</i>	49
5.1.2 <i>Cognitive errors</i>	50
5.2 Concluding remarks—Concerns, predicaments	52
5.3 Reflections.....	56

Bibliography	57
APPENDIX I- FRA SKOLVERKET	62
APPENDIX II- RESPONDS FROM ECLJ	64
APPENDIX III- 11375 TEXT MAPPING	69
Alternatives	69
Attack	69
Beliefs	70
Creationism	71
The creationist	75
Danger	79
Deception	79
Dogma	80
Evidence	80
Evolution	81
The evolutionist	88
Facts	89
Lecointre	90
Fundamentalists	90
Objectivity	91
Pseudo	91
Science	92
Threats	95
Truth	95
War	96
Watchdog	96
APPENDIX IV- Interview with Mrs Woie	97
APPENDIX V - The meaning of the parable	98

Key terms

Belief system: A belief system is made up of all the sets of perceptions, expectations or hypotheses a person at any time accepts as constituting truth. A belief system includes elements of objective truth and elements of individual and collective distorted truths.

Cognitive errors: Cognitive errors are the tools that our schematas use when fitting reality to our preexisting core beliefs.

Collective memories: These are impersonal memories that have their basis in a thought community and not in a particular individual. Collective memories require a collective recollection of experience. This recollection is guided by preexisting schematas internalized within the given thought community. That is, we are taught what to remember and how to remember. We are socialized into taking on collective memories as our own memories. This socialization is possible because of the transference of core beliefs through a normalization process.

Core beliefs: These are the deep, mostly unconscious beliefs we hold in regard to what constitutes truths about ourselves, others and things.

Dogma: In order to be dogmatic, one must have a belief system that has a number of distorted truth elements. The distortions are all caused by core beliefs. The term “dogma” is also used to describe a dogmatic thought process. A dogmatic thought process requires the prevalence of core beliefs, schematas and cognitive errors, and it leads to our moving in circles.

Dysfunctional perceptions of reality: Dysfunctional perceptions are perceptions of reality that deviate from the real. This deviation is the final product of the core belief-schemata-cognitive error production process. It confirms the validity of the deep beliefs that caused it, and therefore, it functions as a confirmation of a preconceived understanding of reality.

Normalization: Through the process of the collective application of schematas, what is abnormal becomes the normal. We are socialized into perceiving core beliefs as true directly through education, media and governmental agencies, and indirectly through the collective application of schematas. Schematas draw upon a toolbox of cognitive errors, and errors normalize when the utilization of cognitive errors becomes the normal order of things. Through the process of normalization, we receive core beliefs, and we become so familiarized with the utilization of cognitive errors that we do not perceive them as errors.

Schematas: These are the unconscious cognitive strategies we implement in order to enable ourselves to fit reality into line with our core beliefs when these deviate from reality.

Thought community/Community: A thought community occurs when all the people, whether on a global or national scale, in field-specific situations or within a family, share one or more closely related core beliefs. In this thesis, the core beliefs that a thought community shares always deviate from reality. A thought commune is a stable thought community. With the sharing of core beliefs, one would expect to find a prevalence of “we and them” thinking. We find stable thought communes at every level of the society.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In my one-year Master essay, *Sannhet, tro og fordommer*, I searched for an understanding of how perception seemed to fool participants in a court trial so that wood became bone, and a man became guilty based upon practically no evidence. I came to understand that a fundamental belief system existed and was shared among the participants in the trial, even including the defense lawyer and perhaps the convicted person himself. This was a belief that Thomas Quick was guilty of murder, a belief so strong that whatever evidence, or lack of such, presented was twisted in order to fit a preexisting conception. It was a belief system so strong that two well-known scientists confirmed an erroneous finding, making conclusive remarks that led to wood being perceived as human bone.

I ended this research with the conclusion that homogeneity in a field, as well as the existence of a well-respected authority, might contribute to erroneous science, while acknowledging that strong leadership also seemed to play a role in influencing perceptions.

In this essay, my goal has been to gain a larger understanding of how human error normalizes and what makes it possible to transform a subjective perception of reality influenced by illusions into objective truth for a collective entity.

In this research, this scientist has again ventured into the legal field, this time at the supranational level, in order to study document 11375, "The danger of creationism in education." This research looks into how a collective entity comes to perceive a religious belief as a threat comprising a danger to the democracy. And with that, the research ponders whether we, as a collective entity, can have a distorted picture of reality, experiencing something as constituting truth while being in line with the perception of a well-functioning society. And what happens if we build upon a foundation of error?

1.1 Aim of study

The main aim of this thesis is to investigate how human errors normalize, so that a distorted perception of reality comes to represent the truth for a given field, group, generation, or otherwise entity of people.

Building upon the experience gained in the 1-year master thesis I started to question whether it is possible for us to develop laws and implement regulations which aim to defend and secure human rights, while on the other hand on a seemingly unconscious level actively counteract the very principles which the same laws and regulations rest upon? And if this is possible how and why does it happened?

In this study have ventured to the supranational community namely the European Council. The material of study is primary doc. 11375, “The danger of creationism in education”. This document has been chosen foremost because of an interest in the discourse utilized in the evolution versus creationism debate. The danger posed in the document was seen by European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ) to be out of proportion, the document as containing prejudice and its aim to stop a debate.¹ The document was also mentioned in the book “*Dissent over Descent*“, where Fuller stated that it was unsecure how much the “European parliamentarians understood of the science they supported” and that the document in itself was ”openly polemical.”²

On the road to understanding what can be answers of abstract questions there generally arise a need of asking many smaller questions, in this document these questions are: Does this document indicate dysfunctional decision-making? If so, which human errors exist? Does it contain prejudice? What possible outcomes can there be if cognitive errors play a role in a dysfunctional decision making process? Was reality constructed in this document? Is it possible to identify any pre-existing core beliefs? How does human error normalize?

¹ Appendix II, see link to document

² Fuller, Steve: *Dissent over Descent* (2008)

1.2 Methodology

Tetlock, in his book “*Expert Political Judgment: How Good Is It? How Can We Know?*” Looking at political experts’ fallibility stated that it is much more important to understand how experts think than what they think.³ This becomes even more important when one realises that the outcome of a prediction of a danger, as posed in this document, is influenced by a number of preparations, all increasing the chances of the prediction coming true, and that the prediction in itself can trigger a societies’ cognitive immune system and thus licence, if not authorize, necessary activities.⁴ It must be borne in mind that the persons, groups and entities that experience a danger are not necessarily under a real threat.⁵ Consequently we find that a collective entity can create an imaginary enemy, victimize itself and, by utilizing simplifications in the form of dichotomous thinking, and rightfully – in their understanding – punish the supposedly dangerous enemy.⁶

Suedfield and Tetlock have shown that the more communicative simplifications existed in a discourse, the higher the danger perceived. It appears to this scientist that loss of communicative complexity must be compensated by utilization of cognitive errors used to construct a distorted reality.⁷ This is also confirmed by Beck, who also states that those cognitive errors are visible and that their mere presence indicates deep pre-existing beliefs.⁸ Therefore it appears that cognitive errors hold both predicative value, but also indicate fundamental pre-existing beliefs and should be possible to use as a tool for analysing a given discourse. This tool, which I would like to name cognitive conceptualisation analysis, is what this scientist has tried to develop and use in this thesis.

Contrary to rationalistic micro theories the cognitive sociological framework undertaken does not assume rational actors, but assume that people are motivated by an inherent need of meaning.⁹ In order to gain meaning we are able to unconscious fit reality into what fitting with our deep beliefs. These beliefs are so deep (being our core) that we mostly are not aware of them, and still we can both share, but also gain them, in a collective community.

3 Tetlock, Phillip T: *Expert Political Judgment: How Good Is It? How Can We Know?*(2006)

4 Fuller, Steve: *Thinking the unthinkable as a radical scientific project* (2011), page 399

5 Beck, Aaron T.: *Prisoners of Hate, the cognitive basis of anger, hostility and violence* (1999), page 174-175

6 Tetlock, Philip E,(1979), page 1317

7 In 1977 Suedfield and Tetlock conducted a very interesting study of communicative complexity in international crisis which showed a change in the complexity of communication as a climax approached finding that low communicative complexity correlated with outcomes like war. This study was based upon conceptual complexity theory, which in basis means that the higher communicative complexity which existed between parts in a given crisis the more dimensions, possibilities, alternative sources and conditional relationships exists within a given frame of reference while also taking into accountancy the prevalent ability to consider multiple points of view simultaneously, integrate these and to be able to respond flexible to them. Suedfield, Peter and Tetlock, Philip: *Integrative Complexity of Communication in International Crises* (1977), page 172, 175 and 182

8 Beck, Aaron T, (1999), page XII

9 Rydgren, Jens: *The power of the past: A Contribution to a Cognitive Sociology of Ethnic Conflict* (2007), page 227-228

In analysing the document of study, I looked at a discourse that was not highly structured and which had lines of theoretical arguments going everywhere and I had to start to untangle the net. The methodology utilized was very simple. First I tried to identify the central concept in the document.¹⁰ Then I looked for fixing of meanings that is what the document puts into the meaning of the concept.¹¹

Some concepts were easily recognised such as Evolution, Creation, Creationist and Science but also Danger, Belief and Truth. But eventually, I realized that connected with these concepts were others like fundamentalism, deceptions and more. All might not be as important and heavily used but still they were contributing to the understanding. Then I thought I would be better off selecting too much than too little. The next step was asking questions like, what is this? For example, what is creationism, a creationist, evolution, a fundamentalist, and so on? Then seeing the pattern in the Appendix III, I asked questions like why it is a danger? How is it dangerous? To whom is it dangerous? Who is dangerous? Who is against it? Who is in favor? Why is it true? Why is it important? And so on. Generally, chapter 4 therefore is a collection of answers to what, why, who, whom and how.

In chapter 5, I analyse the collected and categorised material based upon knowledge found in the literature and experiences, accounted for in chapter 2 and 3, in order to identify distorted perceptions and cognitive errors in a collective setting.

I also conducted a couple of brief interviews, unstructured in the form of explorative conversations.¹² The aim was abstract, namely for Mrs. Woie (who served at Council of Europe's Committee on Culture, Science and Education as a representative for Norway at the time) to understand her change of mind and her perception of what was going on at the time.¹³ My conversation with Mr. Sixto was very brief.¹⁴

1.3 Delimitations

Acknowledging that different types of human errors exist, some which have to do with the human-machine interface, the human errors in this study are always cognitive errors.

10 Sayer, Andrew: *Realism and Social Science* (2000), page 36

11 Jørgensen, Marianne and Phillips, Louise; *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method* (2002), page 26, 28

12 Frankfort-Nachmias, Chava and Nachmias, David, *Research Methods in the Social Sciences* (2000), page 215 see also May, Tim, *Social Research-Issues, methods and process* (1997), page 113. May do not differentiate between the focused and the non-directive Nachmias does.

13 Frankfort-Nachmias Chava and Nachmias, David, (2000), page 217-218. One has to remember that happenings are in the past.

14 Hardly to merit the name of an interview...I was eventually transferred to Mr. Sixto order to get an answer to my question in regard to how one could determine which countries implement resolutions. I looked up Alfred Sixto at the Councils homepage and he seems to Head the Secretariat, for the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs.

2.0 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DISTORTIONS AND BELIEFS

In sociology, it is well known that our perception of what constitutes reality does not necessarily reflect the actual reality. What is not known is whether, once we are a part of the world and thus of the same reality we describe and analyze, we are able to view it more rationally than we do today.¹⁵ Is it possible to see objectively the reality that encompasses us, or are we prisoners of our own subjectivity?

Some say that one can see objective reality when looking at the past, but this cannot be the case. Even in a court trial, where evidence is weighed and the happenings are in the past and thus not a part of what is going on, the trial itself becomes a field of its own, an encompassing reality in which past and present play a role in activating our expectations of what we perceive to constitute the truth in the case.¹⁶ The assumption, then, that we cannot see these errors during the trial but only afterward, must also be wrong, since experience has shown us that on a collective basis, we are even able to distort our own history.¹⁷

2.1 *The two realities*

I would like to emphasize the existence of two realities, the actual and the subjective.¹⁸ The actual reflects what really exists, independent of whether or not we know about it. This we find confirmed by the evident fallibility of our own knowledge. That is, we get things wrong, crash into things or have our expectations confounded, implying that we are not infallible, since the actual world is not a construct of our own knowledge.¹⁹ Consequently, while we can have many theories about reality, and these theories might change, this does not mean that the nature of the real object is changing.²⁰

While there is an actual reality, it is easy to agree that subjective perceptions of it also exist. However, these are not to be confused with personal preferences. Preferences are what make us pay attention to or focus on different aspects when studying a picture or observing a situation, a person and so on.

¹⁵ Calhoun, Craig et al: *Contemporary Sociological Theory 2nd edition* (2007), page 226–227.

¹⁶ See Kjosnes, Berit: *Sannhet, Tro og Fordommer*, Chapter 9 (2011).

¹⁷ There are many examples of this. One example is the perception that Christopher Columbus could “discover” a continent that was already populated. Another is the understanding that the earth, so much traveled around by non-European people, could be perceived as flat by the ancient people. Yet another example is the belief that ancient people had less developed religions, laws or minds than we do.

¹⁸ Kjosnes, Berit: (2011), chapter 4, page 5.

¹⁹ Sayer, Andrew, (2000), page 2.

²⁰ I see cognitive sociology as recognizing an absolute truth, and that it is possible for humans to perceive absolute truth unless there exist preexisting schematas that hinder it. Still, as we will see, the problem of schematas is a profound one. See Sayer, Andrew: (2000), page 11, DiMaggio, Paul: *Culture and Cognition* (1997), page 5/22 and Rydgren, Jens: (2007), page 228.

However, while it is thus true that we tend to take notice of different aspects, it seems reasonable that when beholding the same painting, we should at least see part of the actual picture.

But if some of the particular features of the picture that we behold are dwarfed, exaggerated, minimized, simplified or excluded in part or as a whole, the picture becomes distorted and does not reflect reality.²¹

Therefore, it is my perception that when there is so much disagreement when it comes to the creation-evolution debate, the answer to the differences in the present understanding of the past might be found in preexisting expectations and distorted perceptions on the part of those looking at the same picture. Seeing reality as holistic, it must consist of nonconflicting parts, however interconnected in time and space, with a high level of complexity and surely also with nonrecognizable parts. The picture can only stay the same; we, however, suffer from distorted perceptions of reality.

It might look like the problems with distortion are general ones; for example, we seem to be particularly prone to activate distorted perceptions in settings where we perceive a threat. In our striving for meaning in activity, we tend to perceive threats when facing so-called “black box” situations, that is, when we do not know what the outcome will be. Fear can also be generated through pictures painted, through the media or in textbooks, of major events. These may influence us when we remember and guide how we see the past.²²

Another factor influencing our perception is our experience. Looking at the Bruner-Postmann experiment, we find that our experience of reality is influenced by our expectation of the same, and that what does not fit into our expectations we are prone to ignore or renounce.²³ Fraser explains this by stating that when we study the clouds, we look for what we can recognize, and what we do not recognize, we cannot distinguish.²⁴

²¹ Beck, Aaron T, (1999), page 73

²² Rydgren, Jens, (2007), page 229- 230, 240

²³ Bruner, Jerome S og Postman, Leo: On the Perception of Incongruity: A Paradigm (1949)

²⁴ Fraser, Jim: *Forensic Science A very short introduction* (2010), page 49.

2.2 *The problem of experience*

There is something global about our memories, and yet the memory is such a personal thing.

The various universal patterns of organizing, storing and accessing past experiences are all alike for all human beings.²⁵ Yet it is clear that we all have our autobiographical memories that are personal and made up entirely of experiences we do not share with others. On the other hand, it also appears to be true that the way we perceive these experiences most often is affected by our current social environment.²⁶ Even the very act of remembering is most likely to be influenced by the social environment that encompasses us.²⁷

The influences that our social environment have upon our recollections are at least twofold. Firstly, we tend to draw upon others, using them as tools (mnemonic others) to help us remember what has happened in the past. These mnemonic others do not just promote memories but on the other hand, can also block access to certain events in our lives, thereby preventing those events from becoming memories in the first place. This is particularly clear in children and young students, children, because they depend on others to define for them what is real, and young students, because textbooks and teachers are typically seen as epistemic authorities. Thus, students tend to receive textbook knowledge uncritically as objective truth. The extent to which our social environment affects the way we remember the past becomes even clearer when we understand that much of what we “remember” is actually filtered and is therefore distorted through a process of interpretation that usually takes place within our particular social surroundings. These distortions affect both the actual facts themselves and also the particular tone in which we recall them.²⁸

Secondly, we recollect things as members of families, organizations, nations, educational institutions, scientific fields and all the other mnemonic communities that we enter. Upon our entrance into a group, community or even simply the world, there is already a set of experiences conferred upon us. Members who are already integrated into the group can provide us with materials for memory and can prod us into recalling particular events while ignoring others.²⁹

Groups can produce memories in individuals of events that the individuals have never directly experienced.³⁰

25 Zerubavel, Eviatar: *Social Memories: Steps to a Sociology of the Past* (1996), page 284 see also Halbwachs, Maurice: *On Collective Memory* (Heritage of Sociology, (1992), page 170.

26 Rydgren, Jens: (2007), note 3, page 226; Zerubavel, Eviatar: (1996), page 284; and Olick, Jeffrey K: *The International Encyclopedia of the social sciences*, 2nd edition (2007), page 7.

27 Zerubavel, Eviatar: (1996), page 283–4. The term “mnemonic” has been used to describe memory tools throughout this essay.

28 Ibid, *Qualitative Sociology*, Vol. 19, No 3, 1996, page 285; and Rydgren, Jens: (2007), note 3, page 235.

29 Olick, Jeffrey: (2007), page 7.

30 Zerubavel, Eviatar: (1996), page 289.

Zerubavel states that just to be social human beings presupposes the ability to experience events that happened to the groups and communities we belong to long before we joined them, as if they were part of our own past.³¹

Many of our memories are those we share with some people and not others. The unmistakably common nature of these memories indicates that they are clearly not just personal, while on the other hand, their confinement to particular thought communities shows that they are not entirely universal either.³² These are collective memories that involve not only impersonal but also collective recollection, and these memories are how a mnemonic community remembers its past as a group. This is perhaps the main way in which society can influence, among other things, what and who we remember.³³

Firstly, this happens because collective memory sites such as history books, archives and so on, direct people's memories and beliefs in certain directions by pointing out what past events are considered important.³⁴

Secondly, we are taught to define certain moments in history as the actual beginnings of particular historical narratives, and thus we learn that everything that preceded those moments belongs to the prehistory that we can practically forget.³⁵

Thirdly, our memory of the past depends not only on what the past objectively was but is also influenced by what is happening in the public area, that is, in such places as newspaper editorials, television and radio. It seems that major changes in the way we come to see the past usually correspond to major social changes that affect not just individuals but entire mnemonic communities.³⁶

Lastly, there is our tendency to better remember facts that fit our preexisting mental schematas.

We acquire schematas when we become socialized into different mnemonic traditions that apply different mental filters commonly shared by their respective mnemonic communities.³⁷ Thus, collective memory uses the collective framework as an instrument to reconstruct an image of the past that is, in each epoch, in accordance with the predominant thoughts of a society.³⁸

31 Ibid, page 290.

32 Ibid, page 284.

33 Halbwachs, Maurice: (1992), page 169; and Zerubavel, Eviatar: (1996), page 293–4.

34 Rydgren, Jens, (2007), page 226.

35 Ibid, page 287.

36 Ibid, page 297.

37 Ibid, page 4.

38 Halbwachs, Maurice: (1992), page 34 and 40. Halbwachs emphasizes that the present generation might rewrite history, but it does not write it on a blank page.

The process of socialization is therefore also a process of normalizing errors. We are socialized to perceive something as normal that is not normal. Zerubavel states that the division of the past into a memorable history and a practically forgettable prehistory is neither logical nor natural. He goes on to say that one needs to be mnemonically socialized to view Columbus's first voyage to the Caribbean as the beginning of American history. One needs to be taught to regard everything that had happened in the Americas prior to 1492 as a mere prelude to America's real history. Only then can one forget pre-Columbian America.³⁹ Remembering is more than a spontaneous personal act; remembering is regulated by social rules of remembrance that tell us quite specifically what we should remember and what we can or must forget. These rules determine how far back we remember by setting certain historical horizons prior to which past events are basically regarded as irrelevant and, as such, are often forgotten altogether.⁴⁰ And when we are socialized to accept this, it all becomes the natural way of doing things.⁴¹

When embodied structures and the objective structures are in agreement, when perception is constructed according to the structure of what is perceived, everything seems obvious and goes without saying. This is the experience in which one attributes to the world a deeper belief than all beliefs in the ordinary sense, since it does not think of itself as a belief.⁴² This is the core belief representing our bottom line and telling us what constitutes truth.⁴³ When core beliefs become activated, they automatically produce a cognitive response to a given stimulus, a response that might feel like a rational interpretation of a given event. Yet there is nothing rational about core beliefs.⁴⁴

³⁹ Zerubavel, Eviatar: (1996), page 288.

⁴⁰ Ibid, page 286.

⁴¹ Bourdieu, Pierre: (2001), page 21.

⁴² Ibid, page 81.

⁴³ Westbrook, David, Kennerly, Helen and Kirk, Joan: *An Introduction to Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Skills and Applications* (2007), page 8.

⁴⁴ Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 281.

2.3 How beliefs trigger error

What is there about beliefs that can trigger constellations making us prone to errors?

It appears to me that we can gain some knowledge by looking into the nature of dogma. When talking about dogma, Rokeach states that ideological dogmatism has to do with both the way a person believes and his thoughts, and this not only with respect to one single issue but to a total network of issues organized into a belief system.⁴⁵ A belief system represents all the sets of perceptions, expectations or hypotheses a person may have at any given time that he or she accepts as representing truth.⁴⁶

Rokeach then goes on to describe the connection between this belief system and the information processing mechanism of the brain, stating that based upon the belief system, new information can either be fitted into the prevalent system or be rejected.⁴⁷ The more closed a belief system is, the more rigid or narrow it is and the more fitting is needed. On the other hand, an open system does not need fitting.⁴⁸ Thus Rokeach connects the belief system we hold with the way we process information; the less rigid our belief system is, the more information can be processed without fitting. However, if this belief system represents truth, the information we take in will not need fitting; therefore, it follows that a belief system in which information must be fitted always consists of distorted perceptions, either partly or as a whole. Belief systems that are not distorted in this way cannot be dogmatic, since dogmatic thought, according to Rokeach, is identical with a closed belief-disbelief system.⁴⁹ Thus, dogmatic thought always rests upon a foundation of either partially or wholly constructed reality.

2.3.1 Understanding Core Beliefs

It seems reasonable to believe that not all kinds of beliefs lead to a closed belief system and require information fitting. First, we must differentiate between the beliefs we have *in* someone or something and the beliefs we hold *about* ourselves, someone, or something. While the former beliefs should not require information fitting, the latter beliefs certainly do. Since my belief in God, in you, in someone opens up a channel for dialog, it can even remove bias.

If I am prejudiced against a certain group, then just to see members as individuals, may remove my prejudice against this person and affect my perception of his/her group of “belonging.”

⁴⁵ Rokeach, Milton: *On the Unity of Thought and Belief* (1956), page 227.

⁴⁶ Rokeach, Milton, (1956), page 229. Rokeach also mentions a disbelief system which represents, in the same way, what the same person accepts as false to one degree or another. Connecting these two systems, Rokeach sees them as a kind of unity, naming them the “belief-disbelief system,” a combined religious, political and scientific system.

⁴⁷ Rokeach, Milton, (1956), page 232–233.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, page 234.

⁴⁹ Rokeach, Milton: (1956), page 236.

My prejudice was based on a rigid and simplified picture of reality, but now reality has become complicated and appears fractionated.

On the other hand, the beliefs I hold about myself, things, others or God are of a different nature, since these produce expectations in regard to what I am about to experience. Realizing, then, that we tend to fit reality into a preexisting frame, it follows that when the beliefs I hold “about” something do not reflect reality, they become core beliefs, whose mere existence indicates dysfunctional perceptions, cognitive errors and schematas.⁵⁰

Collectively, there is a problem if the fundamental knowledge we hold, which enables us to distinguish, translate and understand happenings, contains core beliefs, since the resulting interpretations we make of the world are bound to be erroneous.⁵¹ In the routine of everyday cognition, we seem to rely heavily and uncritically upon available cultural schematas that we take for granted, since they have become normal for us. We appear to retain and store information with a default value of “correct,” and that information most often passes into memory without our even questioning its validity.⁵²

Consider, for example, how we are educated. As we grow and are exposed to the wider world, we form perceptions and ideas about a number of issues such as the function of the government, good versus evil, national leaders, what mental sickness is and what it is not, the behavior of some groups of people and so on. These impressions might be good in that they prepare us for the world, but they might also be bad in that they create preconceptions that govern our whole process of perception, marking out certain objects as familiar or strange by emphasizing differences.⁵³ If we differentiate among people, thought communities and groups, it follows that even using the words “we” and “they” can be enough to distort our perceptions and make us prone to stereotyping, especially when not belonging is based upon having unacceptable values or beliefs.⁵⁴ Then it doesn’t help that stereotyping tends to stamp itself upon evidence (of expected behavior) in the very act of securing evidence.⁵⁵

So having a preconceived expectation about a certain group of people makes us prone to collect evidence supporting our simplified picture of reality, thus confirming the core beliefs we had in the first place.

⁵⁰ Westbrook, David, Kennerly, Helen and Kirk, Joan: (2007), page 8–9.

⁵¹ For example, in forms of stereotyping. See Lippmann, Walter: *Public Opinion*, Chapter III, Stereotypes, part 1(1921).

⁵² DiMaggio, Paul: (1997), page 4–6/22.

⁵³ Lippmann, Walter: (1921), Chapter III, Stereotypes, part 3.

⁵⁴ In particular, this applies to competing groups; see Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 152, 153 and 147.

⁵⁵ Lippmann, Walter: (1921), Chapter VII, Stereotypes as defense, part 2.

2.4 *Where do we find distorted perceptions?*

Distorted perceptions exist both on an individual level but also on a collective level.⁵⁶ On a collective level, these perceptions become visible when they are not accepted in a particular social environment. That environment could be a group (a sick group such as the Heaven's Gate cult), a field (such as a court, in which the wrong person is found guilty), a country at the general society level (like a country at war), and even in an environment at a supranational level (a court or committee). Yet participation in a community, in itself, is not enough to make our perception distorted.

As alive and active humans who participate in a society, we cannot escape moving between different spheres within that society, and we do not exist in a vacuum. While it is true that we most likely always bring something with us into each new social environment, whether that be from our own personal sphere, one or more particular spheres, or from the mainstream, it is also true that we receive something in return.⁵⁷ Bourdieu explains this by stating that the different life conditions in which we find ourselves in produce different kinds of habitus that can be used in different situations, while on the other hand, the schemata that each habitus generates can be applied through a simple transfer to the most different situations.⁵⁸ Thus, when we experience new ideas and attitudes, these are not necessarily new, but because they are applied in a new situation, they feel as though they are new. This is the fundamental experience we undergo through learning a collective understanding of the way things are or should be. It is an understanding accumulated throughout childhood and through education but also through adulthood, and it eventually forms the basis for a natural way of perceiving reality.⁵⁹

This is possible because a social agent implements cognitive structures in his or her own pool of practical knowledge that is gathered about the social world. This practical knowledge is internalized as embodied social structures, and it sets the expectations of what is accepted, and it orients the perception of situations and their appropriate responses.

It does so by implementing classification schemes or classification systems, mental structures, symbolic forms, historical schemes and knowledge, based upon an unconscious separation into such things as classes, ages and sex.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Beck, Aaron T, (1999), page 144–146.

⁵⁷ Here, the mainstream is the umbrella that holds the common values and practises that form the common ground of subcultures, fields, families and/or thought communities, whether they are in the form of the meaning of words, history or the collective memory.

⁵⁸ Bourdieu, Pierre: *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (2010), page 185 versus 190.

⁵⁹ Mannheim, Karl: *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge* (1952), page 282; see also Bourdieu, who states, for example, that there are thousands of professors who apply to the students categories of perception and appreciation that are structured according to the same principles. Pierre Bourdieu, *Practical Reason, On the Theory of Action*, (2001), page 26.

⁶⁰ Bourdieu, Pierre: (2010) page 470 jfr. 166 ref. Bourdieu, Pierre: (2001), page 8 and page 80. Among other systems used to differentiate between what is good, bad, right or wrong.

When this system is collectively shared, it works as an invisible self-confirming network of praxes (scripts) in regard to truth and legitimate understandings.⁶¹ Bourdieu informs us that habitus consists both of the fundamental principle that guides the unconscious assessment we make based upon our own classification and also of the classification system itself.⁶²

While Bourdieu's field seems to correlate more or less with different visible groups such as professions or institutions, Fleck introduces us to a thought community or thought collective, which does not necessarily fully coincide with an official community. Fleck explains that one can liken this to a collective of religious believers where only true believers make up the thought community of the collective, while all formal members make up the official religious community. The true members can, but need not, make up the official religious community. Therefore, the internal structures and the organization of a thought collective will often differ from that of a formal organization.⁶³ Thus one should be able to say that the players on Fleck's field have gotten the feel of the game or have gotten the game under their skin. The game, with its unconscious rules, has been embodied. The players have gotten the beliefs of the game and know the expectations, limitations and rules, and they play accordingly, while on Bourdieu's field, one might find both believers and those who do not fully share the beliefs of the game. Thus tension might arise. Sharing some elements of beliefs does not mean that the entire belief systems are identical. Members of thought communities are social beings (individuals) who all perform mental acts such as perceiving, framing, generalizing, interpreting and classifying.⁶⁴ It seems likely that a thought community can either be temporal, existing due to a particular situation or time, or more stable. Stable thought communities cultivate a certain exclusivity, both formally and with respect to their content. A thought community can become formally isolated yet be bonded together internally through a statutory and customary arrangement, sometimes through a different language or at least through particular terminology. Members of thought communities have in common their manner of thinking and the meanings accredited by the group's members. This occurs to such an extent that it becomes increasingly correct to insist that the individual member participate in thinking further what others have thought before him or her.⁶⁵

61 Bourdieu, Pierre: (2010) page 166.

62 Bourdieu, Pierre: (2010) page 165–166 jfr 185.

63 Fleck, Ludwik: *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact* (1981), page 103.

64 Zerubavel, Eviatar and Smith, Eliot R: *Bridging Social Psychologies: Transcending Cognitive Individualism*, page 321–322; and Mannheim, Karl: *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge* (1952), page 282.

65 Mannheim, Karl: *Ideology and utopia: An introduction to the sociology of knowledge* (1929); see also Zerubavel, Eviatar: (1996), page 286; in regard to entrance into new thought communities, see also Fleck, Ludwik: (1981), page 103.

2.5 The function of perception—A conclusion

There appear to be three ways to perceive reality: objectively, subjectively and collectively (supra-subjectively).

Table I, Objective perception

When our perception of reality is in accordance with what constitutes truth, it needs no fitting and therefore has no use for schematas. Without schematas, there will be no cognitive errors. This applies also when we add the notion of perception, since when we study a picture or read a book, we can view happenings from different angles. By doing this we add perspectives to a narrative by describing different sides of the same matter. However, if our perception of the happenings differs and this difference is not explained by added complexity, the difference must be caused by a distorted perception of reality.



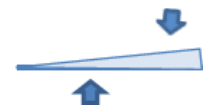
Table II, Subjective perception

Our perception of reality will be distorted if we as individuals believe something to be true about ourselves, others or things that is not true. Then because of our search for meaning, the core beliefs we hold will activate a schemata (much like a script) which, through the use of cognitive error, will rework reality so it fits our core beliefs. Individual core beliefs can be acceptable or unacceptable in our social environment. We have acceptable individual core beliefs if they correlate with others' beliefs. This correlation can happen through transference in the form of self-fulfilling prophecies. An example of this is when parents perceive that one of their kids is difficult and perhaps even bad. They will treat the child as bad and perhaps even talk to others about him/her as difficult. The child might be treated as a difficult child both at home and at school and might eventually come to see himself/herself as difficult. When the core beliefs we hold are not in accordance with what is acceptable in our social environment, we are seen as having distortions.



Table III, Supra-subjective perception

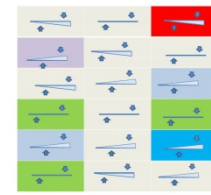
In the same way that individuals hold distorted pictures of reality, people also do this collectively. It seems as though the main difference between collective and individual distorted perception is that the collective is impersonal and involves collective recollections. They may preexist us in the given society.



As with individual distortions, collective distortions are also created by core beliefs, which activate readymade schematas, having been internalized in such a way that the cognitive errors activated need no questioning.

We see, then, that when we enter the world, we acquire both particular individual core beliefs, and as we grow up and participate more fully socially, we also acquire collective core beliefs. All of these come with their own schematas and cognitive errors and cause dysfunctional perceptions. Then we move around between educational institutions, professions or all kinds of groups within which there will be thought communities. A thought community is a community that shares one or more closely related core beliefs. The more core beliefs a thought community shares, the more dogmatic its members become.

Table IV, Belief system⁶⁶



We as individuals acquire core beliefs directly from our social environment in at least three ways. First, we acquire these beliefs when, through our educational training or upbringing, we are taught that theories that are in part or as a whole subject to change constitute truth. Secondly, we acquire core beliefs through the messages conferred upon us through media channels such as through news and documentaries that we accept as true, and thirdly, through the messages that governmental agencies transmit to us in regard to truth, guilt and the policies of the society.

Through the given thought collective schematas, we acquire core beliefs indirectly, firstly by being educated into acknowledging some channels as authorities capable of producing truths we can trust in, even to the point of not critically evaluating the messages given. Secondly, we acquire the beliefs because our attention is directed to which selections of our mutual history are considered relevant and which are not and also to the mutual acknowledgement of a starting point in time. Thirdly, news coverage and the perceptions of media not only influence us to reframe the way we see history but also influence our present experience. Then, since the core beliefs both induce cognitive errors and enable them to normalize, it follows that when a thought community shares schematas, cognitive errors will no longer be visible. When this happens, cognitive errors have normalized.

Both schematas and core beliefs must be transferrable between thought communities because closely related core beliefs should be easier to accept than unrelated core beliefs. Schematas are the scripts (guiding which tools to use but also providing practical reasoning that determines how and what to fit) that we utilize when we select the information that we believe is true. The transference of both core beliefs and schematas requires that these are accepted in the new thought community.

⁶⁶ This is just a part of a belief system. There might be reasons to believe that there exist interconnected belief systems and that a paradigm theory can be identified as one. This needs further study seeing that in this case core beliefs are more or less visible while their deviating nature is not properly understood. Here, red symbolizes acceptable deviations, green is shared objective perceptions, light blue is deviations that we share with mainstream, while clear blue and lilac symbolize deviations that we share with different fields.

3.0 OUR CAPABILITY TO DEVELOP ERRONEOUS CONSTRUCTS

As we see, core beliefs, operating through schematas, use cognitive errors to make distorted perceptions of reality possible. Cognitive errors cause, but also sustain, distorted perceptions of reality.⁶⁷

3.1 Cognitive errors

People make several different types of cognitive errors. Some of the most common ones are the following:

Dichotomous thinking is viewing things in an all-or-nothing way while ignoring the spectrum between two extremes (such as good or bad, clever or stupid, success or failure).

Catastrophization is when people on a weak foundation leap to the most awful conclusion.

Overgeneralization is drawing general conclusions based upon specific conditions.

Applying mental filters is applying a filter on information either by downplaying what does not fit, or adjusting it to fit.

Disqualification either of what is positive in the out-group or what is negative in the in-group.

Magnification of positive events and research in the in-group while underestimating comments and research in the out-group.

Jumping to conclusions is drawing conclusions in the absence of facts to support them or applying emotional reasoning by assuming that feelings reflect facts.⁶⁸

While some cognitive errors are individual, it appears that many are also collectively shared and are quite similar in nature.⁶⁹ After all, groups, fields and nations do consist of people.

⁶⁷ Westbrook, David, Kennerly, Helen and Kirk, Joan: (2007), page 114 and 125.

⁶⁸ Inferred from Westbrook, David, Kennerly, Helen and Kirk, Joan: (2007), page 115.

⁶⁹ Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 145.

3.2 *The particular nature of collective errors*

Beck states that certain phenomena such as camaraderie, commitment to a leader or cause, and collective illusions need to be understood in the context of a group.⁷⁰

Irving, Tetlock and also Beck appear to see group dysfunctional decisions caused by groupthink. Groupthink occurs when the independent critical analysis of a given problem becomes less important than the group member's motivation to maintain solidarity within the group and to hinder disunity by not allowing unaccepted doubts or opinions to enter.⁷¹ There are several reasons why groupthink may develop. Members may lack access to critical expert advice. There may be a leader within the group who uses his or her prestige or power to influence members to accept certain preferable alternatives instead of encouraging them to engage in open inquiry or critical evaluation. There may also possibly be a lack of norms dealing with the decision-making process.⁷²

Beck, Irving, Tetlock and Rokeach all add to our knowledge with respect to symptoms of dysfunctional group thinking.

3.2.1 **The collective construction of a people**

Group members tend to have robust, stereotyped images about other groups, and/or their members, without being aware of it.⁷³ When we have a stereotyped image of a group, the individuality of the members in the out-group (that is, a competing group) disappears so that individual members become interchangeable as the group takes on a life of its own; out-group members become one with their group.⁷⁴ This is possible because their personalities are absorbed in what we perceive as the group personality. Now, because of our negative bias, we will *disqualify* the other group's actions or words, translating them negatively and applying mental filters.⁷⁵

In situations where members of a group perceive a threat, these members are particularly prone to utilize cognitive errors in order to jump to conclusions. They do this by taking bits of information out of context, making erroneous conclusions, overgeneralizing or applying dichotomous thinking.⁷⁶ When our thinking becomes dichotomous, a competing group, field or country is seen as too evil or too stupid; it is all or nothing, good or bad, sick or healthy, weak or strong.⁷⁷

⁷⁰ Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 144.

⁷¹ Tetlock, Philip E: Identify Victims of Groupthink From Public Statements of Decision Makers (1979), page 1314.

⁷² Janis, Irving I: *Groupthink* (1982), page 177; see also Tetlock, Philip E: (1979), page 1315.

⁷³ Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 147.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, page 151.

⁷⁵ In particular, this applies to competing groups; see Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 152, 153 and 147.

⁷⁶ Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 71–73.

⁷⁷ Tetlock, Philip E: (1979), page 1317.

We construct a distorted picture of the out-group's understanding, theory, ethnicity, color, personalities or beliefs.

As the threats upset us, we continue to employ dualistic thinking and make extreme categorical judgments based upon the understanding that we are good and they are evil, making us victims and them victimizers. Opponents must be punished because they threaten our security, system or ideology.⁷⁸

3.2.2 Applying a filter on reality

Prejudice becomes robust when a belief system that is closed exists and does not allow modification of the prejudiced belief.⁷⁹ Core beliefs we hold about out-groups are possible because information and warnings that might question the in-group's assumptions are collectively discounted by the application of mental filters.⁸⁰

Only some channels of information are sanctioned. In addition, there exist self-appointed mind guards in the form of members who filter outside information that might undermine confidence in beliefs, decisions and qualifications and thus contaminate them.⁸¹ The way we gain knowledge now becomes the tool for keeping the bias in place.

3.2.3 Unification of beliefs

Normally, in a group, if unity is important, one expects an adjustment of the agreement or document of understanding so that all are satisfied. But when the group's thoughts become dysfunctional, then the persons whose understanding deviates from the group utilize self-censorship to adjust their views to the understanding of those who preexisted them in the group. Thus, this process leads to clear cognitive distortions, which seem in an odd way to bind the group together.⁸² The group process enhances the credibility of the distorted perceptions, making them the truth for the group, and by this process, members are molded into conformity with the group's illusions, stereotyping and/or commitments.⁸³

Furthermore, if sanctioned power exists in the group in a person esteemed to be knowledgeable and trustworthy, members might feel that the group is well informed and might thus increase their trust in their own group statement and tendency to go along with the group.

⁷⁸ Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 174–175.

⁷⁹ Ibid, page 147.

⁸⁰ Ibid, page 154; ref. Rokeach, Milton: (1956), page 231.

⁸¹ Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 156 and Tetlock, Philip E: (1979), page 1315; see also Janis, Irving L: (1982), page 174–175 .

⁸² Sears, David O with more: *Social Psychology* (1991), page 239 and Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 145; ref. Tetlock, Philip E: (1979), page 1315. Salomon Asch found that people tended to conform to the group even if they knew that what the group was doing was incorrect. See Sears, David O with more: (1991), page 240.

⁸³ Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 148; this independent level of education. ref. Janis, Irving L: (1982), page 174–175, which has influenced this chapter.

In fact, the more difficult or ambiguous the task is, the more people trust group authority.⁸⁴

3.2.4 Symptoms of defective decision making

Janis tells us that whenever most of the symptoms of groupthink exist, we can expect to find symptoms of defective decision making. Symptoms of defective decision making are decisions based upon an incomplete survey of alternatives, the conducting of a poor information search and/or selection bias in processing the information at hand, the lack of thorough analysis of objectives, the failure of the group to examine the risks of preferred choices, an inability to reappraise initially rejected alternatives, and a lack of contingency plans in place in the group.⁸⁵

3.3 *The danger of errors*

While some say that cognitive errors are accepted to a certain extent (and are even quite natural in a situation where we are upset) unless the bias is chronic or too extreme, it appears to this scientist that serious causes seem to exist for not agreeing with this statement.⁸⁶

Surely there are several reasons why cognitive errors cannot be accepted, some of which apply to a particular situation while others are of a more general kind. Here, we will examine a couple of these.

3.3.1 Developing a bad trend

Employing cognitive errors might result in a global categorization applicable to a person or group, creating an image that becomes the basic structure for understanding the behavior of others.⁸⁷

Beck explains that the psychological constellations triggered by a provocative situation can be similar, generating an image of the insulting person or group as an enemy, stimulating a disposition to punish or eliminate that enemy in order to neutralize pain and/or perceived helplessness.⁸⁸

As a result of this, violence can occur in a particular situation, but it can also easily be deployed in general in similar or related situations when the categorical perception becomes the basic structure for interpreting similar situations or people. It even appears that one can damage oneself by stimulating bias of a general kind in the way one normally processes information.⁸⁹

⁸⁴ Sears, David O with more: (1991), page 241 and also Rydgren, Jens: page 227–228, stating that we particularly listen to people whose authority derives from his/her position of power.

⁸⁵ Janis, Irving I.: (1982), page 175.

⁸⁶ Westbrook, David, Kennerly, Helen and Kirk, Joan: (2007), page 114.

⁸⁷ Beck, Aaron T.: (1999), page 261 and 255.

⁸⁸ Ibid, page 266.

⁸⁹ Ibid, page 258

3.3.2 Stuck in a dysfunctional pattern

By utilizing dichotomous thinking and applying filters to screen out reality, it might look like we are making our cognitive processes rigid.

An explanation for this might be that when we have dualistic thinking, we focus on differences, making understanding more different than it really is. We do this by blotting out mutual foundations and ruling out all other possibilities by denying opposing or contradictory facts on such grounds as “face absurdity,” exception or chance, and by not looking for other explanations.⁹⁰ Thus, our minds become closed to contradictory information and alternative explanations, and we get stuck in a pattern of making erroneous causal explanations, ignoring a matrix of reasons.⁹¹ We acquire a tendency to process information in a simplistic way and make biased judgments based upon the information that is obtained.⁹² Thereby we are no longer only prejudiced toward a group, belief or people, but our cognitive processing suffers and the way we treat information on a general basis may be damaged. We close down our minds to variation, to a multitude of explanations and to the severe complexity of the reality we are a part of.

3.3.3 Cognitive errors fuel anger

When people are upset, they tend to blame others, and they do this by attributing negative intentions to others and making negative generalizations about the offender’s character, employing both overgeneralization and dichotomous thinking. Upset or offended persons are more likely to make “categorical” diagnoses of a perceived intruder as being malicious, manipulative or deceptive.⁹³

Because of the particular relationship between core beliefs and distorted perceptions and the way that they sustain and generate each other, it follows that the more one employs cognitive errors, the more upset one becomes, creating a bad circle of events in which anger reinforces bias and bias reinforces anger.⁹⁴ This works like a self-fueling propaganda machine, enhancing in the in-group members’ minds the portrayal of the out-group as an enemy and as evil.⁹⁵ When the out-group is seen as evil, then members of the in-group may abandon their usual ethical and moral norms, even to the point of justifying violence.⁹⁶

⁹⁰ Rokeach, Milton: (1956), page 231; see also Janis, Irving L.:(1982), page 174–175. See also Rokeach, Milton: “Narrow-Mindedness” and Personality, 1951, page 234–5 in regard to prejudice and narrow-mindedness.

⁹¹ Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 74, 84, 154 and 263.

⁹² Ibid, page 156; ref. Tetlock, Philip E: (1979), page 1317.

⁹³ Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 259.

⁹⁴ Ibid, page 80.

⁹⁵ Ibid, page 204–205.

⁹⁶ Sears, David O with more, (1991), page 239 and Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 145 and 279.

3.4 How one justifies violence and persecution

A group turns malevolent when its members start to see competing beliefs as hostile and see those who oppose them as enemies while at the same time justifying their own acts while lifting existing inhibitions of violence against human rights.⁹⁷

When looking at how permission is perceived as given for conducting violent acts, Beck suggests that one focus is on how the deed is justified, firstly, because of transference of responsibility to an authority. It can also be justified, secondly, because “violence in a good cause is not a crime,” and one will be better off in the long run. It is justified thirdly, because there are no other possibilities than to eliminate or pacify the enemy, fourthly, because it is seen as prevention, and fifthly, because it is acceptable.⁹⁸

3.4.1 Transferring responsibility

By transferring the responsibility to the scientific authority in place, people playing teachers in Milgram’s experiment were able to continue to administer electronic shocks to students who failed to answer questions, even up to a voltage of 450. All of the 40 participating subjects in the experiment administered 300-volt shocks while 65% continued up to a startling 450 volts.⁹⁹

In a reproduction of this experiment aired by BBC in 2009, 75% of the respondents administered shocks, when sanctified by the scientific authority, up to the final level. However, there were certain things that reduced compliance; one of them was bringing the victims closer to the subject, and another was placing an emphasis on the teachers responsibility for his/her deeds. But as long as the subjects could shift responsibility to the experimenter, obedience was high.¹⁰⁰

Thus, removing barriers between “us” and “them” influenced adherence to the negative influence of authority.

3.4.2 Violence for a good cause is not a crime

Participants in a dysfunctional group often do not question in-group morals or motives for deeds, and therefore, members tend to ignore the ethical consequences of their actions. Tetlock informs us that groups tend to exhibit unquestioned belief in the righteousness of their own group policies and in the inherent immorality and incompetence of the enemy.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 157.

⁹⁸ Ibid, page 278.

⁹⁹ Sears, David O with more, (1991), page 260.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, page 260; ref. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BcvSNg0HZwk>

¹⁰¹ Tetlock, Philip E: (1979), page 1315.

Beck emphasizes the fact that there seems to exist a relationship between rigid thinking, ideology and prejudice due to a dualistic separation between us, the good guys and them, the bad guys. Since we are good, then whatever action we undertake is justified; after all, we fight the good fight.¹⁰²

3.4.3 No other options

If and when people experience danger, they tend to imagine the worst.¹⁰³ Therefore, one finds that participants in persecution believe, usually as a result of propaganda or a myth, that the persecuted group really is dangerous.¹⁰⁴ It might be that leaders of countries at war play on this, employing propaganda resources available to create and reinforce their enemy as the world's real enemy.¹⁰⁵ Thus, one sees no other option than to exterminate the enemy.

3.4.4 Preventive measures

If people already have a biased picture of a given minority, they are by default ready to see this group as at least partly responsible for its own distress. Whenever violence occurs, a continuity exists in the cognitive characteristics of violence across different domains, whether the domain is a family, a street group, an instance of persecution, genocide, war and so on. Thus we find that both the persecutors and the populace of aggressive nations tend to see themselves as victims while the real victim is seen as a victimizer, even when the persecutors engage in lynching and ethical massacres. They actually believe that they are protecting themselves by attacking the enemy. Their focus is on preserving or defending their group or nation.¹⁰⁶

3.4.5 Normalization of violent acts and prejudice

Where there is social pressure or even simply approval of antisocial behavior, many people can overcome moral restraints so that when the possibility of violence arises, justification is already in place.¹⁰⁷ Justification is in place when the reaction is based upon a valid interpretation of the situation in a given forum.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰² Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 155–156.

¹⁰³ Ibid, page 149.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, page 279.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, page 203.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, page 273–274.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, page 146 and 267–268.

¹⁰⁸ Because of normality, members might thus be unaware about the bias leading up to it; see Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 279.

3.5 The predicative value of errors

It seems that cognitive errors can be used as a predictive tool. In addition to indicating dysfunctional perceptions, they tell us something about core beliefs and can predict violence.

3.5.1 Predicting prevalent core beliefs

When cognitive errors are activated in provocative situations, the meanings ascribed by the person in question to the provocative event can provide a guide to the kind of distress experienced, and also to an understanding about why the situation represents a threat.¹⁰⁹ Thus, it should be possible to discover a key to the deep thoughts of a person or thought community and unlock their prevalent core beliefs.¹¹⁰

3.5.2 Predicting violence

The prevalence of cognitive errors seems to work as a predicative instrument, alerting us to occasions upon which we can expect violence. From Tetlock we learn that all decisions influenced by groupthink lead to unsuccessful military intervention and the escalation of threats, whereas non-groupthink decisions do not lead to significant military action. Therefore, it should be possible to predict in advance when military interventions or escalations of conflicts will occur by looking for the indicators of polarization and a loss of communicative complexity.¹¹¹

This is exactly what Suedfield and Tetlock found. They noticed that communicative complexity could be used as a predicative instrument for indicating a danger of war; the more polarized and less complex the communication was, the more likely it was that an international crisis would lead to war. On the other hand, the more communicative complexity existed, the more likely it was that the crisis would have a peaceful outcome.¹¹²

This is in line with what we found in Beck, who states that when one projects an image of the opposition as being an enemy and thereby utilizes dichotomous thinking, one is but a step away from hostile behavior such as threats, denunciation, embargo or violence, which acts as a reification of the image and stimulates further antagonistic behavior.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, (1999), page 257.

¹¹⁰ And most likely also the distorted perceptions.

¹¹¹ Tetlock, Philip E: (1979), page 1323.

¹¹² Suedfield, Peter and Tetlock, Philip: Integrative Complexity of Communication in International Crises (1977), page 182.

¹¹³ Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 213.

3.6 No exit?

In contrast to automatic thought, when we are sufficiently motivated, we can override default programmed modes of thinking in order to think critically and reflexively. One way to motivate ourselves is to draw our attention to a problem.¹¹⁴

Beck found that when people became aware of their cognitive errors, this awareness in itself seemed to be therapeutic and to enable an adjustment of the distorted perception of reality, bringing it more into line with what constituted truth.¹¹⁵ Thus, if our cognitive errors become visible to us, then we should be able to adjust these, as Beck stated: “We are not enslaved by our personal history or by evolution-derived patterns of thinking.”¹¹⁶ Recognizing cognitive errors enables us to challenge the automatic thoughts generated by these errors, even those that might feel to us like the obvious conclusions of the matter.¹¹⁷

3.7 Summary

We, and humanity, are suffering from an inclination to error, on both the individual and collective levels.

The particular pattern of the relationship between core beliefs (CB), schematas (S), cognitive errors (CE) and dysfunctional perception (DP) locks us up in a circle of erroneous thinking, and our propensity to make errors gets stronger the more we follow the same path.

In my mind, this must be something like the pattern of obsessive compulsive disorder. When a person with this disorder acts upon his/her compulsions, the disease energizes, like a path where more and more cars travel. The more traveled the road, the broader it is and the higher the speed.

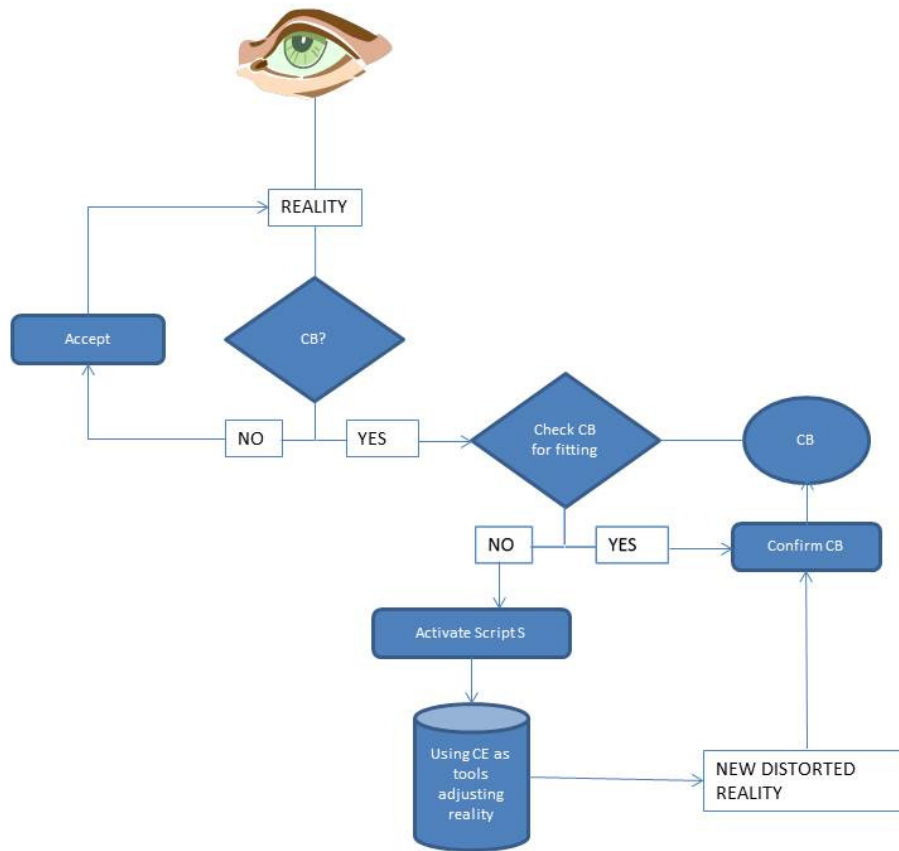
114 DiMaggio, Paul: (1997), page 6/22.

115 Beck, Aaron T: *Cognitive therapy of depression* (1987), page 261; ref. Westbrook, David, Kennerly, Helen and Kirk, Joan: (2007), page 115.

116 Beck, Aaron T: (1999), page 86.

117 Ibid, page 251.

Table V



I have tried to visualize the pattern of dysfunctional thinking in Table (V).

Here we find that:

- * CB activates S
- * S draws upon its toolbox of CE to adjust reality into fitting
- * CE both produces and sustains distorted perceptions
- * DP confirms the core beliefs and the rationality of our erroneous cognitive process

While there are several types of collective errors, many of them seem in principle to be the same as those we fight against on an individual level.

First of all, we find a tendency to be prejudiced toward out-group members while being overly positive toward our own qualifications, results and deeds. When we are prejudiced, people’s identities tend to disappear, and they become one with how we perceive the stereotyped group. Then we are able to magnify our own results while discrediting or disqualifying the competing group’s deeds, words, results, abilities and qualifications.

We have a tendency toward dichotomous thinking that is all or nothing, good or bad, friend or enemy. Then we have emotional reasoning sustaining a picture of an enemy, based upon little or no evidence, while we perceive ourselves as victims of a plot.

In order to confirm our beliefs, we filter reality, jump to conclusions and overgeneralize, that is, make general statements based upon particular evidence.

In addition, we have the possible existence of a watchdog as well as press, for unity within the group, so people might adjust their perceptions to fit those of the group. This particularly applies when the source of the beliefs is held up by what is considered to be an authority.

When a collective entity makes a decision based upon a distorted perception of reality, as Janis tells us, it employs groupthink. Some state that groupthink arises because the group lacks access to alternative expert advice that asks questions, or because the group has a strong leader who turns down questions and lacks critical evaluation, or because the group suffers a lack of norms. While all of this makes sense, still one wonders whether the reason why inquiries have not been raised, evaluations have not been done and the truth has not been challenged is the prevalence of a mutually acceptable understanding within the group, one or more closely connected core beliefs capable of producing schematas that filter out what can count as legitimate truth for the group. Having a strong leader may help, but this in itself cannot be enough, as the leader is normally given the right to lead by the group. If the group does not grant him or her authority, the leader will have none.

Thus, by utilizing our knowledge of groupthink, we understand that symptoms of distorted perceptions in a particular case might be visible through a group's careful selection of sources. These sources support the group's view and its lack of desire to explore other sources that might raise doubt. The sources also support the limited numbers of available solutions, the fitting of information, the failure to examine the risks involved in the preferred choices, the inability to reappraise what has been initially rejected and the lack of a contingency plan.

The application of cognitive errors at the collective level is much more dangerous than when they are employed by an individual. When a group in power, a group of leaders, or a group of decision makers makes decisions based upon a distorted perception of reality, these decisions can affect many people. This we have seen too many times in world history. In Europe, we saw it in the Nazi regime, in Italy under the fascists, and in Russia, we saw it under communism. Furthermore, it does not help that prejudice may not allow modifications of beliefs.

Employing cognitive errors represents a danger, firstly because we stimulate a bad cycle of events, which can lead to a general pattern of behavior that makes us prejudiced, among other things. Secondly, cognitive errors represent a danger because we are closing our minds, making our cognitive processes defective, rigid and unable to grasp a complex reality. Thirdly, and not least, we fuel anger. Thus, peaceful situations can turn into war, and people can be persecuted so that people of different opinions, ethnicities or colors become real enemies of the state.

Groups, thought communes, become malevolent when they perceive competing beliefs as hostile and see people of opposing viewpoints as enemies while lifting existing inhibitions for violence against human rights.

Violence and persecution can be justified by a quiet or public acceptance of the views of the authority. For example, when the authority uses forms of propaganda or projects a picture of an enemy, hostility can reach a point at which the “enemies” in question are seen as so bad that by persecuting or exterminating them, one commits no crime. After all, these actions are the good people fighting the evil ones. Our perceptions are playing with our minds. It might even be perceived that there exists no other option and that one has to strike first before our imaginary enemy strikes. Finally, we can normalize violent acts and prejudice by making them seem acceptable within our group, field or society.

Cognitive errors hold a predictive value since, in addition to alerting us about distorted perceptions and core beliefs, they can predict violence. One predictor of violence is dogmatic thought. That is, the less complex reality is the more information must be filtered, and therefore the more it is simplified into good or bad, clever and stupid, evil and kind, ignoring the ocean of possibilities that exist in between. In fact, picturing the opposition as an enemy is one step on a path toward violence, threats and persecution.

Yet still there is hope! While it is true that when errors normalize, we are not aware of them, it is also true that when we look for errors, we not only discover them but also learn about the nature of the core beliefs that caused those errors, and we are able to challenge the distorted perceptions that resulted from them. In order to explain how this works, I picture an incident from when I was younger. I remember us girls counting red Volkswagen (VW) beetles. Before starting to count, I hardly noticed that they existed, but as the counting continued, I suddenly become aware that there were very many red VW beetles around. The beetles having preexisted my discovery of them did not prevent them from existing, but my not directing my attention to them kept them out of my awareness of their existence.

4.0 DOCUMENT 11375

There is no document, happening, thought or word that comes without a history.

Non-conclusive parts of the history of document 11375 that concern us are our mutual European history when it comes to the separation of education and Christianity and also the more current history of the document in question.

4.1 Introduction to document of study—Our mutual history

From time immemorial, religion has existed; in fact, both science and law seem to have originated from a religious root.¹¹⁸ Religion not only preceded these, but it was the spirit that fuelled them both, contributing to making them what they are today.¹¹⁹ If, then, religion forms such a fundamental part of our history, why is it forbidden in European schools?

In Europe, we find three more or less distinguished patterns in dealing with religion and education. The first, in France, forbids both teachings in religion and teaching about religions in most schools. The second pattern is in Italy, where Catholicism is taught in school, but there is free choice about attending classes. The third pattern we find in England, where schools teach about religions but do not teach in religion.¹²⁰

If, then, our oldest documents were of a religious nature, what would be more natural than to look for clues to our mutual origin in these? Yet today we try to ban what we consider to be mere assumptions based on religious material from entering the scene of science. We define science that is built upon an assumption of a creation as “anti-science” or as “pseudoscience,” deciding that it is even too dangerous for our children’s minds.¹²¹ What is there about religion that makes it too dangerous for scientific education?

It cannot be that Christianity leads to violence, for while it is true that in the name of Christ, people have committed various misdeeds, it is also true that in the name of science, people have done the same. It might even be that Christianity acts as prevention against violence, though people with a mind to commit violence will employ whatever justification is at hand in order to take action, since through schematas, they fit information into a preexisting core belief.

118 Durkheim, Emile: *The elementary forms of the Religious Life* (2008), page 8–9 ref. Christoffersen, Lisbet et al: *Law & Religion in the 21st Century-Nordic Perspectives* (2010), page 370.

119 For an excellent example on the religious spirit fuelling law, see Danby, Herbert: *Tractate Sanhedrin, Mishnah and Tosefta-The Judicial Procedure of the Jews* (2008).

120 Christoffersen, Lisbet et al.; *Law & Religion in the 21st Century-Nordic Perspectives* (2010) page 27–33 In Italy other religions can be taught but not at the expense of the state.

121 Resolution 1580 ref. Document 11375.

Violence conducted under atheistic regimes such as communism can serve as an illustration of this, as it is not the “belief *in*” that fuels violence but the “beliefs *about*,” and these beliefs do not need a god in order to exist.

4.2 Introduction to document of study—Organizational features

The Council of Europe, which heads the European Court of Human Rights, is the highest level of court a resident in a European member state can apply to in order to claim a violation of human rights. Among these rights is included the right to freely practice religion.¹²² The Council’s objective appears on its homepage, where we find the following: “The primary aim of the Council of Europe is to create a common democratic and legal area throughout the whole of the continent, ensuring respect for its fundamental values: human rights, democracy and the rule of law. These values are the foundations of a tolerant and civilized society and indispensable for European stability, economic growth and social cohesion. On the basis of these fundamental values, we try to find shared solutions to major problems such as terrorism, organized crime and corruption, cybercrime, bioethics and cloning, violence against children and women, and trafficking in human beings. Co-operation between all member states is the only way to solve the major problems facing society today.”¹²³

With regard to the implementation of resolution 1580 the dangers of creationism in education, Mr. Sixto informed me that at the time the member states voted on the resolution, the Council of Europe did not have an organization in place to secure the proper implementation of resolutions once they were adopted. Therefore, it is difficult to recognize which countries did adopt the resolution. Mr. Sixto also stated that if an erroneous resolution has been adopted, it cannot be adjusted except in the form of a new resolution that cancels out the old.¹²⁴ This implies that while the resolution was adopted, this does not necessarily mean that it was implemented in all of the countries. But it also implies that any errors made can be adjusted.

¹²² Council of Europe, web.

¹²³ Council of Europe, “Our objectives,” web.

¹²⁴ Telephone conversation 17/04/2013. This applies to resolutions affecting all or a majority of the members. Also, since 2012, this has changed, and the committee leaders are now responsible to report to the assembly about implementation at the end of one year after the resolution has passed.

4.3 Introduction to document of study—Case history

The Interacademy Panel on International Issues (IAP) published a joint document of understanding in June 2006, stating that an evidence-based theory of evolution is needed in order to understand the science of nature and urging decision makers, teachers and parents to educate children in this theory.¹²⁵ In that same year, on October 19, European council representatives signed the first motion, presented by Baron Andrew McIntosh, “The danger of creationism in education” (Doc. 11065). In this document, we find that the scientific theory of evolution is almost universally accepted among those with religious beliefs in Europe and that the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe is concerned with the possible negative consequences of the promotion of creationism.¹²⁶ In the same month, Adnan Oktar published *The Atlas of Creation*, a book that is seen as creationistic and which document 11375 interprets as taking an extreme Muslim point of view in the document of study. Through a phone conversation, Åse Gunhild Woie confirmed that the committee members did receive at least one of Oktar’s books. Whether or not this contributed to a change of attitude is uncertain.¹²⁷ The next month, the Swedish Skoleverket issued a PM making clear that education is to rest on the scientific foundation of evolution with respect to questions about the origin of life. Denominational schools are allowed to educate pupils in their faith-based theories about life’s origin, as long as this does not happen in a way that presents their own beliefs as a scientific alternative to the evolution theory. The scientific foundation of evolution must not be questioned by belief systems. It is important that education in one subject does not discredit education in another, and it is important for school education to be holistic. Students have a right to a factual and comprehensive education. Schools that are not able to incorporate the scientific theory of evolution along with their own beliefs can lose their license to educate as well as their financial support.¹²⁸

In June 2007, the Council of Europe’s Committee on Culture, Science and Education published its first report. The report was presented by Guy Lengagne (Professor at the University of Amiens and a member of the French National Assembly’s faculty of professors).

125 IAP statement on the teaching of evolution, web.

126 Council of Europe, Doc. 11065: The “The dangers of Creationism in education,” web (Two Swedes was among those voting for); also see chapter 2.3 Creationism, in that document for more information about intelligent design.

127 Mrs. Woie states that it may have contributed, but it was not given much attention by the committee. However it did seem strange to me that Mrs. Woie would repeat herself, asking if people who believed in creation were Christians. Another question concerns how much one can trust memory after so long, so this is the reason to why I did not contact others on this committee. See APPENDIX IV.

128 Appendix I-PM fra Skolverket 2006-11-02; more about this, among other things, is found in the LäroplanförGrundskolan, Förskoleklassen och Fritidshemmet 2011, 3.9 Biologi, web; see also Skollag: (2010:800) 1 chapter:§5.

It was 13 pages long, with 11 pages authored by Lengagne himself.¹²⁹ In preparing his explanatory memorandum, Lengagne mainly consulted with the following persons and sources for information:

Jacques Arnoul, who holds a PhD in the History of Science and Theology and is an agronomical engineer. Jacques Arnoul is the author of *Gene Avatars: The Neo-Darwinian Theory of Evolution*

Hervé LeGuyader, Professor of Evolutionary Biology at the University of Paris VI

Pascal Picq, paleoanthropologist at the Collège de France, specialist in human evolution and author of *Darwin and Evolution Explained to our Grandchildren*

Guillaume Lecointre, a professor of zoology at the National Natural History Museum in Paris, an ardent evolutionist

The book, *Discover Biology*, by Michael Cain, Hans Damman, Robert Lue and Carol Kaesuk Yoon, published by DeBoeck

The report *Schöpfung und Evolution*, Sankt Ulrich Verlag, of a seminar held at Castel Gandolfo in September 2006, under the chairmanship of Pope Benedict XVI

Although this document does not seem to be accessible online, another discussing the evolution of the universe under the leadership of the same pope was published in 2008.¹³⁰

Lastly, the Islamic book by Harun Yahya, alias Adnan Oktar, already mentioned.

In addition, a number of “articles on creationism as seen by its supporters were found on the Internet.”¹³¹

This report triggered a reaction from the European Centre for Law and Justice, which issued a brief that questioned whether the aim of the report was to forego a scientific discussion on the theories of evolution and creationism, to impede the educational formation of children by restricting classroom exploration of ideas in regard to the origin of life, and/or to infringe on the rights of free exercise of expression, religion and education.

¹²⁹ http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/11/tribun/fiches_id/1939.asp ref. Council of Europe, Doc. 11296. “The dangers of Creationism in education,” web.

¹³⁰ Here we also find a description of the evolution of the evolution theory itself, on page 235; with more: <http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/PAS-on-Evolution-of-the-Universe-2008.pdf>

¹³¹ 11375:B105 and 11297:B105; please note that “we” in 11297 has been replaced with “I” in 11375

The brief stated that the picture painted of creationists in the report was extreme, in that people who believed in creation became a “threat to human rights.” The ECLJ brief concluded that to censor the discussion and teaching of creationism violated the spirit as well as the letter of democracy enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Charter on Fundamental Rights of the European Union as well as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The ECLJ recommended that the Parliamentary Assembly reject the resolution as “incompatible with the goals and ideals of the Council of Europe.”¹³²

Shortly thereafter, in response, Guy Lengagne issued a press statement stating firstly that the report was not meant to be against religions but for the progress of science, and secondly, that creationism was a religious insult against science. He also stated that there were fundamentalist groups whose views on creationism threatened work being carried out involving cell mutations. During the plenary session in the parliamentary assembly where this report was discussed and a vote was to be taken, Mr. Van Den Brande of Belgium suggested that it was necessary to refer the draft resolution back to the committee, calling it unbalanced and questioning whether the assembly was a scientific academy or a political body. He received some support for his view from Hancock from the United Kingdom, who did not understand how the report came into existence in the first place and who made it clear that the council was a political body. The planned vote on the danger of creationism was then called off until October 2007, which caused a protest from the issuing committee as well as from Guy Lengagne, who stated that to combat the theory of evolution and impose creationist ideas had the making of a return to the Middle Ages.¹³³

A new revised report, now with minor changes, was issued on September 17, 2007 (Doc. 11375) by Anne Brasseur, having taken over the leadership of the committee after Guy Lengagne. This is the report that the present study is based upon. It was accepted with a few amendments as resolution 1580 in the Parliamentary Assembly’s 35th sitting on October 4, 2007, with 48 votes in favor and 25 votes against, plus 3 abstentions.¹³⁴

¹³² Memorandum on ECLJ Response to Council of Europe Draft Doc. 11297: Report on the Dangers of Creationism 20th June 2007.

¹³³ Council of Europe Report, 19th sitting, Monday, June 25, 2007; Press statement June 26, 2007, Culture Science and Education, Creationism in education: Committee protests at sending back reports; and Guy Lengagne: “The makings of a return to the Middle Ages” June 25, 2007.

¹³⁴ Web. Taking a slight look at the physical features, we find that the number of PMs should be around 318 persons (representing 47 member states), which means that only 23% of the parliamentarians seem to have made use of their votes in this session; ref. Council of Europe, 35th sitting, Thursday, October 4, 2007 web and PACE brief, web and Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, web.

A few days thereafter, on November 9, 2007, the ECLJ issued a new report, this time pointing to the “alarmist screed against the dangers of creationism and beliefs rather than a well-researched and formal pronouncement of a parliamentary body,” pointing to the dogmatic belief in evolution reinforced by the resolution. In the report, Gregor Puppincx, counsel for the ECLJ, states that “Some MPs wanted to pre-empt any European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) case ruling in favor of free education on the issue of Evolution versus Creationism. In this way, the political trial came first.” In the same statement, we also read that earlier the same year, more than 700 scientists, many of them prominent in their fields, signed a document entitled, “A Scientific Dissent from Darwinism,” stating that a careful examination of the evidence of Darwin’s theory should be encouraged.”¹³⁵

¹³⁵ Appendix II, Letter from ECLJ, signed by Cecilia Wharton in response to mail, April 23, 2012.

4.4 Conceptualization in document 11375

While it is normal for what constitutes physical matter to have a visible body, concepts are of a different kind in that they receive their meaning from the users in a given situation or time.¹³⁶ Thus, the meaning of concepts should be less stable than that of physical matter and should be more easily fitted into a purpose. This means that when people construct reality through fitting, this action should be visible through the meaning they put into concepts. This can be seen, for example, in conversations where we are upset, in which words such as “mean,” “bad” and “evil” all indicate concepts that tend to assume the appearance of the person upsetting us, thus acquiring their meaning by the setting in which they are used. What it takes to be mean, bad or evil changes with the situation; this is not necessarily because the concepts themselves are empty but because other subconcepts are added and/or their meaning is not fully explored. Therefore, it appears to make sense to utilize a conceptualization analysis in order to investigate the prevalence of human error.

The aim of the document being studied is to warn against a tendency to pass on beliefs as science, since it is important that beliefs must be separated from science and hindered from opposing science. Therefore we will begin by looking into what the document states about beliefs.¹³⁷

4.4.1 Which beliefs must be separated from science?

According to the document, it appears that the belief that needs to be separated from science is the belief in a creation in the biblical sense of the term.¹³⁸

4.4.2 Science and its whereabouts¹³⁹

What is science? Science is a matter of reason, observation and hypothesis, theory and testing. “Science provides irreplaceable training in intellectual rigor.” Its aim is to explain how things work and not “why things are.” It has its rules and its areas of application. In document 11375, Lecointre, professor of zoology at the National Natural History Museum in Paris, put it this way: science is “*the totality of operations that produce objective knowledge.*”

Yet no science is closed, and one finds that a level of uncertainty surrounds all sciences.

¹³⁶ I have counted as a “concept” what is not visible, what is not touchable, what you cannot taste or feel, and what can change depending on the situation where it is employed, as for example, the evolution of company, technical knowledge, religion, or description of a biological process; see Durkheim in Calhoun, Craig: *Classical Sociological Theory* (2007), page 150; also see also Durkheim, Emile: *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1982), page 51–59.

¹³⁷ 11375:B5.6, Introduction.

¹³⁸ Appendix III, Beliefs; see also, “The creationist,” 11375:B59.

¹³⁹ Quotes in this section can be found in 11375:A8, 16, B24, 42, 43, 45, 79, 80, 94 and B102; all text from Appendix III, Science.

After all, science is a body of knowledge constantly being built and rebuilt, since the “scientific approach consists in continually questioning models, which remain true unless and until they have been refuted.” Therefore, science evolves in the following way: “A scientific theory produces new knowledge that it tries to interpret according to the prevailing paradigms, which forces the theory to evolve in order to take account of these new data.”

In addition to making the prevailing paradigms into translators for the interpretation of new data, the document implies that “reviewing and evolving a theory does not mean calling into question its basic principle, and the same applies to the theory of evolution.” This implies that if science consists of some fundamental principles, these are not up for review.

To ensure that what is up for review and can evolve is objective, one has to ensure the objectivity of the results. According to Lecointre, “*A statement on the world can only be described as objective if it has been verified by an independent observer. This verification depends on three factors: skepticism, rationality and logic and, finally, methodological materialism. These three pillars ensure the objectivity of a scientific result.*” The objectivity of a scientific assertion depends to a large extent on the ability to verify the objectivity by reproducing experiments or observations.

A declaration signed by the academies of science in 1967 emphasizes the importance of educating “all children about the methods and discoveries of science and to foster an understanding of the science of nature.”

This objective is important, since science provides knowledge of the natural world and empowers people to meet human needs and protect the planet. Science is of fundamental importance because it has “made possible considerable improvements in living and working conditions and is not an insignificant factor in economic, technological and social development.” In fact it “*is a prominent player and plays a big and active role in this process of the evolution and transformation of societies.*”

Therefore, scientific knowledge should be defended and promoted, and students should not be prevented from “accessing scientific knowledge,” as this would make them unable to compete effectively with students educated in states where science has a key status.

Science is important because it is not possible to establish knowledge without providing scientific evidence; thus, then, what has been scientifically tested constitutes proven facts.

Evidence is important for any scientific theory, since a theory without evidence can be “compared to an attempt to manipulate minds for purposes that are, moreover, scarcely virtuous,” and therefore, to deny “scientifically proven theories constitute[s] a brake on education and the intellectual and personal development of thousands of children.”¹⁴⁰ But one can be convinced that something represents the truth without its being the truth. A lack of scientific recognition can indicate that something is not true; another indicator can be the inability to establish truth by being unable to have scientific recourse “*to material realities.*”¹⁴¹

It is true that one can fabricate facts by “*a tendentious selection of facts*”, or one can create deceptions by fabricating facts that do not exist. However, true facts are not produced by dogmatic assertions, a distorted use of scientific quotations or through backing from more-or-less well-known scientists who are not specialists in the particular matter. True facts are established through evidence, through numerous cases confirming a matter and through direct observations. The fact of the matter is that there are proven facts, and evolution is such a fact. To deny this is to deny facts.¹⁴²

4.4.3 Evolution

The concept of evolution seems to work as an umbrella for several concepts and theories. In the document, evolution is seen as an explanation of how organisms adapt to their environments by *natural selection*.¹⁴³ (Adaption describes the characteristics of an organism that improve its ability to survive and reproduce in total harmony with its natural environment.) Evolution also explains how biodiversity came about, that is, by *speciation* (that is, the repeated separation of one species into two or more new ones), and it answers *why* different organisms share characteristics through a *common ancestor*. (A common ancestor is one species that later separated into two.) Populations evolve when certain inherited characteristics become more frequent in the following generations. *Biological evolution* is a modification of gene characteristics over time within a group of beings or a population. Humans also have a place in this process as one of the links in the long chain of evolution. They are closely related to monkeys in that both species have a common ancestor.

In document 11375, evolution is said to describe a process, demonstrated by scientists, with consequences for life on earth. Evolution involves all the above different characteristics of that life.¹⁴⁴

140 11375:B80 and 83/ Appendix III, Evidence.

141 11375:B46 /Appendix III, Truth and Facts.

142 11375:B46 / Appendix III, Facts and Deceptions.

143 The document offers no definition.

144 Appendix III, Evolution.

4.4.3.1 There is a considerable body of scientific knowledge that confirms evolution¹⁴⁵

Evolution a fact because of the following:

Evidence provided by paleontological data

The fossil record provides clear proof of evolution. Fossils are the preserved remains of organisms living a long time ago, and they furnish biologists with a means of reconstructing the history of life on earth. While a number of uncertainties still remain, fossils give weight to the idea that species have evolved over time.

Paleontology confirms the existence of new groups of organisms on the basis of old ones, which is consistent with the theory of evolution. One of the main propositions of the theory is that organisms carry in themselves evidence of their evolutionary past. This is indeed the case.

Evidence furnished through the numerous cases of characteristics shared by organisms with a common ancestor

Similarities in the development of the above organisms can be explained by a mutual ancestor. The proteins and DNA of organisms that share a common ancestor are closer than organisms that do not share one.

Evidence provided through the reality of continental drift

Fossils of organisms that evolved before the continental split have a wider geographical distribution than those that evolved more recently. Continental drift resulted in the separation of families of living organisms and resulted in the independent development of their descent, but it also resulted in new species and the extinction of others.

¹⁴⁵ Quotes in this section are from 11375:B12, 14, 27 and 28 all text from Appendix III, Evolution.

Evidence provided through direct observations of genetic changes in populations

Among those organisms that reproduce sexually, one finds that genetic variability increases through the crossing over and independent assortment of fertilization and chromosomes. (This is what normally happens when a man and a woman have a child.) These different combinations, together with any other processes that rearrange genetic information, combine to produce the evolution of species and populations, tending to secure variability among species on this planet. Genetic modifications generate morphological, biochemical and behavioral differences (which explains why each of our children has his/her own features, biochemical systems and behavior). “Natural selection and/or genetic drift have an effect on the differences between individuals or species in order to produce evolutionary change.” Both in the laboratory and in nature, scientists have observed genetic changes over the course of time in populations they have studied and in species. Scientists have also been able to modify genes by crossing species; this is called artificial selection.

Both natural and artificial selection make it possible to provide evidence of evolution. AIDS research confirms evolution, in that the virus is rapidly evolving to continue to adapt to its environment.

Furthermore, as the quoted points below state, the following has been confirmed many times:

- the solar system, which includes the Earth, was formed approximately 4.6 billion years ago;
- life appeared on Earth at least 2.5 billion years ago (in the form of unicellular bacteria);
- about 200 million years ago Pangea began to split up to form the continents we know today;
- homo sapiens (i.e., human beings) emerged between 100,000 and 200,000 years ago.

In fact, “Research being done on evolution is still providing more evidence for the truth of the theory of evolution.”

4.4.3.2 Concerns¹⁴⁶

According to the document, the theory of evolution is accepted virtually throughout the scientific world. Indeed, in the document we find that “scientists from all nations, races and religions agree on the existence of evolution and accordingly no longer try to find out whether it has actually taken place but ‘how’ this has happened. A number of questions remain within the scientific community with regard to understanding all the processes that lead to evolution. In particular, this work consists in ‘*revealing the mechanisms that have governed the present structuring of biodiversity.*’ However, no science is ever complete and new discoveries regularly enable progress to be made on understanding ‘how’ things are as they are.” Therefore, it is clear that the theory of evolution has itself evolved considerably since Darwin.

Now supporters of the theory of evolution find themselves attacked by creationists, putting the lack of certainty about the theory of evolution at the center of the debate.

Reports have shown that 75% of Turkish secondary school students do not believe in evolution. This could be due to “Muslim creationism: the creationist arguments of Christian origin became popular among the Muslims with the rise of the Islamist movements at the beginning of the 1980s.”¹⁴⁷ It appears that Turkey is the cradle of Islamic scientific creationism.

A small Swiss creation group aims to assert creationism over evolutionism by means of media or play. Belgian students seem to be confused with respect to the theory of evolution, since a large proportion say they have never heard about the theory even if it is a part of the biology curriculum. In Belgium, one can also find that creationists have attempted to infiltrate Belgian schools where *The Atlas of Creation* has been distributed.

In France, the Interdisciplinary University of Paris (UIP) has been gradually abandoned by its supporters and accused by its sponsors of introducing spirituality into science as a result of a suspicion of neocreationism. One of the members of UIP’s council inspired a documentary named, *Homo sapiens, a new history of Man*, which raised doubt about the current understanding of evolution. The university was said to be closely allied with the American Intelligent Design movement.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Quotes in this section are from 11375:B26 and 39 or from Appendix III, Evolution and The evolutionist.

¹⁴⁷ 11375:B39 /Appendix III, Evolution.

¹⁴⁸ This documentary appears to have been the result of six years of research done by Thomas Johnson in cooperation with Dr. Anne Dambricourt-Malassé, a paleontologist whose thesis received cum laude and whose current research has raised questions in regard to some of the basics of evolutionary theory. Although Thomas Johnson seemed to see himself as an ardent evolutionist, he received letters and had media naming him a creationist, even accusing him of being an American creationist loyal to Bush, infiltrating France to spread anti-Darwinism. In an open letter published online, Johnson seem to accuse Guillaume Lecointre, also involved in the production of our document of study, of having distributed mail throughout France, addressing scientific journalists, friends and defenders of “materialism,” giving instructions for how to stop a debate that could hurt the theory of evolution. (I have tried to contact Johnson to verify the authenticity of this letter,

In Poland, the theory of evolution was publicly called into question by the Polish Deputy Minister of Education. The minister stated that the evolutionist theory is only a story, a piece of literature.

The teaching of evolution is increasingly called into question in Russia. The Deputy Head of the Department of External Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate states that the theory of evolution has an ideological character reminding it of the past Soviet era. In Greece, the theory is downplayed and left to the final part of the course. In Serbia, a minister had to step down after she ordered schools to stop teaching the theory of evolution. In the Netherlands, the minister of education caused a stir when she proposed a debate on the teaching of evolution in schools. Six years earlier, political parties had agreed to teach evolution as part of the curriculum in faith-based schools. Most curricula in Europe unashamedly teach the theory of evolution, but creationism, in the form of neocreationism, is well developed in English-speaking countries. In the UK, creationists hold lectures at state schools and universities. In the US, a Pew Research Center poll from 2005 showed that 64% of Americans favored teaching Intelligent Design alongside the theory of evolution. This was also supported by President George W. Bush; today, 20 of 50 American states face potential adjustments in school curricula in favor of Intelligent Design.

4.4.3.3 The importance of the theory of evolution

The theory of evolution is important because the theory of natural selection enabled humankind to put an end once and for all to the theoretical foundation of “religious obscurantism.” Evolutionary theory is built upon facts and has nothing to do with divine revelation. When the theory was introduced, it contrasted sharply with the knowledge and fears existing at that time. The work of Darwin marked the end of the agreement between natural history and the Christian tradition, but it also marked the birth of the anti-evolutionist movements.

It is important to emphasize the profound effect that the theory of evolution has had on science in general and on philosophy, religion¹⁴⁹ and many other aspects of human society. Evolution has also entered psychology in the form of evolutionary psychology¹⁵⁰ and not simply as the study of the evolution of humans and populations. Evolutionist thinking pervades all areas of biology and affects the scientific study of the earth and the universe, but it pervades the whole of science and is one of its fundamental principles. In fact, advances in evolutionary research broaden the basis of the theory of evolution.

but I have been unable to find a phone numbers or email address for him.) 11375:B58 ref. Open letter from Thomas Johnson on Hominides.com; see also the movie, *Homo sapiens, a new history of man*, also on the web.

¹⁴⁹ One must question how?

¹⁵⁰ Not with ease. Dealing with living people is not as easy as dealing inanimate dead material or bodies.

Think about the consequences of denying evolution for the development of our societies or for medical research such as that developed for fighting AIDS. Evolution pervades all medical research. Removing evolution could lead to an end of medical research. Advances in medical research with the aim of effectively combating infectious diseases such as AIDS are impossible if every principle of evolution is denied. Furthermore, “One cannot be fully aware of the risks involved in the significant decline in biodiversity and climate change if the mechanisms of evolution are not understood.”

It is beyond doubt that the theory of evolution is a fundamental scientific theory and is central for our understanding of life on earth. This theory is crucial for the development of our societies and for the future of our democracies.

Evolution is present everywhere, from the agricultural overuse of pesticides, causing insect mutations, to medical overprescription, causing resistant bacteria. Prohibiting the theory of evolution, which is a key theory, is “totally against children’s educational interests.”

Acknowledging the important role of science in the transformation of societies makes it therefore crucial that the theory of evolution occupy a central position in the science syllabus in particular. The Interacademy Panel (IAP) emphasizes that it is harmful for children’s education to deny evolution: “The scientific community recognizes that *‘there are still many open questions about the precise details of evolutionary change’* but refuses to challenge some of the results of its research.”¹⁵¹

Alternative theories to evolution can only be considered if they “provide sufficient guarantees as to the scientific nature and truth of the ideas put forward.”

Yet to teach an alternative to the theory of evolution constitutes a danger in itself in that it “involves the risk of witnessing the development of many different theories, each as absurd as the next.” This would only contribute to “sow discord among pupils and students.”¹⁵²

4.4.4 Creationism

Creationism was “born of the denial of the evolution of species through natural selection.” While creationism used to be an American phenomenon, it has spread to Europe.¹⁵³

What is creationism? The document states that “Creationism is first of all a reaction to the theory of evolution.” Creationism consists of alternative “pseudo-theories” put forward to replace evolution.

151 11375/B79 /Appendix III, Evolution.

152 11375:B97 and B51/Appendix III, Alternatives.

153 11375:A2/Appendix III, Creationism.

Creationism is influenced by divine revelation and is a religion; it consists of beliefs, and as such, it is a “theological position” that perhaps could be “presented as an addition to cultural and religious education.” As a religious belief, belief in creation gives meaning to life for some, but the biblical story of creation is a constructed myth and has “*nothing in common with the construction of a scientific assertion.*”

The word “creationist” is derived “from ‘creation’ in the biblical sense of the term,” and most creationists are Christians or Muslims. However, there still exist numerous different creationist groups representing different faiths, all believing that they possess truth, and thus, “there is no consensus on one creationist theory in particular.”¹⁵⁴

In the document, this scientist has recognized three different groups of creationists, but also different streams of subgroups. The first one consists of strict creationists (1). These “claim that the world was created by God in six days,” and they state that science is wrong if it contradicts the Bible.¹⁵⁵ “This strict creationism is subdivided into two branches, one that categorically rejects the scientific discourse (1.1) and another, also called ‘scientific creationism’ or ‘science of creation’ (1.2), that thinks that the science versus religion conflict is only an illusion.”¹⁵⁶ This last group is again divided into two, one being the so-called “young-earth creationists (YECs)” (1.2.1) and the other being “old-earth creationists” (OECs) (1.2.2).

While the OECs admit that creation may have taken a long time, the YECs apply a literal interpretation of the first 11 chapters of the Bible. This makes YECs the most radical creationists, who completely deny “the scientific advances and discoveries concerning the evolution of species,” while OECs state that the biblical God is always present and “intervenes in the various processes that bring about evolution.” This group thus attempts to place the narrative of the holy books on a scientific basis.¹⁵⁷

The second group adheres to “so-called progressive creationism, which does not totally reject evolution but argues that creation necessarily involved successive divine interventions.”¹⁵⁸

The third and last group to emerge in the last quarter of the 20th century was the Intelligent Design (ID) movement, or the so-called neocreationists.

154 Appendix III Creationism and the creationist, ref. 11375:A2, B29, 40, 50.

155 Appendix III Creationism and the creationist, ref. 11375:A2, B82, 84 and B29-30.

156 Appendix III Creationism and the creationist, ref. 11375:B31 and 52.

157 Appendix III Creationism and the creationist, ref. 11375:B32.

158 Appendix III Creationism and the creationist, ref. 11375:B33.

ID supporters state that the theory of evolution is not a scientific theory but an ideology or a “natural philosophy,” which therefore should not be taught in schools as a “science.” This movement acknowledges “the intervention of a so-called superior intelligence,” but does not seem to believe in a divine creation.

As one can see, there are in fact several types of “creationism” that accept different forms and/or levels of evolution. Some seem to follow the evolutionary way, but the document still identifies them as creationists.

4.4.4.1 Lack of recognition¹⁵⁹

Creationism is not recognized by the international scientific community, and as a result, creationists have minimal impact, since the creationist movement is not able to publish in the scientific community. In the United States, a ruling in Pennsylvania declared that teaching ID violated the constitutional separation of church and state. In the Netherlands, the Christian Democratic Alliance (CDA) is totally against creationism and evolution being placed on an equal footing. The Archbishop of Canterbury has declared himself against creationism in British schools and has condemned attempts to introduce it there. Pope Benedict XIV, similar to his predecessor, Pope John Paul II, “today praises the role of the sciences in the evolution of humanity and recognizes that the theory of evolution is “more than a hypothesis.” Pope Benedict XIV did not support the ideas of creationism since he said that the idea that “the creationist position is based on an interpretation of the Bible that the Catholic Church does not share.”¹⁶⁰

Furthermore, Pope Benedict IIV “rejects both *a creationism that categorically excludes science and the theory of evolution, which hides its own weaknesses and does not want to see the questions that arise beyond the methodological capacities of science.*”¹⁶¹ But lastly, it appears that, similar to creationism, the theory of evolution is also “considered too pervasive by the Catholic Church, which is concerned about the influence of ‘social Darwinism’ and the evolutionist theories of economic matters and medical ethics.”¹⁶² In 2005, the Archbishop of Vienna stated in a New York Times article that the declarations made by Pope John Paul II were not to be interpreted as recognizing evolution. In his article, the Archbishop argued for ID ideas. There appear to be clashes within the Catholic church, “However, it is important to note that the majority of contemporary Catholics now accept the neutrality of science.”

¹⁵⁹ Quotes in this chapter are from 11375:A13, B75 and B76; ref. Appendix III, Creationism and the creationist.

¹⁶⁰ However, this is an ambiguous statement. Does it refer to the Protestant Bible? Which creationism? ID?

¹⁶¹ This is another ambiguous statement. To me, it seems to imply that the pope rejects creationism, which does not accept science, and evolutionism, which does not acknowledge its weaknesses, and also to imply that there are questions that science cannot answer.

¹⁶² This is a strange text. It appears as though the Church is more concerned about the theory than an utterance of an approval of it.

4.4.4.2 The danger of creationism¹⁶³

Creationism is dangerous; the doctrine of ID is dangerous. ID is no less dangerous than Islamic scientific creationism. Creationism can become a threat to human rights.

Creationists “possess real political power.” All attempts to teach creationism as a scientific discipline must be firmly opposed. Creationistic ideas might have ill effects within the education system and within our democracies.

Firstly, creationism is dangerous because creationists deny facts and do not contribute to the transformation of societies; instead, they support a radical return to the past, “but to making them become archaic”. Creationists attack the very core of knowledge, knowledge about “nature, evolution, our origins and our place in the universe “which *we* have built little by little in order to impose moral dogma.”¹⁶⁴ The war on evolution “most often originates in forms of religious extremism closely allied to extreme right-wing political movements.” It is a fact, “and this has been exposed on several occasions,” that some advocates of strict creationism are out to replace democracy with theocracy. All leading representatives of the main monotheistic religions have adopted a much more moderate attitude.¹⁶⁵ But creationists target education, and they want their ideas included in the school syllabus.

Creationism is also dangerous because creationists oppose “various discoveries and scientific advances concerning evolution” in that “For the creationists of all persuasions, the element of uncertainty that surrounds scientific work on the subject of creation and evolution is much too large to give this theory sufficient credence.” Creationism calls into question the basic principles of evolution and thus oversteps the borders of what is allowed. More than that, one finds that creationists claim that evolution is only one interpretation among others. These ideas are dangerous and can spread and cause ill effects.

Creationism in any of its forms, such as “intelligent design,” is not based upon facts, nor does it use scientific reasoning. Its “contents are definitely inappropriate for science classes.” Creationism claims to be based upon scientific rigor but is not; in fact, “the scientific character of the alternative ideas put forward by the creationists can be seriously called into question, indeed totally refuted.” Creationism is not based upon any scientific proof. Creationism is not science.

¹⁶³ Quotes in this chapter are from: 11375: Summary, A12, B29, 42, 44, 46, 48 and 91 ref. Appendix III, Creationism and the creationist

¹⁶⁴ Appendix III, Dogma.

¹⁶⁵ In document 11375 I got 9 hits on churches; 6 of them applied to the Catholic Church, 1 was negative, 1 was neutral and referred to a court case, and 1 referred to the Christian Council in the Canton of Vaud in Switzerland.

ID supporters are deceptive in that they say that the theory of evolution is not a scientific theory but “an ideology” or a “natural philosophy,” and therefore claim that it either cannot be taught in schools as a “science” or that the intelligent design ideas must be taught at the same time.

Still, “There is consequently a tendency to justify the inclusion of the intelligent design ideas, which are presented as scientific because of the total lack of any reference to the Bible and God, in the school curricula.” But ID is actually opposed to science; it is anti-science because its supporters are involved in “*scientific fraud, intellectual deception or communication that blurs the nature, objectives and limits of science.*” Even the very nature of how the science of ID is conducted is distorted; its adherents’ objectives are distorted, and the writing of the leaders of the movement are religious and not scientific.¹⁶⁶ Scientific creationists utilize science as a dangerous instrument in order to mentally manipulate minds for a purpose. Creationism is the very opposite of science. Lecointre emphasizes the fact that scientific creationism is anti-science because it denies the need to have “*recourse [...] to material realities [...] in order to establish truths.*” Creationists fabricate pseudotheories as alternatives to evolution, and these must be combatted effectively.

4.4.4.3 The identity of a creationist¹⁶⁷

In the document, several scientists are named, in the introduction notes-case history, who “support” the theory of evolution. However, I have found no “supporter” of creationism whom I could identify as a scientist.

The closest I have come is Harun Yahya, whose name generates 21 hits, and whose work, *The Atlas of Creation*, generates 11 of them. It is not possible for me to state whether Harun Yahya, an alias for Adnan Oktar, is a scientist or not. In document 11375, he appears to be a preacher.¹⁶⁸ Harun Yahya is said to be a symbolic figure in the Turkish fundamentalist school of thought, which Islamic scientific creationists are said to adhere to. Furthermore, *The Atlas of Creation* is said to be the product of a sectarian organization closely connected to the Turkish extreme right.

Contrary to most other creationists, Yahya has his own publishing house and can publish in large quantities. His work mentioned above has been sent to a large number of French, Belgian, Spanish and Swiss schools. Yahya has a research foundation called “Bilim Arastirma Vakfi (BAV),” which works to get evolution out of Turkish schools. BAV is linked closely to the American Institute for Creation Research (ICR). Harun Yahya states in *The Atlas of Creation* that there are close links between evolution and ideologies with blood on their hands, such as fascism.

¹⁶⁶ This does not seem to be correct; it does not take much web searching to find academic titles in form of PhDs and years of research for these people, in contrast to Harun.

¹⁶⁷ Quotes in this chapter are taken from 11375:A4; see also B89, A9, B46, 48 ref. Appendix III, Creationism and the creationist.

¹⁶⁸ I did a search and found his homepage, but it did not make things any clearer; <http://www.harunyahya.com/bilgi/yazarlHakkinda>

He claims to denounce deception in the theory of evolution. He fabricates evidence and twists the truth. In fact, *The Atlas of Creation* is full of falsehoods. No argument in the book is based upon any scientific evidence.

The book presents itself more like a primitive theological treatise than a scientific refutation of the theory of evolution. The writer states that major scientists support him, but that can only be the case if they are specialists in the biology of evolution. The same criticism applies to the proponents of ID.¹⁶⁹ Document 11375 states that Lecoindre has shown that ID is anti-science. Anti-science is “any activity involving blatant scientific fraud, intellectual deception or communication that blurs the nature, objectives and limits of science.” ID is anti-science because it distorts the nature of science and its objectives.

It is illogical to teach intelligent design alongside the evolution theory.

One also finds that creationists do not agree and that there are numerous different creationist groups, all believing that they possess the truth.¹⁷⁰ Nonetheless, in the document, these are treated as one group.

We find that the creationist here is the one who endeavors to “question the scientific character of certain items of knowledge and argue that the theory of evolution is only one interpretation among others” and who “accuse[s] scientists of not providing enough evidence to establish the theory of evolution as scientifically valid.” In the document, it is argued that creationist statements like this do not “stand up to objective analysis;” nor does the use of science to defend creationist statements as scientific.

Lecoindre shows us that creationists are not able to properly follow the elementary rules of science. In fact, in every experiment a creationist conducts, his/her preconceived belief decides the outcome. Creationists are not skeptics. Creationists cannot see things objectively. Creationists select facts that support their view. A creationist commits a large number of breaches of the principles of methodological materialism and experimentation. Creationists make a number of claims that cannot be “scientifically tested and are thus not provable.” Since creationists’ dogmatic assertions are impossible to prove scientifically, creationists become deceivers, in that they claim to follow scientific principles but do not; some even fabricate facts and evidence. Some creationists make absurd interpretations of results, and some fabricate pseudoevidence to support their theory.

¹⁶⁹ No work is referred to, and no scientists are referred to except Arnoul, a scientist who is a *supporter* of the theory of evolution.

¹⁷⁰ Might this be a common problem?

The methods used by creationists are “purely dogmatic assertions; distorted use of scientific quotations, sometimes illustrated with magnificent photographs; and backing from more or less well-known scientists, most of whom are not specialists in these matters.” By this they “seek to appeal to non-specialists and sow doubt and confusion in their minds.”

4.4.5 Danger, threats, attacks and finally war

Creationism and ID are dangerous, but *The Atlas of Creation* is even more dangerous than Christian creationism. To teach alternative theories to the theory of evolution constitutes a danger in itself. The danger lies in the scientific approach adopted by creationist, which is a particularly dangerous instrument of mental manipulation. The values at the very essence of the Council of Europe are in danger of being directly threatened by creationist fundamentalists, and one must therefore react before it is too late.¹⁷¹

Who, then, are the fundamentalists? We might find guidance in the words of Arnoult, who emphasizes the fact that “*Turkey appears to be one of the most active and most highly structured centres of this fundamentalist school of thought.*” Turkish Islamic creationists are not the only fundamentalists; in the United States, a Pentecostal school has used Muslim fundamentalism as a model of indoctrinating children. A documentary entitled *Jesus Camp* reveals “all the violence and fanaticism of the most radical of the creationist movements and the effectiveness with which they succeed in manipulating human beings.”¹⁷²

Because creationism poses thoughts that attack the very core of knowledge “that we have built up little by little concerning nature, evolution, our origins and our place in the universe,” in order to impose religious dogma, they are making a serious attack on human rights. The rejection of all science is “definitely one of the most serious threats to human rights and civic rights.”¹⁷³

The attack is occurring on two fronts. It occurs firstly by the denial of the scientific nature of the theory of evolution and secondly by the emphasis of evolutionary theory’s lack of certainty. This is possible because the theory of evolution renders itself open to attacks. However, there is a problem inherent in science in itself. Because of a lack of understanding of the scientific approach, science itself is vulnerable to the development of all manner of fundamentalisms and extremisms, synonymous with “attacks of utmost virulence on human rights.”

¹⁷¹ Quotes are from 11375:B55 and 88 /Appendix III, Danger.

¹⁷² Quotes are from 11375:B53 and 88 see also Appendix III, Fundamentalist and Evidence

¹⁷³ Quotes from 11375:B91; see also A5 and B96 see also A11 /Appendix III, Threat.

We also find that Darwinism and materialism in particular are attacked by some creationist fundamentalists, which claim that those viewpoints are “the real ideological source of terrorism,” stating, “Darwinism is the basis of several violent ideologies that brought disaster to the human race in the 20th century.”¹⁷⁴

There is a war going on against the theory of evolution, a real war with a real enemy. This is a war not only against the theory of evolution but a war on the democratic society as we know it.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ Quote from 11375:B87 /Appendix III, Attack.

¹⁷⁵ Appendix III, War.

5.0 ANALYSIS and CONCLUDING REMARKS

This analysis will be done in three steps. The first will focus on symptoms of dysfunctional decision making, and the second will delve into cognitive errors while the third, in conclusion, discusses errors, core beliefs, normalization and the predicative value of errors.

5.1 Analysis of the discourse in document 11375

5.1.1 Symptoms of dysfunctional decision making

Bearing in mind that the aim of document 11375 is to prevent beliefs from being passed on as science and to hinder them from opposing science, this should be reflected in the selection of sources used in the document. First, one might expect to find some investigation of literature or some assistance from specialists on belief systems. However, this is not what one finds. Instead, the objective shifts from a general concern about beliefs to a general concern about religious beliefs, thus leaving out all other beliefs.

The selection of trusted sources in the introduction as well as throughout the document indicates a careful selection of data sources. All scientists consulted are “supporters” of the theory of evolution, and only one person provides the picture we get from creationists, and this in written form only. This man appears to be a preacher. Yet this lack cannot be for want of sources, knowing that over 700 scientists holding a PhD have signed a document stating that they do not adhere to the theory of evolution. Surely there must be at least some who could have provided us with some facts and who have the same level of recognition in the different branches of creationism as the other sources that were selected presumably hold in the evolutionary field.

Looking at the written work, the only clues we find to provide us with information about creationists from sources other than those being provided by “supporters” of evolutionism are the sentences advising us that a number of articles on creationism as seen by its supporters are to be found on the internet. We are given no names, authors, or references, so it is not possible to check. From the information provided, we find only one creationist source quoted, and that is *The Atlas of Creation*.

The same applies to the selection of churches. We are told that the leaders of the main monotheistic religions have a “more moderate” view about not being allowed to teach their children about creation in school science classes while they accept having their children’s minds exposed to the prevalent understanding of the theory of evolution. But only one church seems to have been consulted, if one can speak of consultation in this case, and that is the Catholic Church.

With regard to the solution of the problem of beliefs in science, now narrowed to religious beliefs in science, there is only one solution and that is to ban all creationist theories from science. There seems to be no assessment of the risks or consequences connected with the decision that is made, and warnings about these risks are ignored. It is not possible to state much about contingency plans, only that at that time, it appeared as if the European Council did not have a mechanism for ensuring implementation of the decision. The level of implementation and whether political pressure was applied to ensure adherence to the resolution is not known.

5.1.2 Cognitive errors

Quite different groups of creationists obviously exist, and in the case of the UIP, the document even leaves us uncertain whether a creationist has to be a believer in a creation or whether he or she just needs to dare to question the basics of evolutionary theory; they are all considered one. The picture, symbolized by the creationist Harun Yahya, is of someone who is extremely right-wing and possibly sectarian. He is not a scientist, but who can be a creationist and a scientist? After all, they cannot possibly prove what they say. Therefore, all creationist scientists distort information, twist truth and are deceivers. The individuality of the single person, who may or may not believe in a creation and/or who questions the theory of evolution, has ceased to exist. He or she is now the stereotype of a dangerous enemy.

In the document, we find six references to professors, some referring to the same person but all of them “supporters” of evolution. If the document is meant to expose the danger of creationism, one would tend to think that the different creationist theories should be presented by qualified representatives who discuss pros and cons. But instead, one finds very little about creationism except that it is dangerous and it questions evolutionism. Most of the document appears to be presenting the theory of evolution, emphasizing the truth of the theory and providing a number of facts supporting it and the qualifications of its “supporters.” Hardly any who are qualified seem to support creationism. In fact, creationists do not get their work published in scientific magazines. Creationism is not science; ergo creationists do not use scientific reasoning but resort to supernatural explanations. Therefore, their work is not published. They can pretend to do science, and they do so in a way that fools mostly nonspecialists. What they do is oppose science by doing anti-science. They commit scientific fraud and communicate in a way that blurs the “nature, objectives and limits of science.”

There is no “good” creationist, at least not among those who question the right to teach evolution in the school or who want ID or creationism taught alongside evolution or instead of it. All are bad, and all are nonscientists. They all would represent a danger if one were to give them the opportunity.

The theory of evolution and the “supporters” of evolution are faithful and trustworthy scientists trying to combat illness, particularly AIDS, and deal with climatic changes. They are in danger of being hindered by creationists. Creationists’ dangerous ideas might spread, which may lead to confusion in our children. It’s all or nothing, good or bad, friend or enemy. You accept the theory of evolution, and you do not question it, or you are our enemy. And we are the strong ones, we are the good ones, we are the ones who represent the theory that saved this world from religious obscurantism, the ones who supported and upheld human rights and democracy. Lengagne, who wrote the majority of this document and who personally selected the sources, has become one with the group of evolutionists. Attacks on evolution are an attack on him.

The document portrays a danger: there are attacks, there are threats and there are wars. The ones posing the danger and threats and who are going to attack and make war are all creationists. The victim is the theory of evolution, the belief system of evolutionists. Yet does the enemy exist? Who is the enemy? Is it Islamic creationism as portrayed in *The Atlas of Creation*, is it religious beliefs or is it beliefs in general? Is it a real or imaginary picture that poses the threat? If many countries are already questioning the theory of evolution and ID has a place in curricula, which country is then left to excel in sciences based upon the theory of evolution? Is it China? If our democratic constitutions and our legal systems are based upon Christian principles about equity and nonviolence in that they reflect Christian values, is it likely that Christians would like to return to the time of inquisition when a number of Christians were persecuted? Or return to the time where many Christians escaped to North America and where men like Roger Williams founded a constitution that they thought would prevent any future infliction of persecution based upon beliefs? And unless the theory of evolution is what constitutes science, is it not likely that science existed before the theory of evolution was introduced or in countries where evolution was not accepted?

Reality has been filtered out in this document; it deliberately ignores a wealth of information that is available with respect to views of creationistic theories as well as the qualifications of creationists. It does not help that some of the material, like the statement from the pope, looks as though it was twisted into fitting and was overgeneralized.

Facts provided by Lengagne in favor of the evolutionary theory bear the marks of jumping to conclusions and overgeneralization, both because some of the facts do not seem to apply particularly to the theory while others do not address all the levels of insecurity that surround the data of our past, where a number of unknown variables are beyond our control.

The theory of evolution has been magnified to encompass nearly all science and even religion. It is a fundamental science, and medical research is not possible without it. But is it?

To this scientist's knowledge, there are well-known universities that conduct medical science based upon a perception of God as the creator and that hold well-known scientists. Loma Linda University is one of them.

In document 11375, there is a respected authority, and in fact more than one, the professors who are all in favor of the theory of evolution. They all see creationism as a danger in education; they all see that the theory of evolution must not be endangered. It is important that the creationist is an enemy. If there is a watchdog in this committee, it would make sense to see this as professor Lengagne himself, since the majority of the document is a result of his own work.

As I understood from Mrs. Woie, the aim was consensus. Yet her mind changed between the time of the first vote, in which the proposal to ban creationism was turned down, and the time of the second vote, even though the document remained the same. Only the understanding of how one should see the document had changed between the two votes, indicating an adjustment of at least one person's mind to fit the understanding of the group.

5.2 Concluding remarks—Concerns, predicaments

Document 11375 demonstrates clear symptoms of a dysfunctional decision-making process. This applies firstly because it is very clear in this document that the objectives of the decision-making process are not thought out and analyzed. An investigation of how one can hinder beliefs from being passed on as science as well as hinder them from opposing science is honorable and good. The same applies to the establishment of some general rules aiming at reaching the goal of limiting the influence of beliefs in science. But an objective of eliminating religious beliefs from science while ignoring all other beliefs, among them stereotyping, is prejudicial and indicates preexisting core beliefs.

Secondly, the data collection process shows the prevalence of schematas; only "legally" acceptable sources that confirm the preexisting view have been consulted. All of the scientists are evolutionists. By these we are given a picture of the theory of evolution.

The document emphasizes time after time that people who believe in creation are not scientists, and this claim is visible in the data selection process, as only one nonevolutionist is consulted through his written work, and he is one who can verify the picture painted of the creationist. No work is provided from anyone at all who could compromise this view. The picture of creationism is painted based on unknown articles from the internet, “supporters” of evolution and Harun Yahya.

In addition to mental filters, overgeneralization and disqualification, we find the presence of errors such as dichotomous thinking and catastrophization in that creationists have lost their individuality; they became the stereotype of a creationist, an extreme right-wing preacher. Therefore, it is not hard to understand why creationists are not able to do science but cheat and manipulate. They are simply not qualified. Supporters of evolution, on the other hand, are qualified, and they do real science. All or nothing, creationism is an enemy to the theory of evolution.

There is nothing good in creationists and nothing decent, as they are deceivers, they endanger our society with their ideas and they only do bad science. They are an enemy to democracy.

Evolutionists are strong; they are one united group without deviations. They hold the scientific society in their grip; creationists are weak, and they do not have access. Yet creationists still attack, and they have real political power. They are dangerous, they compose a threat and they want to destroy democracy and impose theocracy. Creationism is not a matter of a view with regard to origins; it has been magnified to a global enemy, an enemy of society. In order to construct reality into fitting the preexisting stereotyped creationist, comments are twisted and information is selected, while other information is ignored. Merits of the theory of evolution have been overgeneralized and its importance exaggerated, and the theory of creationism has been belittled.

But then, who is the fundamentalist? In the document, he is an Islamic creationist or a Christian creationist utilizing the methods of Islamic extremists. This knowledge informs us about an experience of threat, the threat of Islamic extremism in Europe, which is transferred to the concept of creationism and globalized to all who believe in a creation, confirming the words of Beck. Seeing that media coverage of current happenings influences how we perceive these happenings, this might provide some explanation of why the abnormal became normal. Yet it still does not explain how the threat of Islamic extremism became juxtaposed to the Christian creationist. That is, unless there was a schemata available or a preexisting core belief.

One of the schematas could easily be an understanding that one who takes the biblical story of creation literally is extreme, based upon a core belief stating that those who read the Bible literally are fundamentalists. The Bible might appear strange, since ten people can read it and perceive the happenings differently. The problem is not one of the book but of the schemata.

In addition, we find at least one core belief stating that religion, and with it Christianity, can pose a danger of imposing a theocracy and/or a dogma on society. However, at least one more core belief must exist for this distortion to be possible.

The theory of evolution has been taught in most of the European countries, which means that we all have been or should have been exposed directly to it either during our education or through the media. Perhaps evolutionary theory has been presented not as a theory but as truth; thus, we have been socialized to see it as truth. What we are taught as constituting truth, we will cognitively deal with according to that perception. When this idea is helped by media and established by governmental policies, then what we are taught cannot help but become truth. Then, that schemata is already in place for us that selects which history to focus on, what to ignore and when to start. It answers questions like, when was science born? When was medicine born? Yet the problem of changeable theories is exactly that they change, so which version is then the true one?

The theory of evolution as presented in the document itself also bears the marks of cognitive error. Some of these are overgeneralization, jumping to conclusions, magnifications and the application of mental filters. We see overgeneralization with respect to the fossil record, as it can support more than one theory depending on the schematas utilized. One should also ask whether it is proved that organisms carry in themselves leftover evidence of their evolutionary pasts. In some cases, these “leftovers” have later been discovered to continue to fill a function. One example is the appendix, and another is junk DNA. We also see jumping to conclusions where laboratory findings (the AIDS virus, for example) do not necessarily support a complex theory that spans millions of years with unknown sources of influence and so totally outside our control that we can merely speculate about it. The importance of the theory and its role in science as well as its supported findings is magnified, and in order to support the theory, one applies mental filters, ruling out all other explanations. One can also see clear schematas in dealing with our mutual history.

In order for errors to normalize, there must be core beliefs and schematas. Seeing some of these beliefs made visible, one may ask what caused them and made the errors invisible.

From the theoretical discussion, it is clear that we can acquire core beliefs directly or indirectly through schematas. In this group, there was both sanctioned authority within the committee (which one can deduce, from seeing the dealings in *Homo sapiens* the movie, most likely existed beforehand), but also outside the committee in form of the IAP.¹⁷⁶ Most probably, there were also “experts” who shared the committee members’ point of view through media channels. Here we find that schematas are informing us which sources are trustworthy and which are not and which experts will tell us the truth. Another inducer of core beliefs is likely to have been the influence of the focus on terrorism that has occurred in the aftermath of 9/11, which changed our legal systems and received a lot of attention in the media. This focus on fundamentalist terrorism can induce an interpretation of the concept of fundamentalism as everything from members of political opposition to those whom one perceives to be more religious than the average. The result of this is that imaginary enemies will develop. Now, seeing the preconditions, everything was in place for this committee to produce a distorted document that would produce further distortion.

Theory has taught us that one of the outcomes of a dysfunctional decision-making process where dichotomous thinking has been utilized is the persecution of deviations. Looking at our document, we see that it is rigid, dogmatic and stereotyped, and there is nothing in between the extremes. There is one enemy. It is not one little group, but it is all who believe in a creation. They are molded into the form of a dangerous enemy. All other possibilities and all deviations from the picture are ignored; data is left out, sources are selected and the enemy is threatening not only the theory of evolution but democracy and society.

Following the words of Dr. Beck, we might be heading toward persecution. We left a time behind when Bibles were burned; we left behind a time when Jews were persecuted. Do we really want to go there?

Obviously distorted pictures of reality in the form of constructed truths can be accepted as constituting truth. Such distorted pictures did constitute truth, not just for one person but for the majority of the committee, the council, the national agencies who implemented the regulations and lastly, for the schools who accepted these pictures. The document has shown that human error does normalize; for a number of people, it became invisible. In fact, it is likely that collective entities engage in cognitive erroneous thinking on a regular basis, and they see this as the regular way of doing things.

¹⁷⁶ Whose decision-making process would require another analysis.

This is possible because members of thought communities, whether they be at a national or a supranational level, share core beliefs and implement schematas that need collective errors in order to exist.

This study has taught me that it is possible for us to develop laws and to implement regulations that aim to defend and secure human rights, while on the other hand, because of preexisting core beliefs, we are simultaneously able to actively counteract the very principles that the same laws and regulations rest upon. This can happen because in order to exist, core beliefs do not need single individuals but can rest in collective communities in form of thought collectives, and errors can become invisible.

5.3 Reflections

This thesis was not written in a few weeks; it has taken me more than one year to develop the thoughts and to understand the complex network of meaning that is prevalent in document 11375 and to address my own cognitive errors. True, it was not a full-time study, and I have taken on other subjects in between, but it could not have been a full time study. I needed this time to understand how beliefs create reality. The theory and methodology was based upon thoughts from well-established scientists in the fields of sociology, cognitive psychology, social psychology and political science. Not much is new; I just mapped the thoughts and implemented them in a new way. Selecting materials of study can easily be biased; therefore, this is a total study in that I took all the concepts that were naturally given and collected all the information I could find that applied to them. I did this because I believe it is very important that a study is replicable and that it is clear how it is done, but it is also important that it can be strengthened or weakened by other people coming to the same conclusions (or not coming to those conclusions). The results gained were in line with the concerns aired by both Professor Steve Fuller and the advisor for ECLJ.

I wrote this thesis in order to create an awareness in society of the problem of invisible errors. I did so with the hope that the society, and also the natural science community, will understand the problem of errors so that errors will no longer be invisible but will come into the light. With that said, there is a need both to challenge this resolution in order not to promote further error, as well to limit the damage the error causes, but also to increase our understanding of the particular nature of core beliefs, schematas and cognitive errors.

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Skolan och den vetenskapliga teorin om evolutionen

I Sverige liksom i andra länder diskuteras, med större eller mindre intensitet, hur skolan i sin undervisning skall behandla frågor om livets uppkomst och utveckling på jorden. Dessa frågor har varit centrala i den naturvetenskapliga forskningen i århundraden. De ingår också, sedan ännu mycket längre tillbaka, i olika religioners trosläror.

Eftersom Sverige – under bestämda villkor – godtar fristående skolor som har en konfessionell inriktning medan offentliga skolor skall vara icke-konfessionella, uppstår frågan hur konfessionella skolor skall undervisa i dessa frågor, där vetenskapen och trosläran tycks ge olika svar. Frågan har fått aktualitet genom föreställningar om s.k. intelligent design och genom en inspektion som Skolverket genomfört 2006 vid en kristen skola i Stockholm (Andreasgymnasiet).

En saklig och allsidig undervisning

Ett grundläggande krav på fristående skolor är att de ger kunskaper och färdigheter som till art och nivå svarar mot utbildningen i den offentliga skolan och att de även i övrigt svarar mot de allmänna mål och den värdegrund som gäller för utbildning i det offentliga skolväsendet. Till värdegrunden hör att undervisningen skall vara saklig och allsidig.

Regleringen av undervisningen om livets uppkomst och utveckling finns i läroplanerna och i kursplanerna för de olika ämnena. Av läroplanen för det obligatoriska skolväsendet framgår att eleverna efter grundskolan skall känna till och förstå grundläggande begrepp och sammanhang inom det naturvetenskapliga kunskapsområdet. Kursplanerna anger t.ex. att eleven skall ha kunskap om universums, jordens, livets och människans utveckling. Kursplanen för Naturkunskap A, som alla elever i gymnasieskolan läser, anger att eleverna skall ha kunskap om den naturvetenskapliga världsbildens framväxt samt universums och jordens historia. Undervisningen i de fristående skolorna skall till art och nivå motsvara dessa krav.

Undervisningen i skolan skall alltså bygga på vetenskaplig grund, vilket kräver utbildade lärare med goda ämneskunskaper. Kraven på vetenskaplig grund, saklighet och allsidighet innebär att vetenskapens kunskapsläge, anpassat till elevernas ålder, skall vara utgångspunkten. Skolan skall också lära eleverna att förstå samspelet mellan empiriska iakttagelser och teoretiska modeller och ge dem redskap att kritiskt granska information och att sakligt värdera den.

Vetenskapen och frågan om livets uppkomst

Grunden för skolans undervisning om livets uppkomst och utveckling skall vara den vetenskapliga teorin om evolutionen. Denna bygger på en solid kunskapsgrund inom t.ex. biologi, paleontologi och biokemi. Även om det kan finnas motstridiga detaljer i den evolutionära förändringsprocessen har inga vetenskapliga resultat

presenterats som motsäger den. Det ligger för övrigt i vetenskapens natur, och är dess styrka, att den alltid har något preliminärt över sig. Arbetet är öppet för ifrågasättanden och kunskapsbasen utvecklas ständigt, men det är ändå alltid en grundläggande skillnad mellan tro och vetande.

Utomvetenskapliga föreställningar om livets uppkomst, t.ex. ”intelligent design”, är inte något alternativ till den vetenskapliga teorin om evolutionen som grund för skolans undervisning. Däremot är det inte förbjudet för en skola, fristående eller kommunal, att behandla t.ex. ”intelligent design” i sin undervisning, men det får inte ske på ett sätt som gör anspråk på att denna föreställning skulle vara ett vetenskapligt alternativ till teorin om evolutionen. Detsamma gäller när en konfessionell skola behandlar den egna tron om skapelsen. I skolan skall inte den vetenskapliga grunden ifrågasättas av trosföreställningar. Eleverna har rätt till en saklig och allsidig undervisning.

Religionskunskap och den vetenskapliga teorin om evolutionen

Skolans undervisning är en helhet. Undervisningen i ett ämne får inte ifrågasätta eller misskreditera ämnesinnehållet i ett annat. En konfessionell skola måste vara särskilt omsorgsfull i sin undervisning i ämnet religionskunskap. Utrymmet för den konfessionella inriktningen som skollagen tillåter medger inte att undervisningens vetenskapliga grund, saklighet och allsidighet överges.

Undervisningen i religionskunskap skall bland annat göra eleverna medvetna om likheter och olikheter mellan olika religioner. Det kan då vara naturligt att också behandla religionernas syn på skapelsen. En konfessionell skola kan ge en fördjupad bild av den egna konfessionens tro i detta avseende.

Undervisningen i religionskunskap, som har människans frågor inför livet och tillvaron som en utgångspunkt, oavsett om dessa uttrycks religiöst eller inte, skall också stödja eleverna att reflektera över och formulera sig i för dem viktiga livsfrågor. En konfessionell skola kan föra en diskussion med eleverna om hur vetenskapens rön om t.ex. livets uppkomst förhåller sig till den egna konfessionens tro.

Om en konfessionell skola kan förena den vetenskapliga teorin om evolutionen med den egna tron uppstår inget problem i dessa sammanhang. Problem uppstår däremot om skolan skulle anse att dessa inte går att förena. En skola, som vill följa bestämmelserna och behålla sitt tillstånd och sin offentliga finansiering, måste i sin undervisning hålla sig till den vetenskapliga grunden. Skolan får inte heller uttrycka missaktning mot t.ex. andra religioner och inte försöka tvinga eleverna till en viss trosuppfattning.

Skolverkets inspektion av Andreasgymnasiet

Skolverket har i sin inspektion av Andreasgymnasiet noga granskat skolans undervisning utifrån lagstiftningens krav och funnit att kraven uppfylls. Skolverkets beslut innebär alltså inte något accepterande av ”intelligent design” som godtagbar grund för undervisningen om livets uppkomst. Detta blev inte tillräckligt tydligt uttalat i inspektionsrapporten.

APPENDIX II- RESPONS FROM ECLJ

Dear Ms. Kjosnes,

Thank you very much for your phone call of this morning and your email.

The brief of the European Centre for Law and Justice on this issue can be viewed here:

http://www.eclj.org/PDF/070621_ECLJ_Response.pdf

AND :

Council of Europe passes resolution to ban creationism from classroom

November 09, 2007

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe recently adopted a resolution that recommended a prohibition towards the teaching of creationism in any educational setting outside of religion classes.

In June 2007, the European Centre for Law and Justice (ECLJ) presented a brief to the Council of Europe in response to a Council report that served as the basis for this resolution. In its brief, the ECLJ argued that, “[t]he aim of the Report is to forego scientific discussion between the theories of evolution and creationism, or intelligent design, to impede the educational formation of children by restricting classroom exploration of ideas, and effectively infringe on the rights of free exercise of expression, religion, and education.” Therefore, this project goes against the respect for pluralism and diversity of ideas and opinions that the Council of Europe claims to stand for.

As a result of the ECLJ intervention, the vote on the resolution had been postponed from July to October, the initial report of the Rapporteur was dismissed. The new Rapporteur tried to minimize the anti-religious character of the resolution, adding, as an introduction, a disclaimer against any attack on one’s right to freedom of belief.

However, the October 4 resolution, as voted, reads more like an alarmist screed against the dangers of creationism and belief rather than a well-researched and formal pronouncement of a parliamentary body. A typical example can be found in paragraph 18:

If we are not careful, the values that are the very essence of the Council of Europe will be under direct threat from creationist fundamentalists. It is part of the role of the Council’s parliamentarians to react before it is too late.

Ironically, in the process of portraying creationism as based purely on dogmatic religious beliefs, the resolution reinforces its supporters own dogmatic belief in evolution:

Evolution is not simply a matter of the evolution of humans and of populations. Denying it could have serious consequences for the development of our societies.

The authors of the resolution do not shy away from revealing why they feel the need to target creationism, and brands its supporters as religious extremists:

The war on the theory of evolution and on its proponents most often originates in forms of religious extremism which are closely allied to extreme right-wing political movements. The creationist movements possess real political power. The fact of the matter, and this has been exposed on several occasions, is that some advocates of strict creationism are out to replace democracy by theocracy.

As many MPs and commentators have said, this resolution goes too far, is hyper-alarmist, and finally discredits the work of the Council of Europe. This resolution not only goes against freedom of religion, but it also goes against the rights of free exercise of scientific research, expression, and education.

According to Grégor Puppinck, counsel for the ECLJ, “the promoters of the resolution never explained the ideological connection between Democracy and Darwinism, and why the rational belief of a Creation could be a danger for our democratic institutions”. As a matter of fact; this resolution is purely ideological, much more than political.

This is the reason why very few MPs were present during the debate and the vote (30 out of 630). The ECLJ opinion is that the majority of the MPs did not want to publicly support or oppose it.

Grégor Puppinck explained that by passing this resolution, some MPs wanted to pre-empt any European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) case ruling in favor of free education on the issue of Evolution versus Creationism. In this way, the political trial came first.

Another serious issue with the resolution is that it severs the independent role of science from politics. Scientific research must be open and free, and have proper respect for the common good and the dignity of the human person.

Finally, it should be noted that there is hardly a scientific consensus on the theory of evolution. Earlier this year, over 700 scientists, many of them prominent in their fields, signed onto a document entitled “A Scientific Dissent from Darwinism” that expressed many doubts about

evolution and stated that a “[c]areful examination of the evidence of Darwinian theory should be encouraged”.

The Counsel of Europe resolution can be viewed here:

<http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta07/ERES1580.htm>

The brief of the European Centre for Law and Justice on this issue can be viewed here:

http://www.eclj.org/PDF/070621_ECLJ_Response.pdf

“A Scientific Dissent from Darwinism” and its signatories can be viewed here:

<http://www.dissentfromdarwin.org/>

Kind regards,

Cecilia Wharton

Responsable Administrative

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The European Centre for Law and Justice is an international, Non-Governmental Organization dedicated to the promotion and protection of human rights in Europe and worldwide. The ECLJ holds special Consultative Status before the United Nations/ECOSOC since 2007.

The ECLJ engages legal, legislative, and cultural issues by implementing an effective strategy of advocacy, education, and litigation. The ECLJ advocates in particular the protection of religious freedoms and the dignity of the person with the European Court of Human Rights and the other

mechanisms afforded by the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the European Parliament, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and others.

The ECLJ bases its action on “the spiritual and moral values which are the common heritage of European peoples and the true source of individual freedom, political liberty and the rule of law, principles which form the basis of all genuine democracy” (Preamble of the Statute of the Council of Europe).

De : beritk@optimisze.com [<mailto:beritk@optimisze.com>]

Envoyé : lundi 23 avril 2012 13:03

À : c.wharton@eclj.org

Objet : In regard to the Memorandum on The Dangers of Creationism in Education

Dear Mrs,

I am currently a post graduate student at Lund University in Sweden, my focus of research is the application of science in court but also when it comes to development of laws and obligations.

Some time ago I was made aware of the existence of resolution 1580 with its pre-work. And in this connection I was surprised by the discourse used in Doc.11375 which for me is not representative for anything else I have seen in my previous study of WTO directives, neither UN obligations nor EU law.

It seems to me that ECLJ did react after the first rapport no. 11275 and wrote an Memorandum, however when looking through the proceedings of the General Assembly I find no references to this report which surprise me.

This prompts me to question firstly whether the memorandum is fake? Secondly if the memorandum not was followed up after report 11375 was written? (that is before the session of 4th October where report 11375 went through)

Also was there any discussion post 4 october?

I am also wondering in my mind how it could be that the Dangers of Creationism came into life

in the first place? It seem to be not a part of the regular business for Council of Europe.

Thank you for your understanding and help.. my report is due in a couple of days and I need these bits to clear my mind... thank you:-)

Kind regard

Berit Kjosnes

APPENDIX III- 11375 TEXT MAPPING

Alternatives

11375:B42 Reviewing the evolution theory does not mean to call into question its basic principles, thus an alternative theory cannot call into question the basic principles of evolution.

11375:B44; Lengagne will show that: “The scientific character of the alternative ideas put forward by the creationists can be seriously called into question, indeed totally refuted.”

11375:B49 ID creationism jump to conclusions and cannot be justified to be a alternative theory to evolution

11375:B50 The international community does not accept alternative ideas to evolution put forward

11375:B51 To teach alternatives to evolution as science would constitute a danger it itself, but also “involve the risk of witnessing the development of many different theories, each as absurd as the next”. It would only contribute to “sow discord among pupils and students.” The teaching of alternative theories can only be considered if they provide sufficient guarantees as to the scientific nature and truth of the ideas put forward.

11375:B52 In this connection an open attitude to alternative theories as advocated by scientific creationists and with this ID the American pastafarian movement came into being. Believing in the flying spaghetti monster this movement also demand a place at the school curriculum for their theory.

11375:B97 It can only be considered to teach alternative theories to evolution if they “provide sufficient guarantees as to the scientific nature and truth of the ideas put forward.”

11375:B101 Creationist theories are alternative “pseudo-theories” to evolution

Attack

11375:A5 and B91 Creationistic thoughts attacks the very core of knowledge we have built up little by little

11375:B41 Creationist attack on two fronts, firstly by denying the scientific nature of the theory of evolution and secondly they emphasis the evolutions theory’s lack of certainty

11375:B56 A Turkish commission was established in 1998 in order to responds to the creationists attack on evolutionist ideas “and to try to warnd the public”.

11375:B87 Darwinism¹⁷⁷ and materialism are attacked by some creationist fundamentalist which claiming it to be the "the real ideological source of terrorism" and that "Darwinism is the basis of several violent ideologies that brought disaster to the human race in the 20th century".

11375:B91 The mode of thought which creationism represent constitute a serious attack on human rights

11375:B96 The lack of understanding of the scientific approach render it open to development of all manner of fundamentalism and extremism, synonymous with "attacks of utmost virulence on human rights"

11375:B100 The theory of evolution render itself open toward attacks.

Beliefs¹⁷⁸

11375:A1 For some people belief in a creation gives meaning to life

11375:A5 ref. B66 What has to do with beliefs must be separated from science less confusion arise in children's minds

11375:A6 and B92 Mixing of conviction, beliefs and science risks create serious confusions into our children's minds

11375:A15 Individual beliefs are of a religious nature and cannot claim scientific respectability but only "possible be as an addition to cultural and religious education".

11375:B5 intro-The "right to freedom of belief does not permit" the resolution to fight a belief Beliefs should not be passed on as science.

11375:B6 intro-Beliefs must be separated from science. Still they must be able to co-exist, in a way which hinders that beliefs oppose science.

11375 B4 and :B54 "belief in an omnipotent "God Creator" is one of the main tenets of the three principal monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam."

11375:B46 Faith impose "*a preconceived idea of the expected result*" in scientific experiments conducted by people believing in a creation. " Faith does not permit them objectively to accept the result of a scientific experiment if it does not correspond to" beliefs. And "It is impossible to reconcile faith and science"

11375:B66 February 2007, in Russia there was a case where some claimed that the school biology textbooks teach only one theory that of evolution, and this was incompatible with their faith.

Today the theory of evolution is increasingly called into question in Russia.

¹⁷⁷ Darwin or Darwinism 35 matches

¹⁷⁸ 16 hits

11375:B103 Beliefs can belong in religion, human relations and intelligence but not science

Creationism¹⁷⁹

11375:head It is dangerous to educate children in creationism

11375:Summary “Creationism in any of its forms, such as “intelligent design” is not based upon facts”, or use scientific reasoning. Its” contents are definitely inappropriate for science classes” All attempts to teach creationism as a scientific discipline must be firmly opposed.

11375:A1 As a religious belief, belief in creation gives meaning to life for some. Creationistic ideas might have ill-effect within the education system and for our democracies. Creationism can become a threat to human rights.

11375:A2 “Creationism, born of the denial of the evolution of species through natural selection” used to be an American phenomena which now have spread to Europe

11375:A3 Creationism is not a scientific discipline

11375:A7 Creationism has many contradictory aspects. Intelligent Design (ID) is a refined version of creationism. The doctrine of ID is dangerous.

11375:A8 Creationism is influenced by divine revelation

11375:A9 Creationism claims to be based upon scientific rigour but is not

11375:A10 Some who advocate strict creationism want to replace democracy with theocracy

11375:A15 Creationism is a “theological position” which perhaps could be “presented as an addition to cultural and religious education” Creationism “cannot claim scientific respectability.”

11375:A17 Arguments “between creationism and evolution goes beyond intellectual debate”

11375:A18.2 and4 Parliamentary Assembly urges member states, and their educational authorities to firmly oppose the perceive of creationism as a scientific discipline on equal footing with evolution which is objective scientific knowledge

11375:B3 intro That creationism in education is a politically topical question which should be dealt with by the European Council was confirmed since the discussion in regard to not discuss it at the June session in the Council attracted the attention of media.

11375:B5 intro Creationism consist of beliefs

11375:B2 “Creationism is first of all a reaction to the theory of evolution” The “most orthodox form of creationism denies the scientific character of the theory of evolution while claiming to be a science itself.”

11375:B3 Creationism is religion and “cannot lay claim to the status of science” while evolution is real science

11375:B8 Creationism came about in opposition to the Darwinist theory of evolution

11375:B12 The war on the theory of evolution “most often originates in forms of religious extremism closely allied to extreme right-wing political movements.” It is a fact, “ and this has been exposed on several occasions ”that some advocates of strict creationism are out to replace democracy with theocracy.

11375:B13 All leading representatives of the main monotheistic religions have adopted a much more moderate attitude.¹⁸⁰ Pope Benedict XIV, as well as his predecessor Pope John-Paul II “today praises the role of the sciences in the evolution of humanity and recognizes that the theory of evolution is “more than a hypothesis.”

11375:B28 It has been confirmed many times that the solar system is ca 4.6 billion years old, that life appeared on earth at least 2.5 billion years ago, that our continent came into shape about 200 million years ago and that human beings emerged between 100-200.000 years ago this one can understand represent a challenges to those who strict Creationism

11375:B30 Believers in creationism which do not compromise claim that God created the world in six days and that transformist or evolutionist theories which conflict with this account is not correct.

11375:B31 Strict creationism “is subdivided into two branches, one that categorically rejects the scientific discourse and another, also called “scientific creationism” or “science of creation ” which consider the conflict between religion and science to be an illusion

11375:B32 Scientific creationism states that the Biblical God is always present and “intervenes in the various processes that bring about evolution.” Within scientific creationist, one find “young-earth creationists” (YEC s) and “old-earth creationists” (OEC s). The first intepretate the first eleven chapters of Genesis litteraly while the OEC’s seek to incorporate a long time evolutionary process into the story of Genesis.

11375:B33 We also find a third group of thought within creationism that is the “so-called progressive creationism, which does not totally reject evolution but argues that creation necessarily involved successive divine interventions”

11375:B35 Creationism experienced an “appreciable resurgence” in the last quarter of the 20 century when it emerged in the form of neocreationism. In neo creationism references to God and the Bible seem to be absent and there is no longer a question of a divine creation.

¹⁸⁰ I got 9 hits on churches, 6 of them applies to the Catholic Church, 1 is negative, one is neutral it is court case and 1 refer to the Christian Council in the Canton of Vaud in Switzerland.

The neocreationist movement consist mainly of supporters of “intelligent design”. That is acknowledgment of “the intervention of a so-called superior intelligence”.

11375: Judge John Jones in Pennsylvania declared that teaching ID in schools violated the constitutional separation of church and state.

11375:B37 Creationism in the form of neocreationism is well developed in English speaking countries. In 2005 a Pew Research Center poll showed that 64% of the Americans favored teachings of ID alongside the evolution theory. This was also supported by president George W. Bush. 20 of 50 American States face potential adjustments in school curricula in favour of ID:

11375:B43 Creationist movements proclaim themselves scientific, while some of “the most radical creationists adhere to a crude denialism by completely denying the scientific advances and discoveries concerning the evolution of species”, other creationist movements proclaim themselves scientific, that is “So-called scientific creationism” which is an attempt to place the narrative of the holy books on a scientific basis. The Biblical story of creation is however a constructed myth and has “ *nothing in common with the construction of a scientific assertion*”

Therefore it is hardly possible to combine evolution and the Biblical creation, even if some movements promote the “ idea that evolution has indeed taken place but is the result of the act of a transcendent will, an “*intelligent design*””.

11375:B45 Creationism has not evolved at all, Creationism has not evolved beyond a pitiful level of quibbling “Creationism appears to be dogmatic than scientific.” Creationism is not based upon any scientific proof. Creationism is either facts without a theory or theory without facts which can confirm or refute them without any facts to confirm or refute them. Creationism are more dogmatic than scientific.

11375:B46 Creationism is the very opposite of science since it denies the need to recourse to material realities in order to establish truth. As Lecointre emphasizes: Scientific creationism is anti-science because it denies the need to “*recourse [...] to material realities [...] in order to establish truths*”

11375:B47-8 “ The Atlas of Creation” is full of falsehood. No argument in this book is based upon any scientific evidence. The book looks like a primitive theological treatise than the scientific refutation of the theory of evolution. The writer states major scientist supports him but that can only be the case if they are specialists in the biology of evolution. The same critic applies to ID. Lecointre has shown that ID is anti-science. Anti-science is: any activity involving blatant scientific fraud, intellectual deception or communication that blurs the nature, objectives and Limits of science” ID is anti-science because it distort the nature of science and its objectives.

11375:B49 ID creationism uses a “God of the gaps” method in resolving scientific problems, thus jumping to conclusions, and do not refer to “*natural causes in one’s explanations*”

ID “only refers to supernatural causes.”

11375:B50 The international scientific community do not recognize creationism. This gives that they will have minimal impact.

11375:B52 It is illogical to teach intelligent design alongside the evolution theory. The Pastafarian theory of the Flying Spaghetti Monster has developed in US as a response on a court decision to teach ID in scientific courses on equal footing with evolution.

11375:B62 A small Swiss creation group aims to asserts creationism over evolutionism by means of media or play.

11375:B69 The Archbishop of Canterbury has expressed himself against creationism in British schools, and condemned attempts to introduce this.

11375:B70 The Christian Democratic Alliance (CDA) is totally against creationism and evolution being placed on equal footing.

11375:B74-75 In regard to the position of the Vatican and the Christian religious movements For a long time the Catholic Church was opposed to transformism and therefore evolution. But this was caused by a general mistrust to science prevailing at a time when there was a different international climate of socialism which it saw as a consequence of the theory of evolutions. Pope John-Paul II recognized Darwins theories as “more than a hypothesis.” However the debate on evolution is still taking place in the Catholic Church today. And “Several movements still defend creationism as dogma” In 2005, the Archbishop of Vienna stated in an New York Times article that the declarations made by pope John-Paul II was not to be interpreted as recognizing evolution. In his article the Archbishop argument for ID ideas. ”However, it is important to note that the majority of contemporary Catholics now accept the neutrality of science.”

11376:B76 Pope Benedict XIV do not support the ideas of creationism since he expresses that “the creationist position is based on an interpretation of the Bible that the Catholic Church does not share”¹⁸¹ Furthermore does the pope reject both *a creationism that categorically excludes science and the theory of evolution, which hides its own weaknesses and does not want to see the questions that arise beyond the methodological capacities of science.*¹⁸² And lastly it appears like to the theory of evolution is ”considered too pervasive by the Catholic Church, which is concerned about the influence of “social Darwinism” and the evolutionist theories of economic matters and medical ethics.¹⁸³

181 This is an ambiguous statement! Does this mean it the «protestant bible»? Which creationism? ID ?

182 This is one more ambiguous statement! To me it seems to imply that the pope rejects creationism which does not accept science and evolutionism which do not acknowledge its weaknesses and that there are questions science cannot answer.

183 This is a strange text it appears like the Church is more concerned about the theory than an approval of it.

11375:B91 The mode of thought which creationism today represent is threatening to impose religious dogma.

11375:B93 Creationism has many contradictory aspects. ID is a late more refined version of creationism, acknowledge a degree of evolution. This school of thought has hardly provided any fuel of the scientific debate until now. ID is no less dangerous.

11375:B97 Creationists alternative ideas cannot “sufficient guarantees as to the scientific nature and truth of the ideas”

11375:B104 A detailed study has showed that the discussions between creationism and evolutionism go well beyond intellectual disputes.

The creationist¹⁸⁴

11375:A1 Creationist ideas can spread and cause a ill-effect

11375:A3 Most creationists are either Christian or Muslims. Creationist target education. They want their ideas included in the school syllabus.

11375:A4 A creationists is the one who “question the scientific character of certain items of knowledge and argue that the theory of evolution is only one interpretation among others” and who “accuse scientists of not providing enough evidence to establish the theory of evolution as scientifically valid” Creationist statements like this do not “stands up to objective analysis”. Nor does the use of science to defence creationist statements as scientific.

11375:A5 Creationists want to impose religious dogma, they are attacking the very core of “the knowledge that we have patiently built up on nature, evolution, our origins and our place in the universe.”

11375:A9 Creationists employ the following methods “purely dogmatic assertions; distorted use of scientific quotations, sometimes illustrated with magnificent photographs; and backing from more or less well-known scientists, most of whom are not specialists in these matters.” And by this they “seek to appeal to non-specialists and sow doubt and confusion in their minds.”

11375:A12 Creationists “possess real political power” The war on the theory of evolution and its proponents most often originates in form of religious extremism closely allied to extreme right-wing political movements. It has been exposed on several occasions that “Some advocates of strict creationism are out to replace democracy by theocracy.”

¹⁸⁴ 75-12 creationist ideas(creationism)= 63 hits

11375:A17 Investigation of creationists “growing influence” show “that arguments between creationism and evolution go well beyond intellectual debate” In fact creationist fundamentalist can threaten values of essence to European Council.

11375: A18.4 It is important to on a general basis resist “ the presentation of creationist ideas in any discipline other than religion”

11375:B6 Creationists appears to be belong to anti-evolutionist movements

11375:B7 Creationists defend Christian theology

11375:B29 Creationists opposed “various discoveries and scientific advances concerning evolution” The word creationist is derived from ““creation” in the biblical sense of the term”

11375:B30 The strongest believing creationist “claim that the world was created by God in six days” These are the ones which state that science is wrong if it contradicts the Bible.

11375:B32 There are two groups of Scientific creationists one is “the so-called “young-earth creationists or YECs”” while the other is the “old-earth creationists or OECs” While the second group admit that creation may have taken long time, aiming to reconcile scientific data with the Bible the first is a literal interpretation of the first eleven chapters of the Bible.

11375:B34 there has been confrontations between creationists and evolutionist, and this in particular in US.

11375:B35 In the late of the setbacks creationists suffered against the supporters of the theory of evolution, the creationists tried to adapt and did so by removing the divine creation and replaced it with the hypothesis of intervention by a superior intelligent. Most of the recreationists are advocates of ID. These demand ID ideas to be taught alongside the evolution theory.

11375:B36 In 2005 ID suffered another setback when a US court ruled that it was against the separation of church and state to teach Intelligent Design in schools

11375:40 Creationists can be of several faiths, and they try to get their ideas accepted in Europe. The Turkish creationist Harun Yahya with is book “ ‘The Atlas of Creation” , his last and very lavish work, claims to denounce the deception of the theory of evolution. This book has been sent to a large number of French, Belgian, Spanish and Swiss schools.

11375:41 Creationists attacks on two fronts by either denying the scientific nature of evolution or by trying to “put the lack of certainty at the center of the debate that pits them against the supporters of the theory of evolution.”

11375:42. “For the creationists of all persuasions, the element of uncertainty that surrounds scientific work on the subject of creation and evolution is much too large to give this theory sufficient credence. Do they need to be reminded that this applies to all science?”

11375:B43 The “most radical creationists adhere to crude denialism by completely denying the scientific advances and discoveries concerning the evolution of species”, this while other creationists complain themselves scientific. This is a complete contradictory claim.

11375:B44 It is not likely that creationist can provide scientific for what they are saying. We will show that the scientific character of the alternative ideas the creationists put forward can be totally refuted.

11375:B45 creationist has not changed since Darwin they still have not evolved from their pitiful level of quibbling.

11375:B46 Lecointre has shown that creationists are not able to follow properly the elementary rules of science. In every experiment a creationist conduct their preconceived belief decide the outcome. Creationists are not skeptics. Creationists cannot see things objectively. Creationists select facts that support their view. Creationist makes a large number of breaches of the principles of methodological materialism and experimentation. Creationists make a number of claims which cannot be “scientifically tested and are thus not provable” Creationists Since creationists dogmatic assertions are impossible to prove scientifically, creationist becomes deceivers, in that they claim to follow scientific principles but do not, and some even fabricate facts and evidence. Some creationists make absurd interpretations of results. Some fabric pseudo evidence to support their theory.

11375:B47 A Muslim creationist by the name of Harun Yahya the author of “The Atlas of Creation” are one of these deceivers that fabric evidence.

11375:B48 ID supporters are also deceivers, in that they say that the theory of evolution is not a scientific theory but a ideology or a ““natural philosophy” and therefore think it either cannot be taught in schools as a “science” or that the intelligent design ideas must be taught at the same time.” And “There is consequently a tendency to justify the inclusion of the intelligent design ideas, which are presented as scientific because of the total lack of any reference to the Bible and God, in the school curricula.”

ID is anti-science because supporters involves in “*scientific fraud, intellectual deception or communication that blurs the nature, objectives and limits of science*”

The nature of science ID conduct is distorted, their objectives are distorted and leaders of the movements writing are religious and not scientific.

11375:B50 Creationist movement are not able to publish in the scientific community.

Harun Yahya (The Atlas of Creation) got his own publishing house and can publish in large quantity. Creationists cannot publish in large quantity. Ref B54

11375:B50 Creationist do not agree. There are numerous different creationist groups. All creationist groups believe they possess truth.

11375:B52 There are scientific creationists which advocate alternative ideas

11375:B53 Muslim scientific creationists belong to a fundamental school of thought.

11375:B54 The Turkish Islamist preacher Harun Yahya (The Atlas of Creation) whose real name is Adnan Oktar, is around 50 years old and a symbolic figure in this fundamental school of thought. He got his own publishing house and has been publishing works on creation or religion for about 20 years. He got a research foundation called “Bilim Arastirma Vakfi (BAV)” BAV works to get evolution out of Turkish schools. BAV is linked closely to “Creation Research (ICR)”.

11375:B55 Harun Yahya state in his book “The Atlas of Creation” there are close links between evolution and ideologies with blood on their hands as fascism.

11376:B56 In Turkey creationists attack evolutionistic ideas.

11375:B57 Harun Yahya’s creationism is according to Professor of Evolutionary Biology at University of Paris IV “*“Much more dangerous than the previous creationist initiatives, which were often of Anglo-Saxon origin”.*

11375:B58 The “*The Interdisciplinary University of Paris (UIP)*” has been abandoned by its sponsors accused for introduced spirituality into science. One of the members of UIPs council inspired to a documentary named: “*Homo sapiens, a new history of Man*” which raised doubt in regard to evolution

11375:B59 The word creationist is derived from creation in a biblical sense of the term.

11375:B61 The European Biblical centre is a creationist publisher having published around fifteen works.

11375:B62 There is a small Swizz creationist group named ProGenesis working for the rehabilitation of the Book of Genesis.

11375:B63 Creationists attempt to infiltrate Belgian schools here again we found “The Atlas of Creation” distributed.

11375:B69 In UK creationists holds lectures at state schools and universities.

11375:B75 The Catholic Church has demonstrated for a long time that it is creationist. The pope John Paul II stated that Darwins theories was more than an hypothesis. There are clashes within the church.

11375:B81 Creationists deny facts and do not contribute to the transformation of societies but supports a radical return to the past, “but to making them become archaic”. This “could prove particularly harmful in the long term for all our societies. This is therefore a crucial issue”.

11375:B82 Creationists are denying facts

11375:B83 Scientific Creationists utilize science as a dangerous instrument in order to mental manipulate minds for a purpose.

11375:B84 BAV, Harun Yahya (The Atlas of Creation) Twist truths

11375:B87 Some creationists fundamentalists attack Darwinism stating it is an ideological source of terrorism

11375:B88 Some of the most radical creationists are violent and fanatics which indoctrinate children

11375:B89 The creationists claim evolution is only one interpretation among others

11375:B91 Creationists attach the core of knowledge in order to impose moral Dogma

11375:B99 Creationists can possible present their setting in culture and religion.

11375:B101 creationists alternative pseudo theories must be combated effectively.

11375:B104 European Councils values is in danger of a direct threat by creationist fundamentalists.

Danger¹⁸⁵

11375:A7 Crationism and with that Intelligent Design is dangerous

11375:B51 to teach alternative theories to Evolution constitute a danger in itself.

11375:B57 Herve Le Guyader consider “ The Atlas of Creation” to be more dangerous than Christian creationism

11375:B83 The scientific approach adopted by creationist constitute a particular dangerous instrument of mental manipulation.

11375:B104 Values of very essence of the Council of Europe are in danger of being directly threatened by creationist fundamentalists and must therefore react before it is too late.

Deception

11375:B40 The Atlas of Creation claims that evolution is a deception

B46 Creationists create deceptions, by fabricating facts which do not exist.

11375:B47 The Atlas of Creation claims that evolution is a deception

11375:B48 Lecointre has shown, that Intelligent design ideas utilize intelligent deception scientific fraud and communication “*that blurs the nature, objectives and limits of science*”

11375:B55 The Atlas of Creation claims that evolution is a deception

Dogma

11375:A5 The type of thought questioning the evolution theory and claiming teachings of creationism in schools make us in danger of imposing religious dogma

113375:A9 There are dogmatic assertions, which creationist makes

11375:B46 A dogma can advocate something

11375:B91 Religious dogma, that is a mode of thought we find in creationism today, attacks our very core of knowledge, knowledge about “nature, evolution, our origins and our place in the universe “which *we* have built little by little.

Evidence

11375:A4 Enough evidence can establish a theory as scientific valid

11375:B12 Scientific can provide evidence. Paleontological data provide evidence for evolution.

11375:B16 Paleontological data (such as the fossil record) provide clear proof for evolution.

Biologists can reconstruct the history of life on earth and thus provide evidence of evolution, this even if a number of uncertainties remain. This evidence gives weight to evolution.

11375:B18. Continental drift, which is the result of the splitting up of the Pangea (the old supercontinent comprising almost all the land that emerged from the Carboniferous period at the beginning of the Jurassic) at least 200 million years ago, also enables proof of evolution to be furnished.

11375:B19 “Natural and artificial selection make it possible to provide evidence of evolution”

11375:B20 Changes in AIDS virus provide evidence of the ability of any organisms to evolve

11375:B27 Research done on evolution still provide “more evidence for the truth of the theory of evolution”

11375:B44 Scientific proof are provided when one is able to verify objectivity by reproducing experiments or observations. How can creationists claim to be able to provide scientific proof? Proof comes with the ability to reproduce experiments or observation.

11375:B45 Creationist ideas are not based upon any scientific proof

11375:B46 “it is not possible to establish knowledge without scientific evidence” However one can fabric evidence. What cannot be scientifically tested is not possible to prove.

11375:B47 Harun Yahya¹⁸⁶ (The Atlas of Creation) fabric pseudo-evidence, he challenges the scientific truth of evolution without providing any scientific evidence.

186 Harun Yahya got 21 matches in document 11375 not bad for one person alone! Direct hit on his book «The Atlas of Creation» generated 11 hits. By comparison Intelligent Design got 24 hits and not one of their books where mentioned!

11375:B65 The Polish Minister of Education Roman Giertych stated that the theory of evolution was not supported by evidence

11375:B83 A scientific theory without evidence can be “compared to an attempt to manipulate minds for purposes that are, moreover, scarcely virtuous”

11375:B80 to deny theories which has been “scientifically proven theories constitutes a brake on education and the intellectual and personal development of thousands of children”

11375:B81 What has been scientifically tested constitute proven facts

11375:B88 A documentary entitled Jesus Camp provide evidence of the number of deviations from normality inherent in the denial of reality practiced against evolution and in the accompanying attempts made to convince others about the truth of these matters.

Evolution¹⁸⁷

11375:Summery It is absolutely no doubt that the theory of evolution is a central theory for our understanding of life on Earth. The assembly calls on education authorities to promote scientific knowledge and teach evolution.

11375:A4 Some say evolution is only one interpretation among others. Some say there is not enough evidence to establish the theory of evolution as scientific valid.

11375:A5 Evolution is under attack by a type of thought which would like to impose religious dogma

11375:A7 Some creationists acknowledge evolution

11375:A8 The evolution theory is built upon facts and got nothing to do with divine revelations

11375:A10 Denying evolution “could have serious consequences for the development of our societies. Advances in medical research with the aim of effectively combating infectious diseases such as AIDS are impossible if every principle of evolution is denied. One cannot be fully aware of the risks involved in the significant decline in biodiversity and climate change if the mechanisms of evolution are not understood.”

11375:A12 There is a war on the theory of evolution

11375:A13 Both pope Benedict XIV and his predecessor pope John Paul II praised the role of sciences in the evolution of humanities, recognizing the theory as more than a hypothesis.

11375:A14 The theory of evolution is a fundamental scientific theory and therefore crucial “to the future of our societies and our democracies” Evolution is present everywhere, from agricultural overuse of pesticides causing insect mutations to medical over prescription causing resistant bacteria’s

¹⁸⁷ Evolution generated the highest score, 180 hits!

11375:18.4 and 5 Creationism most not be taught on equal footing as evolution. One has “to promote the teaching of evolution as a fundamental scientific theory in the school curriculum.”

11375:B2 Evolution is of a scientific character. Orthodox creationism denies the scientific character of the theory of evolution.

11375:B3 Evolution is real science. Creationism is religion.

11375:B6 The theory evolution contrasted sharply with the knowledge and fears existing when it came to life. Darwins work marked the end of the agreement between natural history and the Christian tradition, and also the birth of the anti-evolutionist movements.

11375:B7 The theory of natural selection could enable mankind to put an end once and for all for the theoretical foundation of “religious obscurantism”.

11375:B9 Evolution is a science. “DNA, as will be seen, is widely used in the science of evolution” What is Evolution?¹⁸⁸

11375:B10 Populations evolve, when certain inherited characteristic becomes more frequent in following generations. Biological evolution is modification of gene characteristics over time within a group of beings or a population. Adaption describes the characteristics of the organism which improve its ability to survive and reproduce in total harmony with its natural environment. Adaption is a result of natural selection, this happens when one species separate into two or more new species.¹⁸⁹

11375:B11 Evolution is an explanation about how organisms adapt to their environment by natural selection, how the bio diversity came about, by speciation and answer why different organisms share characteristics that is through a common ancestor. Humans are closely related to monkeys in that they have a common ancestor. ”When a single species separates into two, the two resulting species share numerous characteristics as they derive from a common ancestor.”

11375:B12 There is a considerable body of scientific knowledge which confirms evolution. Evolution is a fact because of:

- ”- the evidence provided by paleontological data,
- the numerous cases of characteristics shared by organisms with a common ancestor,
- the reality of continental drift,
- direct observations of genetic changes in populations.”

11375:B13 Humans are just one of the links in the long chain of evolution.

¹⁸⁸ This is a very complicated question. Is it a fixed matter, like a stone? Or is it a concept which changes pending the circumstances, the time and aim? The answer might surprise...Suddenly it can become a sociological problem that is a social phenomenon...

¹⁸⁹ In case you think you know what species are please visit: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Species_Problem last accessed 12 May 2013

11375:B14 Among those organism which reproduce sexually one find that the genetic variability increases through crossing over the independent assortment of fertilization and chromosomes (I guess this is what's normally happens when a man and a woman get a child). These different mutations together with any other processes that rearrange genetic information combine to produce the evolution of species and populations tending to secure a variability and species on this planet. Genetic modifications generate morphological, biochemical and behavior differences. (Which explain why our kids got their own features, biochemical system and behavior) “Natural selection and/ or genetic drift have an effect on the differences between individuals or species in order to produce evolutionary change”

11375:B15 Scientists has demonstrated the process of evolution and the consequences this process has for life on earth. Adaption, Speciation – that is the repeated separation of one species into two or more new species contributing to biodiversity and the existence of a Common Ancestor. Evolution involve all these different characteristic of that life.

11375:B16 Paleontological data like the fossil record provide clear proof of the evolution of species and individuals. Fossils are preserved remains of organisms living long time ago which furnish biologist with means to reconstruct the history of life on earth. There are a lot of uncertainties still, but these give weight to the idea that species has evolved over time.

Paleontology confirms the existence of new groups of organisms on the basis of old ones.

11375:B17 The fact that these organism have characteristic in common with the old one is consistent with the theory of evolution. This since one of the main propositions of the theory is that organisms carry in themselves evidence of their evolutionary past. This is indeed the case.

Similarities in developments can be explained by a mutual ancestor. Proteins and DNA of organisms which share a common ancestor are closer than organisms that do not share one.

11375:B18 Continental drift, that is the result of the old supercontinent splitting up ”at least 200 million years ago, also enables proof of evolution to be furnished.” This since fossils of organisms that evolved before the continental split have a wider geographical distribution than those evolving more recently. Continental drift resulted in the separation of families of living organisms and brought upon them development independent of their descent, but also resulted in new species and the extinction of others.

11375:B19 Scientists has observed both in laboratory and in the nature genetic changes in the course of time both in populations of study and in species. They have also been able to modify genes by crossing species, this is called artificial selection. Both natural and artificial selection makes it possible to provide evidence of evolution.

11375:20 Aids research confirms evolution, in that virus are rapidly evolving to keep on adapting to the environment.

11375:B23 “There can be no doubt that evolution is a real science”

11375:B24-25 Evolution represents objective knowledge

11375:B26 “scientists from all nations, races and religions agree on the existence of evolution and accordingly no longer try to find out whether it has actually taken place but “how” this has happened. A number of questions remain within the scientific community with regard to understanding all the processes that lead to evolution. In particular this work consists in *revealing the mechanisms that have governed the present structuring of biodiversity* However, no science is ever complete and new discoveries regularly enable progress to be made on understanding “how” things are as they are.”

11375:B27 Le Guyader states that the theory of evolution now pervades all areas of biology and affects the sciences of the Earth and the universe. Advances in evolutionary research broaden the basis of the theory of evolution. “Research being done on evolution is still providing more evidence for the truth of the theory of evolution.”

11375:B28 It has many times been confirmed that:

- ”-the solar system, which includes the Earth, was formed approximately 4.6 billion years ago;
- life appeared on Earth at least 2.5 billion years ago (in the form of unicellular bacteria);
- about 200 million years ago Pangea began to split up to form the continents we know today;
- homo sapiens, ie human beings, emerged between 100,000 and 200,000 years ago.”

11375:B29 These evolutionary discoveries and scientific advantages led to strong opposition from creationists.

11375:B30 Creationists that do not compromise state that transformist or evolutionary theories that conflict with the Bible can only belies.

11375:B32 Scientific creationists accept evolution by intervention

11375:B33 Progressive creationists do not totally reject evolution and argue for successive divine interventions.

11375: B34 A teacher was taken to court for teaching evolution. Gradually the theory of evolution gained acceptance. In 1968 anti-evolutionist laws unconstitutional.

11375:B35 ID supporters wanted ID to be taught alongside the theory of evolution

11375:B37 Most curricula in Europe teach unashamedly evolution as a recognized scientific theory. And still creationism in the form of neocreationism is well developed in English speaking countries. In 2005 a Pew Research Center poll showed that 64% of the Americans favored teachings of ID alongside the evolution theory. This was also supported by president George W. Bush. 20 of 50 American States face potential adjustments in school curricula in favour of ID:

11375:B39 We also now have “Muslim creationism: the creationist arguments of Christian origin became popular among the Muslims with the rise of the Islamist movements at the beginning of the 1980s”

11375:B40 The Atlas of Creation claims to “denounce the deception of the theory of evolutions”

11375:B41 The science of evolution is not a closed science, however if there are doubts in regard to certain elements and a need for specifying others this do not give reasons to calling into question the foundation “of which it is based” The theory is under attack.

11375:B42 Creationists of all persuasions see the that too much uncertainty surrounds the theory of evolution to give it sufficient credence. ”However, reviewing and evolving a theory does not mean calling into question its basic principle, and the same applies to the theory of evolution.”

11375:B43 Some movement stats evolution has taken place but is the act of a transcendent will.

11375:B45 Evolution evolves continually, and has evolved considerably since Darwin

11375:B47 Harun Yahy (The Atlas of Creation) tries to prove the absurdity and unscientific nature of the theory of evolution. In order to challenge the theory of evolution one must be specialist in the biology of evolution.

11375:B48 Opponents in form of ID present the evolution theory as an ideology or natural phisology

11375:B50 It is a fact that the theory of evolution is accepted virtually throughout the scientific world.

11375:B53 Turkey is the cradle of Islamic scientific creationism.

11375:B54 Harun Yahya the author of “The Atlas of Creation” has set up a science and research foundation named Bilim Arastirma Vakfı (BAV), BAV except from trying to try to ban evolutionism from the Turkish curriculum got close link to the American Institute for Creation Research (ICR) Harun Yahyas foundation BAV has been very active in trying to remove evolution from Turkish education.

11375:B55 The Atlas of Creation attempts to refute evolution and state that evolution is a deception.

11375:B56 75% of Turkish secondary school students do not believe in the theory of evolution. A commission was created to hinder attacks on evolution and try to warn the public. The Turkish

Academy of Sciences and the Turkish Scientific and Technological Research Council are in favour of evolution.

11375:B58 The “*The Interdisciplinary University of Paris (UIP)*” has been gradually abandoned by its sponsors accused for introduced spirituality into science.(suspicion of neocreationism) One of the members of UIPs council inspired to a documentary named: “*Homo sapiens, a new history of Man*” which raised doubt in regard to evolution The university was said to be closely allied with the American intelligent design movement

11375:B61 The European Biblical centre is a creationist publisher having published around fifteen works.

11375:B62 There is a small Swizz creationist group named ProGenesis working for the rehabilitation of the Book of Genesis.

11375:B63 Creationists attempt to infiltrate Belgian schools here again we found “ The Atlas of Creation” distributed.

11375:B64 Belgium students are confused in regard to the theory of evolution. A large proportions say they never heard about the theory even if it is a part of the biology curriculum.

11375:B65 Some from a “extreme right-wing, ultra-Catholic party” say the evolution theory is not true. The theory of evolution was called publicly into question by the Polish Deputy Minister of Education. The minister state that the evolutionist theory is only a story, a piece of literature.

11375:B66 The teaching of evolution is increasingly called into question in Russia. Deputy head of the Department of External Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate states that the theory of evolution has a ideological character reminding them about the past Soviet era.

11375:B67 The Italic scientific and journalistic community set down a commission which stated that teaching of Darwinian theories makes it possible to prevent racism and eugenics and is crucial for the overall view of life.

11375:B68 In Greece the theory of evolution is not banned but downplayed and left to the final part of the course.

11375:B69 In UK creationists holds lectures at state schools and universities.

11375:B70 An Serbian minister had to step down after she had ordered schools to stop teaching the theory of evolution

11375:B71 In 2005, Netherland the minister of education caused a stir when she proposed a debate on the teaching of evolution in schools. Six years earlier political parties had agreed to teach evolution as part of the curriculum also faith schools.

11375:B75 For a long time the Catholic Church opposed evolution but this has changed. There are clashes within the church.

11375:B76 “Pope Benedict XIV now welcomes the role of the sciences in evolution”

The theory of evolution concerns the Catholic Church. The Archbishop of Vienna has put forward arguments put forward by supporters of ID ideas.

11375:B77 President of the French Council of Muslims states that the theory of evolution does not conflict with the Koran. He is convinced that evolution is a scientific fact.¹⁹⁰

11375:B79 Inter Academy Panel (IAP) emphasized that it is harmful for children’s education to deny evolution. The scientific community recognises that “*there are still many open questions about the precise details of evolutionary change*” but refuses to challenge some of the results of its research.

11375:B80 Prohibiting the theory of evolution which is a key theory is “totally against children’s educational interests” Science is a big player and got a big and active role in the process of evolution and transformation of societies.

11375:B81 Creationists “are in fact supporters of a radical return to the past, which could prove particularly harmful in the long term for all our society. This is therefore a crucial issue”

11375:B82 we have now seen that it is not as simply as a matter of the evolution of humans and population the theory pervades the whole of science and is one of its fundamental principles.

Think about the consequences of denying evolution for medical research like fighting aids or for the development of our societies? Evolution pervades all medical research. Removing evolution could lead to an end of medical research.

111375:B84 Harun Yahya and the American Institute for Creation Research twist truths about evolution.

11385:B85 Harun Yahy refutes evolution by quoting the Koran. The Koran does not however mention evolution but only creation.

11375:B86 Science, and thus the theory of evolution, never claims to answer questions like why something is, but simply consider how they work.

11375:B87 References to social Darwinism which dictators have made cannot “in any way call into question the theory of evolution or religion” Social Darwinism is a ideology which got nothing to do with the theory of evolution. One cannot ascribe all evil on earth to the theory of evolution. It is absolutely scandalous

11387B88 In US there is a number of aberrations inherent in the denialism practiced against evolution. One documentary movie about One of these groups provides evidence of Them.

11375B89 Creationists claims that evolution is only one interpretation among others but this is not the case. The evolution theory remains irrefutable today, it constitutes a fundamental body of knowledge, fundamental for the future of our democracies and cannot arbitrarily be challenged.

¹⁹⁰ What is a scientific fact? Also one might here consider the principle of Tawātur? The more people that consider something to be true the more secure it is that it is true.

11375:B90 It is of importance to emphasize the profound effect the theory of evolution has had on science in general, philosophy, religion¹⁹¹ and many other aspects of human society. Evolution has also entered Psychology, that is in the form of evolutionist psychology.¹⁹²

113875:B91 Creationists attack the very core of knowledge we have built up little by little concerning evolution, nature our place in the universe our origin. This is without doubt a serious attack on human rights.

11375:B93 ID do not completely deny evolution, but they are not less dangerous.

11375:B94 Therefore teaching evolution by natural selection as a fundamental scientific theory is crucial for our democracies and the future of our societies. Evolution must therefore occupy a central position in the science syllabus in particular.

11375:B95 Denying evolution can have serious consequences for the development of our societies. If every principles of evolution is denied how can we combat diseases like AIDS? How can we understand the risk a significant decline in biodiversity and climatic change? Evolution is present everywhere from overuse of antibiotic to overuse of pesticides.

11375:B98 Creationists ideas cannot be taught within the scientific disciplines , alongside or instead of the theory of evolution.

11375:B100 The ”theory of evolution leaves itself open to many attacks” this can be caused by the way it is taught.

11375:B101 by better teaching evolution one can combat creationist theories

11375:B104 A detailed study show that the discussions between creationism and evolutionism goes well beyond intellectual dispute.

The evolutionist

11375:B35 Supporters of the theory of evolution won over creationists.

11375:B41 Supporters of the theory of evolution are attacked by creationist putting the lack of the theory of evolutions certainty at the center of the debate.

11375:B70 The Dutch minister of Education wanted to confront the creationists with supporters of the theory of evolution but she failed doing this since her own party are totally opposed to creationism and evolution being placed on equal footing.

Exist in form of attacked serious scientific researchers actively producing objective knowledge which might save humanity from disaster!

¹⁹¹ ??

¹⁹² Not with ease...dealing with living people is not as easy as dealing with dead material or bodies.

Facts

11375:Summary Creationism in any form is not based upon facts

11375:A8 Divine revelations do not constitute facts. The theory of evolution is however built upon facts.

11375:A9 Facts are not produced by dogmatic assertions, distorted use of scientific quotations or backing from more or less well-known scientists which are not specialist in the particular matter.

11375:A12 It is a fact that some advocates of strict creationism are out to replace democracy by theocracy

11375:A17 It is a fact, which is consistent with the theory of evolution, that organisms share common characteristic. This confirms that organisms carry within themselves evidence of their evolutionary past and indicating a common ancestor. Proteins and DNA of organisms which share a common ancestor are closer than proteins and DNA of those that do not share one.

11375:B12 Facts can be established through evidence, numerous cases confirming a matter, reality and direct observations

11375:B20 It is a fact that the HIV virus evolve in order to keep adapting to its environment and this confirm the theory of evolution.

11375:B27 It is a fact that advances in evolutionary research have resulted in a broadening of the basis of this theory now we find that evolution of populations are only part of evolution as a whole.

11375:B41 It is a fact that no science, and neither evolution is closed.

11375:B45-6 It is a fact that creationists pretend to comply with the principles of logic. Facts can be fabricated by “*a tendentious selection of facts*”

11375:B50 It is a fact that the theory of evolution is virtually throughout the scientific world and that the ideas of creationistic movements, whatever they may say, still are marginal. And that they therefor should not be included in the school curriculum.

11375:B55 The “ Atlas of creation” claim creationism is a fact

11375:B78 Dalil Boubakeur, President of the French Council of Muslims says he is “*convinced that evolution is a scientific fact*”

11375:B81 There are proven facts and evolution is such a fact, to deny it is to deny facts

11375:B83 ”Charles Otis Whitman, an American zoologist (1842-1910) wrote,” *Facts without theory is chaos, but theory without facts is fantasy*” As Lecointre informs us that clever manipulators relies on facts alone.

11375:B84 Harun Yahya in “The Atlas of Creation” resorts to facts alone.

Lecointre

11375:B24 As Lecointre, which is professor of zoology at the National Natural History Museum in Paris states: “ science is the totality of operations that produce objective knowledge. A statement on the world can only be described as objective if it has been verified by an independent observer. This verification depends on three factors: skepticism, rationality and logic and, finally, methodological materialism. These three pillars ensure the objectivity of a scientific result.

11375:B43 Lecointre emphasizes, that as the “construction of a myth has nothing in common with the construction of a scientific assertion, the statements made in the context of the two theories have very little chance of tying up with one another. ”

11375:B46 Lecointre has shown that ID supporters” have been somewhat cavalier” in regard to elementary rules of science. This since firstly in every creationist experiment” faith imposes a preconceived idea of the expected result” thus it does permit objectivity to accept the results of an experiments which does not correspond to their beliefs. Therefore it it appears to be impossible to reconcile faith and science. Then creationists logic is based upon false premises, in that they utilize a ”tendentious selection of facts.” Lecointre also emphasis that ”scientific creationism is by definition the very opposite of science because it denies the need for recourse [...] to material realities [...] in order to establish truths”

11375:B48 Lecointre has shown that ID ideas are anti-science, in that all activities which involve blatant ”scientific fraud, intellectual deception or communication that blurs the nature, objectives and limits of science may be called anti-science” ID is anti-science because it distorts the nature of science, and also the objectives of science. Leaders for ID has shown that objectives are not scientific but religious.

11375:B83 Lecointre emphasis that ” any clever manipulator relies on” facts” alone.

Fundamentalists

11375:B17 and B104 Fundamentalists threaten the very value of Council of Europe

11375:B53 Turkey seems to be one of the main cradles of Islamic scientific creationism, as emphasized by Arnould: “*Turkey appears to be one of the most active and most highly structured centres of this fundamentalist school of thought*”.

11375:B87 Some of the creationist fundamentalists attack

11375:B88 An Pentecostal School in us has used Muslim fundamentalism as a model of indoctrinating children. A documentary named “Jesus Camp” reveals”all the violence and

fanaticism of the most radical of the creationist movements and the effectiveness with which they succeed in manipulating human beings.”

Objectivity

11375:A4 It does not stand up to an objective analysis to state that lack of evidence to establish the theory of evolution as scientific valid, nor to question the scientific character or certain items of knowledge nor argument that the theory of evolution is only one interpretation among others.

11375:A18:2 Implying that there exist “Objective scientific knowledge” and that the theory of evolution is objective.

11375:B22 The number of means for verifying hypotheses has increased since Darwin and the cross-checking of information makes it possible to achieve considerable objectivity.

11375:B24 “Science is the totality of operations that produce objective knowledge”

“A statement on the world can only be objective if it has been verified by an independent observer.”

Objectivity of scientific results are ensured by employment of: skepticism, rationality, logic and methodological materialism.

11375:B44 “The scientific nature of an assertion depends to a large extent on the ability to verify its objectivity by reproducing experiments or observations.”

11375:B46 Lecoindre has shown that in every creationist experiment, faith imposes its preconceived ideas of the expected results. Faith does not permit creationists to objectivity to accept results of a scientific experiment which do not correspond by own beliefs.

It is not possible to establish knowledge without scientific evidence and without verifying objectivity and scientific character “by the reproduction of experiments and/or observations.”

Pseudo

11375:B46 Some creationists offer absurd interpretations others do not hesitate to fabric pseudo evidence as proof of the scientific nature of statements by creationists.

11375:B47 Pseudo-scientific methods was used by Harun Yahya (The Atlas of Creation) and cannot in any way be considered scientific.

11375:B48 ID ideas are of pseudo-scientific character.

11375:B52 Pastafarianism is a pseudo-religion.

11375:B101 Creationists produce pseudo-theories

Science

11375: Summary, None forms of creationism use scientific reasoning, and are not science.

From a scientific point of view is beyond doubt that evolution is a central theory for understanding life on earth. It is important to promote scientific knowledge and oppose creationism as a scientific discipline.

11375:A3 Creationism is not a scientific discipline

11375:A4 Objective analysis shows that creationism is not science and that creationist claims stating that scientists do not provide enough evidence to establish the theory of evolution as scientific valid is incorrect.

11375:A6 There is a risk of confusing “convictions, beliefs, ideals of all sorts and what has to do with science”

11375:A8 Science has is of fundamental importance because it has “made possible considerable improvements in living and working conditions and is a not insignificant factor in economic, technological and social development.”

11375:A9 Creationists claims to be based upon scientific rigor is false, they provide purely dogmatic assertions, make distorted use of scientific quotations and got backing from more or less well known non-specialist scientists not qualified to talk in these matters.

11375:A11 Development of science and technology forms an important part of our history. The scientific approach is not well understood. Total “rejection of science is definitely one of the most serious threats to human rights and civic rights.”

11375:A14 Teaching of the theory of evolution “as a fundamental scientific theory is therefore crucial to the future of our societies and our democracies.”

11375:A15 Creationist ideas cannot claim scientific respectability

11375:A16 “Science provides irreplaceable training in intellectual rigour.” Science “seeks not to explain “why things are” but to understand how they work.”

11375:A18:1-2 Scientific knowledge should be defended and promoted

11375:A18:3 Science should be made more “comprehensible, more attractive and closer to the realities of the contemporary world”

11375:A18:4 One has to oppose teaching creationism as a science on equal footing as evolution

11375:A18: 5 One has to promote the teaching of evolution as a fundamental scientific theory

11375:B5 intro The aim of the document is to warn against a tendency of passing on a belief as science

11375:B6 intro Beliefs must be separated from science and hindered from opposing science

11375:B3 The brief review of the biological questions in this document makes it possible to seriously show that evolution is a real science, and that creationism is a religion and cannot be taught as science.

11375:B9 DNA is very widely used in the science of evolution

11375:B23 “There can be no doubt that evolution is a genuine science”

11375:B24 According to Lecointre, professor of zoology at the National Natural History Museum in Paris: *“science is the totality of operations that produce objective knowledge. A statement on the world can only be described as objective if it has been verified by an independent observer. This verification depends on three factors: scepticism, rationality and logic and, finally, methodological materialism. These three pillars ensure the objectivity of a scientific result.”*

11375:B25 Scientific research in evolution are no exception from above.

11375:B26 Evolutionist thinking now also affects the sciences of the Earth and the universe.

11375:B30 Creationists which do not compromise state that science is wrong in those aspect where it contradict the Bible.

11375:B31 Scientific creationism or science of creation state that “the science versus religion conflict is only an illusion.

11375:B41 It is a fact that no science is closed

11375:B42 A level of uncertainty surrounds all sciences. However: “A scientific theory produces new knowledge that it tries to interpret according to the prevailing paradigms, which forces the theory to evolve in order to take account of these new data. “ However, reviewing and evolving a theory does not mean calling into question its basic principle, and the same applies to the theory of evolution.”

11375:B43 *“the construction of a myth has nothing in common with the construction of a scientific assertion, the statements made in the context of the two theories have very little chance of tying up with one another.”*

11375:B44 “ The scientific nature of an assertion depends to a large extent on the ability to verify its objectivity by reproducing experiments or observations.”

11375:B45 “Science is a body of knowledge constantly being built and rebuilt. The scientific approach consists in continually questioning models, which remain true unless and until they have been refuted.” The evolution science has evolved considerably since Darwin.

11375:B46 Skepticism is an elementary rule of science. It is impossible to reconcile faith and science. Science is necessary in order to establish knowledge. Lecointre states that scientific

creationism is anti-science since it denies the need for resource to material realities in order to establish truths.

11375:B47 No method employed in the book named “The Atlas of Creation” by Harun Yahya is scientific. Science is used to provide proof, evidence

11375:B48 Anti science is “*any activity involving blatant scientific fraud, intellectual deception or communication that blurs the nature, objectives and limits of science.*”

11375:B49 In order for something to be scientific it must only refer to” natural causes in one’s explanations” ID ideas immediately jump to the conclusion involving intelligent cause without looking for other explanations.ID cannot be taught in science courses.

11375:B50-51 Because of the lack of influence of the creationist movement, and that whatever they may say will stay marginal it is not acceptable to teach alternative theories as science.

11375:B52 Pastafarianism is a parody established as a response on a Kansas State Board of Education’s decision to permit teachings of ID in Science classes.

11375:B58 The interdisciplinary University of Paris UIP is actively working on introducing spirituality into science.

11375:B60 Secular and religious education must be separated

11375:B67 A commission stated that natural sciences are important in our modern culture.

11375:B75 For a long time there was a general mistrust of science, this made the Catholic Church opposed to transformism and evolution. The pope accept the neutrality of science

11375:B76 In the tradition pope Benedict XIV now welcomes the roles of the sciences in the evolution of humanity. Stating it has opening up a large dimension of reason previously closed and brought us new insight.

11375:B78 The sociologist Malek Chebel states that “Islam has never been afraid of science”¹⁹³ Religion “must not challenge science” states the Swiss Association of Muslims for Secularism.

11375:B79 A declaration signed by the academies of science in 67 states emphasis the importance to education “all children about the methods and discoveries of science and to foster an understanding of the science of nature” Science provides knowledge of the natural world and empowers people to meet human needs and protect the planet.

11375:B80 It is possible to scientific prove theories

“Science is a prominent player and plays a big and active role in this process of the evolution and transformation of societies.”

11375:B82 Evolution now pervades the whole of science and is one of its fundamental principles.

11375:B83 To present a scientific theory without evidence is to manipulate

¹⁹³ Perhaps their scientific tradition goes further back than the European perception of it?

11375:B86 Evolution is a science, and considers therefore only how things work.

11375:B89 Evolutionary science explains how things are happening, and not why things are.

11375:B90 The “theory of evolution has had profound effect on science in general.”

11375:B92 There must not be confusion in children’s minds between “convictions, beliefs and ideals” and what science is

11375:B93 Students must not be prevented from “accessing scientific knowledge” as this will make them unable to compete effectively with other students who are being educated in states Where science has a key status”¹⁹⁴

11375:B96 Development of science forms an important part of our history. The approach of science is not well understood. To reject all science is “one of the most serious threats on human rights and civic rights.”

11375:B101 More appropriate teaching of the sciences and evolution might enable dissemination of alternative pseudo-theories such as those proposed by creationists. It is important to teach quality scientific teachings better suited to realities of the daily life.

11375:B102 “Science provides irreplaceable training in intellectual rigour. It seeks not to explain “why things are” but to understand how they work.”

11375:B103 “Science is a matter of reason, observation and hypothesis, theory and testing. It has its rules and its areas of application”

Threats

11375 A1 Creationism can become a threat to human rights

11375 A11 and B96 “ The rejection of all science is definitely one of the most serious threats to human rights and civic rights.”

11375:A17 versus B104 Values of essence for the Council of Europe can, if one is not careful, can suffer a direct threat from creationist fundamentalists. It is a part of the role of the parliamentary assembly to react before it is too late.

11375:B91 Thoughts which attacks the very core of knowledge “that we have built up little by little concerning nature, evolution, our origins and our place in the universe” in order to impose religious dogma are to be considered serious attacks on human rights.

Truth

113375:B27 The theory of evolution constitute truth. Research being done on evolution still provide more evidence for the truth of the theory.

11375:B46 Truth can be established scientifically when one recourse “*to material realities*”

¹⁹⁴ If the theory of evolution is called into question in US and Russia, and science is in fundamental parts equal to evolution are we here talking about India and China?

11375:B50 One can be convinced that something represent the truth without this being truth.
Lack of recognition in the scientific area can indicate that something is not true.

11375:B65 A Polish extreme right-wing politician stated that *“the theory of evolution is a lie, a mistake that has been legalized as a common truth”*

11375:B97 Teaching of alternative theories can only be considered pending these provide sufficient guaranties to the scientific nature and truth of the ideas postulated.

War

12. There is a war going on on the theory of evolution which most in forms of religious extremism, closely ”allied to extreme right-wing political movements”. ”The creationist movements possess real political power”. ”Some advocates of strict creationism are out to replace democracy by theocracy.”

Watchdog

11375:A6 and B92 We need to protect our children toward serious confusion in order to escape harm and disaster.

11375:B80 We need to protect our children’s interest, not hindering their intellectual and personal development.

11375:B81 We need to be protected toward the creationists which want us to return to middle ages

11375:B93 We need to protect our kids from lurking behind when it comes to scientific education

APPENDIX IV- Interview with Mrs Woie

Q was, seeing your was against in the first vote while supported the resolution in the second, what made you change your mind?

Mrs Woie emphasis that the leader of the group used a lot of time in order to gain consensus within the group.. Mrs. Woie felt that they came to a mutual consensus in regard to how the document was to be understood. Mrs Woie also informed me that they received The Atlas of Creation, she first stated that this might have caused a change of mind then she stated that she did not think it was given much attention within the group.

Mrs Woie asked me twice whether creationists where Christians.

APPENDIX V - The meaning of the parable

This parable explains a fundamental principle. The particular application in this context is in the phrases “new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved” and “no one, having drunk old *wine*, immediately desires new.”

It is not possible to fuse creationism into the paradigm of evolution, and it is not possible to fuse evolution into the paradigm of biblical creation. There must therefore be a third option, that is something new, which will allow the mutual existence of both people who believe in creation and those who have spent their life working on a paradigm of evolution. How this co-existence will be carried out in practicality, I cannot say; (if it happens) it still belongs to the future. But it is recommended.

This I do know, that one step in the correct direction is to ask the following questions:

1. Is it natural for a theory of origin to be a part of natural science classes?
2. Would it be possible to map the wealth of written information we have in the form of original sources in regard to information on our origins, our past, and present in the science of history?
3. Is it necessary to know how old the earth is? Since people who believe in creation would not know the matureness and thereby “the age” of the earth at creation, and people believing in evolution cannot claim control over the number of possible variables of influence, many of these variables still unknown.
4. Would it not be good if we could develop a program that made it possible for our children (and scientists) to deal with cognitive errors at an early stage? Would we not create a society with less violence? Would they not get a better future? A healthier mind?